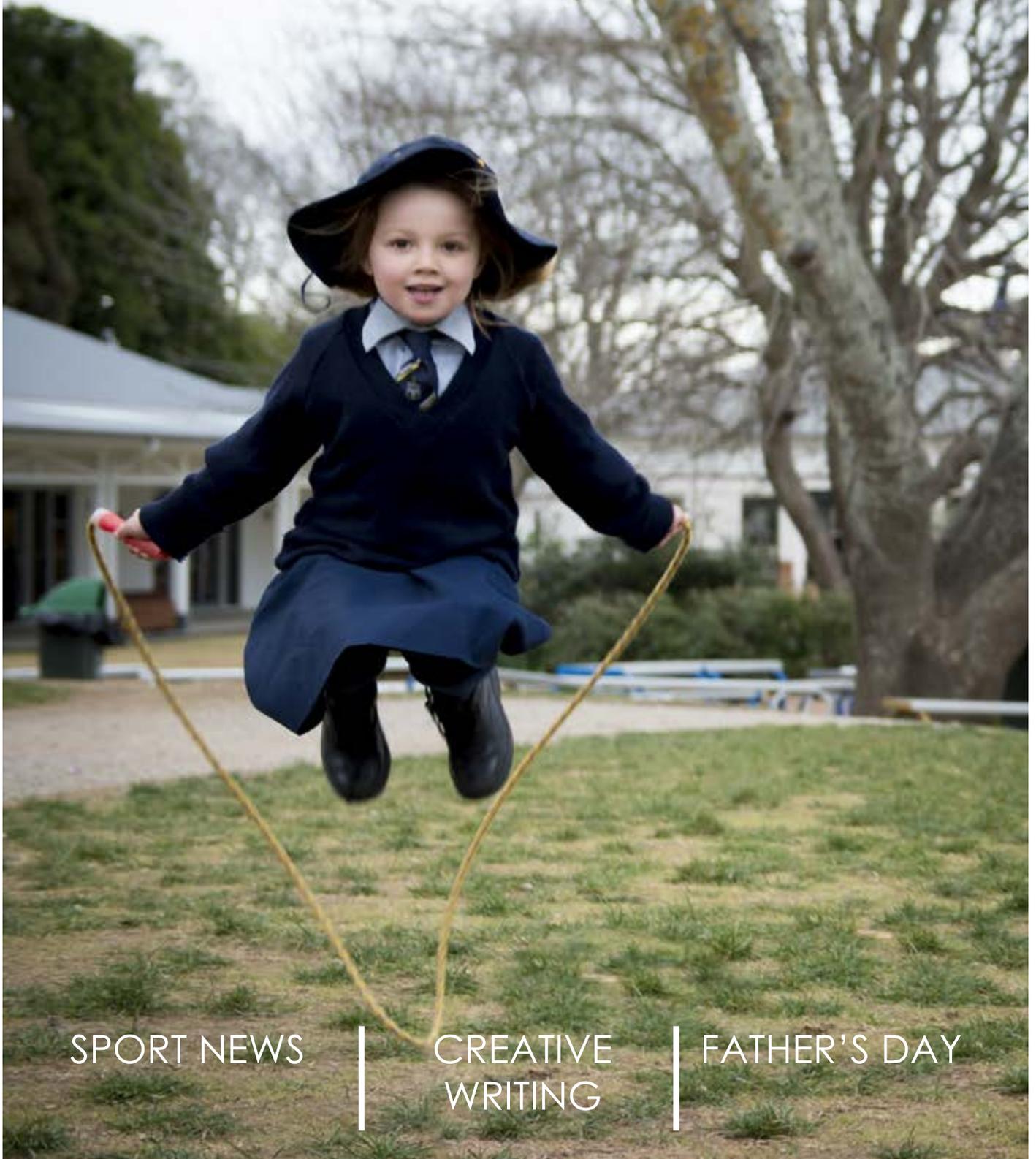


PINOAK

ISSUE 58: TERM 3, SEPTEMBER 8,
2017
OXLEY COLLEGE



SPORT NEWS

CREATIVE
WRITING

FATHER'S DAY

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George Wade with Jeffrey, Outback 2016 Sunrise at Kata Tjuta

OUTBACK- UNDERSTANDING CULTURE & HISTORY

The journey of Outback, while one of self-discovery, also allows students to expand on an understanding of Aboriginal culture and history initiated in the classroom at school.

Sites of beauty, cultural and historical significance are visited at Lake Mungo, The Breakaways at Coober Pedy, Uluru, Kata Tjuta (the Olgas) and Watarrka (Kings Canyon). At many of these places students participate in educational talks and tours which develop an appreciation of the natural world as well as Aboriginal culture. These experiences are usually akin to presentations students have seen in classroom learning tasks; the content is very positive and inclusive and encourages a broadening of perspective to appreciate the value of an Aboriginal place in our current Australia.

Less anticipated experiences occur in towns visited along the journey in places we stop for shopping, or simply as a spot to camp on a long and isolated stretch of road. In many Outback towns students witness the hardships of everyday life endured by many of our fellow citizens, sometimes in confronting ways. The most significant of these is in Oodnadatta in South Australia, a town which flourished in the days of the Ghan Railway, and has now become a centre for the local Aboriginal community and a traveller's stop.

Our school and the regularity of our visit are well known in the town. We have a game of basketball every year after dinner with the local kids, and a local man named Jeffery welcomes us every time with his bicycle and guitar; every year it is like only yesterday we were there for him.

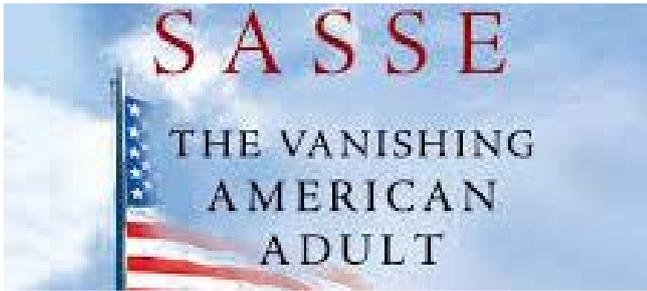
For the more disenfranchised in our country, this is not an easy place to live without a regular income or adequate resources, and this, the students see in spades. Unfortunately, not much has changed in 25 years. Below is a reflection written only recently by two Outbackers from 1991- it is remarkable that a memory is still so clear for them.

