On 24th July, year 8 students were invited to the Sydney Opera House by Opera Australia to view a stage orchestral of the opera, La Traviata. Students participated in some introductory workshops and activities before viewing act one. After the viewing, students were able to ask questions of a singer as well as a person in charge of props and sets.

Students commented on the day:
Rachel: “I’ve never been inside the Opera House before so it was amazing to actually go inside and watch an opera. The workshops were very informative and gave a different perspective to operas and the Opera House. Overall, it was an exciting and entertaining day.”

Jacqueline: “It was an amazing experience seeing opera for the first time. Viewing the rehearsal was a worthwhile experience. It was an amazing day that I would go on again.”

Rachelle: “The theatre workshops were very worthwhile to go and experience. The day was a once in a lifetime opportunity.”

Aaliyah: “I’ve never been to the Opera House so that was a whole new experience. The workshops really gave a good overview on opera like how many people are involved and how hard it is to sing opera. I would love to go again to an opera, it was an amazing experience.”

Mrs James
Head Teacher CAPA
I have been at this school for a very short time but it is already clear the depth of talent at Robert Townson High School in the students and the teaching staff. I have been welcomed very warmly by all and will relieve as Principal for the remainder of this year. There are many programs in full implementation at the school to support learning for all students and give everyone the chance to excel and achieve their very best.

Public School Ambassador
The ceremony to recognise public school ambassadors throughout the region was held on August 8 and Melissa Holt (Year 11) represented the school with distinction. She was also awarded one of the few Regional Ambassador positions which shows how Melissa is an exemplary student of which we are very proud.

We also had numerous students perform at the regional Ambassador Ceremony in front of hundreds of people. Matilda Petelo (Year 9) signed for the National Anthem and Munia Latif (Yr 9), Matilda Petelo (Yr 9), Tamika Icasuriaga-Brasier (Yr 8) and Veronica Browne (Yr 7) performed as part of an ensemble of schools in a dance item.

Thank you to Ms Pape for her support and coordination of this group. Robert Townson High School continues to show how we are providing excellent opportunities to all our students.

Literacy improvements
I would like to welcome Mrs R Wright to our staff as a Head Teacher who will be overseeing our Improving Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership to improve the literacy achievement of students through working with teachers to further develop the quality of learning taking place. A dedicated team of teachers are working with her and we are particularly targeting improving literacy results in Year 7 and 8.

Vocational Education
Mr Ramos, one of our teachers within the Technology faculty has won a teachers award at the Regional Vocational and Training Awards presented on Monday 12th August. Three of our students: Aalia Sipos; Cynthia Alguerno; Mark McLeod and Jacob Russell have won school awards for excellence in vocational education and are in line for the coveted regional awards. I wish them luck and congratulate them for their hard work, commitment and achievements.

Year 11 2014 Subject Selections
Year 10 will be attending a Subject Selection Evening on Tuesday 13th August to prepare for their studies in Year 11 2014. It is most important to attend as the selections for courses that are made will impact on their commitment and engagement in their senior studies. As a general rule, it is important to choose subjects that students have an interest in and have previously shown some success.

Drama Festival
Our Year 9/10 Drama Company are involved in the Regional Drama Festival at Campbelltown Arts Centre on Friday 16th August. This includes schools from throughout the region and after auditioning to participate last term they won the right to perform. They will be performing a work created by Ms Stevenson called 'There's Something in the Water'. It is about a water contamination scandal in a small town that has disastrous consequences. Good luck to the following students in their upcoming performance: Emma Lown; April Walker; Caitlin Ramondetta; Emilia Bulloch; Bailey Dymitriw; Tegan Dinning; Celina Touma; Taylah Middleton; Briony Chu and Jasmine Haddad. It’s clear that the performances of our students have earned a high reputation throughout the community.

Visual Arts and Industrial Technology Exhibition
Our annual exhibition showing the magnificent work of our students will be held in the school library from 6pm on Wednesday 21st August. It is a testament to the hard work and talents of our students and teachers. I would like to encourage all of you to come along and support our students.
Principal’s Message

This newsletter is the first for Semester II and it will show how much can change in such a short time. As many of you know, two days before the end of last term I was asked to undertake a special leadership project based in Sydney. With so few days available between undertaking the new job and finalising my current projects as principal, I asked my new state office employers for an extension. They gave me a week. During that time I notified all staff, students (not year 12 as they were undertaking their trial examinations) and the Parents and Citizens Body. This is the first opportunity I have had to address you the community and let you know what is happening. Despite the week’s grace it was a rushed time. For terms 3 and 4 I will be assisting secondary schools around the state in implementing the new I am booked in to advise many more. That will mean travelling to schools such as Kyogle, Coonamble, Merimbula, Parkes and more. Though the experience is tiring I am gaining as much from the job as I am giving (maybe more). The plan is that my current project will conclude on the last day of this school year. In the meantime our school has been very fortunate to secure the services of Mr. Leon Weatherstone as relieving principal. Mr Weatherstone comes to us from Ingleburn High School and has undertaken many leadership roles across our region. It has been a very rapid transition for the both us. I hope you make him feel as welcome as I have felt. I still have several opportunities to meet with various members of the school community at up and coming awards and presentation evenings and recognition ceremonies and I hope to see many of you there.

