A Word From Ellon ...

Hello Everyone

Welcome to another year at Periwinkle.

Our focus this term is to support the children with their play and help them become familiar with the routines and rhythms of the day. We work very consciously on holding the space and allowing the children to take ownership of their own work place. This builds on their independence, confidence, and sense of self as they become accustomed to being part of a group. It is amazing how quickly the children have become so settled and ready for their day. They have truly arrived and I am sure many of you would have felt that when you all came together for the Autumn Festival.

The festivals are something special, and each year they have their own unique qualities. To prepare for the day we participated in activities with the children, such as the harvest morning circle, stories and bread making, felted the autumn leaves, as well as singing before pick-up each day. Singing with the children of an afternoon was an opportunity for you all to be part of the preparation, and learn the songs together before the day. The preparation also makes explicit how an event happens in (and over) time. This is a gift in a world where instant gratification is so often presented as the norm and the preparation is invisible or denied.

Sadly I wasn’t able to be here on the Festival day but I have heard glowing reports. It is a wonderful experience for the Periwinkle families to come together to celebrate as a community and share this moment with your child/children.

This year we have also had Easter within the term and the children have enjoyed making a hot cross bun and an Easter basket to carry it home in. (Amber has kindly added a crafty how-to of this basket in the newsletter for you to pop in your home resources.)

I would also like to say a special thank-you to Kellie for standing in for me over the past month and all the staff who have been so supportive after my surgery. I look forward to being around more next term.

I wish you all a happy holiday and look forward to seeing you in Term 2.

Warm regards, Ellon.

Dates to remember 2013

Last day of Term One: Fri 12th April
Term One holidays: 15th-26th April
First day of Term Two: Mon 29th April
Winter Spiral: Thurs 13th June
Lantern walk: Thurs 27th June
Last day of Term Two: Fri 28th June
The Periwinkle Autumn Festival was held on a lovely sunny morning, the 19th March. After weeks of rain, it was such a blessing to stand in the warm sun and be bathed in the spirit of our lovely community. The morning began with lively singing as we gathered inside for a special gift of storytelling from our gorgeous teachers. The Apple Star story mesmerised children and adults alike! (For those wanting to hear it again, I’ve included a version in this newsletter.) We were then invited to join our children outdoors in a bulb planting ceremony. Planting bulbs is symbolic of our upcoming hibernation time as autumn turns to winter, and the blossoming we will once again feel in Spring. The teachers gathered everyone in a circle and the children sang autumn songs along with their Autumn leaf felted finger-puppet from the Autumn tree. Lastly, sharing a delicious meal with our friends and community, we rejoiced in the warm embrace of Periwinkle.
Periwinkle Preschool Autumn Festival
Tuesday 19th March, 2013
There was once upon a time a little boy who was tired of all his toys and, tired of all his play. "What shall I do?" he asked his mother. And his mother, who always knew beautiful things for little boys to do, said, "You shall go on a journey and find a little red house, with no doors and no windows, and a star inside."

This really made the little boy wonder. Usually his mother had good ideas, but he thought that this one was very strange. "Which way shall I go?" he asked his mother. "I don't know where to find a little red house with no doors and no window."

"Go down the lane past the farmer's house and over the hill," said his mother, "and then hurry back as soon as you can and tell me all about your journey."

So the little boy put on his cap and his jacket and started out. He had not gone very far down the lane when he came to a merry little girl dancing in the sunshine.

Her cheeks were like pink blooming petals and she was singing like a robin. "Do you know where I shall find a little red house with no doors and no windows and a star in inside?" asked the little boy.

The little girl laughed, "Ask my father, the farmer," she said. "Perhaps he knows."

So the little boy went on until he came to the great brown barn were the farmer kept barrel of fat potatoes and baskets of yellow squashes and golden pumpkins. The farmer himself stood in the doorway looking out over the green pastures and yellow grain fields. "Do you know where I shall find a little red house with no doors and no windows and a star inside?" asked the little boy of the farmer.