Janet Maley: *'I would say I was most impacted by the town of Oodnadatta. I was genuinely culture shocked by the poverty and remoteness of the community. For privileged white teenagers who do not know they are privileged white teenagers the impact is a lasting one. Oodnadatta is a place unlike the luxury resorts we saw near Ayer's Rock and the William's Creek Pub. I also remember we were keen to get on the bus and get out of there.'*

Nat Lawrence: *'I always refer to our Oodnadatta experience when I cover content related to social/economic disadvantage of aboriginals and rural and remote communities in the subjects I teach. I will never forget them.'*



Reflection at The Breakaways



The Vanishing American/Australian Adult?

Recently I read a very interesting new book by Ben Sasse called *The Vanishing American Adult* which has given me a lot of pause for thought. Although it refers to what he sees as a American malaise, much of what he says can be related to Australian young (and old) people. Ben Sasse is a Republican politician who first came to my attention as a senator who said he would not be voting for his own party's candidate at the Presidential Election. His book this year treads safer non-political territory. It is thought provoking nonetheless.

He says that America, and by implication the Western World, is in a crisis of perpetual adolescence - a 'coming of age' dilemma. He points out that '#adulting' has become a verb that many people in their twenties use to describe basic activities such as doing the laundry or paying their bills- as if being an adult is an activity you have to do sometimes instead of a thing that you just are. Examples in the book abound of young people feeling unable to live without air conditioning in moderate temperatures, unable to stick at a job that is not their dream job, or living in their parents' basements until their thirties playing video games (then again he probably isn't aware of the price of real estate in Australian capital cities).

The book tracks some of the problems back to our parenting - something else for us to feel guilty about I suppose. Many parents have their children grow up as 'baby Einstein's' instead of 'little citizens'- i.e children are encouraged to see themselves as the very special centre of their universe instead of a single member of a much wider community or network. This leads to more intellectual and emotional fragility and less resilience. He writes of employers who report that 'millennials who have grown up on a steady diet of participation trophies and self-esteem boosting seem to be uniquely unable to adapt when the feedback and coaching comes in the forms they don't like. The generation's sense of entitlement in the workplace seems to reflect a reduced sense of toughness, grit and resilience compared to that of their ancestors'.

Of course, social media, pornography, later marriage, the education system and the digital revolution come in for a fair slice of time in the proverbial dock too.

In the book a number of factors are outlined that

could help swim against this tide of entitlement and passivity.

- Engage with many people in other age groups. He says that only spending time with your own age group is historically unprecedented and cuts younger people off from the wisdom and experiences of older generations.
- Work hard. Society tries to make everything easy for younger people (apart perhaps from the HSC) whereas we could actively look for things that are hard and increase resilience. This could include part time, not very interesting, jobs.
- Resist consumption. Sasse says, in what I think is the best sentence of the book 'consumption is not the key to happiness, production is'. Excess consumption is merely a vacuous sugar high, whereas production is meaningful, long lasting and makes a difference in the world. It also, ultimately, makes you happier.
- Travel to experience the difference between 'need' and 'want'. So set kids out with a backpack after school to experience other cultures and get under the skin of these cultures. This is not the well trod route of the package tourist but the byways of the traveller with time on his or her hand.
- Become truly literate. Predictably this is my favourite one. This is about reading books of substance to know that we stand on the shoulders of giants and have much to learn. It is about engaging in something deeply and critically. It is about reading and digesting books as bran, not fruit loops. Sasse even provides an (American centric) reading list.

I don't agree with everything in the book. I sometimes had a nagging sense it harked back to a rose coloured view of life on the range, the prairie, or the set of 'Leave it to Beaver', without sufficiently taking into account the dark underside of some of these values. (e.g 'work hard' can equal child exploitation, 'resist consumption' can be pointless frugality, 'becoming truly literate' can mean imbibing problematic values of the past) I think that the completely new world of the twenty first century requires a complex realignment and reassessment of many traditional values rather than a reinstatement of them. However, these are just caveats. Overall I found myself challenged, provoked and energised by this book. I can recommend it.

Autism: disability or cognitive strength?

I'd like to paint you a picture. A boy age 11, Year 5 in primary school a straight A student, he plays representative basketball, an LA Lakers fan who could tell you every NBA stat under the sun, he always has the back of his friends and is a kind and caring brother.

Another boy age 8, Year 3 at primary school excellent at maths, plays football for the Moss Vale U10s, a crazy kid who just wants to have fun with his friends and family and play football quote "Like my older sister who kicks butt!" That is my picture of what autism is to me, and that picture is different for everyone. Particularly the picture that is so often portrayed in the public eye.

With two family members on the autism spectrum I have grown up in a household which has been changed, and if you ask me for the better by autism. When I asked my 11-year-old brother Noah, what autism meant to him, he replied. "Well I think that it means that you are different person to the people next to you. It is not something that you should worry about. Because we are all different anyway, otherwise everyone would be boring. You've just got it, and it will stay."

So often when people meet my brothers and find out they autism, the comment is always "I didn't know that, I couldn't even tell." "They don't seem autistic to me." And in the majority of cases those comments are made as a compliment and made with a sense of naiveté because of how autism is perceived. Most of us do not know enough about it.

When I asked my eight year old brother Luca how he would explain autism to someone who has never heard of it before? He said, "I would say that autism is something to do with your mind. You sometimes just want to have your own time, to be in your own world. Sometimes in class I ask my teacher if I can have my own time, and they let me go into my own corner of the classroom."

So often when people mention autism we picture a small child rocking and banging their head against the wall, a teenager who can't communicate with those around them, oblivious to the rest of the world. Autism is difficult to define because it is such a broad spectrum and every individual with autism is different and unique.

I asked Noah what would you say to someone who believes that autism is a bad thing? And he replied. "I would say that it is not such a bad thing, it can be challenging but life is challenging so it doesn't matter. I would also say what if you had autism? Would you want people to think it was a bad thing?"

The negative angle surrounding autism has led to a new wave of offensive comments. How many times have we heard someone say "you are so autistic," "do you have autism or something?" But why is this an offense? By turning the word and concept of autism into a negative it does nothing but destroy the confidence of those on the spectrum and builds on the false image surrounding autism spectrum disorder.

