

PIN OAK



OLD OXLEYANS

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OLD OXLEYANS
So much Talent!

—
BIG ISSUE
Persecution

—
ART
HSC STARS

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OXLEY REUNIONS

This year's annual celebrations for past students – the 1990 Old Oxleyans' 30-Year Reunion, the 2000 Old Oxleyans' 20-Year, and the 2010 Old Oxleyans' 10-Year Reunion – were all affected, like everything else, by COVID19. The 30- and 20-Year Reunions were at first postponed from their middle of the year place on the Oxley calendar, and then eventually substituted by online gatherings when there was uncertainty over attendance at dinners. All three year groups attempted, on the anniversary of their final HSC examinations, to achieve some sort of link to their alma mater and to their contemporaries by entering separate Zoom meetings, hosted by one of their contemporaries. Many thanks to Kirrily Zupp and Annik Schaefer (1990), Brad Dawes (2000) and Montana Mays (2010) for setting up and acting as meeting hosts.

The unusual form of Reunion allowed those who were overseas or interstate to participate and Old Oxleyans from as far afield as Austria and Holland joined the chat. It was also pleasing to see that several Oxley staff had joined in the conversation, showing an interest in what their students have achieved post-Oxley.

It is hoped that next year we can get back to a normal programme and have past students back on the campus for traditional reunions – and a possible 'catch-up' event for those who missed out this year. By Peter Craig



MOVEMBER

Movember is the leading charity changing the face of men's health on a global scale, focusing on mental health and suicide prevention, prostate cancer and testicular cancer. To raise money, every year during November men around the world will not shave for the entire month and grow out their 'Mo's' in the hope of receiving donations. So far the Oxley Mo Bros (team name) have raised over \$1,298 between teachers and Year 12 students, within 13 days of our shave-less campaign. However, this year the 'Mo Bros' have aspirations of raising more than \$4,000, and we need the Oxley community's help to get there. If you'd like to give a donation, the teams URL is: <https://movember.com/t/oxley-mo-bros?mc=1>, or simply go onto the Movember website and look up 'Oxley Mo Bros'. Please help us raise funds for all the dads, brothers, sons and mates in our lives. Please donate to men's health. By James Feetham

HEAD OF COLLEGE'S REPORT

The spirit of the Oxley Community is shining bright as we come to the end of the year. The students are showing their generosity to others with several Christmas service projects underway- Reception and Student Services are filling up with donations for Christmas Hampers as part of the Community Christmas Drive.



Please see page 5 for details. We can never underestimate the ripple on effect of kindness and generosity. Since Year 5 students made 'pots of colour' during OLE week for the recipients of Meals on Wheels, we have received some wonderful feedback about how their generosity lifted up

those who received a plant. One of those recipients, Muriel who is 95 years young and living independently, wrote to the Year 5 students and now through this new connection is coming to visit Oxley to share her life story and interest in geology. I know this experience will be so positive for both Muriel and the students.

On the weekend, we saw wonderful leadership amongst our Oxley staff, with Meaghan Stanton organising the Inaugural GD Championships for mountain bikers from Oxley College and Chevalier College to remember former Oxley student George Dummer. It was a fabulous event and as Meaghan said it was one of the most important and proudest things she has done. The Oxley community turned out in strength to pay tribute to George and the Dummer family. Oxley student, Ava Lambie, wrote a moving article for the local newspaper and as she said, "there was more than just competition here. People had also turned up simply to pay tribute to George, to show support for the Dummer family, to ride with their mates, try their first mountain bike race or just be part of it all." To read Ava's full article please see page 15 of Pin Oak. It is also featured in the Southern Highlands News via this link <https://www.southernhighlandnews.com.au/story/7027725/mountain-bike-event-a-tribute-to-passed-oxley-college-student/?cs=264>

We also celebrate the ongoing success of our students with Ava Lambie reaching the National Finals for the United Nations Voice competition. This is a fabulous achievement by Ava who addressed the issue 'How can the Australian public health system provide better care?' and had to answer questions relating to the topic. Our Year 12 HSC students' success also continues with James Doughty's Theatre Criticism being selected for the OnSTAGE exhibition and Matt Hardy's stunning sculptures being selected for the ARTEXPRESS exhibition. Matt's work will be on display in the Maitland Regional Gallery.

As we draw to the end of Term 4, we also prepare for the holiday period which is always a hive of activity for general maintenance and refurbishments around the College. Some of the projects we are working on over the holiday period include:

- The relocation and refurbishment of our gymnasium into a new facility adjacent to the PCC. This highly valued facility will open up to the outdoor area and allow the gymnasium to all be in one space.
- We are beginning stage 1 of an upgrade to our library with new floor coverings. Over 2021 we will be completing stage 2 which will include some shelving and furniture upgrades.
- There will be some refurbishment of general classrooms. We are developing a new 'Maker Space' for Design and Technology and also for our Personal Interest Projects.
- We are also re-roofing the Staff Study area and food technology room. In addition, we are creating new vegetable gardens in the area in front of the Food Technology room for our new elective in Year 9, Cultivate.
- We are also hoping to address some of the student safety and parking concerns by providing additional parking. We are in the final stages of this planning and will inform parents on the 'where' and 'how' when it is all approved. This is an ongoing focus in 2021. In addition to what we can do onsite, we are also looking at developing a 'Green travel plan'.
- Two new demountables will be brought in temporarily to provide specialist spaces for Junior School classes for Art, STEM and Music. These will be located at the end of the PCC car park. Whilst we will lose a few short term parking bays, we are looking at how we can open up more parking for parents.

