

PIN OAK



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IGNITE
Festival of Bright Ideas

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ENGLISH
Extension

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DONATIONS
Lego

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HEAD OF COLLEGE'S REPORT



Vale George Dummer

'We are all in this together' and 'we will get through this' have been comments that have been made many times over the past year and never more so, than this week. The Oxley community has come together as we support each other and the Dummer family - Jane, Murray, Charlie (2017) and Sophia (2019) after the tragic death of their much-loved son and brother George on Saturday. George was well known to many members of the Oxley community as he was a student here from Year 2 - Year 7 before transitioning to Riverview as a boarder. George certainly had an impact on many of our staff and I share some of their memories with you.

'I will always remember George as a kind young man with a cheeky smile who filled each and every day with energy, fun and adventure'. - Peter Ayling

'I taught George in Year 6 in 2017. His smile was unforgettable and his warmth and compassion for others was something his many friends counted on. He used to come to school on Monday mornings with hilarious tales of his weekend dirt bike stunts and other courageous physical and sporting adventures'. - Shona Apostolatos

'Having taught George for two years, the thing I loved most about him was his sense of humour, we could always share a laugh. He was incredibly honest - always being relied upon to tell the absolute truth, no matter what, and taking responsibility for his part in it. He had a compassion and love of animals that was so beyond his years, he seemed to naturally understand them and they, him. With his mates (the rest of the 'Labrador puppy litter') Matt, Billy, Benedict, Gus and James, they kept the class entertained and their energy was boundless. I miss George's cheeky smile and warm, kind nature. I watched him change from a boy into a young man and I am a better person for knowing him'. - Jo Ismay

'George was a determined, loveable and courageous student, whose smile brought joy to others. He gave everything 100%'. Gareth Loveday

We will remember George fondly for his spirit and character and he will be missed by all. As a community, we offer our deepest sympathies to Jane, Murray, Charlie, Sophia and the extended family. We will continue to wrap around the Dummer family and support all of George's friends and peers as we journey in our grief following George's sudden passing.

May he rest in peace.



HEAD OF COLLEGE'S REPORT *continued*

Staff Farewell - Stuart Bollom

After 17 years of outstanding service, Mr Stuart Bollom will leave Oxley College at the end of Term 3 to take up a new opportunity at the Uniting Church as Director of Mission. Stuart has held a range of roles during his time at Oxley including teacher, Tutor, Executive member and Head of Mawson House and we thank him for his loyal and dedicated service. He is well known for demonstrating the Mawson spirit with his strong participation alongside the students in House competitions. We are very appreciative and grateful to Stuart for his professionalism, enthusiasm and commitment to all the students who have been in his care. Stuart is always supportive and encouraging of the students and works closely with his colleagues to ensure the best outcomes are achieved. Stuart will be greatly missed but an exciting new adventure awaits and our very best wishes go with him.



Looking forward to 2021

While 2020 has been filled with uncertainty and challenges, it has also brought some unpredicted bonuses. One of the unexpected consequences of Covid has been the desire of many families to leave Sydney and to move into the Southern Highlands. Many of those families are looking to move because of the reputation of Oxley College and of course the lifestyle which comes from living in the Southern Highlands. As a result, our enrolments continue to grow. In 2021 most of our year groups are full. In planning for 2021, we have formalised our leadership structure including a Director of Curriculum and a Director of Students to support our learning and wellbeing teams. Mrs Catherine Dobner, our current Head of Mathematics has been promoted to the role as Director of Curriculum. It is with pleasure that I introduce the following staff members who have been appointed to leadership roles and will be joining Oxley College in January 2021.

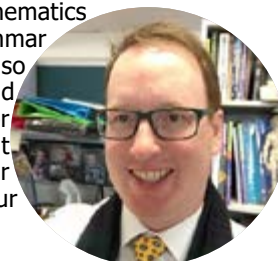
Genevieve Whiteley - Director of Students (Senior School)

As Director of Students Genevieve will work in the Senior School with the Heads of House and pastoral team to support our student's wellbeing and learning. Genevieve is an experienced educator, most recently holding a similar position as Director of Students at Cranbrook School from 2015-2019. During her tenure at Cranbrook (2009-2019) Genevieve also held the positions of Head of House, Assistant Head of Mathematics and Mathematics teacher. This year, Genevieve has been studying another Master's Degree in Education (Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health) to add to her other Masters degree in Education and Bachelor of Education (Mathematics). Genevieve is looking forward to joining Oxley College and getting to know the students and community.



David Houghton - Head of Mathematics

David will take up the position as Head of Mathematics following an extensive career teaching both Mathematics and English to secondary students. David is currently a Senior Mathematics teacher at Sydney Grammar School (2014-2019) and has taught all levels of Mathematics including Extension 1 & 2. David has also taught Mathematics at the University of New South Wales whilst he was a Teaching Fellow in 2012. David has a Master of Arts and a double degree in Bachelor of Teaching and Bachelor of Arts with a major in Mathematics and minor in English. David taught both English and Mathematics from 2009-2011 at Cranbrook School. He has also been heavily involved in the co-curricular activities coaching football over many years. David is excited about bringing his family to live in the Southern Highlands and leading our Mathematics team.



Tom Kindred - Head of PDHPE and Sport (K - 12)

Tom will join Oxley in 2021 to lead our PDHPE and Sport programme. He is transferring from SCEGGS Redlands (2017-2019) where he currently holds the position of Head of Sport (7-12). Tom is an experienced educator and leader, teaching PDHPE and coaching a range of sports in NSW and Qld. He has a Bachelor of Arts; Human Movement and Bachelor of Arts; Teaching from UTS and a Master of Business Administration from Griffith University. Tom is looking forward to the breadth and depth of this role and working closely with the students and staff to continue to build an integrated and holistic sporting and PDHPE programme from Kindergarten to Year 12. Having grown up in regional NSW, Tom and his family are excited about joining the Oxley community and living in the Southern Highlands.