My brother Noah told me, when I asked him about what he thought about people using the word autism to offend people, "I have been called that in a bad way before. But autism hasn't brought me down one bit. I have a lot of friends at school and have been told I am one of the coolest people in the class. I want to run for school captain year. And has autism stopped me from doing this? NO! And look at me in sport.

I used to not be able to hold a pencil properly but now I practise basketball every afternoon and I am very committed. I go straight through lots of defenders with ease. And I bet you my money Kiara that there are a lot of people who have autism who have done amazing things."

Does autism come with challenges? Of course it does. But these challenges and obstacles should not bring about the disapproving eyes in public. "Control your child," "lack of discipline" and "bad parenting" are terms often tossed around as some parents pull

away their own children as if it was contagious.

Behaviours that may be seen in some people on the autism spectrum disorder include flicking their fingers repeatedly, hitting, screaming or hurting themselves. They may violate other people's personal space or fail to make eye contact or speak. Yet their appears to be no physical evidence in the appearance of the person which may suggest that they are on the autism spectrum.

Sociologist David Gray believes that "It is this combination of pervasive disability and apparent physical normality that gives the stigma experienced by families with autistic children its unique quality."

The only way to limit this from happening is to educate and de-stigmatise autism. As we can see when de-stigmatising other disabilities, there has been a change in language. British autism expert Simon Baron-Cohen was to replace autism spectrum disorder with autism spectrum condition because the word condition is less stigmatising.

It also, quote, "reflects that these individuals have not only disabilities which require a medical diagnosis, but also areas of cognitive strength." The term disability or disorder often makes us forget about the strengths of any individual with any type of disability or disorder, whatever it may be. Not every person with autism is a mathematical genius, or attends Harvard at the age of 12.

But by bringing more attention to their strengths, the negative stigma surrounding the autism spectrum can be broken down. It is only their weaknesses that are often drawn forward. Imagine if we looked at society as a whole like this. Rather than drawing attention to someone's strengths and achievements, we let their weaknesses define them.

When researching how autism was perceived in different cultures I came across an interesting point and occurrence that is happening in the US, surrounding public shooters. If the person is a person of colour, terrorism is always the first thought thrown around in the media. If the shooter is white we automatically associate it to a mental disorder, and news reporters have a new go to answer, the autism angle.

When the news of a shooting breaks out on the screens around the US, the go to reasoning behind the shooters motivation has become autism. By the time that this has been proved to be a false accusation, people have sadly lost interest in the story or a new shooting has occurred.

People will always have their own opinions on any disability, including autism. However these opinions, instead of being shaped and influenced by negative stigma, and false perceptions can be shaped by a positive image and a better knowledge of the autism spectrum disorder.

We are all different, and if you look at every symptom and sign of autism some argue that we could all fall somewhere on the autism spectrum. There are all kinds of disabilities and disorders, and there will always be members in the population who have them.

It is not something new, but how we deal with disorders such as autism and how we perceive it, should be different, and with further research and education this stigma will change and is already beginning too.

I would like to leave you all with this one last comment. When I asked my brother Luca if he had the choice to get rid of his autism would he? He replied, "Kiara you are silly, I can't get rid of it. But if I could I wouldn't. Because I am happy the way I am. Why would I want to change any part of me?"

By Kiara Rochaix (Year 11) Edited from a larger piece presented to the Gibraltar Club.

TAKE INSPIRATION



BOOK/TV

★★★★★

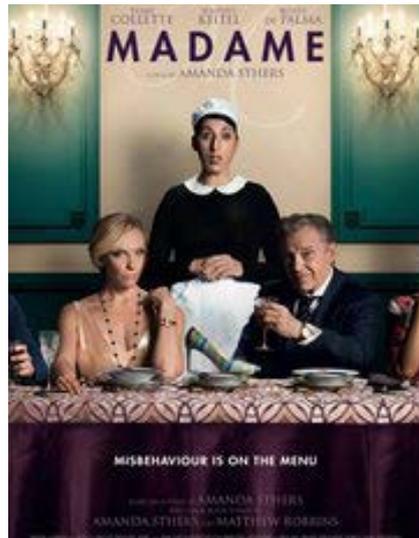
The Handmaid's Tale

Margaret Atwood's best selling fiction has been rejuvenated in an eerie adaptation of *The Handmaid's Tale*. Set in the nightmare fundamentalist Christian state of Gilead, where sex is mandatory for those 'lucky' enough to be fertile, we are brought inside the head of a forced birth surrogate (a Handmaid) known as "Offred". Offred's internal monologue offers the only sense of true character that the women must hide from their superiors and provides a highly subjective recount of events in this amalgamation-state of human cruelty, gender-based subjugation and surveillance. Director Reed Morano's use of an extremely shallow depth of field and focus on the face accentuates this enclosed 'Offred-experience'. It draws on multiple creepy tones of the atrocities of American slavery, East German surveillance, Saudi Wahhabism and the Holocaust.

Unlike most current dystopian fictions with feminist undercurrents (think *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent*, *Maze Runner*), *The Handmaid's Tale* doesn't depict a rebellion arising up out of the rubble that the state has built itself on. Instead, we are introduced to an extremely pretty and familiar society. There are no missiles or ongoing war – everything is at peace – but people are still subjugated by an institution very familiar in today's society – The Church.

The Handmaid's Tale serves as a reminder that no human rights are ever guaranteed, and people must continuously fight for what is right. While I certainly wouldn't recommend the series to anyone below Year 11, *The Handmaid's Tale* is an incredibly well-produced adaptation of Margaret Atwood's hit.