Early in 2021, we look forward to providing more details to parents about forthcoming developments from our finalised Masterplan which will address the needs of the College in the future. As part of our Masterplan process, we have been exploring new building technologies to decrease disruption and time required onsite for construction.

As 2020 comes to a close and we complete our 18 month transition to the new PE uniform, we would ask all parents to please keep this on your radar and purchase new sport tracksuits for your child in 2021. Our current Year 12 students may continue to wear old sport uniforms for the remaining three terms. If this transition is at all problematic, please don't hesitate to contact us. All old uniforms can be donated to our sister schools in Botswana, Nepal and Fiji. We are grateful to two Oxley parents, Angie Sanchez and Shona O'Brien, for organising this collection. Your child can drop into a bin outside the library or give to a Junior School teacher.

Thank you for your ongoing support and we look forward to celebrating the end of the school year in our last Pin Oak edition on Thursday 10 December.



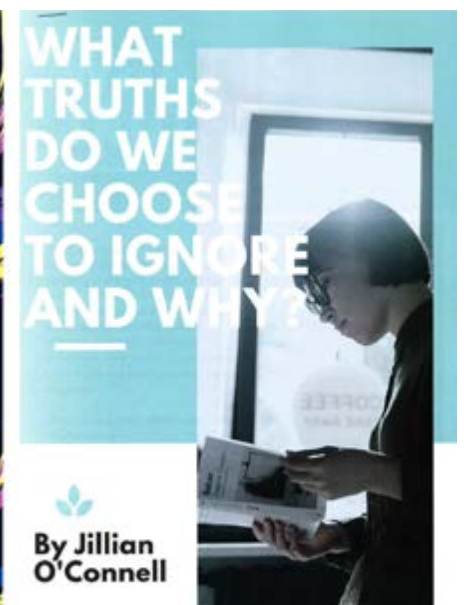
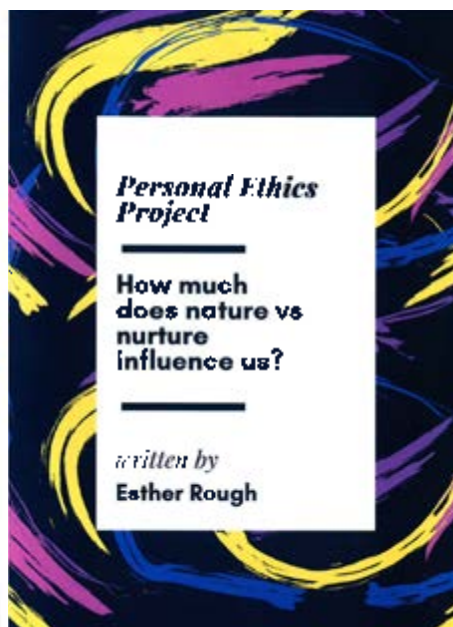
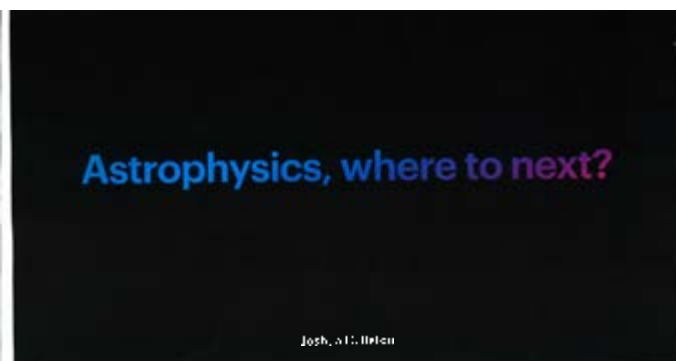
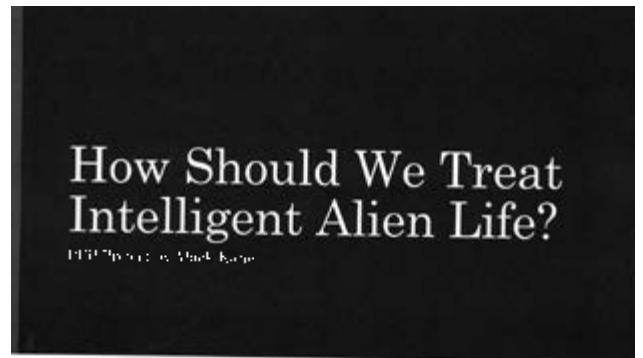
DEPUTY HEAD LEARNING

We are really proud of our students. Our Year 7, 8 and 10 students have completed their Yearly Examinations, our Year 9 students are completing their projects and PIPs and our new Year 12's have ascended to the Study Centre. We continue to be so impressed with the way that each student has approached their learning with determination and grit. An incredibly well deserved break is only days away now!

Post-examinations, our Year 10 students have embarked on the inaugural Festival of Ideas, a series of programmes that will build both their individual and collaborative skills by way of a number of projects. They are currently finishing off the filming of their scripts, and next week will move on to edit, feedback, performances and celebrations.

You will know too that we have evolved some of our Cornerstone study this year to include more opportunity for students to explore big questions that intrigue them. The topics on this page reflect just a small example of the things on the minds of 15 and 16 year olds at Oxley College. I hope you enjoy this provocation and celebration of how we are helping students to learn to think deeply, keenly and with curiosity..... if they are asking these questions now, we can have high hopes for their ability to be wonderful citizens of the world.

