

Learning Beyond the Classroom

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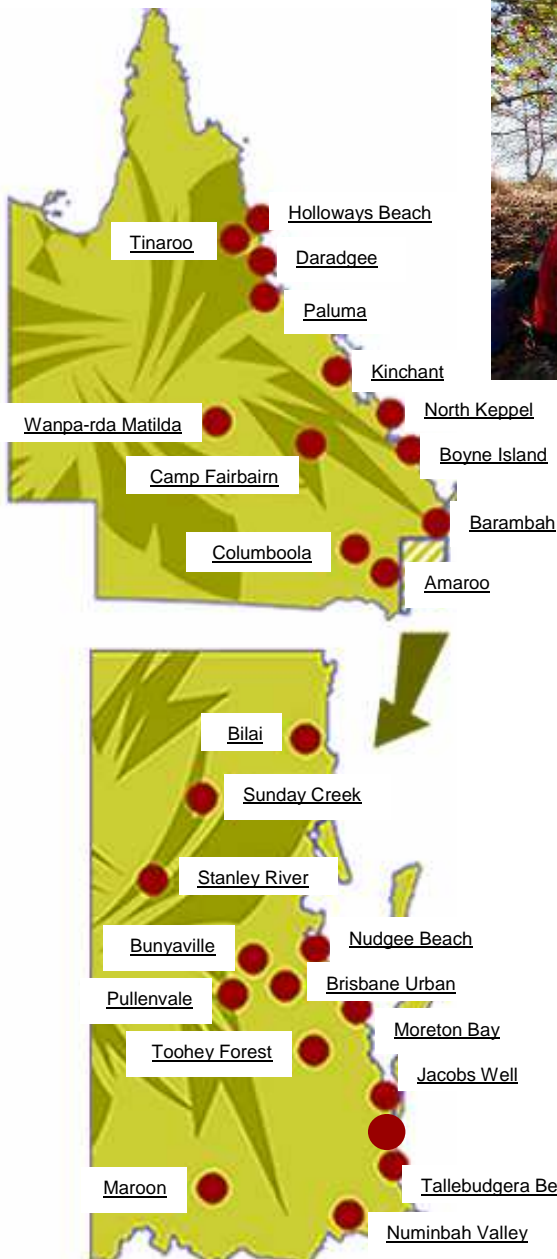
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This Newsletter has been brought to you by staff from:

- Daradgee EEC
- Holloways Beach EEC
- Paluma EEC
- Tinaroo EEC

Partnerships Power Progress



Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre (HBEEC) has been awarded the prestigious “Reef Champions” Award for ‘mentoring and facilitating higher learning’. Presented by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, this award recognizes the Centre’s efforts, knowledge, enthusiasm and resources to showcase Reef Guardian School activities.

HBEEC has a number of programs contributing to the winning of this award. A key component to the success of programs at Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre is the effective use of networking opportunities and partnership building. HBEEC values genuine partnerships where all parties benefit and many of these partnerships have a long history with the Centre.

Successful collaborative relationships have been evident in the Earth Smart Science program with a number of government and non-government agencies committing to assisting the Centre in helping schools reduce their ecological footprint while at the same time achieving their own environmental goals. Cairns Regional Council and Ergon have been particularly supportive of the Centre’s programs and activities. In 2013, the Centre committed to ensuring schools will again be able to access assistance through the implementation of the Cairns Environmentally Sustainable School program with potential new partners requesting to be involved and our regular partners working with us on new operating models. This year, HBEEC will also be targeting state high schools.

The School Leadership program utilizes experts and/or role models to enhance components of the programs particularly goal setting, public speaking and Year 8 transition.

The Indigenous Leaders of Tomorrow Program conjointly delivered by ISSU (Indigenous School Support Unit) and HBEEC brings together Future Senior Indigenous Leaders from all Far North Queensland Schools which has forged strong relationships with the wider indigenous community particularly the Yirrgangdji, the Traditional Custodians of the land in which the Centre is located. This has created a pathway to embed Indigenous Perspectives in all Centre programs.

