

PINOAK

ISSUE 99: TERM 1, FEBRUARY 7, 2020
OXLEY COLLEGE



KINDERGARTEN

YEAR 7 CAMP

BUSHFIRES

HEAD OF COLLEGE'S REPORT

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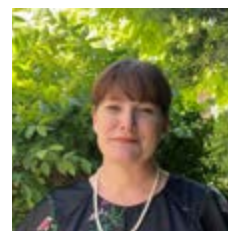
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Welcome to our New Staff 2020:

Mrs Katherine Halcrow - Katherine is the new Head of the Oxley Junior School. She has joined us from Trinity Grammar School where she was a teaching and learning leader. Prior to that position Katherine has held leadership and teaching positions at Penrith Anglican School and Canberra Grammar School. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) degree in English Literature/History and has a Masters of teaching from Sydney University.



Mr Mathew Bentham - Mathew is an experienced Visual Art teacher and holds a Bachelor of Visual Arts and post graduate education qualifications from the University of Western Sydney. He has taught at a number of schools including Barker College for the past 16 years. Whilst at Barker he also held the role as Head of Visual Arts for a period of six years.



Mr Darren Brett - Darren has a Bachelor of Arts and Graduate Diploma in Education where he majored in pure Mathematics and History. He has taught Mathematics at all levels including Extension 1&2 at a range of schools during his career. Most recently at Marist Sisters' College in Woolwich and Tara Anglican Girls school where he was for 15 years.



Ms Trish Gibson - Trish has a Bachelor of Health Science and a Graduate Diploma in Lote Teaching. Her love for Japanese came after spending a year in Japan as a Rotary Exchange student. Trish has come to us from Shore in Sydney where she was Head of Languages for the past nine years. At Oxley she will teach Latin and Japanese. She is also an Old Oxleyan!



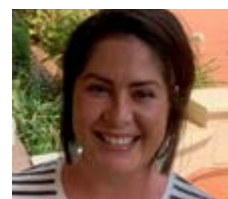
Mr Richard Madden - Richard is coming to us from Wollondilly Anglican School where he has held a range of positions including Pastoral Leader, Sports Coordinator and has taught a range of subjects including D&T over the past 12 years. He holds a Degree in Science and more recently a Bachelor of Education from Sydney University. With over 20 year of experience, Richard will teach Design and Technology, lead the Personal Interest Projects and teach some PDHPE.



Mr Cameron Van Reyk - Cameron is joining us as a Music Teacher across K-12. He has a Bachelor of Music and Graduate qualification in Education from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts and Edict Cowan University. He has been a classroom music teacher, choral, bands and wind specialist directing and conducting choirs and bands at Perth College for the past ten years.



Ms Jeraldine McMillan - Jeraldine is joining us from Pymble Ladies College where she was Head of Religion and Ethics. She has taught History and Philosophy in the UK prior to moving to Australia. She has a BA in Anthropology and Religious Studies from the University of Wales and post graduate education qualifications from University of East Anglia. Jeraldine is currently on a prearranged scholarship on an archaeological dig in Israel. This means she will join us in the third week of February as Head of the newly formed department - History and Philosophy. (Photo not currently available).



Mrs Karla Rogerson - Karla is returning to Oxley to join the Learning Engagement team. In 2018, she worked at Oxley in a casual capacity and last year was on parental leave but undertook work on some of our student risk assessments and ILP's. Prior to coming to Oxley Karla worked as a special education teacher at ASPECT- Autism Spectrum Australia for 10 years. She will be working across the School in Learning Engagement on a part time basis.



Mrs Louise Pike - Louise has been a member of the Oxley community as a parent and is joining us as a Sports Administrator working with Kim McNaught. She has had extensive experience as a Sports Coordinator in International Schools in Singapore.

HEAD OF COLLEGE'S REPORT continued..



What a difference a year makes to knowing and understanding Oxley College! It has been a joy to welcome students back to school and see the College come alive again. While the College is a sanctuary for the students where they can feel safe and secure, it is the students and staff that are the heart and soul of the College. It has been wonderful to see the energy and comfort that comes with normality and the daily routines of school. The calmness and connectedness this year amongst our students has been palpable and is indicative of the strength of our inclusive and supportive community.

At the first assembly I asked our students to focus on their character strength of Kindness this term as we are unsure of each individual's story over the summer months and don't always know how each other might be feeling. Kindness doesn't cost anything and is easy to give by being respectful, thoughtful and caring. It is also a renewable resource and should be never ending. Importantly, I asked them not only to be kind to each other but to be kind to themselves, ensuring they are caring for themselves in body, mind, heart and spirit. As expressed to the students, when each of them is kind, Oxley College is kind!

It is always wonderful to talk to the students about their learning and hear their opinions on each of their subjects or what they are doing. My conversations have been rich and engaging especially when talking to students from Year 9 & 10 about their Personal Interest Projects and the array of different topics and ideas they were interested in. We know that engagement is so important to the effectiveness of learning and it is great to see our students so enthusiastic about this new initiative. I must also say when I spoke to some Year 7s about their favourite subjects that the new subject of Latin came up for two out of the five students in the group which made my heart sing.

As part of our focus on caring for the Whole Child, staff commenced the year with a day of enriching Professional Learning on the Science of Wellbeing - Positive Psychology and how we can apply it to our daily lives and to those of our students. In a similar way to our teaching and learning practice, Oxley College has partnered with the Applied Positive Psychology Learning Institute (APPLI), an evidence based organisation, lead by Dr Paula Robinson to support us on our Positive Education journey. We all know the importance of health and wellbeing and the importance of being proactive in giving our young people the skills, abilities and mindset to navigate their way through life. Oxley has been doing quite a bit in this space already and you will notice that our Year 7-11 school diaries have taken a positive educational flavour with many tips for students to learn and live their best lives. This year there will be a focus on the 24 Character Strengths and encouraging students to explore these and how to grow them in themselves. It is also a useful tool for parents to develop a positive language around Character Strengths so they can navigate some of those tricky conversations and to support students in having a growth mindset. (More information on page 10).