Social Media

This week we have once again been reminded of the importance of monitoring our children's engagement with social media and different apps that they place on their phones. While the College's strong Mobile Phone policy in K-10 of "see it, hear it, lose it" helps to minimise the risk at school, it is important for parents to be aware of which social media apps their child uses and to set their own appropriate family boundaries around mobile phone usage. Extra vigilance may be required if you feel your child is particularly vulnerable or at risk. I know in speaking with parents and students at interviews that the vast majority of parents have strict guidelines and rules around the use of technology at home which is very encouraging. To supplement what you already know there are some excellent online resources for both parents and children to help young people stay safe, including guidance about what to do if encountering disturbing content:

Kids Helpline - <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

The eSafety Commissioner's website: <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

As featured in this week's Pin Oak, Thursday 10 September was R U OK? Day. Whilst there is an annual R U OK? Day, it should be every day that we are mindful of asking 'R U OK?' So check up on your friends and ask R U OK?

By Jenny Ethell, Head of College

DEPUTY HEAD LEARNING



It may seem incredible, but at this time of the year we are already well into thinking and planning about next year – 2021! I am not sure about you, but I do start to feel hopeful about the future, especially when we can be hands-on planning more wonderful learning experiences for our students.

For that reason, our gaze this week has been on getting our senior students ready for the next step toward their futures.

Year 10

Last Friday, Year 10 students received the 2021 Year 11 Subject Lines, built from their preferences. We are proud to be a school that starts first with student voice – what courses do this cohort want to do the most, and in what preference order? After a time of consultation, including an individual meeting with Heads of House, students indicated their priorities and the final curriculum offering result is very exciting. Alongside a very high satisfaction rate, for the first time, we are adding Earth and Environmental Sciences to our programme of study, bringing the number of courses on offer for Year 11 to 27!

Students now have the opportunity to move within the published lines until the beginning of their Stage 6 courses in 2021. My sincere thanks to Ms Catherine Dobner who is watching over the Course Selection process in all its myriad of details!

Year 11

Year 11 students and parents also received a briefing this week about the 2021 HSC Programme of study. Ms Dobner and I presented by ZOOM on Monday afternoon, followed up with an email of the presentation to all Year 11 parents on Tuesday. The key messages were about the importance of preparation for the Year 11 End of Preliminary Examinations, starting this Friday. These examinations mark the end of the three terms of the Preliminary HSC and count as the final, significant assessment task of the year. While this data is for internal use only, it does give us the opportunity to see how students are going, particularly under timed, writing conditions. Students will apply for Extension Courses in Week 10, with confirmation occurring during Year 12 Transition during Term 4, Week 1.

I continue to be delighted with the academic culture of this year group – 29 students attended Year 11 Study Club on Tuesday night – exemplifying how being “alone together” in a silent study environment can benefit all. We look forward to recommencing this in Term 4 when students return as the new Year 12 cohort!



Year 12

I am not sure how many times it has already been said, but I will say it again – we are immensely proud of our Year 12 students! They have shown such grit already, and continue to put in the sustained effort required to finish the important race that is the HSC.

Last Thursday, Mrs Ethell and I met with each student at their final consultation. We looked at the mindset that was reflected in the learning statements given in the final Year 12 report, at assessment and Trial HSC data and most importantly, talked about what needed to be done to achieve their personal best! These interviews were followed with a consultation with Mrs Simpson, our Year 12 Academic Master who is using the information gained to set goals, not just with individual students but with clusters of students.

At Tuesday's Senior Assembly, I also spoke to the year group about a shift of focus now to the Oxley HSC race, not just an individual one. I encouraged each student to not only think of their own future, but to keep working hard so that all students can benefit from a broad range of opportunities in their life beyond Oxley. As teachers, we continue to guide students through these final weeks, and this week we are particularly mindful of the Design and Technology students, as well as Visual Arts students who are putting the finishing touch on their final projects, Body of Work, portfolios and Process Diaries. We know that their experience in these courses prepares them well for the world of design thinking, problem solving and creative collaborations – key skills for the 21st century.

By Kate Cunich, Deputy Head Learning



DEPUTY HEAD PASTORAL



Civic2Surf and 'Walk for Hat' – Saturday 12 September, Bong Bong Racecourse

"Civic2Surf is a student led initiative dedicated to smashing the stigma surrounding youth mental health. By utilising and strengthening the use of youth perspective, we aspire to allow young people to talk about mental health, and to take charge of their stories. Through our large community here in Canberra, as well as our annual fundraising run from Canberra to Sydney which raises funds for Batyr, we hope to continue to empower and encourage our young people to reach out and be heard." – Civic2Surf

Civic2Surf was created by students at Australian National University and involves a fundraising and awareness raising run from Canberra to Sydney. At the midpoint in Bowral, there is a 'Walk for Hat', in memory of Harriet Nixon, Old Oxleyan and former president of Civic22Surf, who died tragically in 2016. The walk involves a lap of Bong Bong Racecourse and is open to all members of the community, with breakfast and coffee available for participants. All participants must observe physical distancing and are encouraged to wear a mask. The event has a CovidSafe plan and has been approved by Southern Highlands Police. A number of Oxley students will be involved as volunteers for the event.



This week students have been encouraged to ask 'R U OK?' and check in with friends, and R U OK? wristbands have been on sale throughout the week, to raise awareness of the need to ask, listen, encourage action and check in. All funds raised go to the RU OK? charity to support their work. Lily Magill (Year 10) spoke in assembly last week about the organisation and reminded us that, whilst there is an annual R U OK? Day, it should be every day that we are mindful of the four steps of asking 'R U OK?'



