

2020 has been a challenging year but we made it through...

Our Year 12 students learnt flexibility as their final year changed then changed again. The year involved self motivation with school work from home. Plans for their end of high school celebrations were uncertain for most of the year, however, this cohort are fine young adults and great representatives of our school and public education.





In 2020 Toormina High School turned 40 years old! As we were unable to hold an Open Day and invite former students back to school we shared as many photos as we could find from the past 40 years on the school Facebook page.







Year 7 students had a different start to high school in 2020. Luckily we were able to hold our Bonding Day at Boambee Bay at the start of the year!

# 2020



## We asked some of our students to reflect on their experience of 2020.

Year 7

In 2020 I learnt -

- ...that high school is important.
- ...how to play the drums and I learnt lots of maths.
- ...that anything could happen in a little period of time.
- ...how to cooperate with new people and how to handle being in quarantine.
- ...that it is really boring when you don't go to school
- ...that working from home was good and bad.
- ...that I did not do well in quarantine.
- ...that you have to put yourself first.
- ...that nurses are more important than anyone thought.
- ...how to be a goalkeeper.
- ...that friendship is important.
- ...home schooling isn't as great as it seems.
- ...I'm not as strong or powerful as I thought I was. I also learnt I'm not in control of the things in my life.
- ...what a prime number is.
- ...how to deal with a global pandemic and how boring lockdown is.
- ...that working at school is better than working from home.
- ...to stick up for myself.
- ...that being in a pandemic is rough and working from school is better than working from home.
- ...that things can always get worse.
- ...that although online learning sounds fun and easy it is not.
- ...in the worst of times the best of people come out.
- ...that high school is harder than it looks but there is always someone there to help you and even when you are stuck in quarantine your teachers, friends and family are always there to help you.
- ...that a lot of people can be really fake.
- ...that school is good.
- ...that Covid 19 sucks.
- ...that hanging out with kids a year above or below doesn't matter and is just as fun if not more than hanging out with your own year.
- ...that life gets boring without school.



In 2020 we ALL learnt:  
to Zoom, Google Classroom and how to join Microsoft Teams.  
We learnt about 'social distancing', how to wash our hands properly, to wipe surfaces often, about Personal Protection Equipment and we also learnt a lot about each other's pets! We used the terms 'lockdown' and 'isolation', but we also learnt what we value.



### YEAR 8 students

In 2020 I learnt...

- ...that not everyone has a permanent place in your life.
- ...how important life is and that you should love everyone/yourself.
- ...to cherish all my relationships.
- ...that without nurses and doctors there would be viruses and diseases everywhere.
- ...how important it is to love yourself for who you are and to appreciate all the stuff you have and all the loved ones that surround you.
- ...that everyone can get stressed and have rough days.
- ...that there is always someone there for you no matter what happens.
- ...that friendships can last as long as you want, only if you are kind.
- ...that the world needs better government.
- ...no matter how serious everything is, don't give up on things even if they are hard.
- ...I learnt to crochet.
- ...that the Covid test hurt a lot.
- ...to be grateful for the little things and opportunities we are offered.

# 2020



This is Wilson. He is now working from home 😊



### Year 9

In 2020 I learnt...

- ...that real friends don't have to see each other all the time
- ...how much the world relies on toilet paper.
- ...that Covid-19 is no match for our resilience and willingness to learn!
- ...that Donald Trump is a sore loser.
- ...that you only live once, do what makes you happy.
- ...to not take my freedoms (going places, parties, hanging out with friends) for granted!







In 2020, THS School Captain, Ellena Cheers-Flavell, was presented with the Youth of the Year for Coffs Harbour 2020 and the Zonta Young Woman in Public Affairs 2020!



Hayden O'Rourke received an ABCN Foundation Scholarship worth \$7,000 and Ryan Gilchrist won the Regional Lions Youth of the Year.

We had eleven students participate in the Southern Cross University Head-Start program, this year with the added challenge of completing their study online.

Our Student Leadership Team, in the photo below, has representatives from across the school and they are all very enthusiastic about implementing their plans in 2021.





