



2017 ANNUAL REPORT

*“Correction does much, but encouragement does more”
— Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*



•Milkwood•
Steiner School



MILKWOOD STEINER SCHOOL ASSOCIATION, Inc.

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This 2017 Annual Report was compiled in April 2018 by David Arthur, Business Manager of Milkwood Steiner School Association, Incorporated. The report is produced to meet requirements under the Northern Territory of Australia Associations Act. And section 242 of the Education Act. Formal correspondence regarding this document should be directed to board@milkwood.nt.edu.au



Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
OUR SCHOOL'S HISTORY	4
CURRICULUM & ANTHROPOLOGY	5
MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR.....	6
GOVERNANCE	7
BOARD.....	8
STAFFING.....	9
AFFILIATIONS.....	11
STRATEGIC RESULTS.....	12
TREASURERS REPORT	12
ENROLMENTS.....	13
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	14
SCHOOL ACTIVITIES.....	14-15
PRINCIPALS REPORT.....	16
CLASS REPORTS.....	17
KINDERGARTEN	17
CLASS 1 & 2	19
CLASS 3 & 4	21
CLASS 5 & 6	23



Introduction

Milkwood Steiner School is a non-denominational, independent private school offering a primary level education to children from Pre-Transition to Class 6. Our school is founded upon the educational philosophy of Rudolf Steiner.

Steiner Education is a proven and successful international curriculum with more than 1,050 Steiner Schools in over 60 countries. There are also nearly 2,000 Steiner Waldorf kindergartens, home programs, child care centres and preschools across the globe. Steiner education is future-orientated and the holistic style underpinning this unique pedagogy supports the healthy well-being of children around the world.



Australia currently has 60 Steiner Schools and Kindergartens including 11 Government Schools running Steiner streams parallel with their mainstream curriculum. There are two Steiner Schools in the Northern Territory, Alice Springs Steiner School and our school, Milkwood Steiner School, centrally located in the Darwin suburb of Berrimah.

Our vision is to offer quality Steiner Education to children of the Greater Darwin region and demonstrate the value of Steiner Education in the wider community.



Our School's History

Since 1996, Steiner-inspired playgroups for young children and families have operated in Darwin and Litchfield. In 1999 several playgroup families formed and incorporated the Darwin Steiner Association (DSA) to enable the development of a Steiner Kindergarten and School.

The DSA grew to a diverse, enterprising and highly motivated group of around 60 members whose activities included publishing regular newsletters, creating a library, running craft and study groups (Waldorf Learning Group), holding public and private seminars, fundraising events, founding the Nightcliff market stall, and supporting seasonal and cultural festivals as well as Steiner-inspired playgroups. Prior to the school opening, the DSA changed its name to Milkwood Steiner School Association (MSSA).



Milkwood Steiner School opened its doors in January 2004 in the converted Nightcliff Scout Hall in Bauhinia Street, Nightcliff. In the first year Milkwood started with 26 students ranging in age from 4 to 8 years old with a Kindergarten and a combined Class 1, 2, 3. Each following year Milkwood expanded by one class year level until 2007 when it had grown to Class Six.

In February 2007 Milkwood moved to Cecil Cook Avenue, Marrara. Here the children were blessed with two enormous trees in which to climb and play.

At the end of 2009 a permanent location was secured and with the help of a significant investment secured through Building the Education Revolution (BER) and an extraordinary effort from the parent community Milkwood was to open its doors in 2010 with four custom built classrooms, a library and music room.

Milkwood now has permanent foundations at this site at 107 Boulter Road, Berrimah. Gardens and playgrounds are now established and the School has also been granted a 12 year lease on the adjoining bush block.



Curriculum & Anthroposophy

“The need for imagination, a sense of truth and a feeling of responsibility – these are the three forces which are the very nerve of education.”

- Rudolf Steiner

Steiner schools have a unique and distinctive approach to educating children, aiming to enable each stage of growth to be fully and vividly enjoyed and experienced. They provide a balanced approach to the modern school curriculum. The academic, artistic and social aspects, or ‘head, heart & hands’, are treated as complementary facets of a single program of learning, allowing each to throw light on the others.

This is implemented by using art as a practice, and language to develop the feelings, by nourishing the children with the rich heritage of wise folk tales, histories, fairy stories, poems, music and games that are part of our world civilisation. This creates the cultural atmosphere in which the children are taught reading, writing, arithmetic, nature study, geography, science, languages, music and other subjects.

Steiner designed a curriculum that is responsive to the developmental phases of childhood and the nurturing of the child’s imagination in a school environment. Steiner thought that schools should cater to the needs of the child rather than the demands of the government or economic forces, so he developed schools that encourage creativity and free-thinking. His teaching seeks to recognise the individuality of the child and through a balanced education, allows them to go into the world with confidence.

A unique quality of human beings is our capacity for conscious thought. Steiner schooling strives to support the development of well-rounded human beings who are able to feel deeply and broadly, to think penetratingly and clearly, and then to act rightly out of conscious and free choice.

The best overall statement on what is unique about Steiner education is to be found in the stated goals of the schooling:

“Our highest endeavour must be to develop individuals who are able out of their own initiative to impart purpose and direction to their lives.”

- Rudolf Steiner



Message from the Board Chair

As we move into our fifteenth year of operation in 2018 it is fitting that we look back on the 2017 school year and reflect on the successes achieved and challenges faced as we continue to grow.

2017 was a year of growth and consolidation for Milkwood Steiner School. Strong support has been shown in the lower years as evident from the at capacity class sizes. Milkwood Steiner School was one of the few independent schools in the Northern Territory to show growth in numbers. This is an outstanding achievement however it does expose the finite capacity to expand on the current site. Other key highlights include;

-) Consistent above average academic outcomes
-) Excellent student achievement across the Steiner curriculum
-) Continued successful events and festivals
-) Quality Professional Development initiatives and outcomes for staff
-) Continued improvements to school grounds
-) Increased marketing and communications presence in the wider community
-) Purchase of a school bus
-) Employment of an Enrolments and Communications person
-) Continued unqualified financial audits (2013-2017)
-) Strong financial position through achievement of a surplus

2017 was also a sad year for Milkwood with the retirement of our founding teacher Wendy Watt. Wendy had been with Milkwood right from the start in the Nightcliff Scout Hall and has been with us on the journey through all the challenges and achievements, always providing a level-headed view and reminding us of the reason we are all so passionate about Steiner education. Wendy was a guiding light in the College of Teachers and was well respected by all students who had the privilege to have her as their teacher. Wendy's passion for Steiner education and her nurturing manner will be sorely missed at the school however we wish her all the best in her retirement.

The Board would also like to acknowledge the work of class 1-2 teacher Carolyn Hall who resigned at the end of 2017 to move to Tasmania. Carolyn had been teaching at Milkwood since emigrating from the United Kingdom in 2012. Carolyn's knowledge of the Steiner teaching philosophies was a tremendous asset to the school. Her drive to continually build capacity in the community through parent education initiatives such as Educaredo was invaluable.

