**March 2016**

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<td>Week 6 28/2</td>
<td>29/2</td>
<td>1/3</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mass 8.30am</td>
<td>Happy Tooth visit</td>
<td>Diocesan Swimming Carnival</td>
<td>Library - Sport Canteen</td>
<td>Clean Up Aust Schools Day</td>
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<td>Week 7 6/3</td>
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<td>12.00-1.30pm Open Classrooms</td>
<td>1.10 Liturgy/Assembly</td>
<td>Office CLOSED (Sally SAS Mtg)</td>
<td>Library - Sport Canteen</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3.30 Lenten Program</td>
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<td>CSW Mass Newcastle</td>
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**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK (CSW)**

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<td>Week 6 13/3</td>
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<td>Mass 8.30am</td>
<td>2.40pm Liturgy/Assembly</td>
<td>Parent-Teacher Goal Setting meetings</td>
<td>Library - Sport Canteen</td>
<td>3.30 Lenten Program</td>
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<td>Week 7 20/3</td>
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<td>Harmony Day</td>
<td>2.40pm Liturgy/Assembly</td>
<td>Parent-Teacher Goal Setting meetings</td>
<td>Library - Sport Canteen</td>
<td>Cross Country Carnival</td>
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<td>Touch Football trials</td>
<td>Parent-Teacher Goal Setting meetings</td>
<td>3.30 Lenten Program</td>
<td>GOOD FRIDAY</td>
<td>Public Holiday</td>
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**Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth ...**

Being meek is being patient, not easily angered and not thinking of yourself too highly. God is looking for us to do the right thing without putting on a show for others...or showing off. Having a positive influence doesn’t mean we have to be ‘centre stage’ all the time...think about these following points for a minute...

- Do I ever look down on others because they may not look or act like me?
- Do I treat other people fairly - at school, in play, at home?

**Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled..**

Being righteous means never making mistakes. But God knows that we can’t possibly live our whole lives without making mistakes. We can try our best to do the right thing and if we don’t, we can ask for forgiveness and the forgiveness erases all the bad. The verse not only asks us to try to be righteous but to keep trying to improve ourselves in the way we live... think about these following points for a minute ...

- When I see or hear stories of people suffering injustice, what is my response?
- Am I prepared to stand up for justice?
Catholic Schools Week

More than 620 Catholic schools across NSW and the ACT will join with to celebrate the annual Catholic Schools Week (CSW) from 6th -12th March.

We are immensely proud of our Catholic heritage, and are committed to celebrating and showcasing the achievements of students in our school.

This year’s theme is ‘I belong. You belong. We belong.’

The 2016 CSW theme ties with the Church’s celebration of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy, which recognises our Catholic faith values of forgiveness, compassion, strength, aid and love.

Our school is proud of the wonderful teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms every day, as well as the contribution our schools have made to Australian communities, in particular the more vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our wider community.

It is for this reason that I would like to extend an invitation to you and your family to join us to participate with members of our parish and wider community in the spirit of this celebration.

Listed below is a schedule of events for the week that you are invited to attend:

Saturday 5th March, 6pm:
Join with the Parish of St Anne’s to celebrate Mass and to witness the commissioning of our nine Year 6 leaders. They have been training hard to take up the leadership challenge and are very excited to receiving their leader’s badges on this occasion. Stay on for a cuppa afterwards in the MacKillop Room.

Monday 7th March, 12.00 – 1.30pm:
Open Classrooms - a wonderful opportunity to join your child in their classroom and see how the learning takes place there. The first hour of this is normally whole school Maths time and so you will have the opportunity to be part of a Maths lesson with your child.

The Monday assembly will take place at 1.10pm on this day.

Monday 7th March, 6.30pm:
Parents and friends are invited to join us for a combined Parish-School Dinner and bingo evening at the RSL club. Guaranteed to be a lot of fun!

Tuesday 8th March:
Catholic Schools Week Mass at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newcastle. Our Religious Education Coordinator, Mrs Anne Marie Peebles will take four of our Year 6 leaders to this beautiful event.

Thursday 10th March:
Anna Kerrigan will join the students to launch the 2016 annual play preparations. We are very proud of the opportunities we provide our students for developing their creative talents.