By Tom Hill (Year 12)



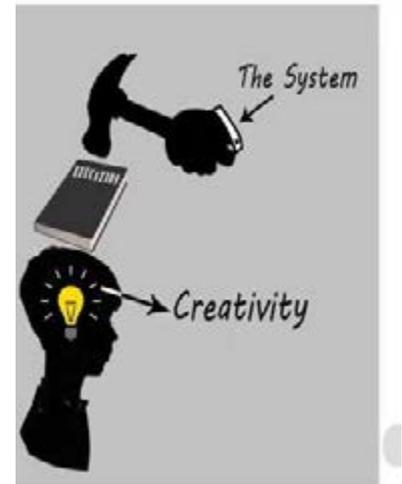
FILM

★★★★

Madame

After a dinner-party panic, Maria, a maid for American expats Anne and Bob, is drafted onto their table to act as a friend of Anne's. Despite strict instructions from Anne to subdue herself, her natural charm shows through and she catches the eyes of British art broker David. The story follows the weaving relationships of those who sit at the table, as both Anne and Bob cheat on each other while Maria and David fall in love. Though neither knows it, they are both living falsely and their romance is built off of a web of lies strung by the remaining characters at the table. The film is lovely in its setting, as it was shot entirely in Paris and features some truly beautiful shots. However, though it is sweet and short, it lacks any sort of memorability that a film in today's cinematic climate requires to thrive. It could have ended up with a talented cast, beautiful setting and interesting plot but it has fallen short on all of these fronts, just not quite short enough to be a disappointment.

By Imogen Hatcher (Year 9)



DO SCHOOLS KILL CREATIVITY?

Do Schools Kill Creativity? It's a fair question, and in reality one that most of us have probably pondered. British author, Ken Robinson, in his insightful Ted Talk "Do Schools Kill Creativity" explores the nature of education as a source of, and potential thief of, creativity. Like any other creator would argue, manifesting creativity in children is equally as important as teaching literacy or mathematics. Robinson suggests that in our contemporary society there is a real push within the education system for children to devote themselves to those subjects, which, supposedly, lead to success in the 'real world'. This mentality is forced upon children throughout their schooling years, as they are brought up to believe that intelligence can be measured only through their success in subjects which can be critically assessed. However, as Einstein once said, "Everybody is a genius, but if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

I urge each and every one of you to check out Ken Robinson's inspiring discussion. Intelligence, like all the greatest things in life, cannot be measured generically.

By Ella Moran (Year 12)

Head of K-6: Justine Lind

Learning is the ultimate change management process and continuous improvement is the hallmark of any organisation that aims to stay current and effective. The volume of information accessible to us continues to increase exponentially and more rapidly and so what is vital is the way we deal with this information and use it to enhance our understanding of ourselves and our world.

Many theories of knowledge and learning underpin our endeavours at Oxley. We talk often of Carol Dweck's theory of cultivating a Growth Mindset by appreciating this notion of continual improvement where effort is valued over innate talent but what compels us to keep trying? Daniel Pink in his ground-breaking book *Drive* explored motivation. He synthesised the research to determine three key elements to motivation; Competency, Autonomy and Purpose. At Oxley, we aim to nurture intrinsic motivation through authentic experience and consequential rewards as opposed to extrinsic motivation through token rewards that foster compliance rather than self-determination.

In K-6, evidence of each child's competencies, degree of autonomy and sense of purpose have been showcased this week as we celebrate effort and growth. We introduced the Student Led Conferences in 2016 to some silent scepticism at first but then resounding endorsement. Parents who felt they might get a watered down picture of their child's strengths and stretches were pleasantly surprised. Our parents soon recognised how perceptive, self-aware and honest our students are and that ultimately they are the ones in the classroom each day and in whose hands their own success lies. I love most of all to see children empowered, in the driving seat of their own learning and growing in stature as they recognise the power of their own influence. We hope you were as inspired by your child as we are on a daily basis and enjoyed taking time to celebrate all that is being achieved.

Our teachers are worthy of celebration too. This week Miss Lara Sheils and Mr Gareth Loveday will present to colleagues from other independent schools across the state at the Biennial Conference of the Association of Independent Schools (AIS). This year's focus is on Inquiry Learning entitled *A More Interesting Question*. Lara and Gareth will share the story of transformation of the learning landscape for some of our youngest students over the course of just one year when we revisited our curriculum to deliver concept based inquiry units. Over the course of the year, students who were brand new to self-directed inquiry learning progressed through the following phases with remarkable success; in Term 1 they participated in whole class teacher directed learning, in Term 2 they learnt through guided partner work, in Term 3 group based collaboration and in Term 4 they were ready for an independent investigative process. Of course there is still teacher directed learning and teachers are not sitting back with their collective feet up, their job has become much more nuanced. They are now the coaches, side by side with the students designing experiences and environments that facilitate the students' discoveries to co-construct new learning and reveal the students' evolving understandings to them. It is exciting to share our achievements with others in the hope of inspiring more schools to trust in the innate capacity of their students and teachers to bring learning alive and to cultivate curiosity, wonder and joy on a daily basis.

It is no wonder that our students are so willing to share their learning with you. Long may it be so.

Weekly Awards:

Learning Journey

KK: Lexi Medes da Costa
KL: Thomas Berry
Yr 1: Scarlett Miller
Yr 2: Imogen Diver
Yr 3: Toby Cuddy
Yr 4: Luca Colloridi
Yr 5C: Ashton Mineeff
Yr 5H: Elizabeth Hamilton
Yr 6: Monte Francis



Oxley Values

KK: Hamish Aston
KL: Charlotte Holmes
Yr 1: Will Kennedy
Yr 2: Joel Sheezel
Yr 3: Flynn O'Brien
Ben Scott
Yr 4: Ava Ritchie
Yr 5C: Ilana Sheezel
Yr 5H: Samuel Bernstein
Yr 6: Bridget Schereck



Learning Journey

KK: Ava Kroll
KL: Teddy Blom
Yr 1: Scarlett Curr
Yr 2: Kallan Rendell
Yr 3: Sam Plummer
Yr 4: Toby Cuddy
Yr 5C: Sienna Soster
Yr 5H: Dominic Verity
Yr 6: Chloe Cassim

Oxley Values

KK: Aari Poole
KL: Anna Sutherland
Yr 1: Adelaide Lawler
Yr 2: Louisa Hogan-Baldo
Yr 3: Sienna Wimborne
Yr 4: Abi Hunt
Yr 5C: Gemma Lee
Yr 5H: Ben Davis
Yr 6: George Dummer



CHESS!

Last week, 22 Oxley students travelled to Tudor House for the annual inter-school Chess Tournament with 42 teams from seven schools. Two of our teams were placed in the top 10. Before the competition many K – 6 students practiced with students from the high school and members of staff at lunchtime in the Library. (Photos in the last Pin Oak). Thank you to Susan Bladen who came with us on the day. The top two top 10 Oxley teams were: Oxley B – placed 6th overall: Monte Francis, Will Brady and Will Gilbert. Oxley A – placed 10th overall: Will Barnett, Hunter Ritchie and Harry Hiscocks. By Natalie Lane





LADY LUCK

He stared into the glass, empty. Empty just as he himself was empty. Empty as the life he'd wasted, so eager to consume every drop of the sweet nectar it bore. But unlike that life, his glass was soon full again at a hand's request.

