



CREATING OUR FUTURE

Debating SUCCESS

Our year 9 and year 10 debating teams were successful this past week in their debates against Maclean High School. The topics debated were about politics and proved to be very challenging for all teams involved. Congratulations to both of these teams and good luck in your next debate.

Sally Atkins, Debating Coordinator



Great news from the Coffs Harbour Regional Conservatorium on our former THS student, Drew Gilchrist!

Recently, the Coffs Con was thrilled to hear the news of a past student achieving some exceptional results. Drew Gilchrist is a clarinet player who was at the Coffs Con for a number of years before moving to QLD to study his Bachelor of Music under Paul Dean.

Drew was a highly valued member of the Academy, frequently performed with the Coffs Con Youth Orchestra, and found any excuse to collaborate with students and staff on stage. Drew is a Coffs Harbour local and is about to be representing our region on the big stage around the world.

The Con's Executive Director, Pat Brearley, recently interviewed Drew about his journey in the music industry to date, and what is coming up in the near future.



Congratulations on your recent news, Drew! Tell us about your musical journey to date.

I started playing the clarinet when I was 10 years old. I started out playing in school bands and orchestras at Bonville Primary School, Toormina High School and Bishop Druitt College. I joined The Academy at the Coffs Harbour Regional Conservatorium when I was 15 and began lessons with Associate Professor Paul Dean around then as well. In 2019 I moved to Brisbane to complete my Bachelor of Music at the Queensland Conservatorium, Griffith University to continue studying with Paul. Since moving here I've played in various concerts and festivals including and been a guest artist with Ensemble Q and the Southern Cross Soloists. This year I am Playing in the Brisbane and Bangalow Music Festivals and Australian Youth Orchestra seasons. I have now graduated from my degree and I am planning to go overseas to continue my studies.

What inspired you to take up the clarinet?

I remember really wanting to join the band at Bonville Primary School. The only instruments that were available at the time were trumpet, bass guitar and clarinet. I used to ride my bike to school every day so I chose the clarinet because it fit in my backpack and I could keep riding to school. I didn't really know anything about the instrument at the time but I have got to know it pretty well. My reasoning didn't really pay off in the long run as clarinetists are often required to play 2 or more different members of the clarinet family in each rehearsal.

What impact did the Coffs Harbour Regional Conservatorium programs have on your early musical career?

My involvement in The Academy had a huge impact. That exposure to chamber music performance and repertoire was really inspiring and led me to seriously consider music as a career. It was great to regularly spend time with other young people in the Coffs Harbour area who were passionate about music and to receive mentorship from musicians such as Trish Dean (O'Brien) and yourself. I gained so many skills that set me up well for tertiary and professional level music making and opportunities to play in the Bellingen and Coramba Music Festivals and the NSW Regional Youth Orchestra.

Tell us about your upcoming trip and how important it will be in developing your musical career.

I will be moving to Frankfurt, Germany in October to join the International Ensemble Modern Academy (IEMA). It is a one-year Masters program run in partnership with the Musikhochschule Frankfurt specialising in contemporary music performance.

During my year in Germany I will be performing regularly with the academy members under the guidance of members of Ensemble Modern, one of Europe's foremost contemporary music ensembles. It is a big step forward in my career as I will gain valuable performance skills in new music and I can establish myself overseas and build a network with other musicians in Europe.

Any advice for young musicians in regional NSW that want to undertake a similar career path as you?

My advice is take as many performance opportunities as you can. Performance craft and being able to handle nerves in front of an audience is really a learned skill and improves the more you do it. I also recommend for as many camps/programs/youth orchestras as you can even if it seems unrealistic. There are a lot of opportunities out there and even if you are unsuccessful there is a lot to learn from the process of preparing auditions. Make sure you do plenty of practice and listen to your teachers. The most important thing is to have fun and enjoy playing music.

Basketball

Our Girls and Boys Under 15 Basketball teams represented our school at the CHS Knockout Gala Day held in Coffs Harbour on Thursday, August 11. Both teams played their first round against South Grafton High School and won comfortably.

