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During a recent leadership retreat, participants, of whom I was one, were asked to reflect on their leadership style and, in doing so, reflect on their inner self. One of the tools used to assist us in our reflection was the poem *Desiderata* by the American writer Max Ehrmann (1872-1945), who published this poem in 1927. Sadly, I must admit to having never read this wonderful work before this weekend, but it is one that has remained with me ever since.

The opening line states: “Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence.” What a lovely sentiment and challenge for us. Our lives and those of our families continue to increase in complexity, requiring order, structure and discipline. In this poem, we are asked to remember the peace we may all find in silence. For some this will be in prayer, meditation, quiet contemplation or sharing a quiet moment with a loved one or friend. It is a reminder that amongst the business, noise and haste of our day, we need to feed our spirits and find peace and beauty in silence. This poem will mean different things to different people. That is the beauty of literature; we each may take away our own understandings and learning from it.

In a similar vein, this edition of the *Vision Splendid* provides wonderful reports on the activities and achievements of our students. They have made the most of the many opportunities available throughout the year, and these reports reflect but only a few of their endeavours. In order for us to truly gain from such activities, we are called to reflect (in silence) and learn and grow from the experience gained. As readers of this magazine, we have the opportunity to engage in this reflection, and I encourage you to read these many articles and then take time to reflect on the young people involved, consider what they (and you?) might learn from the experience, and then consider how we can take these moments into our lives for purposeful endeavour.

Upon further reflection, I feel that the wish that we may all go, “placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence,” is one of generosity, goodwill and peacefulness. May I offer this sentiment to you all now as you read this magazine, and hope that you take away something from one of the submissions; and that you may grow, develop or embrace it in your lives.

Brian Grimes
Principal
Collaboration holds the key to 21st century learning

collaborate v.i. Work jointly (with, or abs.) Work with another person or group in order to achieve or produce something; [f. L COL (Laborare LABOUR).

A.B. Paterson College celebrated the official opening of its innovative state-of-the-art technology facility, the Collaborative Learning Centre (CLC), with the ceremonial cutting of the green and gold ribbon by Board Member, Peter Sippel. Prior to this, the opening ceremony commenced with addresses by Mr Sippel, representing College Board Chairman, David Tanner, and College Principal, Brian Grimes.

Andre Obradovic, Director – Enterprise and SMB, Samsung Electronics, Australia, recognised how his company’s partnership with the College, as one of Samsung’s lighthouse schools, enabled the use of technology as a tool in support of the teaching, learning and collaboration amongst the College’s staff and students. Soon Jinn Lim, CEO, HeuLab Pte Ltd (Singapore) recollected how his own traditional schooling took him on a journey to support student engagement and collaborative learning via innovative technology. Despite hectic diaries, both businessmen were in attendance to celebrate their companies’ significant contribution to the 21st learning of the College’s students.

Guest speaker, Ewan McIntosh, founder and CEO of NoTosh, captivated an audience of local educators, businessmen and women, and students of A.B. Paterson College in his passionate endorsement of collaboration as, not only the key to 21st century learning, but also critical to design thinking, innovation and creativity beyond formal education. Below is a synopsis of what he had to say.

“Learning in school is one thing. Heading to university another. Rarely does either truly reflect the incredible pace of change in the world beyond those thirteen years of formal education, where the demands for more complex collaboration and ingenuity test even the best education systems’ agility to the limit.

“Take the world of fashion, for example. One of our clients, a luxury fashion brand for whom we develop and deliver education programmes in the communities in which it operates, has grown nearly ten times in as many years. Digital teams now operate on a par with merchandising and finance, and clothing designers themselves are acutely
aware from their very first sketch how their product will look in a digital store as much as on the runway.

“The people in these teams would be unlikely to have ever met had they attended the same school. Slightly geeky computer programmers would hardly be seen creating amazing projects with the fashionistas; the mathematicians and science majors wouldn’t be seen spending time in home economics thinking about how they could imbue cloth with data-processing technology that will heat the fabric when it’s cold outside, and cool it down when summer arrives.

“And in university, these serendipitous, tangential collaborations are made even more unlikely to succeed in anywhere other than extracurricular clubs, as students specialise ever deeper, narrower.

“Yet, in the world outside formal education, serendipity is increasingly what makes the creative, financial, scientific and engineering worlds go around. Tangents, not five year plans, are where the biggest discoveries and creations of the past decade have come from, whether it’s developing social networks with billions of users, finding preventative medicine in foods that can help more of us avoid cancer by eating certain foods regularly and cooking them correctly, or developing construction technologies that enable apartment blocks 17 stories high to be constructed in one week in China’s expansive metropolises.

“Chefs work with PhDs, construction trades work in ways that run against what their forefathers would have said was “right”, and individuals in dorms can reach out and find the right team to get the rest done just as well.

“Schools have an opportunity to prepare their young people with the robustness and acuity that is required to survive and thrive in this fast-paced, anything-is-possible world. It involves schools spending time like they’ve never spent it before understanding what constitutes collaboration, real collaboration and not just ‘group work’.

