



“Animals on Bikes”
Paddock Art Sculptures

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- SASSPA reserves the right to make literary corrections and to withhold from publication all or any part of material submitted.
- Material for publication should be forwarded by email. Please include photographs if applicable.

Date for your Calender

*SASSPA Annual Conference
26th & 27th August
Sofitel Wentworth Hotel, Sydney*

From the Chairperson's Desk

Welcome to our first edition of Netlink for 2010. We are sorry for the delay in publishing this year, but the SASSPA Executive committee have been very busy organising two 'Conferences for Women' in Gosford and Campbelltown, aside from the usual school routines, plus all the up and downs in our personal lives. Both conferences were very successful and I certainly learnt a lot – but we will give full reports in the next Netlink.

Well I wonder how your schools are all faring with the BER and for High Schools the DER as well. (Anyone outside schools reading this may wonder at the acronyms, but the Building Education Reform has been in the media a lot recently and has affected all Primary schools throughout the state.

My school (a community school K-12) is in the process of having 4 new classrooms built (to replace the old demountables) and an enormous COLA (covered outdoor learning area) hence classes have been relocated to various rooms such as the library and even older demountables due to be removed and even the connected classroom. We have had to cancel running the regular morning assemblies as there is not enough room for all to congregate and the students have limited space to run around and expend their energy at recess and lunch, but hopefully when all is complete it will be like a 'new' school.

The Digital Education Revolution has also been a great success for our Year 9 & 10 students with many embracing their new 'notebooks' and becoming proud owners of mini laptops! Thanks to our TSO (Technical Support Officer) who has ensured the smooth issuing and overseeing any technicalities that have arisen. Teachers have also been developed professionally to increase their abilities and confidence at providing lessons utilizing technology rather than chalk and blackboards (although these have obviously also been superseded by whiteboards!). We also have many more interactive whiteboards which still constantly amaze me when I see them in use!

On another note I have been invited to be part of the Office of Schools, Schools Action Group for SALM – our next new school software system; but before then SAP finance will be introduced which should prove very interesting as School Administrative Manager job descriptions will alter and take on a different slant. Personally I like the way we can adapt to various changes and face interesting challenges within the Department of Education and Training and I am really excited about the future. If you want to stay in the picture, please ensure you visit the LMBR website regularly.



In the meantime, please don't forget to diarize our annual conference due to be held at the Sofitel Wentworth Hotel, Phillip Street, Sydney on Thursday 26th and Friday 27th August. It is shaping up to be another exciting 2 days.

All the best with your new enrolments and the ongoing day to day school business.
Regards

Sally Ann Copp
Chairperson



Congratulations and Best Wishes to Debra (Vice Chairperson) on her recent marriage to Terry Goyen - We wish them every happiness in their future life together.



From the Treasurer

Membership numbers continue to grow and as at the end of May we have:

- ❖ 381 Individual Full Members
- ❖ 13 Associate Members
- ❖ 191 School Affiliate Members

Total 585 which is absolutely wonderful.

The August Conference registrations will be coming out shortly so keep an eye out. Please remember to send your registration to

Marge Amery,
SASSPA State Treasurer,
PO Box 51
Leeton NSW 2705

or you may miss out if it is posted to the wrong address. The conference promises to be a spectacular event and there are some truly great speakers on the program.

Following the Conference the Annual General Meeting will be held and all members are invited to attend. If you have ever thought of joining the SASSPA team this is your chance to do. It really is a great opportunity and we have a lot of fun, so come on why not join us!

Marge Amery
SASSPA Treasurer

Invitation to Members Annual Conference



on Thursday, 26th & Friday, 27th August 2010

to be held at the

Sofitel Wentworth Hotel, Phillip Street, Sydney

Wonderful speakers and workshops now being organised

Make your travel and accommodation arrangements

now as this will be a great Conference

NSW Woman of the Year



Has your community been faced with falling enrolments at school, the possibility of losing a teacher, families leaving the area, loss of skills and more importantly, loss of strands that make a

rural community work? Well when the small country town of Cumnock (less than 300 people) faced that very real-life situation a couple of years ago, along came Mrs Christine Weston, who with community enthusiasm and backing, decided to do something to reverse the trend.

Mrs Weston's contribution to the rural village of Cumnock is a tremendous example of how ideas, enthusiasm and positive attitude can motivate a community. She developed the Rentafarmhouse concept which resulted in opportunities for Cumnock and helped attract new families to the area. The population increased by 15% and the loss of a school teacher was reversed and staff numbers increased at both the local primary school and preschool. Her work also saved a local school bus run, and during the drought she facilitated water deliveries to farmers and helped local families move into the area. Farm houses were rented at \$1 a week each and offered families who have children to send to preschool and school, a great opportunity to experience a "tree change".

Last March, Deputy Premier and Minister for Health, Carmel Tebbutt, announced that Mrs Christine Weston, the Cumnock mother of three had been named the 2010 NSW Woman of the Year. The Deputy Premier said, "Mrs Weston is an amazing woman who works tirelessly for her community. Her ongoing contribution to the Cumnock community is a wonderful example of how ideas, enthusiasm and a positive attitude can motivate others".



Christine is always thinking of ways to ensure that the Cumnock community continues to grow and her recent project has been Animals on Bikes "Paddock Art" sculpture tourist trail from Molong-Cumnock-Yeoval-Dubbo. Whilst driving along the Obley Road, you could be startled by the sight of colourful animals trailing along beside your car – all on bikes!



This unique creative project captures travellers' imagination, promotes local tourist operators and showcases rural creativity. Animals on Bikes is a series of 45 quirky/imaginative sculptures created by local farmers, farmers wives, Men's sheds, sculptors, preschool kids, playgroup mums – anyone with an artistic flair!



