Speech by Deputy Principal Kathy McDowell at Liz Donnan’s retirement morning tea.

Every one of us as we reach retirement time ask ourselves what will be our legacy, how will we be remembered. I am honoured to speak on behalf of the school today, however, I have found the writing of this speech incredibly difficult. How do you sum up a person’s career in 3 minutes and a teaching career at Toormina High School since 1999? Get help, and I did what any other school teacher would do, I went to the experts, I asked students out there in the playground what they thought would be your legacy.

I was proud of their insightful words such as, smart, interested, honest and caring; phrases included, interested in people from all over the world, prepared to listen to all sides of the story and understanding of the ethos of Toormina High. Let me now try and do the students and staff justice by recounting the following:

Teacher – Liz became a teacher in 1972 because she wanted to make a difference in the lives of others, like all of us it was a planned decision on her part and one of which she should be so rightfully proud. Her results speak for themselves and they are a reflection of the dedication, determination and flexibility that was the hallmark of her career. Liz did not shy away from challenges, whether that was from teaching in those difficult geographical areas or in managing students and staff.

Humanitarian – I have never known Liz to not put the rights and feelings of others before her own. Again as an administrator she forged the way forward in this school. I have to say that Toormina High School is a far better place because of this. She believes and lives the Code of Conduct, she believes and lives in protecting students, she believes and lives in the rights of a free and public education for all. She is a supporter of public education and is not afraid to show that to the community. She rolls her sleeves up and hands out how to vote cards, writes letters to her superiors and represents us in all processes. Her humanity goes further than these walls however. It reaches out to ensure that communities and countries, families and most importantly, children, are safer today due to her efforts through following DEC policy, belonging and participating in service organisations such as Zonta and Rotary International. Shelter boxes have been provided, birthing kits have been distributed, knowledge has been given, exchanges have been made and the students of Toormina High are richer in understanding and empathy as a result.

Forgiveness – Liz has shown how to have high expectations for all and that even in having those expectations we can still be forgiving and caring for those who fall short. There are many students who have received another chance because Liz saw a spark of something deep within them and knew that if she could show that a caring and responsible adult believed in them it would make a difference. Liz you have and will continue to make that difference. Perhaps the best example of forgiveness is when students set fire to our school and many wanted to see punishment. Liz stood tall and taught us all that punishment was not the answer. Yes, there needed to be consequences and yes, there would be difficulties, but as a school community we could teach humanity and forgiveness by caring for those students and their families. I believe this single event is what showed the wider community and students what THS really is about, that we are far greater than the bricks surrounding us. We are resilient, we are determined and above all, we are caring. Since that time there have been many other situations similar but as a staff and a school community we have known that Liz will be unwavering in her leadership and that the spirit of THS which she forged and raised through those ashes will come to the forefront.

Friendship – we are proud to have Liz as a friend. She is loyal, she has our back and she is honest. As a staff member if we are worried about something she will listen, tell you straight how she thinks and as a teacher she then will begin to work with you through the steps for improvement. Her incredible knowledge of Departmental policies and procedures and her values of friendship and leadership have meant that we are here today better teachers, individuals and for many of us better parents. So thank you Liz for your service, thank you for being a teacher in the true meaning, thank you for caring about all of us and thank you for being a leader, our leader, our inspiration and our friend. We wish you all the best.
This newsletter we are introducing the Support Unit School Learning Support Officers...

Name...Sue Flick
THS Position...SLSO
The high school I attended was...Orara High School.
On weekends I enjoy...gardening, cooking, spending time with family and friends.
I love...travelling, camping, my family.
I don't like...weeds, wearing shoes, whinging people.
When I was a teenager I wish someone had told me... not to worry about what other people thought, if you knew how little they did.

Name...Shadie Mackay
THS Position...SLSO
The high school I attended was...John Paul College.
On weekends I enjoy...spending time with family and friends.
I love...family, friends and MUSIC!
I don't like...discrimination, violence and soggy weetbix.
When I was a teenager I wish someone had told me... to make the most of everyday and laugh.

Name...Jo Robb
THS Position...SLSO
The high school I attended was...Orara High School.
On weekends I enjoy...swimming at the beach, going out for coffee.
I love...going away in my caravan.
I don't like...pickles.
When I was a teenager I wish someone had told me...sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.

Name...Karen Waugh
THS Position...SLSO
The high school I attended was...Callaghan College, Newcastle.
On weekends I enjoy...camping and being outside in the sunshine.
I love...my family and friends.
I don't like...people who are cruel to animals.
When I was a teenager I wish someone had told me...that life goes by so fast.