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With the common goals shared between Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre and Reef Guardian Schools, the Centre location has been an ideal setting to conduct the Future Leaders Eco-Challenge with schools and teachers coming from far and wide to be involved. The Reef Guardian Schools program is seen as an important asset in achieving the Centre's goals with a staff teacher a member of the Reef Guardian Steering Committee to set the direction of the Reef Guardian Schools program.

Over many years, HBEEC has worked closely with Fisheries Queensland in collecting real data around distribution, population and growth of mud crabs. A senior biologist from Fisheries Queensland had the following comment

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regarding Holloways Beach Environmental Centre:

"I have worked professionally with the Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre since 1999. The knowledge, enthusiasm and professionalism shown by the staff has made it easy to collaborate on scientific projects, such as their mud crab tagging project.

I recently had the pleasure of attending a year 5 school camp and observed the projects we'd been working on put into practice. My visit confirmed that the enthusiasm shown towards professional organisations and agencies is carried through to their interaction with students. The staff's knowledge on the biology and ecology in the region is impressive. The teachings are pitched at a high level and the students rise to the challenge of understanding technical concepts and the context in which they are used. I had the pleasure of attending the bird watching, mangrove identification, crabbing, aquarium tour, surf carnival, mud bath experience, problem solving and rogaining. The variety of activities left me exhausted and inspired.

I was so impressed that I would now like to increase my involvement with the Centre and assist with analysis of data collected by the schools. I will also be the first to volunteer at future school camps as an assistant."

Promotion of all the great things happening at and through the Centre through publishing of student articles in the Post-Ed section of the Cairns Post has highlighted the many and varied activities at the Centre as well as providing exciting reading material for The Cairns Post. This partnership has gone from strength to strength even when co-ordinating roles have changed at The Cairns Post. The added benefit of this is the enhancement of school pride of the individual school.

Space does not allow elaboration of all the partners—others include but are not limited to James Cook University, Society for Growing Australian Plants, Cairns Tropical TAFE, Australian Conservation Volunteers, Wet Tropics Management Authority, Barron River Catchment Management Association, and Battery World.

Developing strong partnerships takes time and planning, but has resulted in an increased capacity for Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre to achieve its educational outcomes. **Partnerships power progress** and Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre is proud of the long standing committed partners that have contributed to the successful implementation of the Centre's programs.



Article contributed by:
Louise Carver,
Principal, Holloways Beach EEC



Thanks to our partners for their support.



Tinaroo EEC—Acting Staff Adventures



Hi! I'm Adam Richmond, Acting Principal at Tinaroo Environmental Education Centre (TEEC) for Term 1, 2013.

I arrived at Tinaroo EEC on Tuesday 29 January, replacing the incumbent principal (Peter MacGregor) who is on leave. After a wide-eyed tour of the



grounds and facilities the new acting principal induction began.

Experienced Senior teacher, Darryl Dilger and back-from-retirement Greg Mather led me through the standard operating procedures for TEEC's canoeing, high ropes and abseiling learning activities and took me on visits to TEEC's many learning sites, including Barrabadeen, Platypus Rock, and a trip to assess the suitability of an abseil site at Bushranger's.



I was also a suitable volunteer to test the safety of the High Ropes course and abseiling activities.

Our first week for 2013 was spent reviewing policies and procedures, and on necessary staff training such as child protection & anaphylaxis management.

A valuable two days were spent at Daradgee EEC to develop a common language with the help of Peter McKenna from Maroon Outdoor Education Centre.

The biggest challenges this year will be to maintain our outstanding levels of client satisfaction, and refine our existing assessment processes for students, staff, self, program, and Centre.

TEEC is in the enviable position of being almost fully booked for 2013 - even during NAPLAN week! Already this year, we have assisted Malanda SHS with their Year 12 Leadership program, helped Yungaburra SS Year 7s develop their leadership and teamwork skills and are currently hosting Babinda SHS Year 12 leadership program. This emphasis on the development of leadership skills is not lost on me, as I am able to draw parallels with my own development process as an enthusiastic aspiring Environmental Education principal!