“It means the construction of new spaces, and the overhauling of existing ones. Rows of chairs and the same group of students sitting with each other all year long is not preparation for collaboration ‘out there’. Students of the same ability working with each other doesn’t chime with the notion that, in true collaboration, you reach out to those smarter than you to fill your gaps in understanding - we need more cross-age coaching, joint projects, younger students bringing their different perspective on the world to older students who might have lost it on the way.

“And these aren’t just great for collaboration. Education research is mounting that it is the skill set for collaboration in the real world that also brings the most to learners’ progress in school.

“Now, go and discuss this. In a team. Collaborate on something to rock the status quo of group work and encourage young people to truly collaborate.” Ewan McIntosh, 1 June, 2013.

This amazing space we call the CLC is at the heart of A.B. Paterson College’s eLearning strategy. Not only does it offer the latest digital technologies that will ultimately enhance student learning and understanding, but it also gives staff and students a purpose-designed space in which to meet, to share, and to challenge conventional learning parameters. To collaborate.

A.B. Paterson College students are encouraged to deepen, share and demonstrate their understanding in innovative and effective ways. Informative conversation, active listening, negotiation of decisions, management of, and participation in meetings, coupled with both leadership and teamwork are all key drivers behind the development of the Collaborative Learning Centre. Teaching and learning needs to move away from the traditional learning environments; and this innovative, flexible, technology rich Centre, combined with extensive software and expert support, allows our staff and students to do just that.

These skills include: problem solving and innovation, self-regulation and assessment, collaboration, ICT use, skilled communication, knowledge building and a global awareness. Digital or eLearning enables effective personalised and differentiated learning to take place and gives the freedom for students to be imaginative and creative, leading to engagement and lifelong learning. The wider audience inherent with the production of a digital portfolio leads to high quality outcomes and increased motivation for success.

As we move towards a blended learning approach to our pedagogy, based upon the adage, sage on the stage to guide on the side and a curriculum that is, in essence, more student centred and less teacher centred, the students will take much more ownership of their learning with the guidance and support of College staff.

The road to understanding is individualised and collaborative. Students must be active participators in their learning journey and also be able to access and disseminate a vast amount of information to develop a deep understanding of their academic curriculum.

True collaborative learning is a skill and, like all skills, it needs to be coached, practised and developed.

… and we have just the place for it!
It all started at the auditions. In early January, over 400 students auditioned for a place in the contemporary musical *The Wiz*. 120 were selected. The theme for this year’s musical was ‘Participation’. In past musicals, Junior School students have successfully taken part but, very often, suffered long waiting times in the Green Room between on-stage appearances. I decided to give most students multiple roles, which facilitated multiple appearances and full participation.

This was a huge challenge for our choreographer, Emily Fletcher, who placed every student on stage in both major musical items: *He’s The Wizard* and *Everybody Rejoice*. Both routines were spectacular, assisted by the wonderful rainbow costumes designed by Barry Voevodin and Lisa Wise.

A.B. Paterson College’s 2013 Musical was a huge success. The fast-paced action was kept alive by Dorothy (Ruby Sethi), Scarecrow, (Sebastien Golenko), Tin Man (Jack Baker) and Lion (Mitchell Lang).

Ruby's performance was spectacular, with a very special rendition of *Somewhere over the Rainbow* and culminating in her show-stopping song *Home*, just before Dorothy's transition back to New York. Sebastien’s cheeky personality and wonderful agility captivated the audience as the friends journeyed towards Emerald City.

Jack Baker brought his character to life by playing Tin Man as ‘Mr Cool’. He literally nearly brought the show to a standstill when, during our final dress rehearsal, all the radio mics kept breaking up the sound, courtesy of the metal on his costume so skilfully designed by Christie-Lee Wise. The metal had to go! In true trooper form, Lisa Wise, Christie-Lee and Jackie Bennett remade the costume from scratch in less than half a day! Plastic replica shapes had to be sourced, spray painted and fitted, to exactly replicate the original costume. Jack went on to woo his audiences with a stellar performance.

Mitchell Lang brought so much humour and pathos to his lovable Lion. His wonderful duet with Dorothy was a highlight of the show. Madison Eastwood tore up the stage with her
spectacular, Evillene; while Christie–Lee Wise was sensational as the ‘feel good’ Addaperle; and Emma Peterson glittered as the beautiful, elegant, fairy-like Glinda, who mesmerised everyone watching with her rendition of Believe in Yourself.

And then there was the Wiz! Justin Tan developed his character through rehearsals, working closely with Vocal Director, Tania Vadeikis, to produce a sensational performance. From the moment he began his first song, the audience was spellbound. Michael Greenwood and Erin Condrin’s superb acting skills brought the characters of Lord High Underling and the unfortunate messenger to life.

Dance made a major contribution to the show under the direction of Emily Fletcher and Dance Captains, Korbie–Lee Paltridge, Ella Ryan and Emma Peterson. The sensational very Yellow Brick Road singers and Village people dancers wowed the audience every time they appeared.