Mr Warren Parkes
Principal

Futsal Success

Congratulations to our 16 Years Boys Futsal Team. On Thursday last week they were runners up in the State Futsal Championships, competing against students from all sectors. Thank you to Mr Kelava for his coaching and support of the boys, a truly phenomenal achievement.

Parents and Citizens Meetings

I would like to encourage you all to attend P&C Meetings held on the second Wednesday of every month during school terms from 7pm. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 11th September. I am most impressed at the hard work and dedication of the small group of ladies to assist the school in a variety of ways to improve the education of students. I am sure they would welcome any new members to participate and make a positive contribution to the school.

Leon Weatherstone
Relieving Principal
At this time Year 12 have completed their Trial HSC exams and in the remainder of the term will complete the final topics for the HSC. It is important that students work with staff to clarify any areas of weakness. Students will receive information linked to leaving school with reference forms completed by staff.

All students should realise that a personal or school reference from a teacher is indicative of the students’ behaviour and attitude. Students who continually refuse to wear the correct school uniform are unlikely to be as fully supported as those who support community standards.

Year 10 parents have had their subject selection evening and Year 8 have received their junior prospectus for year 9 and 10 electives. Choices MUST be returned by the due date.

Mr R Morrow
Deputy Principal

As we settle into Term 3, students continue with extra activities as well as attending school including work placement, the Trainee Tradies and Volunteer Program (VATT) and the Quik-Shine program.

The VATT students from Years 7-11 received a boost in the form of a Keep Australia Beautiful Community Litter grant. The students are helping a local scouts group and other community groups to streetscape a recreational area at Appin. It involves landscaping and working with Wollondilly Council in developing a plan of action with the project due to be completed by November 2013. The VATT team has already completed several projects including a fence, brick retaining walls and a ramp at the Appin Scouts Hall. Master tradespeople have instructed the students in these activities with the work being completed to a high standard.

The first QuikShine team of Year 9 girls will complete their training in beauty therapy this term and are preparing to go out to aged care facilities to work with people and make their lives a little brighter. Mrs Hogan and Mrs Costello will accompany the girls to support them in this community project.

Unfortunately we have not heard any information from our partner TAFE’s (Macquarie Fields and Padstow) regarding short courses for students in Years 9-11 during Semester 2 as these courses are dependent upon government funding. There are still courses available with Café Horizons (Cabramatta) and Cake Kulcha (Campbelltown) if students are interested in barista training, food preparation and service. Students are able to enrol in TAFE courses through TVET and should see Mr Bannura, our Careers Adviser for more information.

The VATT team has constructed the brick wall and ramp at Appin Scouts Hall this year as well as fence repairs due to vandalism.
Our school was well represented by Melissa Holt and Grant Lewis of Year 11. The competition was held on June 27, right at the weariest part of term. Both students were questioned by a panel of three judges who asked them about general knowledge, leadership, community participation and so on, in a fifteen-minute interview. This interview was worth 60% of their overall marks. Judges were Ms Emma Macfarlane (Commercial Litigation Solicitor), Mr Ray Slack (Rotarian and Company Director) and Lady Katrina Hobhouse (Commercial Beef Producer, a member of the famous local Macarthur family.)

After the afternoon interviews, students then made a four-minute prepared speech on a topic of their own choice. This was followed by a one-minute impromptu speech with no preparation time. Grant’s topic was ‘Bridges’, and Melissa’s was ‘Rainbows’.

Both Grant and Melissa represented us extremely well and were congratulated by many. While not victorious on this occasion, they were wonderful representatives of our school.

Ms C Wright

Once again our school has made a terrific contribution to Wrap With Love – an organisation whose goal is to support cold humanity. A big thank you goes out to the mums, grandmas (of staff and students), and staff who knitted or donated yarn for this wonderful project.

We also had a big contribution from our local hearing impaired community who donated beautiful knitted and crocheted wraps already complete. We totalled 297 squares and 13 wraps altogether.

It’s great to know that a small effort on our part (though it was a big effort for some of our brilliant contributors) can end up making a real and practical difference to someone’s life. I’d especially like to thank my own 90 year old mum who has knitted up a storm for us every year since we began. She says she’s slowing down now, but she still managed to produce enough squares for 7 wraps!

I hope you’ll support this project again next year.

Ms C Wright
Uniform Reminder — Shoes

**ACCEPTABLE FOOTWEAR**
For daily wear AND practical subjects

Black fully enclosed shoes with leather upper and white socks—girls, grey socks—boys

**UNACCEPTABLE FOOTWEAR**
For daily wear AND practical subjects

These shoes or white sports shoes are ONLY acceptable during SPORT.

