Welcome to our first newsletter for 2015!

On Monday I congratulated the entire school for the way they have started the year in uniform. They look excellent and I thank you as parents and carers for your support in ensuring our students look their best when they come to school each day. It is so important to set the scene for a positive attitude and a productive school day and year.

Wee Waa High’s Robotics team, the “Bush Bots” have hit the ground running with their project to build, program and operate their own robot. Mr Druce, Mrs Grellman and the student team have already put in countless hours, beginning before school returned and continuing in the afternoons and weekends. They have impressed their Macquarie University mentors by getting their robot constructed and working in such a short time. Stay tuned for updates as they prepare for their trip to Sydney to compete against other teams.

We have welcomed some new staff members to Wee Waa High this year. Ms Debbie McGann is our new School Administration Manager, replacing Ms Sally Bush. Ms Jackie Neil has replaced Mr Nigel Ellevsen in the English/HSIE faculty. Mrs Myers is Acting Deputy Principal for term 1 and Mrs Burgess will be Acting Head Teacher English. We are also pleased to have Ms Blewitt, Miss Cuddigan, Mrs Booby, Ms Wilson and Miss Russell in a temporary capacity again this year.

Five senior students have been awarded a NSW Government Youth Scholarships Program scholarship to support them with education related expenses and assist them to complete their Higher School Certificate. Congratulations to Danielle Elford, Darcy Lang, Lateisha Doolan, Jermaine Toomey and Tyrell Toomey.

Year 11 will receive their assessment booklets next week and there will be a short parent information meeting to provide further information and answer your questions. Organisation for the Stage 6 Excursion to Sydney is well under way by Mrs Grellman and Mrs Baxter. The program includes a variety of curricular and cultural experiences and some information has already been distributed to year 11 and 12 students.

Congratulations to all participants in the swimming carnival and the age champions and the house champion. It was a great afternoon with a high level of involvement and we need to thank Mr Patrick Legge for his organisation. Photos are in this issue. A full report will be in the next newsletter.

I’m looking forward to a great year at Wee Waa High School and the school has returned with a strong and busy start. We encourage students and parents to be involved when and where they can. Greater involvement will definitely enrich your school experience.

Annabel Doust

New Staff Members
Ms Jackie Neil & Ms Debbie McGann

Upcoming Events:
15 Feb - Teen Mental Health First Aid - staff and parent information
17 Feb - Year 11 assessment Parent Information Evening - 6pm in the Library
18 Feb - P & C meeting and AGM

If you would like an electronic copy of the newsletter each fortnight, please send an email to janelle.lilliebridge@det.nsw.edu.au
Welcome Year 7
Welcome to 2016! We’ve certainly had a busy start to the year at the Wee Waa High School Ag Farm. Over the holidays I installed a watering system into the greenhouse to help the students in their propagation of vegetables. I also installed the vertical garden. This garden, in conjunction with the vegie plot will be used to grow a basket of produce that Year 9 and 10 Agriculture will be entering into the Sydney Royal Easter Show Schools Vegie growing competition. Year 9 and 10 have already started working in the garden on their produce and this week will begin work on their Powerpoint slide shows to go with the entry. The entries will be judged at the Tamworth Show. We will not be going over for the day, however if any parents are interested in taking the students over it would be great to see.

Another new development in the holidays was the donation by Kenway and Clarke of Wee Waa, of a set of sweeps for our scarifier purchased last year. The Primary Industries classes have already put the sweeps to good use, cleaning up the fields after all the brilliant rain we received in January. They have all commented on the great job they do compared to the points we had. Thank you to Kenway and Clarke for supporting Wee Waa High School Agriculture.

Year 11/12 Primary Industry students with the new scarifier.
Year 7/8 tech working in the vegie plot

The growing of the vegetables will be a whole year level effort this term with 7/8 tech also studying vegetable production this term. The class had a very productive lesson on the farm this week. Students demonstrated great team work, working together to till the hills up in the new plot and planting some seeds to germinate in our greenhouse.

Primary Industries students taking out the sunflower plants to feed to the livestock

Year 9/10 Ag students getting the garden ready.

The Vertical Garden

Year 7/8 tech working in the vegie plot
Students returning were pleased to see Bubbles our heifer has returned to the school farm. Bubbles went out to visit a bull in November and we are hoping she is in calf. Thanks to Janine McGowan for taking Bubbles and for the use of her bull. It will be very exciting to (hopefully!) have our first calf born on the farm later in the year.

Bubbles and Caramel have also been joined by a new little shorthorn steer we’ve named Tex. Tex was donated by Mr Richard Slacksmith for the show team to take through to Northern Schools later in the year. He will be joined in a couple of weeks by a couple of steers from Myona Charolais.

The Show team will be busy this term breaking these three in and preparing them for a busy show schedule beginning in Week 1, Term 2. Thank you Richard and Myona Charolais for your continual support of the Wee Waa Show Team again this year! The first event for the show team will be our annual cattle camp at Myona Charolais on February 28th. Any parents that are able to help with transport/supervision on this weekend please give me a call at the school.