The School management continued to engage with Steiner Education Australia and Australian Independent Schools Association of the Northern Territory (AISNT). Without their continued support and interest, our ability to communicate with government stakeholders would be greatly diminished.

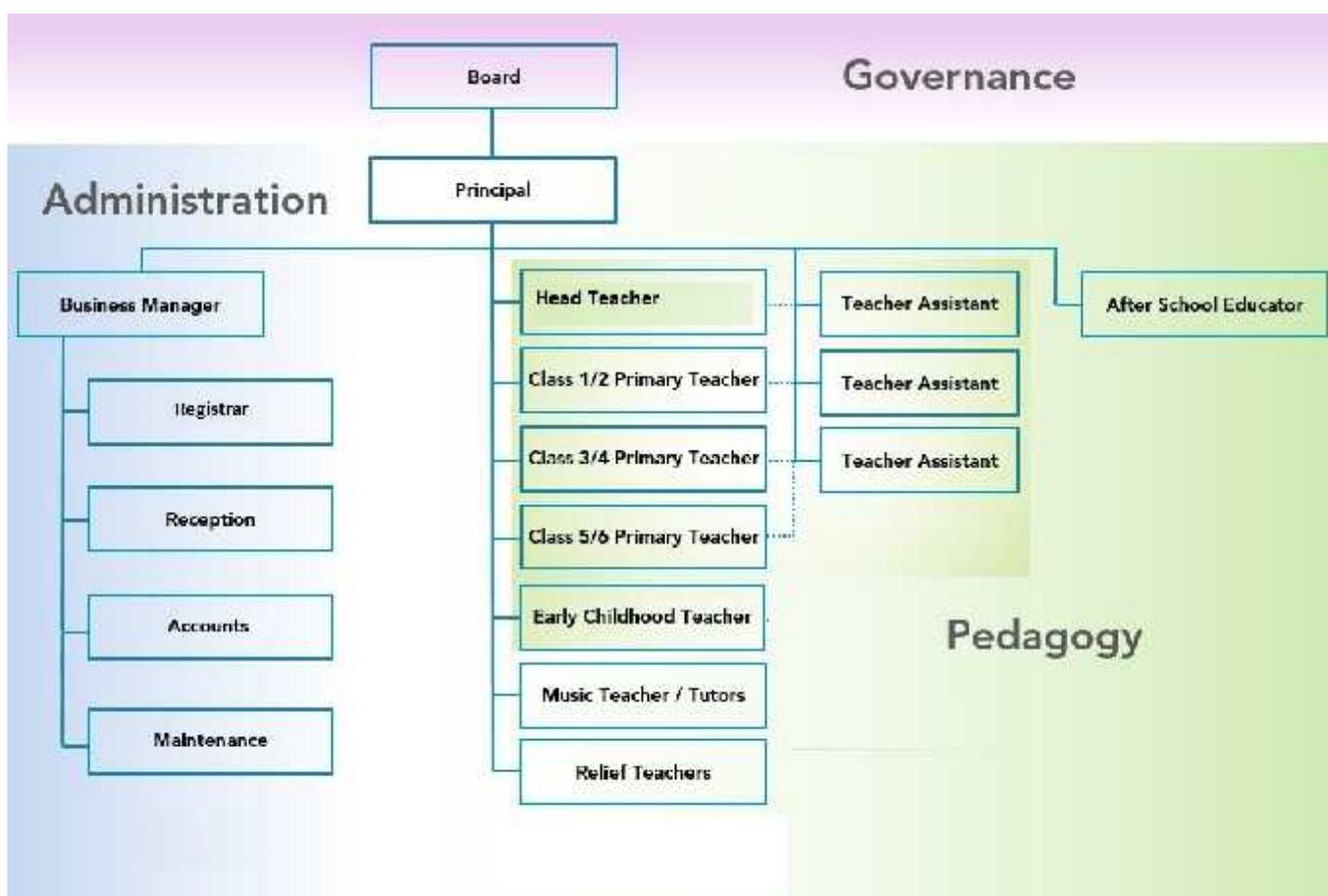
All of the achievements highlighted throughout this report would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of all the school staff. I would also like to acknowledge the support the committed parent community continues to provide to the staff and school as a whole. This community of likeminded families is the heart of the school and is a vital component of the overall strategic direction of the school.

Sincerely
David Jan
Chairperson, Milkwood Steiner School Association, Inc.

Governance

Milkwood Steiner School is an initiative of the Milkwood Steiner School Association (MSSA). MSSA is a not-for-profit incorporation of which parents become members for the period children are enrolled at Milkwood Steiner School. MSSA membership is also open to non-school parents and other interested parties. The role of the School Board is to guide the direction of the school in consultation with the Principal, Business Manager and College of Teachers (CoT) whom create the policies from which management operate. Meetings are held monthly and the AGM is held during Term 2.

The Association is often referred to as 'the Community', and includes the whole body of members, and active participation in the Community is of benefit to both the school and the students.



Pedagogy: Educational leadership and direction is the responsibility of the Principal in consultation with the College of Teachers and other teaching staff.

Administration: Administration, through a School Business Manager, is empowered to manage and lead the business aspects of the school on a day to day basis.

Governance: Our school is governed by a Board. The Board assumes legal responsibility for the schools finances, operations, compliance, employees and also registration requirements as both a School and a Preschool. The execution of this is then delegated to the Principal and staff.



Board

In 2017 the Board consisted of five members. Last year's Chair, Anthony O'Flaherty resigned as he moved to Tasmania. Anthony did a superb job as Chair and took the school to a new level of professionalism and strength. Many thanks from the School Community. Also not continuing in 2017 was Nikki Rudd. Thanks for your contribution also.

Name	Role	Term
David Jan	Chairperson and Public Officer	April 2014 - Present
Kylie Banner	Secretary	April 2017 - Present
James Carlos	Treasurer	April 2014 -Present
Sharon Kyriacou	General Member	2017 April -Present
Katie Bowden	General Member	April 2017 - Present

Disclosure of Interest

In 2017 two Board members, Kylie banner and Katie Bowden had children attending the school. In situations where matters involved a potential conflict of interest for a particular Board member, that individual was excluded from all discussion and decisions relating to that particular issue.



Staffing

The table below provides a summary of staff across 2017.

Name	Role	Term
Deidre Edward	Class 3/4 Teacher – Head Teacher	Year
Carolyn Hall	Class 1/2 Teacher	Year
Wendy Watt	Kindergarten Teacher	Term 1-3
Tara Venn	Class 5/6 Teacher	Year
Penelope Johnson	Transition Teacher/Kindy Teacher	Year
Caryn Dunning	Teachers Assistant	Year
Dorte Peterson	Teachers Assistant	Year
Bernie Murray	Teachers Assistant	Year
Donna McKenzie	After School Care Co-ordinator	Year
Graham Baggs	Principal	Year
Dave Arthur	Business Manager	Year
Isabelle Kirkbride	Registrar	Year
Jacqui Ryan	Receptionist	Year
Sarah Thomson	Bookkeeper	Year





Affiliations

Milkwood Steiner School Association, Inc., are proud members and supporters of the following peak organisations:



Steiner Education Australia

Steiner Education Australia supports, advocates, promotes and represents the free and healthy development of Steiner education in contemporary, diverse contexts.

