Tarremah Steiner School

NOVEMBER 1 | ISSUE 15, 2024

Tarremah Times

Our highest endeavor must be to develop free human beings who are able of themselves to impart purpose and direction to their lives. The need for imagination, a sense of truth, and a feeling of responsibility—these three forces are the very nerve of education. *Rudolf Steiner*

In this issue:

Japan Trip 02
Why the emphasis on the arts 03
The beginnings of Tarremah 04
A Simple Nature Table 05

Diary Dates:

Sun 3 November
Spring Fair

Mon 4 November
Student Free Day

Mon 4 – Fri 8 November
Class 9 Geomorphology Camp

Wed 6 November
School Tour

Wed 6 November
Heartwarmers Cafe

Thurs 7 November
Parent Education – See Flyer

Mon 11 - Fri 15 November
Classes 2 & 3 Swimming

Tues 12 – Fri 15 November
Class 6 Port Arthur Camp

Thurs 14 November
Parent Education – See Flyer

Fri 15 November
Class 10 Leavers Dinner

Mon 18 – Fri 22 November
Class 1, 4 & 5 Swimming

Wed 20 – Thurs 28 Nov
Class 10 Overland Camp

Class 5 Camp to Fortescue Bay

Waves, whales, and walking!

Class 5 camp to Fortescue Bay was blessed with fine weather, and a great group of students and adults.

After setting up camp Nita Education helped the children try and light a fire using some special sticks and wood...hard work! A Bush tucer forage and an emu dance finished a good, focused session.

The walk towards Cape Hauy was in warm sunny weather. All the students were rewarded with views of whales and rocky cliffs.

And of course, beach time, ball games, card games and journaling and just chilling in an awesome place resulted in a great camp.

A big thank you to Shawn (and in setting up a slack line), Luci, Clancy, Karen and Lucie Whitten for their quiet support on the camp.

John Correy
Outdoor Education Teacher

Japan Trip

While the School enjoyed their Spring Holidays, quite a sizeable amount of the students from Class 9 and 10's Japanese lessons chose to spend their Spring Holidays on a cultural exchange in the Land of the Rising Sun! Beginning at four, the very next morning!

Off we travelled, Hayley the Japanese teacher, seventeen bleary eyed but excitable students and myself to Haneda Airport, Tokyo!

There we experienced life in a megacity. Wandering through it's parks, streets, lanes and shopping precincts. We visited the immersive light art exhibit by Team Labs in Odaiba as well as the emerging Sciences exhibit. Then off to Shinjuku to their observatory tower to try and see the edges of the city (we couldn't) before walking through Meiji Shrine and Park, and then a spot of shopping in Harajuku and Shibuya. Finishing the night on in the middle of the famous Shibuya Scramble.

After Tokyo we travelled to Kyoto and enjoyed a slower, more stately pace. There we took in shrines like Fushimi Inari Shrine and Kiyomezu-dera Temple, as well as enjoying a spot of Karaoke.

Our next stop was Osaka where we enjoyed the thrills and spills of Universal Studios, and then a journey by Shinkansen to Hiroshima. There we were reminded of how recent our recent history lessons actually are, and how the consequences of those actions from the lessons are still being grappled with to this day.

Following the Hiroshima Peace Park and museum, we had a day visit to Miyajima to see the floating Tori Gates, feed the deer, search (and find) monkeys in the mountains, and explore the little laneways and shops, and shrines and temples there.

Finally after a week of touring we made our way to Kochi, where we were greeted by our host parents from Kochi School who took us all onboard. We lived with different families and took part in classes as well as after school clubs and activities.

Ishimaru Sensei also organised excursions to see Kochi Castle and Museum, as well as the Botanical Gardens, and Chikurinji Temple where we got to take part in a buddhist ceremony. And some host families managed to find time amidst their busy schedule to arrange for a spot of caving, shopping and sight seeing. There were calligraphy lessons and lessons on cultures and foods (the Japanese students were horrified at the idea of Kangaroo Burger patties. Whereas our own students had a less than favourable response to whole raw baby squid.)

Finally after a weeks stay, we farewelled our very generous hosts and flew back to Tasmania. Just in time for the start of Term 4!

