We give thanks for the blessing of Winter.
Season to cherish the heart
To make warmth and quiet for the heart
To make soups and broths for the heart
To cook for the heart and read for the heart
To curl up softly and nestle with the heart
To sleep deeply and gently at one with the heart
To dream with the heart
To spend time with the heart
A long, long time of peace with the heart
We give thanks for the blessing of winter
Season to cherish the heart

- Michael Leunig
Goodbye golden Autumn and welcome Winter!

Frosty mornings mean that all children will feel much warmer when they have their hats, coats and gumboots. Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the season as we often spend time outside in all weather. With all these extra clothes in the hallway, please make sure everything is clearly named.

Thank you for supporting our school Winter Festival. Thank you to our Prep families who made soup, helped set up our spiral and the kitchen and a sincere thank you for bringing your children along to share in this wonderful community event.

Each year we hold fair and festival to celebrate the changing of the seasons. Seasonal festivals serve to connect humanity with the rhythms of nature and the cosmos. Festivals provide an opportunity for the whole community to come together. There is joy in the preparation, the anticipation and the celebration itself.

Winter in the Prep room will see us begin our work with wool. Pom poms, finger kitting and stitching. Each craft linked with story and song to bring deep understanding of process. Our craft will also decorate our room to celebrate winter with snow fairies and ice. We will be visiting the library with our new library bags and will begin to appreciate concepts in print. Our morning circle gnomes will be around for a little while but then King Winter will rule with frost and snow and icicles. Number rhymes begin counting in multiples and our bean bag work starts with a ‘fiery dragon circling around flying high above the town, blowing fiery flames of red’. As we begin the term with the story of Stone Soup each family is asked to bring a vegetable each Wednesday so that the children can have soup and bread for morning tea.

Blessings
Johanna and Polly

Woodwork

Our patient and magnificent friend, K, has been delivering a wonderful woodwork program in the newly prepared shed. Regardless of the weather, we are now able to lift up the roller door and create magnificent swords, shields, boomerangs, habitat boxes and flower presses. If you have any old chisels, vices, clamps, tools or wood to donate it is always greatly appreciated. Just catch up with K in the hallway or in the Woodwork shed on a Monday.

Garden Gossip

Our broad beans and sweet peas are growing and flowering over the garden arches and frames. The bulbs are starting to raise their heads and the happy faces of a few jonquils are smiling in our garden.

The Preps have enjoyed cutting back the herbs and making flowery stews and giving all our grasses a good hair cut. In the next couple of weeks we will move a bit more of the mulch onto the paths and look at harvesting our peas and beans. There is a healthy crop of Asian greens and we will look at cooking these up. The precious Preps have their eye on the rhubarb for a late crumble or stewed onto of Rice pudding and the stalks are flushing a lovely shade of pink.

The cornflowers that were so amazing last year have only self seeded in the veggie box so I will be more careful with the seed this year and try a more organised sowing of these favourites. The calendula on the other hand has been a great success with lots of little sprouts popping up in the most unexpected places. The Preps will harvest these flowers if there are any left and make some calendula cream. The grape vine has had a prune and hopefully we will have the fruiting that we had last year. We would appreciate the help of someone in regard to the olives. This year the tree fruited so abundantly but none of us really knew or had the time to pickle, preserve or deal with the olives. Next year I would love some help with harvest.

Class 2/3 will have the Harvest/plant stall at this years Twilight Fair so will be looking for produce, preserves or plants at that time. So if you are planning, sprouting or sowing in the near future put in a couple of extra plants and we can sell the excess at the Fair.