1. Ask



2. Listen



3. Encourage
action



4. Check in

More information about how to start a conversation can be found at: <https://www.ruok.org.au/how-to-ask>

By Mark Case, Deputy Head Pastoral

HEAD OF JUNIOR SCHOOL



Weekly Awards

Learning Journey

K: Harrison Peebles
Yr 1: Rose Hurst
Yr 2C: Euan Shedden
Yr 3B: Gabi von Sperl
Yr 3L: Oscar Choo
Yr 4: Rory Shedden
Yr 5B: Leila Palmer
Yr 5N: Heidi Malouf
Yr 6A: Imogen Hiscocks
Yr 6W: Fred Hamblin

Oxley Values

K: April Sneddon
Yr 1: Albert Herrmann
Yr 2C: Oscar Jones
Yr 3B: Charlotte Holmes
Yr 3L: William Carioti
Yr 4: Scarlett Miller
Yr 5B: Aiden D'orio
Yr 5N: Oxford Feller
Yr 6A: Flynn O'Brien
Yr 6W: Madeline Gordon



Students of the Week

Learning Journey

K: Thomas Apostolatos

Yr 1: Max Curr
Yr 2C: Tessa Hunter
Yr 3B: Oscar Le Guay
Yr 3L: Will Kean
Yr 4: Molly Harwood
Yr 5B: James Blanche
Yr 5N: Alexander Psarakis
Yr 6A: Gabby Dobson
Yr 6W: Ava Steyn

Oxley Values

K: Grace Byrne
Yr 1: Luella Sewell
Yr 2C: Anna-Sophia Psarakis
Yr 3B: Victoria Feetham
Yr 3L: Sapphire Sparke
Yr 4: Jett Loiterton
Yr 5B: Miranda Hunter
Yr 5N: Madeleine Wright
Yr 6A: Sofia Perin
Yr 6W: Harry Kean



This week, I was joined by Matilda Lambie, Fraser Finley, and Matthew Morschel to conduct an interview via Zoom with Dr Erin Mackenzie, lecturer at Western Sydney University, and former Science Teacher at Meriden School. She teaches the Master of Teaching programme, in Primary and Secondary STEM learning.

She is an expert researching in the area of STEM, and particularly looking at the attitudes of young people to Science and Mathematics, and the long-term impact of their self-belief. She works closely with Primary Mathematics specialist, Catherine Attard and they work with primary and secondary schools to educate students in how to successfully get STEM programmes up and running in schools.

What is STEM and why is it good for Primary Students?

STEM is an integrated approach to teaching Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. It is founded on Inquiry learning, where students have to do a lot of the thinking, and to do more of the work in their learning. They learn to apply their skills, particularly in Maths and Science, to solve real-world type problems. STEM challenges students to think out of subject boxes, and to connect their thinking. This is an important skill for the future.

Matthew asked: Is it more difficult to teach to younger students?

Yes, it can be. However, a good teacher will use more support for younger students, as they would with any subject, including breaking things down into smaller steps, and using more age-appropriate equipment.

Yet, we have found that giving students rich and exciting immersive opportunities in STEM learning from a young age is critical for setting children up with positive attitudes to learning in Mathematics and Sciences, and these attitudes can be set for life.

Matilda asked: How do ensure both girls and boys get interested in STEM?

I have done a lot of research in this area, and is where my expertise lies. It is really important that both boys and girls feel capable and interested in STEM from a young age, and that they feel equally encouraged to take up STEM learning opportunities.

Sadly, there are very entrenched attitudes about boys and girls and their suitability for STEM subjects, and yet we know that it is largely in STEM that the jobs of the future lie. Boys are still over-represented at Secondary School and University-level Physics, Engineering and Mathematics courses.

Fraser asked: Will STEM learning be important for getting jobs in the future?

It's necessarily that all future careers will be STEM-based, but certainly many jobs of the future will be STEM-based, or at least will rely on STEM-based skills. People will need to have a strong capacity for innovation, reasoning and critical thinking. STEM teaches children those skills, and certainly the jobs of the future are strongly associated with STEM.

Ms Halcrow asked: How is creativity and critical thinking a focus in STEM learning?

It is important for children to learn to be innovative and creative, to explore options and possibilities. Closely following that, is the need for children to learn to critically analyse their creative responses. This is scientific method. Scientific method explores possible solutions to a problem, but then uses evidence to discover whether, and to what extent, those possibilities are of relevance. Science, like Mathematics, teaches children to use evidence in a robust way, that helps them to use their creative

ideas in a way that has value in the world.

Oxley Junior School is looking to launch a STEM learning programme in 2021.



Legends and Legacies: Year 6

This week, I have been in conversation with a number of Year 6 students who shared with me the impressive historical and contemporary figures who have inspired them this term.

I felt incredibly inspired and encouraged by the lives of these incredible legends

Gemma Fraser 6A researched legend, Bill Gates

I really admire Bill Gates because he has demonstrated the Oxley value of humanity throughout his life. Bill Gates displays the Oxley values of persistence, and has shown entrepreneurship at its best. He didn't finish his formal university studies but later received an honorary doctorate. I think it is his entrepreneurship that I would like to live out in my own future, though perhaps not aspiring to make quite as much money!

Fred Hamblin 6A researched legend, Chris Hadfield

Chris Hadfield is a Canadian astronaut who has gone into space many times and has orbited Earth thousands of times. He demonstrated leadership skills and persistence, and it is persistence I think I have learned from him the most.

My favourite quote from him is that, 'Almost everything worthwhile carries with it some sort of risk...' and that 'Good leadership means leading the way, not hectoring other people to do things your way.'

Sabine Garton 6W researched legend, Jane Goodall

Jane Goodall worked with chimpanzees, and is a scientist and biologist.

Her life is inspiring to me because of her respect for nature, her kindness towards animals and her persistence in the face of challenge. I have learnt the values of courage and persistence from her life.

My favourite quote from her is, "The greatest danger to our future is apathy."

Gabby Dobson 6W researched legend, Michelle Obama

Michelle Obama has always fought for equal access to education and the rights of girls. At Princeton University when studying law, she faced a lot of discrimination because of both her race and her gender. My favourite quote from her is, 'Instead of letting your hardships and failures exhaust you or discourage you, let them inspire you.'

She displays the quality of persistence and courage.

Amber McGlynn 6W researched legend, Jessica Watson

'You don't have to be someone special to achieve amazing things,' is my favourite quote from Jessica Watson.

Her special qualities are that she demonstrated bravery and persistence at such a young age. She had to be incredibly courageous to be able to sail so far all on her own before anyone her age had ever done this.

