

# HERITAGE HERALD



Newsletter for Heritage families

April 2011



<http://www.anu.edu.au/childcare/heritage/>

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## Director's report

Vicki

It is lovely to welcome all the new families to our Heritage community. We hope you are feeling very much at home and are beginning to get to know other parents in the centre.

The start to the new school year is always a very busy time for staff as we transition children (and parents!) to the next room, and settle new children and families into childcare. This year's children have adapted very quickly to the challenges of their new environment and the rooms are running very smoothly.

We started the first term of 2011 with the much enthusiasm in programming under the new National Early Years Learning Framework for Childcare (EYLF). The framework has been discussed at the past two parent information nights and is also displayed in each room. Please look at each room's program and the programming notice board near the centre's front entrance to ensure that you are up-to-date with what your child is learning and, if you wish, provide input into it. As stressed at the parent information night, your family's input is so very much valued. Thank you to the many families who are getting on board with the "Weekend News Sharing" sheets, as this is a wonderful way of integrating your family's interests and activities into our programs.

We are very grateful of the hard work by Mr Matt, Tymon, Ryan and many of the children who, through the warm summer weather,

constructed the final stage of the outside area. This involved pulling up pavers, building a stage, wheel-barrowing many loads of soil and tan bark, raising fences and gardening. The children choose to play in this new area a lot, which is a wonderful testament to their efforts and lovely to see as this was a very under-utilised area of the play ground.

The project of creating a library is coming together nicely; however, it will take a little more time for it to be up and running than expected. Meg, our resident librarian, is busy covering and repairing books and making props that will enhance children's love of literacy.

Finally, a number of members of the 2010 (and previous) committees are retiring their posts this year, while others will remain on the 2011 committee in the same or new positions. To those who are resigning their positions, I would like to thank you for your support and dedication to the Heritage community. In particular, I would like to thank Robyn, our outgoing chair, who has not only been a conscientious, professional and diligent chairperson, but has also been a good support and friend to me. Thank you very much Robyn.

I look forward to working closely with Greta, the incoming chair. I'm sure we will have a very productive 2011.

### A friendly reminder

Please remember that HECC shuts at 5.45pm and children should be collected by 5.40pm and be out of the centre before 5.45pm. This allows staff to finish their day's work on time and ensures that they can meet any after work commitments.

## Outgoing chairperson's report

Robyn

With mixed feelings, this is my last chairperson's report for Heritage. Sigh. Our family's association with Heritage began six years ago when our first son, Giles, started in the nursery. We decided upon Heritage as we wanted to be involved in our son's time at care—there have certainly been plenty of opportunities for that over the years!

I started as an ordinary member of the committee in 2005, put my hand up for the secretary role in 2006 and, by 2007 when my second son, Joshie, had just started in the nursery, I was cajoled into the role of chair. I'd watched the outgoing chair deal with the hiring of a new director (Vicki), staffing problems and general management issues and was a bit cautious about what I was getting myself into. She assured me there were great 'growth' opportunities and I thought "What the heck, why not?"

Within three weeks, I'd had to make the decision to close the nursery due to ongoing illnesses with staff and children; thus began the start of my 'growth' opportunities with the Heritage management committee!

I really want to thank all members of the Heritage management committee over the past five years. They are an amazing group of parents who give of their time each month to attend meetings, or follow up on the email trail if they can't attend. I'd like to share with you some of our achievements as a committee over the years, starting with the most important:

- The decision to have nibbles at the meeting—if you can be organized enough to get yourself to a meeting, I believe you deserve to at least have something to nibble on! (Thanks Robyn Ross and Felicity Kelly!)
- The closure of the Nursery for a day, spawning a complete overhaul of our policies and procedures starting with the

illness policy. Eventually this has led to a part-time position created within the office management area of Heritage as writing and staying up-to-date with our policies and procedures is the foundation of so many of our accreditation processes and fundamental to running the centre. My thanks to all those who helped in the early days including Emma Armson, Emily Hurley, Cathy Milner and Greta Doherty. Heritage is lucky to have Julia Charters (an ex-parent of Heritage) doing such a fantastic job in the office now.