The Cumnock & District Progress Association arranged welding classes for participants and as part of the competition to create the best sculptures, several prize categories were created with sponsors supporting the community.

The Western NSW Regional SASS Reference Group recently held a conference in Orange and Christine Weston was our special guest speaker at the Conference Dinner – she is truly inspiring and after listening to her story, every small community can only wish that they have someone like her living in their community.

Helen Ross
School Administrative Manager
Mullion Creek Public School

My Year Abroad to "London by the Sea"

In 2008 I went on a teacher exchange to Brighton in England. Brighton markets itself as "London by the sea" because it is like a miniature London as it has theatres, concert halls, specialist shops and celebrities. It was a wonderful place to be based because of all of these things. It was also just an hour by train to London and half an hour to Gatwick airport (access to cheap flights to Europe).

The school, Dorothy Stringer Secondary School (named after a mayor of Brighton), is a 7-11 school with over 1700 students. The students are aged from 11 to 16 years old and leave school at the end of Year 11 when they receive their General Certificate of School Education (GCSE). This is equivalent to the School Certificate in New South Wales. After this students can go on to a 6th Form College where they do Years 12 and 13 and sit their A level exams. The retention rate of students to these colleges is not big and many students leave school having received their GCSE.

Teaching at such a large school came with many challenges and one was working out which member of staff did what. There were many layers of school management with Deputy Head masters and Assistant Deputy Masters. Heads of department did not discipline students as this was carried out by the Deputies and the Year Coordinators. Lots of paper work (in triplicate) was filled in when a student was naughty.

The administrative staff carried out many of the tasks that at my school in NSW are carried out by teachers. For example student attendances and follow up was carried out by Admin staff as were teacher absences and cover of their classes.

The system in England is one where schools are inspected quite often and this comes with lots of paperwork. Also where as in NSW we just have the BOS setting and overseeing curriculum, in England there are numerous Academic Boards that offer courses and the exams that accompany them. This too involves lots of paperwork, all overseen by the Administrative staff.

You can imagine that it took me all year to learn the names of the office staff and who did what. Lucky for me is the fact that school admin staff around the world are nice people and looked after me well. It was a pleasure to make a huge batch of Anzac biscuits as a thank you.

What else did I learn? The "reprographics" room is the photocopier room! The school year in England is from September to July so when teachers and students say "see you next year", they mean "see you in September".

Recess is called "break" and roll call is "registration". The school oval is called the "school fields".



Thanks to Neighbours the students know more about Australia than we do (or at least they think they do!)

All in all it was a great year living in someone else's house and teaching their classes. I had lots of laughs to help with the moments of stress. Huge amounts of travel compensated for the fact that Aussie students are nicer than English ones. If anyone is considering an exchange, I am happy to talk to you about my experiences.

Kate Dally
Birrong Girls High School

Secondment into the City - Glamour or Grunge?

After working 12 doors from home for 10 years an opportunity arose for me to accept a 12 month secondment into DET Head Office, Sydney.



Dear Diary,

Day 1, (the first day of the Term 1 holidays),

- Up at 4:30 am, pack lunches, process washing, decide what to wear and iron some clothes for the day
- Drive 20 minutes to catch the 7:35 am express train,
- 45 minutes later, after standing in the one spot, I arrive at the city
- The Bridge and Opera House standing grandly, watching over the Harbour foreshores, the buildings unchanged with time.
- 8:30 am start. No bells for recess here, no recess here at all. Grab a cuppa on the run, if you can.
- 1:00 pm lunch. 30 minutes not time enough to walk up the other end of town, to go shopping, just a quick walk around the block will have to do.
- 5:00 pm finish. Just log off your computer and leave. No kids forgotten to be picked up, no phones to answer, no teachers asking you for favours – could get used to this.
- Run to the train. Wait for 15 minutes because there is track works, great I get a seat, but the train stops in the tunnels for what seemed an eternity.
- 6:00 pm arrive back at the station, 6:20 pm, finally home, now what for tea?

Day 2

- Day one all over again, only that it's wet and I had to smell someone's armpit all the way home.
- Grab a coffee on the way to the office, definitely puts GJ's to shame.
- Find my cubicle and start all over again

Day 3, 4 & 5

- All the same as the days before.

Day 6 & 7

- The weekend at last and I am totally exhausted! Need to go shopping; I can't wear the same thing every day.

Day 8

- Torrential rain, the trains are running late and my feet hurt from wearing heels.
- Was asked to lunch by some ex-schoolies today, this flexi time is not too bad. \$16 for a sandwich, lunch out; only a rarity I thought to myself!

Day 9

- The whole office is put on notice; the Director-General needs some information urgently. No time for lunch.

Day 10,11&12

- All the same as the days before – just 353 to go!

Leesma McKeown

School Administrative Manager

Tharawal Public School

LMBR WildWorkShop™

As a member of the School Administrative and Support Staff (SASS) Finance Consultation Network, I attended the first LMBR Schools Engagement WildWorkShop™ which was held in the Marcus Clarke building in the city in March 2010.

Representatives from the Office of Schools, School and Regional Financial Operations, Audit, Shared Services Centre, Staffing, Secondary Principals Council, Primary Principals Association, Professional Learning Directorate, Public Service Association, Principals Innovation Network and the LMBR SASS Finance Consultation Network, amongst others, participated in the workshop, ensuring a wide cross section of views.