SEA is the peak body representing member schools throughout the states and territories of Australia.

» <http://www.steinereducation.edu.au>



Association of Independent Schools of the Northern Territory

AISNT is a member of the Independent Schools Council of Australia (ISCA), which is representative of all State and Territory Associations of Independent Schools.

» <http://www.aisnt.asn.au>



Treasurers Report- James Carlos

The Schools financial position was strong in 2017 as the school posted a profit of \$59,079 after depreciation. This is entirely due to the increase in enrolments which increased the funding income. 8 funded students from Transition to year 6 attended the school. As the level of funding for non-government schools is directly tied to the number of students in the school it has become necessary to put a structure and program in place for the future growth of the school. The expenses were overall kept under budget in 2017

The balance sheet of the school is strong and is mainly tied to the buildings. The schools' buildings are relocatable and are therefore genuine assets that are able to be sold in the event of bad circumstances. The cash position is strong and increased in 2017. There is always a lag when schools grow with funding as both the NT and federal Government needs the August census data before the extra funding becomes available.

Gonski 2.0 has been a windfall for NT Schools which were amongst the poorest funded in Australian States and Territories. There is a catch-up to the rest of Australia for the next 5 years and funding will grow at 10% a year from the Federal Government for NT Schools. Remember that they provide over 50% of the School funding.

It is also worth noting there has been a large increase in the Building Fund. The account sits at just over \$91,935 and will be of assistance as the School needs new buildings.

The Auditors report is unqualified and supports the ability of the school to sustain trading. It also is a vindication for the financial policies and procedures the Board has implemented in previous years and its commitment to financial procedure and accountability.

Our 2017 **successful unqualified financial audit**, performed by Susanne Lee & Associates PTY LTD Certified Practicing Accountants, reflects the solid position of the school.

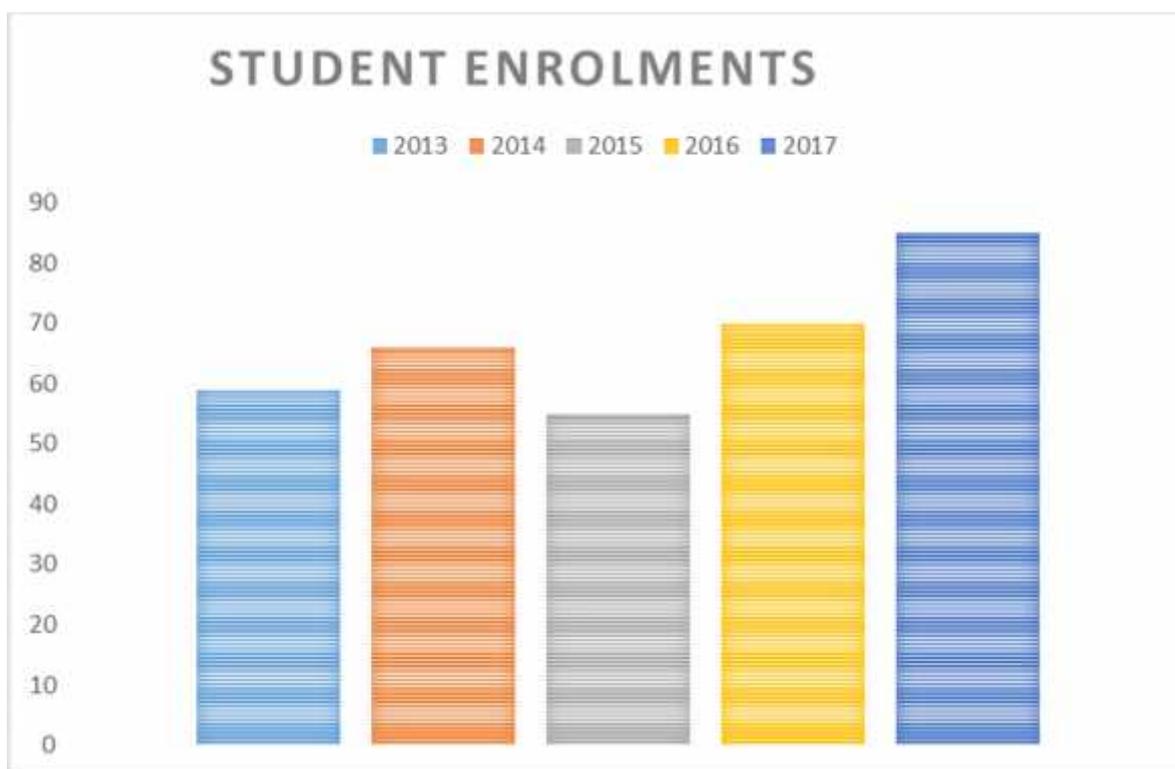


Enrolments

Enrolments are the life and blood of the school and one of the key measures the Board monitors. We have consistently aimed for approximately 80 enrolments from Transition to Year 6 and this has finally been achieved. We will continue to strengthen the Schools' position to both sustain existing enrolments and attract new enrolments. Key enrolment statistics for **2017** are shown below:

- » Maximum enrolment was **85** children
- » Indigenous enrolments were **9%** of total enrolments
- » Average total attendance was **90%**
- » Despite a **.5%** downturn in Darwin population, enrolments grew at the School by **21%**
- » Families were again lost interstate to continue Steiner Education in Middle School

The following figures are a comparative summary for the years 2013 to present and related only for Transition to Year 6 students, remembering that no funding is received for pre-school children.





Professional Development

Various education and training qualifications and programs are held by staff that define their professionalism and personal growth. Milkwood Steiner School strongly advocates professional development as we believe it is important for lifelong learning, benefits teaching and learning in the classroom, improves operational procedures and efficiency and also satisfies minimum regulatory requirements.

In 2017, staff participated in the following approved professional development initiatives:

-) University programs
-) VET sector courses
-) Mentoring from colleagues
-) EduCareDo self-awakening course in anthroposophy
-) Provide Advanced First Aid
-) Anaphylaxis & Asthma training
-) Conferences for Professional associations such as ASBA
-) Steiner Annual conference
-) Annual intensive course at Glaenon Steiner School
-) Overseas Study tour to China
-) Second Annual Law Conference – Governance and Compliance

All staff maintain valid Criminal History Checks and Working with Children Clearance Notices (OCHRE card).

After School Care

A survey of parents was conducted in 2015 and the results indicated strong demand for an after school care service. A comprehensive application was submitted to the NT Department of Education and subsequently the service was commenced in Term 1, 2016. In 2017 the service continued to experience growth in numbers, necessitating at times the services of an assistant. The After School Care Service is currently being assessed and rated and was subject to a compliance audit in 2017, which has been successful.