Currently the Year 7 students are being inducted into ethical and effective use of technology and introduced to our Learning Management System of CANVAS in the new subject Learning 2 Learn. I would ask all parents of all year groups speak to their children about CANVAS and sign up to observe their child's activities and learning. Instructions to do this are on our website under the Learning/e learning tab. This is a good way for parents to support students in developing organisational skills and their accountability for assessments and academic prep.

I would also ask parents to discuss the software students have on their computers. In some cases games and leisure software are making computers run very slowly and impeding the students' learning. It is recommended that devices brought to school are seen as tools for learning only and as such only have the software recommended by the College.

At the beginning of the year, new students have been issued with their Student ID cards. These cards are used for the Canteen, Library and at the Off the Shelf Café. We ask students to take responsibility for these cards and to ensure they look after them. Interestingly, Mrs Henderson in Senior School Student Services issued 500 replacement cards due to loss or misplacement in Term 4 last year (this equates to more than one new card for every student in just one term!) which is of concern - let alone expensive. It could be an interesting conversation to have with your child about how many of these cards they have accumulated? To encourage responsibility and accountability, students will only receive one replacement card per year. Should they require an additional card there will be a notification to parents and a charge of \$10 for the new card.



AUSTRALIA WINS THE AUS OPEN YET AGAIN

The superstar athlete, advocate and radio host, the man with many roles has done it yet again. Dylan Alcott is now a ten-time grand slam singles champion and has recently won his 6th consecutive Australian Open title. He is no stranger to the public's eye and doesn't fail to crack smiles with his witty jokes. Dylan won the Men's Quad Wheelchair Singles Australian Open Final in a two set match resulting in a score of 6-0 and 6-4 against British Andrew Lapthorne. Dylan also won the doubles competition alongside Australian, Heath Davidson. According to ABC news, he has raised over \$40,000 to donate to people with a disability whom have been impacted by the recent bushfires engulfing the nation. The 29 year old athlete, I believe, sends a great message not only to people with a disability but to able-bodied people too, that when you have a dream or goal to achieve, the best thing you can do is just go for it and let everything else fall into place.

Dylan also plays quite a distinctive role in advocating for people with a disability as shown in a triple J interview, he says, "I'm just trying to be a positive role model in the media to show people that just because you are disabled it's not a life sentence, your life's not over, there's still so many things that you can do to get out there and live a happy and successful life." The unfortunate thing about our current society is the unwanted taboo around disability's which makes it hard to educate people about them. Dylan is breaking down that wall to make a more inclusive and educated nation, and world. This societal stigma was brought up in Dylan's Ted Talk presentation in 2015, he refers back to when he was driving down the highway and

saw a big billboard advertising the consequences of speeding by showcasing a photo of this depressed looking man in a wheelchair. Dylan urges that this exact portrayal of disability being so devastating and horrific is what feeds the taboo surrounding disability's by making it something to fear. With the use of his oh so comical humour he began to point out that there are much worse things than being in a wheelchair, such as the wearing of 'cros' and supporting of the English cricket team.

All jokes aside, as an able-bodied person I believe Dylan has enabled me to learn more about what it's like living with a disability and so I can become more aware and also pass those important messages onto my friends and family as to make them more educated too. Hopefully you have read this article and found that you are now more knowledgeable and know to shut down the stigma when you see or hear it because nobody deserves to be marginalised. See the ability in disability.

Link to Dylan's 2015 Ted Talk:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79CrqQVoREQ&feature=emb_title

By Peggy Holmwood (Year 10)

TAKE INSPIRATION



BOOK

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo

Never have I had the experience of knowing that something harrowing lurks in my future, yet I am still more eager than I've ever been for it to be brought to light.

'The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo' follows the two respective narratives of disgraced journalist, Mikael Blomkvist and social outcast mastermind, Lisbeth Salander. By a twist of fate, the two come to work together in solving the disappearance of 16 year old Harriet Vanger, discovering a plethora of deception, danger and revolt deeply embedded in the case that has been unsolved for 40 years.

The main characters offer a complex yet relatable perspective of the internal struggles individuals face. Lisbeth Salander is a genius hacker and a heart-rending, yet inspiring mix of vulnerability and unrelenting adroitness who calls for nothing less than punitive measures against anyone who gets in her way. Mikael Blomkvist on the other hand is a journalist and manager of a once highly respected magazine, which is crumbling underneath him as a result of a media frenzy surrounding a career defining expose.

Author, Steig Larsson, writes from a 3rd person point of view, with glimpses into the 1st person, individually examining each character to give the reader just enough to decipher what makes them tick, while still leaving particular nuances to be solved by the imagination

All of this considered, it is not a read for the faint hearted, exploring concepts such as sadism, murder, and above all, tormenting emotional anguish as it seems that every character in the book is sewn perfectly into the fabric of their shared cynical world, yet they never seem to be quite at home inside it.

If you want a read that will make you fall off the edge of your seat, this is for you!

By Lucy Cavanough Quince (Year 11)



BOOK

This Is Going To Hurt by Adam Kay

Have you ever wondered what really happens in the inner canals of local hospitals? Or pondered what the most obscure admissions to the Emergency Department entailed? Or perhaps simply felt intrigued by the abilities of modern medicine?