By Katherine Halcrow, Head of Junior School

OLD OXLEYAN

ORIANE DUBOIS Class of 2003

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

After I finished school, I took a gap year before moving to Canberra where I began studying a Bachelor of Community Education. But after a year studying it, I realised it wasn't quite the right fit for me and instead decided to undertake a Bachelor of Nursing. I studied part-time, whilst working full-time, which thinking about it now, was a very intense period.

In 2011, I graduated and became a Registered Nurse. I was really interested in working in Operating Theatres and managed to score a position into a new graduate program where I learnt a tremendous amount of skills. I worked in all three areas of the operating theatres which included scrub/scout, recovery and anaesthetics. Once I finished the grad program, I was offered a full-time position and chose to stay in anaesthetics and recovery (though I would often do scrub/scout when it was needed).

I also completed a Graduate Certificate in Perioperative in 2013. In 2017 became a fellow in the Australian College of PeriAnaesthesia and in 2018 I completed a Graduate Diploma in Anaesthetics and Recovery nursing. I'm also a member of the Australian College of Nursing.

All of this hard work has allowed me to have a few promotions at work which led me in becoming a theatre floor manager. Being a floor manager has its challenges but it is very rewarding and everyday there is a new challenge which I absolutely love. This year has been particularly interesting due to Covid 19 and the bush fires earlier this year. Covid has brought us many challenges but we have been very lucky that it hasn't been as bad as some other places.

What is your biggest achievement since high school?

My biggest achievement has been finding my footing and working out where I want to be and what I want to do. I have been nursing for almost ten years and I am proud at how much I have achieved. Now working as a Leader in Nursing/Theatre Floor Manager, every day presents new weird and wonderful challenges. But it's worth it. I have such a great team and every day they inspire me and make my job much easier. Last year I was lucky enough to be nominated for the ACT Nursing Award for excellence in Management.

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

No, not really. I wasn't exactly sure what I wanted to do and kept changing my mind. It took me a while to realise what I wanted to do. At the time I was stressed as it felt like everyone had a plan except for me. Then I realised that it really doesn't matter if you are not sure what you want to do once you leave school. Life is full of surprises and you never know where it may take you.



How did Oxley prepare you for your future?

I was very lucky to be a student of Oxley. I came when I was in Year 9 and felt very welcomed by everyone. Oxley allowed me to be me and showed me what being part of a community was. My parents worked very hard to allow me to go there which I will always be grateful for.

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

There were many teachers, and students who made an impact on me while I was at Oxley. In particular Mr Schaefer was a teacher who really inspired me. He was a firm teacher but he had such a big heart and had a great sense of the importance of community. He really cared about people and I was able to see that on our trip to East Timor as well as on the Outback trip. Both of these adventures have had a huge impact on me.

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

The friends and the activities Oxley offered. I was able to take part in musical activities, sporting activities such as kayaking which I absolutely loved!

What would you say to your fifteen-year-old self?

Don't worry so much about what people think, life is too short to worry.

English Extension Students Shine

Black Shuck

The wolfhound's black nose dances side-to-side along my neck. The sniffles titillate my skin. It then droops its head further into my skeleton, releasing a very depressing whine. Its voice is low and mournful. Its pupils stare deeply into the windows of my soul. When an animal you don't understand does that to you, it is something else. You feel raw. Humans might not know all your secrets when looking into the confusing glass lens of your eyes, but animals do. They can see right through those reflective windows and understand what kind of person is hiding desperately behind it. It knows I am tired. It knows I want to leave and never return, dreaming away in whatever empty void is left on the other side. It won't let me though. In a way it feels like it is forcing me to feel whatever loneliness it is feeling.

My fingers tug gently at the rough fur of the beast. Blood and earthy rubble spreads onto my palms. My eyes close as I rest alongside the melancholy monster, both our bones moulding and intertwining one another.

I dream for a long time. It's the same dream that repeats every time I fall asleep. Only, each night it worsens just a little bit. I age whenever I face the ghastly mirror. First, I have eyes and I simply look more tired, sad and older in front of the mirror. Then comes the wrinkles and the colourless palette of my skin and hair. Eventually, dirt tickles my skin and I feel some of it hugging my insides, my organs slightly out of place as though I had been laying down for a long time. More dying flowers surround me, as though I rise from a grave and become clumsier every time, catching tangled flora on my way out. I watch myself and the colourful flowers decompose bit by bit each night. By the fourth night my sealed eyelids shoot open again, revealing sockets, my bones becoming extremely prominent. My yellowed skin sags, exposing the core of me, my skeleton and a few tucked organs now visible over the skin. I can still see my heart pulsating rhythmically in the emptiness of my chest, though I know there isn't any blood or life left inside me. I am dry, filthy and fleshless, and desperately waiting for the end. The mummified flowers curl in and around my ears. They grasp the shell of me, holding me in the embracing arms of living death.

"I feel it looking, I feel it thinking" – Sylvia Plath, 'A Birthday Present'

I breathe in deeply. My ribs and lungs suddenly expand and lift upwards, my back cracking with ease. I feel like a plant that has finally pierced through the ground's surface after being trapped inside a tight seed. A tiny slither of sunshine that escaped the grasps of the curtain kisses my bloodied palm. My watery eyes glance around the room. My bed looks like somebody ravaged through an open casket. Black muck is all over the once pure white sheets surrounding me. Even the grains of sand are turned into earthy strains. It must have left silently, though I'm not sure how long ago. The crushing sensation is gone, and I lay for a long time, recovering. I can't tell how long I had stayed resting, but my stomach's gurgling indicates it has been days since I last got up. Maybe the creature got hungry too.

By Indira Horsley-Elliot, Year 12



SPRING – Osaka 1987

By Clancy Aboud

The glasshouse glowed amber, sun melting the western sky. Velvet. The air clung itself to the small hairs on my arms, welcoming the humidity's embrace. It was the familiar essence of Ojiichan's greenhouse, the scent of watermelon and cucumbers – they were early this year. I stood there and inspected, one full bodied melon beginning to hang low with great stress being placed on its skinny little vine. I watched it, wanted to cradle it in my arms, placing it in the crux of my elbow like a newborn's head. I wanted to take care of it, rock it to sleep. "Ojiichan, isn't it going to break and hurt itself?" I called out.