The next round for the girls saw them compete against a strong Coffs Harbour High School team. Although the girls played with determination and strength, they were unlucky not to progress through to the finals.

Congratulations to the following girls for their performance on the day.

Mattie Bloomfield, Amy Dart, Janni Gill, Isla Hewitt, Kaitlyn Holm, Samantha Holm, Flora-bell Mander, Amber Morley, Eryn Sandry and Mickaylah Whitton-Holden

The next round for the boys was against Woolgoolga High School. The boys won this game by 40 points. This put them through to the grand final against Orara High School. The grand final was the boys best game of the day. It was a tight game, with only 1 or 2 points in it, but then the boys pushed through and extended the lead in the final quarter to win by 10 points. The boys have now progressed through to the next round, where they will be playing the school who has won the lower north coast division. The date of this game is yet to be confirmed.

Congratulations to the following boys for their performance on the day and for progressing to the next level.

Liam Foster, Adrian Frankham, Cameron Haig, Cabe Harrison- Wickham, Riley Hudson, Jai O'Connor, Declan Peters, Tane Skinner, Dylan Teale and Zachary Wilson.

Bianca Bilbija and Michelle Wilsmore



Vulnerability, Anxiety and Staying In It....

Lately I have been thinking a lot about vulnerability (thanks Brene' Brown!), as this is something that is key to developing authentic and meaningful relationships, which is something I highly value and deeply admire in others.

But what is vulnerability? To me it is being in a situation where you are exposed – your underbelly is soft and open. This is key to developing authentic relationships. I wonder, how can we be truly connected as parents and partners unless we are safe to expose our underbellies, and our weak spots? I like to think of the image of a tiger, rolling on its back and playing with her cubs, that exposure of her soft underbelly allows the connection. But it raises many questions too - How do we be vulnerable with others? When is it safe to do so? Will it be beneficial or harmful? And what about vulnerability to ourselves?

Like many Australians, I experience anxiety. Not just the I'm a bit worried about XYZ garden variety, but more like the hard core in the grip of intense emotional overwhelm anxiety, I feel like I am sometimes just keeping it together, holding on to "normal outward appearances" by the tips of my fingers! In this anxiety, I experience vulnerability all the time, I feel vulnerable to myself – that is, my own thoughts attack me ("I am not good enough, I'm an embarrassment, I'm unlikeable/unlovable/not worthy" – hello shame!!). Sometimes for me it's just overwhelming the experience of intense emotions, that are somehow enmeshed in these thoughts. They hurt, it's a kind of chronic pain.

I don't want to feel this, it sucks, but I know that trying to numb this might provide some relief, but often creates more problems than it solves. I can't easily change these feelings and experiences, but I can change my relationship to them. I need to allow vulnerability with my anxiety.

To do this, I need to sit with the uncomfortable feelings, not to dwell, and spiral into depths of despair, but rather to allow for a change in my relationship to the experience of anxiety. This may not eliminate the anxiety, but it will make it less distressing to me, I will start to untangle myself from it. One strategy I use is to apply a strategy by Psychologist and Teacher Tara Brach – R.A.I.N. "Recognise, Allow, Investigate and Nurture".

R = Recognise – firstly recognise or label the pain, I feel shame (or just "shame"), I am feeling anger, I am feeling fear. For your Thoughts you might say (or think) "I am having the thought that I am not good enough" or "I am having the thought that I want to avoid any responsibility today...I am having the thought that I shouldn't {or should have} done this or that".

A = Allow – The next step is to gently allow your anxious thoughts and feelings, to even welcome them, or to personify it – "oh here you are again anxiety (or whatever name you want to give it - Beatrice?), nice to see you. I know you're here because you want to protect me. Thank-You for what you bring, and trying to keep me safe, but I've got this". It may just be saying "I allow this to be here".