Not every program is about Leadership and personal development. TEEC prides itself as an Environmental Education Centre and integrates a theme of reducing waste, saving water, saving energy or promoting biodiversity into every residential program.

TEEC teaching staff have also continued to support former Earth Smart Science School program participants with the Centre funding a visit to Mount Surprise SS and Forsyth SS to facilitate environmental education field days focusing on water quality and biodiversity. This was a memorable and worthwhile experience for all staff and students involved, and

may well have uncovered some of tomorrow's environmental leaders.

Darryl managed to show his piscatorial prowess with this great *Hephaestus fuliginosus* caught during a 5-minute travel break, on a lure cast from a handline.

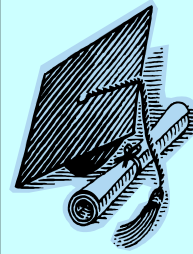


Alas, I haven't managed to land a fish whilst residing near Barramundi heaven but I do have a few more weeks in which to try.

Article contributed by:
Adam Richmond,
Acting Principal,
Tinaroo EEC



Writers & Illustrators Program



Congratulations!

Congratulations must go to David Kopelke who is now **DOCTOR** David Kopelke. Congratulations on completing your Ph.D. and becoming a Doctor of Education.

Left: The 2012 Group with their creations.

In Early Term 4, 2012, the Daradgee Environmental Education Centre once again hosted Elizabeth Honey & Alison Lester along with 45 students from the Far Northern Region as part of our Writers & Illustrators Program.

This program works on extending students nominated by schools in the Specialist area of Children's Literature. This year's project required the students to research humour in literature and write and illustrate a Children's Picture Book aimed at the specific target audience of Year P – 3 or 4 – 6 students based on the theme of 'Make Us Laugh'. The students were required to undertake pre-camp preparation tasks and to complete a published and bound Children's Picture book.

Our 2012 program proved to be the best of the 15 we have conducted to date with both Alison and Liz absolutely wrapped with the professional works produced by the students.

Following is part of our promotional material along with some photos of Alison, Liz and the students in action.

The Daradgee EEC's 2012 Writers' and Illustrators' Camp supported student learning across the three strands of the Australian Curriculum – English: Language, Literature and Literacy. In addition, the General Capabilities of Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Behaviour and Intercultural Understanding and the Cross Curriculum Priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures and Sustainability were embedded in the planned learning experiences that featured in the camp program.

The program was organised around the explicit teaching model of 'I do', 'We do', 'You do'. On the first day of the camp the role of Alison Lester and Elizabeth Honey, the featured authors, was to share their stories, their lives as authors and the many and

Right: Elizabeth and a student discuss illustration methods and options.



varied skills they draw on in order to create a piece of literature. The role of the students was to listen and learn as Alison and Elizabeth modelled their writing processes.

On the second day of the camp, the guest authors and participants worked together through a range of carefully scaffolded activities that lead towards the development of participants' writing and illustrating skills.

Below: Individuals working together to paste illustrations into books.



The third and fourth days of the camp saw the participants busily writing and illustrating their own piece of literature with the adults present, including Alison and Elizabeth, in the role of support people.

P.S. We do hope to get some of the students completed works onto our website as soon as possible: <https://daradgeeec.eq.edu.au/Programsandactivities/Pages/Specialist-Camps.aspx>

Article contributed by:
Noel Cristaudo,
Principal,
Daradgee EEC



Above: Alison and a student work together to edit text.

The Rain on the Plain Falls Mostly in ...Paluma?

Making excursions all things to all stakeholders is a constant challenge - we want to develop environmental connectedness in our visiting students, teachers want to complete the C2C units, and students just want to have fun. Our existing water quality monitoring excursion program was successfully reimagined by our curriculum team to do just this.