Toormina High School students joined with primary students from our Bongil Bongil Community of Schools to participate in, 'Write a Book in a Day' and for Marine Studies enabling primary age students to familiarise themselves with high school activities. Public education building communities!



in 2020, staff and students at Toormina High School wore purple to raise awareness of LGBTQI+ issues, bandanas for Canteen, raised money for the Heart Foundation on Valentines Day and wore crazy hair for the Leukaemia Foundation.







In a disrupted year Toormina High School still ran a Peer Tutoring program with year 9 and 7 students participating and the Love Bites workshops which explore the issues around relationships.

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This year our music tuition with the Coffs Harbour Conservatorium tutors continued and fortunately our debating teams could still argue their case via video conferencing.

TomorrowMan and TomorrowWoman ran valuable workshops in our school. The Fit for Life program continued at the PCYC which involves exercise before school while providing support and education for students.



We ran a girls group, a boys group, and Rock and Water. At lunchtimes we had sport, a reading group, a LGBTQI+ group, a coding group, an Amnesty 'Write for Rights' team and a Grl Tribe.



### Toormina High School would like to thank...

- Oz Harvest for their ongoing support of our healthy lunch program by delivering fruit and snacks every week to our Wellbeing Team.
- Local businesses for providing work experience placements.
- Our youth workers, Penny and Cameron for their ongoing support of our students through 2020.
- Our families, staff, students for embracing so many changes during Covid-19!







During 2020 dedicated staff offered support to our Aboriginal students; Aboriginal Education Officer Aunty Gloria Mercy; a Deputy Principal Aboriginal Education, Melanie Murray, Language Teacher; Penny Grace; dance instructor and School Learning Support Officer, Darryl Lockwood.

# 2020

In 2020 our Dancing Groups have developed and excelled. Our NAIDOC celebrations, with our new gnyah, involved the whole school and were fantastic.

Gumbaynggirr is our LOTE subject and also an elective in Year 9 now. SistaSpeak and BroSpeak continued at school this year and our students attended two leadership camps, a Bangarra Dance Workshop and we hosted First Nation guest speakers from Dakota.

A Street Art workshop for high potential students was a great success at Open Studio in Coffs Harbour.

In 2021 we will add a Junior AECG and hold community Yarn Ups. Our staff have worked to provide knowledge, support and encouragement to our students to value culture and education.







In a very disrupted year for sport our students still got to participate in school swimming and athletics carnivals. To encourage physical activity the PDHPE Faculty ran various sports at lunchtime.

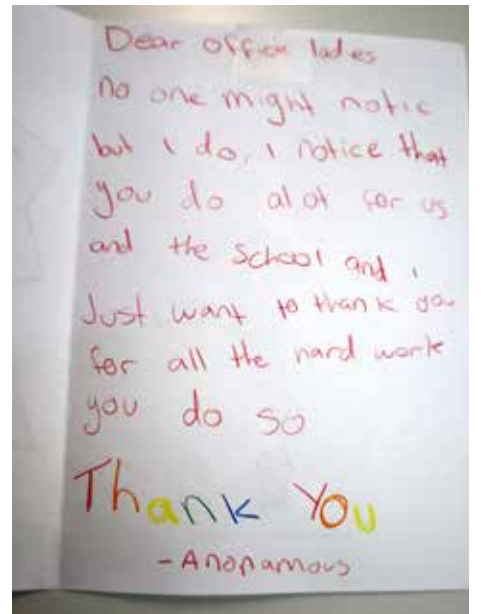


Students were still able to attend TAFE Taster lessons, work experience and complete a White Card Construction industry course.





Another innovation at Toormina High School in 2020 was the introduction of the Yondr mobile phone pouch. Students lock their phones in the pouch during the day reducing phone use at school.







The Fast Forward Readers program was introduced in 2020 in the THS Support Unit, this has been successfully implemented in every class, every day. Due to Covid-19, the Coffee Shop has transformed to Cafe U which has

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continued developing hospitality work skills in our students. Food Technology classes have incorporated the Indigenous Edible Garden with 'garden to plate' recipes while also providing opportunities for learning about growing our own food. Our Bunnings team has relocated their work program to a set of regular jobs integrated around the school. We look forward to another great year in 2021.