I – Investigate – The third step is to investigate, that is, notice where you feel the pain/emotions in your body, recognise it, hot cold, hard ,moving, solid soft edges, burning sensations, tense muscles, breathing fast? Or for thoughts, notice where the thoughts arise, are they images, voices, sounds, where do you experience thoughts? Do they come and go? Are they loud, soft, what is the tone (harsh, abrasive, unpleasant)?

N = Nurture – Finally, gently soften around the emotions and sensations that you have investigated. This will allow you to release or relax tension that may be a result of the thoughts/stress. Bring self-compassion into play – you might say to yourself "its ok to feel/think this way, I'm doing the best I can, others feel this way too, I'm not alone" (Self Compassion Researcher Dr Kristin Neff has some excellent resources on using self-compassion in this way).

To have authentic relationships with others, we need to first have an authentic relationship with ourselves. This implies then that we need to allow vulnerability, allow ourselves to feel the things that hurt – the uncertainties, the embarrassments, the things out of our control, or are regretful about. To be able to do this, is to allow vulnerability within one-self (remain exposed), it is not pulling away or numbing the sensations. (Continued on next page)

Vulnerability, Anxiety and Staying In It....continued from previous page

This is an act of courage, often experienced in the face of overwhelming and challenging thoughts and feelings. It is connecting with oneself in an authentic manner that will allow for ultimately connecting with others (and our children) in the same way. Win Win

And remember if things ever do get to the point where it feels too hard, there is real time help and support out there – talk to your GP, get a Mental Health Care Plan (you can access rebated/bulk billed psychology), or go online and check out beyondblue, lifeline, eheadspace, parentline.

Sending the love from the great big universal heart of Compassion and Kindness straight to you on your anxiety journey – Ryan

Ryan Squires, THS Counsellor



Year 6 Visits

Toormina High School student leaders along with the 2023 Year 7 Adviser, Holly Trimble, and Aboriginal Education Officer, Chris McDonald, have been visiting local primary schools. This provides an opportunity to meet the fabulous students who will be joining us soon and for the year 6 students to ask our school representatives questions about high school.

**Rachel Barwick,
Learning Support Teacher**

ACTIVE ARVOS every Wednesday, at school 3:30 - 5:00pm

Active Arvos is a program which aims to enhance student's health and wellbeing through participation in a range of non-competitive, social and sporting activities.

All students are welcome to attend and participate in a range of field, court and fitness based activities. For more information contact PDHPE Teacher, **Kate Williams**.

A permission note is available on link below or see Ms Williams for a paper copy.

<https://forms.gle/PAN2F2wzp3nYGKz7>

HOMEWORK CENTRE

every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, THS Library 3:30 - 5:00pm

The THS Homework Centre is available to students from all years and provides staff to help across all subjects. We post on our school Facebook page each week to promote the specific skills available each week eg. essay writing, goal setting etc. Snacks for our students are also provided.

See **Bridget Kramer** in the HSIE staffroom if you need any further information.

SENIOR STUDENT TUTOR every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,

Teacher, **Ryan Minchinton** is our Senior Student Tutor. Students can access Mr Minchinton across all subjects for additional instruction, assistance with assessment tasks and general support. See Mr Minchinton in the staffroom next to Lab 6 in the Science area.



Training Clinic

Last week, our Exploring Early Childhood students attended the Midwifery Training Clinic at Southern Cross University. Assisting our students was former THS student, Rebecca Walsh!



Plenty of fun with clay in the art rooms! CAPA teacher, Matt Francis, demonstrating the art of the wheel thrown pot!

CONGRATULATIONS GIRLS!



Congratulations to our super athlete, **Casey Cowgill**, year 12, on her selection to the Mid North Coast Bulldogs U17's Girls Ilsa Fioala Cup team. This game will be played in Tuggerah on the 27th of September 2022.

Maya Farmer and **Ella Drewell**, year 11 students, have been asked to speak at the Festival of Women! Great representatives of Toormina High School and public education!

THS Uniform Survey



Last week, students who volunteered to be members of our Uniform Team, met with Principal, Paul Humphrey as they prepared a uniform survey.