The WildWorkShop™ team, lead by Michael Hall, provided the opportunity for the participants to contribute their knowledge and experience in both open forums and group activities. It was so interesting to be in discussion groups with such a diverse cross section of the DET, using whiteboards to record our thoughts on the varied topics which focused on:

- Exploring and understanding the proposed service improvements within DET (their purpose, where we are heading, the steps we are taking, the benefits, etc)
- Exploring different ways to best approach the engagement of 2,245 schools over a 12-18 month period
- Beginning to build an initial “community” which will continue to be engaged over time, involving new and different people as the roll-out progresses
- Deciding what needs to happen for every school to successfully deploy the new finance system
- Identifying potential opportunities, ideas and issues for the schools and the overall roll-out
- Building key messages to share with the wider community

At the end of the day, Jim Breen, General Manager, LMBR, assured us that a summary of key messages from the workshop would be emailed to the participants, an excerpt of which follows:

LMBR will provide an integrated Financial, Human Resources and Student Administration Management System and processes that will improve the way NSW schools do business. The Schools' Finance rollout is the first wave of a much larger well funded and supported reform project within DET which is designed to enable NSW schools to better manage their resources. The rollout of the Schools' Finance system is expected to start in October 2010 with a small group and continue through to November 2011.

I will provide more details on the system, its benefits, functionality etc over the coming months as appropriate.

My perception of what you expect from LMBR:

Realistic timeline and roll out model, effective change management and reliable interim processes

Easy to understand, trusted and in-time communication about all changes and implementation requirements

Acknowledgement of challenges and issues

Staged implementation recognising the differences in NSW schools

Service efficiencies

Utilisation of existing networks

Repeated engagement of our school communities translated into meaningful actions

Effective, flexible, school role-based, quality training and training materials as well as long term support

Some of the things you feel LMBR will bring to the department, to your school and to you are:

Streamlined business processes

Updated and modern standards

Consistency across DET and accurate reporting

Career path options

Efficient and integrated systems

Skill enhancement and recognition of excellence

Support into the future

Some of the things I'd like your help, support and assistance with are:

- to be advocates for the School Finance Deployment (which can be achieved if I keep you informed and involved)

- to become a “Mythbuster” – help us to bust any myths (which can be achieved through clear and relevant communications)

LMBR WildWorkShop TM - Continued...

The first workshop was a beginning not an end. I am planning to run a number of workshops like this one with progressively more people being invited. The general concept is that we take the same sort of format out to each region and we ask you to be the common thread through inviting participation from others in your network.

The workshop provided a wonderful opportunity to gain knowledge of proposed reforms, exchange ideas and opinions and network with a diverse range of DET staff. The proposed reforms will provide learning opportunities and better work practices which will benefit staff, students and parents, by improving the way we do business.

These reforms are not to be feared. With continued open dialogue, the assurance of funding for training and support, consultation and feedback, the implementation of this new system should be seamless.

Jill Montgomery
School Administrative Manager
Cronulla High School

Further information is available on the LMBR Intranet site:
<https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/deptresources/lmbr/schools/finance/index.htm>



Gerogery Fires

I posted this rather dreary report on the administration webmail after the fires on 17th December, and received an overwhelming response – offers of help, sympathy, concern, kindness and compassion. Wow... we were blown away. I must admit snapping quickly out of my miserable mood when we heard about another school actually being burnt down later that holiday.....

The Gerogery School still stands.... don't know how – the fire was really close and other property was lost all around us.

Our small community lost 4 homes - one belonging to a family of eight children (4 children were to attend next year), and one family with a child in year 6 next year. The Principal and a teacher were at the school, unaware



of the danger so close and they only just got out. Luckily there were no students at school as they had no warning - a passing resident told them to get out.

No text arrived to warn the school either. The new 'text' feature to warn residents was received by our residents two hours after they were evacuated!! There are many stories of 'just getting out in time'. The fire was contained mostly at the fence line of the school but came within school grounds, mere metres from school buildings. We are just an unburnt square, all around us is burnt and black. We had cattle eat out the paddock next to the school 2 weeks prior to the fires and that largely saved the school as there was little fuel on one side.

I sit here at school 2 days before Christmas, just visited some community people. I spoke to the family of eight that lost everything. The mother told me of her flight to get the kids out with only minutes to get 8 kids in the car and trying to think what to grab. On a lighter note she has two sets of twins 6 months and 5 years her husband asked "what

do I grab?" - She answered "take a baby!" – but he did manage to have all the kids in the car. The only single item they were able to take was the bottle sterilizer (and the babies!!) Everything else was destroyed. I can't begin to imagine that feeling.



I am here today at school to find some photos for the family's that lost everything - looking in school newsletters, photos et. to give to them for Christmas. Like most small communities everyone has pitched in to help their neighbours in any way we can just so we can do something to feel like we are helping.

It's tough here, smoke and ash everywhere, black on all four sides of the school and of course the town is burnt all around houses and paddocks. I arrived to continue putting out spot fires around the school. Emergency services were everywhere, road blocks, no electricity, helicopters flying around and landing next to our school and the sudden smash of trees falling down, still smoldering scared the pants off me. Trees and property burnt for weeks after.



Many families stood and fought for their homes and for their lives on that day. So many stories of survival and desperate measures to save homes, property and just get out of danger.

It's heartbreaking and all so sadder a week before Christmas.

But the school is OK and Steve, the Principal is part of the recovery organiser group for the town - at least we can feel like we are doing something for others.

Gerogery Fires - Continued....

Our disaster plan to evacuate the students would not have worked. The fire started in Walla and that's where the bus was to collect the students in the event of a fire. The fire was too fast; embers were 5km ahead of the front, huge gusty winds and no warnings to evacuate until the town was hit. Warnings on the radio were announced incorrectly, warning the Gerogery West area to evacuate whilst the Gerogery town burnt.

I backed up the school computers the day before the fires - how important is backing up now to me!!

Luckily we are able to decide where we went wrong in preparation of a fire at our school and how to do things differently.

