

Mandalay sculpture inspires students



Inspired art: Beveridge Primary School students receive blocks of clay at the official unveiling of Mandalay's sculpture.

STUDENTS from Beveridge Primary School will take part in a sculptural art program sponsored by the region's latest residential development, Mandalay at Beveridge.

Nine students from the school have been selected to participate in the six-week art project, which Mandalay has developed as part of its commitment to support the local community.

Chosen for their enthusiasm for the arts, the students, from grades five and six, are creating their own ceramic masterpieces on the theme 'my favourite thing about Beveridge'.

The students attended the unveiling of the Mandalay sculpture last month along with the Mayor, Cr Bill Melbourne, and were treated to a personal talk from the artist, James Parrett, who shared with them his creative influences, techniques and ideas.

The students' own sculptures will be displayed in the Mandalay sales centre before being donated to the Mitchell Shire.

The school will also receive a donation from Mandalay that will be used for new art supplies in the hope of continuing to build on the school's art resources for future projects.

Beveridge Primary School Principal Steven Fernando said he could see the students responding to the project immediately and that they couldn't wait to start sculpting their designs.

"It's so important for students to have a well-rounded education with influences from all different disciplines.

"Witnessing the students create their own ceramic sculptures and knowing that they will be able to display their works to the public is a fantastic confidence boost for the children - they feel very proud.

"As a small school we don't have the resources for a professional art department. As a result we don't run regular in-house art classes.

"This sponsored program from Mandalay has been a wonderful opportunity for our students that have shown a flair for art to enjoy greater exposure not only to practical art but to artists and the art world as a whole.

"The children have been inspired to learn more about art and I'm sure that the new art supplies, donated by Mandalay, will go a long way to creating more projects like this one to help further their education."

He said that educational programs were an important building block for students and seeing the children actively link art within their own community with the work by James Parrett, was a valuable learning process for the children.

"It's great that the students can draw inspiration from the community around them and create a piece of art that reflects their own town and influences.

"Beveridge itself is a close community so I am delighted that the art program can reflect that culture."

Mandalay project developer Rob Binedell hopes that community programs such as the sculpture project will continue to flourish in the years to come.

"Mandalay is committed to fostering community relations with Beveridge in the coming years. We understand the importance of neighbourhood unity so we will endeavour to keep on facilitating learning and growth within the local primary school and beyond that in the future," he said.

The art project concludes in June and will be on display in the Mandalay sales office throughout July.