Milford Lodge

Term 4 News 2016

Dear Milford Lodge Families & Friends,

What a fun filled few months we have enjoyed! Term 3 is always very busy and includes loads of fun weeks and events such as Children's Book Week & National Science Week. Behind the scenes in July we were very busy also preparing for our very first two day conference – "Village Ways" – held out in the South Burnett, which was absolutely amazing!

The children of Milford Lodge have been out in the community even more, with some new outings added this last few months, including swimming lessons at Swim fit Buderim

Our next big event is only a few sleeps away now – the annual Milford Lodge Community Market Day is on again on Saturday 8th October from 9am until 1pm. Many children have been already and the excitement has been building. We hope you can make it along to help raise funds for the Buderim Men's Shed and A Beautiful You – and have a great day at the same time!

x Team Milford

REMINDER:
Last day of 2016 – Friday 23rd December
First day of 2017 – Monday 16th January

Team News

Congratulations to Tegan and her husband Carmine who got married on Saturday 1st October. We wish them all the happiness in the world as they begin their new life together.

We were sad to say goodbye to Jenny recently after two years of service as she relocated to Brisbane with her husband. We sent her off with an amazing gluten, egg and dairy free cake made by Monica that not only looked delicious but also tasted divine.

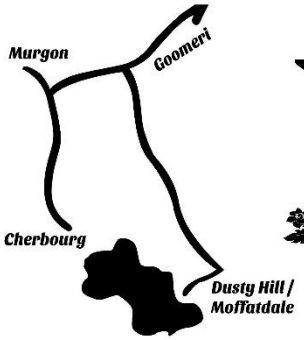
Kate & her family have taken an amazing opportunity to live in the South of France for 12 months. They will be leaving in mid-October. Best wishes, safe travels, and send photos!!

Congratulations to Molly for completing her Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care through our School Based Traineeships. Molly has worked extremely hard – both at school and at work – and we are very happy to be offering her a position in the Toddler House group from November.

Kerstin has returned from Sweden again, and we have very much enjoyed having her back this last week ☺

It was wonderful to have Milli return to do some relief days in Avocado Cottage during the school holidays since completing her Certificate III through our School Based Traineeships. Milli is planning on studying Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of the Sunshine Coast next year. She will continue to do relief work for us whenever it fits it with her uni timetable.

Next term both Peta and Suzie are taking time off to complete their final pracs in primary schools. Sue and Alison will cover Suzie's days in Todkins and we are really excited to have Gemma join School House to cover Tegan's Wedding and Honeymoon leave followed by three weeks covering Peta's prac. Gemma spent time with us earlier this year as a pre-service teacher and was over the moon to be asked to do some relief here, as she had an amazing experience.



VILLAGE WAYS

Dusty Hill Vineyard, Saturday 30th& Sunday 31st July 2016.

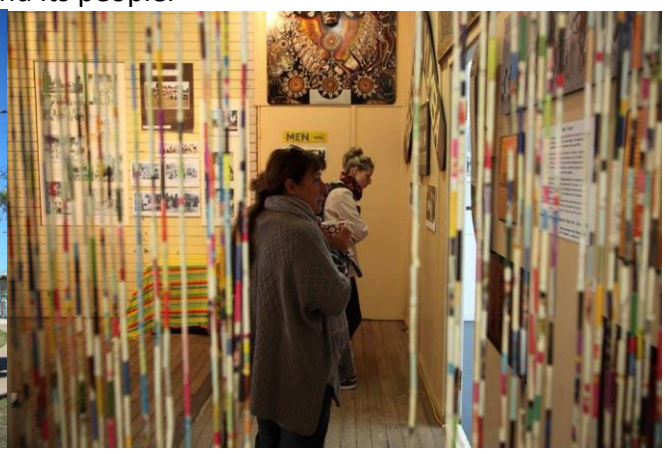
"It takes a village to raise a child." This is a proverb that we have had in our philosophy for a few years now. It is not just a throwaway line to us. We live it daily. Our children are out in our community on a daily basis, and we invite our community back in to share time with our children.

It took us a fairly long time to give our conference a title. And when we finally put these two words together, they just made sense to us – and it really summed up what we felt Early Childhood services needed to get back to. It is something that Milford Lodge has embraced since the introduction of the National Quality Framework in 2012, and it has allowed us to revisit many of the experiences that Milford Lodge once held so dear. They may have been gone momentarily, but they certainly were not forgotten!

For our line-up we had international super star shameless Pokémon hunter Teacher Tom, the bold and more than happy to be blunt Prue Walsh, Milford regular Niki Buchan and an emotional tour of the nearby Ration Shed (Aboriginal History Museum) in Cherbourg.