We have not heard any inquires of concern or otherwise from the DET. The Principal did ring the SED but otherwise no calls to see if we were OK... and a Happy holiday to them too!!!

Our town people seemed to bond and began fixing whatever was burnt or broken over the last 5 months. We still have fences down and homes needing repair and a scarred landscape to look at. The family of eight couldn't find alternative accommodation in the area. This meant our numbers dropped and the awful process of losing teacher/SASS staff hours began.

I must add that the school was not on the CFA assets list (to be saved). Since the fires, the Principal, Stephen Broomfield, has voiced this omission loud and far to DET and emergency services. We now take our Emergency Management Plan and drills a whole lot more seriously and the school will definitely be contacted and attended by a Fire Warden as an asset to protect - very reassuring now.

Cathy Rose

*School Administrative Manager
Gerogery Public School*



In retrospect the DET needs to look critically at the preparation of our rural schools in a more organised method - clear the gutters when needed - not just for cyclic maintenance, ensure our schools are given a fire break around school etc.

School holidays have started of course I hope that other rural schools keep safe for the holidays.

And of course back up frequently; you never know when we will need it.



View of burnt area 5 months on



WOMEN IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP (inc)

Lissa Tardiani
Executive Officer
Lissa.Tardiani@det.nsw.edu.au

MENTORING WITH WIEL

I have had many people indicate to me that support from an “old girl” – sorry – “someone more experienced” – would be appreciated.

This email is simply to find out whether there is interest out there for a Mentoring-style program through our WIEL data base network. It is just a “germ of an idea” at the moment and if there is an interest I will flesh it out, with your assistance, and bring it “to life”.

It won't be a formal program. We won't be working through modules about Mentoring.

It will be more of an informal relationship between like-minded women – experienced with ambitious, (so to speak). My vision is that the MENTORS will provide the “MENTEES” with support by phone or email; an ear when needed but also to give constructive advice.

HOW CAN WE DO IT?

If there is an interest I will set up a “matching service” whereby those interested provide basic information that I will put out to the interested parties so that you will select those people that you think: “Yes – that person sounds like someone I could relate to”. I will devise a simple form where you fill out, for example: experience, interests, talents (in teaching), areas you feel that you can offer advice to others.

If there is enough interest we may run a day where the “couples” would come together to meet (sounds like the Perfect Match, I know!) and we will host an information and “getting together” day to start the whole thing off. We can even look at hosting it in areas of most interest rather than one central meeting, although the “couples” can be from very different geographical areas. We have someone in mind to facilitate such a day. Then it would be up to “the couple” to develop the relationship as they see fit with Lissa as the intermediary and support person where necessary.

WIEL is keen to live up to our charter and provide additional support to our current activities and conferences.

WHAT WILL I DO IF I AM INTERESTED IN EITHER ROLE?

If you are interested in being a **Mentor** (and don't be modest or shy – if we oldies don't support our younger women we won't change the imbalance that still exists will we??? Statistics still show that there are over 70% of women in the teaching workforce and only around 30% in executive roles) or in being a **Mentee** (first thing is to come up with a better term than that) – **please email me**. Just send me an email to say I am interested in being a Mentor/Mentee and I will contact you.

I realise that it is a busy end of the year for new ideas but wouldn't it give you an exciting new venture for the New Year!!???? I don't anticipate that we will go much further than this “expression of interest” this year but if I know there is an interest “out there” I will be getting my ideas together for you ready for the new year.

Looking forward to hearing from you, Lissa

Country Kids hit the Surf Scene

Early term 1, all students at Mullion Creek Public School were given the opportunity to travel to Sydney for two days to experience the Manly surf and the Coastal Environment Centre at North Narrabeen.

A bus was hired, accommodation booked and after an early start from school – 5:00 am roll call – the principal, a teacher and ten parents set out for their adventure over the mountains and down to the sea.

First stop was Manly Surf Lifesaving club for the Surf Educate Australia program and that was a memorable experience for the kids – lifesavers took them out into the surf and all rode the waves back on a surf board, either lying flat, on their knees and some even managed to stand up.

Several students, whose mums said their children would never get in the water, didn't hesitate after seeing the fun others were having and their confidence was rising



sky high with the help of the lifesavers. One "little" got dumped face first and came up wiping sand off her face and out of her mouth and eyes, with the comment "that was awesome!!"

For the last several years our school has participated in the Telstra Beach to Bush program which involves experienced surf lifesavers travelling to regional areas to teach primary school children important surf safety messages and its amazing how confident and competent children become. This is a wonderful program for country kids to learn water skills for family coastal holidays and trips to Sydney.

What great opportunities they have today to experience the joy and fun of surfing that is considered a treat for most people living west of the mountains.

Following several hours at Manly beach, students then enjoyed the hospitality of Balgowlah North Public School for a short visit. The students at Balgowlah North were great hosts showing the kids from the bush around their large school in the suburbs.

A game of beach cricket and a swim in Narrabeen lagoon culminated the daytime activities. It was a great

experience for the bush kids to be staying right on the beach at Narrabeen.

Fossicking in the rock pools at the rock platform enhanced their learning about sea creatures that they had been studying in class. It was all hands in designing



and making the sand sculptures with the parents having as much fun as the children. I think the kids took home a fair bit of sand in their socks and shoes – enough to help fill the school sand pit.

A tired group lunched by the water at the famous Manly Pier and watched the world go by. Then they had just enough energy to visit Manly Oceanworld and be face to face with sharks, giant turtles and eels – lucky they didn't see these before they went surfing at the beach!!

The bus trip home was pretty quiet with tired kids and more exhausted parents and teachers.