A big thanks to Hayley sensei for organising and leading such a phenomenally fantastic cultural experience! And a big thanks to all of the students for their efforts representing the school while abroad.

Brett Tait
Secondary Teacher

Why the emphasis on craft and the arts

In this fascinating and absorbing journey of learning to be an educator in a Steiner School, the richness and value of a Curriculum that fully embraces craft and the arts has become clearer and clearer to me. It is the compost for the garden that helps all other things grow. During a recent conversation, one of the teachers remarked how quickly and easily the students had grasped literacy and how enthused they were to be writing and reading. What a balm to hear this during a time when it seems all are concerned with literacy levels! Within the limits of this short article, I will try to break down my observations as to why arts and crafts are such a key to learning success in a Steiner School.

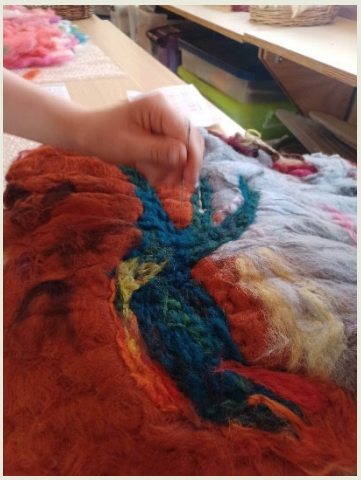
Movement and Mood

When a newborn begins to move independently, the brain responds by building neural connections that further develop what is an unfinished organ. The brain is not the only unfinished part of the child... for example the inner ear is developing balance, and lungs are still forming their final shape and adult teeth are forming. It is the use of the body in 3-dimensional space that allows this further development. Sadly, we have evidence that an infant that is immobilised will have an underdeveloped brain as a result.

So, when the Early Childhood teachers bring little artistic movement games, finger games, rhymes and songs which move the arms, legs, fingers, mouth and lungs, this helps all unfinished things to develop in the body and mind. When there are crafts that are rhythmic, repetitive and predictable, the teacher assists with the delicate laying down of memory capacity, enriched through the senses – not rushed or drowned out through a screen that cannot respond to wait when one of the children has just noticed a bird, or is still getting ready. The essential human warmth that the adults working in an Early Childhood setting bring, is greatly assisted through immersion in the arts and crafts.

Social Development

The crafts in the Early Childhood are simple, but within them are the foundations which can be built on in the Primary School. From primarily gross motor skills to primarily fine motor skills the hand is becoming agile, flexible and sensitive right to the very tiniest nerve endings of the fingertips. Thereby the children are using the very large part of the brain dedicated to the hand, thoroughly. Flexible fingers equal flexible thinking indeed.



Continuing to work within an artistic mood that includes verses to begin and end the lessons and that has little rhymes to remember how the knitting or crochet needle moves, the children are led through a sequence of more and more complex projects, multi-stepped and long in duration, with a practical purpose for use in life. They exercise persistence, overcome difficulties, sometimes must undo and redo things – what Rudolf Steiner talked about as 'will' activities. They learn to work within a group of people striving for similar things, supporting and

teaching friends who are learning too, unaware that they are learning to be teachers. The children co-operatively build sets for plays, sew simple costumes, create music together using various instruments and learn how much can be achieved as a group. Like stones placed in a bag and shaken for a long time, they polish their rough edges against one another and become glowing, beautiful jewels.

Of course, these projects have used mathematics and literacy to achieve their outcome. Whether it is learning to count stitches in a knitting project, read instructions to sew a stuffed animal, measure out wood before cutting, learning to read the lines and memorize them for a play – literacy and numeracy are now necessary, useful tools to achieve what is desired.

Identity and thinking

Within the development of the human being as described by Rudolf Steiner, there is an emphasis in the High School on thinking. When you think about thinking, this can be quite a lonely thing. From the first tender realizations that your parent cannot read your thoughts, that lying is possible, that your favourite colour is different from your friend's favourite colour to the High School student who is able to have an individual project that they present to the school is a long and eventful journey. It is at this time that students can amaze us with their compositions – in music, in craft, in design, in painting and in their writing. I have yet to walk away from High School individual project presentations without a feeling of awe at these students.