- Updating our Rules of Incorporation. Nothing like having a lawyer or two on the committee for you to find out that the legalities are hopelessly out of date! Emma Armson (who has since moved to Sydney) and Jane Atchison were/are our lawyers-in-residence, and dragged us into the 21st century by ensuring that we can now vote on Committee matters via email and receive notices via email. Emma was also instrumental in going over our rules with a fine-tooth comb to ensure we really were up-to-date. It made managing the meetings and processes so much easier so a big 'thank you' to both of them.
- Creating the position of grant's officer and finding the treasure, Greta Doherty, in locating and applying for various grants - and winning some of them! (The solar panels WILL go up ... eventually!)
- Having a full fundraising calendar throughout the year administered by the wonderful Kate Potter—whose family technically left Heritage some time ago but who has since remained so committed to Heritage. A big, big thank you to Kate.
- Having the support of the parents of Heritage's families during times of financial pressure, such as when decisions have been taken to increase fees. A

special thanks to our treasurer and deputy treasurer, Danielle Heinecke and Emily Hurley, for their huge effort in getting the budget sorted each year.

- Our new newsletter was launched including some great columns like What's in Your Lunchbox and a Calendar of Events (Thanks Amanda Denniss!)
- Getting the new building extension work carried out which included the preschool area into the general building area—finally!
- Changing the opening and closing hours to ensure our staff are looked after as well as they look after our kids.
- Moving the Christmas party from Black Mountain Peninsula to the grounds of the childcare centre itself and introducing Christmas craft and music.
- The upgrading and beautifying of the grounds—special mention to Mick Kelly and Warren Doherty from ANU Services for their help in making this happen.
- Our inaugural Fine Art Show and Auction which was a wonderful success both financially and socially.
- Having Heritage's director nominated for a Children's Services Award by our accreditation person.
- Nominating Vicki for an International Women's Day Award.

And things to look forward to for Heritage in 2011: winning the Children's Services Award for best director and/or childcare centre!

I'd also like to thank our secretaries over the years—Ruth Jarvis and Fleur de Crespigny—for keeping us current with what's gone on in meetings; to our HR Representative, Jane Atchison, for keeping our staff happy; and also to our Public Officer (Melanie Allan)—a small role overall but a vital one in keeping us legal! A big thank you to our staff representatives too—how else would we know what is going on?

Lastly, I'd like to thank Vicki McDonald and all the staff of Heritage. We nominated Vicki for an International Women's Day Award this year and she made the list but unfortunately didn't receive an Award (there's always next year!). It has been a pleasure and a privilege to work with Vicki and the staff, both past and present, over the years. I am always in awe of their dedication in both time and heartfelt empathy with each and every family's concerns. I will miss their cheery hellos, patting Rovina's hair, their wonderful care and love for my children. Giles and Joshie couldn't have gotten a better start in their 'institutionalised' lives!

I wish you all well and hope that you continue to support the efforts of the staff and management committee of Heritage—it's well worth it!

Bye for now  
Robyn

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### Incoming Chairperson's report

Greta

My name is Greta and I'm the new chair of the Heritage management committee (and mum to Owen in the preschool room and Elise in the nursery). I'm excited about undertaking this role because I've really enjoyed my involvement with the committee over the past few years and am looking forward to working with all Heritage families in the coming year.

The most important thing for me to do in this new role is to say an enormous thank you to the outgoing management committee, especially Robyn Thurecht, our outgoing chair. The Committee has achieved a huge amount

under Robyn's fabulous leadership, including the review and update of our policies, the successful application for a number of grants and the inaugural Art Show. We'll be holding a farewell dinner for Robyn at 7:30pm on Monday 18 April at Delissio in Braddon—please let me know ASAP if you'd like to attend.

For families new to Heritage, and for old hands who might have just forgotten, committee meetings are held every second Tuesday from 5pm till 5:45pm in the staff room off the back deck. Staff are on hand to care for kids during this time. All families are

welcome to attend the meetings, even if you are not a formal member of the committee. In addition, all families are welcome to go on the committee email list, so that you can receive agendas and minutes from the meeting. If you're not on this list and would like to be added, please let me know.

That's all for now except to say take care and stay healthy—always a challenge in changeable weather.

Cheers

Greta

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### Nursery notes

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Kate

First of all, we would like to welcome our new families who have settled happily into the nursery this year. We have been working hard to build relationships with new babies and we're all glad to see that they have settled very well.

We also would like to congratulate Kate Miller who recently completed her Certificate III recently. She worked and studied hard last year. We would also like to welcome Courtney who joined our team in January. She brings lots of laughs and brightness into the nursery each day.

