



# KOROWAL SCHOOL

## Newsletter



Opening ceremony choir singing "If We Only Have Love"

*If we only have love, then tomorrow will dawn  
and the days of our years will rise on that morn.  
If we only have love to embrace without fear,  
We will kiss with our eyes, we will sleep without tears"*

## CALENDAR

When	Where	What
Wed 21 - Thurs 22 March		Year 7 camp
Thurs 22 March 6.30 pm	Hall	Pathways drama students' <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
Friday 23 March 6.30 pm	Hall	Pathways drama students' <i>Midsummer Night's Dream</i>
Wed 28 - Fri 30 March		HSC preliminary examinations
Wed 28 - Fri 30 March		Year 8 outdoor education camp
Wed 4th April		KSC meeting
Thurs 5th April		Last day term 1
Mon 9 April		Italy tour departure
Mon 23 April		First day term 2
Wed 25 April		Anzac Day public holiday

## Opening Ceremony

Many thanks to everyone who helped to make our opening ceremony such a sparkling celebration. We now officially have a home!

Aunty Carol conducted the **Welcome to Country** and made a touching speech commenting on what a warm and welcoming feeling our school has. She thinks that our children are extremely lucky and would like to come back to school at Korowal herself.

**Senator Doug Cameron** received enthusiastic applause for his passionate speech in which he linked Korowal's human-centred principles to the government's motivations in funding the BER program. He argued that there is no point in having a budget surplus if it cannot be used for human-centred purposes - for the good of the community and the future of education.

Our group of singers and instrumentalists performed a rendition of **"If We Only Have Love"** that touched everyone's heart strings.

A sumptuous morning tea for over 200 people was prepared and served in typical Korowal-friendly fashion. Thank you to everyone involved.

An audience in the hall was treated to music and dance from the Korowal Studios and high school students.

Visitors toured the school and were suitably impressed.

Here is the text of speeches by Mark Thomas and Rosemary Dillon.

### **Korowal School Opening Ceremony address**

**Mark Thomas**  
**School Coordinator**

Firstly we acknowledge the traditional owners of this site the Darug people, represented today by Auntie Carol.

We have chosen this day to celebrate a number of very significant events in the life of our school and in doing so we wish to acknowledge the key people and events that have brought us to this occasion.

This Hall, which today Senator Cameron will officially open, was constructed using funding from the Building the Education Revolution program as part of the Commonwealth Government's response to the 2008 Global Financial Crisis. In our school's entire 34 year history we have never had such a wonderful facility and we are greatly appreciative of it

That we were even eligible for this funding was a consequence of events that go back to 2007. In that year we were given notice to leave the premises we had rented in Leura for nearly 30 years.

The quest to find a suitable new home in the Blue Mountains for our school began an amazing five year journey culminating in this event at which I can announce that we feel we have actually found a home where we have the freedom to become the school community that we aspire to be.

At the beginning of that journey, in 2007, we drew the community together to outline our plans to find a new home. In effect the School Council and the executive asked our staff and our families to trust and support us to make our plans a reality. It was the overwhelmingly positive response from our community that sustained the entire journey. We all knew that we had a school that was worthy of the effort required.

As you will all appreciate, there were not many site options available in the Blue Mountains suitable for a school. It was most fortuitous that this remarkable site was for sale. We are delighted that the then owners of the property, Maurice Cooper and Kerry Mackenzie are here with us now, together with many other people who share a long and special relationship with this property when it was operating as the Hall for Children.

The considerable funds required for the purchase and refurbishment of the buildings were sourced via assistance from the Association of Independent Schools, the Block Grant Authority, the Commonwealth Government's "School's Pride" program, the Short Term Emergency Assistance scheme and our own fund-raising efforts.

This site, which is subject to Heritage controls, required the approval of the Blue Mountains City Council to be used as a school. I wish to express our gratitude to the local Councillors who supported our application, which was approved.