A highlight of the show was the Kalidah drummers, choreographed and created by Jodie Davis. Jodie spent an hour each week teaching the Kalidahs how to play the intricate drum routines. The orchestra was magnificent under the direction of the musical director, Tony Paye. The show was visually and aesthetically unique due to the production designer, Barry Voevodin, and digital artist, Jackie Bennett, with the show’s spectacular wardrobe headed by Lisa Wise and assisted by Janet Burrage, Julie Wode and Kerri-Ann Condrin, who made the magnificent crow masks. Hair and Make-up was sensationally created by Imelda Delahunty and Renee Hohendorf.

Vocal Director, Tania Vadeikis, was assisted by Rachel Newcombe, who undertook a dual role as assistant stage manager. Theatre manager, Marshall McAdam was responsible for sound, together with Lance Soloman, Robert Christie, Alex Fox (lighting), Nicholas Faulks (lighting), and Sam Vallone. Lindsay Valentine was in charge of set construction. Jackie Brewster was an admirable stage manager, leading a team that included Tyler Wood, Lauren Perry, Chelsea Kururangi and Fabio Alfieri. Candace Kruger produced the show, assisted by Callie Hewitt.

The journey to create The Wiz was a huge challenge for all involved and certainly not for the faint-hearted. All in all, The Wiz’s success was due to our very talented students and to all the professional staff and parents involved. The Wiz was an unequivocal success that, once again, demonstrated to the community the vital role that the Arts play in both the academic and co-curricular life of the College.

My heartfelt thanks to all for giving me such a wonderful opportunity. And before I forget… special thanks to Lauren Burne for playing the witch’s legs so magnificently, and to the adorable Mary Kruger who stole the show as Toto!

Jacqui Fry-Director
On Wednesday, 22 May, 10 of the College’s Senior School students were fortunate enough to attend the 2013 World Vision Global Leaders’ Convention.

The convention, which was held at the Carrara Dream Centre, was designed to inspire and empower students to become a voice for justice within our society.

“It was a truly eye opening event that all participants found both interesting and insightful,” Year 9 student, Hatham El-Ghobashy, exclaimed.

Over 200 students from the Gold Coast area took part in the convention – enhancing their leadership skills and learning about the circumstances millions within the developing world are forced to endure daily.

“The day began with an interactive game that simulated the Global Food Crisis. We learnt to work with people we had never met before and were provided with some great insight into the situation of those living in the developing world,” explains Year 10 student, Emma Marsh.

Through dynamic keynote speakers and multimedia presentations, student leaders were able to identify the underlying causes of poverty, the stark inequalities of the world we live in and how we can contribute to lasting change.

Among the speakers was 2013 Youth Ambassador for Queensland, Tayla Nel, who spoke about her eye-opening venture to Malawi earlier in the year.

“Whilst it was difficult to comprehend the fact that the communities we visited live in such poor conditions every day, seeing the difference World Vision was making empowered me to realise that change is already taking place,” Tayla recalls.

The former King’s Christian College student is a firm believer that poverty can, and will be, eradicated one day. It was the motivation of speakers such as Tayla that enabled students to realise their full potential as global leaders.

In addition, the convention importantly enabled students to realise the impact that their schools, as a community, can make through fundraising efforts.

World Vision’s annual 40 Hour Famine is considered World Vision Australia’s largest annual event, with around 300,000 Australians taking part each year.

The funds raised by those who partake in the famine assist World Vision’s work in various developing nations - 2013 will see all donations distributed directly to projects in the nation of Malawi.

The country, located in southeast Africa, is among the least developed nations in the world and, as such, has been affected severely by the Global Food Crisis.

“About four million children live in Malawi - the same number that live in Australia. The difference being that 47% of Malawian children are malnourished, meaning they lack vital nutrients and do not have enough food to survive,” Taylor Nel explains.

World Vision’s work in Malawi dates back to 1982 – by 1992 they had set up a number of projects that include: improvement of school facilities, bridge building to improve access to hospitals and schools, and training...
local communities to recognise disaster warnings and reduce the impact of natural disasters on their livelihood. World Vision’s work is now helping over one million people, currently working with communities in 26 districts through 44 long-term Area Development Programmes (ADPs).

Whilst the situation in Malawi is severe, World Vision’s past successes have provided much hope for citizens of this struggling nation.

The students who attended the convention would agree that they left the event equipped to lead the fight against global hunger – or at least lead the College in the upcoming 40 Hour Famine.

“The GLC enabled me to realise my full potential as a leader and the change one person can make. I’m looking forward to leading and inspiring students of A.B. Paterson College to get involved in this year’s 40 Hour Famine,” says Year 12 student Joshua Schmid.

In 2013, the famine will take place on the 16-18 of August, so be sure to get involved and assist World Vision in the fight against world hunger.

Let’s challenge ourselves! Together we can do this.

So, what will you give up in 2013?