Saturday 5th March - Sunday 13th March:
Catholic School’s Week display in the Merriwa shopping centre. Take time out to look at your child’s contribution to the display.

Thank you for your ongoing support. I look forward to seeing you during CSW 2016.

The Australian Catholic Superannuation and Retirement Fund proudly sponsors this event.

Please remember in your prayers all the needs of our community.

Our condolences to the Magner and Alley families who have both suffered the loss of close friends recently.

There seems to be so many people suffering and sometimes we can begin to think that all is bad in the world.

As a Christian community, we try to remember to look with optimism and hope for the future. What better reason for hope can there be than the birth of a beautiful healthy baby. Congratulations to Nat, Steve, Axul and Levi Hourn on the birth of your new son/brother Arlo Franklin. We wish you many, many happy family years together.

Curriculum News

Better writing is one of the goals for our school this year. We have just completed the 7 Steps to Writing Success training and what a difference we are seeing already. Students have been focussing on “Sizzling Starts” and planning their writing. Some of the classes have started to make a list of commonly used “boring starts” and have made a pact to “Ban the Boring”. Ask your children now what they have learned.

Improved Mathematics is our other major focus for the 2016 year. To this end we have embarked on the Choose Maths program which I wrote about in the last Newsletter. Miss Foran and Miss Farrow have had their first training session within this program and are very excited about their
learning. There are some helpful hints for helping your child with their Maths later in this newsletter. All teachers will attend a Regional training session on the 8th March.

As part of our ongoing commitment to computer technology we have purchased a number of new computers for the school. All Information Technology in the school is in top working order and the speed and capacity are in great shape to enhance learning opportunities.

Mrs Kerr and I will be travelling to Sydney this week to attend a two day Future Schools conference. We have chosen different workshops whilst there so that we can bring maximum ideas back to the school. We are really looking forward to our learning there.

Student Wellbeing
Kidsmatter?? They sure do! Miss Farrow and I went to a briefing day in Newcastle last week to learn about this framework which aims to help schools better cater for the social and emotional needs of our kids. We have decided to adopt the framework at St Joseph’s and will be in touch very shortly to engage parents with the staff in the process.

Cool and Friendly program will be back in full swing next week. This is a great invitational program where students join me for one lunch time a week to explore ways to regulate their emotions. They then practise the skills throughout the week.

Sports News
Congratulations to Amy Redgate, Axul Hourn, Patrick Magner and Tia Magner who are representing our school and region at the Diocesan Swimming Carnival today. If we have results before printing we will “stop press”.

Children should be practising their running now as our annual Cross Country Carnival will be held on Thursday 24th March. This is always a great day and we are looking forward to it. As usual we welcome and encourage parent helpers on the day.

Touch Football Trials are being held at St James’ Muswellbrook on Monday 21st March. Good luck to our students who are trying out as part of the team.

Student Achievements
There will be no catching Darcy Taaffe anymore as she has qualified through Little Athletics to compete at State level in the 800m race. This is a great achievement. Congratulations Darcy...we can’t wait to see your form at our Cross Country and Athletics carnivals.

The Netball Trials were held in Singleton last week. Olivia Collins, Madelaine Thrift and Amy Redgate participated in these. Bronwyn Redgate sent in the following report:

Olivia, Madelaine and Amy had a great day and played very well. There were 21 girls in all with only seven (one for each position) selected to go on to Dio.

Our girls tried very hard and although outclassed enjoyed themselves and represented our school magnificently. From the chatter, all are looking forward to next year...so look out!!

[It was] A pleasure to take them away.

Thank you to Mrs Bronwyn Redgate who transported our three students who participated in the Netball trials.

Parents and Friends
Your executive team on the P&F is joining me in Newcastle next Wednesday evening to network with the larger P&F Association members and to learn more about their roles. I would like to thank Dermot Shannon your P&F President as well as Mrs Bronwyn Redgate (Treasurer) and Mrs Peta Luke (Secretary) for your commitment and dedication to the education of our children.

Mrs Mel Bates is travelling to Muswellbrook next Monday to learn more about running a healthy canteen. Thank you Mel. Your input in the canteen is marvelous.