"Lucky Riley's" was a pub no good man had business visiting. Its beer stained benches beckoned those seeking shelter, yet the company of loneliness was all the decaying abode could offer. It was not unusual for the man to visit Riley's on a Sunday sapped of its morning sun. But it was certainly not often he chose to reflect in a place of such paradox.

The scotch eased its way down his throat like a well-acquainted friend. He found it peculiar how one could distil such comfort from an addiction so insidious. And yet he found no issue in consuming the beverage instinctively. His late father's mantra lived truer than ever; "One drink to remember, another to forget"

Life hadn't come easy. At 20 years young, a man with abysmal qualification, little motivation and no connection felt separated from his surrounds. He was alone.

She was the miracle he didn't deserve.

He told the barman of the woman who loved him from first sight. Graced with her presence at 25, pregnant at 26. Her energy invigorated him, justified the measly reward of an office job. She captured all that he was and released it tenfold in a burst of enveloping warmth. She became just as much a part of him as his own hands. The hands that caressed her flawless face. The hands that would feel the kick of his unborn child. The hands that lifted the intoxicating glass upon his lips.

The blur of months that followed left a satisfaction he'd been unable to replicate. A deep fulfilment had emanated from her desire to please him. Her love made him happy, almost as if it were a separate entity from her altogether. She adored him, and he adored the idea that he was needed.

He'd be lying if he didn't admit it troubled him; if she were to ever love someone else, what would his life mean? And yet every evening, the blackened sky would cease to depress in the face of a home imbued with endearment.

A dazzling star was born after 9 months of preparation. A star so bright, it reduced its surrounds to an endless sea of grey. But no flower could survive un-nurtured. Thus, she raised their son as any mother should, wholeheartedly. So much so, that no portion remained. A mother, not a wife.

Her love was wasted on that boy.

His feelings of love, nay, passion for a life he'd longed for so desperately disintegrated little by little. It was gradual, imperceptible, akin to observing the slightest changes in one's reflection each day. The man of two years ago wouldn't have dreamt of resenting his wife as he did now.



He was alone once more, deprived of the affection and energy that had sustained him. How dare she. What cruel god would bestow a gift so pure, only to seize it when needed most. Envy strengthened its hold like a cancer.

The man composed himself, and continued.

He pursued pastimes, hobbies even, in an attempt to fill a void so empty it devoured all that was right in his world. Hobby. He felt nothing but disdain in his own presence as the word came to mind.

He truly did try, and for that reason his descent was long winded. A gradual sinking more-so than a fall. The pursuit of a thrill lead him to a palace seeping hopeful jingles, entered through a grand walkway of false faith. Not that he knew it then. Happiness he sought, and the temporary attention of a card dealer renewed his importance.

Hope remained. A part of him wished she'd yank him from his fantasy, plucked back into her loving arms. No luck, not until he approached the felt-lined table at least. Old Sinatra was right; luck truly was a lady, and he'd married her, only to replace her by the 6 faces of a dice.

The bartender had long since moved on to another customer, but the man continued.

Poker seemed a game of wit, of instinct. He found it easy. He was perplexed by his own ability. Surely he was intelligent to thrive at such a game. Surely the crowd that gathered to observe him did so as an act of adoration. Surely they loved him. They had to, right? In the eye of every stranger was a glint of hope, a sign perhaps, that he was important. To someone.

He was immortal, a lowly servant now king of the palace he once idolised. Yet what is a king without his gold? As reality's grip tightened around his neck, he fought a noble fight for a dishonourable cause. Alas, it was the night he returned in a ripped suit and the stench of a lie that his home's warmth shrivelled.

He could do nothing but beg. Beg to a god he didn't believe in for a miracle he didn't deserve. She'd seen no more than an empty bank account, and that was all it took. How dare her? How dare he! Only in the absence of happiness did he realise he'd had it all along. She was perfect.

And in that very moment, he reminisced from a state of absolute grief. Her invigorating smile, her enveloping warmth, her flawless face, her adoration.

Come morning, she was gone.

From his drunken trance the man arose, judged by the silence of an empty bar. And as a final drink sank his spirits low, he longed for nothing more than three, short, words; "I love you". He closed the door behind him.

By Gabe Kolovos (Year 11)

DEPUTY HEAD REPORTS

Deputy Head Academic: Kate Cunich

Celebrating the results of hard work!

This has been a very busy time for Year 12 students. In recent weeks they have:

- Submitted English Extension 2 projects – nine students completing an array of short stories, poems and films.
- Drama Critical Analysis – five students submitting four reviews of theatre productions as Theatre Criticism.
- Design and Technology – 13 students completing an individual project and design folios.
- Visual Arts – 11 major works and their accompanying process diaries.
- Textiles and Design – one student completing their project by Distance Education.

Our 22 HSC Drama students completed two days of their group and individual performances last week. We were very proud of the exemplary and professional approach each student had as they prepared themselves for the daunting task of performing for three external HSC markers. While we know we are in the hands of individual markers, we know that our students did the very best they could, with the overall standard outstanding.



Still to come are the Music Performance examinations next Wednesday where students will complete not only combinations of prepared pieces representing different musical eras and genres, but take part in viva voces, where they talk to the panel of markers about an area of investigation in music.

Finally, we look forward to the Design and Technology Exhibition next Thursday night. It is always a wonderful display of the success that comes after a year of project and product design. Amidst the tears there is certainly triumph!

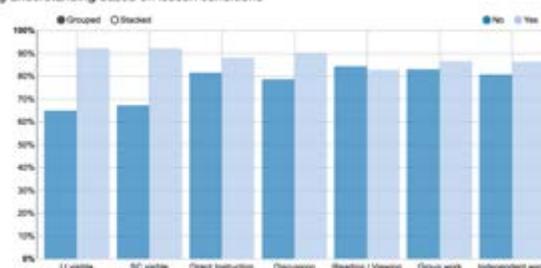
Term 3 Walkthrough

In the last fortnight we have completed our Term 3 walkthrough. A walkthrough involves pairs of teachers

visiting as many classes as they can in a given time. The team sits with students, asking about their learning and understanding. A key part of the conversations is about intentions and success, and whether students can track their progression in each of their courses. Across K – 12, we visited 27 classrooms, observing the learning of different combinations of 492 students, engaged, on task and able to articulate their learning.