Bernie has been volunteering every Monday in the garden and helping our Class 3/4s, please come along if you would like to help out there is always something to be done. Thanks so much Bernie.
To all of the students with their fabulous lanterns at last nights Winter Festival, thankyou. 
To all of the families who attended, bringing their foliage, soup and support, thankyou. 
To all of the staff who work tirelessly to bring such rich experiences to the children, thankyou. 
To the Class 6 students who lead the way by shining their light so brightly, eternal gratitude and respect. Thankyou ~ Leanne Carr (5/6 Class Teacher)

Whoosh, the flame is over my head as I spin my fire stick. The metal is warm from the fire and the citronella oil is running down the pole onto my hands. It is so quiet apart from the noise of the flames (which are surprisingly loud), The oil smells of fire and warmth. The fire makes me feel alive and excited. What a powerful ceremony to be a part of. ~ Marnie H

We put our sticks together. Whoosh! We all could see the fire exploding from the sticks….it was excruciatingly loud! The fire was frightening. I smelt citronella oil all over my hand. It felt like the stick was slipping but no……I made it through without dropping my firestick. ~ Amelie W

I grab the cold firestick as I shiver from the crisp air. I’m waiting for the drum beat. Then BOOM! My stick lights. WHOOSH! WHOOSH! We place our sticks down. POW! I smell the citronella oil as we say our ancient blessing. I feel honoured to participate in this ceremony. ~ India C
Some thoughts on Television & Electronic Media from a Steiner Perspective. 
A message from your teachers.

Children need whole body, active and open ended experiences. This is especially important for those under seven years of age. They need to learn primarily through imitation, repetition and full engagement of their bodies and senses in a wholesome, nurturing and, above all, artistic and active way. Television and electronic media are counter to these needs.

Young children cannot discern between truth and fantasy. Think carefully about the images and story material you present to your child. Ask yourself, “Is this story true and beautiful? Does it present universal themes or archetypes which will nourish my child’s soul?” Young children are like sponges, soaking up everything around them. They cannot filter, discern, block, reject or ruminate over the images they receive from a screen. Modern films are especially damaging to children precisely because they tend to have heightened emotional content, drawing viewers in in a stronger way than films for children generally used to do. Compare ‘The Lion King’ with ‘Mary Poppins’ for an example of this.

Children under 7 are in the most active and physical stage of their lives. They need to move, touch, taste, feel and otherwise explore with their whole bodies and all their senses. Further, their way of learning – their way of being - is via imitation. Although one can find TV characters worthy of imitation, because they are not real and are presented in a disjointed way which is not true to how life is, a child is left without a worthy human model to imitate. What happens then is the shell of humanness, the image from the screen, is imitated. This is not a sound foundation upon which to raise our children.

“Learning”, when presented via electronic media, is neither artistic or active in the way young children require learning to be. Nor is it tempered or delivered by a living human being who can find the right and warm way to teach that child. The bulk of a child’s learning should be from soul to soul. This is not possible with television, computers or videos.

From a Steiner perspective, it is strongly recommended that children under the age of 7 do not watch television, play electronic games or use computers at all. If television is to be viewed occasionally, videos or recorded short programs such as ‘Play School’ are preferable to children’s channels on television. These options avoid loud or frightening advertisements, run for a finite duration and parents can monitor, vet and choose which are most suitable and least damaging for their child. Children’s television tends to be at a very fast and frenetic pace, even when the content is not violent. Such a fast pace combined with bright images and the bits and snippets approach favoured by television producers makes for a sensorially challenging and unhealthy experience for children. If you choose to show your child the occasional video, generally, the older, original films are to be preferred over the new. (For example, the old 101 Dalmations instead of the new one with Glenn Close.) Similarly, the original Doctor Doolittle with Rex Harrison is a lot calmer and gentler than Eddie Murphy’s frenetic newer version.

Please avoid any videos of fairy tales or literature which will impact on the child’s future ability to create their own mental pictures when reading or hearing at school. (‘Disney Princesses’ are particularly damaging in this respect as the fairy tales on which they are based are a rich source of learning for so much of our curriculum right through school.) Old film versions of Mary Poppins, Bedknobs and Broomsticks or The Sound of Music are preferable.

For older children....

It is even more important that older children do not view movies or television programmes based on the literature that will be delivered via the Steiner Curriculum. In our curriculum, the children discover so much from the stories we bring to them. If the children have already seen movies which are based upon the literature we bring, the child is ‘spoilt’ by the images they have already formed in their heads from the movie makers and not their own, far richer, images. We have all experienced the disappointment of seeing a film after we have read the book. Somehow, the film is never as good as what we imagined. But to see the movie before reading the book, even for adults, spoils the book because all we can see in our mind is the Hollywood actors who played the parts in the film version.

