

“Sometimes you never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory.” Dr Seuss



Building Connections and Cherishing Memories

What is a memory? A cherished coral necklace gifted from a father to daughter. A photograph of a dearly missed husband in his heyday.

A tandem tricycle shared with a sister on Christmas day. A special bell to remember a grandmother. Recounting the Mem Fox book 'Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge', Prep boys respond 'A memory is something warm, something as precious as gold, something that makes you laugh, something that makes you cry, something from long long ago. A memory is something you remember.'

What began with a scone and a cup of tea, an initiative to serve and connect with our local community, has blossomed over the past six months into rich reciprocal relationships between the Prep boys and residents of Vailima Gardens Retirement Community. Mirroring the story line of 'Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge' by Mem Fox, the Prep boys have visited the residents just 'next door' and found points of connection between their lives establishing new unlikely friendships. A love of drawing, a name, a sense of humour and a love of stories has dissolved an 80-year age gap and made room for new friends.

Recently, Prep students were joined by some Vailima Garden residents on an excursion to

DreamBIG Festival's performance of 'Wilfrid Gordon McDonald Partridge' performed with members of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. The performance was a celebration of the friendship between Wilfrid, a young boy, and a retirement home resident, Miss Nancy. The striking parallels between the book and performance with the Prep students and Vailima residents brought tears to our eyes and was a poignant reminder of the joy young children bring to the lives of those around them. The performance also sparked conversations about memories. In response, the Vailima residents visited the Prep boys in their classroom to share their own memories. The boys listened with intrigue and investigated each item with curiosity. Thus a collection of memories shared by members of our community, students, staff and residents, is growing in the Prep room to honour the moments in our lives that are precious like gold, moments that make us laugh and moments that make us cry, moments from long ago and not so long ago.

As we reflect on memories today, we are simultaneously creating memories through the Vailima and Prep relationships, memories that we hope our four year olds will look back on and remember fondly.

Stephanie Cabot | Prep Teacher



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- 1 Walter Welch with Joan
- 2 Henry Zhu with Audrey
- 3 Clifford Michell with Margaret
- 4 Back row: Angie Storer, Bear Douglas, Cathy. Middle row: Charlie Smith, Henry Gunasekera, Hamish Reid, Walter Welch, Abbott Feng, Audrey B, Audrey V, Henry Zhu, Hilary. Front row: Ryan Fowler, Alexander Penglis, Stephanie Cabot