As a consequence of owning our own school site, purchased in late 2008, we became eligible for a range of grants, and most significantly, the BER program. This was strangely serendipitous, or remarkably coincidental, depending on how you like to look at things.

I sometimes think that on any one of dozens of occasions we might have failed to realise our plans, that our school might have ceased to be. We are a secular institution, which probably disallows my suggesting that we have a guardian angel but the question arises – why did we succeed?

My answer is, on the one hand, through sheer will and dogged determination, and on the other hand the acknowledgement that this school is a manifestation of people's passion, creativity and imagination. It is much more than the buildings.

Enough hard working, creative and imaginative people were committed to making sure that this school would continue to exist. Those people were compelling enough to attract the necessary support to make it all happen. I wish here to acknowledge the tireless efforts made by the Korowal School Council, the executive and teaching staff, the parent advisors and working teams, the students, ex-students and their families.

Since we have been here, each year our enrolments have increased, our waiting lists for future years have grown longer. This tells me that our journey and success has attracted a lot of attention.

The successful relocation made it clear that Korowal has a strong community, a community that embodies its values and as our achievements have been acknowledged we are discovering a new sense of self identity.

A significant difference that our new school hall has made has been to enable us to fulfil a long held vision – the opening of the Korowal Studios. Through this program specialist teachers are able to use our premises to provide a wide range of classes - not only for our students, but for the local community too. Most of the current teachers are parents of children in our school and continue to work as we do, to allow children to take the time they need to develop their skills. They are passionate practitioners, and we thank them for their contribution to the evolving potential of Korowal. We look forward to seeing some performances from these people later today.

In the world of school education in Australia, with such phenomenal attention being paid to the role and function of schools in sustaining our economic and cultural futures, we know we have a voice, we have a model of education that works for our families and students, and for our nation. Where once we kept our story to ourselves we now feel compelled to get involved, to share our experiences and practices with others, to see if we can influence the debate about the future of education in our country, because we are confident that we have something to offer.

We are aware also that we are part of a wider Blue Mountains, state and national communities. In the journey of our relocation we have become conscious that without this awareness, without this sense of reciprocation, we would not have received the phenomenal support we needed to succeed.

This site is a remarkable place. As the TR Hall Sanatorium, then the Hall for Children and now Korowal School, its function has been about serving the needs of others. There are many people here today with a significant connection to its history and I acknowledge their presence.

We feel privileged to be the custodians of this very special place and acknowledge the wonderful support of all present and all those people who have ever made a contribution to this school. I proudly declare our school officially open at this site. I hope it flourishes as a safe haven for many generations to come.

### **Speech from Rosemary Dillon, Chair Korowal School Council**

On behalf of the Korowal School Council I would like to extend a very warm welcome to all present today on this auspicious occasion of marking the official opening of our school in its new home. Today we celebrate the fact that after 30 years in leased premises we now own our own school home. Mark has outlined the incredible journey we have taken to get here including the enormous effort, resilience and commitment required from so many – from Teachers, support staff, parents, students, and so many others. But what inspired this unwavering effort, resilience and commitment in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges?

When faced with the uncertainty and hard work of the relocation in 2008, our parents and teachers could have found an easier option and gone to other schools. But they didn't. And we have not only survived but flourished in our new home.

I think it is important that we pause to reflect on why this was so. I think it has much to do with the fact that Korowal is a community where people are connected and feel that they have a place. We are a small school with a big heart. We function as a community – a community in which children, teachers and parents are able to develop strong and meaningful relationships and get to know each other.

I think the effort and commitment was there because Korowal offers something unique. Korowal is a secular school governed by a democratically elected school council comprising equal numbers of parents and teachers. It is administered by a dedicated Executive led by Mark Thomas, and supported and inspired by the talent, energy and wisdom of its staff and students. Education at Korowal is human-centred and sustainable. We value quality over quantity. Korowal is a small, nurturing, integrated school where relationships are paramount and creativity is valued, where students feel known and understood, where the learning culture and the social environment is co-operative not competitive. At Korowal the whole person is valued in a balanced and integrated way. The aim is to develop the full potential of the child. The values of compassion, tolerance, equity, respect, empathy, commitment, resilience and critical thinking are consciously fostered.