These shoes are acceptable for daily wear but NOT practical subjects
A reminder to all that students must have a complete change of clothes and the appropriate footwear for all PDHPE practical lessons. The school has a sports uniform that can be purchased from the uniform shop. If a student is unable to wear the correct sports uniform (it may be dirty, wet, not currently available or they have outgrown their uniform) an appropriate change of sports clothing should be bought in so the student can still participate, with an accompanying note that explains to the teacher why the student is not in their correct uniform. **SINGLETS SHOULD NOT BE WORN IN ANY PDHPE LESSON.**

Students are also encouraged to bring a hat, sunscreen and a drink to all practical PDHPE lessons.

A reminder that spray deodorants are not permitted at school and will be confiscated by PDHPE staff. Students are encouraged to bring a roll on deodorant.

As a faculty, we welcome Mr Piscioneri and Mr Dawson to the PDHPE staff. Both teachers have been working across the school this year but will now have a PDHPE focus on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Craig Innes
Head Teacher PDHPE

HIU

Term 3 is proving to be another busy term for the students in the Hearing Impaired Unit, with students involved in a large variety of activities across the curriculum.

The HIU Drummers, who are now equipped with beautiful African-style drums, have been beating away. Their first public performance was at the school's Education Week Morning Tea and was very successful. Their next major performance will be at Darling Harbour on 19th October as part of the International Deaf Festival. The Festival includes stalls, entertainment and activities and you are all encouraged to go along to Darling Harbour, soak in the festival atmosphere and support our wonderful drummers!

While on the topic of entertainment, students of the HIU have again been selected to dance in the annual School Spectacular which is being held this year on 29th and 30th November. We look forward to joining public schools throughout NSW in celebrating thirty years of School Spectacular. Four of our students were involved recently in a dance performance for the Regional Ambassadors Awards night that was held at the Revesby Workers Club while one student, Matlida, signed the National Anthem at the start of the evening.

Students in Stage 6 recently visited the Casula Powerhouse to participate in the gallery's Auslan Self Guided Vodcast Tour. This tour involves using a smart phone or tablet to scan QR codes which upload a linked video in Auslan describing a nearby artwork or feature. The Open Mi Tours provide a fantastic new service to Deaf people and are available at various galleries and Museums. The Stage 4 and 5 students are learning about Australian history at the moment and will be able to participate in an Open Mi Tour when they visit Hyde Park Barracks later this term.

Auslan classes commenced this Term for students and teachers wanting to learn more about sign language and improve their skills. The classes are held at lunchtimes on Tuesdays at the Townson Cafe and are open to everyone. The response so far has been very positive.

The netball team which was formed as a result of training provided by Alana Bradley at school last year has had a great season with the Campbeltown Netball Association. Parents and supporters have been there every week cheering on the team and our school recently hosted a Deaf Netball gala day. At the end of August, the team will be travelling to Canberra to play in the **National Deaf Netball Club Championships 2013. We wish them luck.**
Recently students completed their creative writing competition. Winners were selected from each year group. Below are extracts from each winner’s story.

**Year 7 Winner**  
**Hope Swanepoel 7E**  
(The story is concentrating on a successful plot)  
**Cleo’s Murder**

One night a teenage girl came back from the pub. She was at the train station waiting and waiting until… A man jumped up from behind and said, “Give me your money, and your watch.” She refused to give him her money and watch. He took out his gun and BANG! He shot her with no mercy. Finally her train came, but she was lying on the ground, dead.

The next morning police, parents and the ambulance were checking for prints and more evidence, but still nothing. The girl who died was named Cleo Clark. She was 17 and had partied with her friends that night. Her friends were crying and also her family members. Three hours later they fund a gun, the one that murdered Cleo. The police were surprised and looked for more evidence.

The police had found fingerprints, so they searched for the person who touched it last. His name was John Carter, and the police named him as a suspect. John said, “I swear I didn’t do anything. I only sold the gun to a woman!”

The police asked who she was and wanted to know what she looked like. John told them everything. They found another suspect and asked him questions, but he had a believable alibi, so they thought he couldn’t be the right one.

Cleo’s mother was heartbroken to hear that her daughter was shot, and the police never gave up on that case – they kept searching.

The detective and his partner were looking at some criminal records with photos and asking John Carter if he could recognise the women, but as yet there was no luck. But they found something suspicious about the mother. She had some blood on her bracelet, so the detective asked her some questions.

Cleo’s mother refused to answer and walked out, but the detective stopped her and asked, “Did you kill your daughter?”

She burst into tears and said, “Yes.”

The detective softly asked, “Why?”

“I needed some money and I loved her watch but she got it first… she wouldn’t give it to me!” she yelled.

The police grabbed her hands and said, “You’re under arrest for the murder of Cleo Clark.”

They took her to jail after she was found guilty.

**Year 8 Winner**  
**Bonnie Kuru 8S**  
(This story is concentrating on setting.)

I never want to return. Every day I do whatever I can to try not to come back, but in the end I somehow always end up back in the same dirty place. Once I almost did it! I spent the whole night curled up on a hard park bench, later found by the police and dragged back home. I have nobody. No friends, no family, nobody. Let’s face it, nobody wants to hang out with that weird girl who lives in the woods. So instead I’m stuck with the crazy man downstairs, who is probably too high to care about what I’m about to do. And I am going to do it. I have to.