Verity Gett
Agriculture Teacher.
Swimming Carnival 2016
Wee Waa High School has been given funds to participate in the FIRST Robotics Competition. The team, known as the Bush Bots, with the help of three Robotics experts - Anna, Adam and Aaron - have managed to build a functioning robot in less than two days. With the skills of our experts passed on to the Bush Bots, work has begun in designing our team banner, picking our best driver to operate the robot and to construct extra features on the robot, including the arm and bucket of the robot.

**Competition**

For the FIRST Robotics 2016, the aim of the game is to become the best Alliance in FIRST Stronghold. FIRST Stronghold is played between two Alliances, each Alliance made of 3 teams, the Alliances compete against each other to breach their opponent’s defences and capture their opponent’s tower.

Points are scored by breaching these defences and by shooting goals through the low goal and high goal located on the tower. In the 2 min and 30 second time limit of the game the tower can be weakened by putting the boulders through the high and low goals, when the lights are completely gone from the tower is means the tower is breached and the robots can surround and scale the tower to gain your Alliance more points.

Our Robot has been designed with a bucket to scoop up the boulder and roll it into the low goals, if the attachment fails we have designed the Robot to tackle some of the Defences which include the Rough Terrain, Moat, Rock Wall and possibly the Lowbar. Even if the arm fails the breaching of the defences will accumulate enough points to make an impact in the game.

Many thanks again to our experts Anna, Adam and Aaron who we would have been lost without their guidance. Our teachers, Mrs Grellman and Mr Druce have been working tirelessly and they are ably assisted by Ms Janssen, Mr Catt and Mr Grellman. A big thank you to our sponsors, without whom, this project would not have been possible. We are having a launch/unveiling of our robot on March 7th. More details to follow.

**Tom Pattison**

**Bush Bot**
P & C News

Welcome back to a new year.

Although teenagers are developing their own sense of independence, the P&C believes that parents can still contribute to the ongoing education of their children into the High School years. We invite you to come along to our meetings to hear what is happening within the school and be a part of maintaining and improving Wee Waa High School.

Unfortunately our first meeting due to be held this Thursday clashes with the School Swimming Carnival. The first meeting for the year will therefore be Thursday, 18th February. Usually meetings are held in the school Library at 7pm on the second Thursday of each month during term.

If you have any questions about what the P&C are involved in please contact me on 0437876336. I would love to share with you the benefits of working with other parents and the school to provide the best opportunities for the children in our community.

See you next Thursday

Alison Downes
President
Wee Waa High School P&C

every day counts....
A day here or there doesn’t seem like much, but...

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<th>When your child</th>
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Give your child every chance to succeed...

Every day counts!
Your child’s school is conducting tMHFA training, which gives teenagers the skills they need to recognise and help with mental health problems and crises in their friends, and to get the help of an adult quickly.

Young people will often turn to each other when stressed or upset, and try to help each other, taking too much on. This course teaches them not to try to take on these problems alone.

The course discusses suicide. You may wish to discuss this with your child, if there is a risk they will find it distressing.

This course has not been introduced because of any specific problems at the school. Mental health problems are very common in adolescents. If there has been a student suicide in the school, be aware this specific suicide will not be discussed, nor will any individual student.

Your child might want to talk about the course. The following can help you to have a conversation if this is needed.

**Session 1** discusses mental health problems in general, and understanding how common and disabling these are in young people. Students also learn about professionals who can help.

**Session 2** talks about helping a friend who is in crisis, whether because they are suicidal, engaging in non-suicidal self-injury, using alcohol or other drugs, or experiencing bullying or abuse.

The Action Plan (‘Look, Ask, Listen, Help Your Friend’) is introduced for the first time, and applied to a crisis situation. You can find details about the Action Plan on the MHFA website listed below.

There is a video which shows a young man helping a friend who is experiencing suicidal thoughts. Participants are told that in a crisis situation it is important to get a responsible adult involved right away.

**Session 3** takes a step back and discusses how to help if someone seems to be developing a mental health problem. We don’t teach students how to diagnose problems – it’s advice about being a supportive friend, encouraging the friend to seek help, and knowing when it’s time to get an adult involved.

Your child will bring their manual home after session 3. There are resources for further information in the back and you may want to explore them together. If you wish to learn more now, resources are also provided overleaf.
If you wish to learn more…

… about mental health problems experienced by young people, visit:

- [www.youthbeyondblue.com](http://www.youthbeyondblue.com)
- [www.reachout.com](http://www.reachout.com)

… about suicide:


… about tMHFA and other MHFA courses:


For immediate online help for teenagers:

- [www.eheadspace.org.au](http://www.eheadspace.org.au)

This course was postponed in December 2015 to February 2016. The course is for students in Years 10, 11 and 12. Sessions are run by a qualified trainer and are approximately 75 minutes long. The training will be held on Monday February 15, Wednesday February 17 and Friday February 19, 2016.

Interested parents are invited to attend an information session at 4pm on February 15.

For further information contact Lindy Widauer or Carmel Schwager at WWHS on 02 6795 4477.