By Kate Cunich, Deputy Head Learning





DEPUTY HEAD PASTORAL

Christmas Hampers – Donations still needed please!

In collaboration with the Salvation Army, BDCU Alliance Bank and the Southern Highlands Christian School, the Oxley College Senior School is seeking more donations for the 'Southern Highlands Community Christmas Dinner', in support of local families in need. Bon-bons and ginger bread house kits can be delivered to Senior School Student Services.

As in previous years, we are also collecting both hamper items and children's toys for Wingecarribee Family Services. Due to health and safety regulations, only new, unused toys can be accepted. Please do not wrap any toy donations. Students should bring donations to their Head of House's office.

- Christmas Pudding
- Long Life Custard
- Tinned Fruit
- Bon Bons
- Milo
- Soft Drink
- Christmas Cake
- Cereal
- Chocolate
- Fruit Mince Pies
- Biscuits
- Candy Canes
- Jelly
- Jams
- Christmas Napkins
- Napkins

Advice for Parents – Christmas Tech Gifts

The eSafety Commissioner has published advice for parents who are planning to purchase tech gifts for children and young people this Christmas; the advice covers everything from smart watches to online game memberships, VR devices and drones. The 'Gift Guide' includes age appropriate advice, what to look for in products to help children stay safe, and what measures or boundaries parents should consider. For details, go to <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/gift-guide>

By Mark Case, Deputy Head Pastoral

**COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS
DRIVE THROUGH**

AT SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS CHRISTIAN SCHOOL CAMPUS,
22 BOARDMAN ROAD SOUTH, BOWRAL

ON 23 DECEMBER 2020 FROM 2-5PM

We need your help, Oxley College!

Please help us by collecting
200 Ginger Bread house kits and/or
200 Christmas Bon Bons for the
Community Christmas Drive Through.

If you know of anyone doing it tough in 2020,
encourage them to register and receive a car
load full of Christmas goodies: a frozen
Christmas dinner for the family, bon bons, a
gingerbread house kit, gifts for the children and
a hamper of non-perishable items!

Register on www.trybooking.com/BBLIH

For more information call Irma on 0499 197 522

P & F NEWS

In true 2020 style, the Oxley College P&F AGM was held via zoom on Tuesday 24 November.

Congratulations to the P&F Executive who were elected for 2021:

President – Megan Moore

Vice President (Junior School) – Eva Loiterton

Vice President (Senior School) – Sooz Heinrich

Secretary – Lynda Smith

Treasurer – Sandra Talman

Assistant Treasurer – Justine McKinley

Junior School Parent Rep Coordinator – Rebecca Morse

Senior School Parent Rep Coordinator – Ann Marie Greenop

We farewelled and thanked, Bec Biddle, for her enormous contribution as a past P & F President and Vice President. We also thanked Sandra Mineeff for her role as Junior School Rep Coordinator. We were delighted to have approximately 25 people online for the AGM. There will be more P & F updates in the last Pin Oak for 2020.

Funny Theatre Company Presents

MAMMA MIA!

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY
BENNY ANDERSSON
BJÖRN ULVAEUS
AND LYRICS ADAPTED BY JUDY CRAYMER

10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20 December
Evening shows @ 7:00pm, Matinees @ 2:00pm (Sat & Sun only)
at Clubbe Hall Mittagong
Tickets - www.trybooking.com/BHBOI

JUNIOR GALLERY





Weekly Awards

Learning Journey

K: Em Hunt
Yr 1: Hannah Cochran
Yr 2C: Greta Lawson
Yr 3B: Zoe Sneddon
Yr 3L: Sapphire Sparke
Yr 4: Jake Linde
Yr 5B: Brigitte Pietsch Liddell
Yr 5N: Holly Bentham
Yr 6A: Ben Scott
Yr 6W: Henry Adamson

Oxley Values

K: Finn Kean
Yr 1: Emily Wright
Yr 2C: Charlie Hammond
Yr 3B: Ayden Hosseinzadeh
Yr 3L: Hadley Morgan
Yr 4: Molly Harwood
Yr 5B: Cartier Dobler
Yr 5N: Fraser Findlay
Yr 6A: Amber McGlynn
Yr 6W: Fairlie Pulbrook

Top performing Olympiad participants

Emily Byrne, Gemma Fraser, Fred Hamblin, Chris Mansour & Hamish Tully

Year 6 Maths games prize winners

Toby Wood, Isaac Halcrow, Sam Plummer, Madeline Gordon and Allegra Mineeff.

Year 5 Maths games prize winners

Miranda Hunter, Heidi Malouf, Henry O'Riordan, Caelan Granger, Saxon Mellish

Students of the Week

Learning Journey

K: Lucy McIntosh, Frankie Ventura
Yr 1: Harry Berry, Chloe Motycka
Yr 2C: Ian Phillips, Tessa Hunter
Yr 3B: Robbie Clothier, Hamish Aston
Yr 3L: Oscar Johnson, Ivy Bacon
Yr 4: Clancy O'Mahoney, Jett Loiterton
Yr 5B: Hayden Zupp, Phoebe Mooney
Yr 5N: Emilie Henderson, Tristan McCroary
Yr 6A: Mimi Legge
Yr 6W: Ella Loiterton

Oxley Values

K: Emily Hunt, Thomas Apostolatos
Yr 1: Xavier Halstead, Luella Sewell
Yr 2C: Sophia Bagnall, Matilda McCarthy
Yr 3B: Pollyanna Landrigan, Andy Clothier
Yr 3L: Laura Drysdale, Mariella Vlahakis
Yr 4: Scarlett Curr, Eddie Hunt
Yr 5B: Dakota Winn, Asher Smith
Yr 5N: Lex Cochrane-Ryan, Ivy Halstead
Yr 6A: Fred Jurgs
Yr 6W: Toby Wood



HEAD OF JUNIOR SCHOOL



Spotlight on Gratitude

In a year of challenges, we should also acknowledge all that we can be grateful for at Oxley.