All the work that was done prior, from making bread, finger knitting, instrument playing and working with many materials such as clay, wax, fibre, wood and paint, using many fine and larger generous movements in space, have resulted in a mind that has been enriched and exercised so that it can be used as an effective tool to reach a goal. The soul is full because it is able. Now the freedom of individuality can be exercised, refined and discovered.

Katy Egger
Craft Teacher

The Beginnings of Tarremah Steiner School

— *Maria Rofe*

First, Tarremah was a vision but then, enthusiasm, moral and physical support and the good hearts of many people turned the vision into reality.

When we arrived in Hobart in 1981, we were approached by David and Gussi Bowling as they were very interested in a Steiner school and had heard that we had connections to Steiner Education. In Sydney Stephen and I worked at Warrah, a Steiner home, school and farm for adults and children with disabilities, founded by Karl and Hannelore Kaltenbach. We certainly were very interested in the project. David was well networked. He worked for the state government (I think) and he was a very practical and pragmatic person and did a lot of the administrative work, like applying for funding, grants, subsidies…

From the start, we had wonderful help all around. Jean Hearn, a senator from Launceston was a great moral support, full of encouragement and enthusiasm. She attended a study group, which we had started at our home in Lesley Vale.

Then there was Sylvia Brose, who, in 1957, founded Glenaeon, Australia's first Steiner school (Stephen was in one of her first classes). She came down to Tasmania to hold seminars, to bring the ideas of a Steiner School to potential parents and other interested people. Very important were Helmut and Helga Kusch, a German couple, living in Hobart. Helmut was a well-known mathematician who wrote Maths books. They lived in Hobart, their chosen hometown, while Helmut was working for his German publishers. The Kushes gave us important consistent financial support.

The financial situation of the school was difficult. Parents and friends helped us for free.

I hesitate to sing my own praises, but it may be appropriate to say, that although my teacher's wage was way below the standard rate, we still paid full school fees for our two children. It had to be. It wasn't possible otherwise.

I, myself concentrated on actual school things, like writing the curriculum. That was a big task but a wonderful

challenge. I knew about the Steiner curriculum, but I was free to write it so that I felt it would fit a school in Tasmania. The Calvin Christian School in Kingston kindly gave me their curriculum, so I could see what format was expected by the Education Department, and what I had to include. For instance, extracurricular activities like excursions or camps. Otherwise, as I said, I felt very free (I am so pleased to see that Japanese is still taught at Tarremah). The curriculum had to be approved, and we had to find parents who would be interested in Steiner Education. I started a playgroup in a hall in South Hobart (1986/87) (2 afternoons a week) which helped us to find interested parents. We were able to move into a cottage in Warneford Street South Hobart. It had an entry hall-kitchen, 2 rooms, a small office space, enough parking places and a wonderful backyard. From the beginning, in 1988, we thankfully had enough enrolments for 2 Kindergartens. Thank God we found Jacqueline Mulberry, who was a truly wonderful Kindergarten teacher. I took the other class.

Stephen Rofe and Charlie Biggins were a great practical support. Things needed doing. They helped remodel the cottage, to make it suitable for a school. They put up fences, built a sandpit in the backyard, which needed regular care, etc, and other people helped too. Monika Patterson was a Volunteer Bursar, parents cleaned the school and helped organizing festivals or the fair. We had a market stall at Salamanca. Apart from modelling wax and crayons, we sold Zopf (a Swiss braided bread) but the main thing was, to make people aware of us.

I think we knew from the start the school should be like an Albatross: strong, free but never losing its way. So, we wanted to know what Albatross meant in the dialect of a local aboriginal tribe and the name Tarremah was born. I wrote the Tarremah song and it just felt right.

In the first year, our camping trip brought us up to our land in Scotts Rd Kingston. I think it was in December 1988. We put our tents up in a lovely paddock and one night Saint Nicholas put a little something in the shoes standing outside the tents. The second year we stayed in a camp house. Each child embroidered their own square patch. The idea was to sew them together to make a Tarremah wall-hanging. This happened, just before we left, so I don't know, if it ever worked out. A special occasion was when Burnam Burnam visited the school. He told dream time stories and painted symbols on the arms of the fascinated children.