NT Boosting our Economy Grant

In 2016 the School received a Grant for \$100,000 to put into either Capital Works or maintenance. In 2017 The School chose to put the money into a demountable building to be used as a classroom. The grant paid for the classroom, renovations, outfitting of the room and all associated landscaping and requirements. Thanks to the NT Govt for financing this valuable addition.

NT Business Grant

The School applied for a Business Grant to assist with the digital transformation of the school. The amount in question was for \$3500. The money helped finance a new website, some media for the website and advertisements on channel 9. Rick (Knight) Creative did the work, and the adverts have been a success in attracting new students to the school. The school also has a resource of film to draw from in the future.

Maintenance

As far as the school infrastructure is concerned, all buildings are in fair condition and continue to be maintained following our regular OHS inspections which occurred every week. The trees within the school boundaries have all been examined every six months by a qualified arborist and any problems quickly rectified. The School bus was used extensively this year and also has undergone a regular maintenance schedule. It is important we look after and maintain our assets and we are grateful for the assistance of parents and staff to do this as we cannot afford a full-time maintenance officer at this time.

Film Night Fundraiser

The school had a very successful film night at the Deckchair theatre. It was almost a full house so a successful night fundraising wise. The School screened Romeo and Juliet and the Principal spoke to the crowd about the Milkwood School. Thanks to Amy Sharp for coordinating the event and to all the parents who cooked and assisted. Over \$5000 was raised and will go towards the school library.



Principals Report

We had a great start to the year with lots of new students which necessitated the purchase of another classroom with money provided by the Department of Education under the Schools Infrastructure Grants. The Demountable housed the year 5/6 class and allowed the splitting of the pre-transition and transition classes in preparation for what was trending to be an influx of Kinder students. Unfortunately, by the end of 2017, it was realised that with the size limitation of our existing block and a significant increase in numbers in the 5/6 class for 2018, there would be no room to house another classroom and the decision was made to recombine the kinder classes together to allow the bigger group to utilise a normal sized classroom.

The need to find another site for the school featured as a major priority as we continue to lose enrolments interstate because of the inability to build more rooms to house a year seven and another kinder class. Despite many hours spent searching, enquiring and attending meetings at all levels of government, there has still not been a solution to what is becoming a serious issue for the long term thrive-ability of the school. At a time when one private school in Darwin is given over twenty million dollars to build a new school and then a further nine million dollars in the current budget, it is extremely frustrating and galling to be told the coffers are empty and we need to try harder. Numbers have steadily increased over the year due to various factors including advertising, targeted open days and word of mouth which has yielded the greatest results. In 2016 at census we were 82 students (including pre-school) and in 2017 we had 97, a growth of 18 %.

We were blessed at the start of the year to appoint Tara Venn as the new 5/6 teacher. Tara was teaching at Maningrida and brought with her a wealth of experience which has been utilised and appreciated. Unfortunately, towards the end of the year our much loved Kinder teacher, Wendy Watt resigned for family reasons and her position was taken over by Penny Johnson to whom we are very grateful for stepping in. All staff continued to go above and beyond their already heavy workloads, often working long after hours, during holidays and weekends in order for the school to run smoothly .and efficiently

Throughout the year we had a significant number of parents helping out in many different ways, undertaking many different jobs and pitching in to help when it was most needed. I have not known a school as fortunate enough to have so many willing helpers in all aspects of the school's life. Parents have donated time and resources to:

-) The library
-) The gardens
-) The bush block
-) Class Cafes
-) Fundraisers
-) Regular and emergency working Bees
-) Bus driving
-) Animal welfare

I would like to thank each and every parent who contributed, for their commitment and help in making the school a fantastic place for children to receive their education in. Towards the end of the year we conducted our annual survey of all Parents, staff and older students and the results were very positive with no major issues identified though we do not rest on our laurels but are keen to continue improving in all that we do.

Graham Baggs
Principal



Class Reports

Kindergarten/ Transition

Penny Johnson

Due to predicted high numbers in the kindergarten, in 2017 Milkwood Kindergarten started with separate transition and preschool classes. The preschool children attended on a two day/three day cycle and the transition children five days a week.

Unfortunately, the actual numbers in the transition were lower than expected, averaging around ten students throughout the year. Though this was a lovely class size for both students and teacher, it proved financially untenable. A short-term solution was found in offering the preschool students who had turned five before the end of June, a full-time place in the kindergarten, attending their 2/3 days in the preschool and the remainder of the week in transition. The majority of families with children of this age accepted the offer. This almost doubled the class size.

Sadly, towards the end of term 3, Wendy's husband became very ill, and she made the decision to retire to stay home and care for him. At this point the transition and preschool were recombined.

The recombination of preschool and transition was advantageous in many ways. Not only was it a more viable financial option for the school, it also engendered a more positive social dynamic for both the older and the younger children. On reflection, a mixed age group is a much better model for Milkwood Kindergarten. It gives the older children then chance to lead and help the younger children and gives the younger children a model to follow. If future numbers indicate splitting the kindergarten again, a vertical division, rather than horizontal, would be a better idea, that is, two groups of mixed age.

Although the slightly higher age group did allow for slightly more advanced activities to be offered, the curriculum of the transition class remained, for the most part, the same as that of the combined preschool transition kindergarten.

Due to the high energy levels in the class, the decision was made to commence each day with a walk in the bush block. The children would first walk the perimeter of the bush block, helping them to experience and understand boundaries, then we would gather together in the middle for morning circle before the children were allowed to go and enjoy self-directed play in the bush block. This allowed the children to engage with nature and experience the changing seasons of the Territory on a deep level.

The children would then return to the classroom for morning tea preparation and indoor self-directed play. For morning tea, the children would help prepare seasonal fruit and a grain-based snack, loosely guided by Steiner's prescribed "grain of the day".



Morning tea was followed by more self-directed play and then story time. The story would be told by the teacher on the first day, then the children would help set-up for a puppet show of the same story on the second day, which would then be again told by the teacher. The third day was reserved for Show and Tell in which the children would bring precious items from home to introduce to the class. On the fourth day, the teacher would tell the same story again, while the children would give the puppet show and on the fifth day, the children would choose some costumes for themselves and would act out the story with the teacher as narrator.

Lunch followed story time and after lunch the children would go over to the preschool garden area for outdoor play. After that, the children would pack up and return to the transition room for the afternoon activity. These included wet on wet painting, handwork, beeswax modelling, wax block drawing and woodwork.

Our first woodwork project was to sand some rough-hewn wooden blocks for outside play. One of the fathers of the class volunteered to come in and show the children how to follow the grain of the wood while sanding. The next project was to sand and oil some specially ordered wooden figures made in the shape of local wildlife. Then we sanded back some small cheese boards as a Fathers' Day gift and, finally, we worked on refurbishing some old wooden furniture.