The farmer laughed too. "I lived a great many years and I never saw one." He chuckled, "But ask Granny who lives at the foot of the hill. She knows how to make molasses, taffy and popcorn balls, and red mittens! Perhaps she can direct you."

So the little boy went on farther still, until he came to the Granny, sitting in her pretty garden of herbs and marigolds. She was wrinkled as a walnut and as smiling as the sunshine. "Please, Dear Granny," said the little boy. "Where shall I find a little red house with no doors and no windows and a star inside?"

Granny was knitting a red mitten, and when she heard the little boy's question, she laughed so cheerily that the wool ball rolled off her lap and down the little pebbly path. "I should like to find that little house myself," she chuckled. "I would be warm when the frosty night comes and the starlight would be prettier than a candle. But ask the wind who blows about so much and listens to all the chimneys. Perhaps the wind can direct you."

So the little boy took off his cap and tipped it politely to the Granny and went on up the hill rather sorrowfully. He wondered if his mother, who usually knew almost everything had perhaps made a mistake. The wind was coming down the hill as the little boy climbed up. As they met, the wind turned about and went along, singing beside the little boy. It whistled in his ear, and pushed him and dropped a pretty leaf into his hand. "I wonder," thought the little boy, after they had gone along together for a while, "if the wind could help me find a little red house with no doors and no windows, and a star inside."
The Apple Star Story (continued...)
Told at the Autumn Festival, Tuesday 19th March, 2013

The wind cannot speak in our words, but it went singing ahead of the little boy until it came to an orchard. There it climbed up in the apple tree and shook the branches. When the little boy climbed up, there at his feet lay a great rosy apple. The little boy picked the apple. It was as much as his two hands could hold. It was red as the sun had been able to paint it, and the thick brown stem stood up as straight as a chimney, and it had no doors and no windows. Was there a star inside?

The little boy called to the wind, "Thank you," and the wind whistled back, "You're welcome." Then the little boy gave the apple to his mother. His mother took a knife (AT THIS POINT, START CUTTING AN APPLE CROSSWISE) and cut the apple through the center. Oh, how wonderful! There inside the apple, lay a star holding brown seeds.

"It is too wonderful to eat without looking at the star, isn't it?" the little boy said to his mother. "Yes indeed," answered his mother.


The adventures of Biodynamics
With Sandra Frain, by Luke Rutland.
Sunday 17th March, 2013

On a warm Sunday afternoon my son, Harry, and I attended the biodynamic workshop at Periwinkle. We came armed with our spade, gardening gloves and jam jars for take homes. Sandra, our biodynamic mentor for the day, introduced herself to us all and explained what she hoped we would learn. First, we learnt how to construct a garden sized compost pile. The pile consisted of scraps people had brought from home, compost from Periwinkle, which contained (to Sandra’s delight) lots of bugs and worms, and two large buckets of manure that Sandra had collected from lactating cows at full moon.

After constructing the compost pile, Sandra lead us through the seven special preparations. Harry was particularly pleased to have been lucky enough to dig a hole and be one of the people that added a preparation to the pile.

Everyone agreed that they had learned some valuable information about constructing compost heaps. After washing our hands, we ate some delicious food Sandra had specially prepared for us. It was a fantastic afternoon and introduction to biodynamic gardening and we’re very grateful to Sandra for her knowledge, information and passion on the subject.
How to make a simple paper basket
(Perfect for Periwinkle Hot Cross Buns!)

1. You need two pieces of paper, one for the basket base, (30 cm by 30 cm, or larger) and one for the handle (9 cm by 30 cm). (You can see I was experimenting with size on a piece of Ned’s orange-coloured painting to ensure the base of the basket was big enough!)

2. With the handle, simply fold the piece into three, lengthways.

3. For the box base, you’ll need to follow these toothfairy keepsake box instructions. But only on one piece- no lid required. (URL: www.parentingfuneveryday.com/make/paper/visit-from-the-tooth-fairy-handmade-keepsake-box/) The measurement of the box will be approximately 9.5 cm by 9.5 cm, large enough for all kinds of Easter treats, including home-made Hot Cross Buns, `a la Periwinkle!