EARLY LEAVERS

If your student needs to leave school early, or for a period of time during the school day, please have them drop a note into the office BEFORE school. This will speed up the process and create minimal disruption to classes and students. Thank you for your cooperation.

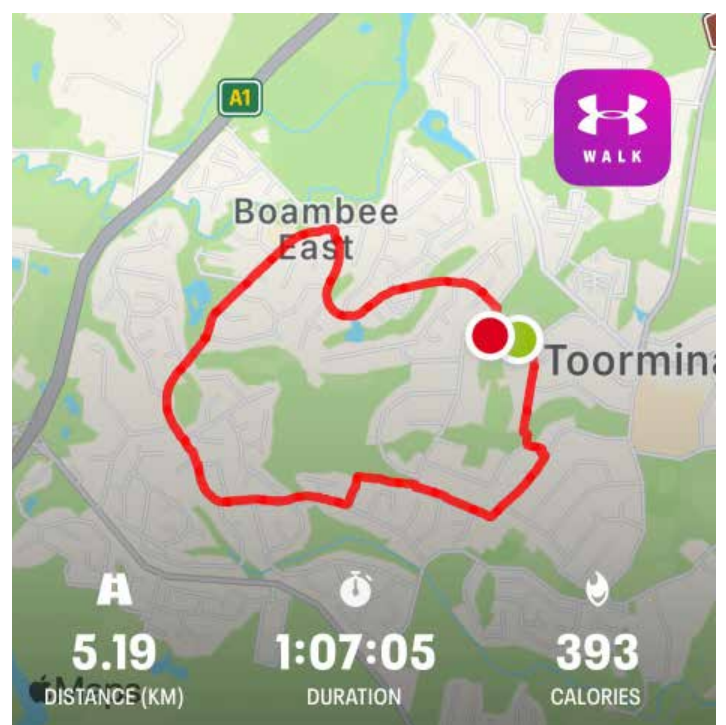
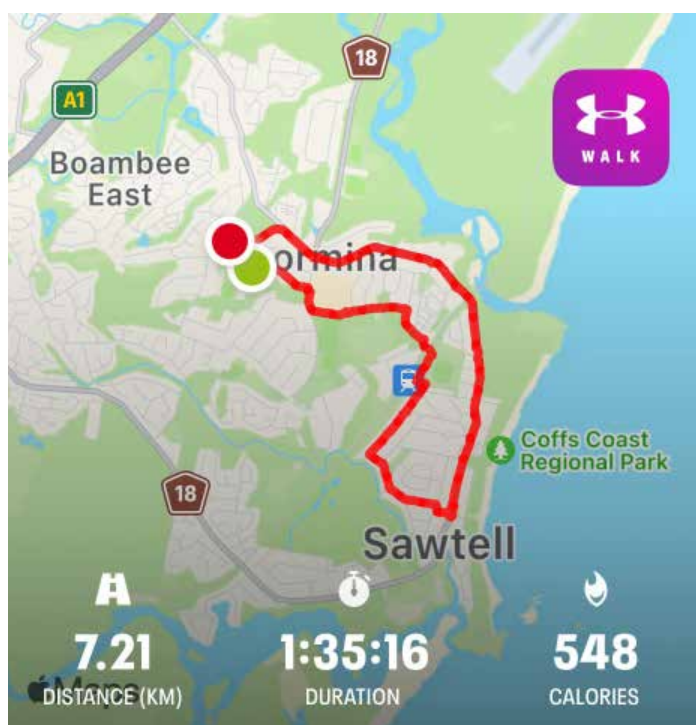
Music, music, music!



Walking Group

The walking group is a new sport this term the walkers have been moving around the local area. We use the 'map my walk' app to track our walk via gps and keep track of our speed. The group love to know the distance they have covered when we return to school. On occasions, we will plan to jump on one of the sport buses and find some new walking tracks to explore.

Mel Sharkey





School Learning Support Officer (and former THS student), Michael Foster, above, is preparing for November!

