

Marimba Magic at Broulee Public School

by Terry McGee and Jesse Rowan



What's a marimba?

A marimba is a tuned percussion instrument consisting of a set of wooden bars with resonators. The marimba is played with mallets and up to three players can play one together. Traditional marimbas use dried-out hollow gourds as resonators, but these days most are made with wooden boxes or pvc pipes. Professional versions are often made with selected rainforest timbers and aluminium pipes and are therefore incredibly expensive.

Thanks to our bass marimba sponsors!

Brendon Sheldon of Nature Coast Plumbing donated all the plumbing materials needed for the resonators.

Cameron's Hardware donated the timber and other hardware.

Terry McGee and Jesse Rowan who are professional musical instrument makers and repairers, gave their time and expertise to the project to build the bass marimba.

You can contact Jon at
<http://www.marimbamusic.com.au/>

How it all started...

Jon Madin, an instrument maker and performer from Victoria, introduced marimbas to Broulee Public School in 1997. Under his guidance, staff, parents and students helped make four marimbas for the school. These have been very popular in the classroom and the playground for many years.

In 2011 Terry McGee and Jesse Rowan, parents of children at Broulee PS, offered to refurbish these as they had been loved to bits over the years. After many hours of work on each - making new bars, retuning usable bars, replacing worn parts, making new mallets (hammers) and stabilising the frames - the marimbas were ready for more music-making. With four treble marimbas, it was time to add a bass marimba to the sound, just in time for Jon's second visit in May 2012.