We managed to get Teacher Tom and Niki Buchan out to the area early enough on the Friday to be able to have a tour of the Ration Shed. We were extremely thankful to Matthew (Ration Shed volunteer) for staying open for this to occur. Both were so grateful to have been able to visit the Ration Shed and Teacher Tom wrote a blog post about his thoughts from that day. It can be read here: http://teachertomsblog.blogspot.com.au/2016/08/democracy-and-education.html

Having lived out at Dusty Hill and worked at Milford Lodge Murgon when I was younger, I was really interested to visit the Ration Shed for myself. Upon arrival, we were made to feel very welcome by the elders. Eric, Matthew and Aida made it quite clear that The Ration Shed and its purpose was not to blame anyone for the past events in the area, and that it was simply an educational museum to share history and the story of Cherbourg and its people.



The documentary that we were shown was professionally made and very factual and informative, and not to mention emotional. For a room full of passionate advocates for children and families, it was very confronting to hear how families were torn apart.

Ironically, Aida said that she did not feel that way about her childhood, and that she had a very happy childhood surrounded by her friends and with lots of happy memories. "We didn't know any better."

The staff and volunteers at The Ration Shed do a fantastic job and all delegates said they were very moved and would love to go back again next year and participate in some of the workshops on offer.

What made me even happier was the amount of money people spent in the shop – poor Matthew didn't leave the till for about half an hour for both (morning and afternoon) groups – but he was very happy! I have a feeling it is the largest shopping spree they have ever encountered, with all money going back into their community and museum.

Arriving back at Dusty Hill we were treated to a delicious spread for lunch before moving on to the next workshops.

Having been to the Ration Shed for the morning, it was time to play outside with Niki Buchan.

Having already done a few outdoor workshops with Niki I could see that this was her ultimate training ground!

Niki provided some resources to enhance the environment and delegates were left to… well… play!

We had tree climbing, boat building, fire lighting, marshmallow toasting, corn popping, tepee constructing, leaf painting and more! Even Team Milford picked up a few new tricks – you can read about these later on in Forest Dwellers ☺

Teacher Tom rounded up my day (preaching in the chapel!) with his reflections on teaching and learning from pre-schoolers. Tony (Milford Lodge educator 2006-2008, above left) found this workshop invaluable and had many questions and discussion on rough and tumble, risky play, boys and more.

Saturday night's canapé function was a wonderful chance to network with some fantastic and passionate educators from across the nation with more great food, plenty of drinks and some keen dancers ☺

Sunday brought us the keynotes. It was only a few weeks prior that I realised there was a full fifteen minutes left for another welcome, which was not really necessary. Everyone would feel very welcome by then!

I managed to come up with an idea, and with special thanks to Ange Ryan (A different kind of Perfect), I penned a speech. I felt there was a strong message in that for the people working in the Early Years. The small fifteen-minute speech was later turned into our very first blog and can be read here: http://www.milfordlodge.com.au/blog/dont-keep-walking-past (Thanks again Ange!)

After my first nerve racking speech since high school, I was very happy to take the back seat for the "don't be fooled by her sweet looks" Prue Walsh. Prue began with the story of a lady and her home (my mother and Milford Lodge), which was the story for many places for children pre 90s, and took us through the horrific decades (90s – 00s) which saw many of these wonderful places ripped apart and destroyed by 'safety nazis', society and red tape. She reminded us to take some risks and really consider what is best for children when creating environments.

A hard act to follow, but Tom delivered. His speech about the way in which our education systems are 'top down' really gave us food for thought. Again, standing up for children, Tom talked about democratic education and reminded us of one of our most important roles, which is guiding children to be purposeful members of society.

Sitting sharing a cider on Sunday afternoon, Nancy, Niki, Margie and I all reflected on a sense of achievement whilst reading through the comment cards from our 90 new friends. It was a fantastic weekend which surpassed all of our hopes and dreams, and we cannot wait to start planning 2017 Village Ways! ~ Molly

Seeing Double

We realised recently that we now have six sets of twins enrolled at Milford Lodge which we think is pretty remarkable! We thought we would share a photo of all twelve children.

Kitchen Hands

Our kitchen is the very heart of Milford Lodge .The children are loving assisting our chefs of a morning prepping the vegetables for lunch by chopping mushrooms, husking sweet corn, top and tailing green beans, grating carrots and beetroot etc. Recently we have purchased some new first knives and are encouraging the older children to prepare the fruit for both morning and afternoon tea. This is proving very successful and we are following a program called Kids in the Kitchen Skills, which is implemented in some local primary schools. The skills involved include cutting, chopping, peeling, dicing, mashing, crushing, grating etc. Children are taught to use a claw grip to hold the fruit or vegetable, ensuring their fingers are tucked under to prevent injuries.