4. Once you have folded and glued your box base, it is time to add the handle. Use a sharp needle to pre-punch the holes -one on each side of the box in the centre, as shown- for your paper fasteners (brads).

5. Pre-punch a hole in both ends of the handle also, at least 1.5 cm from the base. Place the handle inside the box.

6. Push the paper fastener through the box and the handle, and open out the arms at the back of the fastener to secure.

7. All that is left to do is to fill your box with your favourite Easter goodies!

Crafty teachers wanted!
If you love craft, and would like to host a craft day or session for Periwinkle parents (either a child-free evening, or a Saturday), the Parent Management Committee would like to talk with you! Please call Belle on 0400 015 809.
A very big thank you to all the families who came out on Saturday 16th of March for our first working bee of the year. There were many sweaty brows at this bee, as we had a hot and sunny day, and some physical work at hand. I even heard of aching muscles the following day!

Adults and children could be seen pushing loaded barrows, shovels heaped with sand or mulch, pulling weeds, cleaning gutters, and staining wood, and all the while chatter and laughter could be heard throughout the garden. It is so lovely to see people working together, taking initiative and putting their all into the tasks at hand.

We are very blessed to have eager folks who don't mind donating their time to a bit of hard work and the end results are stunning! It may seem obvious to us how Periwinkle shines as an outstanding preschool program and nurturing environment for the children and I feel blessed to be a part of this community. You all play a vital role in helping to maintain the appearance of the school grounds.

Working bees are a great way to not only help maintain Periwinkle and meet new people, but to show your child how you give loving care to their school. If you couldn't attend the bee and have a hankering for some hard work, there will be other opportunities to get involved. Keep an eye out on the noticeboard as we will be seeking some helpers for a few jobs in Term 2, including some assistance with cleaning the roof, and patch painting it to protect it from rusting.

We'd like to thank Millianna's dad, David Denning for coming in on Easter weekend to stain the play equipment. This is an extremely important job that helps care for the beauty and longevity of these lovingly crafted structures. We would like to complete this task again in Term Four with your help. (A child-free event.)

Finally, if anyone has any seedling or plants they would like to donate they would be warmly welcomed to the garden!

Thanks again for all the wonderful help.

Sincerley
Cyndi and Daniel Harris

Lily and Archie, hard at work!

Have you seen the Steiner Memes Facebook page, http://www.facebook.com/TaurangaWaldorfSchoolMemes? It is filled with funny and quirky sayings, Waldorf in-jokes, and posters such as the one below sent in by Rebecca Ingram.

Yes, I am in a Waldorf school...

...why do you ask?

Sincere
Cyndi and Daniel Harris

Lily and Archie, hard at work!
Would you like to become a host family for a Periwinkle International Volunteer?

Periwinkle Preschool has decided to be open again to hosting another international volunteer, like Christine who spent time with us during 2011 and 2012, as it was so successful for all parties involved.

The only challenge the preschool had was finding enough host families. So the committee wants to gauge an idea of any interest of the Periwinkle (and wider) community before we move forward.

The commitments of the host family are as follows:

• To provide accommodation and meals for a period, roughly 2-4 mths.
• To provide volunteer with own room during stay
• To see and treat volunteer more as family than a stranger
• To expect no more than about 15 hours per week assistance from the volunteer who is giving her hours to Periwinkle - (The Periwinkle volunteer is not an au pair, and not to be exploited as such).

The volunteer's expected role in host family is one like a family member - to help with general meals and housework and some care of children - details and boundaries to be worked out with each host family.

One of our previous hosts, Jen Henderson, found that as a host, she wanted to treat Christine as family, and she did become a beloved member of their kin. Christine was also very independent and spent most weekends with her own newly made friends. Jen and her family found that all in all, it was a very positive experience for everyone, and she is more than happy to talk with anyone contemplating the idea. Please call her on 0413 057 600 if you wish to chat further.