The door creaked open: like the vent of a rice cooker releasing steam. Ojiichan, hunched over with hose in hand. A towel around his neck soaking up the pearls of sweat that trickled down. Cigarette precariously dangling from his lips, perfectly balanced. The folds in his face told of a life spent smiling with eyes squinted and lips pursed upwards. From his pocket, a plastic shopping bag, wrinkled much the same. With measured force, he lifted the watermelon to the roof, placing it in the bag. Then knotted it through the support beam and leaving it to dangle weightlessly from above.

"See, easy. You don't need anything much. Just a little bit of cleverness. And a garbage bag. Never throw them away".

Dirt wriggled itself into my hot pink crocs. Crouched by the strawberry patch, I separated leaves, searching for ruby gems. The flowers were pretty, with their soft white petals and seedy golden centres. But the real joy lay in filling my wicker basket with red, with the intentions of bringing as many home to mum as I could.

Sundays were spent inhaling flour, sat on the edge fishing for lost egg shells. Whipped cream, the closest thing to catching a cloud in my butterfly net and transferring it into a bowl. Light and fluffy. And those strawberries: sliced, syrupy, carefully cut then coated in that cream. Layered in a tower of sponge and air. With a final dusting of icing sugar, a pinch of fairy dust. Subtle. Art.

Ojiichan helped open the door to the house as I stretched on my tiptoes, struggling for the handle. The metallic melody of windchimes, tinkling. Like opening the door of the lolly shop down the road: "irasshaimase". Instead of being greeted by an overly enthusiastic shopkeeper and the familiar pastel aesthetic, it was the most humbling of scents; the smell of oden that gripped the air. Hard boiled eggs and fishcakes stewing in a light salty soup of... "Stop, stop, stop. Take your shoes off" I reminded myself,

"leave those evil spirits outside".

I sat cross-legged in the genkan and pulled off left, then right. I moved them to the side and neatly lined them up next to Ojiichan's. Our shoes were friends as I often fantasised; my pink crocs, his brown boots, both full of holes. They had that in common. I imagined them sitting there at night, talking about their days, gossiping, giggling. I slid my 'inside' slippers on quickly, over each foot so mum wouldn't notice the dots of dirt on my socks. White socks.

In the kitchen, Ojiichan's veggies sat on the floor. He unloaded them from a repurposed shopping basket, once red, faded to salmon. A kiss from the sun worked like that, had the power to age, to wear. He passed mum daikon radishes to be washed and peeled. They awaited their fate, soon to be swimming in a pot of salty broth, then in my tummy. I peered into my own basket, now lighter than the time of initial departure, full of more lonely stems and less actual strawberries. Not enough for the cake either.

Never mind, we could spend our day another way. An afternoon walk with Ojiichan was routine. But not mundane, ever. In fact, it was the elements of repetition, of utter certainty that made it sacred. It was as though we possessed this allocated time of day. As we approached the edges of town, I felt the same breeze that would comb through rice paddies. The sweet blossoms that would cling to the very same gust, playfully dancing and twirling until their eyes grew heavy and their mothers called them to bed. Then they'd float sleepily down, arranging themselves in my pigtails, complementing my signature butterfly clips. "Goodnight my darlings" their mums would whisper. Although apparently insignificant, at least to anyone else, each detail was intentional. And there lay the allurements, nestled amongst the obscurity, waiting for the right person to look at it the right way. That was us. Me and Ojiichan.

Chirusakura Falling blossoms
kaze ni nagarete cling to the breeze,
nemutai yo comatose

By Clancy Aboud, Year 12

irasshaimase – a common Japanese phrase to welcome customers into a shop or restaurant.

oden – a kind of Japanese hotpot dish commonly eaten in winter. It consists of various ingredients simmered in a soy-flavoured light dashi

Genkan – traditional Japanese entryway areas for a house, apartment, or building—something of a combination of a porch and a doormat.

Reconciliation

Annik didn't believe in holding grudges.

That was why, when accused of cultivating illicit medicinal plants in her balcony greenhouse, she let the comments fly. That was why, when the police came knocking on her doorstep, she let them in with a smile. That was why, three months later at the neighbourhood bake sale, she turned up with a tray of muffins, which nobody dared eat.

That was why, when confronted by the man who had ruined her life years before, she let him inside to talk. Of course, in hindsight, she hadn't known it was him to begin with.

* * * * *

Admittedly, Skandar had followed Annik home.

But what else was he supposed to do? Phonebooks weren't half as reliable anymore and he couldn't bear to have waltzed into her workplace and wheedled the information from one of her colleagues.

If he had to be honest with himself, he could admit that the reason he hadn't found her earlier was because he was a coward. A nocturnal, socially awkward coward who knew full well he shouldn't be following this dangerous woman home. Who knew what ties she still upheld? If she was still in contact with her criminal family, she could easily have him hunted down and killed, or worse. There was no limit to what dirty underworld money could do.

But she had run away from that, hadn't she? Skandar noted, with a dull pang in his chest, that he had driven her to do so. He quashed the uncomfortable, unfamiliar feeling and turned back to stare at the apartment he had left just minutes ago – Annik's apartment. The buttery light from the windows was warm and inviting, just like the woman inside, but at the same time it repelled him. He functioned best in the dark.

When a figure moved past the window, he turned away to trudge back home, digging in his pockets for his keys. He couldn't find them. Cursing, he realised with panic that he had left them in his wet clothes, still hanging to dry in her apartment. What if she found the keys, and took them to a real estate agent? What if she had him hunted down? Tonight would be too soon to act—he could go home and sleep through the day, but he'd have to rent somewhere tomorrow, he thought, scrounging through pockets for his wallet. No wallet either. As soon as he retrieved his belongings, he would lease his daggy apartment and have another fake I.D. run up.

One couldn't be too precautions when one was wanted for attempted murder.