Part of the success lies in close consultation with our client schools. Our Principal met first with the trial school's curriculum team - Deputy Principal, Head of Curriculum and year level Coordinator (a class teacher) - to share and discuss the implementation of sections of the two Year Seven "water" units through a residential excursion program.

We developed a data collection tool to record curriculum goals at the pre-visit stage, based on the Dimensions of Teaching and Learning. Together, we made choices about what the class teachers could best do in class and what would work best at our centre. In the end, we had negotiated an excursion program that met the needs of the corresponding C2C units while making effective use of our "place" to present a rounded real life experience to students.

And what better place than Paluma to explore everything to do with water? The water cycle is literally "in your face" - mountains are regularly covered in clouds with stunning views of the Crystal Creek catchment as the creek flows down to the ocean (when the clouds aren't in the way). Where else but the Wet Tropics could students experience this all at once?

Typically, single class groups arrive at Paluma by bus for a three-day residential excursion. As a stand-alone learning experience, testing water quality parameters takes just under two hours. This was a logistical challenge because we wanted all students to personally have a go at all aspects of water quality

monitoring, both abiotic (weather conditions, creek bank soil type, temperature, flow rate, pH, conductivity and dissolved oxygen) and biotic (riparian vegetation assessment and macro invertebrates). To accomplish this in a limited time frame, we built in the comparative study of two creeks and enrolled our keen classroom teacher and supervising parents to help facilitate this experience. Everybody had "fun".

Remaining true to the traditions of our "pedagogy of place", a significant portion of the excursion program provides students with experiences of just being in the rainforest, learning about the survival of this complex ecosystem in such a "watery" environment. Students explore the tropical rainforest with all senses and record features with our almost indestructible cameras. And - if they are in the right place at the right time, they get to experience what cloud "tastes" like. Even the most mature and sensible Year Seven student (or teacher or parent) will eventually give in, stick out their tongue and have a taste. Does cloud really taste like marshmallows and fairy floss?

For us, it is important that students who are studying Science "content", critiquing, examining, explaining and developing skills, do not forget that this place is special (and amazing). We give students opportunities to step back, sit down, be still, look and listen to their surroundings.

Seven classes from two schools have participated in this new program this term. Usually monsoons and cyclones make first term our quietest term but this program has made it very busy. We are still fine-tuning the program and different Centre teachers may present it slightly differently, however the song remains the same. The curriculum, concepts and experiences are shared by all classes. We are now digging deeper into both the Australian Curriculum and its interpretation the C2C for other opportunities to draw change-weary classroom teachers back into this Cloudy Clearing, back to Paluma.

Right: Recording the features of the tropical rainforest.



Left: Students at work "exploring everything water" at Paluma.

Aspiring Leaders Meet

Mid Term I saw a total of 20 Aspiring Leaders from the O&EEC sector attend the QASSP Forum at Bond University on the Gold Coast. The aspiring leaders initiative aims to build leadership capability in O&EECs, as well as assist individuals with the recruitment and selection process. This is the first time this type of program has been offered.

Aspirants were initially introduced to the program, and what would be covered, via a web conference in December. Following this, three days were spent on the Gold Coast - two days at Bond University for the QASSP Associate Administrator's Forum and the final day at Numinbah Valley EEC.

At the Associate Administrator's Forum a variety of speakers and presenters shared their insights and stories with approximately 200 people, provoking thought, laughter and, for some, tears. The latter triggered by inspirational adventurers Cas and Jonesy (James Castrisson and Justin Jones). The final day at Numinbah Valley proved extremely valuable with the focus being more on our leadership styles, and the styles of others, as well as preparation for the recruitment process.

It was a worthwhile experience to mix with other staff from the O&EEC sector at Numinbah Valley. A three-course dinner on the Saturday night for both aspirants and principals was a highlight with delicious food and great company. This program has enabled us to develop closer relationships with the other aspirants whilst benefitting from the guidance of the principals.

Article contributed by:
Louka Lazaredes,
Teacher, Paluma EEC

Article contributed by:
Steve Cutuli,
Teacher & Aspiring leader,
Daradgee EEC

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