Helen Ross
School Administrative Manager
Mullion Creek Public School

Ups and Down of our School Canteen

A few years ago, our school was not making very much money from the school-run canteens (we have a K-6 and 7-12 canteen) and it was a little extra work for the SAS staff, so the auditor recommended that we put an advertisement in the local paper asking for tenders from prospective lessees. It was hard to let our canteen supervisors go, as they had been loyal supporters for many years, but one became a casual teacher's aide (SLSO now) so still works often at the school and the other found an alternate canteen to run.

So approximately 30 months ago we followed the instructions from Finance, advertised for 3 weeks and received approximately 8 tenders. The panel (which included myself, the P&C President and my Principal who was the Convenor) managed to cull these down to 3 applicants and duly interviewed them. Interviews were held and the panel finally concluded that one tenderer was not only the most suitable and appealing but was also offering the highest rent.

So having cleared out all school owned equipment, they moved in their 'suppliers' fridges, ovens, pie warmers etc while we distributed our equipment out to various staff rooms and the TAS kitchens.

The term started off well with new and exciting menus in both canteens, but it wasn't long before we had a few complaints, especially from parents of K-6 students whose children had been sold lollies or were not being given their change, but a lolly instead. As we had indicated at interview we required the canteen to adhere to the Healthy School Canteen Policy, the Deputy called a meeting to say that this could not continue and the lollies had to go.

Also after about 3 months the lessee was already late with their rent despite monthly invoices being issued.

It was about then that we had a phone call from the previous owners of the said canteen business to say that the employees that were currently running our canteen were in fact NOT employed by them. So we called another meeting and I enquired as to their correct business name as obviously it was not the same as that under which they had tendered.

We also discovered that they had photocopied the solicitor's page and altered the date. We notified the said solicitor who was also annoyed and was going to follow it up from his side.

This is when we called Legal Branch who came out to visit and talked to both the Principal and the Canteen Lessees. He was most supportive of the lessees and understood how they were in the process of trying to form another business name, although they did have one already as originally were suppliers of fruit and vegetables. So we decided them give them another opportunity and drew up a new lease with their correct name (which was triple and

double-checked against their ABN) and slightly reduced the rent as they were experiencing difficulty in keeping up.

Within about six months however, one of the canteen lessees was reported to be behaving inappropriately towards the young female staff and towards some of the older female students. After many written reports the school was forced to evict this person from the premises with no access to the school within school hours unless the Principal was given prior knowledge. You can imagine how we all felt now!

Despite numerous invoices, meetings and written requests, the lessee was now way behind on their rent and still serving lollies in the K-6 canteen. They had also introduced full strength coke into the 7-12 canteen despite this being banned from day one! Plus we also learned that some students in the primary school actually feared going to the canteen due to the language and reception they received from the employee.



Unfortunately it is very hard to just close a canteen and have them removed from the premises without ensuring all efforts for a possible reconciliation have been made. The rent had been reduced to half the original tender and at one stage we received a cheque for all outstanding amounts on the last day of a term. This was looking slightly more promising except that on our return we found that the cheque had bounced. On top of this they also failed the Council's inspection!!

Ups and Down of our School Canteen - Continued...

After long discussions and information written, we finally convinced Legal branch that this lease needed to be terminated and as by this time the lessee was also 'despondent' from trying to make ends meet, we came to the conclusion that they would finish up at the end of last year (just 2 years after inception).

So three months prior to this, out went the advertisements again for a new lessee. This time with an extra panel member the whole process started again! But the panel was very careful in their selection and found a most affable, keen and friendly applicant (although NOT the one offering the most rent, just the better outlook).

Thankfully the previous canteen lessees had removed most of their equipment and belongings early in the Christmas holidays which enabled our new lessees to completely clean up everything with bleach etc, so that it looked and smelt spick and span; before they filled it with their equipment.



And what a difference – the food smelt delicious, the prices were reasonable, the staff most friendly and they even gave away left over home made healthy pizza's at the end of lunch to encourage the 7-12 students to purchase the following day.

I can assure you the staff embraced the new canteen lessees with open arms and even had them supply food etc for the weekly staff morning tea.

BUT.....within 3 weeks they asked to meet with the Principal and said that sales were atrocious – most unexpected. We wanted them to stay so offered 6 weeks rent free if they would just continue to try and give it a go. They had three paid staff and the main lessee, so they let one staff member go and reduced the other's hours, but still not worthwhile – so guess what.....Next term we are going back to running a school canteen!!!

We have kept the two paid staff as they were parents of our students anyway, but now the school is asking for volunteers on busy days.

The SAS Staff will be banking the takings, paying their invoices and ensuring the supervisors are paid as in the past, but even though we tried it is obviously NOT a going concern. We are closing the K-6 canteen and running both canteens from the one senior canteen. Lunch orders (few that they are) will still be filled and counter sales reduced to ready-made healthy foods!

I have no idea why our school cannot support a leased canteen, but obviously we are surrounded by parents with enough time to make school lunches, or people are 'cash poor'. Either that or they have been so unhappy with the previous lessees, we have lost all business.

It is a shame but hopefully the auditor will not request we go to tender again (not until sales increase anyway!) and the school will have to allow a budget to support the canteen in the near future.

Good luck to any school setting up a leased canteen – our experience did not have a happy ending.

Sally Ann Copp
School Administrative Manager
Lucas Heights Community School

"School Daze"... a light hearted look at a SAM's life in a small school...

Farewell to all my Admin email friends and colleagues, especially Small Schoolies! I have accepted a transfer into a secure full time SAO job at Dorrigo High School after many years as SAM at several small schools.