Last week was SCIENCE WEEK! All the crazy nerds in the THS Science Faculty (photo on right), love an opportunity to celebrate all things Science!

Aunty Penny has had her ceramic work displayed in the new "All Fired Up- our stories in clay" exhibition at Yarrowarra Aboriginal Cultural Central, photo on right.



PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Parent Teacher interviews will be held at school on Tuesday, September 6, 3:30pm to 6:30pm, book through the Sentral Parent Portal from, Monday, August 22.

THS Uniform Shop is OPEN

every MONDAY 8am - 12pm
every THURSDAY 12 - 4pm
Orders can still be placed online and collected after a text notification.

<https://https://daylightsportswear.com/toormina>

Manager Mel, 0468 436 217

IMPORTANT DATES

Fri 26/8	'Write a book in a Day'
Mon 29/8 - 2/9	WEEK A
Mon 29/8 - 2/9	Year 10 Work Experience
Mon 5/9 - 9/9	WEEK B
Tues 6/9	Parent Teacher Interviews
Mon 12/9 - 23/9	Year 11 Examinations
Thurs 22/9	Year 12 Farewell Assembly & Formal

Principal's Column

Last Saturday, we held our year 6 into 7 High Achiever class applicants come in for the afternoon to complete a range of fun assessments as part of the selection process for this highly sought-after class. This was the first time that we had undertaken this process on the weekend, and it proved to be highly successful with parents and students involved providing great positive feedback on the day. Thank you to the staff gave up their time and assisted on Saturday afternoon.

Tomorrow (Friday) we hold our annual Write a Book in a Day program with several Primary school students as well as several teams from Toormina High School involved. One team, a senior group of students who have participated since we commenced in the program, are really looking forward to achieving better than last year's result where they achieved a highly commended award. I am confident that not only will they do well, but all of our students involved will do well and will have a fabulous day. The day starts at 7.30am and finishes at 8.00pm. Thanks to all the amazing staff for their ongoing commitment to this program.

There has been a lot of talk in the media lately about banning mobile phones in high schools. It is very obvious to all teachers, that mobile phones are the number one distraction for students during school hours. Defiance around mobile phones is also one of the largest issues that staff have during the day. We will be reviewing our Yondr (mobile phone case) later this year as it has fallen off a bit since we returned from COVID working from home in 2021.

I have also noticed that some parents are not aware that their child has put a calling number block on their phone to stop the school being able to contact parents. This is extremely dangerous for students as the school will be unable to contact the parent in the event of an emergency. I encourage all parents to check their phones regularly to ensure that this has not occurred.

I held a very exciting Student Uniform Team meeting last week where we met with two potential suppliers to review some samples and develop a student survey. The student survey will be emailed out to students next week. We will now commence the process of developing the tender documents for the Department to identify who will be the uniform supplier so that we can then work directly with this company on the uniform design etc. We will then move to the new uniform at the commencement of 2024. I will be holding another Student Uniform Team meeting early next term and inviting interested parents to attend to review the survey data and further discuss the process.

The Work Health and Safety Team met recently and decided that our next emergency drill will be a Lockdown drill which will be conducted during a recess or lunch break. We are currently identifying our designated Lockdown Rooms and students, parents and staff will be advised of the time and date of the drill prior to the drill occurring. This is because we have not held such a drill in many years. Students and staff need to be aware of our procedures for Lockdown at any time of the day. It is important that parents do not come to the school in the event of a drill or actual Lockdown as this does increase the risk for emergency services that may be involved in the incident.

We opened the bookings for the Parent/Teacher evening on Tuesday 6 September 2022. The link to the booking sheets is through the Sentral Parent portal application. I hope that all parents attend the event and discussing their child with their teachers.

Paul Humphrey, Principal

Congratulations

Breaking News - Another amazing athlete, great sport and wonderful representative of our school, congratulations Asha Lloyd, joint winner of the 2022 Best and Fairest U17 AFL, a well deserved award!