Our Handwork projects included Pom poms, Gods' Eyes, finger-knitting flowers, embroidered cushions for Mothers' Day, a woven bag and a felt turtle. Parents volunteered to come in and assist and this was invaluable in helping the children learn these fine motor skills. The whole class worked together on a finger-knitting and weaving project, culminating in a beautiful floor mat which was raffled at our Café in term two.

In addition to our Café fundraiser, an information and craft stall was also held by the kindergarten at the Teddy Bears' Picnic, part of the Darwin Festival.



Class 1 & 2

Carolyn Hall

In Class One and Two at Milkwood this year the children have been as busy as caterpillars munching their leaves, experiencing many new things and changes ... but as someone once said:

If nothing ever changed, there'd be no butterflies...

The year began with a change of classroom, enabling us to trial the Bochumer Flexible Classroom model, which had benches and cushions instead of desks and chairs. In addition we took over the care of the garden by our verandah and a complete flexible indoor and outdoor classroom model, with a number of features to support the children with the development of their four lower senses, (balance, movement, sense of life and touch), and to support the development of their sensory systems in a healthy way.

The verandah quickly became an established play space, with imaginative building block creations, informal clay processing, puppet plays and drawing. The core balls and wobble boards were well used, as was the big sandpit for very elaborate sand and water play displaying some fundamental elements of engineering.

Our Main Lessons would happen both inside and outside on the verandah, depending upon what we were learning. Form drawing saw the children running with ribbon sticks on the grass, creating forms in chalk on the pavement and drawing forms with their toes on the verandah, before finally putting the forms into their Main Lesson books. Term One ended with our Easter Festival and Egg hunt in the bush block.

In Term Two, to accompany our literacy Main Lesson the children learnt a Basque Fairy Tale off by heart, performing this in chorus to the parents, along with songs and recorder pieces that they had learnt. In mathematics, we worked with rhythm, rhyme and counting. The children concluded the term with a lantern festival, where we made candlelit grottos in the bushblock and our own colourful lanterns for the lantern spiral.

The class garden was well tended under the caring eye of Keita, who worked with the children to build fairy gardens, and to plant and care for each of them. Highlights of the gardening year included the mulching of the garden paths by the children, the fruiting of our citrus tree, the harvesting of sweet potato for our festivals, cucumbers for morning tea, along with several bunches of bananas and ripe paw paw. The passion fruit ripened, but we had to beat the Sulphur crested cockatoo, which were keen to help themselves!

In the Semester break, a group of parents and ex-student Denver met to build a small



sandpit complete with shade tipi, in the garden. This created a really inviting place for students to get some quiet time.

In Term Three we began with our Dreamtime stories main lesson and were lucky enough to see “Songlines”, an interactive theatre performance, at the Darwin Entertainment Centre. This was followed by a visit from some Indigenous visitors from Arnhem Land, sharing their songs and stories. We then took a trip out to Turtle Dreaming Land – to visit Pudukul for their rich aboriginal culture tour, where the children had a wonderful, inspiring experience, hearing more stories, playing the didgeridoo and clap-sticks, traditional spear throwing and string making from native sand palm leaves.

Throughout the year Di Lucas took the class on a number of interesting bush walks to the different landscape areas around Darwin, deepening and enriching the children’s understanding and experience of nature, evident through their beautiful bookwork.

The Class One/Two café saw hardworking parents running a number of events at the class café, including: the wood fired pizza oven (The children made the pizza bases for the pizza), a herb tea stall, busking by the older strings students.

In our Mathematics Main Lesson, the children started to work with the four processes and place value, which included drawing, counting and acting out our story sums. Term Three ended with our whole school performance of the Michaelmas Play, with Class One participating as fiery comets and Class Two becoming the fierce, roaring dragon.

Term Four was busy with our swimming program and play rehearsals for the class end of year play: St. Bridget of Iona. The classroom was turned into a roiling sea, a green and pleasant land a beautiful rainbow and a hot desert, as the children retold the story of St. Brigid of Iona and the birth of the King of the Elements. The children worked incredibly well together to master songs, learn a vast amount of choral speech, and for Class Two, individual parts. This was followed by our whole School Christmas concert, and our final changes – moving back to our original classroom.

A fitting end to the year!

*May the wings of the **butterfly** kiss the sun.
And find your shoulder to light upon,
To bring you luck, happiness and riches.
Today, tomorrow and beyond.*

Irish blessing



Class 3 & 4

Class 3/4 Annual Report 2017

The year commenced with the Old Testament stories, rich literature for class three children who are awakening to the consciousness of the surrounding world. These stories of Creation bring tales of bravery, heroism, death and destruction over which the good spirit prevails. These stories provide rich literature for our grammar, spelling, story writing, reading and comprehension studies. They contain lessons of infinite wisdom and moral tales important in navigating life, lessons such as fairness, kindness, justice, rightness and wisdom. Attention is never brought to the underlying message as we all come from different backgrounds and cultures, but rather the stories are left to rest on the individual consciousness for individual interpretation.

As our mathematics unfolded for the year we learned about measurement, length, weight and capacity and how the ancient people of our past discovered measurement. First the relevance to our bodies and understanding how our bodies were the tool for measurement in times past. Tales of Noah's Ark and the amazing task set before him, to build an ark using the only tool he had for measuring, his body. Immersing the children deeply and engaging not only the academic, but the artistic and the practical. As Easter approached the children learned their songs for our Easter Festival celebration. Woven baskets were prepared for the delight of the treasures that may land in them come our Easter story and egg hunt in the bush block. A fitting way to end term one.

There are many cultures and beliefs and in the next term the children learned of the Myths of Northern Europe and the creation of life according to Norse Mythology through stories of the Norse Gods of Asgard and from the Kalevala and Beowulf. Study of fractions and money commenced with money providing a wonderful stepping stone to study fractions. The children held a trading day within class using real money and goods to learn of trade for barter and money. We then held our toastie days throughout term, a fabulous effort was made in fundraising for our class to purchase much needed supplies. Delving into the rich tales of the Land of the Word, the children were enthralled to go on a discovery of the very important rules of grammar in our written work. This term ended with our wonderful Lantern Festival, a whole school celebration.

The class went on a three day camp to Coomalie Creek in term three. There was great excitement as the time approached, we set off in the new school bus to much singing and delight. Over the three days the children were challenged to stretch themselves in many ways. From children who discovered that leaving home on school camp for the first time was exciting but stressful, they got through the first night challenge of missing parents and home. Immense fun was had and a number of parents volunteered their time. It was amazing to have them take charge of the kitchen and cook with the children, leaving me to take charge of activities. The first day comprised of setting up camp and the delights of tent construction and settling in. On the second day we went to Batchelor Outdoor Education, where the



Class 3 & 4

children were challenged by a trail bike ride through the bush, with many bumps, dumps and scrapes and first aid stops. Later we returned to our starting point. The remainder of the class stayed at the centre to do Archery. Then all the teams had a challenge against each other, which was a lot of fun. On the last day of camp we went to Buley Rock Hole for a swim and lunch, before returning to school with a very tired group of children.