Over more than 15 years I have worked at up to three schools concurrently as the permanent part time SAM, supporting 24 teaching Principals (not counting those of less than a term) 21 of whom were wonderful people to work with at our one and two teacher schools. I have had two schools quickly drop student numbers and lost 'permanent' SAM days. One school did not even have a year in review: from 48 down to 23 students - very sudden, Principal transferred to a sought-after P5 immediately, lost the second teacher and lost a SAM day per week, as when kids go, SAM time goes also.

It has been a pleasure working with many children, SAS staff, cleaners and teachers as a recognised and respected SAM in isolated rural small school communities, but over this time my duties, especially my 'as directed' duties have grown. In small schools SAMs often perform the widest range of duties including traditional 'Principal or Deputy duties', as the teaching Principal K-6 is allocated three hours a week casual teacher relief for all the school admin and finance.

For a laugh I have listed some of my usual scenarios and 'as directed' duties:

- being handed the school cheque book with 24 cheques to post date in OASIS as last year on 2nd December, (Principal decided to take chequebook and all the school on a few days overnight excursion during Rollover),
- daily heating and preparing student lunches from home, (eg. toasted sandwiches) as expected by all parents,
- defrosting frozen toilets (often still frozen at lunchtime), fixing/straining fences,
- daily chopping kindling and lighting the wood fire in the classroom because the (male) Principal couldn't light it (minus 9° inside, but no heat in my office - achieving new classroom gas heaters took 7 years),
- priming the water pump, (student sent to accompany me laughed when I fell in the creek, of course!);
- fixing urinals constantly running, no 'town water supply' issues, equals no water at school,
- removing snakes and funnel webs from the playground,
- 9 years of taking up to 3x schools' garbage to the tip,
- daily supervision of K-6 class while sole teacher unavailable,
- constant 'emergency' classroom technology support, eg. press enter!! or 'my typing is being eaten up',
- no networks or file servers in small schools: all stand alone machines, so 'install this class software on 'em will you'? Was that all 23 of them???
- craft lessons, gardening lessons, canoeing instructor, swimming instructor, Principals' cashflow instructor,
- writing, monitoring and returns for many successful grants submissions for several schools, eg. Investing

in Our Schools - new classrooms, new COLA's, three schools' staff toilets, phones, admin office upgrades, demountable admin block, covered walkways, signs, etc.

- catching stallions and mares, removing 70 steers by myself from the playground, while the teacher and students watched from the classroom window,
- organising casual teachers, liaising with District Office eg. support services, submissions, etc.
- all school based returns including TPL, Swimming Scheme, etc.
- arriving at school - no teacher, students dropped off by parents, furiously calling casuals, managed to get a teacher to travel 90km and arrive just after 10:00 am,
- more than 35 ASR's, 30+ Rollovers and 30+ AFS's with all comments ready for the Principal to sign and send.

Our new teaching Principals do need to recognise that we already have our job to do, without constantly asking us for class photocopying, laminating, typing student reports and classroom support in general. In small primary schools we do not have any SASS allocations for teacher support or classroom duties, unless we are lucky enough to have a part time SLSO. Our P6 SAM allocation is 0.496 or almost 2½ days per week. I will no longer do four school's rollovers in 4 successive days (that was an exceptional year - t'was usually just 3 rollovers for 3 schools)!

I also found it very interesting to note that nowadays teachers must always have a second adult on site for safety reasons, but as my daughter says, 'SASS are the only ones allowed to die alone at school!' Working in isolation is always a thrill, particularly when Police and ambulance are hours away in any emergency. I have spent one hour and 45mins waiting alone with critically ill student for an ambulance to arrive!

I am hoping this transfer move will provide better job security, some collegiality, less work overload, daily lunch breaks, the ability to go to the toilet when needed, and being able to speak with other adults!!! Oh - to work at a High School. However, I am sure that I will miss the daily changing routine of a small school - Cheers to you all! My last day at Ebor PS was Tuesday 11th - NAPLAN Day!

Karin

Every year schools contribute to making a positive impact on this world through the power of storytelling and the collaborative process of creating art. It's a beautiful and wonderful thing to be part of - the stories display incredible talent, compassion and astounding ideas. Following are just two stories

Congratulations to Kimberley Redmond who was placed third in the open division of this prestigious competition with a story titled "A Day in the Life of an Aussie Kid".

***The Other Day* By Kimberley Redman(6C, Cudgen PS).**

The other day, I was bored out of my brains. There was just absolutely nothing to do. My footy was flat, my I-pod needed charging, and my mates all had swine flu. I told Mum "I'm bored." She told me, "Clean that pigsty you call a room." I rolled my eyes- they do that on TV so I felt pretty cool- and went off to my room and fell asleep...

The next morning, I was woken by Mutt licking my face- how pleasant that was. Mutt is our dog- he's huge. I got up, turned on the shower and sat next to it for 5 minutes, while I wet my hair in the sink and picked all the sleep out of my eyes. After the 5 minutes was up, just long enough for Mum to think I'd actually had a shower; I raced out to the kitchen, where Dad was boiling the kettle. Mum handed me an International Roast coffee and I skulled it down- hot. Then I scarfed some Weet Bix- with a tonne of brown sugar on top, of course! - I was really late for school.

I stuffed a paper bag off the bench into my backpack, followed by an extra little treat- a packet of Lifesavers! I gave Mum a peck and raced out the door. Mutt barked his head off as I jumped on my ripstick and sped off to school- lucky it's only down the road from our place or I wouldn't have made it to school at all!

I went through the front office to pick up a late slip and got detention for taking a shortcut through the staff room to get to class. Great, I really needed that. "Sorry!" I said as I ran through the room of teachers screaming blue murder. I finally got to class, but to top things off, instead of just quietly sneaking into class unnoticed, I tripped on the edge of the carpet at the door, screamed, and landed face first on the floor. Lovely, and totally unnoticed. Utterly mortified- and ouch! Carpet burn! - I sat down in my seat and listened to the teacher. He was telling me and my friend about this writing competition....