Green Fingers

Better Homes and Gardens

At the beginning of August we were invited to bring a small group of children down to Food Street to join Duncan & Caroline film a segment for a future episode of Better Homes and Gardens for Seven Network Television. We are so proud of the media exposure Urban Food Street is receiving lately which is richly deserved. Duncan commented that he feels it is a responsibility to share the wonderful things that are happening in this community.

We are still waiting to hear exactly when this episode will be aired but we will of course let you know as soon as we hear. The children planted some potatoes with Duncan before sitting down for a well earned rest with Caroline to enjoy some delicious freshly picked mandarins .it was a beautiful morning and such a privilege to accompany the children as they participated in this exciting opportunity.

Sunshine coast Daily Seed Giveaway

http://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/news/generation-green-growing-up-at-buderim/3090175/

Margaretha has involved the children in digging and planting the new garden area surrounding our new building. Liam's dad very kindly donated some beautiful plants, which Liam and some of his friends delighted in choosing the perfect spot for them to be planted.

Other children helped Margaretha and Molly plant some new plants in front of School house and are enjoying the responsibility of watering them on a daily basis ever since.

ACCOUNTS REMINDERS

For the past few years Milford Lodge has asked that families maintain their account to include two full weeks in advance, with no Child Care Benefit or Rebate being estimated on those weeks.

It was discovered shortly after Jenny leaving that this system was changed at the beginning of July (2016) and only included one additional week in advance.

We have decided to leave this the same until the Christmas closure to avoid further confusion, however the additional week will be added back onto accounts over the 3 week break.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

Please remember that Public Holidays are removed from accounts JUST PRIOR to submitting the attendance for the week that the public holiday falls in.

This means that you will still see a fee for that day for the few weeks prior.

The reason for this is that the Child Care Benefit and Rebate lines up with the week that the holiday falls into. (Due to our two weeks' full fees in advance).

Early Arrival & Late Departures

Can we just remind everyone that our opening hours are 7:30am -5:30pm. We have always allowed families to come in from 7.20 am to put their child's bag away and spend a few minutes with their child before leaving for work at 7.30. Recently we have noticed families are arriving earlier and earlier (sometimes close to 7am) This is when staff are still opening up rooms, ensuring all safety checks are completed and using the leaf blower etc. We would kindly like to request that families do not arrive before 7.20 am and bear in mind that leaving before 7.30am is not permitted.

On the same note our closing time is 5.30pm.We would really appreciate if families could ensure they arrive in time to ask about their child's day and ensure they have all their child's belongings rather than rushing in at 5.30pm on the dot. In saying this we are very understanding when traffic delays or something out of your control happens.

Our late fee charges are $20 for the first 10 minutes.

Exploring and Reflecting on “Excellence”

We were very honored to be asked by the Workforce Council if we would play host to a bus tour of forty educators wishing to explore what ‘’Excellence’’ looks like on Saturday 16th September. The bus was an opportunity to visit two services, which have been awarded a rating of ‘excellence’. The other service was Bribe Island Kindergarten. Educators spent some time in both our services, observing the environment and learning about our philosophy and practice. Whilst the bus left from Brisbane, educators had travelled from the Gold Coast, Mackay and Townsville!

It was nice to meet and chat to lots of new faces and share our home.

Special Events Report

CBCA Book Week

Once again it was a fun filled week enjoying dressing up as our favourite book characters. School House were invited to join in the book parade at Buderim Mountain School (Jemima from Todkins and Sammy from Kindy Lodgers sneakily joined us too ☺)

It was great to have you and your guys there and yes the children amazed everyone!I received so many positive comments about your children (from parents and teachers) about how well behaved they were for the length of the parade and also how confident they were on stage and especially talking into the microphone. So many people were amazed that four year olds could be so confident. I must also say your costumes were excellent - very impressive indeed.

Jon Readshaw

Deputy Principal

National Science Week

Professor Jellybean helped us kick off National Science Week again this year with some weird and wonderful scientific experiments. Whilst there is always loads of science throughout the entire year, National Science Week offers us an opportunity to really immerse ourselves over an entire week ☺

Father's Day BBQ

Friday 2nd of September

Thank you so much again to all of the special people who came and shared time with us for our Father's Day BBQ.

Swim Fit Buderim

Thank you to Lana fromBuderim Aquatic Centre for inviting the School House children to join in some free swimming lessons which coincided with the Olympic Games .The children really impressed us with their confidence in the water and had lots of fun as well as learning an important message about water safety.

Budding Artists @ Art Nuvo

"We love being able to work with creativity right from the stage they are not governed by what people will think it's just pure FUN! We will have a feature Milford Artist changing every 2 weeks so we can showcase the talents of our local up and coming artists. The art will go in a frame with the picture of the artist and a little note about themselves for all their family and friends to come and see! Thanks Nancy for the idea we think it's awesome!"~ Olivia & Andrew

CONGRATULATIONS TEAM MILFORD!