If you are interested, could you please let Ellon or Kellie know. We would like to create an informal roster/time table of potential hosts to give to the Volunteer organisation before we begin negotiations.

We sincerely hope that we are able to work alongside another volunteer. It is an amazing opportunity for a foreigner, and provides the Periwinkle team and children with another set of helpful hands, and arms to cuddle, and also offers a cultural opportunity that broadens the horizons and viewpoints of the children and team.

We look forward to hearing from some families who are willing and able to help!
Periwinkle’s “25 Candles for 25 Cakes”

Late last year, we were proud to launch Periwinkle Preschool’s new cookbook, “25 Candles for 25 Cakes” and give thanks to a number of last year’s parents who kindly baked for the 25th Celebrations and whom donated their delicious recipes, and to the editor Jenny Edney who donated her time to ensure the book was professional and beautifully produced.

A number of copies are still available at Periwinkle for $10. Please call in to the office to collect your copy today. This cookbook would make a wonderful Mother’s Day gift!
Dear Director

My name is Susan Smith, and I am a Doctorate of Psychology candidate at the University of Western Australia. I am researching separation anxiety in kindergarten children across Australia, and how this predicts anxiety when children enter school. I am looking for parents of Kindergarten aged children who are interested in participating by completing a short online questionnaire. I am asking Kindy’s to help by letting parents know about the study in their newsletters, websites and/or email contact lists.

As you are probably aware, separation anxiety is quite common in the kindergarten age group and these children are more likely to develop anxiety later on in life. What I am trying to find is how parents think about their kindy child’s separation anxiety and whether this is important to their child’s future anxiety when they go into full-time school next year. The research has been set up online to allow parents from across Australia to participate, and requires parents to complete a short on-line survey now and then again in one year’s time when their child enters full-time school.

I’m more than happy to send a summary of results to Kindy’s this year and again next year. I also am an accredited trainer in Mindful Awareness Parenting and would be happy to write a paper for your newsletter about this if it would be of interest.

If you are interested in helping out at your Kindy, I have attached some further information that you can perhaps email to parents, or place on your webpage or facebook page if you have one. I can also send out some leaflets in the mail if you prefer.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like to ask questions, or let me know that you are participating and would like me to send out the study results when they are ready later this year. My contact details are 08) 6488 2644.

The link to the study is http://tinyurl.com/kindykids

Thank you so much for your time.

Susan Smith.  Student Researcher UWA

(Please see over the page for the accompanying poster to this request.)

“The magic of autumn has seized the countryside; now that the sun isn't ripening anything it shines for the sake of the golden age; for the sake of Eden; to please the moon for all I know.”

Elizabeth Coatsworth
Have you ever wondered about how children make the transition from Kindy to Primary School?

So have we.

Researchers at the University of Western Australia are interested in how parents think about anxiety in their kindergarten child and whether their thoughts are important in their child’s anxiety when they enter school the next year.

Who can take part in the study?
You can take part in the study if:
• You have a child enrolled in kindergarten
• Have access to a computer with the internet.

What will happen if I take part in the study?
You will be asked to do an online survey which will ask about:
• Yourself and your child’s background (age, gender etc) and typical emotions and behaviours.
• How you think about your child’s anxiety.
• You will be asked to complete these measures when your child begins kindergarten now and one year later when your child starts school.

To access the online survey, please go to: http://tinyurl.com/kindykids

Parents who take part in the study will go in a draw to win a Myer gift card.

This study has been approved by UWA ethics.

Susan Smith is a student researcher and registered Psychologist, the research will be supervised by A/Prof Jeneva Ohan. If you have any questions about the study, please contact either the researcher Susan Smith (08) 6488 2644 or the chief investigator of this project Assoc/Prof Jeneva L Ohan (08) 6488 3249.
Periwinkle welcomes the new 2013 Periwinkle Management Committee.

President: Belle Padgen   Secretary: Aloma Raez     Treasurer: Gerald Anderson
Members: Amber Greene, Cyndi Harris, Sarah Sykes.

