

The school that is slip, sliding away

EDITORIAL

By **BRONTE SHARMAN**

ST Joseph's School Charlestown was built in 1975 in a bushland setting on a steep, sloping site. At the bottom of the school grounds is Flaggy Creek, which flows directly into Glenrock Lagoon.

Over time, the school has experienced storm water run-off issues, resulting in severe soil erosion undermining the asphalt and concrete. This has presented safety issues, as well as ongoing and costly maintenance, to remove the top layer soil deposits from the unwanted areas within the school grounds.

In addition, the lack of capacity in stormwater drainage at St Joseph's has allowed water run-off to flood the bottom oval, and the cricket nets are unable to be used at times. Clean-ups are ongoing.

Due to its environmental value, protection from the soil deposits being dumped into the creek is very important. Land care projects officer John Hughson from Lake Macquarie City Council has been called in to address the most cost effective strategy to assist with erosion and stormwater run-off.

His recommendation was to construct a series of "berms" (large soil mounds) to slow the flow of water to drop out on the mound, providing useful, rich, top soil for future planting. This would prevent the sediment being deposited in unwanted areas. The "berms" will require specialised engineering design as to shape, size and location, as well as a donation of large quantities of soil and earthmoving equipment. As well as this, a large volunteer workforce is needed.

Mr Hughson advised that the council is able to supply plants free of charge and some equipment and tools, if needed.

However, no earthmoving equipment is available. The council has always been supportive of schools in our region, but the school needs as much help as it can get with this matter. The school consists of many tiers with the playgrounds on the lower level.

If there is a lot of wet weather, the playgrounds are not able to be used by students. Much needs to be done so that St Joseph's stops slip, sliding away into Flaggy Creek.

The school needs assistance, because as much as it tries, it is very difficult to manage.

More help is definitely needed to stop this serious problem.



Cartoon: Riley Kirkaldy



SUCCESS: Artist Trisha Fitzpatrick with granddaughters Mia and Lucy Bartley.
Picture: Brooklyn Edwards

Artist shines in New York

By **EVIE LOGUE** and **GRACE HUTLEY**

TRISHA Fitzpatrick began painting in 1994. She has her own studio/gallery at Blueys Beach, where she now resides, after moving from her home in Maitland.

In December 2001, her work entitled *Flowers in Spring* was published in the *Australian Artist Magazine* for being a finalist in the still life challenge. From this award, she was asked to write "How did you paint that?", which featured a painting entitled *Sydney Harbour Illuminated*.

Then in the 2010 edition, Trisha was asked to do an eight-page spread on her art work and technique, titled "Painting the Spirit of the Sea."

On her visit to St Joseph's, she said: "I love to experiment, having the blank canvas and just creating from the mind." She loves to paint abstract and push the boundaries.

Eighty per cent of Trisha's work has been commissioned from all over the world so she doesn't do many exhibitions. However, she recently held an exhibition in the Agora Gallery, in the heart of the Chelsea art district, in New York.

The exhibition was called *Out From Down Under and Beyond: Fine Art From Australia and Beyond*. Trisha sold some of her best work at the exhibition, though she brought one along to show the students.

Red threads help jump for hearts

By **ESTHER BARTLEY**

ON June 19, St Joseph's raised \$1183 for the Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal. The day also included Jump Rope for Heart activities, where the students were sponsored to raise money for children and adults with heart problems. Students came to school dressed in red and made a gold coin donation.

The day started off with stalls in the playground, such as face painting, guessing competitions and iced biscuits on sale.

After this all students went into skipping groups and did different tricks. They rotated around stations, experiencing a variety of exercises.

Later in the day a fashion show was held. The best dressed were chosen by the school councillors. They paraded on the stage in their outfits, as the councillors described what they were wearing to the audience.

A raffle was held and first prize was a Razor scooter, followed by second and third prizes of \$100 vouchers to the Athlete's Foot.

Lastly, there was a skipping talent show, where groups of children showcased their best skipping tricks, including double dutch.

The councillors worked very hard to organise the day's events and it all paid off, with a healthy and entertaining day. Lots of money was raised for two very worthwhile causes.

A balanced diet can help you get healthy

By **MADDIE WILSON** and **JADE CALLAGHAN**

CRUNCH and Sip was relaunched at St Joseph's on May 22. This was to promote healthy eating and more water drinking.

Everyone came dressed in the colour of their favourite fruit or vegetable. The students were notified that a very special guest was coming from *Sesame Street* to help with the relaunch.

The day started off with a healthy food rap performance, followed by a water

skit and then a dance with the year 6 girls and the Cookie Monster, who gave up cookies for the day.

Afterwards, year 6 students took themselves and their kindergarten buddies around the school with fruit and vegetable platters. Everyone tried something different from what they normally eat.

The children also visited some websites to learn about healthy food.

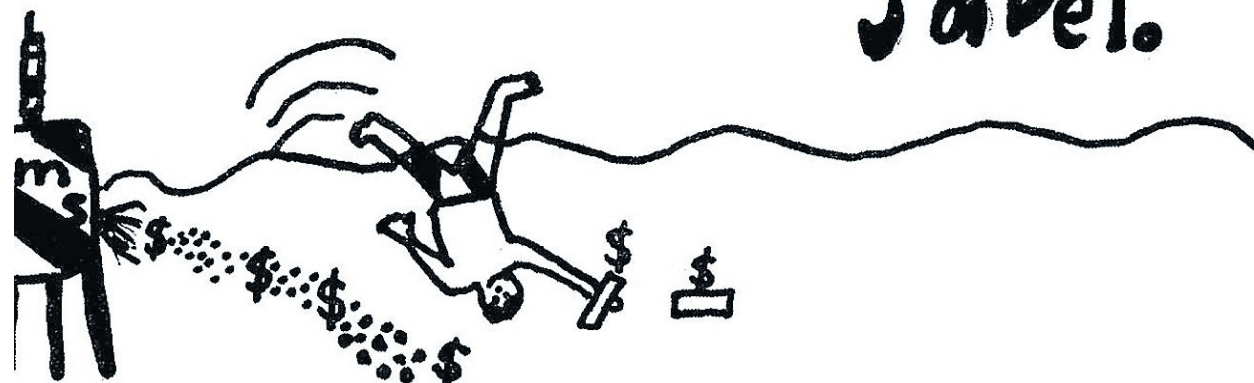
By the end of the day, everyone learnt something about eating correctly and staying fit and healthy.



CRUNCH AND SIP: Children sampling a fruit and veggie platter.
Picture: Brooklyn Edwards

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