I shove the last ratty pair of underwear into my broken backpack and seal it with a safety pin. I don’t own much so that should make this much easier. I observe the room I once loved. One small plain bed, one wooden seat, one old cupboard, and one little hand mirror. Not much to mourn about.

I slip into my brown volleys. I’m not sure if they are going to survive the events to come. I hear clashes of glass and wall meeting and know this is my last chance. I can do this. I can do this. I can do this. I inhale a deep breath and regret it instantly as the thick taste of dirt and whisky choke me. Yuk. I pull the door closed on my horrible room of memories with a loud squeak. I hear the smashing stop. Oh no.

“Alice?” Oh no, no, no, NO! I stay quiet. “What are you doing?” My heart pounds against my ribcage, breaking delicate bones. I see the old wooden door just below the stairs. I sprint with all my might, dashing down the stairs.
The floorboards groan under each foot, and I know that if I don’t make this, the consequences will be bad. As I reach the bottom I lunge for the door handle. Feeling its splintery surface in my hand, I have hope.

All is destroyed as I feel a giant hand clasp the back of my shoulders, his dirty fingernails pinching the flesh that shows. My breath catches in my throat and the colour drains form my face as the hand spins me around to reveal the bloodshot eyes of my father. “Where do you think you’re going?”

I guess I should have seen it coming. The flying slap, straight out of nowhere, planting itself right on my cheek with perfect aim. The impact throws me hard against the door and my legs give way. Colours swirl before my eyes and the man before me stumbles onto the floor. What just happened?

I can’t concentrate. The wall. It is pale pink with … green flowers? No, yellow flowers with green stems. I guess that’s something. Concentrate Alice. What is that? The man who raised me is curled on the ground, hunched over, throwing up all over himself. He looks at me, his eyes now scared and soft, screaming to me to stay. But I know this is a trick. I know after the many years of being hit, that this man is a fake.

Year 9 Winner
Brittney Cable 9EC
(This story is concentrating on character.)

I sat outside on the porch, watching the clouds mix with shades of grey and white. Holding onto the only memory I had left, wondering how it all began. In my hand a photograph, a photograph my brother took right before the tragedy. It’s hard to remember my life and how I felt before, even with hours of therapy or just talking to random strangers on the train; I felt I was living in an endless cycle.

The day it happened, I woke up to prepare to go to my University. I wore a green coat that my mother sent in order to prepare for the winter season. She wrote a letter saying it would match my dark brown hair and deep hazel eyes. She was always a charmer. I walked into my local coffee shop and sat at the booth in the back. I never drank coffee there because it felt like I was drinking glue. I came here for the view, you could see all of New York and its wonder from that window. Ever since I was a little girl, my dream was to take on New York, live there, work there, and do everything. I guess you could say it came true but every night before I went to sleep I never felt truly satisfied.

I studied at film school and it was great, very rewarding for my future, but I always had doubts. I always asked ‘What if?’ ‘What if I’m not good at this?’ ‘What I there’s something better?’ But my teacher always reassured me when I was concerned or anxious, I guess in a way she helped me.

I walked to Uni that day. The sun was out but with a chilly breeze; I loved those days. I left the coffee shop letting the wind hit me and blow my coat. As I walked, watching all the scenery around me, I saw a building, a beautiful old building. It was like when you aunty buys you an antique and you know it’s precious. I immediately thought of my brother. He was a photographer who loved taking photos of places and putting them into collages, but my father always saw it as a hobby and nothing more. Even then my brother could care less. It was his escape, his chance to show the beauty of the world, and he did.

I left school early that day. I wasn’t feeling my best. However I rang my brother to tell him about the site and he was extremely excited. We continued to talk for hours until there was nothing left to task about. He arranged to go down the next day with me to have a bit of a brother and sister time.

The next day my brother pulled up in a silver Nissan, picking me up form University. We headed to the site. When we arrived, his face immediately perked up and I was glad. He set up his equipment asked me to be in it, which kind of surprised me. He gave me his white umbrella because it was slightly sprinkling with rain. As I stood there, growing slightly impatient, I saw an old man walk up the stairs with a scratchie in his hands. His face expressed joy towards the card, but soon his face turned red, his hand clutched his shirt and as he fell down the stairs right below my feet, my heart shattered.

That day I saw someone die right before my eyes. I could only imagine how his family felt. I ran into his son one day at my coffee shop. Eli told me his father had been in the war, married the love of his life and had four children. He was always up for a great adventure and loved football. His name was Henry.