For example, Class Threes are learning about Hebrew Mythology. If they have seen the recently released Hollywood movie “Exodus: Gods and Kings” you may feel you are helping them with their studies, but in fact, this is detrimental. We tell the story of Moses and the exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land over several weeks. The movie tells it in a few hours! The way we tell it is rich and builds in suspense over those weeks, creating incredible images in the minds of each child, a richness that can only grow with them ‘sleeping on it’ over many nights. They have a hunger to hear the next instalment, a great anticipation. What a disappointment for the child to already have an image of Christian Bale as Moses (wasn’t he also Batman?) and to already know what is coming next...such a spoiler not only for them, but for their friends with whom they are so keen to share their ‘knowledge’.
Some thoughts on Television & Electronic Media from a Steiner Perspective....
(continued)

A short list (by no means complete) to avoid in film or TV versions;

Beatrix Potter (Peter Rabbit)
Winnie The Pooh
Any Fairytales (incl Grimms, Hans Christian Anderson...this is a huge list within itself)
Aesop's Fables (Hare and the Tortoise, Lion and the Mouse)
Indigenous Stories
Maori Stories
Celtic Stories
Stories of Saints
Norse Mythology/ Vikings (Loki, Thor, Valhalla)
Greek and Roman Mythology (Clash of the Titans, Hercules, Ulysses, Jason and the Argonauts, Helen of Troy, Medea, Homer, Helena, The Odyssey)
Hindu Mythology

Finally, it is recommended that as parents, we consider our own viewing habits. Remember that young children learn primarily through imitation. Discuss your screen use with your family and think carefully about when and how you use television and electronic media in your home. By valuing childhood and making strict boundaries concerning television and other electronic media, one allows children to be children and lays a foundation for the young adult to fully engage with the world in a sensible and balanced way. It is hoped that, as adults, our children will use electronic media wisely, making the most of these potentially wonderful tools in full consciousness and not losing themselves in them.

Happy Birthday Blessings to a ll of th e Winter Babie s

Sophie, Saul, Milo & Ryder

We are truthful and helpful and loving in trust...
For our heart’s inner sun, glows brightly in us.
We will open our hearts to the sunbeams so bright,
and we’ll fill all the world with our heart’s inner light.

(parents please advise if you wish for your children’s birthdays to be included in future editions)

Felt art by Lanakarten

News from Class Four

What a wonderful term Class 4 have had. In Main Lessons the students have been deeply immersed in Norse Mythology and the Class 4 play, ‘The Theft of Thor’s Hammer’, was a resounding success with students learning the challenging alliterative language over many weeks of practice and perseverance. Mathematics has also been a focus, with all students working hard and making good progress. Next term in Main Lessons we begin work on mapping the local area as well as our ‘Man and Animal’ unit. Through exploring our local geography, students will ‘wake up’ to the presence of their environment and connect strongly with it, working from the familiar, outwards, to maintain a strong sense of security and an ability to integrate their experiences. ‘The Human Being and the Animal Kingdom’ will foster interest in, and connection to, animals whilst cultivating a sense of responsibility towards them based on our potential for guardianship of the earth. Norse Mythology will continue to be our overarching theme during second semester with much rhythm and movement incorporated. Making and decorating their own Viking shields in woodwork classes will be a highlight for the students this term.

Many thanks for the support of all Class 4 parents during Semester One. From pizza making, costume alterations, stage make up, shields, swords, apples, wreaths, soup and festivals, your support and dedication to our class has been invaluable and is greatly appreciated.

Warm winter blessings,

Lizzy, Amy and Polly
News from Class One

With winter well on its way, we are enjoying rugging up in our warm clothes and venturing outside when we can. We have also been watching the funny antics of the Magpie, Cockatoos, Lorikeets and Corellas outside in the children’s garden.