A year ago today, I heard the news that I would be coming to Oxley as the new Head of Junior School, and I think on that with a deep sense of gratitude. It is a role that I have loved despite all the challenges, and I am glad to have been able to lead and support staff and students in what will be a memorable year for us all.

It has been a tough year, no doubt about that. I am mindful of families in our community who have had particularly challenging personal circumstances. It has been a year of unexpected opportunities, growth, and has perhaps given us time to reflect on what is important and to appreciate things we may have taken for granted.

As educators and leaders, we have had the opportunity to review the ways we frame learning and wellbeing. Covid has provided this new lens. It has helped us to see what is most important; a rich, stimulating education that is also humane, well-rounded and character-building.

I am grateful for the learning@home period, where the creativity of our exceptional Junior School staff team, was on show for families giving them true insight into their classrooms. We also saw what our students are really capable of, their resilience and independence. Some students truly shone in that context. Strengths were revealed that had not been seen before.

I am grateful for the Junior School team, who together with families and students, pulled together and shouldered the changes bravely, with intelligence and ingenuity. I am grateful for the sense of camaraderie that is a distinct mark of our Junior School community and for the personal messages of support extended in my first year here, which has made me feel very welcome.

The enthusiasm and determination of staff to go ahead with new initiatives possible within the limits of Covid, such as Ignite! Festival of Bright Ideas, OLE Week and Year 6 Camp has been impressive too.

It has also been especially rewarding as a Junior School staff to see the gentle growth of our students over the year. Kindergarten have been particularly remarkable. I think of the units of study across the year where teachers lead investigations with: bugs and self-portraits in Kindergarten; studies of biomes and playground design in Years 1 and 2; inquiries into countries of the world, fables and changing societies in Years 3 and 4; and survival, identities, Legends and Legacies and Sustainability in Years 5 and 6.

Most of all, I am so grateful for getting to know the children of the Junior School, to hear about their day and to see the tenacity they have shown. I am constantly amazed by their creativity, sophisticated thinking and most of all, their sense of kindness.

We can look forward to 2021, confident that Oxley is a community that survives and thrives even in tough times. 2021 promises to be an exciting one, with some new opportunities for us, and we will continue to be grateful for the way life throws us its challenges and opportunities which are always a new opportunity to grow and even flourish.

To review the year, please take some time to have a look at a new promotional video for Ignite, and for OLE Week:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ng5K225PgmI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aG9njJ8b4ts&feature=youtu.be>

By Katherine Halcrow, Head of Junior School

Why are we seeing a re-emergence of the far-right in global politics?

Over the past decade, the world (Europe in particular) has seen a rise of far-right/right-wing populist parties in the democratic political landscape. In this instance, far-right/right-wing populist refers to groups with ultra-conservative political ideologies which lie very much right-of-centre on the socio-economic political spectrum. These groups tend to have very nationalist, authoritarian values tending towards the protection of nativist rights, national pride and even racial/ethnic/religious superiority. Traditional far-right/extreme-right groups, particularly in regions such as Europe, generally hold xenophobic, autocratic, racist, homophobic, transphobic, or reactionary views. They are often characterised by their appeal to a more traditionalist value system (i.e. how things used to be in “the good old days”) and allude to perceived failings of the modern democratic system to accommodate these values, especially in regards to: law and order, the family, the ethnic, linguistic and religious community and nation as well as the natural environment.

In the last century, especially post-World War Two after which the world was still recovering from atrocities committed largely by the extreme-right Axis alliance of the German Nazis, Italian fascists and Japanese ultra-nationalists, there was very little support shown for extreme/far-right political groups. The war left Europe and parts of Asia destroyed and impoverished, but the years that followed were a time of great growth and development—both economic and in terms of human rights. Poverty decreased significantly, life expectancy went up, and despite the turbulences that continued

to disturb the course of progress (the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the dictatorships that replaced colonial powers), no major global conflict again erupted. So it is with great surprise that we see, in this day and age, a re-emergence of political extremism, particularly that of a far-right nature. The question is where are these ideologies re-emerging, and why?