Call it coincidence, fate, or even destiny, but in the end I married Eli and when we had our first son we named him Henry. Life can be unfair, challenging, confusing, yet also wonderful. Sometimes we can’t control what happens in life, but we have to move on and accept. I struggle seeing Henry’s piercing eyes when I see Eli, but I know life is precious. But in my case life is also ironic.
Guilty

The storm was a black beast whose growls were silenced as I closed the heavy door behind me. I walked slowly to the front of the courtroom, my footsteps echoing in the silence, where the magistrate was seated, waiting. She eyed the tattoos that snaked their way up my neck, her gaze heavily disapproving. She spoke in a hushed voice to my lawyer, and tears of sweat glistened on my forehead. I bit my lip so hard that I tasted the metallic tang of blood. The magistrate’s harsh voice reverberated as she asked me the question I did not yet have an answer to. “What does the defendant plead?” She stared at me as my thoughts flashed back to the reason I was here.

Rain pelted on my windshield, the thunder crashing and lightning streaking across the sky as I sped down the rain slickened road. Vodka splashed from the open bottle to the floor of my car as I turned a sharp corner, my hands savagely gripping the steering wheel. My broken heart pounded in time with the thunder that rampaged through the clouds as memory of my girlfriend cheating on me flashed across my mind. I pressed harder on the accelerator and started to speed dangerously.

Branches form the trees created claws that reached out to scratch my car, the high pitched shrill sound penetrating the air. I sped faster.

There were no cars in sight as I approached the intersection with the rain blurring my vision. As the alcohol took hold of me, my eyes started to close. Only then did I see the blaring headlights headed toward me. The rain continued to pelt, the thunder still booming as I slammed on the brakes. It was too late, the collision was unavoidable.

The shriek of metal against metal sounded and glass filtered to the floor. It was over before it began.

The silence that followed was ripped apart by the scream of a child as her world cascaded around her. My eyes scanned the front seat where I found the broken mother.

I was transported back to the silent courtroom as the magistrate repeated her question. I found the child, grasping her father’s hand as tears streamed down her face. I thought of all I had taken from her and knew my answer.

“My voice shook as I replied, tremors racking my body as I thought of the black and white stripes I would soon be wearing. “Guilty.”

Libby opened the creaky fly screen door and sat down on the step of the caravan. She took a deep, unsteady breath and counted slowly to ten on her head. Her muscles slowly unclenched and the bitterness that had bunched up in the base of her neck gently subsided. A car drove past, raising up a storm of dust and sending the cockatoos into an unsettling panic. Their squawks grated against the peace of the morning air and drove frustration back up through Libby’s thoughts. She flicked her hair out of her face and sighed. The sun began to rise, sending splotches of light through the trees and intensifying the pale and cool morning colours. People began to get up, emerging sleepily out of their caravans, armed with mugs of tea and shrill laughter.

There was some shuffling around behind Libby and she turned to see her father searching around the kitchen. His blanket was draped over his shoulders like a robe and his face held all the signs of a restless night. Almost in habit he slammed the toast into the toaster and pulled out a plate. He grabbed the orange juice from the fridge, and finding only dirty glasses, took a big swig straight from the bottle. Libby cringed and went to make herself a cup of tea.

“Damn it!” her father bellowed explosively, making Libby jump. She turned around questioningly and saw her father staring at the toast he had dropped on the ground. His mouth curled with displeasure and he tossed his knife into the sink. “I’m going to bed,” he muttered.

Libby finished making her tea and cleaned up the crumbs, jam and cold toast from the floor. She waited a while, then crept over to her father’s room. He hadn’t even made the effort to put the pillow back on his bed.

A word sprang to mind, and she rolled it over a few times, testing it. A month ago she would never have believed it would fit her father so perfectly, but as it settled on her tongue she knew it was true. “Defeated,” she said and the word hung in the air, turning stale. Her father grunted and rolled over.

“You say something?” he mumbled, rubbing his eyes.

“When are you going to find a job?” she snapped.

“I had a job.”
(This story is based on the concept of Belonging.)

“It was a lie,” he thought wryly, “when they said that your life flashed before your eyes.”

The sun beat down harshly upon the pavement as a number of hazy figures struck boulders with equal force, their pick axes clinking with each strike. The men surrounding them, clad in monotonous uniforms, garnered whips which they used to lash out at tired, hungry mortals.

The bell sounded for supper just as the fifth lash had met with skin and they all shuffled into the tiny mess hall, their manacles clinking with each step. The same gentlemen with their uniformed skin surrounded them, this time armed with guns, watching them like hawks. He dreamt of those eyes that night.

The sun glared at them when they went back out, rocks turning inexplicably into diamonds as their guardians surrounded them yet again. There was movement in the corner of his eyes as he turned, as they all did, to the sound of a whip meeting flesh. It was one of the men from before, the tired and hungry soul resting for a moment to breathe. He’d hit the chain-link fence just as the whip collided yet again with his face. They watched as he was surrounded and dragged towards one of the compound’s buildings, and resumed work.

Supper was no different from the night before, the same tasteless morsels of food with just enough nutrients to last the night. There was a bang from the left corridor as the same man from the afternoon came through, flanked by two looming uniformed guardians. He met his gaze, eyes boring through him as if he were trying to convey a message he couldn’t decipher. They were headed towards ‘the room’, their activities hidden behind closed doors, their screaming the only sound echoing throughout the building. He did not dream that night.