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Emily Selleck - Year 10 Student

REPUBLIC OF MALAWI - Chalo cha Malawi, Dziko la Malawi

Flag

Coat of Arms

Motto: “Unity and Freedom”[1]

Independence
- from the United Kingdom 6 July 1964
- Current constitution 18 May 1994

Area
- Total 118,484 km² (99th)
  45,747 sq mi
- Water (%) 20.6%

Population
- 2013 estimate 16,407,000[4] (64th)
- 1998 census 9,933,868[5]
- Density 128.8/km² (86th)
  333.6/sq mi

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malawi

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Macau in China is where you will find Franco Dragone’s spectacularly breathtaking extravaganza, The House of Dancing Water. A former director of Cirque du Soleil, Italian-Belgian genius creator and director, Dragone, set out to create a new genre, a human performance fusion involving dialogue between countries and people. He drew his inspiration for the largest water based entertainment the world has ever seen from his visits to China and what he observed within Chinese culture, particularly the ‘seven emotions’ derived from classical Confucian beliefs. Hence it has many ingredients of China, including Chinese graphics in its logo and haunting traditional Chinese music, a thin, reed-like, eerie sound that reflects the fantasy land in which it is set. Dragone’s observations capture the magic of ordinary simple things and create a fantasy vision, a dream world in which dance and water come together in one place.

A theatrical experience in the round, the show is permanently housed in a 2000 seat, 273 tiered theatre, where the audience gets a 270 degree view of an epic tale of love that transcends time and space amidst storms, shipwrecks, love lost and a journey of rediscovery and redemption. With a budget of US$250 million, Dragone promised the most spectacular show that Asia has ever seen. Set in an extraordinary Kingdom where nature’s magic reigns, the show will take its audiences on an awe-inspiring journey through the heights and depths of human emotions. Opening in 2010, The House of Dancing Water is now in its third year of production. It was an enormous challenge with 25 different countries represented by over 80 performers and 160 technicians.

The cast is an eclectic company of dancers, acrobats, motor bike stunt riders and strap artists. The moves and
stunts are dangerously death defying, so the safety of the artists is of paramount concern. One of those artists is A.B. Paterson College 2012 alumnus, Helèna Merten, who joined the company in Macau earlier this year. It would seem that Helèna has always courted danger and was destined to be a skilful gymnast/acrobat from a very early age.

“I was constantly scaring my parents climbing the trees in my back yard and teaching myself new tricks on my trampoline so, when I asked them if I could do gymnastics, they were more than happy to be putting me in a safer environment,” Helèna explains.

“Since the age of five I trained and competed in a range of sports including Artistic Gymnastics, Acrobatic Gymnastics, Diving, Power Track Tumbling and anything offered at A.B. Paterson College, all of which have contributed to where I am today and my passion for sport. I trained on the Gold Coast my entire life; however, I was invited to train at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra when I was nine years of age and later for Diving. My coaches have come from across the world - China, Belarus, America, Australia and Russia - most of whom were world class professionals during their competition or performing years.”

But it is a long way from all of this to where Helèna now finds herself. So how did it all happen and what were her initial thoughts and feelings?

“I really was in utter disbelief and it was surreal until a few weeks into being here in Macau. I knew that if I committed myself to the goal, there would be no reason why I couldn’t make it into a show as renowned as The House of Dancing Water, but to find out this was my first full time job after graduating was incredible. To me, my age wasn’t really a factor I thought about and I have always been a reasonably independent person. I couldn’t wait; I had never even been overseas before.

“My fellow artists were very welcoming. However, it was not only the artists but the coaches, scuba divers, riggers, technicians, wardrobe, band,
management and everyone that works hand in hand to drive the show. The variation of nationalities, personalities, backgrounds and talents is astounding and will forever provide something new to learn, whether it be skills, qualities or even language and culture.”

What an incredible opportunity! It must have been like a dream come true for a newly graduated high school student from the Gold Coast, Australia. Not only would Helèna leave Australian shores for the first time, but she would enter a completely different world of professional artists and technicians from all around the globe. In accepting the challenges that obviously lay ahead, Helèna reflects on her training and the show itself.

“I think one of the best things about the show is that it well and truly takes you into a whole new world. Not only are the acts and scenes unlike any other show, but the stage and special effects create an amazing performance within themselves. What also makes this show so unique is its story. It’s not just a string of circus acts; I believe everyone will receive a different interpretation of the symbols, characters and messages in the performance.

“The show is held at The City of Dreams, Hotel/Casino in Macau, China. The 2000-seat theatre has the world’s largest commercial pool, which holds more than five times the volume of an Olympic swimming pool (17 million litres of water). Even more impressive, however, is that in less than a minute, 11 hydraulic lifts frequently transform the pool into a dry stage (or conversely from a dry stage to a depth deep enough for 25 metre dives) with over 239 independent water jets, some of which reach up to 18 metres in height. The acts include Boat Diving, Human Chandelier, Straps, Russian Swing, Pyramid, High Diving and a Motorbike act all bound together by characters in harnesses and dance choreography to craft the story.

“During the boat act I am a sailor, who rises up from the sea along with three nine metre tall masts. Throughout the act we are swinging, jumping and diving.

“The Human Chandelier is an aerial act, where the chandelier shaped frame, packed with 20 performers, enters the stage from 21 metres above. Here we perform choreography and skills with partners, including swings, catches and even handstands.