The journey home was wet and cold. By the time he forced his way through the window, he was just as wet as he had been before. The apartment was dark and sparse; he'd only been here a couple of weeks. Opting to flick on

the lamp instead of the main light, he sat by the heater and turned it on, hoping it would help to dry his borrowed clothes. He reached over to the radio on the coffee table and tuned it in. A cheerful voice emanated from the speaker.

"... And that was 'Uptown Funk' by Bruno Mars! Next up is a blast from the past: 'Smooth Criminal' by Michael Jackson!"

Of course. The universe's way of taunting him. The first jarring chord from the electric guitar pierced through the air like a knife.

"As he came into the window, it was the sound of a crescendo. . ."

He glanced back at the open window he'd left behind him.

"He came into her apartment; he left the bloodstains on the carpet—"

He'd made the mistake of stepping in some of it. What a huge lead, the examiners had declared—he'd never worn work boots again.

"She ran underneath the table—he could see she was unable. . ."

He could see her now, quivering underneath that table, as if it could shield her from him. She'd left blood underneath that, too.

"She ran into the bedroom—she was struck down, it was her doom!"

He smacked the radio off the table. It thumped loudly to the floor, and the musical voice faltered and died. He cringed, craning forward to survey the damage—only to see the batteries had fallen out. Sighing, he picked them up and slotted them back in, making sure to turn the radio off before it could start singing again. Though the radio was quiet, the lines rang around in his head.

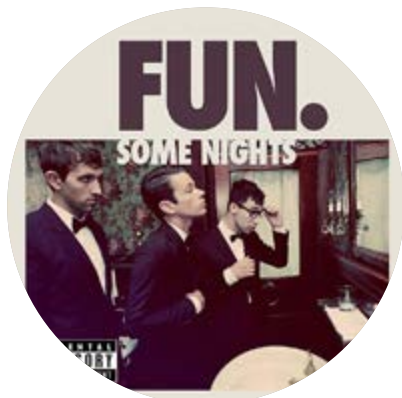
Annie, are you okay? Can you tell us that you're okay?

You've been hit by, you've been struck by—

A Smooth Criminal.

By Lauren Bailey, Year 12

INSPIRATION



ALBUM

Some Nights

Some Nights by New York band Fun. is a 2012 album that most will recognise by its stand-out singles, Some Nights and We Are Young (featuring Janelle Monáe), however it is actually so much more than those two songs. Admittedly, those two are definitely great songs, with their alt-pop vibe and easy sing-along-ness (is that a word? Oh, well, it is now) proving them to be a hit wherever you are, whether it be over a tinny supermarket speaker or the ear-splitting loudness of a trendy nightclub. However, I like to focus on some of the lesser known tracks on the album, as I believe that those are the ones that really make it special. Whether it be the soft, sad musings of Why Am I the One, or the loud, marching band like beat of One Foot. Some Nights is a perfect album to put on if you are looking for some quality music to listen to while, say, writing an article for Pin Oak or completing an English assignment that you definitely already started and definitely isn't due tomorrow. The only downside to this album is that there isn't more of it, as it only features 11 songs and the band has been on hiatus since 2015 and doesn't look to be coming back any time soon. Until then, you can always stream (or whatever people do these days, I don't know) Some Nights for hours on end to numb the pain. Ultimately, in a world of increasingly incredulous music tastes (looking at you, mumble rap), sometimes it can be good to go back to, while slightly older, still definitely quality music, and Some Nights definitely fills that gap.

By Liam Verity, Year 10



BRIGHT IDEAS

Ignite

Ignite week in the Junior School was filled with beautiful performances, drama and music, wonderful showcases, and a lot of bright ideas. With COVID-19 in the way, it was a hard year to show off our learning to families, but Ignite week created a chance to still do something special. Ignite was a way to stagger everyone, but still be able to show other students what we have achieved this past term.

Year 6 presented a showcase about Legends and Legacies. Everyone chose a 'legend', researched them, and wrote a biography on their Legend. Some people even chose to act as their Legend, pretending to be a statue but coming alive and saying an inspirational quote as people walked past. This was a fun way for people to gain some skill in first person performance and for the people walking back to their classes to have a fun experience.

Each year group presented a different performance or showcase of their learning. It has been filmed and we are looking forward to all of the families at home to be able to enjoy this experience as well.

By Emily Byrne, Year 6



MOCK TRIAL

School Team

The Mock Trial team have been hard at work all year in order to legally finesse our opposing schools, and so far, they have done that and more. The Mock Trial competition is set by the Law Society of NSW and aims to both educate children about the law as well as provide them with a fun time and an opportunity to argue, examine and object to their heart's content. Each round, the opposing teams are given scripts that outline the conflict at hand and give the prepared statements that the witnesses must read. The teams are then given several weeks to prepare their case and figure out strategies and perspectives that they will be using in order to win the trial. Mock Trial also incorporates real-life law into the proceedings, with teams using actual legislation and precedent to their advantage in order to win the case. So far in 2020, the Oxley Mock Trial team has spent countless hours making their cases the best that they can be, and it shows as they have won all 4 out of 4 trials that they have participated. Additionally, the whole process has been completely upturned due to COVID-19, and so trials are now having to take place on Zoom, which, despite numerous technological hiccups and mechanical ineptitude, has meant that the trials can continue under these challenging circumstances. We will have to see whether or not Oxley will qualify for the quarter-finals of the competition, however if there is anybody who is interested in doing Mock Trial in one, two, three or even more years, I heavily encourage you to try, as it is great fun and can really teach you a lot.

By Liam Verity, Year 10



Finding Beauty in the Small Things

The line between what our society deems as a pessimistic view is ever-thinning to one that takes on more of a realistic stance. This sentence in itself felt rather glum to write yet this seems the best way of explaining my current view of the earth we call home. Amidst a global pandemic, the future health of our world, economic recessions, surge in domestic violence and Chinese concentration camps...only to name a few; right now doesn't seem awfully 'positive' or 'bright'. It's difficult to face the fact that our world is not perfect and probably never will be. Though, I don't think this should deter us from challenging its ways and ultimately breaking down its harmful practices in hopes for a better home – now perhaps that would be considered an optimistic view if I'm lucky, yet its sense of solace may override such a thing from happening. I suppose it is simple and easy for me to sit here pondering on the nature of our worlds complexities, but honestly, that is in no way helpful. So, in an effort of being uplifting, I have derived an elongated list of ways in which we, as the everyday Joe, can make a difference.