As discussed during the parent information evening, we have been running the room based on EYLF. March was the first month that we put into practice a centre-wide theme,

'Animals and Habitat', to assist the children to learn. We ran a project called the 'Nursery Farm Making Project' throughout the month and most babies joined and enjoyed all activities, including finger painting, brush painting and collage. We also made many visits to the garden, chicken cage and guinea pig cage during the day to extend their knowledge. Additionally, we incorporated animals into story time and singing, which the babies enjoyed very much. Please visit the nursery to have a look what we did last month, our babies all did brilliant jobs.

Lastly, we would like to extend our appreciation to those parents who keep their babies at home when they are unwell—this helps to keep a happy and healthy nursery.

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### Toddler tales

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Katie

It's been a busy start to 2011 in the toddler room as we transitioned and settled our new toddlers. Staff have returned fresh from Christmas holidays and we've been working hard from January to the present, implementing the new EYLF within our curriculum. Some areas of interest that have arisen have been a mixture of the interests of both staff and children, and feedback from parents (using our new family input sheets). It has been so great to hear what the toddlers and their families have been up to over the weekend and they also give us great ideas for the program. This is such a great way to contribute to the room so thanks so much to all those who have contributed so far.

Throughout the year so far we've been putting a focus on belonging by encouraging the older toddlers to role model and help

their new peers. This has been working really well and has been helping the new toddlers to settle in. During the day we've noticed that many of the toddlers are taking the younger ones to wash their hands, taking their peers hand and leading them around the garden, helping with their hats, rubbing in sunscreen and helping to hand out water bottles. This seems to be developing a real sense of community within the toddler room and is wonderful for children's social and emotional development.

We've been doing some celebrating within the toddler room, firstly with Chinese New Year, making a dragon and having a big parade. During this we learnt a lot about Chinese culture, doing counting in English and Chinese and Tina teaching us songs in Chinese as well as cooking some fried rice. The

toddlers especially liked watching the dragon dances on YouTube. We also decorated the toddler room before and after Australia day making lots of Australian and Aboriginal flags. This also gave us the chance to talk about the flags, look at maps of Australia, sing the national anthem, look at Australian animals and make ANZAC biscuits.

During February we started to do a sewing activity, making a tree to put all the children's pictures on. This lasted for over a month with many of the toddlers and preschoolers getting involved and as a result learning a great deal. This also has gotten us out and into the garden, some of you may have noticed some tomatoes, zucchini or squash coming home in your child's lunch box.

These are all from our garden walks and have been a great way of teaching toddlers about nature and healthy foods.

Of course presently you've probably been hearing a lot about animals, particularly the ones that have been visiting Heritage. Recently Amanda from the preschool's cat (Rupert) came for a visit, Millie (from the preschool) brought in her puppy, we've also had the hatching chicks and lastly we've just moved the fish tank into the toddler room. So I think there will be many more learning opportunities to come.

Anyway that's about all for now, if you have any suggestions or feedback please come and talk to Katie, we'd love to hear from you.

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### Preschool news

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Amanda

Hello again Preschool families! Our year has gotten off to a brilliant start, with lots of new faces and friends joining our class. Below are some curriculum highlights that have occurred in our program so far!

January - February:

- Families, Friendship & Belonging unit with Rainbow Fish
- Celebrated Australia Day, Chinese New Year with our teacher Tina
- Wished our remaining big preschoolers good luck as they left for Kindy
- Outdoor area construction projects were completed
- Emphasis on science and nature, as well as with natural disasters in the world (Floods, Tsunamis, Earthquakes, Volcanoes, etc)

March:

- Pets & Farm Animals unit
- Celebrated St. Patrick's Day, Harmony Day
- Hands-on interactions with animals with visits from Amanda's cat Rupert and Millie's dog Monty
- Hatching chickens experience, with eight fuzzy chicks that we watched grow for two weeks
- Learning about life cycles with *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*

Thanks to all the parents that came out for our annual parent's information night in February. This year we had a large turnout of families. During the evening, Vicki and our room leaders shared our policies, philosophies, and curriculums with parents and staff. We also highlighted the new curriculum framework (EYLF), which we are now using centre-wide. An integral part of this framework is for our families to share news with us about home experiences, holidays, adventures and other happenings that occur outside of Heritage. This will allow us to integrate meaningful content into the program that stems from the children's life experiences. Please remember to get an input form from a room leader any time there is something you or your child wish to share with the class. Many families have already shared news and that's great!

