

# *150th issue!*

PIN OAK



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## Acknowledgement of Country

The writers, editors, and designers of Oxley's Pin Oak begin today by acknowledging the Gundungurra people, Traditional Custodians of the land on which we learn and work and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within the Oxley community.

## Spring Fling



Thank you to P & F President, Megan Moore and team for a highly successful Senior School, Spring Fling at Briars. There was such a buzz in the room and people loved reconnecting and making new friends.



# HEAD OF COLLEGE'S REPORT



There have been some excellent teaching appointments made for 2023.

## Senior School

1. Head of Science, Mr Jeffrey de Rooy (St Andrew's Cathedral School)
2. Music, Ms Renae Pinazza (The Illawarra Grammar School)
3. Visual Arts, Mr Andrew Jones (Orana School in Canberra)
4. Biology, Ms Sarah Reeves (former Oxley student, Clancy Catholic College)
5. Design and Technology, Ms Sophie Edis (UWO)

Four of the five are or have been HSC markers or on HSC Curriculum committees.

## Junior School

1. Head of Junior School Sport (new position) and PE teacher, Ms Fran Dorczak (Kincoppal)
2. Visual Arts, Ms Kathleen Bevis (Bundanon Museum and Shoalhaven Regional Gallery)
3. Infants Teacher, Ms Rebecca Gaffney (Gumnut Pre School)
4. Languages (French), Ms Megan Leddet (West Pymble Public)

## Internal Appointments (Senior School)

1. Head of Mawson House, Mrs Jodie Wolsencroft
2. Head of Monash House, Mr Tom Kindred
3. Head of Humanities, Ms Jo McVean

I have received resignations from Mrs Monita Singh (Science) and Mrs Trish Gibson (Languages).

Both are moving back to Sydney. We wish them well at their new schools.

Staffing remains the major ingredient for success at Oxley College. Our staff are highly dedicated and talented. Great care was taken to secure the right teachers to complement the existing team.

By Dr David Mulford, Interim Head of College



Fran Dorczak



Kathleen Bevis



Megan Leddet



Jeffery de Rooy



Renee Zink



Andrew Jones



# GALLERY





# HEAD OF SENIOR SCHOOL



## Teenagers, Alcohol and Other Drugs – Paul Dillon (Year 10 and Year 12 Presentations)

Paul Dillon has been working in the area of drug education for more than 25 years. Through his own business, Drug and Alcohol Research and Training Australia (DARTA) he has been contracted by many agencies and organisations across the country to give regular updates on current drug trends within the community. He continues to work with many school communities across the country to ensure that they have access to good quality information and best practice drug education. Paul returned to Oxley this week to speak with our Year 10 and Year 12 2023 students.

### Vaping

“When it comes to vaping, the key message for parents is to keep talking about it. Start by asking what their friends think” (Paul Dillon)

Vaping is a major concern of health professionals, schools and parents across the world. It was the subject of an ABC Four Corners episode earlier this year ([“Vape Haze: The new addiction of vaping”, 27 June 2022](#)). The long term effects of vaping are still unknown. It does not help that the law is confusing and varies from state-to-state in Australia. Whilst e-cigarettes were once seen as an effective way to wean addicts off smoking, we have seen a rise in vaping in recent years amongst young people who have never smoked, and consequently, addiction. Vapes are easy to conceal (being as small as a pen), flavoured, do not carry health warnings and are packaged to appeal to young people. It is important for parents to be aware of the potential risks and issues associated with vaping. A survey published in September this year by the University of Sydney provides some valuable data about the extent of vaping in NSW and proposes the need for government to take action:

“Education is often the default first action to address unhealthy behaviours in young people. However, unless this is coupled with strong, supportive policy action, this approach is unlikely to have any measurable impact. Education campaigns cannot protect young people from an industry that so freely disregards laws meant to protect health”. 1

Parents can find some excellent resources below, including Paul Dillon’s factsheet for parents on vaping, guidance for speaking to teenagers about vaping, along with other alcohol and drug information for parents and links to Paul’s blogs for parents.

The College’s Drug Policy, which includes vapes, can be found on p144 of the Year 7-10 Student Diary, and p182 of the Senior Planner.

### Bibliography and Resources

[https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2022/09/27/study-provides-new-insights-on-teen-vaping-behaviour-in-australia.html#:~:text=We%20found%20teenagers%20are%20readily,%25\)%20had%20never%20previously%20smoked.](https://www.sydney.edu.au/news-opinion/news/2022/09/27/study-provides-new-insights-on-teen-vaping-behaviour-in-australia.html#:~:text=We%20found%20teenagers%20are%20readily,%25)%20had%20never%20previously%20smoked.)