Budding author, Jemilla Raphael, received a silver award for her story "The Day it Ended". Well done Jemilla.

***The Day It Ended.* By Jemilla Raphael (6C Cudgen PS)**

I was alive on the day the world ended. No one ever really knew how it happened. All we knew was that we were too careless with the world around us, that we had neglected the environment. I'm Cassis and this is what happened in the year 2015.

All the trees were wiped out in replacement for things that we didn't really need. The pollution in the air became thicker * thicker and humans were starting to lose their minds to technology. Finally, on the 28th November, the world ended. Humans were choking on pollution and were finding it hard to breathe with little trees on the earth. Eventually, humans had to start living underground. People were dying. There was no clean air anywhere. We were living off oxygen tanks and that was just keeping us alive. But what would happen when we ran out? No one liked to think of the answer. I decided to make a difference. "Ahem," I said, as I stood up in the dark underground cellar. Twenty pairs of eyes looked up at me. "Family and friends, I have a plan". Hope appeared on their faces. "We have to eat all the fruitnow". Hope was quickly replaced with disgust. "What will that give us!" snapped Joe, with an icy look on his face. "Wait!" I yelled, "There's more,"

Joe slowly gave me a forced look of interest. "When we eat the fruit, we put the leftover seeds and cores into the earth and plant a tree. Looks of happiness and surprise came on all their faces, even Joe's. "A tree!" they murmured to each other. They knew what that meant. A tree meant air, air meant life and life is what we needed. So that night, the community came together in the underground tunnels and agreed on the idea. We started planting a forest and eventually, after much suffering...we could breathe again! We could come up to the surface!

As we spread the news through the world and people were reunited, I realised that we all belong together, that we need each other to stay strong, to be happy. So on the 18th January, 2016, the new world began. This time, it was full of trees and hardly any buildings were built. People could roam free, respecting the world around them so much more. Animals were born again, from some dogs and birds that survived the end. Humans weren't as stressed and worried, and adults who used to work all the time would play with their children. So, no one could really say that they survived the end. The older version of the human race had died; the new version was there to stay. From this experience, I have decided to live by a new moral. With every end, there is a beginning.

TO ALL RE-SENDERS OF EMAILS

Please take a few minutes to read the following information concerning the re-sending or 'forwarding' the emails we receive from friends and relatives.

Here is something everyone should read and take the advice. If you don't, **you're hurting yourself and your email buddies.**

By now, I suspect everyone is familiar with <http://www.snopes.com> and/or <http://www.truthorfiction.com> for determining whether information received via email is just that: true/false or fact/fiction. Both are excellent sites.

Advice from **Snopes.com** very important!

1. Any time you see an email that says,
"Forward this on to '10' (or however many) of your friends";
"Sign this petition, or you'll get bad luck/good luck";
"You'll see something funny on your screen after you send it"; or whatever,

it almost always has an email tracker program attached that tracks the cookies and emails of those people you forward to.

The host sender is getting a copy each time it gets forwarded and then is able to get lists of 'active' email addresses to use in **SPAM emails**, or sell to other spammers.

Even when you get emails that demand you send the email on if you're not ashamed of God/Jesus ...that's email tracking and they're playing on your conscience. These people don't care how they get your email addresses - just as long as they get them.

2. Also, emails that talk about a missing child or a child with an incurable disease - "how would you feel if that was your child?"
...**Email Tracking!!!** Ignore them and don't participate!

Almost all emails that ask you to add your name and forward on to others are similar to that mass letter years ago that asked people to send business cards to the little kid in Florida who wanted to break the Guinness Book of Records for the most cards. All it was, and all any of this type of email is, is a way to get names and 'cookie' tracking information for telemarketers and spammers - to validate active email accounts for their own profitable purposes.

You can do your friends and family members a **GREAT** favour by sending this information to them; you will be providing a service to your friends, and will be rewarded by not getting thousands of spam emails in the future!

If you have been sending out (FORWARDING) the above kinds of email, now you know why you get so much **SPAM!**

Do yourself a favour and **STOP** adding your name(s) to those types of listings regardless how inviting they might sound, or make you feel **guilty** if you don't!

It's all about getting email addresses - nothing more! You may think you are supporting a GREAT cause, but you are **NOT!** Instead, **you will be getting tons of junk mail later and very possibly a virus attached!** Plus, you are helping the **spammers get rich!** Let's stop making it easy for them!

Also: **email petitions are NOT acceptable to Government**, or any other organisation - i.e. social security, etc. To be acceptable, petitions must have a signed signature and full address of the person signing the petition, so this is a waste of time and **you're just helping the email trackers.**

You can read the full story here:

<http://www.snopes.com/inboxer/petition/internet.asp>

And here's another take on the subject:

IMPORTANT!! HOW TO FORWARD EMAIL APPROPRIATELY

A friend who is a computer expert received the following directly from a system administrator for a corporate system. It is an excellent message that ABSOLUTELY applies to ALL of us who send emails. Please read the short letter below, even if you're sure you already follow proper procedures.

*"Do you really know how to forward emails?
50% do;
50% DO NOT.*

Do you wonder why you get viruses or junk mail? Do you hate it?

Every time you forward an email there is information left over from the people who got the message before you, namely their email addresses & names. As the messages get forwarded along, the list of addresses builds, and builds, and builds, and all it takes is for some poor sap to get a virus, and his or her computer can send that virus to every email address that has come across his computer.

Or, someone can take all of those addresses and sell them or send junk mail to them in the hopes that you will go to the site and he will make five cents for each hit. That's right, all of that inconvenience over five cents.