The answer to this question is, for the most part, in parts of central-Europe such as France, Italy, Poland and Germany, all countries which share one common occurrence: increased rates of immigration. In 2018, an estimated figure of 2.4 million people immigrated to one of the EU-27 member states from a non-member country, 10% of these were refugees. The

“The question is where are these ideologies re-emerging, and why?”

top three countries in terms of highest immigration rates were (1) Germany, (2) Spain, (3) France, and (4) Italy. The correlation? In all these countries, the method of persuasion by far-right political parties such as

the AfD (Alternative for Germany), Marine Le Pen’s National Rally, and former leading party of Italy, Lega Nord, centre around backlash against immigration and the alleged inability of the current system to regulate it, a sentiment shared by a significant proportion of native inhabitants. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that 39% of French natives regard immigrants as more of a burden than a blessing on local economy and culture, this number is even higher in Italy and Russia (51% and 64% respectively). A commonly shared belief as to the detrimental impact of immigrants on the economy is that immigrants “take away” employment opportunities from endemic workers and thus disadvantage people whom apparently think



they're "more entitled" to access these jobs than people who will work just as hard, if not harder, simply because they are superior in some way. Some other political groups play on the instinctive human fear of invasion by outsiders and attempt to link increased immigration with terrorism, as was most evident in the 2016 Nice terror attack in which 87 people were killed by an Islamic extremist who drove a 19-tonne cargo truck into a crowd of people celebrating Bastille Day. However, although many people would have been understandably grief-stricken by such events (and most likely very angry at the perpetrators), it is important for people to understand that extremists come in many forms and from all cultures/religions. For example, the Oslo terror attacks in 2011 – in which 77 people were killed and at least 319 injured – were orchestrated by a sick, deranged white supremacist who changed Norwegian attitudes toward extremist offenders. This brings us to our next question: how many people are really voting for parties that appear to encourage this kind of reaction?

In the past, the answer would have been 'not many'. However, in recent years these have gained a sizeable electoral boost because of said immigration patterns, and the ineffective responses delivered by governments. The AfD, for example, received enough votes in the 2017 election to enter the Bundestag, winning 94 out of 709 seats in the national parliament. Over the Summer of 2017, the AfD even passed the Social Democrats (a member party to Angela Merkel's government coalition) in the polls. Not a bad

achievement for a party established just four years previously. Meanwhile in France, Marine Le Pen's Rassemblement National created quite a reputation for itself as a far-right alternative in the last election, capturing 21.3 percent of the national vote in the first round. Despite Le Pen's shortcomings in the second round, her brand of nationalist, anti-immigration politics still took 33.9 percent of the popular vote (10.6 million absolute votes). These statistics are scary considering the nature of the ideologies held by these parties.

Ultimately, I believe that, although far-right political organisations may represent some values and beliefs held by some people in the voting demographic, such as the harmfulness of immigration, what many of these supporters may not recognise or wish to acknowledge, is the danger of democratic destabilisation, suppression of free speech and other essential freedoms, and incitement of serious hate crimes by electing these parties into power. This is most likely what keeps the informed majority from enabling their election, and in the interests of public safety and democratic transparency I personally hope it stays that way.

By Hugh Corbett Year 10

OLD OXLEYAN

Tim Shephard Class of 2003



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

Ha, I have no idea. I guess I've done a fair bit since leaving Oxley though. I worked as a video journalist at the Sydney Morning Herald for a few years before moving to San Francisco and running a film production company. Getting a bit over the daily grind, my wife and I bought an old camper van and headed down to Oaxaca, Mexico where I run the production and sustainability for a mezcal brand, Madre Mezcal. If you're at Oxley you obviously don't drink but your parents could try it. Mezcal is a type of alcohol made from different types of agave (with similarities to tequila). Good stuff! At the same time I just finished directing a feature documentary (www.settingthebarfilm.com). For this film, I spent a few months in the Peruvian Amazon trying to find the genetic and cultural origins of the cacao that later gets made into some of the world's best chocolate. A large part of my work now is working with indigenous groups or underrepresented communities to preserve culture, and in particular food systems, while highlighting people doing things to care for their culture and land.

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

Definitely not. But I actually had no idea what I was going to be doing. I started studying business or economics or something like that in uni and it just felt so disingenuous to what I wanted in life. But sometimes you just have to start something to open some doors. I worked out pretty quickly that I wanted to have a less conventional life and have some fun. So far I've been doing that and it's led me into doing some things that I love and that feel important.

How did Oxley prepare you for your future?

I was actually just thinking about this the other day. Oxley gave me a network of people that have been a huge support to me. Some of my closest friends are still from Oxley and I don't take that for granted. Even hav-

ing lived out of the country for the last 10 years, those relationships are still hugely impactful to me and all of us are doing well in our own ways.

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

Ah well look, we all had our favourite teachers and then the teachers who didn't find your antics as funny as you thought they were. But in general, the teaching staff that were there during my time were fantastic. I learned quickly that a lot of teachers genuinely want to help you if you're going through something or struggling with something, so use that resource.

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

Honestly, I don't think I was an overly successful student. Often probably a bad one. So I guess I miss detention, picking up rubbish and missing the bus. Also I probably miss the opportunity to be able to try a wide range of subjects, sports and activities to work out what you like and don't like. That's a pretty invaluable experience that you just don't really get as easily handed to you after school.

What would you say to your fifteen year old self?

Probably something like 'don't do that it's annoying'.

INSPIRATION



FILM YEAR 10

On Monday 23 November, Year 10s began their end of year 'film week'; whereby they would use scripts from their previously submitted English assessment task to cast, organise and produce short films at Oxley College. So as of Monday, the Year 10 cohort split up between classes to create production groups; with their only filming tools being iPhone's, costumes and the director's imagination. Within these groups there was a selection of filming roles to cater for individual talents, some of these positions include: cinematographer, actor/actress, director, producer, set designer, editor and costume organiser. Consequently, as you can imagine the cohort was quick to roll out some quick 'rock, paper, scissors' to allocate roles appropriately between group members. However, these scripts had to be adapted and/or appropriated from pre-existing fairy tales, myths and folklores; which made reshaping the setting to suit the Oxley grounds much more difficult than imagined. For example, in one group's film their plot is based around the theme of a bedroom; which meant some stark redecorating for the corner of the library couches to resemble a teenage-like bedroom. Although we are only half way through the filming process, groups are finding themselves thoroughly enjoying the imaginative process that accompanies filming, whilst loving the experience of making new connections with classroom peers.