“The Russian swing is essentially four swinging platforms positioned around the stage with pushers and flyers. The flyers swing off the platform, performing various stunts metres up into the air and across the stage to finish with a dive into the water.

“People from all around the world and of all ages come to watch the show. The story, uniqueness of each act, together with the stage and special effects makes The House of Dancing Water appealing for anyone, and this is what makes the audience want to return. The show attracts people from all walks of life including famous people in the audience, like the King and Queen of Malaysia at our last show.

“Training ranged from strength and conditioning, choreography and character work, scuba diving, as well as all the skills for each act. Like any training, it was of course challenging at times, but working on something you love doing makes every moment enjoyable and rewarding. Now that I am performing, we also train during the day and between our two performances at night.

“I am in the House Troupe, which is an acrobatic role that has over eight different costumes. The danger factor in the show is extremely high but, of course, leaves the audience on the edge of their seats. For every risk in the theatre, an equal safety measure is put into place. For example, the pool lifts have a tape switch which, when touched, completely stops the lifts from moving and, therefore, eliminates the risk of anyone or anything becoming trapped between the lifts. There is a hand signal which, when given by anyone, will immediately stop the entire show and cameras situated above and under the water to ensure the performer’s safety.”

Helena considers the future much as a blank canvas. Anything is possible.

“From here I am truly unsure what is next, I couldn’t think of a better place to be right now, so once opportunities arise I will decide. I know I will certainly continue to travel in my spare time and perhaps volunteer. Other than this, I simply hope to work or study in something that I love.”

We hear so often the catchphrase “chance of a lifetime” and certainly this is just that, but it is an opportunity that Helena has grasped with all of her being, embracing the unfamiliar, the unknown and the downright scary. Her comfort zone is but a mere distant memory, superseded by an experience that is exciting, exhilarating and defining. It will be a hard act to follow.

Thanks to Helena for giving us insight into her incredible new world. We salute your courage and tenacity and wish you well in the Franco Dragone Entertainment Group.

Added 22/12/2009.
Calling all scientists!

If you love science as much as Year 11 student, Tommi Muller, you will understand how important his role as University of Queensland (UQ) Science Ambassador is to the promotion of all things scientific within the College campus.

Being selected as an ambassador for 12 months carries with it the responsibility for promoting and raising the profile of science events and activities amongst junior and senior students. Tommi was offered the position following his involvement in the Queensland Brainbee Challenge as a member of the Honours Programme. There is a minimum of one and a maximum of six ambassadors in total across Queensland.

The University of Queensland offers information to Tommi for promotional purposes, ranging from different competitions available for entry, career opportunities in science related fields and encouraging involvement in science themed days such as National Chemistry Week and Earth Day.

“I hope to bring science to the attention of students and to raise the profile of science at A.B. Paterson College by encouraging participation in science events and activities. I believe that this is important, given its significance and frequency of application in our everyday lives in this day and age,” says Tommi of what he hopes to achieve through his ambassadorship tenure.

Since embarking on his ambassadorship, Tommi has initiated two competitions in the Junior School – a plant growing competition, challenging students to grow better plants than the scientists working at the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (RACI), and a second competition to see who can grow the best crystal. Learning about the chemistry behind crystal formation will enable students to understand how crystals grow and inform their own winning chances. In the Senior School, Tommi is promoting the National Science Youth Forum (NSYF).

Tommi’s personal interest lies in Physics and Chemistry, and he feels that these two disciplines help him to understand the fundamentals of how nature works and, consequently, how our world works.

“Science is all about using the information all around us and trying to understand how the universe works. Through science, we can explain the fundamentals of nature, which help us to understand the world better, but some questions we may never be able to answer and that fascinates me.”

Medical research is where Tommi feels most drawn towards, particularly the area of neuroscience studying the causes of the devastating Alzheimer disease and dementia. If the research that he hopes to do takes him that far, looking into a treatment for this neurological disorder would be the obvious next step.

Going full circle, it was the Brainbee Challenge that first fired Tommi’s interest and passion. The brain is such a complex organ it is difficult to understand how it can be studied. The challenge enabled Tommi to look at the different parts, how they link up with each other and, ultimately, make the brain and body function.

“The human brain is arguably the most complex thing on Earth and to study it would be uncovering the secrets to what makes us tick. The most challenging questions are the “how” and answering those questions, like many of the questions of science, will help us understand ourselves better,” says Tommi of his passionate interest in neuroscience.

With family in Canada, Tommi spent the 2013 mid-year holiday in Canada. Whilst there, he visited the University of British Columbia (UBC) and spoke with Colleen Guimond and Emily Dwosh, two genetic counsellors who work alongside physicians and researchers at UBC and specialise in genetic counselling for neurological diseases, including Alzheimer disease and other forms of dementia.

Emily and Colleen were able to discuss future studies and career paths in Alzheimer disease research with Tommi. From his interview, many options were suggested, such as undergoing study in medical school or aiming for a PhD in a specific field of neuroscience.