As the year progresses, please feel free to be as involved as you can in your child's program! You are welcome to come in and check out the art work displays and project pictures in the room. See what your child is up to during their time with us. We are also looking for anyone who would like to share any talents or special skills with the children (art, cooking, music, gardening, etc), talk about your cultural traditions, or even if you just want to come by and read a book with us.

The children adore having you come in for a play as well. Feel free to speak to the preschool staff if there's anything in

particular you are interested in doing with the preschoolers.

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### Mem Fox's 10 'read aloud' commandments

Source: <http://www.memfox.net/ten-read-aloud-commandments.html>

1. Spend at least ten wildly happy minutes *every single day* reading aloud.
2. Read at least three stories a day: it may be the same story three times. Children need to hear a thousand stories before they can begin to learn to read.
3. Read aloud with animation. Listen to your own voice and don't be dull, or flat, or boring. Hang loose and be loud, have fun and laugh a lot.
4. Read with joy and enjoyment: real enjoyment for yourself and great joy for the listeners.
5. Read the stories that the kids love, over and over and over again, and always read in the same 'tune' for each book: i.e. with the same intonations on each page, each time.
6. Let children hear lots of language by talking to them constantly about the pictures, or anything else connected to the book; or sing any old song that you can remember; or say nursery rhymes in a bouncy way; or be noisy together doing clapping games.
7. Look for rhyme, rhythm or repetition in books for young children, and make sure the books are really short.
8. Play games with the things that you and the child can see on the page, such as letting kids finish rhymes, and finding the letters that start the child's name and yours, remembering that it's never work, it's always a fabulous game.
9. Never ever *teach* reading, or get tense around books.
10. Please read aloud every day, mums and dads, because you just love being with your child, not because it's the right thing to do.

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### Top 50 best children's books (Booktrust)

Source: <http://www.smh.com.au/news/books/the-list-top-50-childrens-books/2008/02/22/1203467440437.html>

1. The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe, C.S. Lewis
2. The Very Hungry Caterpillar, Eric Carle
3. Famous Five, Enid Blyton
4. Winnie the Pooh, A.A. Milne
5. The BFG, Roald Dahl
6. Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince, J.K. Rowling
7. The Faraway Tree, Enid Blyton
8. The Wind in the Willows, Kenneth Grahame
9. Alice in Wonderland, Lewis Carroll
10. The Gruffalo, Julia Donaldson
11. The Tales of Peter Rabbit, Beatrix Potter
12. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Roald Dahl
13. Matilda, Roald Dahl
14. The Secret Garden, Frances Hodgson Burnett
15. The Cat in the Hat, Dr Suess
16. The Twits, Roald Dahl
17. Mr Men, Roger Hargreaves
18. A Christmas Carol, Charles Dickens
19. The Malory Towers Series, Enid Blyton
20. Peter Pan, J.M. Barrie
21. The Railway Children, E. Nesbit
22. Hans Christian Fairy Tales, H.C. Andersen
23. The Wizard of Oz, L. Frank Baum
24. The Witches, Roald Dahl

25. Stig of the Dump, Clive King
26. The Wishing Chair, Enid Blyton
27. Dear Zoo, Rod Campbell
28. The Tiger Who Came to Tea, Judith Kerr
29. Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Jan Brett
30. James and the Giant Peach, Roald Dahl
31. A Bear Called Paddington, Michael Bond
32. Black Beauty, Anna Sewell
33. Where the Wild Things Are, Maurice Sendak
34. Aesop's Fables, Jerry Pinkney
35. The Borrowers, Mary Norton
36. Just So Stories, Rudyard Kipling
37. Meg and Mog, Jan Pienkowski
38. Mrs Pepperpot, Alf Proyson
39. We're Going on a Bear Hunt, Michael Rosen
40. The Gruffalo's Child, Julia Donaldson
41. Room on a Broom, Julia Donaldson
42. The Worst Witch, Jill Murphy
43. Miffy, Dick Bruna
44. The Little Prince, Antoine De Saint-Exupery
45. Flat Stanley, Jeff Brown
46. The Snail and the Whale, Julia Donaldson
47. Ten Little Ladybirds, Melanie Gerth
48. Six Dinners Sid, Inga Moore
49. The St. Clares Series, Enid Blyton
50. Captain Underpants, Dav Pilkey