Happy Boxes Project

The students from room 26 and room 25 have been volunteering at the Happy Boxes Project in Toormina as part of their community access and combining this with the integration of mathematics, life skills and work skills. The students work really hard on a variety of tasks such as gardening, creative work with cards and boxes, unpacking pallets of goods and sorting them into the storerooms and gathering goods to put together for the Happy Boxes.

Judith Muldoon Support Teacher



A Happy Box is a collection of toiletries and beauty products put together with care, and sent to an Indigenous woman in a remote community. It may include essential items such as shampoo, soap, deodorant, pads, tampons, and toothpaste or luxury self-care items.

Women in remote communities are going without basic toiletries. Accessibility to simple items like deodorant, shampoo and soap prove challenging when the closest store can be up to 1000km away. Some communities are at the end of 750km of harsh, red dirt roads. Others can be cut off by flood waters for months at a time. Some are only accessible via boat or plane.

<https://www.facebook.com/Happy-Boxes-Project-100552562311773/>

We like to introduce our new staff members to our school community with a short questionnaire...



Name...Bianca Bilbija

THS Position...PDHPE Teacher

The high school I attended was...McCarthy Catholic College, Emu Plains.

On weekends I enjoy...spending time with my family and exploring new destinations.

I love...my family and playing sport; basketball is my favourite.

I don't like...snakes and spiders!

When I was a teenager I wish someone had told me...you can achieve anything you set your mind to.



English Faculty Wallys for Book Week 2022



Children's Book Council of Australia Book Week 2022

THS Library has put together an amazing display in the library to celebrate Book Week 2022.

Author – illustrator Jasmine Seymour, a Dharug woman and primary school teacher, created the theme for this year's Book Week, Dreaming with eyes open. Dreaming with eyes open is about stepping into your own story. It is about looking, listening, and feeling what is around you. Dreaming with eyes open is about noticing all those things you did not notice before. Dreaming with eyes open is about learning from others who have helped you on your way as you travel through your life.

THS acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as being the Nation's First story tellers. Why not take a moment to think about your story and perhaps share it with others.

Adrienne Gillingham, Teacher Librarian

Southern Cross University is hosting Parent Information Evenings to assist parents with their students transition to University studies.

Join us to hear from current students, along with their parents to discuss:

- How to apply
- UAC and QTAC processes
- Scholarships
- Costs of Uni
- Accommodation
- Support Services & more!

Tuesday 6 September, 5pm

Thursday 8 September, 6pm



Year 12 Parent Information Night

Online
5pm Tuesday 6th September or
6pm Thursday 8th September

Transforming
> Tomorrow

Is your child in Year 12 and planning on attending University in the future?
Do you have questions about the process?
We are here to help with your child's transition from High School to University.
No matter what University your child is interested in attending we encourage you to attend our upcoming Parents Information Evening.

- How to apply
- UAC and QTAC processes
- The ATAP
- Scholarships
- Costs of Uni
- Accommodation
- Support Services & More!

Your children are also welcome to attend

Register here:
scu.edu.au/study-at-sc/ah-high-school-student-parent-information-evening/



Southern Cross University Information Session



School-based Apprenticeship and Traineeships

Year 10 career classes learnt about school-based apprenticeship and traineeships (SBAT) this week. Information was provided by RIEP project officer- Sam Palise, local SBAT officer- Donna Kearns, HIA representative- Glen Cassidy, Ms Woodward - Careers Adviser, and Mr Francis- Transition Adviser and current Toormina High School SBAT student at Hungry Jacks - Jacob Smallwood.

Information included: process of securing an opportunity, how to stand out from the pack, benefits of being an SBAT, how it works toward HSC eligibility, industry-specific information and current local SBAT opportunities available in the areas of Business Administration, Glazier, Warehousing Operations and Retail.

Very informative session!

Construction Industry White Card Course

A general construction induction card (commonly known as your White Card) is a mandatory requirement to enter or work on a construction site across Australia.

Last week students at Toormina High School had the opportunity to complete this training program which covers general work health and safety information.