Most importantly, we continue to track those things that make the most difference in student learning and understanding. The following graph represents how different classroom activities are impacting student progression:

Learning understanding based on lesson conditions



Open Classrooms – Oxley Excellence on Show

We continue to receive requests from other schools to visit our school and particularly our classrooms. This is based on our growing reputation for outstanding pedagogy, academic rigour and enlightened learning. Our work in Visible Learning is also of great interest to other schools just beginning their journey.

Last week we hosted two Heads of Department from a leading Sydney school, eager to learn more about how learning occurs at Oxley and in particular of implementation of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria. They very much enjoyed their day and have returned to their school bursting with enthusiasm, singing Oxley's praises. We are delighted to continue sharing our outstanding practice with our colleagues in other schools, in this way enriching our profession and leaving a lasting legacy in education.

LIBRARY

Add an extra 23 months to your life!

I think we all recognise the cognitive benefits of reading, including improvements in vocabulary, empathy and success at school. Less well known are the benefits of reading as we age. Remarkable research published in the Journal of Social Science and Medicine in 2016 shows that reading does more than just provide entertainment in retirement. 3635 research participants aged over 50 were surveyed, then tracked over 12 years. Participants who read over 3.5 hours per week were 23% less likely to die and had a 23-month survival advantage when compared with non-readers. Researchers hypothesised that reading provided cognitive engagement, improved reasoning and concentration, critical thinking skills, empathy and emotional intelligence; all processes that may well lead to greater survival. Surprisingly, the most significant benefits were gained by reading books in comparison to newspapers and magazines.

With this research in mind, I would like to invite our student's extended families to pop into the library and borrow a book "longevity pill".

By Elizabeth Antoniak



OLE! Week 2017

OLE! Week is a compulsory and unique multi-day/overnight Oxley College event held in Week 1 Term 4. During OLE! Week students from Year 3 to Year 11 will be involved in a variety of activities off-campus designed to build confidence and resilience, encourage team work and collaboration, and nurture independence and self-discovery in both familiar and unfamiliar environments. OLE! Week medical and consent forms are now overdue! If you have not already completed and handed your form/s in, please do so as soon as possible. As you can appreciate, OLE! Week is a huge undertaking logistically and we look forward to your support and assistance in running another successful year of positive experience and challenges for our students.

By Natalie Lane

**Design & Technology
Major Design
Exhibition**

Thursday 14th September
5:30 - 7pm
Orchestra Room

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Spring into Coding – Years 2 - 7

If you have any questions about the upcoming Spring Code Camp please contact Natalie Lane on natalie.lane@oxley.nsw.edu.au

Gerlinde Gniewosz 1993



Now that you're off in the big wide world, what have you made of yourself since finishing school at Oxley?

I was told many years ago that life is never a straight line, and it is certainly proving to be a very curvy and bendy one for myself. I am probably about half way through and it is going to be an interesting final half. I would summarise the first 15 or so years as the phase where I continued to learn – university, first job in structured/project finance in investment banking, MBA at Harvard, strategic consulting in Germany, mobile/internet corporate in the UK. The last five+ years have been more of applying all the different skills, capabilities and experiences gained along the way, even while still learning new things – founding and running an award-winning mobile edtech startup, becoming a housing activist to save a community of 300 homes and finally a mother to a wonderful daughter.

What is your biggest achievement since high school?

This is a tough question because how do you measure completely different types of achievements in different fields against each other. Academically, I was awarded the University Medal as well as many other prizes whilst doing my undergraduate at UNSW, and then subsequently got accepted into the Harvard Business School.

Career-wise, getting into investment banking in Australia without a Finance degree (I did an Accounting major as part of the co-operative scholarship programme) was at that point in my life a major achievement of which I was then very proud. General wisdom at Harvard was that you should never change all three elements (Industry, Function and Location/Company) of your career at the same time. Well I seem to have done it twice and don't regret it. There is nothing like jumping into the deep end and forcing oneself to learn to swim very fast. I also enjoyed my time in the start-up world after many years in large organisations, but practicalities of deciding to be a single mother by choice has meant that the career going forward has had to be adapted.

However, what I am most proud of currently are my efforts to save Cressingham Gardens from demolition. Whether it will be my "biggest" achievement, I don't know, but it will probably be my most impactful. Around the time I started my first company, I bought my first cheap apartment in order to get out of the very expensive private rental market. It was a one bedroom flat on the Cressingham Gardens estate next to the very beautiful Brockwell Park close in to central London. It is a Hollamby designed council estate of 300 homes with an amazing community that I have gotten to know very well over the past five years. Just as I finished renovating my flat, the local council Lambeth announced that it wanted to demolish my home along with the

other 300 or so homes because it couldn't afford to update its tenants' properties on the estate and pay its share for new roofs.

Circumstances have come together on Cressingham Gardens where there is a very strong long standing community that also has a number of individuals, including myself, that have the education and gumption to take on the establishment. We have taken the council to the High Court twice already (won one, lost one) before a single drawing has been put down on paper by the council. We have even managed to pull together an alternate "People's Plan" complete with architectural drawings and detail quantity. I am very proud of the community, because many residents have done things that they never dared before – speaking at cabinet meetings, protesting, etc. To say that one lives on Cressingham Gardens now generates both considerable respect in the wider London community and true fear in councillors and local council officers. This fight will continue for a number of years to come, but my daughter is getting a once-in-a-life experience that already started when she was only a week old when she came with us to the High Court for three days.

Were these things that during high school you expected you would end up doing?

I never expected to be a housing expert and activist – particularly never thought I would be making public speeches at protest demos in London. I was even featured as a character in a theatre play about what is happening in London.

How did Oxley prepare you for your future?

I was very academically focused during my high school years. Oxley did a good job of ensuring that I experienced and participated in a very wide variety of activities that I probably would never have done otherwise. It was also good at toughening us up to deal with the rough and tumble of the real world: I will never forget having to run the cross country across ankle-breaking cow paddocks during a snow storm or going down the rapids in a kayak as a novice or sitting in the assembly hall whilst the headmaster read out everyone's marks for the term.