Tommi has decided that after school he would like to travel to Canada to study at university there, with the end goal being to undertake PhD study and research leading into university lecturing and, perhaps, a professorship in years to come.
A European travelogue

Boarding a flight from Brisbane International Airport bound for Barcelona via Dubai were 30 excitable students and four equally happy members of staff. This trip, primarily based on the theme of history, language and the arts, represented the culmination of more than two years of planning and dreams of becoming one of the best excursions ever.

The teaching team led by Marc Olivier, Jackie Bennett, Victoria Fehringer and Assistant Principal, Marie Perry, were confident before the wheels even left the ground that they had chosen an incredible group of polite, caring, inquisitive and enthusiastic students who would, without a doubt, enjoy the overseas experience that was a mere 20 hours flying away, but also 16,000 kilometres from the comfort of home.

Spain

First stop, Spain. We visited many places including Monserrat, the Sagrada Familia, and the royal palace, as well as walking around the city itself. Barcelona and Madrid - both were so different from Australia!

There were rows upon rows of apartments with little balconies and shutters. It was so quaint. One of the main things I noticed was that most of the buildings were painted in yellow and terracotta colours! The streets were bustling; I think a lot of people walk rather than drive. Even just walking down the main street of the city to go to dinner was an exciting experience. There were buskers and street vendors everywhere. The Sagrada Familia was a real highlight. It was so full of history. Its construction was started during the Renaissance, and it still isn’t finished! Everywhere we visited was full of so much history.

The food was amazing. We ate tapas nearly every night. Tapas are a variety of small savoury dishes with things like chorizo or potato fritters. A few of us tried ‘paella’, which is a dish of rice, saffron, chicken or seafood. And, of course, we tried churros, a Spanish doughnut dipped in chocolate. It wasn’t the healthiest option, but it was by far the tastiest!

Both Barcelona and Madrid had a really lively atmosphere, especially at night. In Madrid we watched flamenco dancing. It was so energetic, and it was a great way to spend our evening. Of course, the shopping was a major highlight, and the girls often found themselves in Zara and H&M looking for “souvenirs”. The people were so friendly and always smiling! I would definitely go back to Spain. Whilst we were there the weather was unseasonably cold, but I’d love to go back during the summer and explore other places like Majorca or Malaga.

Kelly Brown – Year 11
France

As soon as we embarked from our flight into the chillingly brisk Parisian breeze, there was an instant energy in the air. THIS was really Europe. PARIS was what people thought about when they thought about Europe. And we were finally there.

We were quickly whisked out of the freezing weather and onto the bus and soon we were cruising through the streets of Paris. Eager for a peek at the Eiffel Tower, we fought for the window seats but, much to our disappointment, we were soon leaving the cobblestoned streets of Paris bound for the quaint country charm of Amiens.

No sooner had we settled down in our trés chic hotel (complete with unlimited wi-fi which we were exultant to note), we ventured out into the darkened streets of Amiens, bound for our first attempt at French cuisine. A (lucky?) few tasted, for the very first time, the slimy succulence of snails.

After a restful night, bright and early, we began our solemn two-day journey through the war memorials of Amiens, including Thiepval, Ulster and a tour of the Somme battlefield. With a chilling low of 2°C, we could only begin to imagine the misery and tragedy that our soldiers endured throughout the massacre of WWI. Our final port of call on our Amiens tour was the memorial at Villers-Bretonneux, where a student-run remembrance service was held.

With a reprieve from the solemnity of the memorial tour, in the form of Bianca Palmer dressing up as the Easter bunny for our Easter celebration, we left the charm of Amiens and made our way to the lights of the city of love.

‘From Paris to Berlin’ firmly stuck in our minds and the sparkle of the Eiffel Tower at night dazzling our eyes, we tearfully bid the city of love “au revoir” and said “guten tag” to the wonders of Berlin.

Kayla Saich -Year 12
Germany

During the Europe tour, we had the privilege of travelling to Berlin and visiting infamous WWII sites such as Sachsenhausen, Check Point Charlie and the Holocaust memorial.

Sadly, however, we only had a short time in Berlin, staying a total of three nights, meaning we were constantly on the move using the Metro for quick travel. We had two particularly significant trips, one to Sachsenhausen and a day walking trip through the city.

Sachsenhausen was, frankly, quite confronting. Many of the buildings had been demolished, but enough were left to leave an empathetic understanding of the prisoners’ lives. We visited the sterile white-tiled medical facility, where horrible experiments were conducted. We also visited the remains of the gas chambers and realised how many people had died in the room in which we were standing. We then visited the dormitories and truly got an understanding of the living conditions, by walking through the cramped quarters. Visiting Sachsenhausen was an experience no one on the tour will ever forget; walking through the buildings and getting a real understanding of life within its confines during this time will forever affect us.

We also had the fantastic opportunity to explore Berlin on a lighter note through our walking tour. We had a hilarious tour guide, even ushering away gypsies when we were approached. He was even kind enough to let us stop in a free museum to warm up since it was absolutely freezing! He walked us to Checkpoint Charlie and, afterwards, we further explored the city and got a feel for Berlin, during which time we visited the Holocaust memorial.