Toormina High School is seeking additional staff to work with students as part of our Intensive Literacy Program. This program runs Monday to Friday from 9am until 1pm, and on Wednesdays 9 til 12:15.
If you have excellent literacy skills, are interested in working with high school students and have a completed Working With Children Check please contact the school to speak to either Sue Winsor or Joanne Bellette on 6653 3077. Applications close Friday May 8.
On Saturday Toormina High School students and teachers participated in the ANZAC Day march and service at Sawtell. It was a pleasure to see so many of our students involved. Well done Tanya Cheers on your organisation for this event. I’d also like to thank all of the staff who participated in the march and those who supported the school from the crowd. Congratulations must also go to Lil Ross and Justin Pryce who delivered the commemorative address at the service. I must agree with the President of the local RSL sub-branch who followed their address by saying that they were a credit to themselves, their families and the school.

Jo Bellette - Relieving Principal
The students in the visual art class enjoyed creating self-portraits which expressed their emotions last term. The class used pencils to create quick portrait sketches then applied waterproof pen to capture the lines and shapes. Students experimented with a variety of water colours and patterns to express their mood. An outstanding effort!

Lina Bluhm - Art Teacher

**BMX BROTHERS**

Drew and Ryan Gilchrist recently competed at Armidale UNE in a High School Mountain Bike Team Challenge representing Toormina High.

Most schools had upwards of 10-12 riders so the total point score for Toormina did not see a podium result but in the individual results Drew(Yr 9) came 4th in the Yr 9/10 combined class and Ryan(Yr7) took the win in the Yr 7/8 combined class.

The boys are travelling to Brisbane for week 2 of Term 2 to compete in the BMX National Championships. Good luck!
YOUNG ENGINEERS

During the last week of Term 1, Year 9 and 10 students from Toormina High School had the honour of representing the school at the Science and Engineering Challenge held at Woolgoolga High School. The competition was run by Newcastle University and volunteers from the local Lions and Rotary clubs. Toormina High School competed against 8 schools from the Mid North coast. Students had limited time and set materials to construct and design a Mars Moon Buggy which had to travel across an undulating surface. Other students designed an eco-friendly habitat which had to withstand high winds and capture rainwater. Students made a bionic hand out of straws and string which was then used to communicate through sign language, our students came 1st in this section. Other activities included building a weight-bearing tower, a catapult and a bridge capable of bearing a trolley filled with weights.

Toormina High School students did their school proud placing 1st in the eco-habitat task and placing highly in many other tasks during the day. The school placed 5th overall which was a fantastic result after having led on the scoreboard for much of the day. The students were wonderful representatives and were able to learn new skills through each of the activities. A fun day was had by staff and students and we look forward to competing in the challenge in 2016.

Michelle Nicholls
Science Teacher
Football Representatives

Jayden Kitchener-Waters and Damien Dickson were chosen as members of the NSW ACT ‘Kickstart’ Under 15’s AFL team to compete in Cairns during the last school holidays. The boys have been part of the Adam Goode talent program. In Cairns they played 5 games and 2 finals (finally losing to Western Australia) with Jayden kicking 5 goals during the competition.

Jayden has also been selected in the Lloyd McDermott Under 17’s Rugby Union Team. Team members have been chosen from players all around Australia through the ‘Brothers in Union’ development squad.

Jayden has been training in Sydney in preparation for a tour to New Zealand next year.

Damien is also in the Northcoast AFL team as is Tyke Kemp (photo left). Tyke is also in the 15 years Regional Rugby League team.

Barb White, one of our THS school learning support officers, even reads the latest THS newsletter when overseas!

Photo on the right is Barb in Hoi An, Vietnam keeping up to date on all the school news.

YEAR 10 MORETON ISLAND EXCURSION

Year 10 students will need to pay $170 to the front office by Friday, May 29 to secure a place on the year 10 excursion to Moreton Island.

The total will be due Friday, September 18 in term 3.

For more information contact year adviser, Lina Bluhm at THS 66533077.

THS KOKODA CHALLENGE TEAM

Toormina High School has entered a team in the Kokoda Challenge on the Gold Coast in July. This is a physically and emotionally challenging endurance course for high school students.

Our team with teacher, Sheridan Watkins, is Hannah Bake, Chloe Rann, Zyla Steele and Hunter Bake-Smith.

Team fundraising supports the Kokoda Challenge Youth Program, a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to helping the youth of today through developing the values forged by our Diggers.

