Great Start to Year 8
by Ms Andrea Aleksic, Deputy Principal

Last week we welcomed the newest members of our school family when over a hundred Year 8 students started high school. They felt confident and more informed because of the two days of orientation in 2013. They have settled well into the routines of high school and have shown exemplary behaviour. A reminder school hats are mandatory and must be worn when outside, if your child does not have one they can be purchased from the office for $15. The Year 8 students have been fantastic in regard to wearing the hat at break times. Well done to all Year 8 students you are GREAT!

Interact 2014
by Mrs Nyree Woods, Teacher

Interact is starting the year with a bang! With Valentine’s Day quickly approaching, a team of willing workers are getting ready to order, create and sell a variety of Valentine’s Day surprises. Roses and chocolates will of course be the main elements of the special day. However, students should keep their eyes open for some special little gifts along the way. The first working bee was held on 5 February with a large number of students supporting the Interact committee. Gifts will be displayed outside the Resource Centre and can be ordered both lunch breaks leading up to Valentine’s Day. Ordered items will be delivered to students with secret (or not-so-secret) admirers on Valentine’s morning. Interact look forward to the support of the school community in this first fundraising effort.

Introducing helloworld Ayr

Pierina Dalle Cort and the team Ayr have great pleasure introducing their new name - helloworld! Formerly trading as Harvey World Travel, we are all very excited to be part of this whole new travel experience and we look forward to welcoming you into our refreshed, rebranded store. We will offer you the same great service and familiar faces you’ve come to trust and rely on for over 30 years.

2014 State of Origin
Brisbane Packages available from $820pp! Don’t miss out this year! Game 1: 28th May & Game 2: 9th July. Call 07 4783 2122 for further details regarding package inclusions and to book!
From the Principal
by Mr Craig Whittred, Principal

Editorial - Newsletter No. 1
07/02/14

I would like to welcome everyone back for the 2014 school year. Firstly it was great to see the majority of students attending school right from day one and secondly it is great to see that they have started the year in such an enthusiastic way!

We have welcomed a new cohort of Year 8 students into the Ayr High family. The students are integrating into high school life well with most of them feeling very confident after participating in a thorough transition and induction program over the last two years. The Year 8 Coordinator Ms Cheyne has been very proud of the Year 8s with many students already earning “Hawk Points”!

I am very pleased to see the commitment that our new Year 12s have started their final year with. All students have reviewed their QCE status, with the majority of students on track to achieve a QCE. Many of these students who were at risk have been proactive in meeting with the Senior Secondary Deputy Principal, Mrs Olsen, to discuss their best options for achieving a QCE by the end of 2014. I encourage all parents of Year 12 students to have a discussion with their sons or daughters about their QCE eligibility.

Next week we have our Student Leaders Investiture. We will acknowledge the 2014 Student executive as well as the form class representatives from each year level. The two groups of students will work together over the year showcasing and developing their leadership talents across a range of initiatives including the Student Council.

In 2014 we have begun the implementation of our Success for All Students Policy which is focusing on an acceptable attendance rate of at least 95%. Students and families have responded positively to this initiative with an increase in our attendance rates already after only two weeks of school. I would also like to thank those parents who are proactively contacting the school notifying us of future absences. Improved attendance is the first step towards improved outcomes for our students. At Ayr State High School we are committed to supporting every student to achieve their personal best.

Last week we were under the threat of a tropical cyclone, thankfully the cyclone bypassed us and headed south. For future reference I would like to clarify a few things. In all natural disasters Education Queensland will maintain the position that schools are open unless directed by disaster management authorities or from myself the principal upon the report of major damage to the school’s facilities, which make it unsafe for students to attend. Schools are required to communicate this to their school’s community the day before the disaster where possible.

On the morning after a natural disaster Education Queensland will issue a press statement at approximately 6.00 am indicating any school closures. Parents are advised to listen to radio reports to confirm a school’s status. In all cases there is a need for the parents to make a decision on whether they feel that it is safe for their children to travel to school. As our students come from a wide variety of areas this will be a matter of local knowledge to whether or not it is safe for travel to and from school on that particular day. I hope that that sheds some light onto the processes and protocols for natural disaster management.

2014 is shaping up as another successful year for all here at Ayr State High School. As a staff we are all excited and committed to providing a top quality education to all our students, helping them to Strive for better things.