News from the Periwinkle PMC.

MOVIE NIGHT
We are planning on hosting a movie night early next term. Please save the date: 23rd May, 8pm at the Pighouse Flicks. Movie and cost to be confirmed. This will be a child free night, and we look forward to spending time and having the opportunity to further develop friendships with you all.

SILENT AUCTION FUNDRAISER
We are aiming to host a silent auction fundraiser at Periwinkle in September/October and would like invite you to donate to the auction. The scope of what can be offered is open wide- it might be a service, or goods. Vouchers for massages, beauty treatments, gardening help, handyman services or trades are welcome. Please contact Belle on 0400 015 809 to offer your donation today. Thank you.

BYRON MARKET FUNDRAISER 2013
Later this year, Periwinkle will be given the opportunity to be the Non-Profit of the day. We’d also like to hold a craft stall to coincide. So we hope to offer some craft workshops soon to begin building our supply of crafty items to sell, as well as teach interested people some new skills. See message re: Craft teachers wanted. Pg. 8.

WOOLWORTHS EARN AND LEARN
We will be participating in this promotion and ask all parents who shop at woolworths to please collect the sheets & stickers from the checkout. Once a sheet is full, please put it in the box on the sign in desk at Peri. We earn 1 point per $10 spent which can be used to buy materials for the school.

Amber’s (our newsletter editor) long-awaited book, Creative Parenting for Fun, is now for sale, and she needs your help!

Amber launched her e-book, Creative Parenting for Fun: Simple secrets for transforming your family life, one idea at at time on April 2nd, and now needs YOUR help to publish 1000 copies of the paperback edition. Fully self-funded to this stage, Amber’s professionally edited, designed, illustrated, and photographed book is a 430 page compendium of practical ideas, and helpful strategies gleaned from her 20+ year early childhood teaching career (incl. 12+ years of Steiner) and 18 years of parenting experience. This book CAN CHANGE LIVES! And every sale helps us get closer to our goal! The paperback version is in reach.

During launch month, buy a copy (e-book only $30; e-book and pre-sale of print book $60; pre-sale of print book only $50) and go into a raffle to win one of 20 amazing and creative prizes! All the details including a list of raffle prizes, and an overview of content can be found at http://www.parentingfuneveryday.com/shop/books/creative-parenting-for-fun-book-an-overview-of-content/ 100% MONEY BACK GUARANTEE!
Rudolf Steiner gave many exercises and meditations to strengthen the human being through its journey of developing consciousness. Together we will explore the inner work, the birth of the higher self, the spiritual year and how exercises can bring us closer to our own experience of these processes. This will enable us to both hold and further our daily practices. Those wishing to establish a meditative life and long-term meditants have found this work invaluable in deepening their relationship to the path. This is a 3-day commitment.

**FOUNDATION COURSE 2013 DATES**  (for new dates, contact Lisa)

**SUNDAYS 17TH FEBRUARY, 17TH MARCH 14TH APRIL**  **TIME:**  9.30 - 2.30

**VENUE:** MULLUMBIMBY, NSW **COST** $300 (INCLUDES LUNCH)

**TO DISCUSS THE COURSE, PLEASE CONTACT**

LISA ROMERO (02) 6684 1636

**FOR BOOKING ENQUIRIES AND DIRECT ENROLMENTS**

innerworkpath@gmail.com OR KATHERINA KISS (02)66846147

LISA ROMERO is a practising homoeopath who has applied an anthroposophic approach to her practice since 1990. In 1998 she began teaching out of anthroposophy. Lisa designed and facilitated the Educaredo Towards Health and Healing course. This training ran eight, year-long courses, working with therapists from all modalities as well as Waldorf teachers to bring the practical application of therapeutic and pedagogical methods.

For several years Lisa was the lecturer for health and nutrition and male/female studies at Parsifal College (now Sydney Rudolf Steiner College). She also regularly lectures in numerous courses and schools within Australia, Asia and USA.