The sounds of murmuring woke him the next day, the others rushing to put some form of clothing on as the guardians hurriedly ushered them out. They were led towards the courtyard, scattered trees providing little shade in their barren states as the sun beat down just as relentlessly, yet he felt a comfort long forgotten in its constant heat. More uniformed men stood out front, more regal than the others, as they were put into rows. He dared to hope for an end to this life as the gentlemen spoke in a language foreign to his ears. But when they started dousing him and his company in a liquid he was all too familiar with, all scraps of hope he had were gone.

The relentless sun turned into a comfort he thought was but a far off memory. Looking up towards the blue sky, his darling sun, who had watched him most of his life, was accompanied by a bird. As if in mourning for what was to come, it cried out and loomed above them for several moments before speeding off into the horizon. He closed his eyes and smiled.

“How ironic,” he thought as the feelings of anger and sadness never came. He never thought his life would end up where it was at that moment, but then again, who would? He looked up at the sun yet again as the smooth caressing of the flames kissed his skin intimately like a lover welcoming him home.

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On Wednesday the 31st of July, my fellow classmates and I went on an excursion to St Peters for a delightful day to see Romeo and Juliet live in theatre at the King Street Theatre. We caught the train over to St Peters station and walked for about 5 minutes to get there. Everyone broke off to get some food as we were 45 minutes early. The theatre looked small but everyone managed to get in.

The play was set in Cronulla with still the same plot and characters but had an Aussie style to it. The actors were very talented and managed to pull it off.

Overall the play was successful and was great. This excursion was worthwhile.

Miss Park deserves big thanks for organising this excursion and Mrs Douglas for being able to take us students to this excursion. This excursion was a great event and everyone is glad they went.

Written by Kimberly Betts 9EP
On the 27th and 28th of June a group of senior leaders attended a Senior Leadership Camp at Teen Ranch. The camp went over a course of two days, where we were asked to step outside of our comfort zones and work as a team to complete a series of different activities and challenges. The camp was aimed at preparing us for different situations we may be faced with as senior leaders such as working effectively in a team environment. At the camp we did things like rock climbing, high ropes, abseiling, archery and many different group activities which all required us to work together and trust each other. The camp was a very helpful and fun experience. All the activities that we did allowed us to work to the best of our ability and were very fun. Thank you to everyone involved, including all the staff at Teen Ranch, Ms Griffiths and Mr Kapitanow for organising the camp and to all the students who took part. Overall, it was a great experience.

Manal Hallal, Khalid Al-Najjar and Cameron Rodgers
FROM THE WELFARE/SUPPORT DESKS…
Ensure the school office has all up to date medical and contact details for your child/ward. It is vital that we can contact you in an emergency.

AFFORD Work Readiness Program
Eight students in Years 10 and 11 benefited from a series of weekly workshops in Term 2 preparing for work. It was a worthwhile experience with positive comments from students including “better prepared for leaving school” and “provided opportunities to discuss really important topics”. The group even tried ‘yoga/tai chi’ stress management techniques!

Year 9 Peer Leaders
Congratulations to our Year 9 Peer Leaders for 2013. They begin leadership training with two day activities at Teen Ranch on 20th and 21st August. Our Peer Leaders will work with the incoming Year 6 students next term during their transition to high school program. It will be a busy semester for them. Mrs Wood & Mrs Gile (Year 9 Year Advisers) are looking forward to working with such an impressive bunch of young people!

Cyberbullying and Online Safety Seminars
Our School is committed to providing a safe environment for our students - your children. Bullying and the use of social media and other technologies to bully others is an increasing problem in society. Research says that more than 60% of 12-13 year olds have witnessed cyber bullying. Miss Beeten & myself are conducting seminars in Years 8 & 9 during Terms 3 & 4 to discuss cyberbullying and safety online. Tips about privacy settings and obligations about posting photos and comments are being discussed. Parents and carers are encouraged to have open dialogue about online use. For further tips for parents go to www.cybersmart.gov.au.

Wear It Purple Day 30th August 2013
The School will be recognising this day to celebrate the diversity of school communities nationally and to see sexuality and gender diverse “rainbow” students safer, more supported and celebrated in their schools. Rainbow young people often feel like they are perceived as “different” to their peers, leading to isolation and feelings of insecurity about their identity. Bullying, intimidation and harassment are also not uncommon experiences for these students. At Robert Townson High school we do not accept discrimination on any basis, including gender, race, religion or for any reason! Students will hear messages in the DIS during the lead up to Wear It Purple Day and will have the opportunity to be involved in an education program.

Scoliosis Self-Detection for Girls in Years 7 & 9
August is National Scoliosis Self-Detection month. All girls in Years 7 & 9 will receive a brochure outlining the importance of checking for spinal curvature. There is an online forum that parents and girls are encouraged to access with any questions that you may have...go to www.scoliosis-australia.org/scoliosis/self_detection_prog.html
Should you wish to enquire about any of these programs or any other wellbeing issue contact me at School.