This book will satisfy all your curiosities. Delivered in a highly entertaining tone, Kay's honest description of his progression from junior doctor to resident will leave you shocked, intrigued and with tears of laughter rolling down your cheeks. Originally published as a rebuke at remarks several years ago on lowering the wages and working conditions of already-overloaded NHS doctors, the book has left me with genuine respect and sympathy for the burdens placed on junior staff in healthcare systems around the world.

The novel revels in the dark comedy of hospital life, but ultimately concludes with the career-ending decision that swayed Kay to desert his career in medicine and pursue writing. Squeamish scenes and depictions of emergency surgery are carefully interwoven with anecdotes of memorable patients to fully immerse the reader in the life of a junior doctor. He also includes careful selections of events outside his working life, to convey the immense responsibility being a doctor entails.

Not only is the book a riveting, factual recount, it also serves to remind the public and policy-makers alike of the importance of ensuring bureaucrats and policy-makers are not distanced from the people who are affected most by decisions to lower wages and increase minimum hours, whether in England or elsewhere. This book is perfect for those with short attention spans, due to the enjoyably erratic nature of the diary entries within, and is uniquely funny whilst being intriguingly revealing and, ultimately, heartbreaking.

By Ava Lambie (Year 11)



TECHNOLOGY

Are folding screens the future?

These past few years have been bursting with new and fantastic tech, but what are some of the most interesting ones coming this year?

Lots of big companies are trying to come up with the newest and shiniest tech - new phones, new laptops, new TVs - but they aren't much better than what we already own. People should be careful to only upgrade when you really need it, and check for software updates as they usually give us the latest features without needing to buy a whole new one.

But some new tech does look very exciting. The most exciting of all is most likely the new Motorola Razr smartphone, because it brings back an old flip phone design, also known as a clamshell. But the whole body is one bendable screen. This means a full-sized smartphone is folded in half to fit more neatly into any pocket.

Folding screen technology first appeared last year in the Samsung Galaxy Fold, but it had screen problems when it came out. The Motorola Razr looks like a better design for what might make a folding screen more useful in everyday life. But it's also very expensive. If you want one, you'll need to be willing to pay \$2,699 to get one.

In the end, a fancy folding screen phone is still just a phone. New tech can be very cool and good looking, but you need to remember that it's the function which counts. But it does look like more folding screens will be part of our future.

By Emily Byrne (Year 6)

JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWS

Head of Junior School: Katherine Halcrow

To be what we are, and to become what we are capable of, is the only end of life.

Robert Louis Stevenson

It has been wonderful to meet so many Oxley parents and students over the last couple of weeks, and among them many new families. I feel so fortunate to have become a part of this special community. Thank you for your very warm welcome.

Over the past week, I am so grateful to have enjoyed the opportunity to see everything going on around the place. I am especially proud of the start Kindergarten has made. The accomplished artists of Kindergarten showed me how well they could draw their own portraits, and we shared a story with our teddies. I also spent time with Year 5 students, families and teachers for the 'Minute-to-Win-it' games and barbeque night, and earlier in the week, as they conducted a burning ceremony designed to release their fears for the start of a new school year. Year 6 leaders and Mr Ayling shared their ideas for the playground and their video projects, and meanwhile I was able to visit all the classrooms to drop in, say 'Hi' and give out some birthday cards. Today, I also enjoyed the mud pit with students as they showed me how much fun could be had with a few simple materials and lots of imagination. I have also met new students coming to Oxley for the first time, and have witnessed the way other students have kindly made them feel like friends so quickly.

Oxley students and staff really know how to make school a wonderful place to be.

Last Friday, I spoke at assembly about the importance of feeling a sense of belonging. We all can feel like we don't fit sometimes. So, both as brand new Oxleyans and old, we can consider what a special privilege it is to belong somewhere. It is usually not an accident but is something that has been nurtured. In this community, I can see you have really worked hard to build the sense of welcome I have experienced here.

At our first Assembly, I shared a picture book, *The Lost Thing* by Shaun Tan. It tells the tale of a young boy who lives in a drab industrial seaside town, and who is one day collecting bottle tops when he comes across a Lost Thing. It is a strange out-of-place looking 'thing' that just doesn't seem to fit in. But the boy shows kindness and takes the thing home to find it a home. That's not easy in a town where everyone is caught up in the grinding plod of everyday life. But finally, a place is found. It unfolds like a dream. A beautiful out-of-the way place where a whole lot of curious looking lost things have found a home.

I reflected at Assembly that school should feel like that for all of us. A uniquely beautiful place amongst the ordinariness where we can find a place to truly feel welcomed, and like we belong. A place where we can think, dare, dream and imagine.

I hope that the year ahead will be just such a year for you.

And.... if you have a moment and have never heard the story before, there is an award-winning film version of the picture book to be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rpak6ktsux4>

Weekly Awards:

Learning Journey

K: Olivia Gomes

Yr 1: Chloe Motycka

Yr 2C: Fergus Talman

Yr 3B: Ava Snowden

Yr 3L: Evelyn Hammond

Yr 4: Freddy Florida

Yr 5B: Brigitte Pietsch-Liddell

Yr 5N: Lex Cochrane

Yr 6A: Peter Kearney

Yr 6W: Hamish Tully

Oxley Values

K: Emily Elizabeth Hunt

Yr 1: George Abreu

Yr 2C: Charlotte Bentham

Yr 3B: Victoria Feetham

Yr 3L: Oscar Johnson

Yr 4: Anna Clark

Yr 5B: James Blanche

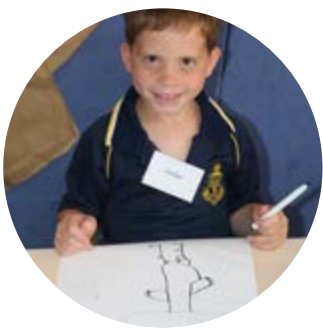
Yr 5N: Claudia Carpenter

Yr 6A: Gabby Dobson

Yr 6W: Ava Steyn



JUNIOR SCHOOL NEWS



HOW WE SPENT OUR SUMMER

Stories from our Year 12 students about the summer bushfires

Ben Ahern

My uncle's property of 100 hectares in upper Lansdowne near Taree is among 25.5 million hectares that have been burned since late last year. If that's difficult to visualise then try imagining 25.5 million ANZ stadiums ablaze. One point two billion is the approximate amount of wildlife that have perished in the fires, of those, 25,000 were said to be koalas. That's enough animals to fill over 300 Olympic swimming pools. Scary isn't it??

I am sorry to begin this with such horrific statistics; however, it is very important that we understand just how much Australia as a country has lost throughout this horrific fire season. When first asked to speak today I was hesitant because I don't like speaking in front of large crowds. However, I had an over whelming feeling to address you about the fires since my family has been directly affected.

These fires raging up and down the east coast of Australia have been doing so for over four months now. And for four months every day I opened the Fires Near Me app to see what the fire activity was like. On occasion it was under control, then suddenly with a slight wind change everything that was thought to be safe was in the path of the blaze.

That's exactly what happened to my uncle's property. It was a calm afternoon there was a slight South Easterly which was pushing the fire front back on itself. However, at exactly 12.42pm the wind changed to a north westerly causing the fire to ravage through the valley and up to his house. He attempted to put it out but it became to dangerous to stay so he fled to Taree.

His bravery saw him save a few family pictures and a small clay bird that my six year old cousin had given to him for Christmas. He said in a video he posted, "I don't know if this is a sign of hope or something else but it's all gone". The good news is that he has decided to rebuild in the same spot, if that's not a sign of strength and resilience then I don't know what is.

The aussie spirit is an unbreakable force, it has been tested over the last few months. However, the true kindness of those who have lost everything and those who just want to help is a real testament to the strength and passion we Australians all share. To all the volunteers and citizens who showed the upmost resilience during this dire time, we thank you.

Bryce Wellman

Being a SES volunteer has moments of excitement especially when you know that you are going to get to go on a job. With the school holidays approaching I knew Connor was away and Tij was not on the call out list so it was my time to take a lead and take on the jobs that we normally do together. But, I never thought I would be involved with the fires. My first job was handing out water in Sutton Forest for all the motorists that were stuck on the road as a result of the freeway being closed due to fears the fire would jump the freeway. Everyday after that Old Oxleyan, Dylan Whitelaw, would send out a message each morning asking for availability. I kept on answering the call but the excitement slowly disappeared and I wondered how have the firefighters been doing this day after day?

The holidays went on and the weeks flew by with the threat of school returning. One morning I was sitting in the office at Luminous, the sound and lightning company I work for, when the phone rang. It was John Waters! Who would have thought what this phone call was going to lead to. Luminous was going to assist with the running of the 2020 Fire Aid Concert and I was given the opportunity to operate the stage lighting. Being in Melbourne when the concert was going to be on, it felt right to fly back for the concert. I knew that little bit of inconvenience for me was nothing compared to what families, animals and the volunteers have been going through over the past couple of months.

During the concert there were smiles on everyone's faces. It was great to see everyone having fun especially knowing that so many local residents have had such a rough time lately. I remember going backstage and finding Archie Waters and saying how awesome the concert has been and who would have thought it was going to turn out as good as this.

I think a big thank you needs to go to all the Oxley staff, parents and students who helped this event go ahead.

[continued over page]

Pip Kettlewell

So I'm part of the State Emergency Service. We're lucky enough to be able to be the primary rescue in car crashes and some emergency situations such as Flood, Storm and Tsunami.

But our roles in the recent bushfires are just as important as our usual roles. We aid the RFS in door-knocking, evacuation and support aid. One of these incidents has stuck with me during my time.

Joadja is a community just west of Mittagong. Instead of bowling with my brothers and mum, I was called in to aid in the evacuation for this small country town. Jumping into WCB 39 we drove out to the end of Joadja Road. We put our dust masks and goggles on, jumped out of the car and started telling the residents the thing they least wanted to hear. It's been advised by the RFS that you need to evacuate your home. The flashes of emotion across people's faces were enough to bring you to tears. I had someone start to cry saying that they had lived there their entire life, being raised there and their children being raised there. I had someone rise to their full height and say they were not leaving, that they would stay and fight the fire, that they were not going to lose something they had worked for their whole life. There were houses with animals still in the paddocks. Ones that when the owners had left after the text message warning had come out, they had no time to find or to round up. It hit home. And I'm so sorry to anyone who had to experience this. The reality that wasn't shown by the news was one that hundreds of us had to experience first hand. Going through the houses with the smell of smoke and fire behind us in the blistering heat exhausted me and the crew. While we were taking one side of the road, another crew took the right side and had the same experiences as us. After a long seven hour gruelling day we went back to headquarters, but the day wasn't over when we were called out 20 mins later to do support for the crews in Colo Vale and EOC - Emergency Operation Centre. Starting at 9.00am and finishing at 7.30pm was just one of the instances that the SES was operational.