Yours in Education

Craig Whittred
Principal

A Magical Production for Ayr State High School
by Mrs Maree Milne, Teacher

"The moment you doubt whether you can fly, you cease for ever to be able to do it."
- J.M. Barrie, Peter Pan

A huge cheer erupted at the Whole School Assembly on Tuesday as Zoe Muir, our 2014 Cultural Captain, was proud to announce this year’s musical. Magic will be theme of this year’s production; Peter Pan The Musical, when it is performed in August at the Burdekin Theatre. Students should be returning their expression of interest form this week and for those who are auditioning, should be ready to pick up their audition packs and book their audition time later on in the week. This is going to be a huge musical for Ayr SHS; beside the usual singing and dancing, the set is going to be bigger and better than ever! Parents who are willing to help with any of the working bees, please do not hesitate to let the school, Mrs Milne or Mrs Jones know so we can get information to you. We love kids performing; everyone is welcome to be part of the musical. Good luck to all the students auditioning. Watch this space.
The 2014 season of interschool sporting competition commences on Tuesday 11 February (week 3) with U15 and Open Netball and Rugby League. Positions in the school teams have been hotly contested with many students keen to participate. Interschool Volleyball (U15 and Open teams) will be the next sport on the calendar. Selection trials and training will begin shortly with the first games scheduled for Monday 17 February (week 4).

The following North Queensland trials are scheduled for Term 1:
- Cluster 1 (10/2) – Tennis, Softball, Cricket
- Cluster 2 (18/2) - Touch, Volleyball, Squash
- Cluster 3 (6/3) - Netball, Rugby League, Basketball
- Cluster 4 (17/3) – Hockey, Football, Rugby Union, AFL

Students should keep an eye on the notices for further information closer to the trial dates or alternatively contact Miss Courtney Carrigan.

**For Sale**

The following items are available for sale from the school. All equipment is being sold ‘as is’. Please note that there is:
- no technical support available for the devices,
- no operating system installed on the devices
- no other software installed on the devices
- maximum of two devices per customer

The devices will be available for purchase from Monday 10 February - Friday 14 February between 8.30am - 1.00pm. All enquiries are to go through the office - no reservations will be accepted. Equipment must be taken on purchase.

- Desktop Computers - $50
  - includes Dell Optiplex 745 computer, flat screen monitor, keyboard and mouse and some cabling
- Laptops - $50
  - HP 6530, 15' screen, power adapter
- Flat screen monitors - $30

**Induction Session for Take-Home Laptop Program**

- Date: 11 February 2014
- Time: 5.00 pm
- Venue: Smart Media Centre
- Who Should Attend: Parents/Caregivers of Year 8 & 9 students who are entering the Laptop Take-Home Program

Vicki Toohey
HOD – Business/IT/Humanities

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**What are you aiming for?**

‘If you aim at nothing you are sure to hit it!’ If you have no goal in life (or at school), it is very difficult to stay focussed, motivated and purposeful. When there is an assignment due or an exam to study for, having a goal can keep you inspired, enthused and determined.

The Career Development Program at Ayr High is designed to provide students with a clear goal and a plan to achieve it. Commencing in Year 8, this series of lessons, computer programmes, guest speakers, excursions, interviews and work experience encourages the students to learn about their own abilities and interests and identify occupations that would provide job satisfaction and a desired lifestyle.

Research has shown that parents are a critical factor in shaping their children’s career aspirations. Parents act as role models and provide important advice about career decisions and learning pathways. More importantly they foster children’s optimism, curiosity and ambition to achieve their life goals. In 2014 there will be many opportunities for parents to partner with our school to realize excellent career outcomes for all our students.

The Guidance Officer, Mr Bruce Johnson, takes a lead role in providing career advice and counselling at Ayr High. He is available to discuss career decisions and assist with identifying that career goal which will provide all students with something to aim at.
Creating Confident Teenagers
by Cassandra, School Based Youth Health Nurse

Why is being confident important?
Being confident promotes self-esteem and makes your teenager feel good about themselves and their abilities. This makes it easier for them to make friends and try new challenges. It also helps a teenager to develop a clear sense of who they are, and what they will and will not do. This helps to protect against being pressured by peers to participate in risky, illegal, or other inappropriate behaviour. It also promotes a positive approach to life that protects against depression and hopelessness.

How to help your teenager become more confident?
• Create a secure and predictable home environment so your teenager is not constantly unsure or anxious about what will happen next, or how you will react to their behaviour.
• A healthy and varied diet and an active lifestyle ensure that your teenager is healthy and fit and feels good about themselves.
• Encourage laughter and fun and provide your teenager with lots of appropriate affection. Some parents think that older children do not want or need their parents’ affection. This is rarely true but it can happen if parents embarrass their teenager in front of other people, particularly their peers. Look for ways to show affection that are appropriate to your teenager’s age and preferences.
• Acknowledge your teenager’s efforts and accomplishments. Do not wait until they have finished something or until what they have done is perfect before commenting. There are lots of areas of your teenager’s life where this could be done – their dress or hair, their room, their involvement at school, or their behaviour with a sibling. Keep it brief but do it as often as you can.
• Encourage your teenager to express their own views and opinions on everyday issues, and encourage them to make their own decisions wherever possible.
• Encourage your teenager to set goals for themselves that extend their abilities a little. At the same time ensure that they are not too self-critical or dismissive of their efforts as they work towards their goals.