By Emilie-Rose Westlake-O'Dwyer Year 10



BOOK When Men Cry

Good old Aussie mateship is at the core of *When Men Cry*, the impressive and engrossing debut novel from young Sydney author and Old Oxleyan Nick Wasiliev, but it offers so much more.

Examining masculinity and the mental health crisis of contemporary Australia, this is a portrait of four men in their early 20s, friends who met at university and, despite their diverging paths, remain connected and caring. In typical 'Aussie bloke' fashion, however, they do not always excel in communicating their commitment to each other – let alone understand it.

Finding one's life path and identity, exploring dating and relationships, moving out of home, developing moral values and transitioning from boy to man is the destiny of every male adolescent and is challenging in itself. When a friend in crisis facing depression, rage, self-loathing and instability is added to the mix, navigating nascent adulthood is nigh impossible. Through Chris and "the lads", however, Wasiliev allows the reader a sobering and insightful examination of mental health, youth, friendship, loyalty and redemption which demonstrates a deft literary talent and understanding of the human condition which will, undoubtedly, ensure a fan-base keenly anticipating his works to come.

It's also impressive to note that 10% of any profits from the sale of *When Men Cry* will go to Livin, a charity set up to break the stigma of mental health and to promote wellness and positive living for vulnerable young people.

Nick Wasiliev Year 12 2011



BOOK Mythos

Ever since I first learned of the intricate and compelling existence of ancient Greek mythology; I have been transfixed and amazed by the stories of their heroes and villains; each mortal or god masterfully imbued with enthralling qualities that make the timeless stories all the more engaging. However, I have found that my enthusiasm for tales that existed over 2,500 years ago is often incongruous with the polite yawns and subtle eye-rolls of those whom I begin to tell such tales to. Stephen Fry, however, possesses the unique combination of expertise in storytelling, and a deep-rooted fascination with ancient mythology. His 2017 publication 'Mythos' is an anachronistically humorous retelling of the most astonishing Greek myths. Fry combines his distinctive wit with countless vivid descriptions to allow his subject matter to be not only approachable, but also thoroughly informative. This book is also compelling as it is inherently divergent from the traditionally erudite, academic retelling of Greek myths; shifting to a more playful narrative recount in order to maintain engagement.

My personal favourite section remains Sisyphus' eternal condemnation to roll a boulder up the slope of the underworld as a punishment for... in fact, I'll leave that one for you to discover. The antipathy of the Gods toward mortals is highly entertaining.

This book is especially suitable for anyone who has ever desired to understand the meaning behind the somewhat-ambiguous phrases such as the 'Midas touch', desired to gain an introduction to the structure of the Greek hierarchy of the Gods or even desired a punchy novel brimming with love, brutality, theft, blackmail and fallacies. The ageless qualities of each character still resonate truth today – namely humility, humanity and loyalty.

By Ava Lambie Year 12 2021



Persecution of Baha'is in Iran

The Baha'is are amid the most persecuted religious minorities in the world. Recently, there has been an increase in the level of maltreatment against people following the religion of Baha'i in Iran. They are Iran's largest non-Muslim religious minority and are routinely detained, arrested, and imprisoned. The reason they are being victimised stems from a variety of Baha'is teachings which are inconsistent with traditional Islamic beliefs. This includes; the finality of Muhammad's prophethood, and the placement of Baha'is outside the Islamic faith. These inconsistencies have made some people among the Iranian public perceive them as outsiders and this ill-treatment has been ongoing since the Islamic revolution in 1979. Lately, the Iranian government has targeted at least 77 individuals across the country in recent weeks even with the present pandemic afflicting the country. A large number of people who follow Baha'i in the provinces of Fars, South Khorasan, Mazandaran, Isfahan, Alborz, Kerman, Kermanshah, and Yazd have been arrested, summoned to court, tried, sentenced to jail, or imprisoned. These have all been based off unsubstantiated evidence and cannot be perceived as anything apart from an attack on the followers of the Baha'is Religion. Most Baha'is who get imprisoned can stay in jail for 1-13 years solely because of their beliefs.

In addition to this, Iran's state associated media have started to implement public slandering and deformation of the Baha'is through a coordinated spread of disinformation regarding their beliefs through a range of media including; radio, newspapers television and more. This misinformation to the public of Iran can cause confusion and an even stronger prejudice towards the Baha'is people. The UN has even made a comment on how unmerited and extreme this

religious persecution is becoming "shocking and profoundly troubling" and that it demonstrates the "Religious bigotry and prejudice the Baha'is in Iran face" (Bani Dugal, Baha'is international community's UN representative). "Threatening to 'uproot a community', trying its members en masse, re-incarcerating them during a pandemic, and spreading hateful propaganda against them is a shocking and profoundly troubling development," (Bani Dugal). More than 200 Baha'is have also reportedly been executed since 1979 and more are being persecuted every day. The removal of the "other religions" option from national identity card application forms dealt another setback towards the Baha'i minority in Iran in January 2020. The government of Iran is even restricting the Baha'is right to have a job or an education as they are being refused entry to universities and disallowed jobs due to their religion.