Our study of Man and Animal enriched the mythological and creation aspects of the beginning of life. Delving in depth the children discovered the specialties of the animal kingdom and their bodies, a fascinating study for the children. We continued to discover the delights of fractions and following on from this the history of writing and where and how it first began.

To round off the term the children participated in a whole school Michaelmas Festival, the children learned their verses, songs and recorder pieces. Children who took the role of King, Queen and Michael were definitely challenged and thought they would like to step down but held firm and carried out their role with finesse. A wonderful performance for the school community.

Term four we had a welcome relief from the wet season build up with swimming lessons. Amongst the final lessons of the year was weaving in the magic of the Dreamtime Stories from the Indigenous Dreamtime, a very important cultural aspect of our area. The children spent the term practicing recorder, singing and music for our end of year Christmas performance to round out a wonderful end to the year.

Deidre Edward

Class 3/4 Teacher



Class 5 Semester One 2017

ENGLISH/HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY ~ ANCIENT CULTURES

Ancient Cultures: India & Persia: For most of Term One we explored the wonder and colour that is Ancient India. Starting with stories, like that of Ganga, which explain how the landscape came to be and tell of the Gods who created it, we delved further into the many deities and belief systems of the Indian peoples, their main festivals, epic writings and shared some Indian food that helped us appreciate how the India we know today evolved. In the latter part of Term One, we moved into Ancient Persia, the land of light, of cities built and crumbling, the cradle of our modern irrigation systems and agriculture. Although not as popular amongst students as Ancient India, they could still appreciate Persia's contribution to our world and the legacy the ancient Persians left.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE & LITERACY

English: English, in its many facets, is integrated into each of our studies of Ancient Cultures, our local region, into Mathematics and Science. In Grammar, we've focused on direct speech, aspects of verbs and adjective use, and punctuation. For Written Expression, we looked at opinion pieces through diaries and letter-writing, poetry and argument, which has complimented our Speaking component where students have chosen to role-play, read some of their work, or read out passages of texts. Finally, for spelling, we've worked at consolidating familiar word knowledge, and building an awareness of the origins of words to enable students to better understand how they are put together. Students have been encouraged to keep both a Personal and a Class Spelling list which they're asked to refer to daily when editing their own writing. This aims to assist the children to take responsibility for their learning and helps them to correct any long-held problematic patterns and mistakes.

MATHS: THE WORLD OF MATHEMATICS

Decimals: Students have worked with transforming ordinary fractions into decimals. We have used the story of 'Decimal Island' together with the understanding that our system of measurement and place value uses base ten as its foundation; having had its origins in the cultures of ancient India and Persia, among others.

Decimals and Fractions: Students continued to explore converting fractions to decimals and worked with multiplication and division of both fractions and decimals, as they became more immersed in the basis of Metric Measurement. The process of working with fractions and decimals included simplifying fractions then writing them as decimals, using 'cancelling', applying what they know to 'story problems', and the used of decimals and fractions in everyday tasks such as calculating amounts on a shopping list and in baking a cake.

The World of Mathematics: Students revise and consolidate their wonder of number from their previous four years, tackling more complex and sometimes abstract number problems. They work at learning their 'times tables' off by heart, with daily practice – forwards, backwards, using division and in number problems, with fractions and decimals. The children additionally learn where to recognise the need to use their 'times tables' in a variety of contexts; from more abstract maths problems, to design and technology, in mapping, calculating a walking route, cooking etc. Students also work with money equations to one thousand, collating and presenting data, choosing which strategy works best in a mathematical problem (including recognising that a certain problem involves mathematical thinking, long division, estimation and rounding off), and at recognising number patterns, the names of each and their sequence.

THE ARTS

The Arts: The children have engaged in a number of Arts subjects this past semester. In the **Visual Arts**, our class has developed 'wet painting' work including experimenting by using collage and veiling techniques once the paintings have dried; they have crafted Duvali Lanterns as a part of our Ancient India studies, made Macassan boats from 'natural resources' they found on the bush block, used paper-mache to create India, and perfected this art to create their chosen State or Territory when studying colonial Australia. For **Media Arts** we role-played 'concerned citizens' being interviewed to present our case for or against a chosen subject (such as 'The Case for having more Sport in Schools'). **Music & Speech** were linked through the study of poetry and song (ballad).

SCIENCE/HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY

Regional History & Geography: Throughout this semester, particularly during Term Two, Class 5/6 has focused on the colonial impact of different peoples in the Northern Territory, with focus on the Darwin region. Children learnt that the Macassan traders have had a long diplomatic, economic and social relationship with Aboriginal People from Australia's north prior to first European contact. Students then explored the impact of Empire and allegiance through our War History - with the main focus being World Wars One and Two - and the way in which these major world events both reinforced and lead to the questioning of colonial ties.

In order to become better acquainted with our natural world and Territory home, we have explored geography of 'country' through Aboriginal stories and a visit from Ronald Lami-lami from Arnhemland, looking at land use, from tourism to the NT Cattle Industry, and, most recently, by 'walking country' through our Camp at Litchfield National Park.



Nature & Habitat Studies – Di Lucas Students have used Nature & Habitat Studies with Di Lucas to compliment and add to our Main Lesson work over the course of Semester One. Indeed, Di's width and breadth of knowledge have meant that during her excursions, students have touched on a broad range of subject-matter. Some of which includes: Geology - looking at Sedimentary Rocks on our trips to the Dripstone and East Point coastline and the Buley Rockhole/Florence Falls area; examining the similarities and differences between Northern Australian Habitats, Botany - in mangroves, floodplains, monsoon forests, and rock country; Poetry and Drawing for each excursion, incorporating Follow-up Art activities in Nature Study books and painted/collaged boards; Outdoor Education and teamwork skills as we moved around in different habitats; Map skills; Health & Well-being - organising what they need to take for a day walk; Observing and enquiring into all that has arisen as we walk and 'look.'; and Verbalising the things that see and how these places positively affect the children.

Excursions have been a great confidence boost for children, and enabled them to feel comfortable moving around these variety of habitats as they observe and interact with Nature. As with everything, there have been some challenges, but it has been great to see the children help each other to overcome sporadic and occasional fears of the bush.

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Health & Physical Education: This past semester our class has developed their teamwork and sporting strategies daily in **Physical Education**, via the games of Flags, Running the Gauntlet, Play the A, and other team games. During Term One, we also enjoyed learning some Water Polo skills, with Kormilda College students, culminating in a game of Water Polo in their school pool at the end of our month's sessions. This was a great opportunity for the children to enjoy social sport beyond our school boundaries and to interact with peers their age.

For **Health**, we have been learning some introductory Yoga poses and breathing to help us slow down and focus when we need to. We have also looked at aspects of Health through cooking, cultivating our Class Garden, and on our recent Outdoor Education Program in Litchfield National Park. We spoke of each child aiming to create new 'rings of confidence', drawn in beautiful concentric circles, where the students added a new ring when they challenged themselves beyond what was comfortable. This is one way for them to see a visual representation of their individual 'achievements' and personal growth.