TO ALL RE-SENDERS OF EMAILS - CONTINUED...

How do you stop it? Well, there are several easy steps:

- (1) When you forward an email, DELETE all of the other addresses that appear in the body of the message (at the top). That's right, DELETE them. Highlight them and delete them, backspace them, cut them, whatever it is you know how to do. It only takes a second. You MUST click the 'Forward' button first and then you will have full editing capabilities against the body and headers of the message. If you don't click on 'Forward' first, you won't be able to edit the message at all.
- (2) Whenever you send an email to more than one person, do NOT use the To: or Cc: fields for adding email addresses. Always use the BCC: (blind carbon copy) field for listing the email address.

This is the way the people you send to will only see their own email address. If you don't see your BCC: option click on where it says To: and your address list will appear. Highlight the address and choose BCC: and that's it, it's that easy. When you send to BCC: your message will automatically say 'Undisclosed Recipients' in the 'TO:' field of the people who receive it.

- (3) Remove any 'FW:' in the subject line. You can re-name the subject if you wish or even fix spelling.
- (4) ALWAYS hit your Forward button from the actual email you are reading. Ever get those emails that you have to open 10 pages to read the one page with the information on it? By Forwarding from the actual page you wish someone to view, you stop them from having to open many emails just to see what you sent.

- (5) Have you ever got an email that is a petition? It states a position and asks you to add your name and address and to forward it to 10 or 15 people or your entire address book. The email can be forwarded on and on and can collect thousands of names and email addresses.

A FACT: The completed petition is actually worth a couple of bucks to a professional spammer because of the wealth of valid names and email addresses contained therein. If you want to support the petition, send it as your own personal letter to the intended recipient. Your position may carry more weight as a personal letter than a laundry list of names and email address on a petition. (Actually, if you think about it, who's supposed to send the petition in to whatever cause it supports? And don't believe the ones that say that the email is being traced, it just ain't so!)

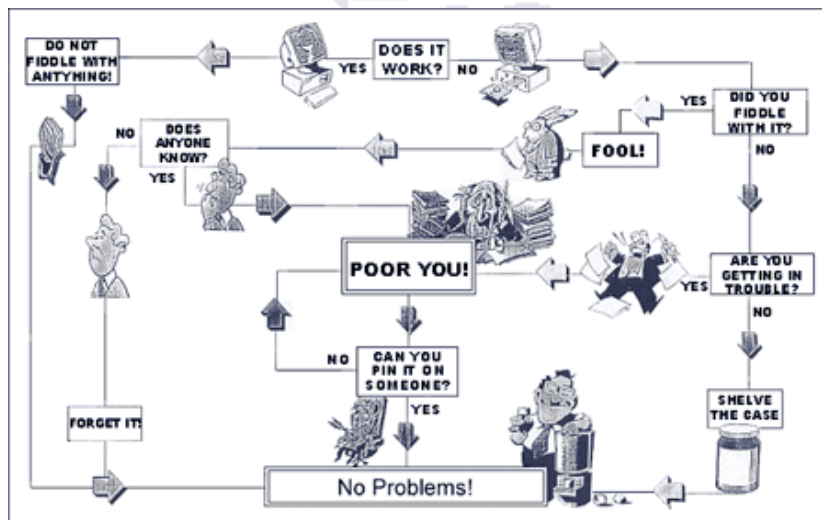
- (6) One of the main ones I hate is the ones that say that something like, 'Send this email to 10 people and you'll see something great run across your screen.' Or, sometimes they'll just tease you by saying something really cute will happen.

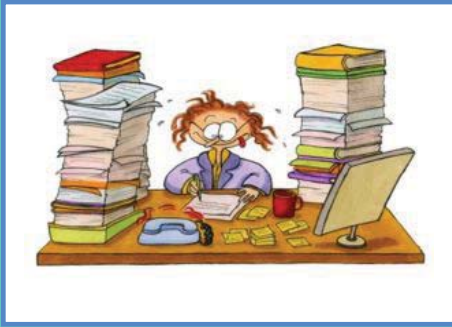
IT AINT GONNA HAPPEN!!!!

(Trust me, I'm still seeing some of the same ones that I waited on 10 years ago!) I don't let the bad luck ones scare me either, they get trashed.

- (7) Before you forward an Amber Alert, or a Virus Alert, or some of the other ones floating around nowadays, check them out before you forward them. Most of them are junk mail that's been circling the net for YEARS! Just about everything you receive in an email that is in question can be checked out at Snopes. Just go to <http://www.snopes.com/>

Its really easy to find out if it's real or not. If it's not, please don't pass it on. So please, in the future, let's stop the junk mail and the viruses.





How Stressed are you?

Help judge how well you are doing -
check for the following stress signs

1. Do you frequently neglect your diet?
2. Do you frequently try to do everything yourself?
3. Do you frequently blow up easily?
4. Do you frequently seek unrealistic goals?
5. Do you frequently fail to see the humour in situations others find funny?
6. Do you frequently get easily irritated?
7. Do you frequently make a "big deal" of everything?
8. Do you frequently complain that you are disorganised?
9. Do you frequently keep everything inside?
10. Do you frequently neglect exercise?
11. Do you frequently have few supportive relationships?
12. Do you frequently get too little rest?
13. Do you frequently get angry when you are kept waiting?
14. Do you frequently ignore stress symptoms?
15. Do you frequently put things off until later?
16. Do you frequently think there is only one right way to do something?
17. Do you frequently fail to build relaxation into every day?
18. Do you frequently spend a lot of time complaining about the past?
19. Do you frequently race through the day?
20. Do you frequently feel unable to cope with all you have to do?