Stand up to everyday injustice: In the words of Amnesty International "Human rights aren't just something you should believe in – they're something you should do." Whether it's a dinner table conversation or out on the playground with your mates at recess, don't hesitate to voice your beliefs and educate others.

Become a Weekday Vegetarian: Cutting down on your meat intake can reduce your environmental impact due to the immense consequences the meat industry has on our world.

Live with Less: The whole minimalistic movement ultimately derives from the ideology of 'living with less' in search for both personal cleansing but also it puts a limit on the commercial influence and hold over your life. You can buy 'recycled clothing, catch public transport

and reduce your consumption of material goods' as ways to reduce your impact on the earth.

Gift of Life: 'The Australian Organ Donor Register is a government register, recording individuals who have agreed to donate organs and tissues in the event of their death.' The gift of donating your organs when you die is immeasurable in its impact of giving life to another.

Learn to authentically love yourself: One of the best ways to live is through your genuine and authentic self, this way you become a role model to others in showing comfort in your own skin.

Overall, the way in which we perceive the surrounding world is undoubtedly a product of what we, as individuals, put into it. Even when it feels terribly dark and big, these simple ways of making your being more influential can ease the seemingly scary aspect of our world. Even If the gloom may be too powerful, it is crucial to try and see the light within every day. Whether this simply is the fresh feeling of splashing cold water on your face in the morning or the soft crunch of soil beneath your feet, or the snug warmth of your bed before drifting to sleep; find beauty in the small things.

By Peggy Holmwood, Year 10

GALLERY



VIRTUAL GALLERY

The Librarian's Choice

Briana Grice, Year 10

Shawn

Oil on Canvas, 2020

Art has a unique ability to trigger, within each of us, individual connections, emotions and interpretations. Art makes us think, and our thoughts are our journey with that artwork. The portrait I've chosen for the Librarian's Choice Award is one showing a person with a fiercely intense and focussed gaze. The subject grasps the ring on his hand as if he is about to meet an opponent or adversary. There is a strength of character in this face that assures me that whatever the challenge, the response will be the right one. The portrait reminds me of Ponyboy in S. E. Hinton's *The Outsiders*, my favourite character in one of our most loved books.

By Elizabeth Antoniak



Studying Philosophy

This year, Oxley's Year 11 cohort were given the opportunity to study a new one unit subject called philosophy. Philosophy is a NESAs endorsed Year 11 subject that was developed by Mr Case for Oxley College. Over the year we have studied what knowledge is, how do we know and the philosophy of religion. Studying these topics has encouraged us to learn and practice new critical thinking skills and describe our world from different perspectives in order to try and solve philosophical problems. For this reason I find that philosophy is quite different from other subjects because I feel like you are practicing thinking skills as opposed to just remembering content.

Philosophy is a very relevant subject as the thinking skills and understanding of knowledge that we have been taught can be applied to our other subjects at school or beyond. This was proven when the class completed our second assessment task. It involved creating a presentation on an epistemological question concerning any subject matter we were interested in such as history, mathematics, linguistics, the sciences and the arts. I enjoyed this task as many of us were able to research unique interesting topics which we wouldn't normally be able to study at school including conspiracy theories or the objectivity of music.

Studying philosophy this year has given me a greater appreciation for honing my critical thinking and problem solving skills. I have learned how to see the world from a number of different perspectives and approach my learning in some subjects differently. Philosophy is important and uniquely human because it requires you to solve problems by thinking laterally which is something machines can't do. So, if you are interested in understanding the world around you or seek to enrich your critical thinking skills for your other subjects, then consider giving philosophy a go.

By Will David, Year 11

Wonderland

Wonderland, a funny place
A place to go just in case
Somethings wrong or somethings scary
A place to go that's not so weary.
This place helps me face my fears
A place where people have big ears.
A place I love to go today
A place where feelings lead the way.
Wonderland, my favourite place
A place to go where I can show my face
The mad hatter, the Cheshire cat.
Tweedle dee and Tweedle Dum who are so fat.
The white rabbit whose habit is being late,
The queen of hearts who chops off heads, Crikey
Mate!
Wonderland, a place for me,
I place I love so much of such and such

Myths, stories, nothings true,
I'll prove to you and take you somewhere new,
Down the rabbit hole we'll go
Chase the rabbit and his sneaky foe.
Follow it to the Hatter and 'Bing',
Have tea with them and hear them sing.
Happy Unbirthday is the tune they sang,
Then we all sat down and had a merangue.

Now it's time to battle the dragon
And win the bet
Save Wonderland from the horrible threat.
The dragon is killed, hooray, hooray,
We've chopped off its head and saved the day.
If you don't believe us, say,
And down the rabbit hole to play.

By Lisa Mussett, Year 3

GOOD & OTHER NEWS



R U OK?

RUOK? is an Australian suicide prevention charity inspiring people to meaningfully connect and support those struggling with life. Designed to create conversations with people who aren't ok and help support them through whatever they may be going through.

But how do we ask R U OK? Without it being awkward?

R U OK suggests the 4 following steps:

1. Ask R U OK? Ask in a subtle calm way like "Hey I've noticed you haven't been yourself lately do you want to talk about anything?"
2. Listen: Take the time to listen. If the person does choose to talk to you be a good listener don't interrupt. Listen to what they have to say and take it into consideration. Don't judge them. Make sure they know you care by listening.
3. Encourage action: Ask how you can help support them through this time and encourage them to see and talk to someone about what they are going through.
4. Check in: Continue to check in with them regularly to see how they are going, show them that you care

This year's theme for R U OK? is there's more to say after R U OK.

By knowing what to say when someone is not ok you can help them feel supported and access appropriate help long before crisis which could change their life

So, what can we say after R U OK?:

- How long have you been feeling like this?
- I'm here to listen.
- What can I do to help support you?
- Have you thought about seeing a doctor?
- How about I check in with you next week.
- How have you been feeling since the last time we talked.
- What your going through isn't easy but its good that we can talk about it.