Indeed the best way to express what is most valued about our school is in the words of our parents and students. When asked last year to write what they value about Korowal, our high school students wrote:

"You can be yourself and express yourself without being teased'.

"The teachers at this school will work with you until you actually understand the question or concept. This school accepts you for who you are and encourages you to reach your goals. "

"It's a very caring school and no one is left behind."

"It has the highest quality of education, and yet it is so friendly and welcoming ...."

From an ex-student aged 19:"Something I will never be able to repay my parents for is sending me to Korowal..... Although I was oblivious to it then the atmosphere of the school gave me a totally different perspective on life, a huge advantage. The school is so much more than the sum of its parts."

From a parent of a year 5 child:

" At Korowal my son is not lost in a crowd; he's part of a big family.

From a parent of a year 4 child:

"School as it should be. Innovative teachers, small classes, and a warm, caring atmosphere..... A place where learning is fun. ...We feel fortunate to be part of such a wonderful, unique school."

These opinions expressed in the words of our students and parents reinforce what we value most about our school. They reinforce our choice to be a small, human-centred, nurturing, integrated school in a policy environment that increasingly encourages schools to be large, specialised and competitive.

Before concluding, I would also like to acknowledge and touch briefly on the rich history of our school site. It is important we acknowledge the traditional owners of this land as we have done today and we can only wonder at the significance of this site through time for them. Moving to European occupation we know the site was developed as a privately funded sanatorium that offered free treatment to patients with tuberculosis. It was established by a philanthropic trust set up by R T Hall, who himself suffered from tuberculosis. The site was chosen after an extensive search because of its north easterly aspect, pure air and fresh water supply. We appreciate these today. The buildings were designed by George Sydney Jones, famous for championing a distinctly Australian architecture that matched our climate and culture. Regarding the purpose of his architecture on this site he stated:

" The message will be of nature and man, of order and beauty, but all will be simplicity, freedom, confidence and light... so that beauty may flow into the soul like a breeze". I think he would feel that this is being achieved on this site and in these buildings which are Korowal today.

In the 1950's this site became the Hall for Children caring for the needs of many children and young adults with disabilities. Much thanks to Maurice Cooper and Kerry Mackenzie, this site as a school, is once again a place that cares for and nurtures children and young adults. Indeed, it is significant to note as Mark did, the ongoing specialness of this site in continuously being used for caring purposes– as the RT Hall Sanatorium, then the Hall for Children, and now Korowal.

In concluding, I extend the sincere thanks of the Korowal School Council to all those - too many to name- who worked tirelessly and contributed to the successful relocation and rebirthing of Korowal in our new home here in Hazelbrook. Thank you for holding to the vision which is Korowal. Thank you for your support, relentless hard work and contribution in ensuring the realisation of this vision in our new home. Thank you for showing what is possible and what can be achieved when community works together against many odds for a great purpose.

## HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

When preparing for the school's opening ceremony the sun was shining and the students were buzzing about the school. It's marvellous what a difference the sun makes. This was a stark contrast to the earlier part of the week when we constantly became saturated as we moved between classes.

There are many people to thank following on from last Saturday. In particular however, we wish to highlight a few. In leading the cleanup, Year 10 were a powerful force in assisting with the organisational aspects of the opening ceremony. For weeks prior, Kim led many high school and primary students in rehearsals of 'If We Only Have Love'. They then performed a very moving rendition of this during Saturday's ceremony. As the Korowal Studios were launched at this event, Niki and her Indian Dancers led the way while Sofia, Rachel, Kim and Phil, all teachers from the Studios, charmed us with their music and senior students Lulu, Lachlan, Gigi, Micah, Ruby and Jack delighted the gathering with both recognisable tunes and several original compositions.