Many thanks ...
... to Brion Booth for helping us to repair the flag pole last week. It is greatly appreciated.

... to the wonderful members of View Club who once again have made some beautiful library bags for our new students and filled them with an assortment of useful school goodies! We really appreciate your support of our school and our students.

In your newsletter this week:

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<td>Book Club News</td>
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<td>Student Wellbeing</td>
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</table>
Great ideas for parents

Are you a bit scared of maths yourself? Try these ideas:

Mathematics is often the subject that most parents tend to shy away from, so here are a few simple suggestions for things that you can do at home to improve your child’s understanding of maths.

1. Maths at breakfast: Instead of presenting each child with their individual pieces of toast, present it altogether on one platter. Have each piece cut into quarters and ask your children how many pieces of bread there were originally. For older children, ask the question after a few of the quarters have been eaten.

2. Maths while out for a family walk: Look at the house numbers as you walk up and down a street. Have your child predict the number of the next house. The numbers can go up or down, usually by twos, in either odd or even numbers.

3. Maths while planning your week: Time is one of the most difficult concepts for kids to understand. Try asking your kids to work out how long it is until… (e.g. If we need to be at Grandma’s at 3:00 and it takes 15 minutes to get there, what time do we need to leave?). This is really important to do for days/weeks as well as hours/minutes. For example, “It is Thursday today, so how many days are there until you start school again on Monday?”

4. Maths while shopping: Estimating weight can be really tricky for kids. Why not get them to estimate how much your bag of apples weighs then confirm by measuring it on the scales? Also, remember to talk about price comparisons. For example, if Kipfler potatoes cost $4.99/kg but washed potatoes cost $5.99 for a 4kg bag, how much more expensive would the Kipflers be for the same amount? Estimate rather than calculating exactly (e.g. Kipflers would be $5 for one kilogram, or $20 for 4kg whereas the washed potatoes would cost $6 for 4kg).

5. Maths with pocket money: Giving kids a small amount of pocket money and teaching them to be responsible with it is one of the most valuable things that children can learn. Instead of just having a generic piggy bank, consider using a multi-sectioned container so that the money can be allocated for different things. Our sections are: spending, saving, presents and charity. When your kids ask for a toy, talk about the price in terms of weeks of pocket money rather than absolute dollars. This gives them a sense of the relative cost and will help them to become more money savvy in the long run.

6. Maths with plastic bottles: Skittles is a great way of helping kids to become solid with their number understandings. Setting up 6 plastic bottles and rolling a tennis ball at them is a great way to spend an afternoon. My little kids love yelling out “I knocked three down, I have three left!”

7. High five alternatives: Why not try doing “cool high fives” with fingers from both hands? You can have two fingers on one and three on the other...

Have lots of fun making maths part of your everyday life!
Sacraments of Initiation

Each year the parish in collaboration with the school helps parents to prepare children for the Sacraments of Initiation. Bishop Bill celebrates this wonderful occasion with us. The process involves children and their parents meeting together with a support person over a number of weeks. The Sacraments offered are Reconciliation - asking God for forgiveness, Eucharist - receiving the Body of Jesus and Confirmation - receiving the Holy Spirit just as the disciples did at Pentecost.

Children who have been baptised and are in Year 3 or above are encouraged to begin the journey to receive the Sacraments of Initiation. If your child is not baptised but you would like this to happen it is never too late - remember Jesus was thirty when he was baptised by his cousin! Please speak to me if you have any questions.

Please fill in and return the form below to indicate your interest.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mass Centre</th>
<th>Mass/Service</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Day</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Denman</td>
<td>Mass of The Lord’s Supper</td>
<td>9.15 AM</td>
<td>Holy Thursday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denman</td>
<td>Stations of the Cross</td>
<td>10.00 AM</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassilis</td>
<td>Stations of the Cross</td>
<td>10.00 AM</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merriwa</td>
<td>Ecumenical Stations of the Cross in the Park</td>
<td>11.00 AM</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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<td>Merriwa</td>
<td>Celebration of the Lord’s Passion</td>
<td>3.00 PM</td>
<td>Good Friday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Merriwa</td>
<td>Easter Vigil Ceremonies &amp; Mass</td>
<td>6.00 PM</td>
<td>Holy Saturday</td>
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<td>Merriwa</td>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>8.30 AM</td>
<td>Easter Sunday</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cassilis</td>
<td>Mass</td>
<td>10.15 AM</td>
<td>Easter Sunday</td>
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Anne Marie Peebles
Religious Education Coordinator

I ____________________________ would like to know more about the process of receiving the Sacraments of Initiation and/or becoming baptised.

SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION
Learning Support News

Reading to and with your children is an important strategy to help children learn to read! Words are all around us! It is important to help children value reading. We can do this by sharing with them words in everyday life and showing them that being able to read is important and fun!

I recently found this article which provides some great ideas of how to integrate literacy in your everyday life.

How to Integrate Literacy into Everyday Life

What does this look like to make reading a more integral part of a child’s life? I’m going to give you some great ideas that should make it very natural and easy for you.

- You are at the grocery store. Kids can help look at the list and read it to you. If they can’t read, you can help them match the words on the list with the boxes or packages.
- You can make index cards and place them on items around the house. We have had the doors, windows, walls and other various items labelled.
- When the girls are in church with us, I have pointed out the words on the screen. I saw it click with Abby one day, and she began connecting the song with the words. This really helped her with sight reading. They also have familiar songs with the lyrics on On Demand or YouTube. I’m sure there are apps you could find on your phone that do this – kind of karaoke style. When Abby was younger, I had Christmas carols typed out, and Abby had a sheet. For about 30 minutes on the car ride home, she was staring at that sheet of paper trying to connect the words of the songs she knew with the words on the paper.
- Point out signs. Have them try to find all of the signs that say “speed limit,” “give way” or “stop.”
- Have them figure out which bathroom is for women and which is for men.
- Have them try and spot candy bars by certain names while you are standing in line at the grocery store.
- Have them help look at recipes as you are making things together.
- Let them watch you write things down and read what you are writing.
- Put magnet words or sentences together on the refrigerator to have them try and figure out.
- Write them special messages – in lunch boxes, around the house or at the dinner table. They will really want to learn to decode these special notes from you. You might like my lunchbox acts of kindness printable.
- Read off the name of stores you go past. Play a game where they need to try and find the stores you name.
- Let them try and figure out what is on the menu at restaurants.
- Label bins around your house. Kids can put things away while learning words. Label makers are great for this. You can put labels on the inside or outside of bins, boxes and drawers. Why not put the word “pants” in the pant drawer someplace. You can have cups labelled inside the cabinet with a label maker. Boxes or bins can say “block,” “balls,” “glue” or “yarn.”

Words are all around us. Don’t ignore them, and your children won’t either.

Tanya Ninness
Learning Support Teacher
Congratulations to our award winners of Weeks 4 and 5:

Kindergarten
Wills Mulligan – for describing many characteristics of friendship in Religion lessons
Sammi Patterson – for predicting what a story is about from illustrations
Freya Tomy – for great participation in classroom activities
Jye Bates – for listening well in sounds activities

1/2
Justin Alley – for displaying exemplary mathematical understanding using Newman’s Analysis
Jack Patterson – for his readiness to learn and independence in completing set work
Archie Constable – for great reading results during reading activities
Aidan Hunt – for fantastic work during his information report on weather

3/4
Isam Arfan – for wonderful contributions to class discussions
Riley Melmeth – for a thorough understanding of how to measure the perimeter of objects
Ella Beaven – for wonderful participation in the life education visit
Mikayla Telfer – for working hard to develop her knowledge of multiplication facts

5/6
Korey Halse – for always rising to the challenge in Mathematics
Patrick Magner – for creating entertaining Sizzling Starts in English
Charles Brazier – for using his knowledge of addition and subtraction to identify number patterns.
Patrick McLaren – for his beautiful painting inspired by Sidney Nolan’s “Dimboola Landscape”
Chloe Towell – for always planning exciting scenarios for imaginative texts

Playground Champion:
Braeden Halse – for always being a great friend on the playground