NSW Health: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/vaping>

Parent Factsheets (Paul Dillon): <https://darta.net.au/vaping-parent-resources/>

<https://www.raisingteenagers.com.au/talking-about-vaping-alcohol-other-drugs/>

By Mark Case, Head of Senior School

## REMEMBRANCE DAY



# HEAD OF JUNIOR SCHOOL



## Weekly Awards

### Term 4, Week 4

#### Learning Journey

Isaac Choo K  
Albie Fisher 1S  
Frankie Ventura  
Jordan Pope 2B

Frankie Russell 3B  
Felix Chamley 3R  
Chase Holmes 4A  
Ian Phillips 4W  
Hadley Morgan 5M  
Andy Clothier 5N  
Fraser Wisken 6H  
Daphne Hutchison 6S

#### Oxley Values

Polly Pemberton K  
Ruby Rogerson 1S  
Fearne Pearce 2B  
Xander Fisher 3B  
Eric Mussett 3R  
Eliza Arnold 4A  
Oscar Jones 4W  
William Palmer 5M  
William Carioti 5N  
Elodie Ahern 6S  
Piper O'Sullivan 6H  
Scarlett Miller 6H

**Japanese:** Clementine Paterson,  
Oliver Barton

#### Learning Journey

Theo Lawford-Smith K  
Charlotte Keats 1S  
Naomi Robertson 2B  
Lexie Seehusen 3B  
Chloe Motycka 3R  
Greta Saviana 4A  
Charlotte Bentham 4W  
Arthur Pemberton 5M  
Oscar Le Guay 5N  
Scarlett Curr 6H  
Brayden Anstee 6S

#### Oxley Values

Ben Cadden K  
Emil De Haas 1S  
Joshua Lawrence 2B  
Heidi Sinclair Hill 3B  
Harry Berry 3R  
Anna Sophia Psarakis 4A  
Alexander Moore 4W  
Ava Snowden 5M  
Raphaela Abreu 5N  
Marshall Devlin 6S  
Anna Clark 6H



Dear Families,

I was only thinking today about how many weeks left in this term and I wondered about our students and whether they were counting down. With the Moving Up day this week, it certainly reminds our students that their school year is almost over, and they all would be having mixed feelings, I am sure. Having started the year with nervous excitement, how were they feeling at this moment. As any parent knows, the last weeks of school can often be the most challenging. There's a mixture of excitement for the summer holidays and exhaustion from a school year that's proved different from the last two years.

Some things to think about to make your home life easier in the final run-up to the holidays would include:

**1)** Sticking to routines – keep everything as it has been. Include some after school activities if the sport season is over. It is also important to keep the bedtime routine.

**2)** Continue the homework – over the next few weeks academic learning continues and teachers will be implementing final assessments. It is important for children to keep focussed.

**3)** Avoid the lunchbox trap – Children need a healthy, balanced lunchbox to provide them with the energy they need to get through the day.

**4)** Try to be extra patient – children will be showing signs of tiredness and not have the patience or the persistence they had at the start of the year. Supporting them through any issues, completing the last of their assessments and homework tasks for the year, is going to be a challenge on some days.

**5)** Talk through any anxieties – your child may be feeling anxious about next year, a new teacher, a new classroom, different people in their class, moving from Junior School to Senior School. Listen and provide support – check out the new classroom, talk to your child's current teacher. Perhaps even organise a play date to reassure your child that his/her friends will be there when school returns in the new year.

Lots to think about but celebrating an amazing year of learning and growth is so important and encouraging your child to look forward to the new adventures 2023 will bring.

Let the countdown begin.....

By Jane Campion, Head of Junior School



Year 6 2022



# *JUNIOR GALLERY*







## RATIO

# DECIDENDI



Last week's Dilemma was; **Is the public opinion of billionaire philanthropists warranted? How can we separate the truly pure heart from those who are charitable for self-gain? Should we have billionaires at all? Is my batman knowledge up to scratch?** For more detail, see issue 147.

Without further ado, here are the responses...

### **Is the public opinion of billionaire philanthropists warranted?**

"I don't personally know any billionaire philanthropists, so I can only comment from afar from what I have seen or read in the media. For example, Jeff Benzos and Bill Gates are well on their way to becoming the world's first trillionaires. Based on the median income in the U.S. of \$60 000, it would take around 16 million years for the 'median person' to accumulate the same amount ... and that's without spending any of their income on the essentials of life!

The idea of one person holding that amount of wealth, whether it be in money or assets, is so inconceivable that it's hard to get my head around it. A bit like looking into the night sky and trying to count all the stars in the Milky Way.