Overall, Berlin was an experience! We all have memories that we will never forget, from something simple such as having Bratwurst in the street to walking through the gas chambers. The Europe Tour is something that none of us will ever forget and Berlin was another unforgettable part.

Bryan Parsons – Year 10
Italy

What a stunning final destination to end a fantastic European tour! Having travelled between Venice, Florence and Rome whilst visiting incredible landmarks such as Michelangelo’s David, The Sistine Chapel, the Roman Forum, Trevi Fountain, The Colosseum, Vatican City and the archaic ruins of Pompeii, it really put into perspective the rich history and architecture that makes this country incredibly unique.

What Italy is even more renowned for, however, is the food! One cannot even begin to comprehend the amount of pizza, pasta and lasagna that was consumed during that final week… but it was worth every single bite. Not to mention the gelatos, which made our Italian culinary experience complete. (Up to 10 euros each… Ouch!)

A common stereotype was indeed noticeable: that Italians dress well! We judged this by the number of Dolce & Gabbanas we passed, or simply the fact that they have their very own Gucci museum in the heart of Florence. However, the amount of swooning from the girls over the handsome Italian men was enough to prove this stereotype very true from the very beginning!

What was also unique was the locals’ way of living: walk or bike to work, close up shop at midday, go home for lunch with the family and eat, eat, eat! The laidback Italian attitude of putting family before work is something to really admire, along with the amount of speaking that is done solely with their hands!

Having bathed in the rich culture of this country, whether it was the beautiful canals of Venice, the cathedrals, ruins of ancient civilisations, famous artworks, food, or the high spirited people of Italy, it has left a long lasting impression on me, and I will no doubt be back for another taste of “La dolce vita.”

Annalisa Guerrini – Year 11

It wasn’t until landing back in Brisbane some three days later that the European tourists had a chance to relax, refresh and simply let the experience of what they had just completed sink in. The success of this trip is testament to the huge planning effort the staff invested to make the excursion safe, fun and informative. The students made this job even easier with their keen sense of enthusiasm, maturity, behaviour and appreciation for what was surely the ‘best excursion ever’.
There was movement at the station, for the word had passed around …

Preparations for the annual Winton walkabout were well underway, when an idea began to germinate in the minds of the Year 6 excursion staff. How about taking a gift from the students to Winton for the Waltzing Matilda Centre? Superb idea! But what? It couldn’t be just any gift, it needed to be something special, something characteristically Banjo and to which all students in the cohort could make a contribution.

“I think the people of Winton will be really excited to receive our art work,” enthused Hayley Corby.

“It is an important project as I am representing A.B. Paterson College in Winton. We will get to meet the people in the Waltzing Matilda Centre and they will hang the art work, and we will be able to see it there,” said Oscar Clarke of his involvement in this project.

With representation from all classes, a picture of The Man from Snowy River coming down a mountain on his “small and weedy beast” captured their imaginations. Projecting the image onto a whiteboard, a template was superimposed onto a very, very large piece of paper.

“We watched the film The Man from Snowy River about people rounding up wild horses. He wanted to go too, but his pony was too small and would not be able to handle steep hills. Then one of the men (Clancy of the Overflow) said that they should give him a chance, so he went. They came to a stop when there was a really steep hill and none of the horses could go down it, but the man from Snowy River kept on going, chasing the horses through the snow and he became a hero to the other men,” recalls Hayley, as she summarises the plot of one of Banjo Paterson’s most famous poems.

Wanting a typical and “old rustic” Australian look, it was decided that each student would create a clay tile into which selected native flora would be pressed to form an imprint. Each tile would then be affixed to the template and the man from Snowy River would ride again, A.B. Paterson College, Year 6 style.
“I chose the wattle and some gumnuts to put on my tile to make them stand out more because they had good texture. I also chose the wattle because it is the national floral symbol of Australia,” recalls Jonte Fouche, who also assisted with all of the project information contained in this article.

With 102 tiles to jigsaw onto the template to ensure a snug fit and then cut around the edges to reveal the silhouette of the intrepid horseman, the work of Visual Art teacher, Ms Jackie Bennett was just beginning. Each tile had to be numbered within its group, prior to firing, so that the tile man from Snowy River could be resurrected by numbers for permanent fixing. Firing the tiles resulted in shrinkage but, undeterred, they were repositioned and glued down on a wooden board. Bitumen paint was then applied to the tiles to darken them, with the floral designs popping out, to dry with a gold-ish hue, creating an antique look.

“I found a bunch of gum leaves and nuts in the school garden and wattle that I imprinted onto my tile. I thought the tile looked amazing – I was quite surprised. After seeing the tiles when they were wet, I wasn’t expecting them to show up as much. When they were wet, they were quite flat,” reflected Oscar.

Thus the man from Snowy River was reborn in the form of a simply amazing work of art. Jessica Hornabrook is really looking forward to giving this unique gift to the Waltzing Matilda Centre and reflects on the culmination of what has been a long process.

“I am most looking forward to representing our College in Winton and to the fun way of learning about the Outback. Giving the artwork to the Waltzing Matilda Centre will be exciting and especially to see their faces, as we have been sending them updates throughout the project. We have sent several photographs at different stages with little articles for their local newspaper.

