

Primary entry # 51: Wirreanda Public School



Wirreanda Whispers



PREP: The 2013 team with teachers Grant Lewis and Erin O'Brien. Picture: Jade Keher

Bright minds create a top performance

By JADE KEHER, SKYE MOORE and JACOBUS VIVIER

ON August 25, primary and secondary teams from around the Hunter Region competed in the Tournament of the Minds Competition held at the University of Newcastle.

Tournament of the Minds is a problem-solving program open to primary and secondary students. Teams are required to solve open-ended problems on four topics: applied technology, language and literature, maths and engineering, and social sciences, within a six-week time frame.

Wirreanda School has been extremely successful in this prestigious competition. In 2011 and 2012 the language and literature team came first and the social science team received honours in 2012.

The 2013 team of seven enthusiastic students had the task of creating a picture book using known characters and telling the story through dialogue and movement.

They chose to write an Aboriginal Dreamtime story, including Katniss from *The Hunger Games* and Fox from *Sly Mr Fox*. The plot revolved around the theme of deception and the Aboriginal tribe needing to relocate to survive.

The team performance was awarded second place in the Newcastle region. Erin O'Brien, the team's facilitator, said, "The children's teamwork and commitment to the project enabled them to achieve a performance that they can be very proud of."

By CHARLOTTE KUSZELYK and DWAYNE DARGIN

WIRREANDA Public School, in collaboration with Irrawang High School, were guided by contemporary artist Sophie Mills in creating a large, artistic mural.

The mural, titled "Our Scape", aims to represent the cultural significance of the local community and portray the Raymond Terrace and Medowie region.

This project is a first for the award-winning artist and a task that no school has undertaken before. Sophie has a rich knowledge from years of experience. The assignment combined the artistic talents of 10 primary and five senior high school students.

All students involved said initially they were extremely nervous, however, throughout the project Sophie taught each of them skills and techniques in both painting and drawing, increasing their creativity and confidence.

Karen Rowan, the supervising teacher of the project, said "It was a great experience for the children to work with a professional artist.



Sophie taught every student that it was OK to make a mistake. The best part was that every child was very committed during the process, and it was a major success."

The mural was officially opened to the school community and public on August 1 in a ceremony with student artists, Sophie Mills, and principals of Wirreanda and Irrawang schools present.

The project is displayed on a

wall of a classroom in the centre of Wirreanda School and has become a talking point among school students and parents alike.

Another visiting artist working with Wirreanda students is Dion Larrigo. Dion has been sharing his knowledge and educating students about his Aboriginal heritage through cultural paintings and storytelling.

Indigenous students at Wirreanda

have participated and assisted in the completion of five Aboriginal totem poles. The poles symbolise a meeting place, and the paintings represent the Newcastle area.

Through the exploration of indigenous art, the students have learnt more about their indigenous background and transferred this knowledge onto the totem poles which have been placed in a prominent position in the playground.

EXPRESSION: The creativity of students on display at Wirreanda Public School include the new mural and the totem poles.

Picture: Charlotte Kuszelyk



ON TRACK: The message of peace being spread at Wirreanda Public School. Picture: Sarah Maidorn

Peace can run across all nations

By SARAH MAIDORN

ON August 7, nine peace runners and the mayor of Port Stephens, Bruce McKenzie, visited Wirreanda Public School to discuss peace with the students.

The runners were taking part in the Sri Chinmoy Oneness Home Peace Run – a global relay that seeks to promote international friendship and understand-

ing. Since its inception in 1987, the run has traversed over 100 nations.

Formerly known as the World Harmony Run, the run does not seek to raise money or highlight any political cause, but simply strives to create goodwill among peoples of all nations.

The peace runners are running around Australia for three months, spreading their message through songs,

dance, and sharing their international backgrounds.

At the end of the presentation, the children formed a large circle and passed a torch from one child to another to express their hopes and dreams for a better, brighter future. As the torch was passed, individuals made a wish to be carried from continent to continent through the motto "peace starts with me".



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