Till next time,
Mrs Sally Willmott
Head Teacher Welfare
2012 HSC Visual Arts student Jordan Fowell’s body of work was selected for the ArtExpress exhibition and he also received the Australia Post sponsored award. *ArtExpress is a Board of Studies and Department of Education and Training touring exhibition which recognises exemplary artworks created by students for their Higher School Certificate Examination in Visual Arts.* Jordan’s work is currently on display at Shoalhaven City Arts Centre, 12 Berry Street Nowra, from 19th July to 14th August 2013. For a full list of Metropolitan and Regional Exhibition dates and to find out more about the exhibition, visit: [http://artexpress.artsunit.nsw.edu.au](http://artexpress.artsunit.nsw.edu.au). You will find Jordan’s work in the drawing section at [http://artexpress.artsunit.nsw.edu.au/2013Drawing.html](http://artexpress.artsunit.nsw.edu.au/2013Drawing.html).

*Mrs James*
Head Teacher Creative & Performing Arts

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**Library**

The year has once again sped past and it is almost Book Week. Book week is the longest running children’s festival in Australia. It is organised by the Children’s Book Council of Australia to celebrate Australian books, authors, and illustrators; and highlight the importance of reading.

This year Book Week will be celebrated between Saturday 17th and Friday 23rd August. Winners of the Book of the Year will be announced on Friday August 16th. Unfortunately, the deadline for this letter is before the announcement, but I will put a link in the library section of the school website which will take you to the site where the winners are announced. Most of the nominated books will be on display in the library and available for borrowing shortly after book week.

The Love2Read campaign was launched as a legacy of the 2012 National Year of Reading. It aims to support the goal of Australia continuing to be a nation of readers. Australia is amongst the highest book-buying nations per capita in the world. The designated Reading Hour is Saturday 24th August at 5pm, and it aims to have as many people as possible reading at the same time. One way to join in is to read during that hour and encourage your children to follow your example.

Every month I put a variety of our new acquisitions on the school website with a short description of each. If you would like to check out what we have recently acquired follow the links to the library page.

I continue to have a problem with overdue books. We do not issue fines for overdue items, but we do issue overdue notices every two weeks so if your child has an overdue notice please help us by getting them to return the item. If a student still needs a book by the due date we will often renew it but they need to see us in the library to arrange the renewal. If a book happens to be lost or damaged beyond repair we do ask that you pay for it. If a book is kept for an extended time by a student it prevents other students having access to it. Returning a book is as easy as putting it in the return slot at the circulation desk.
As part of the Food Technology course year 10 completed a unit of work called “Food for Special Occasions”. As part of their assessment for this unit of work they were assigned the task of decorating a cake for a child’s birthday party. Their creativity shone through and they undertook the task with great enthusiasm. It was a challenge having 24 cakes decorated at the same time, there was icing and food colouring all over the kitchen. The end result however, was worth it. The students were very pleased with their final product. Below is a sample of some of the cakes.

Mrs M Stamoudis (TAS teacher)

Cross Country: Congratulations to the following students who competed at the All Schools Cross Country Carnival at Eastern Creek this July: Jessica Mavroidis, Cameron Rodgers, Kellie Weinert and Jessica Fryer.

The students competed against the best runners in the state from Public, Independent and Catholic Schools. Kellie Weinert was the best placed athlete with an impressive 17th place in the 18 year girls 6km.

Athletics: The Robert Townson athletics team braved the wet conditions to compete at the annual Macarthur Zone Athletics Carnival which took place on the 25th and 26th of June at Campbelltown Athletics Stadium. All the students competed well despite the cold and wet weather. Stand out performances included:
- Conor Irwin from year 11 was 16 boys age champion
- Bailey McParland from year 7 broke a record which has stood for 13 years in the 100m running 12.3
- Bradley Wright from year 11 took out the 800m and 1500m double in the 16 years boys.

The following students also progressed to the Area Athletics Carnival: Omar Afiouni, Mara Fuli, William Mapapalangi, Mele Mapapalangi, Emma, McGuiness, Talome Tenegere.

There were a number of students who volunteered as track and field officials because it was Robert Townson’s job to run the carnival. These students should be proud of their efforts and the way they conducted themselves over the two days.

The officials: Larry Greig-Williams, Lauren Hetherington, William Johnson, Mele Mapapalangi, Mara Marsters, Michelle Meafua, Jami-Lee Mussett, and Kyle Smith

*At the Sydney South West athletics carnival Conor Irwin placed 2nd in the 400m and will progress to the CHS carnival held at Homebush in September.

Hockey: Congratulations to Jessica Fryer from year 10 who was selected for the Open Girls CHS Hockey Team. Jess competed in Sydney and won the grand final against Queensland. This is an amazing effort by Jess as she is only in year 10 and has the opportunity to be selected for the team for two more years.