In 2020 I learnt -

- ...not to take anything for granted, for example, being able to jump on a plane and visit family overseas! I have always treasured and appreciated the time we get to have with family, but 2020 made me appreciate the good times even more.
- ...It is what it is, it was what it was and it will be what it will be :)
- ...that some things we can't control, that we are more adaptable than we think and that a safe home can mean everything.
- ...to be more patient.
- ...that the best laid plans of Mice and Men often go awry!
- ...life is unpredictable!!! Always be thankful, be kind, be positive.
- ...it's healthy to rest and not feel guilty about it.
- ...that regardless of how much adversity comes our way, teachers are resilient and awesome.
- ...sometimes a crisis in the world can provide some relief from it.
- ...chickpeas are delicious.
- ...to not take for granted the ability to visit family and friends.
- ...that life doesn't always go to plan and that each day and that each day, put one foot in front of the other and find at least one happy moment then we can take any challenge the universe sends our way!
- ...how expensive it is to cover grey hair, Merry Christmas.
- ...how well gardens grow with a little attention: how much I need other people (and not on a computer screen).
- ...how fast grey hair can grow!
- ...how hard it is to get into a hairdresser!
- ...that humans really do need humans. And humans that struggle with that realisation made 2020 harder than it probably had to be.
- ...how quickly what we take for granted can change! That humans can live without lots of things but they place a high priority on toilet paper. That if you are going to be stuck somewhere in a worldwide pandemic our little part of the world may possibly be the best spot!





What an incredible year 2020 has been for us all. We could never have imagined that our students would work from home for over eight weeks, utilising the support of parents and teachers in a combination of face to face and virtual lessons. We learnt new technology, Microsoft Teams, Zoom as well as Google Teams. The challenges faced by students, parents and staff in 2020 in managing learning have demonstrated that we can achieve greatness when we have strong partnerships. I realise that there were hiccups, and that not all students had access to the online learning, however, for the most part our students continued their learning without falling too far behind. Congratulations.

Last week we completed our formal prize giving assemblies with students and staff present and our community linking in via a digital connection. It is hoped that when we start having parents back on school grounds, that some of the great things we have developed and implemented in 2020 will remain. It was fabulous to hear feedback from grandparents that they were able to see their grandchildren at a formal assembly, something that prior to Covid meant for some having to travel long distances.

2020 was also our 40th Anniversary Year with Marcia O'Sullivan spending hours providing photographs on our Facebook Page and school website. Many former students also provided photos for Marcia to put up. There was a great deal of positive feedback from our community about the photos and in the absence of any other celebrations this year, a great way to show the pride we hold in our present and former students.

As we near the end of the school year for 2020, we await the HSC results to be released on 18 December 2020. We are confident that several students will achieve the coveted Band 6 result. We also say farewell to students and families who will not be with us in 2021. Several of our staff will also be leaving us. Mrs Seanine Cooper (Head Teacher Special Education) is headed to a Regional Behaviour Support position; Mrs Jo Taylor (Relieving Head Teacher CAPA) is taking up a new role; Mr Brock Janssen is headed to Muswellbrook High School as Relieving Head Teacher CAPA; Rebecca Lawrence is headed to Nambucca High School for her first full time appointment in a permanent position. Also, we farewell Cherie O'Brien and Daniel Smith, and our PBL Head Teacher, Jo Stewart. I would like to thank these staff for the work they have done while at Toormina High School.

I would like to remind everyone that staff will return to school on Tuesday 27 January 2021 for two staff development days; Years 7, 11 and 12 will return to school on Friday 29 January 2021 and Years 8, 9 and 10 will return to school on Monday 1 February 2021.

At this time I would like to thank all of our students, parents and staff for the incredible year that we have had in 2020 and wish everyone a safe, healthy and happy Christmas and New Year.

**Paul Humphrey, Principal**







We would like to take this opportunity to thank our students, staff and community.

**Education is a team effort!**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