Still, the rewards that we get in this volunteer work is phenomenal. The people you meet, the experiences you receive, is something that sticks with you through your life. It influences the way that you act with people and how you make your decisions. Although this is not one of the happy stories as those who refused to leave were helivaced out later when the fires were too dangerous for anyone to stay, there are still times where the story has an amazing end. A child returned to their parents, a home saved when a tree falls through a roof, is all worth experiencing.



DEPUTY HEAD REPORTS

Deputy Head Pastoral: Mark Case

What is a Sanctuary?

I posed this question in the Welcome Assembly on the first day of term. We all need a sanctuary, a safe place, a refuge. For most of us, home is a sanctuary. For some, challenging family dynamics, or other factors such as domestic violence or substance abuse means this is not the case, and the long school holidays may be a particularly difficult time. The assumption that home is a sanctuary was challenged for many in our community during this bushfires season. The need to evacuate – to choose what to take (and what to leave behind) can also be traumatic. The return to school and to routine, and to see friends, was welcome for many. It is within our power to make school a sanctuary, a place where students can be their authentic selves and feel safe. I encouraged the students to think about how, through acts of kindness and care for others, they can make their House and their Tutor Group a sanctuary for all students, whatever else is going on in the world beyond.

Year 7 Orientation Camp

Following the difficult decision to cancel the camp in the first week of term due to the threat of bushfire, it was great to be able to take Year 7 students to Attunga in Canyonleigh on Thursday this week, and especially being able to stay overnight on the Wednesday evening. The primary aim of the camp for our Year 7 students is connection: to the Oxley Senior School, to key pastoral staff and especially the Heads of House, the Student Leaders and most of all, between the Year 7s themselves. The overnight component, in which students are roomed in House and gender groups along with their Student Leaders, is key to this. During the day students took part in a range of activities that focus on team building or overcoming personal challenges. We hope that the students came home tired, but with plenty of good stories to share.

Student Diary Year 7-11

The Student Diary has undergone a significant overhaul this year. The new diary embraces many of the key aspects of positive psychology, structured around the model of "PERMAH" – Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment and Health. Each week of the school year contains information about how to support and improve wellbeing, along with mindfulness activities, tips and opportunities for reflection. We encourage parents to look at the many resources contained in the diary and hope these may prompt conversations with your child at home. Tutors will also be utilising some the activities throughout the year in Tutor Group.

Character Strengths & Positive Education, and APPLI

One of the 2020 Pastoral Goals is to embed the language of Character Strengths in the College. This draws upon the work of Dr Martin Seligman and Dr Chris Peterson in the field of positive psychology, which focused on what is 'right' with people, rather than more

traditional approaches in psychology, which have tended to focus on what is 'wrong'. The VIA (Values in Action) Classification of Character Strengths is the tool that Seligman and Peterson devised and has become a key feature of positive education; they also feature in the Values of the College. Our merit system in Years 7-10, introduced in 2019, gives visibility to four of the virtues from Seligman and Peterson's work: Courage, Humanity, Justice and Wisdom. This week in Tutor Group, student watched this video, introducing Character Strengths: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3nT2KDAGQc> and they will explore each of the 24 Character Strengths in Tutor Group time over the coming semester. You will also find them on pages 10-11 of the Year 7-11 Student Diary. Whilst it is helpful for students to consider their top strengths, we have made the decision not formally to measure students' character strengths using the (free) online VIA Character Strengths tool, with which some people may be familiar. Whilst this test may be useful for adults, formally testing children in this way by ranking character strengths may have the opposite to the desired effect: it risks discouraging them if they feel they do not have a particular 'desired' strength. It also risks students pigeon holing themselves and developing limiting beliefs about their own character and abilities. Character strengths can change over time, with research indicating that this is especially the case in young people aged between 9-19 (Shubert et al, 2018).

Leave Applications

Academic time is extremely important and it is the policy of the College that absence from school for extended holidays is marked as unapproved. However, we recognise that sometimes students may need to be absent for an extended period during term, due to exceptional family or other individual circumstances.

We have revised the process of applying for approval for extended leave from school during term time. Parents are requested to download and complete the Extended Leave Form from the College website, which is available at <https://www.oxley.nsw.edu.au/news-events/parent-documents/>.

This form should be used for any leave applications that are greater than two days, or for planned absences that about a school holiday. The form should be submitted to Junior School/Senior School Student Services as applicable, along with any relevant supporting documentation. The completed form can be emailed or submitted in hard copy.

Academic time is extremely important and it is the policy of the College to not approve of leave for extended holidays. However, we recognise that students may need to be absent for an extended period due to exceptional family or individual circumstances.

Leave requests for up to two days during term time should be submitted via email or in writing to Junior School/Senior School Student Services.

Deputy Head Learning: Kate Cunich

It has been so wonderful to return to Oxley after our long service leave travels. There is nothing more reassuring to know that you choose to teach and learn at Oxley, and that this is where great things happen in education. Learning that will continue to change the world.

We warmly welcome back all Oxley families on behalf of our wonderful teachers. It has been so good to see our students arriving looking excited, relaxed and ready to learn. We talk often about the fact that a school is not alive without children, so while we teachers relished the time to plan over the break, this last week, the return of our students has been the best bit for us!

2019 HSC

We are incredibly proud of our students, parents and teachers, who all worked together to bring about an extremely successful outcome for our 2019 Year 12 HSC cohort. The achievement of all our students was truly outstanding, and many of our students continue to let us know about how happy they are, how many doors are now open to them and how excited they are about their futures – all that we can ask really!

More Distinctives to enhance Learning!

As a constantly evolving place of life-long learning, we are delighted to add to our learning Distinctives in 2020.