The variety and quality of her lectures and knowledge allows her to meet many communities from the point of view of their needs. Essentially Lisa’s work springs from the inner work of meditation and exercises and her dedication to the path of unfolding consciousness. She brings a depth of insight that is reflected in the experiences and changes of the participants who share in this work.

**"The Conditions of Esoteric Training"**

(please contemplate these thoughts before the course begins)

1. The first condition is that the student should pay heed to the advancement of bodily and spiritual health.
2. The second condition is that the student should feel himself coordinated as a link in the whole of life.
3. The third condition is that the student must work his way upward to the realisation that his thoughts and feelings are as important to the world as his actions. It must be realised that it is equally injurious to hate a fellow being as to strike him.
4. The fourth condition is to acquire the conviction that the real being of man does not lie in his exterior but in his interior.
5. The fifth condition is steadfastness in carrying out a resolution.
6. The sixth condition is the development of a feeling of thankfulness for everything with which man is favoured.
7. All these conditions must be united in a seventh: to regard life unceasingly in the manner demanded by these conditions.

"It should be emphasised that the complete fulfilment of any one of these conditions is not insisted upon, but only the corresponding effort.

No one can wholly fulfill them, but everyone can start on the path toward them.

It is the effort of will that matters, and the ready disposition to enter upon this path."

Rudolf Steiner, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and its Attainment* (Chapter V)
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Director: Ellon Gold

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS
Periwinkle parents and friends are invited to submit articles and photographs for the newsletter. Please email submissions to: amber.greene@hotmail.com
Editor: Amber Greene

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Account details:
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BSB: 082489
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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Term 1 photographs by Ellon Gold, Kellie Dean, Amber Greene & Cyndi Harris.
It is a pleasure to have this opportunity to bring to you the overview of 2012. It is exciting to be part of the Periwinkle community and I believe we can be impressed with education being offered and the improvements we have achieved over the year.

The year started very different to what I was expecting. On the last day of in-service at Samford Valley Steiner School, Brisbane I broke four ribs and was devastated to think I would not be at Periwinkle to meet all the new and returning families. However life goes on, and Kellie Dean led the team into the first term. My deepest appreciation and thanks to Kellie and all staff who demonstrated an outstanding professional standard and firm commitment to ensure the Periwinkle community had a smooth transition to 2012.

The highlight of 2012 was Periwinkle’s new kitchen. This was a huge venture undertaken by Iain Mathieson who donated all his time to make the kitchen a reality. Others in the community took up the task to support him in this venture. It was an amazing achievement, not only does Periwinkle now have a very functional working space to support the curriculum focused food program, but also an esthetically beautiful piece of art. Words cannot express the success of this very special project and again I say thank-you to Iain and his team who gave so generously of their time and professional skills.

Again I must say thank you to the broader community and business owners who also contributed by giving huge discounts and (some free items) off goods & materials such as sinks, blinds, tiles, the dishwasher, hotplates, and the oven.

All fund raising events this year contributed to the Kitchen cost.

- The silk ribbon stall at Cape Byron Steiner School.
- Ice blocks sold after school on Tuesdays & Fridays Term 4
- IGA Community Chest
- 25th Birthday Cookbook – Still many copies to be sold.

This year the committee approved for the installation of solo panels and a solo hot water system to be installed early 2013. This is another step in becoming eco friendly and energy efficient at Periwinkle. David Grosser who has a wealth of knowledge in this area has generously taken on the task of Project Manager for these two tasks. Thank-you David.

Management

Periwinkle is a community-based preschool, and it is the effort of many that enables it to function and be the service it is. Words cannot express the gratitude I feel for the support, active participation, and
generosity of spirit I experienced working with you all over the year. Much was achieved, friendships were forged, and it was demonstrated how much can be achieved when human beings are able to work in a community where trust, respect, and support is valued. Thank you to the Parent Management Committee members of 2012 and to each family – your contributions are very much appreciated.