Last year, I lost a family friend Jackson who was only 13 to suicide and since then mental health has had a huge impact on my life. I now realise how important checking up on your friends is even if they seem perfectly fine like Jackson was. Look for the signs of someone who might be suffering in silence and needs your help. I wear my R U OK? band everyday for Jackson and for all those battling with mental health. It reminds me to check in with my friends, peers and family and spread the word about how important R U OK? really is.

As we are all aware 2020 hasn't been the best year and that's why it is so important that we support one another by reaching out and checking with our friends, family and colleagues

R U OK? Day isn't just Thursday 10 September R U OK? day is everyday. So check up on your mates and ask R U OK?

A conversation could change a life.

By Lily Magill, Year 11

Share Market Comes to Oxley

This term in Year 9 Commerce we have studied the topic, 'Investing'. Currently we have been participating in the ASX Sharemarket Game! This has given us the opportunity to learn about the sharemarket and how it works.

In the beginning, we all received a virtual \$50 000, that we have been able to invest over a ten-week period, in over 200 companies and these are listed on the ASX. The prices we buy and sell at are the same prices as in the live market and a brokerage fee is charged for each trade, which simulates real sharemarket conditions. We can create our own company watchlist, examine company charts and view the latest prices of our stocks along with our own portfolio worth. There is a list of the top five and bottom five stocks of the day as well as our local, state and national rankings.

The competition has a 1st place prize of \$600 however, none of us have yet reached the top 100 on the national leader board, but there is still time. We are enjoying developing our knowledge of the sharemarket, learning how to research companies and discovering how to make wise investment decisions. This experience has opened us up to the possibilities of investing in the future. All Year 9 Commerce students' have been thoroughly enjoying this game. We have all eagerly awaited each Commerce lesson, to check how our stocks are progressing and the value of our portfolios.

By Hannah Zupp and Elise Davies, Year 9



LEGO DONATIONS

As part of the new look for OLE! Week in 2020 each Senior School House will create a Lego installation which represents an interpretation of their House namesake.

Oxley College is asking for donations of Lego bricks and mats that can be used in the construction of these projects. Please ask your son/daughter to bring in their donations to Elvo front reception before Monday 21 September, Week 10.



WINNERS VISIT BEN QUILTY'S STUDIO

This week, the winners from the Oxley Portrait Prize 2020 visited Ben Quilty's Studio. They were Arabella Osborne, Nic Milner, Lara Fischer and Jen Allan. We interviewed Lara from Year 9 about this experience.

So Lara, what were your first impressions of his studio?

L: I walked in and it was a workshop area where Ben creates his own frames for his canvases. Then you could see there was an upstairs collection of art, from over the years and on the other side there was an office where him and his colleagues worked.

Then we walked into this massive space, with really tall ceilings and huge canvases where he creates his artworks. We saw some of his artworks that he had just painted a couple of days ago. There was also a giant budgie sitting on a shelf.

What was a highlight for you?

Ben Quilty talked a lot about how the studio is his quiet place, away from everyone else. It was really personal and private. He talked about how his parents are not allowed to come into his studio and they never will be and they are not allowed to comment on his work. I loved that! As a young person it was so cool to see that I could have a space like this of my own one day with my own rules and a sense of freedom.

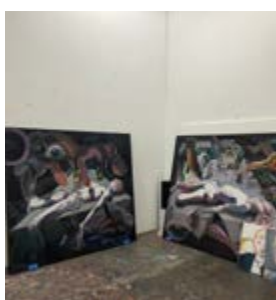
We also got to watch him paint – on an actual painting he was working on! We got to see how freely he was mixing the paint with the pallet knife. I've never seen anyone put a whole bottle of paint on a table!

Was there any favourite works of his?

I had three favourites, the first two were painted during lockdown and are these figures on a table and are full of Glen 20 and vitamin products that symbolise parts of Covid-19 lockdown and show how he was feeling anxious for the world during this time. My real favourite was a woman on a pale table. His painting style is really different to things that I like and as I really love drawing and painting figures, these were my favourites. I loved the colours that he used and how he applied the paint.

Have you been inspired?

YES! I have been inspired to continue my passion for making art and his studio is an insight into what I can have!



SPORT UPDATE

For what has been a crazy and unpredictable season of sport, we have come to the last weekend of Winter sport). Despite not getting the chance to finish what a normal ISA season would be, and having a shortened season only starting in Term 3, it has been one of the best seasons yet!

Many teams at Oxley never get to play Chevalier in their normal competition, and having a Southern Highlands competition organised to play them has been such a great opportunity. I'm sure everyone has enjoyed being able to still play their sport, even if it is a bit different. I, for one, as well as my whole team, have really enjoyed this season. Being in the firsts Netball side I have never play Chevalier firsts in a competition, and it has been so much fun, considering I am friends and play netball with so many of the girls in the Chev team. For our final game, both sides were going in with a win, so the result could go either way. For most of the game, in point score was one for one. In the end, Chevalier won the game by one, however if we simply had five more seconds, the game could've ended in a draw! At the end, there were lots of tears, happy tears for it being such a good game, but a lot of sad tears for the six Year 12s girls in our team, whose last game it was, and for the younger girls who were going to greatly miss such a great team!

The Hockey firsts also had some very close matches, winning the first match 1-0, losing the second match 3-0 and getting defeated in the last, 1-0. All very close results which were all good fun in the end.

The Rugby firsts lost all their matches, but everyone played with great Oxley spirit and continued to turn up to every game, and that is what it is all about.

Despite Chevalier having more teams, and some of the Oxley teams having to play more than one game on the Saturday, the competition between Chevalier was a great way to finish a wild season. Unfortunately, Oxley lost the overall point-score 184-140, however, the competition was a great way to stay active and continue with some normality. The rivalry between Oxley and Chev will continue for many years, and hopefully we can continue to have these tournaments to see who comes out on top. Many thanks to all that were involved in organising the tournament, and hopefully it can be something we look to continue to do in the future.

By Liv Bow, Year 10