Most exciting is the introduction of a Personal Interest Project (PIP) in Year 9 and 10 for all students. Students have chosen within five strands: Arts, Environment/Sustainability, Literature, Media and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). Within their chosen areas, students are being clustered into groups and provided the opportunity to inquire deeply into an area of personal interest. The result will be a product, performance or exhibition. We are already amazed at the ideas being “pitched” to teachers and we look forward to sharing a sample of the projects in upcoming issues of the Pin Oak. It will truly be a celebration of the agility and ability of young minds when provided the chance “to dare, to dream.”

We have also introduced a new learning programme for our newest secondary cohort – our excited Year 7 students! While we know that many of them are already well prepared for the challenges of high school, we want to explicitly upskill them in how (and why) we learn at Oxley. The result is a distinctive course that we are calling L2L (Learning to Learn). This course is being co-designed and facilitated by a great team of teachers that includes our Head of College, Mrs Ethell, Head of Learning Engagement, Mrs Ismay, e-learning Coordinator, Ms Brochard and Year 7 Coordinator, Mr Bollom. We look forward to following the progress and growth of our students in this initiative.

Elevate Study Skills

We have begun the year with the first of our series of Study Skills sessions, provided by Elevate. Many parents will be familiar with the reason we use this company – young dynamic presenters, not long out of school themselves, successful learners wanting to share their knowledge of the best way to study. Initial feedback from Year 11 and 12 students is that they found the sessions useful, interesting and immediately applicable to their studies, especially when it occurred on Day 1 of the year.

Parent Information Sessions – Week 3

Next week senior school parents are invited to the Orchestra Room for a series of Information Sessions. These provide broad brushstrokes of the year ahead, including an overview of curriculum and pastoral priorities. Presentations will be provided to those unable to attend.



OLD OXLEYAN INTERVIEW

KATE MacMASTER CLASS OF 1991

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

My proudest achievement is the off-grid home I have built (literally, with our own hands) with my partner and kids, on our 300-acre wildlife reserve. We've created this mostly out of recycled materials, and timber felled from our property and milled on-site. Obviously, I'm proud of my kids too whose personalities reflect the slightly wild nature of the upbringing they are having out here in the bush.

I have done a bunch of different things in life – worked as a bird trainer at Taronga; been a climate activist for the Australian Conservation Foundation; set up the first carbon neutral book shop in the world; but currently I am a partner in a social change enterprise/business in my local rural town, where I have set up a co-work hub to provide a space for women in remote and rural communities to work professionally – hard to do remotely without commuting to the nearest major city, especially after having kids. We do a lot of community-based volunteer work from here, partnering with others on issues from supporting refugees to youth engagement. I co-run our local Climate Action Network, and run a free science communications program, called "Talk about Town, which is about bringing eminent scientists to rural towns to share their amazing work.

Career wise, I work developing the leadership capabilities of those working in the natural resource and environment sector, many of whom are scientists. I am also a personal and organisational coach. In my spare time, I participate on the leadership team of a program called Homeward Bound – this is a ten-year initiative that aims to build a global cohort of female scientist's leadership capabilities to influence gender parity on the leadership table. There are still many challenges on this front, globally. Every year, the Homeward Bound program takes 80-100 female scientists from around the world, through a 12-month on-line leadership program, culminating in a 3-week expedition to Antarctica. I was fortunate to go in 2016, and in 2020 I am the lead facilitator for the on-line program and the on-ship/shore expedition in November this year. I can't wait to return to the icy continent – there are truly no words to describe its magnificence and how small it makes you feel both in terms of size and significance.

What is your biggest achievement since high school?

I am on the Board of WaterAid Australia – we provide water, sanitation and hygiene services to communities in Timor Leste, Cambodia and PNG. I am most proud of



this, as WaterAid is remarkable organisation, filled with purpose driven, values-based professionals working towards the provision of clean and safe water, for everyone, everywhere. The impacts of our programs, particularly for women and girls, is transformational. I've also recently been accepted as a member of my local Rural Fire Service Brigade, which I'm very proud of!

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

No. I had an idea that I might become an artist. Or a forester. Obviously, I had no idea.

How did Oxley prepare you for your future?

Oxley gave me opportunities to grow resilience, to realise the importance of friendship and connection, and was the beginning of establishing the values that were to guide me into my life.

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

At the time, my art teacher, Mrs Lidstone, who made me think I was talented, even though I probably wasn't. In hindsight, the inaugural Head-Master, David Wright, who worked with passionate Board to create such a wonderful school.

What would you say you miss most about being at school?

I loved the sense of house pride of being in Dobell - connecting with unlikely friends through a bond of that kind is unique and lovely. A good softball match. House play. Swimming in the Minnows. Typing secret messages to my friends through codes written in our hymn books. Outback trip. I don't miss cross country through the paddocks in the snow!

What would you say to your fifteen year old self?

That your story isn't written by what others think you are capable of or should be capable of. That you get to write your own story, and re-write that story, over and over again if you want to. That's the only story that matters – the one you tell yourself, written by you.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW...

EMPTY ESKY

Whilst most families in the summer holidays chose to go overseas for their holidays many small businesses were affected by the bushfires that are still burning in Australia. Christmas time is usually peak time for business and tourism but as soon as the fires flared up tourism all has disappeared making it hard for local business to make any money. Without customers these businesses can't make money and without money businesses can't pay staff wages and then have to dismiss valuable employees. All this impacts the business and makes it hard to make a living.

The 'Empty Esky' campaign has got together to spread the word and create awareness about these fire affected regions and how we as Australians can help our own country. Most Australians haven't even explored their own country. Instead they choose to go overseas during the holidays. So, this year we need to help our Australian mates by supporting local towns and business.

So how can we help?