I would particularly like to acknowledge our executive president for 2012, Abigail Sawyer. She is an early childhood educator and this year has completed her PhD, and in her busy life she still found time for Periwinkle. Abigail, a sincere thank-you, it has been an absolute joy to work with you. Jen Henderson was the secretary for 2012. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude and thanks to the many contributions Jen has made both as the secretary and as a parent. It is certainly a privilege to be able to work with women who are passionate to support and give so generously of their skills to Periwinkle Preschool.

I would also like to thank Gerald Anderson, the treasurer for 2012. It was wonderful to have Gerald and the knowledge he brings to this role. The continuity of having Gerald continue this year has given the opportunity to begin to consolidate and clarify the cost of running and maintaining Periwinkle. It has been a little unknown with the additional demands of restoration that has needed to be done over the past few years. It certainly has taken the stress out of the work with his clarity and understanding of the finances. I also feel very grateful that Gerald has offered to continue in the role for 2013 and hopefully we will be able to put in place a realistic long-term plan for the running cost, ongoing improvements, and maintenance.

Maintenance and Grounds Co-coordinators Cyndi and Daniel have also been very busy and it reflects in how beautifully Periwinkle is now cared for. Cyndi has also studied this year completing the Grail course. Thank-you so much. It is just wonderful to have you around, and your work is a huge contribution to the ongoing organising and maintaining of Periwinkle.

The craft days didn’t really happen on a regular basis during 2012. If anyone is inspired and would like to take this up in 2013 it would be fabulous. In the past, many have been delighted with the skills and friendships that have been forged at craft mornings.

I also want to mention our Periwinkle newsletter, and our editor for 2012 Amber Greene. The newsletter has helped to foster communication and relationships with both our Periwinkle families and the broader Periwinkle community, including Cape Byron Steiner School and our friends and supporters. Thank you Amber for all that you have given to this important role over the year. We are very happy that you will continue the role as editor in 2013.

I encourage all of you to consider what article you may be able to contribute, and to share your thoughts with Amber. It is our newsletter and the articles can only become richer as we feel comfortable to contribute. Thank you to those parents and staff who wrote for the newsletter during 2012.
Curriculum

The curriculum and how we can ensure best practice is always a major focus for me. 2012 was the first year of implementation of the National Quality Standards, and Early Years Learning Framework. This has been a huge undertaking on both a curriculum and administration level. However we have met it with enthusiasm and continue to improve how we provide a learning environment for the children based on the philosophy of Rudolf Steiner, and establish links to both NQS and the EYLF. I am passionate about the curriculum, which I believe should never be comprised. We truly need to understand and appreciate the educational process of the young child through the formative years and strive to meet these little people in a way that will support them to be active, independent learners for life.

I feel with the introduction of National Quality Standards and the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF), Steiner education at Periwinkle continues to shine. There has been a lot of work done to become familiar with working with the new standards and framework. However the more I work with these documents the more I feel excited to demonstrate the benefits of the Steiner approach and how it links very soundly to both the national standards and the EYLF.

Providing food as a curriculum-based learning experience (learning from life for life) has continued to be a successful part of our day. With the kitchen renewed the program has become even more effective. I consider it is cutting edge to be able to achieve this. The benefits we have evidenced can be identified and linked to all aspects of the EYLF framework. The three aspects of Belonging, Being and Becoming are developing in all the domestic work activities. In all the food preparation and eating together the children are defining their identities and their interdependence, establishing a sense of belonging. It allows for the children to be in the here and now (Being), to be engaged with the joy and challenges of meal preparation, packing away, and cleaning up. The children are shaped by the many different events and circumstances that occur around the domestic work, providing the seeds for healthy eating choices and life skills that will develop and change throughout life (Becoming)

Parent information nights, held once a term, are to give parents the opportunity to explore the questions of your children and how we all as educators support their development. Those who came gave me wonderful feedback on how helpful the evenings were for them as parents. I encourage you all to come to these nights. It is not about families creating little Periwinkle environments at home – it is about how we work together creating interdependent roles that foster and support the diversity and culture of our diverse community, which enhances all our children’s learning experiences.