TECHNOLOGY

Technology: Our class has worked at a variety of tasks involving design and technology this past semester. We have designed and built a garden – making alterations in areas that did not work properly (from a pond to some garden beds), planned and created a chicken coop and yard, designed our own maps, crafted models of Macassan fishing boats, masterminded posters to fundraise/inform/entertain, and produced visually stunning Art in our Main Lesson, Drawing and Nature books.

Class 5 Semester Two 2017

ENGLISH

In Class 5 English this Semester our class continued to explore the various aspects of the English language and expression through a variety of experiences and genres. Each child participated in a broad range of oral language exercises; from speech, poetry and verse, using instructional English during our 'Sharing our Skills' sessions in Term 3, through to presenting their opinions in a lively debate in our 'mock parliament' at the end of Term 4. The Children wrote and illustrated Children's books; in the process making choices about the everything from the content of their narrative and its intended audience to the layout and design. The Children also retold the story of Rome's founding fathers, Romulus & Remus, in their own words, and wrote a recount 'A Day in the Life of an Ancient Roman'. This Semester, we also explored a variety of poetry culminating with the Children writing some poetry of their own, from Limericks to Palindromes (mirror poems).

MATHEMATICS

Class 5 Mathematics this semester continued to build on foundation mathematical understandings and knowledge so that the children are ready for more abstract maths concepts and problems presented in the higher years of schooling. Through a combination of games, hands-on activities (including number charts, MAB blocks, props such as rope, pegs and sandy surfaces) work-sheets and whole-class instruction and problem-solving examples, the children practiced work with larger numbers and combined processes to extend their mathematical thinking through more complex problems and investigations. In Geometry, they explored shapes and measurement using new tools to ensure precision and detail were paramount. The Children created eye-catching visual designs using compasses, rulers and protractors as they explored shapes including: circles, parallelograms, various types of triangle, the square, rectangles, trapeziums and the rhombus (they also drew connections between shapes and symmetry and floral arrangements in Botany).



The children also explored perimeter and area and some algebraic formulae, in addition to tackling both number sentences - where problem-solving was paramount – together with some ‘open-ended’ maths questions (open-ended is where there is more than one answer to the maths problem presented).

THE ARTS

During Semester 2, Class 5 continued to explore a variety of Arts subjects – from speech and poetry recital and morning singing, to mosaic work as a part of our studies of Ancient Rome, wet-painting, collage and poster art. In addition to these, the Children are encouraged to take pride and present their Main Lesson work and books as an example of dynamic and colourful visual works of art. Class 5 children also had the opportunity to participate in Ensemble and Choir as a regular weekly part of our Class 5 Arts program, culminating in a performance at our Michaelmas and Christmas concerts in Terms 3 and 4 respectively.

SCIENCE/HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY

In Term 3 Class 5 children investigated their local region – States and Territory – producing a detailed Report in poster form, which covered land-use, points of interest, State and Territory emblems and physical geography of their chosen region. In Botany, the children explored the various stages in the life and times of a plant, selecting plant samples from our bush block and producing detailed drawings of each. They also examined the needs of a plant – based on the elements: air, earth, water and heat – compared with the needs of people and observed the many similarities.

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Class 5 enjoyed participating in a range of Health and PE subjects this semester. These included Ball Sports, Swimming, Tennis, as well as daily Yogic practice and class games. A highlight for many was playing their final Soccer game (integrated with studies of the History of Rome) at Marrara Stadium complete with its huge playing field and Romanesque stadium. The Children also enjoyed the life-saving skills part of their Swimming sessions and striving for their personal best in working through the different levels in swimming. Tennis, complete with mini-nets and appropriate balls to suit gave the children the opportunity to further their co-ordination skills, hand-eye motor skills and spatial awareness. Although our cooking and gardening were limited this past semester, when we did plan and practice both, Class 5 children, as always, rose to the occasion.

TECHNOLOGY

Class 5 have mainly employed technology during our Outdoor Education overnight camp and in maths (geometry) and drawing work this semester.

Class 6 Semester One 2017

In the Steiner Curriculum Australia Framework, both classes 5 & 6 require consolidation of foundation skills and knowledge, therefore Class 6 students have followed the same Main Lessons and units of work as the Class 5 students for this Semester, with additional extension work and some additional Class 6 subjects as detailed below.

ENGLISH

The Wonder & Wisdom of Words: Students are introduced to more complex and artful writing and speech. They are encouraged to use ‘writers’ tools’, such as shorter sentences to create impact or build suspense, experiment more with vocabulary, take risks with their writing, and enlist the help of a Thesaurus in order to broaden their literary knowledge and so they will understand English as it gets more complex in the upper primary and secondary years. We created many sensory experiences, from time in the bush block, work with clay, paper-mache and wet painting, together with excursions to places like the WWII storage tunnels and trips to Fogg Dam, to provide students with sensory activity that will support their blossoming creative writing skills.

MATHEMATICS

Number & Algebra: Students draw and construct shapes in various contexts and situations. This may include garden layout design and calculations, topographic mapping and using resources such as MAB blocks or matchsticks, to measure things such as size, via perimeter and area. Students identify existing number patterns and foundations are laid for higher order thinking. They solve problems based on the interpretation of commonly encountered sources of information such as timetables, shopping receipts, bills, bank statements etc.

ASTRONOMY

Students learn the names, pictures and stories of the most common bright stars and constellations, the movements through the year, the movement of the sun, moon and planets to gain a relationship to the night sky which can



accompany them the rest of their lives. Students observe the night sky and cosmos at camp and in their daily lives over time and hear ancient and indigenous myths of the celestial world. Students pay particular attention to the Southern Sky and identify The Southern Cross and its changes and movement during the night and year.

GEOGRAPHY

Australia and the World Beyond: In Class 6, students now expand to the 'home' continent – with particular emphasis on polarities (urban-rural, plains-mountains, coastal-inland); often linked by the course of great rivers. Students continue to experience an approach linking physical geography and climate to vegetation, natural resources and basic economics (coal, mining, forestry, fishing, trade, tourism) as well as infrastructure. The students' understanding and experience is extended through painting and drawing the earth's main mountain ranges, the oceans and distribution of the continents. The links between major vegetation types and amount of sun and rain is made. Vegetation types explored include forests, deserts, temperate zones, and arctic regions. The great rivers are studied as individual. Students explore the distribution of major natural resources and are introduced to narrative examples of regional and world trade and economic considerations.