The Empty Esky campaign recommends bringing an empty esky from home and going for a long drive with empty stomachs to a bushfire effected region and filling up your esky with local produce and goods from the local shops who are doing it tough. Go to a local pub with your family and fill your bellies up with a delicious meal from the town. By doing this you have helped multiple businesses in just one day out, now imagine if everybody took the time to visit a local town in need, it would only take a short time for these towns to recover. If you can't go on holidays there are many local towns within the Southern Highlands that also need our help with a simple day trip that will help our own local towns.

My family and I decided to go for a drive to Cobargo and Mogo where we went to local shops and we bought a few things then had a big lunch at Mogo's Grumpy and Sweethearts one of the lucky shops which was saved from the bushfires even though the shops directly next door were fully destroyed. Not only did this help the local business in a small way it also made us feel good about helping those who needed it.

Driving back, we couldn't believe the total devastation as far as the eye could see. Despite seeing it on the news regularly it's not until you see it with your own eyes that the full impact really hits you.

Although these towns have been heavily impacted by fire they are getting back on their feet and still wanting us to visit and still open for business. They will need our help not only in the next few months but for years to come to fully recover.

So, let's come together like the Aussies we are and help our local bush fire affected towns and fill up our eskys.

<https://www.emptyesky.com.au/>

By Lily Magill (Year 11)

A reminder from the WINGECARRIBEE COUNCIL

SCHOOL ZONE PARKING OFFENCES		SCHOOL ZONE TRAFFIC OFFENCES	
	NO STOPPING Under no circumstances are you allowed to stop here. (Unless there is a medical or other emergency) Maximum Penalty \$344 + 2 Demerit points		CHILDREN CROSSING When flags are displayed, drivers must not proceed through the crossing if children or adults are still on the crossing or about to start crossing. This is the law regardless of the presence of a crossing supervisor. When children's crossings flags are not displayed, pedestrians should give way to passing road traffic. Penalty \$572 + 4 Demerit points
	NO PARKING You may stop here for no more than 2 minutes, when picking up or dropping off passengers and stay within 3 metres of your vehicle. Otherwise no stopping is permitted. Maximum Penalty \$191 + 2 Demerit points		SPEEDING OFFENCES School Zone speeding offences attract higher fines & demerit points than other speeding offences. Maximum Penalty \$2,635 + 7 Demerit points
	BUS ZONE You are not allowed to stop your vehicle unless you are driving a bus. Maximum Penalty \$344 + 2 Demerit points		MOBILE PHONE USE Driving using a hand held phone in a school zone. Penalty \$457 + 5 Demerit
	DOUBLE PARKING You are not permitted to stop or park your vehicle alongside another vehicle that is already parked parallel to the kerb. Maximum Penalty \$344 + 2 Demerit points	For a full list of all penalties and offences, please visit www.rtm.nsw.gov.au Fines subject to change without notice. These penalties apply to offences in school zones only while the zone is active.	
NSW KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE		NSW KEEPING OUR CHILDREN SAFE	

FIRES NEAR ME APP

The Fires Near Me app is an app which is both crucial and important. The benefits of this app are for the people of Australia to be aware of the bush fires nearby them and resolve whether or not it could be affecting the safety of themselves or others. The features in this app include a map of Australia and it gives you a reference of where other fires are in Australia, not just in your area. When you download the app, you don't need to log in. A small blue dot is placed on Australia and that moves whenever you move with your phone/tablet, meaning it can show you whether or not you are heading away or towards fires. This fire app gets updated almost every two minutes showing you whether some fires have stopped or gained more land. There is also a list page, meaning it shows you the information of some fires which are close to you.

Information includes:

Not applicable: this is known as the White Fire, it is not dangerous and usually is quite small.

Advice: this is known as the Blue Fire; it currently has no immediate danger however stay alert in case of change.

Watch and Act: this is known as the yellow fire; it has raised its level of threat and if nearby you may need to act.

Emergency Warning: this fire is known as the red fire, it is very dangerous, and you may need to take action immediately otherwise delays may put your life at risk. In conclusion, the Fires Near Me app is a very useful app which really benefits all Australians particularly in this fire season.

By Charlotte Florida (Year 8)

GALLERY



FEBRUARY CALENDAR

	Mon 10 Kindergarten Information Session Scholarships 2021 Applications Close	Mon 17 Year 10 Morrsiby Testing	Mon 24 Year 12 Student/Parent/Teacher Interviews
	Tue 11 Year 1 and Year 2 Information Session Year 9 and Year 11 Information Session Year 9 Duke of Ed Information Session	Tue 18	Tue 25 EXC: Year 3 and 4 to Blue Mountains
	Wed 12 Year 3 and Year 4 Information Session Year 7 Information Session EXC: Year 11/ 12 OnStage	Wed 19	Wed 26
	Thu 13 Year 5 and 6 Information Session Year 8 and 10 Information Session	Thu 20 Junior School Swimming Carnival Senior School Twilight Swimming Carnival	Thu 27
Fri 07 Welcome Drinks, 6.30pm	Fri 14	Fri 21 Senior School Swimming Carnival	Fri 28
Sat 08 ISA Sport Round 8	Sat 15 Scholarship Testing ISA Sport Round 9	Sat 22 ISA Sport Round 10	Sat 29 ISA Semi Finals
Sun 09	Sun 16	Sun 23	Sun 01

P & F NEWS

Welcome to the New Year and a specially warm welcome to all of our new families.