Periwinkle has had the pleasure of Christine, a volunteer from Germany, from September 2011 to August 2012. It was a real delight to have her as part of our team and a special gift for the children to learn verses and songs in German. A special thank-you to Christine. It was a program the committee and myself agreed to in 2011. It was an invaluable experience for Christine, families and Periwinkle. I know Christine has appreciated, enjoyed, and become a close friend to the three families who hosted her.
I would like to say thank you to each of those families the Mathieson family, the Grosser family, and the Birkkjaer family who made it possible for Christine to have a home away from home.

Again this year the professional development budget has supported the enriching of the curriculum.

The highlight was the forming of the Periwinkle College, which attempted to meet for 2 hours every Wednesday afternoon from 4.30 p.m. - 6.30 p.m. during the term. This is a time when, as a staff team, we focus our attention to the understanding of the work of Rudolf Steiner, and the implication for our daily work. This has been open to other Steiner educators working in the area and it is a pleasure to have Terese Molloy and Sandra Frain join us for these meetings. Sandra has many years of study and experience in Steiner education and B. D. Farming. She has a family day care in Mullumbimby and many of her children continue on to Periwinkle. Terese completed her practicum at Periwinkle for her Diploma in Early Childhood Education during the year. She is on our relief staff and has worked for many years at Cape Byron School as an assistant and playgroup leader.

Conference and workshops attended by staff during the year.

- All teaching staff - Beginning of the year 3-Day Conference at Samford Valley Steiner School.  
  Music, Movement, Metal – In the education of the Child to Adulthood.

- All staff - Senior First Aid in April.

- Ellon and Deb – “The importance of Self-Regulations” – Research Professor Stuart Shanker.


- Munch & Move Workshop – Carina & Ellon.

- The Rudolf Steiner regional meeting at Byron Bay: Deb, Kellie, Ellon. Armidale: Carina.

- Anthroposophical Society and Steiner Education Australia Conference at Alice Springs.
  “Rediscovering the Secret sacred in Contemporary Professional Life” - Ellon.

- Brain Gym workshop – Bess.

- Ellon completed a Cert IV in Training and Assessment.

I thank the families of 2012 for entrusting their children to us and for the many contributions you made over the year. It was truly something: the openness, trust and willingness to work with the staff was fantastic.
It has also been heart-warming to hear from parents how their children have transitioned to school. From what I am hearing, the children have been confident, excited, and ready to take this step to kindergarten.

**Staff**

Importantly, I want to acknowledge the Periwinkle staff of 2012: Marj, our bookkeeper; Kishiko, who keeps Periwinkle sparkling clean; our eurythmist Karen; our teaching staff Kellie, Bess, Deb, Carina, and Xiola- who sadly had to resign during the year due to personal circumstances. She leaves us with many fond memories and takes with her all our best wishes for the future. They are a committed team who work tirelessly beside me, and I can assure you they are all respected as co-educators of the children.

Again in 2012 the benefit of working as a team was evident, considering each other’s input as we journey along striving to embrace the new NQS and EYLF and continually enliven our practice to ensure all children in our care are supported as active participants of life-long learning. All little children come with this enthusiasm and it is our responsibility to ensure they never lose this curiosity and wonder to continue to learn. This I see as our duty, as we continue to understand what Rudolf Steiner really meant when he said, ‘The preschool years, the kindergarten years (the years before formal schooling) are the most important of all in the education of the child.’ He also said, ‘It is absolutely essential that before we begin to think, before we so much as begin to set our thinking in motion, we experience the condition of wonder.’ The team here at Periwinkle is just fabulous and words cannot convey how much I appreciate working with them all.

We have started the year with full numbers and I look forward to welcoming the committee of 2013. I am sure this year will also bring a richness that will further enliven Periwinkle Preschool, a special place that I feel is providing modern and effective education for the children of the 21st century. What a joy it is to be part of something not only special but also very important for the coming generation.

Thank you all

Ellen Gold

Director

Wishing all our Families, old and new, a wonderful and safe, Term One holiday.