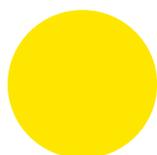
Is there anybody from the Oxley community who inspired you throughout high school?

For me the full appreciation of our then headmaster Mr David Wright has probably increased since I left high school. I still don't agree with all his contentions and statements he made whilst I was at Oxley, but I respect that he made us think deeper and more broadly.

What would you say to your fifteen year old self?

Take a deep breath and simply take the risks regardless of what others are saying around you. Life never goes in a straight line, but it only happens once.

WHAT'S HAPPENING? in the news



NATIONAL POSTAL VOTE PUSHOVERS?



The Turnbull Government's same-sex marriage postal vote hangs in the balance, with a High Court challenge underway claiming that the government does not have the authority to spend \$122 million of taxpayer funds on the survey.

In a move that could stop ballots from being issued next week – and reignite pressure on the Prime Minister to grant a parliamentary conscience vote on marriage equality – critics of the postal survey have begun a legal challenge questioning its lawfulness.

"This postal plebiscite is completely unnecessary; it's costly, divisive, and already causing harm to our community," Human Rights Law Centre director Anna Brown said before the Melbourne hearings on Tuesday morning.

The controversy comes from the Turnbull Government's decision to fund the postal vote with tax payer money meant for 'emergencies'. If the postal vote is over ruled by the High Court, the government would be left with two options. 1) Go to a vote in parliament with no statistical support, or 2) Not putting the legislation through parliament; both options spelling disaster for Malcolm Turnbull's approval rating and more than likely putting the final nail in the Liberal Party's re-election chances.

The hearing in The High Court re-commenced at 10.15am on Wednesday morning, with little information spilling out. Some groups are still optimistic that the same sex marriage proposal could be legal "within a fortnight". In reality, the process will take some time to sort out and the outcome is leaning towards a High Court shut down of the postal vote due to its "unforeseen" expenditure.

However, momentum is in favour of legalising same sex marriage. Even if the postal vote doesn't eventuate, marriage equality is a debate with widespread support. The Government --Liberal or Labour--will not be able to ignore or put off a decision much longer. So why put off the inevitable? Why spend so much time and energy trying to do something tomorrow when it could be done today.

There's no time like the present. By Jack Kennedy (Year 12)

Editor's note: Since this article was submitted, the High Court of Australia has upheld the legality of the Turnbull Government's same-sex marriage postal vote.



INTERNATIONAL

YEMEN CONFLICT

More than 1,184 children have been killed and 1,592 injured, while more than 1,700 children have been recruited to fight in the country Yemen, a country opposite Egypt and next to Saudi Arabia, and one of the Arab world's poorest countries. The cause of this war is the forces loyal to the internationally-recognised government of President Abdrabbuh Mansour Hadi and those allied to the Houthi rebel movement, who are fighting for power. This conflict has mainly been carried out by airstrikes, but the Saudi coalition receives backing and weapons from the UK and the US.

The United Nations has interviewed many witnesses and survivors over this three-year conflict, but recently, The UN Human Rights office reveals that there has been an escalation in hostiles, with more than 5,144 civilians killed and more than 8,749 people injured. The UN describes this attack as an "entirely man-made catastrophe" and has said its observers have "frequently" seen children who were armed and uniformed manning checkpoints. This new information was made public after the head of the World Food Programme, David Beasley, called on Saudi Arabia to fund 100% of the humanitarian needs in the war-torn country Yemen, which was not answered.

Human rights groups have urged the UN to establish an independent inquiry into the Yemen conflict. During this past year, Yemen has had widespread airstrikes against markets, hospitals, schools and residential areas as well as funerals and small civilian boats.

The situation in Yemen is now the worlds worst humanitarian crisis, with close to 18.8 million people in need of humanitarian aid, 7 million on the brink of famine, and an estimated 540,000 suffering from cholera.

Bridgett Drewett (Year 10)



LOCAL TULIP TIME

Corbett Gardens is always a mix of vibrant colours this time of year. But driving passed recently I noticed one soil mound is looking particularly bare. Considering Bowral's annual 'Tulip Time' is set to begin in only six days, it is concerning to see only green buds peeping from the soil. Considering the freezing cold weather we've had, it's not surprising the plants are confused. Let's hope the flowering hurries along to be in time for our 57th 'Tulip Time'. Bring on the warm weather!

By Issy Knowles (Year 12)

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER CALENDAR

 <p>SPRING FOOTBALL CAMP @ OXLEY September 27th, 28th & 29th</p> <p>COME AND LEARN THE SWFS WAY</p> <p>Our vision for our camps is to provide an environment that builds confidence and encourages both boys and girls of all abilities to have fun playing football. We will promote the importance of respect and improving their individual skills.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost \$70 per day or \$190 for all 3 days 10% discount for siblings 15% discount for 3 siblings Boys and girls training, ages from 5-13 All camps run from 9am-12pm at Oxley College Players will play indoor competitions and outdoor sessions which include playing in the Stroney field Children need to bring boots, training shoes, shin pads, sunscreen, morning tea and lunch <p><small>All coaching sessions will be run by Alex Prophet who has a UEFA B Licence plus overseas playing experience. Alex has coached at Sydney United and Helensburgh United and has also worked for Academies in the United Kingdom, Liverpool, Reading and the Wolverhampton Wanderers.</small></p> <p>For all enquiries please call Head Coach Alex Prophet on 0430 096 644 or email swsoccersessions@gmail.com</p> <div style="border: 2px solid red; border-radius: 50%; padding: 10px; text-align: center; color: white;"> <p>OXLEY SHOP</p> <p>The Oxley Shop will be open during the second week of the school holidays.</p> <p>Tuesday 3 October, Wednesday 4 October & Thursday 5 October</p> <p>9.00am-3.00pm</p> </div>	<p>Mon 11</p> <p>Year 11 End of Preliminary Examinations Fiona Smith Gifted and Talented, Parent Information, Orchestra Room, 3.30pm - 4.30pm</p>	<p>Mon 18</p>	<p>Mon 25</p>	
	<p>Tue 12</p>	<p>Tue 19</p> <p>K - 2 Tulip Time performance, 11.30am</p>	<p>Tue 26</p>	
	<p>Wed 13</p> <p>Years 3-6 NSW CIS Athletics</p>	<p>Wed 20</p> <p>Oxley Music Night 7-12 NSW CIS Athletics</p>	<p>Wed 27</p> <p>Nepal Departure</p>	
	<p>Thu 14</p> <p>Design and Technology Exhibition, Orchestra Room, 5.30pm - 7.00pm</p>	<p>Thu 21</p>	<p>Thu 28</p>	
	<p>Fri 8</p>	<p>Fri 15</p> <p>Year 2 Family Gathering</p>	<p>Fri 22</p> <p>Year 12 Farewell Dinner TERM 3 ENDS</p>	<p>Fri 29</p>
	<p>Sat 9</p>	<p>Sat 16</p>	<p>Sat 23</p> <p>Botswana Departure</p>	<p>Sat 30</p>
	<p>Sun 10</p> <p>Kindergarten Family Picnic Year 8 Parent get together</p>	<p>Sun 17</p> <p>Year 6 Family Get together</p>	<p>Sun 24</p> <p>Year 11 Outback Departs</p>	<p>Sun 1</p>