This systematic persecution is unjust and a clear violation of human rights. Currently the UN and the Baha'is are doing what they can in an attempt to eradicate this clear breach of human rights, so far attempts have been ineffective and unsuccessful. This persecution is immoral and cannot be tolerated in our society today.

An example of the censorship of the media is the fact that it was difficult to find articles that provided accurate information regarding the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran.

By Jillian O'Connell Year 10

SENIOR GALLERY



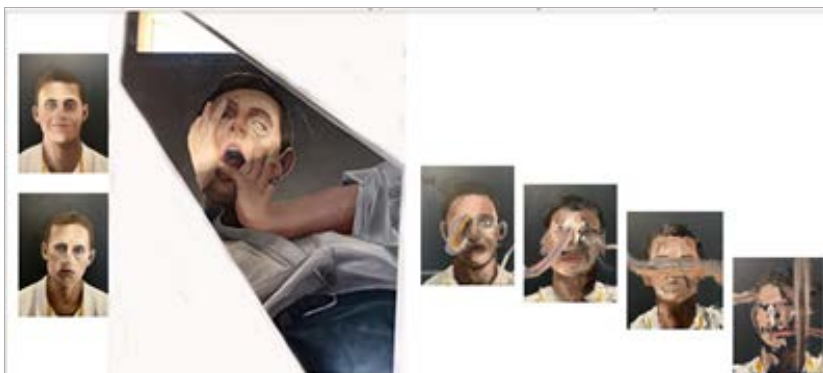
VIRTUAL GALLERY

ARTEXPRESS is the annual exhibition of the top HSC Artworks drawn from the entire NSW Higher School Certificate Visual Arts cohort, over 9000 students in total. Oxley College is proud to announce that three of our talented students were nominated this year, one of which; Mathew Hardy was successful in being selected as a final exhibitor at Maitland Gallery. To gain a nomination alone is a major coup due to the sheer numbers of students involved and the high standards of works. Congratulations to Zoe Edgerley, Dimity Deitz for being nominated and to Mathew for being selected. Well done Ms Forbes for her mentorship of these three students and all of our HSC art students.



GENETIC ENGINEERING – AT WHAT COST?

The human species considers itself the dominant species, superior in every way, top of the food chain, the apex predator. As humans we can critically think, analyze, act accordingly, construct languages, tools, cities and more. However, some still seek to further improve the human species, through the manipulation of our DNA. They attempt to forcefully cut, paste and rearrange entirely, our incredibly complex structures. Messing with six million years of evolution surely doesn't come without devastating complications, horrific failures and hideous experimentation. It's not natural. Why mess with perfection? My sculptures explore through exaggerated means, the confronting nightmarish failures and consequences of severe gene alteration. By Matt Hardy Year 12 2020



**Zoe Edgerley, Overthinking-Self
Inflicted Pain, Oil on Canvas and
Mirrored Perspex**

**Dimity Deitz, My Perception of Anxiety
(detail), Charcoal on Paper**





GD CHAMPS 2020

The Southern Highlands community was greatly saddened by the loss of past Oxley student, George Dummer, in September this year. He was known to all as a true larrikin; an enthusiastic mate who was prepared to give anything a go and committed himself fully to following his passions. Words cannot express the huge loss felt by his family and those who had been fortunate enough to know him.

George was a talented mountain biker. He was known to hit daredevil runs with speed and tenacity, fly through the air performing unimaginable tricks and always had a smile on his face.

The inaugural GD Champs, held on Sunday 22 November at Welby Mountain Bike Trails, aimed to commemorate this outgoing, adventurous young man by bringing his peers together to do what George loved best: riding. Twenty-five teams from Oxley and Chevalier Colleges competed in a four-hour team relay around a four km circuit.

Amidst the friendly hometown rivalry, there was competition aplenty, with teams racing other teams in their own age categories, individuals trying to lay down faster lap times than their mates and both schools eyeing off the overall prize, the George Dummer Cup, which was won by Oxley College. But there was more than just competition here. People had also turned up simply to pay tribute to George, to show support for the Dummer family, to ride with their mates, try their first mountain bike race or just be part of it all.

The event began with a moment of silence; the emotion in the air a fitting reminder of the huge impact George had on this community. The power of a few moments of reflection mixed with the eagerness of riders to get out onto the course brought an excitement that even the balmy heat of the day could not deter.

The race began at 10am, with riders of all abilities soaring through a supportive channel of spectators. Amidst a cloud of dust, they disappeared over a jump and into the bushland to the sounds of George's favourite music thumping through the speakers. The track – colloquially deemed a 'fast track' due to the extensive smooth berms and inviting downhill single-trail – held up well to the thundering wheels of 82 riders, and with the generous support of volunteers along the way, every competitor, no matter how exhausted they felt as they approached the ominous climb out of 'the Oven', felt truly encouraged.

Several sideshow events kept the crowd entertained, with a Big Bunny Hop over a high jump bar (the winning jump of 73cm was truly impressive!), a

Log Roll and a Wheelie-Off. Such was the level of the wheelies, the finals of that competition required an 80m slalom course through witches hats to be decided!