Source: Teen Triple P Tip Sheet – ‘Getting Teenagers Connected’

Students Studying through Distance Education
by Mrs Toohey, HOD - Business/IT/Humanities

There are a number of students studying subjects through the Brisbane School of Distance Education (BSDE) this year. Many are enrolled in Japanese or IPT. These students attend classes twice a week from 8.00am - 9.00am and are able to access tutorials during the week if their timetable allows. Some reminders for these students:
• Be ready to start your 8.00am classes on time – this may mean arriving at 7.50am!
• Bring your own headphones if necessary or access those provided by the school
• Communicate with your BSDE teacher regularly either through the chat option during class or email
• Print out your work rate calendar and place it in your study space at home so that you are aware of what lessons or assessments are coming up
• If you are having difficulty with the distance education method of delivery, contact your study coach (Mrs Toohey) at school.
Welcome back! As we commence another school year, I'd like to welcome all our new students and parents. Over the break, the English and LoTE teachers worked hard to ensure that 2014 is going to be another stellar year for students.

In the senior school, our Year 12 English students have just begun studying the Gothic literary movement, whilst our 11s focus on short stories that deal with moral and ethical questions surrounding the theme of crime, justice and punishment. Meanwhile, our Year 12 English Communication students are exploring the notion of “Heroes”, whilst our 11 English Communication students work on creating a personal digital narrative for entry into the ABC's Heywire competition. In the junior school, our 10s have commenced their Australian literature unit and are currently reading James Maloney's Touch Me (it's about touch football). The 9s are heavily involved in expository writing, whilst the 8s have begun their high school English journey with a unit designed around narratives and their cultural purposes.

As we can see – and as per the Australian Curriculum - there is a strong focus on literature and reading throughout all our year levels – and for good reason. There is a veritable plethora of research that demonstrates the multitude of benefits derived from reading. Unsurprisingly, such findings include the fact that reading increases vocabulary and language acquisition, reduces stress and improves memory. A longitudinal study (one where the researchers ‘track’ the participants over a number of years) by the Economic and Social Research Council found a direct link between children who read for pleasure between the ages of 10 and 16 and their progress in maths, vocabulary and spelling. Simply put; reading for pleasure puts children ahead in the classroom.

To this end, I will review a novel in the Random Acts of Reading section in each newsletter in the hope that I will inspire our students to read. Keep in mind, however, that the books reviewed are ones that I found interesting to read; I am not promoting them as examples of great literature, nor am I suggesting that they will appeal to all students. The books reviewed are simply novels that I have enjoyed reading and are available from the library (How amazing are libraries?!? All that knowledge, and it’s free!).

In conjunction with our strong focus on reading, two of our English staff (Mrs Attard and Ms Battis) will be working with teachers and students across the school in their role as Support Teachers of Literacy in assisting with the implementation of high-yield comprehension strategies.

Finally, don’t forget we have English tutoring Tuesday afternoons in A4 (from 3.15 pm to 4.15 pm) where our English teachers will be on hand each week to assist students with assessment work.

On behalf of the English and LoTE departments, I wish everyone a positive start to the year – and don’t forget: READ!

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Random Acts of Reading

**Novel Reviewed:** Mission Survival: Gold of the Gods

**By:** Bear Grylls

**Genre:** Adventure

**Age suitability:** 10-14 years

**Who would like this book:** anyone who enjoys fast-paced adventures and the Man vs Wild tv series

The Mission Survival series is a thrilling adventure series by Man vs Wild survival expert, Bear Grylls. Each novel follows the adventures of teen protagonist, Beck Granger, who must undertake a survival mission in some of the most inhospitable and dangerous environments on the planet. The novels are action-packed and zoom along so quickly that it’s difficult to stop reading. Each novel incorporates loads of survival tips and some interesting historical knowledge about the location.

Gold of the Gods is set in Columbia (South America). Beck accompanies his anthropologist uncle on an adventure to find the lost City of Gold. However, before they can find the fabled city, Beck’s uncle and Don Rafael de Castillo (the descendant of a previous explorer who claimed to have found the city), are kidnapped. Beck and his friends must negotiate the wilds of Columbia in search of his uncle. Things go from bad to worse as they face broken rafts, shark attacks, and wild animals. Along the way, Beck must use his survival skills to keep them alive.