P & F NEWS

Last Friday the P & F hosted another highly successful Father's Day breakfast for over 200 dads and students. A big thank you to Gail Denington, Korry Poole and Sally Kean and their team of helpers: Susan Bladen, Rel Vild, Melissa Hunter, Lauren Blom, Ruth Shedden and Tanya Beckett. There was a real buzz and dads/grandfather's and their children enjoyed egg, bacon and sausage rolls and delicious coffee. Photos on page 7.

BREAKING NEWS IN SPORT

Division 5 Girls on the Podium at National Snowsports!!!!

Excellent Results at the National Snowsports Championships.
Eva Duffy, Nicola Gardner, Chilli Sparke - 2nd in Division 5 Girls Relay and 5th in Division 5 Girls Classic Team.
Bryce Rodger, Will Gilbert, Lucca Colloridi - 5th in Division 5 Boys Relay. Oliver Cain, Patrick Duffy, Rex Sparke - 8th in Division 3 Boys Relay and 8th in Division 3 Boys Classic Team
Emily Rodger, Amelia Carpenter, Bridget Schereck - 10th in Division 4 Girls Classic Team. Individual results Chilli Sparke 6th/32 in XC Classic and Will Gilbert 11th/30 in XC Classic. At time of printing Hugo Manka is still to compete in Division 3 Ski Slopestyle and Alpine. Huge congratulations to the whole team.

ISA Athletics Championships

20 Oxley College Athletes have qualified for the NSWCIS Athletics Championships.
Highlights
Boys 2nd in Division 2
Girls 4th in Division 1
Senior Boys 1st in Division 2
Sienna Knowles, Elli Connell, Ciara Longworth, Grace Newton - Intermediate Girls Relay Team 1st in Division 1 (ISA Champions)



NEWSFLASH

HICES DEBATING FINALS



In the HICES debating competition, awards are given out following the preliminary rounds of the competition. Three Oxley students were runners up for 'best debater' awards in their division. In the Senior Division - Jemima Taylor and in the Open Division - Lillian Dalton and Thomas Hill. The Year 7 Debating team had extraordinary success this season. This is the most successful team Oxley has entered in the HICES competition and they made it through eight rounds to earn a place in the Grand Finals. Yesterday they competed against Emmanuel College and were runners up which places them second out of 45 teams in their division in the State. The students in this team are: Jennifer Allan, Mackenzie Kane, Liam O'Connell and Liam Verity. Mackenzie Kane received runner up for 'best debater' in the final rounds. Jennifer Allan was 'best debater' for the preliminary rounds and also in the final rounds. Congratulations to all our debaters.

Ravi Wikramanayake



Q. What drove you to excel in cricket? "I just love it, I grew up with the sport, playing in the back yard with my family and I eventually came to love it."

Q. What have you achieved in your early cricket career? "This season was the biggest season for me. It originally started when I played with rep cricket and then from there I got selected in the southern ACT team and from there I went to Coffs Harbour to be apart of the 'State challenge'."

Q. What does your future hold with your cricket passion? "In the next couple of years I am hoping to reach the same level but in under 19s. And then after that I am hoping to play first grade in Sydney and then from there you get picked in the NSW men's cricket team"

Q. Who is your cricket idol? "Started off with Kumar Sangakkara then after he retired it went to Usman Khawaja. But originally my idols are left handed batsmen which is what I am." By Harry Baillieu (Year 11)

CRICKET STAR

EQUESTRIAN TRIUMPH



Sophie Artup

What have been your latest achievements in Equestrian? I recently competed in the State Dressage Championships in the open division. Competing against adult professional riders and I came 8th overall. **What events are coming up and what preparation is involved?** My next event is the CDI dressage championships in three weeks. This is an FEI event, which means it is an internationally recognised. I will compete in the Open Division there on my horse Nick. My preparation includes two-three lessons a week with my coach Sue Hearn, along with riding at home five-six times a week for training. **When did you first start riding and what do you enjoy about equestrian?** I first started properly riding when I was six, however have been around horses ever since I was born. I enjoy everything about riding, not just competing but all the training involved behind the scenes. By Will Quirico (Year 11)

YEAR 9 GEOGRAPHY



On Thursday last week, Year 9 visited Edmondson Park, a new suburb being developed in the Greater Western Sydney area, designed to meet the demands of urbanisation in the region. The reason for the excursion was to witness at first hand how suburbs are being planned and built today. From representatives of the government agency UrbanGrowth NSW (formerly Landcom), we were given an understanding of how and why certain decisions are made during the development of 'greenfield' sites at the edge of the city. As the day progressed, we learned how the mixing up different housing types helps to create a balanced community and how infrastructure is used to establish liveable and sustainable suburbs. We also discovered ways to make a neighbourhood authentic, so that people want to live in it; incorporating street art, sculptures, community events and developing a reputation that can greatly enhance an area's 'pull' factors. Our year group was the first to participate in this government education initiative and all in all, this experience contributed greatly to our knowledge and understanding of what the future of urban geography holds, and how humans are finding new ways to interact with their environments, the core essence of geography itself. Max Lambie (Year 9)