Emily Mckenzie (PDHPE)
On Friday the 21st of June, the annual talent quest for 2013 was held. It was organised by the senior leaders and the Student Representative Council with help from Mrs Gowdy, Mrs Griffith and Mr Kapitanow and raised $798.50. This money will be used to buy a gift for the school from Year 12.

1st Place — Justin Oblea from Year 12 (Guitar solo/vocal)
2nd Place — Dying Memories band (Jacob McGregor, Blake Bell, Aaron Dalton and Bryan Pakulski)
3rd Place — Ave La’Amalefolasa from Year 12 (Guitar solo/vocal)

Other Performances included:
- Guitar solo from Year 7’s Jack Carroll and a guitar performance from Julian Castro and Daniel Jones from Year 12.
- Dance act by Ave La’Amalefolasa, Talome Tengere, Sue-Ellen Taueva, Marama Marsters and Faamanu Meafua. Also a dance solo from David Adeyemi
- Songs from Aaliyah Campos, Madison Hutton and Rachelle Cubis, and an acoustic guitar and vocal performance from Bailey Dymitriw and Sandra Capote of year 10
- ‘Devoted Legacy’ led by their singer Dean Rub from year 12

Each participant has received a certificate for their great effort and entertaining performances. Place getters will also receive vouchers from Dumaresq Street Cinemas, the school canteen and the Townson Café.

A huge thank you must go out to everyone involved in making the day a huge success. Plans are already being made for next year. Maybe a ‘people’s choice’ award will be added to the program! Please see the next page for photos of the Talent Quest.

Kellie Weinert
Senior Leader

The SRC has been very busy this term preparing Jeans for Genes Day which will take place on the 16th August. Our SRC is encouraging students on this day to wear their jeans with their full school uniform. A gold coin donation will be collected in roll call. The SRC will also be holding a fundraiser BBQ on this day which students are also encouraged to attend at lunch in Mid Quad. Prices start from $4 for a sausage sizzle up to $13 for a sausage, drink and Jeans for Gene’s day stationary pack. All money raised will go towards this very deserving organisation.

Our SRC students have also attended multiple student leadership forums. Some of our year 11 students from the SRC recently attended The University of Wollongong for the Elevate Forum. The students gained many leadership skills and found the day a very useful tool as they prepare for their transition into senior leader roles. We were also represented by three students; Grant Lewis, Rebecca Fowell and Khalid Al-Najjar at the Liverpool Interschools SRC group meeting at Ashcroft High School. This provided an excellent opportunity to discuss current issues facing young people and strategies to promote the role of SRC in schools.

Mrs Griffiths and the SRC Team
Blue Mountains Excursion

On Thursday 25 July year seven travelled to the Blue Mountains for a joint history and geography excursion. The Blue Mountains National Park is a world heritage listed site containing pristine natural rainforests and is the original home of the Gundungarra people. After travelling for an hour by bus the students participated in a talk with national park rangers who discussed important geographical issues such as the impact of tourism, pollution and the importance of maintaining natural environments like the national park. The students were also treated to a talk from Aboriginal ranger Pamela who told them all about the way the Gundungarra people lived in perfect harmony with their environment and in a sustainable way for thousands of years before the settlement of British colonisers.

After the talk the students embarked on a guided bush walk, descending through the rainforest on the Thousand Stair walk. Our guides stopped at various points along the walk and told students about different features of the rainforest, again highlighting the importance of maintaining it for future generations.

Once the walk was over the students made their way back to the bus via the Scenic Railway. The Scenic Railway is the steepest passenger railway in the world, having a 52 degree incline at its steepest point. The Railway experience descends 310 metres through a cliff-side tunnel, emerging into ancient rainforest at the Jamison Valley floor. Operating since 1945, the Scenic Railway has thrilled 25 million passengers, including many Robert Townson high school students. All staff and students thoroughly enjoyed the day!

By Mr A Olm
Education Week
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<th>Week</th>
<th>Monday</th>
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<td>15 July <strong>Staff Development Day—no students</strong></td>
<td>16 HSC TRIAL EXAMS PARENT TEACHER NIGHT</td>
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<td>22 HSC TRIAL EXAMS</td>
<td>23 HSC TRIAL EXAMS</td>
<td>24 HSC TRIAL EXAMS Year 8-11 Opera</td>
<td>25 HSC TRIAL EXAMS</td>
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<td>3A</td>
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<td>30 Education Week activities</td>
<td>31 Yr 9 English excursion Romeo &amp; Juliet (selected students)</td>
<td>1 August</td>
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<td>5 YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE Yr 10 &amp; 12 English Listening Task</td>
<td>6 YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>7 YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>8 YEAR 10 WORK EXPERIENCE</td>
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<td>12 Year 9 English Media Task</td>
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<td>6B</td>
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<td>20 Peer Leadership Camp (selected students)</td>
<td>21 Peer Leadership Camp (selected students) HSC Visual Arts and Industrial Technology exhibition</td>
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<td>10B</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>18 Year 12 Graduation</td>
<td>19 Year 12 Formal</td>
<td>20 Last day of term 3</td>
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