COMMUNICATION AND SOCIETY CLASS TAKE TO THE RIVER BOAT IN SEARCH OF HISTORY

By Peter Stewart, Coordinator Society and Environment

On Wednesday, 9 December, the Year 9 Communication and Society class spent their last double lesson as a cruise on the “Captain Proud” paddle steamer. This was a culmination of a unit of work called “My Place” based on the book of the same name by Nadia Wheatley, where the author writes historical narrative based on children telling their story, living in their Place.

In the same way, the Year 9 students wrote about their own house and family, followed by fictional stories based on historical “place markers” for 1959, 1899 and 1799. They were required to research the period for the area near the river and write as a young person with a historically appropriate name. The 1899 story was a young person of a paddle steamer, plying the Murray with trade and passengers. Research also involved watching some of the Mini-series, “All the Rivers Run”. The trip in the Captain Proud was a celebration of the success with which the students compiled their own stories and the resulting books.

During the cruise, students were entertained and informed by the Captain, and learned that Scott Hefron, an ex-student of Murray Bridge High School, is about to become the youngest river boat captain on the Murray.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF GOVERNING COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS

YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES CELEBRATES ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL TERM!

By Travis Wiese, Student Counsellor and Youth Opportunities Coordinator

The term culminated in the graduation attended by the families and friends of the graduates from MBHS and Coomandook Area School and members of the community including Mr Sam Cozens from Murray Bridge Rotary Club. Rotary have been a staunch supporter of the Youth Opportunities Program, offering significant financial support, without which all of these students would not have been able to experience the growth and development brought forth by the program. On behalf of the school and the students, our sincere thanks go out to the Rotary Club of Murray Bridge for this support.

A special thanks also needs to go to Hayley Nielsen for working tirelessly with these students to ensure that they were given the greatest opportunity to meet their goals and develop as young people.

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SCHOOL WATCH

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Another year at Murray Bridge High School draws to a close—and this year, my final year with you. I leave you a very proud school community. Ours is a pride grown through achievement. Ours is a very strong Regional High School, one of the strongest in the State system.

I could write more of our many achievements as a school—the photographs tell of successes in the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme, the expansion of facilities for Vocational Education Courses: the Lower Murray Skills Centre, the Industrial Kitchen and Cafeteria, the Recording Studio in Music provided by Rotary, the $1.7 million Trade Training Centre to be built in 2010.

But the meaning is in the experiences which hold communities together. Jazz legend Don Burrows played with 140 Murraylands students in our gym. The Australian Girls Choir came to Murray Bridge High School and they came again—because of the warmth of the community.

Yet in my time an Afghan man died on a street in Murray Bridge. When I returned to school this year I learned of an Aboriginal young person hurt in a Saturday night fight.

However, the community responds and rises above the grief. The support and successful integration of the new arrivals communities in Murray Bridge is now recognised Australia wide.

As I drove to school on my last day a boy jumped the fence to go to the IGA. ‘Oh, hello Ms Klem’. ‘Was just going to get a coffee’, he said with a grin and he jumped back over the fence. I will miss him. Murray Bridge kids are good kids underneath.

I leave having contributed 9 years, 9 years of my life, to Murray Bridge. I leave appreciative of the community confidence in my work, and appreciative of the community support I have been given.

Murray Bridge has a soul which soars, it sings, it plays football. It is deep, with such a deep sadness. It is strong. At dusk the birds fly south across the river to the lakes, safely in formation, the lights of the Meatworks shimmer across the water.

Together we gather the stars.