Whilst a smaller team for 2016, we also had some very young runners. Congratulations to Breanna (13), Fiona (8) & Niamh (7) for all completing the 5km run!

We hope some of you can join Team Milford in 2017!

www.sunshinecoastmarathon.com.au

Forest Dwellers

Our new weekly outing to the Forest area behind Buderim Mountain School has been a great success and a wonderful enhancement to our Kindergarten program this year. Having researched the benefits of Nature Pedagogy and attending numerous conferences over the past couple of years (see attached video of Nature Pedagogy 2014. http://www.inspiredec.com/annual---pedgogy---in---nature---conference.html
It was time to put our thoughts into action and truly embrace this concept.
In March we hosted Niki Buchan of Natural Childhood for a full day workshop on documentation here at Milford Lodge. The following day Monday 21st March I accompanied Niki to Woombye State School to facilitate an outdoor learning workshop with 75 prep children. Before returning to Milford Lodge I asked Niki to accompany me to the forest area I had been thinking about as a possible place to take children to for a while.

We conducted a benefit risk assessment and I felt very excited about having a new little project to plan for! We purchased some child sized real tools from Modern Teaching Aids including hand drills, hacksaws, whittlers, ropes, pulleys etc.as well as some individual backpacks from local op shops. Susan and I discussed at length the practicalities of this off the beaten track outing acknowledging the importance of been committed to go come rain or shine (with the exception of a severe weather warning of course!) We have actually found that the rainy days have been some of our best days at the forest!

We then both looked forward to the first of many outings to the forest with some School House children. The children's excitement was palpable on the first Wednesday morning as we prepared for our outing. Gathering all the items needed felt like packing for a holiday with 12 children! I was a bit worried upon listening to the children's hopes of finding lions & tigers in the jungle on the way there that they might be disappointed with what was in store but I had simply forgotten the wonderful imaginations that four &five year olds have!
They did of course hear lions, tigers and even caught sightings of crocodiles and snakes on our outing inspired by their surroundings. I just need to pay more attention as seemingly I just missed them according to my little friends. ☺

We purposely planned to take the same group of 12 children for a five-week pilot study documenting our weekly visits and reflections to share with children and families. This decision proved to be so beneficial as we saw the children's confidence grow on a weekly basis. We discovered that each person's zone of comfort is different and sometimes children were happy to initially observe a friend, sometimes asking ''how did you do that? 'The other children have always been very supportive of their friends offering to hold their hands or offer words of encouragement admitting that ''I needed help to do this last week but now I can do it all by myself!" The use of the real tools was extremely popular on the first day with children standing over their friend's shoulders waiting for their turn. This eagerness to use the tools gradually eased as the weeks went on with the knowledge that the tools would be available every week at all times. We were able to pre-empt what the children might enjoy doing for example after observing the children's interest in fishing we ensured we added netting and scissors to our resource bag as well as factual books on insects and plants & fauna to further enhance the learning opportunities. As new children joined us each week we noticed the other children loved taking them under their wing.

In the six months since introducing this outing we have observed a positive impact on children's development particularly in the areas of balance and agility, but also physical coordination and manual dexterity. Children are noticeably more confident, resilient and adventurous.

We are proud to play a part in raising a generation of young people that understand the benefits of the natural world. Young people need opportunities to experience and learn from nature during their early years in order to become custodians of the land and future decision makers who will take responsibility for the guardianship of the Earth, a message we hear often from Rainbow Eagle when he visits us. Some researchers go so far as to claim that contact with nature may be as important to children as good nutrition and adequate sleep. Another interesting fact that Niki shares is that being outside more also helps prevent myopia (near-sightedness) in children.

We have enjoyed having families join us on our Forest Dwellers Adventures during the school holidays. It was really nice to have younger and older siblings join in as well as mums, dads and grandparents. It means so much to the children when their families come along to see for themselves what exactly we do in the forest. We share our delight in allowing them to play and explore, showing them the faith and confidence we have in their ability and watch them flourish.

Recently Niki asked if she could facilitate a training day for other services who are thinking of implementing a bush program to join us in the forest with the children. We were only too happy to do this and to the children's delight we learned a new skill-fire lighting using a steel flint. This was our introduction to toasting marshmallows too. As you can imagine this is now the highlight of our time in the forest. I am sure over time it will become something that we do occasionally but for now sitting around a little fire bowl toasting marshmallows is a beautiful memory in the making.

We have continued with our weekly visits to the forest with younger children who want to join in the fun and adventure and are having the time of our lives ~ Nancy

Making Happy Memories

HAPPY BIRTHDAY MILFORD LODGE!

This October we are celebrating Milford Lodge's Birthday. Not only is Milford Lodge turning 30, the original house is turning 100! We will be celebrating all week with the children, but have also planned a celebration for the adults (only) to enjoy on Saturday 29th October.