Support for the THS Team can be entered online at http://kokodachallenge.com

THS team number is, JSO011, if donations are $100 or over the team will display your business logo on their team shirts.

For more information contact Sheridan Watkins at THS 66533077.
Southern Cross University has been so impressed by Toormina High School student Elizabeth Ross, they have employed her as a Student Ambassador while she studies for her Year 12 HSC. After successfully completing the SCU Head-Start program, in which Lil received a Distinction in the Human Physiology unit, she has enthusiastically accepted the opportunity to work for the university outside of school time.

In her role, Lil will talk to other school students about her experience in the Head-Start program as well as the other benefits of Southern Cross University at school information evenings and career expos. She is a natural public speaker and presents herself so professionally; SCU and Toormina High School are delighted to have such a wonderful ambassador. In March, Lil spoke to local principals at the annual SCU What’s New breakfast, held at the Osprey Restaurant, and did a fantastic job.

Caitlin Burcher - Project Officer, SCU Head-Start & Access

PHOTO above shows Lil speaking at ANZAC assembly

Toormina High hosted teachers from Lismore and Coffs High last week, during a 2 day workshop and seminar on Project Based Learning.

Bianca Hewes, a well-known education blogger and PBL expert, came from Sydney to work with teachers as we plan for our Year 8 projects. Ms Hewes is the Head Teacher Teaching & Learning at Manly Selective College and has had a keen interest in PBL for many years. She generously shared her knowledge and experience with staff and visitors. The THS projects she helped develop will occur during term 3 in both English and science classes.

I would like to thank Ms Hewes and all participants for their time and enthusiasm as we plan for our upcoming projects.

Julie Roberts - Head Teacher Teaching and Learning

SOUTHERN CROSS UNIVERSITY AMBASSADOR

MASTERS for PENNY GRACE

THS L.O.T.E. teacher, Penny Grace graduated from Sydney University recently with a Masters in Indigenous Languages Education. Congratulations Penny!
Principal’s Column

Toormina High School ended term 1 with a fantastic rewards excursion to the Big Banana, which the staff and students thoroughly enjoyed. Congratulations to those who attended for their exemplary behaviour and I would encourage all students to strive toward achieving an academic, merit or encouragement award at our mid-year awards assembly, so they might be invited to attend the next rewards excursion to Dreamworld.

Term 2 looks to be another busy term with the beginning of some important new initiatives that form part of our school plan. Mrs Roberts, Head Teacher Teaching and Learning, has been working closely with English and Science staff to support the introduction of Project Based Learning in Year 8. I look forward to the amazing products our students will develop as part of this initiative. This term will also see the introduction of our After Hours Homework Centre which will support students and their families in completing homework and assignments. Details about the Homework Centre will be provided in future newsletters.

On the first day of term 2 Mrs Donnan announced to staff and students that she has a health issue and will be taking extended leave. Mrs Donnan has been principal of Toormina High School since 1999 and, in a long and distinguished career, has been an outstanding school leader. We wish her all the best and understand she is looking forward to a long and happy retirement on completion of her leave.

Joanne Bellette - Relieving Principal

Parents, carers or family members of a person with a Disability are invited to the:

Disability Info Hub
Thursday 7th May 10am-12.00

Parents, carer’s and family members of a person with a Disability are invited to “drop in” to the Disability Info Hub to informally discuss issues they are facing and to connect with others in a similar situation. The Hub will operate every month on the first Thursday of the month.

Parents and Advocates will be available to talk to you on an informal level on the day.

The purpose of the Disability Info Hub is to inform, educate and empower parents, carers and family members and assist to connect people together and share information and experience.

Parents Pack a Punch

Disability Advocacy

IMPORTANT DATES - WEEKS 3 & 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FRI</td>
<td>15/5</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
<td>Examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRI</td>
<td>15/5</td>
<td>Year 10</td>
<td>Mathematics Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRI</td>
<td>15/5</td>
<td>Year 8</td>
<td>Mathematics Day Armidale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRI</td>
<td>15/5</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>Science Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRI</td>
<td>22/5</td>
<td>Year 9</td>
<td>Mathematics Examination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT</td>
<td>23/5</td>
<td></td>
<td>RELAY FOR LIFE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Congratulations to the following students Taylor McLean, Crystal Mantle, Tahlia Trimboli, Makayla Hoskins, Caitlin Cleghorn and Courtney Ellem who have recently graduated from the Links to Learning program, hosted by Coffs Coast Community College.