We have learnt the Jack Frost poem and a variety of winter circle verses and songs. Class 1 have started their new English main lesson with the story of “Snow White and Rose Red”. The Class is now moving into their next important stage of learning how to write and read the phrases relating to this story. We are working with rich language to try and awaken and nourish a love of word and a feeling for what is beautiful and true. This fairy tale has been chosen for the main class play which we expect to perform for families and friends in around four weeks. The children will be very busy learning chorus and individual lines and dressing up in silks and capes as they take turns playing various characters. We continue to practise skip counting, the 2X tables and form drawing. Weekly painting sessions are now held on Monday while the children continue to produce marvellous pieces of Art. Jo is bringing Nature Studies and the Indigenous main lesson stories to delight the children. Recorder lessons continue to bring progress and we will be ready to perform to everyone later this term. A very warm welcome to our three lovely new class friends Ziggy, Lily and Joshua.

Blessings from Leanne and Jo

Soccer Lightening Premiership

I sprint down the wing with the ball in my possession. Every step and each kick getting further away from my panting opponent. I hear Fitzi the sports teacher and the players on the bench cheering us on. Feeling the pressure slowly fade away as I speed away from the tiring left-footer. I pass the ball to my team mate and watch him send it right past the keeper at lightening speed. What a great team goal! ~ Xavier A

Whoosh! The ball is rocketing towards the goal. I can see the ball in the back of the net. I hear everyone cheering enthusiastically. I can feel the rush of excitement as all my team mates rush in for a group hug. 3-2 up...what a come back! ~ Nick W

I can just see the ball coming towards me. When the game was about to start I felt nervous in my stomach. I could smell the grass when a gamp of wind came through the soccer field. I steal the ball and pass it off to Dayne, Dayne passes to Nick, Nick to Alfie...... goal! ~ Kyron G

I was defending for our team. I can see the ball coming towards me and I can hear everybody calling to me. I can smell oranges. I feel my legs pumping up then .... goal! It was fun but in the end I had breaking legs.....but still I had fun. ~ Dayne L

I am sprinting to the goals. I see competitors running at me. I hear everyone cheering me on. I smell sweat running down my cheek. I feel nervous. I kick.......goal! ~ Alex D

I was standing in the goalies box as the ball is shooting towards me. I kick it and it goes straight through for a goal. I feel a rush of happiness. I hear my team mates cheering for me then the siren blows. We won! ~ Alfie O

I can’t believe that Nick got a goal. He dodged the opponent, kicked the ball and the goalie missed so the ball went in net! ~ Kye E-W

I sprint down the wing with the ball in my possession. Every step and each kick getting further away from my panting opponent. I hear Fitzi the sports teacher and the players on the bench cheering us on. Feeling the pressure slowly fade away as I speed away from the tiring left-footer. I pass the ball to my team mate and watch him send it right past the keeper at lightening speed. What a great team goal! ~ Xavier A

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I am sprinting to the goals. I see competitors running at me. I hear everyone cheering me on. I smell sweat running down my cheek. I feel nervous. I kick.......goal! ~ Alex D
What a fabulous term we have shared together. We explored the delights of Ancient India, creating mandalas within our art, form drawing, geometry, henna hands and wood work. The students chose a deity to research, designing a wonderful range of posters, costumes, sculptures and weaponry. Their creations continue to astound us. Immersing ourselves in the tales from the Ramayana and the stories of Buddha, we paid a very special visit to the Sri Shiva Vishnu Temple in Carrum Downs. Joined by Jodie’s class, Rose, Nikki D and Dani P, we were welcomed by the priests who took us on a tour and gifted us with fruit to offer Ganesh. Members of the public enjoyed our chanting, singing, yoga and meditation as they visited the temple. We were given the incredible blessing of sacred powder from the priests, which we will use with gratitude at our graduation ceremony at the end of the year.

Our morning circles were filled with intricate, geometric choreography. The Firestick Ceremony is an important rite of passage for our Class 6s. It encourages responsibility, clarity and inner strength. It is a picture of many lights shining in the darkness, reinforcing the notion that everyone’s presence is important, that everyone belongs, and that everyone is striving for meaning and purpose. It was a privilege to work with the students to bring this powerful ceremony to this year’s Winter Festival.

We now look forward to Term 3, where we will begin with the Battle of Troy. The 5s will delve into the story of the Iliad while the Class 6s will journey with Aeneaus as he escapes the besieged city and makes his journey to a new land. Here we will meet, Romulus and Remus, and the birth of Rome.