We also wish to thank the 'class parents' of each year group who coordinated the food and volunteer help. This system appears to be quite efficient. A great deal of thought and care was put into the catering of gluten free and sweet and savoury foods, so thank you to all of you who participated, in whatever capacity, to make this event an occasion to remember. Special thanks to Paula, Amber and Tracy for the seamless coordination on the day.

### Coming up

It continues to be interesting in the high school. Years 7/8 technology made pizza at the Blaxland pizzeria this week; a small group of us are going to see 'Love Never Dies' at the Capitol Theatre this Thursday evening; Year 7 will be going on camp on the 14<sup>th</sup> March, followed by Year 8 on the 28<sup>th</sup> March; Pathways Drama will present a workshop production of 'A Midsummers Night's Dream' on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> March; Pathways exams will be on the 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> March, and Years 9 /10 Drama Electives will perform a workshop showing of 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory' for primary classes in the last weeks of term.

Barb



Mark, Rosemary Dillon and Senator Doug Cameron

### Korowal's Grand Tour.

In the next holidays Kath will be leading a small group of senior students and some family members on an Art and Ancient History study tour to Italy. Our itinerary takes us to Pompeii and Herculanaeum, the cities buried by the eruption of Vesuvius, where we will work with a renowned archaeologist. Then in Rome we take in the ancient world of the Caesars - the Colosseum, the Pantheon, the Rome of Michelangelo - the Sistine Chapel and Vatican, and the Baroque fountains and churches. We visit Assisi on our way to Florence, the birthplace of the Renaissance. We visit the beautiful mosaics of Ravenna on our way to Venice where we have a few days to see San Marco, the Guggenheim museum and the Grand Canal. I'd like to think this is the first of a series of Korowal Grand Tours - perhaps we can take a group every three years or so. The tour is managed by Academy Travel who specialise in small group tailor made travel, with school tours especially designed to complement the syllabuses in History and Visual Arts.  
Kath

Below: Korowal Studios teachers Phil Braithwaite and Rachel Hannan performing with "our" Kim.



## A Midsummer Night's Dream

We have a production of A Midsummer Night's Dream opening next week. There will be two open performances: 6:30pm on Thursday 22nd and Friday 23rd of March.

Pathways Drama have been busily working on this production over the last few weeks. In amongst the many other responsibilities that come with the HSC they have rapidly created an edgy, risky piece of theatre. In fact we are still in a race for the finish line bringing an exciting element of uncertainty to the process.