The 10 week program saw a group of year 9 and 10 girls participate in various workshops across the term including Rock and Water, First Aid, barista skills, henna and circus classes. They have completed a Certificate I in Skills for Vocational Pathways and Certificate I in Access to Vocational Pathways. The program is aimed to develop student’s communication and technology skills; increasing self-confidence and self-esteem; setting positive goals and developing future work skills. The girls are provided with learning opportunities aimed at improving their education, employment and life skills.

Matt Francis - Transition Adviser

Could parents/carers please notify the school if there has been any change to your mobile phone numbers. These numbers need to be correct as we send text messages to inform you of your child’s absence. This gives you the opportunity to reply by SMS instead of having to write a note or phone the school. Your reply goes straight into your child’s Record of Attendance.

Homestay Hosts Wanted

We are looking for caring families and individuals to provide a wonderful home away from home for international students attending Toormina High School.

Must be able to provide meals and a Working with Children Check for all adults.
Hosts receive $250 per week for a single room

Apply online at www.staydownunder.com.au or contact us on (02) 8901 4499

LINKS TO LEARNING Term 1 2015

Congratulations to the following students Taylor McLean, Crystal Mantle, Tahlia Trimboli, Makayla Hoskins, Caitlin Cleghorn and Courtney Ellem who have recently graduated from the Links to Learning program, hosted by Coffs Coast Community College.

The 10 week program saw a group of year 9 and 10 girls participate in various workshops across the term including Rock and Water, First Aid, barista skills, henna and circus classes. They have completed a Certificate I in Skills for Vocational Pathways and Certificate I in Access to Vocational Pathways. The program is aimed to develop student’s communication and technology skills; increasing self-confidence and self-esteem; setting positive goals and developing future work skills. The girls are provided with learning opportunities aimed at improving their education, employment and life skills.

Matt Francis - Transition Adviser

New on our school website this week...........
*Year 9, 10 & 11 Half Yearly Examination Timetable
*2015 - 2020 School Plan
*Cross Country photos

YEAR 8 Great Aussie Bush Camp EXCURSION

Year 8 students will need to pay $50 to the front office by Week 5, this term, to secure a place on our Year 8 Excursion in December as there is a maximum number of 60 students.

Information notes are available from the front office or year adviser, Mrs Gillingham.
P & C NEWS

Information will be mailed to parents next week regarding our latest P&C fundraiser - a wide range of gourmet food products will be on offer. If you show the catalogue to your friends and family, this fundraiser should be a great success! You can get a sneak peak at what’s on offer at www.debbiewhite.yourinspirationathome.com.au

Due to the bad weather in Sydney last week, the arrival of our new uniform stock has been delayed. I am hoping it will arrive next week. Please keep an eye on notice board at Uniform Shop for updates. THS jumpers have arrived. Thanks for your patience!!

Michele Bake

CAREERS - for more information see Mrs West

2015 HSC Timetables now available via Students Online account.

University of Wollongong Visits the North Coast

Coffs Harbour Yr 12 Parent & Student Information Night – Wednesday, 20 May 6.30pm - C.ex

This will be a valuable information session for parents and students to attend to ask any questions they may have about university.

We will have a current UOW student attending to answer any concerns or queries that might arise as students are thinking about tertiary study.

The session will also include information on Early Admission, Accommodation, Support at UOW, Scholarships and information on degrees and graduate outcomes.

STUDENTS AND PARENTS

This information evening is for students in year 10 - 12 and parents who would like to know more about studying at UOW, and living in Wollongong.

You probably know what degree you’re interested in, the ATAR you need - and we’re more than happy to go through this with you - but we know that you’ll need to know where you’re going to live, how much it will cost, how you’ll make friends etc. We know because we asked the exact same questions when we were in year 12!

At this Information Evening, we’ll also talk about:

- UOW Accommodation and the Accommodation Guarantee
- UOW Early Admission
- Subject Selections (for Year 10)
- Our Bonus ATAR Point Programs
- Important dates and key things to remember for UAC applications
- Our Scholarships
- The degrees and opportunities available for you at UOW
- Your options if you don’t get the ATAR you need
- Our Clubs & Societies and Student Life

Wednesday, 20 May, C. Ex Coffs Club, Vernon Street, Coffs Harbour, 6.30pm

On behalf of the parents of the students of Toormina High School, past and present, I would like to thank you, Liz, for the guidance, support and love you have given to our children. Your leadership and strength make THS a successful school but combined with your dignity and grace, it becomes an amazing school.

Thank you and best wishes Liz.

Michele Bake, THS P&C President.