Principal’s Awards:
Mikayla Telfer – for wonderful work in English Literacy lessons
Annabelle Hunt – for fantastic written work in Science lessons
Wills Mulligan – for a great understanding of scientific concepts

Afternoon PICK-UP Procedure

To ensure the safety of all children, each student on pick-up must be collected from the MacKillop Room by their parent or designated adult following the afternoon assembly. Students will no longer be dismissed at the front gate. Please ensure you follow this procedure and accompany your children all the way to your car. It is a very busy road and the safety of every child is paramount!
This year for Clean Up Australia Day the Infants class will be responsible for tidying up our school grounds. This initiative links with our study in Science *Push and Pull—Things that Move*. Infants have been studying animals and different movements and how we are responsible for caring for their habitats.

Our Clean Up Australia Day activity will run from 12noon until 12:45 on Friday 4th March. We will be tidying the school and parish grounds and once our grounds are litter free we will be watering the newly planted trees. If you would like to join us we would greatly appreciate any assistance.

If you are unable to attend on Friday, the Merriwa Community Clean Up Australia Day activity is on Sunday 6th March. Community members will be meeting from 9.30am at Rotary Park. Rubbish bags will be available but please bring along a pair of gloves and a water bottle, and wear sensible shoes, sunscreen, a hat and sunglasses.

There will be a free barbecue for volunteers.

For more information contact Beron Arden Wood at the Merriwa District Progress Association on 6548 2245


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**Scholastic Book Club**

New issue of Book Club out this week! Keep an eye out for the catalogues in your child's bag.

Order online using LOOP or return your order and payment to school by next Wednesday 9th March.

Encourage a love of reading and enhance your child’s literacy skills by allowing them to always have fun and interesting books at their fingertips!

Scholastic Book Club provides a great range of books at bargain prices.
Special Needs Information Day

Come along and hear Catholic Schools Office representatives speak about support available for children enrolled in our Catholic schools.

CatholicCare Social Services will also come along to offer information about their services.

Morning tea provided.

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<th>March</th>
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<td>7pm - 8.30pm</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Muswellbrook</td>
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<td>Taree</td>
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2016 Info days

The Special Needs Information Day is provided free of charge!

R.S.V.P. (For catering)
Cath Garrett-Jones
Parent Liaison and Resource Officer
P 4979 1303
E cath.garrett-jones@mn.catholic.edu.au

The provision of the opportunity to gather information from Service Providers present does not constitute an endorsement of their service from the Catholic Schools Office or Federation of P & F Associations – Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. It is a matter for each individual to determine the appropriateness of any service provider for their own needs.
Next P&F meeting:  
Monday 14th March 2016  
4.30pm in the MacKillop Room  
All families and friends most welcome and encouraged to attend!

CANTEEN ROSTER

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<tr>
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<th>Roster</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Mar</td>
<td>Scott Beaven &amp; Berna Gabriel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Mar</td>
<td>Georgie Fairfull &amp; Mel Bates</td>
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<tr>
<td>16 Mar</td>
<td>Lisa Smith &amp; Scott Beaven</td>
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<td>23 Mar</td>
<td>Volunteers required</td>
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BUS ROSTER

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Roster</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/6 Mar</td>
<td>Turner family</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/13 Mar</td>
<td>Alley family</td>
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<tr>
<td>19/20 Mar</td>
<td>Bates family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26/27 Mar</td>
<td>Beaven family</td>
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</table>

THANK YOU . . .THANK YOU . . .
to the Constable & Hopkins families who gave up some valuable time to clean the Aberdeen Bus recently.

P & F would like to thank our recent Canteen Helpers — De Patterson & Pauline Lawler

St Joseph’s P&F Campdraft and Fete

Meeting Advice

6.30pm
Wednesday 2nd March, 2016
Merriwa RSL Club Bistro Area

(Although there is no childminding provided at P&F RSL Club meetings, the playground is available and visible from the Bistro area, so children are welcome if that assists with you being able to attend)

Coordinators and all parents and friends are encouraged to attend this meeting. We would love to have everyone’s input in the planning and running of this major fundraising event.

Enquiries – contact De Patterson
0416 194501