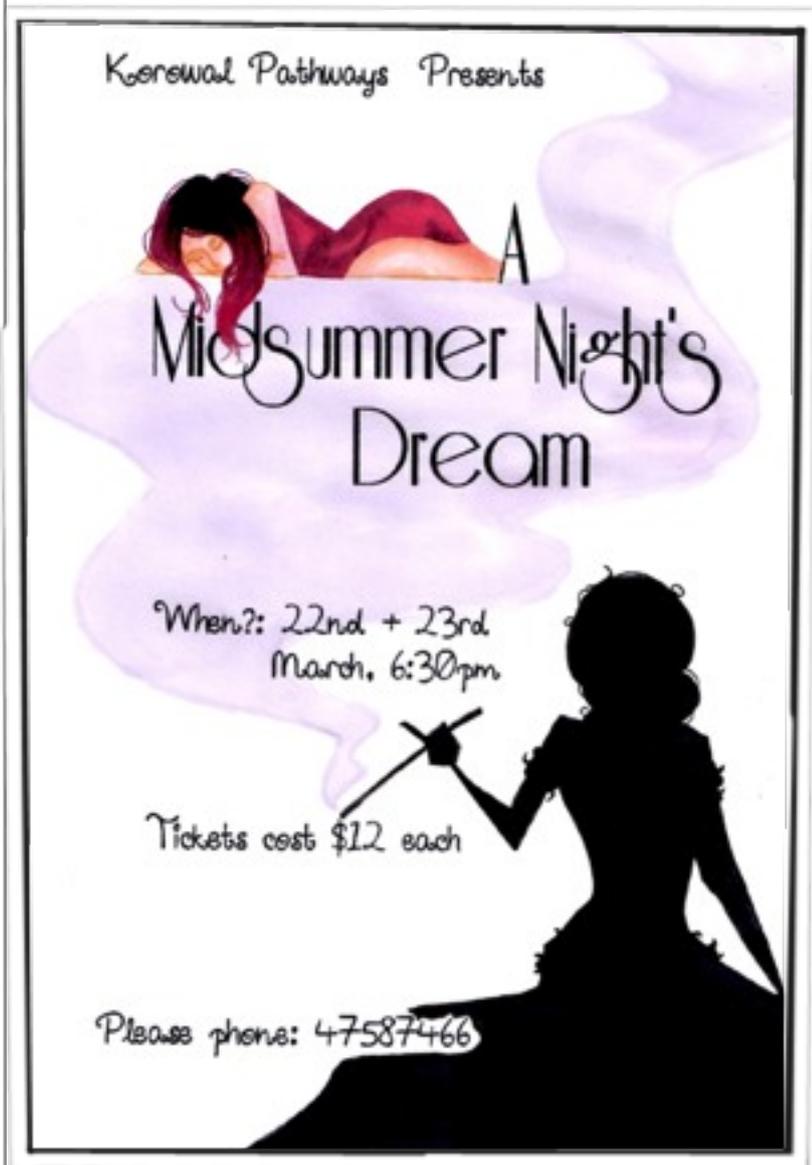
We have incorporated some adult themes into the production. For example, it is insinuated that the magic potions that are pivotal to the plot are drugs. Likewise the inherent sexual tension of the central characters has not been glossed over in the usual innocent way. Therefore we request that audiences are of **High School age and above**. Having warned you of this I would also like to say that these aforementioned elements are not, by any means, overly in your face. If you have any questions regarding this please feel free to call me on 0423 140 211.

All tickets are \$12 and can be purchased over the phone or in person from the office. If there are any left they can be purchased at the door on the night.

We are not using physical tickets for this production. Your name will simply be recorded into the ledger with the appropriate number of tickets next to it.

On behalf of the class, "We hope you can make it!!"

Cairo



## PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Teaching and learning of Language/ Culture in the Primary School

It is with great excitement that we can announce that Louise, our multi-talented student support teacher, will be teaching Japanese to our students next term. Louise has a long association with Japan and will be able to teach written and spoken language and share her knowledge of the cultural aspects of our Asian neighbour. You will be able to read more about this exciting program in our next newsletter.

Louise will continue to work as a student support teacher.

### After school care on Fridays

Did you know that Mountain Kidz OOSH provides after school care on Fridays from 1.20? If you would like to book your child in, or find out more, contact Mountain Kidz on 0401 270 570  
Fax: 02 4758 9980  
Email: [mountainkidz1@gmail.com](mailto:mountainkidz1@gmail.com)  
or talk to Frank from Mountain Kidz on Fridays on the 3/4/5 verandah.  
It is possible to organise care for casual days.

### Parent Teacher Interviews

Please note that following further discussion at our Cluster meeting, we will be postponing these interviews until next term. Please rest assured that if we have any concerns about your child we will contact you.

## Year 5 Poems

The tree is like the finger pointing up to the sky.

By Amy Grieve

Red is like a blazing night  
Red is like blood dripping down a window pane  
Red is like a warm fire on a cold day  
Red is like the lipstick of the princess of a lone island  
Red is like the last apple on earth

By Ari Star

Black is like midnight that never ends,  
Black is like a cat walking down an empty street,  
Black is like the bitterness of licorice,  
Black is like nails going down a blackboard,  
Black is like the inside of a closed box,  
Black is like a leather jacket,  
Black is like the dragon burning the forest to ash.