Full of real survival techniques and gruesome tips (I don’t think I’ll ever be desperate enough to drink a fish eye), the books make for an enjoyable – and interesting - read. I actually found Bear’s fictional novels more interesting than his autobiography!

You can find out more about the series – and the survival missions - by going to the website: [www.Missionsurvival.co.uk](http://www.Missionsurvival.co.uk).

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Absentee Hotline

4790 4353

If your child is away either:

- phone the hotline
- text message or
- hand in a note, on return, to Mrs Slattery at the office.

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English Tutoring

Tuesdays

3.15 pm - 4.15 pm

A4

☺ Your friendly English teachers are available to help you with homework and assessments.
AYR STATE HIGH SCHOOL CANTEEN MENU
(Current until 1 March, 2014)

Canteen Rules:-
- No ports or bags through the Canteen line
- Only 4 items per student
- $50 notes will only be changed towards the end of First Break
- Canteen closes 10 minutes before the end of each break

Everyday:
Sandwiches:  
- Chicken, Mayo & Lettuce $3.50
- Chicken, Avocado & Lettuce $3.50
- Ham & Salad (Lettuce, Carrot, Tomato & Cheese) $3.50
- Roast Beef and Salad $3.50
- Egg, Mayo & Lettuce $3.50
Chicken Caesar Salad Boxes $3.50
Chicken & Salad Wraps $3.50
Ham & Salad Wraps $3.50

Toasties (Except Wednesday):
- Chicken and Cheese (1/2 round) $1.70
- Ham and Cheese (1/2 round) $1.70

Pies and Pasties $3.30
Sausage Rolls $2.20
Sauce .30

Monday Special:
Slice of Pizza (Meatlovers, Chicken & BBQ Sauce, $2.20
Ham and Pineapple)
Sushi $3.60

Tuesday Special:
Subway (6” Chicken Strip, BMT, Club) $4.00
Hot Dog $3.00

Wednesday Special:
Meat Pattie and Cheese Burger $3.50
Spaghetti/Pasta $3.50

Thursday Special:
Red Rooster Chicken Roll (Hot) $5.00
Red Rooster BLT Roll (Cold) $5.00

Friday Special:
Fish Burger with/without Mayonnaise $3.80
Fish Burger with Mayonnaise and Salad (Lettuce & Tomato) $4.00

Drinks:
Large Milks and Juice $3.00
Small Milks and Juice $2.00
Water $1.50

Second Break:
Various Ice-creams from $1.00 to $1.80
Small Packets Chips $1.00
Quench $2.00
Nutrient Water $3.50
Iced Tea $2.50
Slush $2.50
DO YOU LIKE HAVING A SAY?
DO YOU ENJOY EXPRESSING YOUR OPINION ON CERTAIN TOPICS?
ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A WAY TO DEVELOP CONFIDENCE IN SPEAKING IN PUBLIC?

Then the Rostrum Voice of Youth speaking competition is just for YOU!

Rostrum Voice of Youth is a public speaking competition for secondary school students. It has been conducted by Australian Rostrum since 1975, and the goal of the competition is to encourage students to further develop their verbal communication skills, increase their self-esteem and self-confidence and to provide them with an opportunity to speak out on topics that are important to them. Many students may remember their siblings participating in this competition in past years.

This year, Ayr State High School would love to have lots of our students enter the annual Rostrum Voice of Youth competition. Junior students (Years 8-10) speak for 6 minutes and senior students (Year 11-12) speak for 8 minutes, on a prepared topic. Our school heats will be held on the evening of Monday 12th May and will be judged by Rostrum club members, who will provide positive and constructive feedback to all participants. From here, two students from each of these age groups will be selected to represent Ayr High and compete against other schools in the district.

The topics include:

**Junior:** Climb Every Mountain  
If It Ain’t Broke, Don’t Fix It  
Never Say Never  
A Most Valuable Legacy  
Trash Or Treasure

**Senior:** Still Waters Run Deep  
Less Is More  
Charity Begins At Home  
Freedom Or Licence?  
We Hear What We Want To

Public speaking competitions, such as Rostrum, provide students with the opportunity to enhance valuable speaking skills that are useful in both school and vocational contexts. All competitors will receive a Certificate of Participation.

If you are interested in nominating, see Mrs Attard or Ms D’ilario in A5 staffroom for further details. Nominations close 21st March, 2014.