Students wow school with performances

LHS students from a number of different backgrounds have banded together to wow the school with a range of cultural performances at the official Code of Conduct launch assembly.

The performances, which included a traditional Aboriginal didgeridoo and clapping stick performance, some didge beatboxing Iraqi style and a multicultural version of the Manu Samoa, as well as the LHS Haka group were presented in Week 4 of this term.

Reaction from the performances was overwhelming and immediate, with praise being heaped on performers by both staff and students.

LHS Haka group performing Timatanga for the school.

Students had been working hard rehearsing their roles during recess and lunch times, as well as designated cultural sessions during school time.

Much thanks must go to Harry Rai and Niu Fiu, who assisted with the haka, and Robby Bell Lesley Marks, who have been working with our Indigenous and other students in the Didge Group.

Both groups are continuing to work towards future performances, with renowned local artist, Flute-loop, joining LHS later this term to develop an Indigenous hip hop routine for Presentation night.

Year 12 Graduation

The LHS Haka group ensured that the graduating class of 2013 had a memorable send off, performing their version of the Maori Rugby team’s Timatanga haka.

This haka tells the Maori story of creation from nothing to the world we have today, but also details the story of a group of young warriors searching for knowledge, unity and excellence.

The boys shook the stage and inspired the audience, putting all their effort into the performance.

Big thanks to Harry Rai and Niu Fiu who have helped the boys.
Norta tutor Lesley Marks with Uncle Steve Williams.

**Norta tutor wins award**

LHS Norta tutor, Lesley Marks, was presented with a regional award for her with the Aboriginal community at a recent DEC awards ceremony.

Lesley, who has been working with the school’s Indigenous students throughout 2013, was surprised to have won the award, as she was not aware the nomination had been made.

“I was really surprised, but I’m very happy to have won this award.”

Lesley, who also works at Robert Townsend HS and Lansvale PS, is also an executive member of the Aboriginal Education Consultation Group’s Campbelltown branch, which highlights her commitment to developing young Aboriginal people both academically and culturally.

LHS congratulates Lesley on her award, and look forward to continuing our relationship with her in 2014.

**Fundraising Success**

A cupcake fundraiser organised by the school’s Aboriginal girls’ group, Sista Speaks, was a success, raising over $100 towards cultural activities.

The girls, who worked with Lesley Marks and Katrina Jeffs, baked all the cakes themselves, ran a cracking stall and managed to sell all the cakes they had made.

It was great to see everyone working together so well and managing to execute this event without too much drama (or washing up!)

Congratulations to the Sista Speaks group, and particularly to Courtney Peters, who came up with the idea.

Thanks also to Kartina, who baked possibly the best caramel slice in the world for the event.

**Students Represent**

LHS students Jess Davie, Afele Papaali, Sou and Moevao Fealofani, Tasha Dunlop and Raymond Taetuli represented the school in the South West Sydney Kapa Haka group at Freedom Day.

This group, made up of students from Casula, Ingleburn, Airds, Sarah Redfern High Schools, performed at the Salvation Army Freedom Day at Sydney Olympic Park in front of a 200 person crowd.

Big thanks to Katie Talia, Tim Time and Chey Marsters, who have been mentoring the young people and organizing rehearsals.

South West Sydney Kapa Haka group at Freedom Day.
LHS would like to wish Katrina Jeffs all the very best as she completes her teaching qualifications this year.

Katrina, daughter of LHS teacher Rose Jeffs, has a passionate interest in Indigenous education which led her to volunteer her time to work with students throughout Term 3.

Katrina not only assisted in the successful Sista Speaks program, but tutored students and assisted with homework and assignments.

She is currently completing her final Practicum at a school in the community of .

With this kind of commitment, there is no doubt Katrina will be an extraordinary teacher in the future!

“T’m proud of the way the boys have come together as a group”
Harry Rai, Haka tutor.

Aboriginal Storytelling

A group of LHS students attended the Whose Story: Aboriginal History and Storytelling forum at Blacktown Arts Centre recently.

This forum, which featured a range of Indigenous artists from hip hoppers, to painters and writers, allowed students a chance to ask questions and engage in conversations with the panel on a range of artistic issues.

Afternoon workshops encouraged students to get involved and learn something new, with many students exploring their creative talents through sampling to develop their own funky break.

Many thanks to Ms K and Mr Tony for accompanying the students on the day.

LHS students getting their groove on.
Looking ahead to 2014

It has been a big year at LHS. We have had students from across the school involved in learning about their own culture and exploring that of others.

From the refined tastes of WOTOpera, to didges and the raw power of the Maori haka, LHS students from all nationalities have committed to engaging with one another and the wider community.

It has been a genuine privilege to see students teaching and learning from each other, to watch them build unity from shaky beginnings and to see the light of pure enjoyment in their eyes when they finally ‘get it right’. But more than this, it has been the development of leadership skills, often from the least likely of places, the dedication and commitment of students that has been the most pleasing to see develop.

And from these beginnings, bigger and better things can, and must, grow.

2014 promises to be a big year for cultural representation at LHS. Not only are we dedicated to continuing what we have already begun, but growing and expanding the number of students involved and the number of different cultural groups and school communities sharing and learning about themselves and others.

Through sharing and understanding each other, we grow as individuals and as a community. Bring on 2014!