By Cecilia Hughes

Hideous giant,  
Troublesome doctor,  
Enormous bear,  
Wicked witch,  
Horrible dream,  
Old man,  
Little bat.

By Aidan Lee

Grey  
Storm  
Donkey  
Koala  
Metal  
Lead pencil  
City  
Sword  
Fish  
Harbour bridge  
Chains  
Cement  
The moon

By Ruari Forbes

## From Year 2

Sia-Rose: Bec, our usual science teacher, was away for the week so Nancy took our science lesson which was all about buttons!

Caitlin: We sorted the buttons out into groups. I sorted them with Joel.

James: We had fun sorting out the buttons.

Joachim: I worked with Charlie and we sorted our buttons out into colour. We had blue, black and yellow buttons.

Jakob: I sorted the buttons by colour.

Joel: Our groups were white and fashion.

Scarlett: Henry and I had lots of shiny buttons.

Finn: Zephyr and I sorted our buttons by colour.

Cameron: What we did was put the shiny ones in one pile, the soft ones in a pile and the big ones in another pile.

Henry: It was fun.

Eva: We put our see through ones in a pile and shiny ones in another pile.

Zeb: At the end of the lesson we got to keep one button each.

Nancy: We were doing a lot of talking about similarities and differences. There were lots of ways to sort: shape, size, texture, number of holes, but by far the favourite way to sort was by colour. When we talked about what makes a button a button we could really only think of three things: it helps us fasten things, it helps us get in and out of clothes and it can be used as a decoration. We decided it was a science lesson because scientists have to look closely at things, choose reasons for sorting in a particular way and investigate.

We did have lots of fun!



## Class 3/4/5 camp at Chowder Bay

Something special happened on Thursday and Friday of week 4... the SUN came out and STAYED out!

Lucky for Class 3/4/5 that this happened, because we headed off to Chowder Bay, Sydney for an overnight camp at the beach. We were hosted by Outdoor Education Company Land's Edge in a picturesque lodge right by the water - what a view!

Some of the highlights included:

- rafting on the harbour
- swimming at the beach
- building sand sculptures
- exploring the adventure playground at Clifton Gardens
- guided tour of Sydney Institute of Marine Science
- watching the sunset over Sydney from George's Heights
- exploring the old military tunnels, fortifications and cannons at George's Heights
- torchlight bushwalk

That's quite a lot to cram into two days, so we all returned home happy but looking forward to a restful weekend. A great time was had by all and Class 3/4/5 students are to be congratulated for the fantastic way in which they represented our school during their Sydney adventure.

Kizz



### The Swimming Carnival

by Cooper (class 6)

One Friday, me and the rest of my class went to the swimming carnival at Springwood Aquatic Centre. Most kids came on the bus, but I came in my Mum's car.

When we got there, it was really REALLY fun. There were a bunch of races in the big pool, but I went for a splash about with a few other kids and Helen. My favourite thing to do was to swim along the bottom of the pool and then jumping up at Helen. I loved taking her over to the water buckets and getting her splashed!

# CONNECTIONS



EVERYONE BELONGS

**Harmony Day - 23rd March 2012**  
**Celebrate Australia's diversity**  
*Supporting an inclusive Blue Mountains*

All women are invited.  
Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March from 9.30am to 1.30pm.

Come and learn how to do African beading, learn how to drum, dance with Hands, Heart and Feet, make peace flags or if it all seems a bit too active, come and chat and eat lunch.

Bookings are essential call 4782 5133.  
Blue Mountains Women's Health & Resource Centre  
124 Lurline St, Katoomba



This is a partnership between Blue Mountains Family Support Service & Blue Mountains Women's Health & Resource Centre

## Contextart FORUM April 2012

The Australian Forum for Textile Arts

TAFTA's annual April FORUM will be held in the Blue Mountains at both Korowal School and Springwood High School. The CONTEXTART FORUM takes place from 14-20 April 2012.

Workshops are filling fast.

For information go to

<http://tafta.org.au/website/contextart-forum>