In 1989 my Kindergarten class became Class One but we knew Warneford Street could not be extended. From the beginning,

David Bowling, Stephen Rofe and others were tirelessly looking for land to build a new school on. It was urgent. First we looked at land in Summerleas Road and then, the Council suggested a site next to the Kingston Sports Center. The land had a cottage on it, but they didn't feel it was right. The Kingborough Council made us aware of land at Huntingfield that could be made available for a school. This time, support came from Graham and Lois Bury. Dr. Graham Bury was the mayor of Kingborough and his attitude towards the school was very positive. They had a child at the school and were very happy.

And then, in winter 1990, we left for Switzerland. We are so very, very pleased that the school flourished and grew. When we came to Hobart in 2016, and I heard a little girl, a visitor, humming the Tarremah song, I nearly cried.

I've done my best to list the people who made valuable contributions to the founding of Tarremah, but I can't be sure, that my account is complete. Other important people come to mind, such as Helen Sinclair and Margaret Perversi-Brooks. What I want to say is it was a communal effort and I'm proud having been part of it

A Simple Nature Table

" We collect treasures left by Mother Nature as we walk, as we walk..." Pia Jane Bijkerk

An old crate, a shelf, a simple wooden chair set in a corner of a room. A tiny pocket, an altar if you will, in a humming world. A place to observe and ponder the ebb and flow of the year. A fluid collection of treasures that gently draw our attention to the subtlety, the riot, the beauty of nature. Within the easy grasp of little fingers it is a place of exploration, reflection and stillness. A place of connection to the natural world. A nature table.

And tangled up within the leaves, cicada shells and stones found deep in pockets is a thread from the outside world to the indoors. It invites you to cradle a smooth stone in the palm of your hand, to marvel at a screw shell's concentric and ever minimising circles, to crush leaves and inhale their pungent vapour. It keeps us from burrowing too deep into our human realm and reminds us we are but one part of a living, breathing ecosystem.

So collect treasures as you walk and bring them indoors. Set them aside somewhere quiet and watch the tendrils lure you and your littles in.

Here are some everyday items to create a simple nature table in your home:

- an empty shelf, a small table all time-worn and ramshackle, a chair top, an upturned crate or box, a windowsill or even a thrifted basket.
- a small vase (a jar would be lovely) to house feathers, small branches, spring blooms, and seed pods suspended on twigs. Little fingers will delight in collecting and arranging flowers.
- a few small bowls for shells, seed pods, leaves; a bounty of nature's ephemera. Choose natural materials and subtle hues to make nature's riches the true star.

A small space to display nature's wonders. A place to stop, to ponder, to revere.

Mandy Silversides
Education Facilitator

Steiner Parent Education Initiative presents;

An Illustrated Exploration of the Child's Developing Threefold Soul

Thinking, Feeling and Willing,

and the Interweaving of our Four Cosmic Bodies

Physical, Etheric, Astral and Spiritual

Using the fourfold Advent verse as a thread, Sophia will bring perspectives on how children develop in healthy ways.

with Sophia Montefiore

Sophia Montefiore is currently a teacher and Senior School Coordinator at the Newcastle Waldorf School in Australia. She he has taught and mentored across a range of subjects including English, History, Mathematics, Projective Geometry, Art, and Philosophy. Sophia is also the artist behind our Steiner Parent Education Initiative Logo!

https://sophiaartperspectives.com.au/

Thursday, November 7th

7.30pm AEST on Zoom

https://events.humanitix.com/copy-of-an-illustrated-exploration-of-the-child-s-developing-threefold-soul/tickets

Steiner Parent Education Initiative presents;

Steiner Education as a Healing Education:

Nurturing the Developing Child for Healthy Self-Development, & World Development

with Bernadette White

In this session we will explore the healing impulses at the heart of Steiner education.

We will look at how we can support children to develop health self-experience and orientate themselves within the meaningful context of the human story, so unlocking healing potential for themselves and the world.

Bernadette White has been a Waldorf teacher for many decades, completing three class teacher cycles in this time, and is an active Steiner teacher trainer and parent educator in Australia and New Zealand.

Thursday November 14th
7.30pm AEST on Zoom

https://events.humanitix.com/copy-of-steiner-education-as-a-healing-education