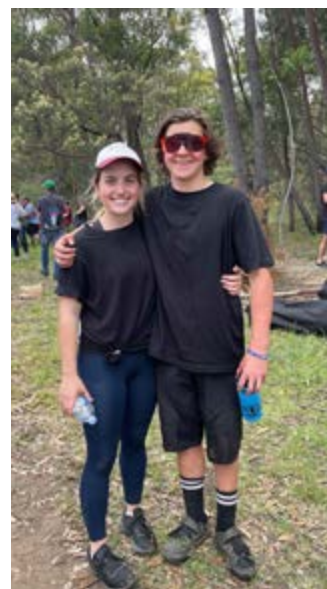
Despite the edge of sadness, as we all wished George could be there with us, the atmosphere at the event was one of joy and celebration. George's friends and family were inspirationally positive and thankful for the opportunity to celebrate his passion, remarking on many occasions how grateful they were that George had inspired so many others to 'give it a go.' I think Sophia Dummer completed more laps of the course than anyone, giving her all, with a smile, riding George's bike. Murray Dummer's "Hotlap" brought the biggest cheers from the crowd in the transition zone, as riders accompanied him across the line. The comradery between riders both on and off the course throughout the day showed that this is a community made up of families who love and support one another and was testament to George's own transcendent positivity.

Of course, the day was more a celebration of this great sport than results-focused, however acknowledgement must be given to the tenacious Oxley team, who won the inaugural trophy with a point-score of 42 to Chev's 13. Remarkably, all six categories were won by Oxley teams. Stellar individual performances assisted with our decisive win as well, including sub-13 minute laps and persistence through crashes and wobbles. In all, an astounding 1352 km were ridden!

And, of course, such an event would not have been possible without the tireless efforts of innumerable people. In particular, the Oxley Sport Department must be warmly thanked for their pragmatic and technical support both preceding and throughout the day. To all the Oxley student and community volunteers; we are indebted to you for your enthusiastic assistance. And, of course, the quiet dedication and humility of Meaghan Stanton, who envisioned and orchestrated the entire day, is all too often overlooked, but nonetheless phenomenal. Your vision for Oxley's MTB programme continues to fuel countless dreams and forge new passions.

George was always a person of action, more than words, so the GD Champs meant so much to so many! The event will be held every year and will hopefully grow to welcome school teams from all over, so that George's legacy may spread far and wide.

By Ava Lambie Year 12 2021



UC CREATIVE COMPETITION

Year 12 graduate, Aisling Ellis's project Gladioli has just been selected as the winner of the Industrial Design and Design category for the University of Canberra School of Design and the Built Environment Design Competition. She is awarded a six months study grant and a cash prize. Congratulations !

<https://www.canberra.edu.au/uccreativecompetition>



STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL NEWS

They are the silent taskforce behind many of the exciting initiatives introduced at school. They are the proactive team, representative of the ideas and desires of the larger majority. They are the dedicated leaders who supplement ambition with determination.

Oxley's 2020 SRC continue to exemplify the values the school is predicated on – being brave, strong and true. Peer-elected earlier this year, they have striven to make the most of their somewhat-disrupted term as members. Whilst many traditionally SRC-run events have been deferred to next year – such as involvement in overseeing the school disco and fundraiser sausage sizzles – the continual stellar attendance at meetings evidences true commitment to selfless representation of the desires of the members' peers.

The resourcefulness of this year's SRC was particularly evident in the reinvigoration of the beloved 'Find the Ox' competition. Small teams of students prepared daily clues as to where a cartoon Ox was hidden somewhere within the school. This competition inspired inter-year collaboration and comradery, as tutor groups battled to decode cryptic clues and claim glory each week. Other initiatives have included advocating for the option of girl's winter pants, and brainstorming ways to maximise connectivity within the school.

Much acknowledgement and gratitude must be extended to the Deputy Head Boy and Girl for 2019-20, Josh Bramley and Mya Bertolini. Their skilful oversight of each meeting, willingness to follow-up student suggestions and expert organisation and delegation of tasks was truly exemplary and made every SRC member, from Year 7 to 11, feel meaningful and included. They have set a high standard for future leaders to come and as incoming SRC Chairs, James and I feel they have certainly raised the visibility and competency of the Council. Watch this space for regular updates as to what new initiatives the SRC is embarking on!

By James Blissett and Ava Lambie Year 12 2021

WEEKEND SPORT

This weekend of sport was great fun, and all teams should be very proud of how they played. We had many girl Touch teams playing against Chev, with unfortunately only the Senior A White team coming away with two wins against the 1sts, 4-1 and then 6-4. Well done girls. Our Junior B Girls Basketball played a cracking game against Chev, however lost 54-26, but continued to fight until the end. Many teams also played against Blue Mountains, and lucky for them they got to play in some pink. Touch and Basketball played in long pink socks, and our 1sts Cricket played in a pink hat. Senior A Blue girls Touch were defeated by Blue Mountains, 5-2, however played some really good Fouch Footy. 1sts Boys Touch defeated Blue Mountains, 15-0 with only seven players, well done boys. Unfortunately our 1sts Cricket were defeated by two runs, but kept their heads high. 1sts Boys Basketball defeated Blue Mountains in a tough game, winning 69-62, and unfortunately our 1sts girls lost by four.

Well done to everyone who played on the weekend. Train hard and get keen for the final round of this competition this weekend, before we hopefully start the ISA next term.

By Liv Bow Year 10

OLD OXLEYAN NEW SHOW DROPS

Old Oxleyan Mia Healy's new show 'The Wilds' on Prime dropped this week globally. 2021 Year 12 Drama students asked their teacher, Phil Cunich, if they could watch the trailer together in Drama class. Watch out for Mia Healy, class of 2016, in The Wilds!