Class 6 -Semester Two 2017

ENGLISH - *As with Class 5, but Class 6 were given more challenging tasks and asked to lead more often.*

In Class 6 English this Semester our class continued to explore the various aspects of the English language and expression through a variety of experiences and genres. Each child participated in a broad range of oral language exercises; from speech, poetry and verse, using instructional English during our 'Sharing our Skills' sessions in Term 3, through to presenting their opinions in a lively debate in our 'mock parliament' as a part of Roman History Main Lesson at the end of Term 4. The Children wrote and illustrated Children's books; in the process making choices about the everything from the content of their narrative and its intended audience to the layout and design. The Children also retold the story of Rome's founding fathers, Romulus & Remus, in their own words, and wrote a recount 'A Day in the Life of an Ancient Roman'. This Semester too, we explored a variety of poetry culminating with the Children writing some poetry of their own, from Limericks to Palindromes (mirror poems).

MATHEMATICS

Class 6 Mathematics this semester continued to build on foundation mathematical understandings and knowledge so that the children are ready for more abstract maths concepts and problems presented in the higher years of schooling. Through a combination of games, hands-on activities (including number charts, MAB blocks, props such as rope, pegs and sandy surfaces) work-sheets and whole-class instruction and problem-solving examples, the children practiced work with larger numbers and combined processes to extend their mathematical thinking through more complex problems and investigations. In Geometry, they explored shapes and measurement using new tools to ensure precision and detail were paramount. The Children created eye-catching visual designs using compasses, rulers and protractors as they explored shapes including: circles, parallelograms, various types of triangle, the square, rectangles, trapeziums and the rhombus (they also drew connections between shapes and symmetry and floral arrangements in Botany).

The children also explored perimeter and area and some algebraic formulae, in addition to tackling both number sentences - where problem-solving was paramount – together with some 'open-ended' maths questions (open-ended is where there is more than one answer to the maths problem presented). For Business Maths, we calculated things like how much money we could make if we sold some frozen fruit cups donated by Carolyn's class and worked out 'profit vs return' in order to price our Children's Books – ascertaining that as authors the children served to make very little, if any, money unless a letter requesting Sponsorship was written to our Milkwood Business Manager, Dave.

THE ARTS - *as with Class 5; however Children were encouraged to deepen their practice.*

During Semester 2, Class 6 continued to explore a variety of Arts subjects – from speech and poetry recital and morning singing, to mosaic work as a part of our studies of Ancient Rome, wet-painting, collage and poster art. In addition to these, the Children are encouraged to take pride and present their Main Lesson work and books as an example of dynamic and colourful visual works of art. Class 6 children also had the opportunity to participate in Ensemble and Choir as a regular weekly part of our Class 6 Arts program, culminating in a performance at our Michaelmas and Christmas concerts in Terms 3 and 4 respectively.



SCIENCE/HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY -

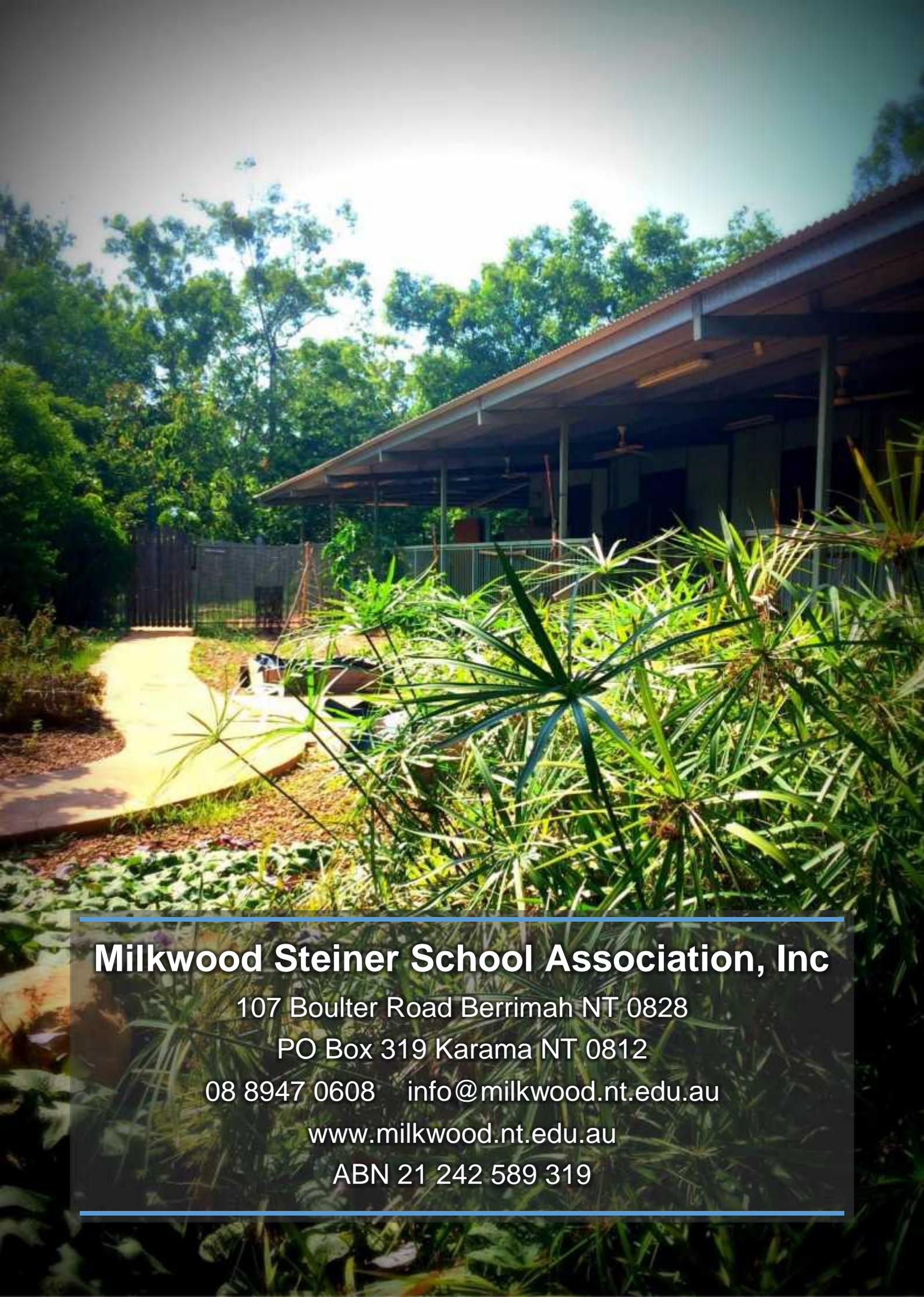
In early Term 3, Class 6 Children finished their Australian Studies unit culminating in a presentation where they produced a paper-mache topographical map of their chosen State or Territory and poster to compliment an oral presentation to the class. They worked in pairs and were assessed on numerous criteria relating to key features and places people like to visit, industry, history and 'points of interest' in their chosen State/Territory. We also followed up on our Astronomy studies that started with some observations whilst on camp in late Term 2, completing a moon-chart and a brief article on the History of Astronomy. In Term 4, we studied the History of Rome, interspersed with some outings in our local region with Di Lucas and an overnight Camp in Litchfield in October. As a part of our Australian Studies we compared our Territory Parliament with Rome's political history and that of its institutions such as the Senate and the democratic vote.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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