As the Spring returns, the 5s and 6s will come back together to explore our Main Lesson on Man and Plant. We will journey through the plant realm, linking it to the growth of the human being…… beginning with the birth of the shy, dependant mushrooms and ending with the vibrant, vivacious flowering teenagers! Our investigations will take us to various habitats, opening up opportunities for a range of artistic expressions and deep connection to the wonders and interconnectedness of nature.

Our morning circles will be filled with athletes preparing for a number of events at the Ancient Greek Olympics, as well as folk dancing in readiness for the Spring Festival. So much fun to come!

Leanne and Jo
News from Class Two

In Class Two children are developing a heightened awareness of the world around them and are attracted to challenge and adventure; while remaining in a vivid world of pictorial imagination. Main Lesson stories of Celtic Saints and holy people from around the world and various cultures emphasize goodness and courage. These stories often also illuminate a relationship between humans and animals; such as the story of Saint Francis of Assisi. Our Main Lesson journey this term has begun with the story of Saint George and The Dragon. We are also performing this story as our Class Two play and all are welcome to our performance.

Peace, Love and Happiness
Jasmine and the 2/3’s

News from Class Three

This term begins with the “Houses and Shelters” Main Lesson. We have started with a focus on Nomadic Life; the people, their needs and their relationship with the animals, land and environment. We will be looking at the various styles and materials people have used to build their shelters throughout the ages and what determines these choices. We will also be looking at trades and people’s relationships with each other when building houses.

Lizzy and Amy
Winter Craft – painting with salt

“The kids and I made wet-method paintings of a winter scene. Using table salt (rock salt would also give an interesting effect), we sprinkled a bit onto the sky, which absorbed some of the pigment, creating the look of falling snow.”


Class 5/6 Astronomy

Aboriginal Australians link the stars, moons and planets to stories to remind of important times and values. One important constellation is the Emu in the Sky. It is made up not of stars but of the area of no stars against what is now known as the Milky Way. Away from street lights, the head of the emu can be found near the constellation known as the Southern Cross. When the Emu in the Sky lines up with ancient rock art at Ku-Ring-Gai Chase National Park it is the right time of year to collect emu eggs.

To explore these stories further please visit:


Winter Craft – feed the birds

Do you know there is a Mornington Park Steiner Stream Parents Facebook page? Join us there for all sorts of community minded exchange and support.
Melbourne Rudolf Steiner Seminar Ltd
37A Wellington Park Drive, WARRANWOOD, VIC., AUSTRALIA 3134
www.steinerseminar.com TEL: (03) 9876 5199

We warmly invite the community to join us for a stimulating and nourishing evening at any of our part-time short courses commencing next Wednesday 22nd April from 7.30-9.30 pm. You can read more about these short courses on our website: www.steinerseminar.com

Enjoy a social and artistic experience.
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For your own inner development.

The role of imagination in healthy child development.

Body, Soul and Spirit. Theosophy: Rudolf Steiner’s psychology of the human being.

Extended Painting and Drawing 2: Veil painting, plant observation, seasons.

Lindleberry
Mornington Steiner Early Childhood Education Inc
c/o Mornington Park Primary School
Robertson Drive, Mornington 3931
Enrolment enquiries Ph Sarah 0402 928 223
Email: lindleberry13@yahoo.com.au

Parent and Child playgroup vacancies available.

Community Notices

NEWSLETTER SUPPORT
All assistance is greatly appreciated. It would be especially helpful if a parent would be able to collect and collate the upcoming dates for the next newsletter. Please contact Jules if you are able or would like more info.

Many thanks, julie@georgiepie.com.au 0438 005995

Wurru-Wurru notices

* Craft group - 1st Tues each month, 7-9pm at Tash’s in Red Hill. BYO craft or purchase a small kit. Ph Tash on 0400 599 112

* Playgroup leader - We are seeking an enthusiastic parent (or grandparent?) to lead our playgroup in 2016 at Red Hill, on Tuesdays 9.30 - 11.30. Mentoring available during this year. Please ph Nives on 0459 642 117 to discuss further.