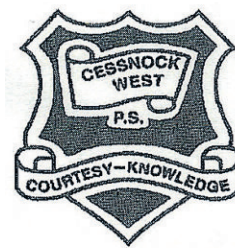


Primary entry #17: Cessnock West Public School



# Cessnock West Chronicle



Moani leaders Ethan Floyd, Nikkita Harris, Jacob Bender and Zackary Morrison.

Picture: Trae Pateman

## Platform for Indigenous youth voices

By **TRAE PATEMAN, DANIEL SHERLOCK** and **LOGAN HALL**

THE first primary Aboriginal Education Team in the Hunter has been established at Cessnock West Public School with the support of the Cessnock Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

The team is comprised of 46 passionate Aboriginal students and is referred to as the Moani group, meaning kangaroo.

Local AECG President Sonia Sharpe said "The Moani group gives Aboriginal students a voice and brings Aboriginal culture into the school. This group can help them help the school develop a better understanding of Aboriginal culture, as the students can then teach the staff, students, community and themselves."

Teacher Miss Blackadder said "It encourages our students to be good mentors for their peers and promotes Aboriginal achievement within our school. For example, year 6 student Ethan who is the team's secretary was awarded the Gulawa scholarship worth \$3000 for outstanding achievement in NAPLAN."

"Additionally, the team's president and vice president Jacob and Nikkita will each give a personal Acknowledgement of Country at the upcoming Primary Principal's Conference on 21st Century Learning."

"Being a part of this group has changed my behaviour for the better because now I am a role model for others," assistant secretary, Zackary Morrison said.

By **JAI GUY** and **CAMERON MARTIN**

IN commemoration of the 100-year anniversary of Anzac Day, Cessnock West Public School officially unveiled their new Reflection and Memorial Garden on April 30, 2015.

"The garden will be a reminder to all students, parents, and the wider community to remember, honour, and reflect on the sacrifices made by men and women who bravely fought in the war," Ann Barry, assistant principal at Cessnock West Public said.

"It will also be a place for contemplation and a waiting place for the parents and community."

The garden features a raised garden bed, containing a lone pine, Gallipoli rose, rosemary and other Australian natives, and four sandstone benches, a remembrance book and a pedestal crafted by local Aboriginal artist Adam Drylie.

"In the pedestal supporting the book and plaque, we have placed a capsule containing the names of all the Hunter men and women who served in WWI," Ms Barry said.

To assist with the cost, the school received a \$3715 contribution from the Australian Government's Anzac Centenary Local Grants Program.

This program "assists and encourages communities across Australia to undertake their own

Anzac Centenary projects that commemorate the service and sacrifice of Australian Servicemen and Women in the First World War."

Surrounded by a sea of students at the ceremony, were special guests councillor Bob Pynsent, Mayor of Cessnock, Christine Boyd, representing MP Joel Fitzgibbon, Max Lewis, Cessnock RSL sub-branch president, and his son Chris Lewis, a member of the army.

Cr Pynsent said the plaque placed on the remembrance book will "ensure the [Anzac] legacy is continued for many years to come."

"The spirit of the Anzacs serves to emphasise how we are to live in this great country, Australia, and remind us privileged that we enjoy this because of the sacrifices made by so many of our ancestors," he said.

"The garden will also have a special place in the heart of many children in the school who each laid a poppy to signify their respect for our fallen soldiers," Ms Barry said.

Special guests pay their respects at the official unveiling of the Reflection and Memorial Garden at Cessnock West Public School.

Picture: Jai Guy



Mrs Barry surrounded by students at Cessnock West Public School.

Picture: Demi Dalton

## Milestone for Cessnock teacher

By **DEMI DALTON, ETHAN FLOYD, NIKKITA HARRIS** and **JACÉ PARKINSON**

ANN Barry, assistant principal at Cessnock West Public School, is celebrating her 50th year of teaching at this school. This is a significant milestone and Mrs Barry is proud to have reached it.

Mrs Barry has been the go-to person for the teachers and principals for many years. "When I started in

2012, Mrs Barry was a great help, her knowledge of the school and community was and still is a valuable asset to me," current principal, Ruth McGlashan said.

Xarah Donovan, one of Mrs Barry's 2015 students, loves how Mrs Barry teaches.

"I love it when Mrs Barry

reads us stories. We also do Friday Food and Friday Funday," Xarah said.

Mrs Barry says she has many memories of the students that will never leave her.

Staff have been putting their heads together to come up with ways to commemorate this event, but are keeping it a secret because Mrs Barry is modest. "A smile is enough" she said.



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