We have some wonderful P & F events on the drawing board for 2020 and first up we are planning a Family Picnic Day. More details to follow. We are delighted to announce a great line up of Parent Year Reps and they are already busy planning year group get togethers for parents and students, and in the Senior School, organising volunteers for Canteen Rosters. The Oxley P & F meet once a term and dates will be scheduled soon. Please keep an eye on this Pin Oak Calendar page for P & F News. I really look forward to seeing you during the year at one of our P & F Functions or around the school.

Megan Moore, P & F President

2020 P & F Executive

President: Megan Moore

Vice President Senior School: Bec Biddle

Vice President Junior School: Eva Loiterton

Secretary: Lynda Smith

Treasurer: Sandra Talman

We also have a Junior School Parent Rep Coordinator - Sandra Mineeff and Senior School Parent Rep Coordinator - Sooz Heinrich.

All contact details for the P & F Executive and Reps via this link: <https://www.oxley.nsw.edu.au/about/parents-friends/>



NEWSFLASH

ILLAWARRA FLAMES



Recently three Oxley students represented the Illawarra Zone in the all-girls U14 regional cricket competition, the "Thunder Cup". Annalee Watson, Emily Rodger, both Year 8 and Chilli Sparke Year 7 were selected to play in the Illawarra Flames representative cricket team. Annalee captained the team in a hotly contested (and exceedingly hot) 40/40 match, in which they were narrowly defeated by the Shoalhaven/Illawarra Dolphins. Temperatures soared to 40 degrees at Centennial Oval before thunder and heavy downpours. Lightning stopped play for around 10 minutes, but the girls showed true grit despite the extreme conditions. All three Oxley girls had good innings with Annalee opening and scoring 4, Chilli 10, and Emily not out on 19. Their bowling was fast and accurate, with Annalee conceding only 15 runs from 7 overs, Emily 0/20 from 3 overs and Chilli 0/14 from 2 overs. The Dolphins reached the Flames total of 180 on the last ball of the 39th over. The girls finished the long day exhausted, but still smiling! By Katrina Sparke

SUFFERING WILDLIFE

It's estimated that 1.25 billion animals have been killed across Australia in the bushfires including koalas, wallabies, kangaroos, wombats, echidnas, birds and reptiles.

The danger of accessing these fire affected areas is making it hard to get help to these animals in time.

12 million hectares of Australian land has burnt so far. Animals are dependent on this land for habitat and food. Where animals are rescued and rehabilitated there is difficulty returning them to their homes as it has often been destroyed by fire. Volunteers are being coordinated to take food and water into burnt areas of bush to feed surviving animals but National Parks and Wildlife stress these feed stations need to be managed with care as animals using these are more exposed and vulnerable to predators.

Many animals that are coming into care have severe burns to their feet as they cross burnt ground escaping from flames. They will often travel a long way with these burns appearing unhurt though in severe pain, before they collapse from exhaustion and infections. The animals brought into care are treated with painkillers and antibiotics and need their dressings changed every three days. This is a difficult task with an adult wild animal and they need to be sedated.

It is not just the fires that our wildlife is coping with. The drought means the leaves that animals eat are low on fluid and animals are becoming severely dehydrated. Koalas are being found on the ground extremely dehydrated. They have to be taken to specialty veterinary hospitals where they can be rehydrated on a drip for several days until they can recover enough to go into care for the long rehabilitation process.

Many Wildlife Rescue South Coast volunteers had to evacuate with their animals in care, sleeping in their cars with wombats and kangaroos with them. The response from the public has been great with funds going towards replacing the enclosures that carers have themselves lost in the bushfires. Additional enclosures and hospital pens are also being built to house extra animals coming into care. Special counsellors have been trained to support carers who are overworked stressed and traumatised by the suffering they have seen.

Kerstin from Wildlife Rescue South Coast stresses that if anyone finds an orphaned animal, please contact a trained carer. These animals might look well and cute but they are suffering from dehydration and smoke inhalation and need care from experts. Wildlife Rescue South Coast is running training courses for people motivated by the bushfires to become carers or help in some way.

With so much damage to our wildlife population and habitat it is going to be especially important to support wildlife response organisations over the coming years as it is estimated it will take 100 years for our land to recover from the damage done this Summer. By Tika Conway (Year 8)



CONGRATULATIONS

Ava Lambie (Year 11) was the winner of the United Nations Voice State Final at the NSW Parliament House in Sydney and she is now going to the National Final in Adelaide this year.

Andrew Campbell (Year 7) was awarded a medal by the international committee for The Welsh Cup held in Le Cresset, Switzerland for the most improved skier and the athlete with the best sportsmanship.

Andrew Bailey-Hughes (Old Oxleyan) On his gap year visiting the Beatles' birth place in Liverpool UK, was asked to perform "Yesterday" at the Cavern Club. "Andy from Australia" was praised for his great singing.

Meaghan Stanton (Staff member) is featured in the recent addition of Escape Magazine in Final Frame.

GET KEEN EVERYONE!

The 2020 swimming carnivals are coming up at the end of Week 4. It's the time of the year when it is hot and everyone has a chance to jump into the pool on a school day! There are events for everyone; swimmer or non-swimmer, that's what the swim through is for.

For those who are really wanting to swim their hearts at and leave it all in the pool, Oxley Senior Swimming Training is the place for you to be on a Wednesday and Friday morning at 7.00am at Bowral Pool. We have a lovely coach, who is very encouraging and will help you as much as you need. After training, there is cereal to dig into and then there are buses that will take you to school.

The swimming carnival is there for everyone. So go in one or two events, or maybe just the swim through, get points for your House and support everyone around you; it's a fun day out in the sun, so enjoy it! Junior School Swim Squad trains on Mondays at Bowral Pool, 7.15am - 8.00am.

By Olivia Bow (Year 10)