“I chose gumnuts and a banksia flower with a few eucalyptus leaves as imprints. It looked really Aussie! The whole thing weighs approximately 50 kgs! It is very heavy!”

As heavy as it is, the gift is also quite fragile, so its final journey will be in a purpose-built crate in the luggage undercarriage of one of the tour buses. All being well, The Man from Snowy River will be installed in the Waltzing Matilda Centre in mid July, a perfect end to a perfect project.

Now there will always be a little piece of A.B. Paterson College in the heart of Banjo country, further cementing a bond between our place here on the Gold Coast, and Winton and its people. Our proud affiliation with Banjo Paterson continues to define us and, as a community, we are proud to bear the name of Andrew Barton Paterson.

The Man from Snowy River

He sent the flint stones flying, but the pony kept his feet,
He cleared the fallen timber in his stride.

And the man from Snowy River never shifted in his seat –
It was grand to see that mountain horseman ride.

Through the stringybarks and saplings, on the rough and broken ground,

Down the hillside at a racing pace he went;

And he never drew the bridle till he landed safe and sound.

At the bottom of that terrible descent.

While every contribution to charity – be it food, money or clothing – makes a significant difference to those in need, there is nothing that compares to the selfless donation of human blood.

This year, A.B. Paterson College partnered with the Australian Red Cross to become an official ‘Donor School’, calling on its senior students, parents and friends to generously give their time to donate blood for those in need. This venture, formed through the ambition of four Year 12 students, Cassandra Gros, Danielle Greenwood, Georgie Scoular and Cassandra Dimitroff, all of whom worked closely with both the Red Cross and several College teachers throughout the year, has already saved over 100 lives.

“A.B. is a school which thrives on assisting and contributing to the community,” explains Cassandra Gros, one of the College’s newly appointed Red Cross Youth Ambassadors and first time blood donor, “so when such a huge opportunity came along, such as becoming an official donor school, it just made sense for us to get on board.”

The Australian Red Cross has been in operation since 1914, pursuing its mission to, “Improve the lives of patients through the power of humanity.” According to their statistics, approximately 1 in 3 people will need blood in their lifetime, but only 1 in 30 donates. For this reason, the College, led by its four Youth Ambassadors, has endorsed the idea of donating blood in and around the College and has actively sought out students, parents and teachers to become involved in the venture.

The project’s zenith came in the last week of Term 2, on Wednesday, 19 June, as A.B. Paterson College played host to the Red Cross Donor Van. In a
single day, students of Years 11 and 12, teachers and affiliates of the College placed enough donations to help save 72 lives.

Year 12 student, and one of the College’s first Red Cross Youth Ambassadors, Danielle Greenwood, is considered a ‘veteran donor’ and someone who was extremely eager to get the College involved in her endeavours this year.

“I started donating when I was 16 and this was my fifth time donating. I started because my parents have been doing it for quite a few years now and I consider that it isn’t a hassle for me, and I am helping to save people’s lives just by spending one hour of my life every few months donating.”

The resounding success of the ‘Van Day’ was inspiring, as the College’s community spirit shone brighter with every passing hour. Despite it being the first year A.B. Paterson College can call itself a ‘Donor School’, many students and teachers were quick and eager to put up their hands selflessly in the name of good will.

The true heroes of the year, the placers of A.B. Paterson College’s blood bank donations, are commended for their outstanding show of generosity and community spirit. While the ‘Van Day’ was the result of efforts made so far by the A.B. Paterson College ‘Blood Team’, it is certainly not the conclusion of the year-long drive. Donations can and will continue to be made at donation centres across the Coast, and becoming involved is simple and infinitely rewarding.

For more information on donation eligibility, or to make an appointment at one of your local donation centres, please visit www.donateblood.com.au.

Cassandra Dimitroff - Year 12
OPEN DAY
Sunday, July 14

Imagine a university that shares your ambition, supports your journey, challenges your thinking, celebrates your success and recognises you personally.

At Bond it’s how we come together that sets us apart – go beyond during this year’s Open Day.

“Deciding on your degree can be an extremely difficult and daunting decision, let alone picking a university that is going to provide you with the best facilities and overall university experience to help you on your journey to success. After hearing an overload of differing opinions about which university to attend, I was feeling increasingly unsure about where to complete my tertiary education. This was until I attended the stunning Bond University campus on Open Day, during which I learned of its many extraordinary academic and social benefits.

The ability to fast track degrees, Australia’s lowest student-staff ratio and the invaluable student support services were just three aspects of Bond that helped cement my decision to study at this incredible university. Although I am still a relatively new student, my high expectations have already been exceeded and I couldn’t be happier with my decision. I’m so glad I attended the Bond Open Day so I could learn for myself all the reasons why Bond is Australia’s highest rating university.”

Isabelle Bambach – A.B. PATERSON COLLEGE GRADUATE AND BOND UNIVERSITY BACHELOR OF COMMUNICATIONS (BUSINESS) STUDENT

To find out more, visit www.bond.edu.au/open-day.