In reality, the philanthropic efforts of the extremely rich help to distract us from the crazy amounts of wealth they have, not to mention the fact that these people also created many of the problems they now claim to address. The optics of goodwill and generosity are simply easier for people to accept."

### **How can we separate the truly pure heart from those who are charitable for self-gain?**

"In my opinion, it all comes down to how much tax the ultra-wealthy pay. Many billionaire philanthropists have set up charitable organisations as a way of avoiding paying taxes. One of the purposes of the tax system is to set up a shared social responsibility to fund 'causes' for the greater good of society. Universal health care, free state-run education, a feeling of safety and security (police force, army, navy, air force, etc.), funding of the arts, helping those less fortunate than ourselves, and a myriad of other community organisations which fulfil a need in our society to make everyone's life better or more enriched.

The explanations for charitable giving fall into three categories:

1. Purely altruistic - I donate because I value the social good done by the charity
2. Impurely altruistic - I donate because I receive a tax break from my donation (the 'what's in it for me' view of giving)
3. Not-at-all altruistic - I donate because I want to look good

Paying our 'fair share' of tax without the need for avoidance comes, in my opinion, under the purely altruistic ... I pay my tax, not because I have to (even though we all eventually do), but because I value the good my taxes will do in society. Billionaires paying their fair share of tax is anonymous ... everyone knows they do it, but not everyone one knows how much they pay. This is, whether they like it or not, from the heart, rather than from a public sense of self-gain by setting up and/or giving to a charitable foundation."

### **Should we have billionaires at all?**

"Yes, of course! People are allowed to be successful and gain wealth through legal means. The question should not be whether we should have billionaires, but rather what responsibility these billionaires have towards the people and society that made them billionaires in the first place."

- Mr Brett, Oxley teacher

### **Whilst I enjoy Batman and his problematic pursuits as much as the next person, you pose an interesting question.**

Whilst I can't comment on the strength on your Batman knowledge, I do have a bit to say about billionaires. Billionaires are an interesting, rare species, and I know they'd argue that they require protection at all costs. But does that mean the rest of us comparable peasants are required to worship at their altar? In short, no. But do billionaires care if we worship at their altar? Again, I believe the answer to be no."

Should we have billionaires? Ideally no, without question more equal wealth distribution would be better for all, but in the capitalist driven world in which we live, sorry to be a cynic, my friends, but this will never happen. This question opens a can of political theory worms, and a discussion of the inherent benefits and drawbacks of capitalism, democracy, socialism and communism, but this discussion has caused countless wars over the years, so I will leave it for another time."





"In this world in which we live, billionaires are entitled to their income and wealth just as the rest of us are. However, we don't care about the wealth of the person who we sit next to on the bus. The only reason why their collective wealth and income is of such interest to us is due to its volume and its associated benefits. The volume of wealth these small number of individuals holds buys them power, influence and exposure, oftentimes leading to increased wealth generation opportunities. It's an endless cycle, and one that can be very difficult to ever truly stop. Billionaires are often too big to fail. Take a look at Elon Musk and his recent failed \$44 billion USD Twitter buyout, or Jeff Bezos' 2019 \$38 billion USD divorce settlement. Such losses would cripple many smaller nation-states across the globe, let alone us mere regular people, but for these billionaires such losses are as The Black Knight in Monty Python once quoted; "Tis but a scratch"."

"In my opinion, billionaires have a self-satisfying reason to desire the public's positive opinion of them: such opinion will often lead to an increase in their power, influence and exposure, which again links back to increased potential for wealth generation and accumulation. It is in a billionaires interest to have the masses hold a positive opinion about themselves. That being said, since billionaires are often too big to fail, should public opinion turn on them, I don't think it would be of great concern; they truly would never come to naught. Billionaires know that they can ride out a bad public relations storm, for they know that in this 24-hour fast-paced news cycle in which we live, the next scandal will be just around the corner, shifting the limelight away from them, and they can still fall back onto their insurmountable wealth, despite certain short-term losses."

"My response is a little depressing, I know, and I don't really know how to end on a brighter, cheerier note. So as not to leave your readers feeling glum, I will end with a joke: Why is Batman always serious? Because he isn't the Joker ;)"

- Lachlan Callister-Hakewill, Oxley family member

**"To start my response, I would like to take us all back to the world of the USA in the 1980s.** For the majority of this decade, Ronald Reagan was the President. His actions as President have greatly affected the distribution of wealth within the USA and thus impacted billionaires today and my response to this article. In 1986, he signed the Tax Reform Act, which, among other things, made tax brackets wider and reduced taxes from 50% to 28% for the top tax bracket. In simpler terms, President Reagan made it easier for millionaires to be millionaires. So, while I don't think that billionaires should be idolised simply for their money-making skills and luck, I understand why that is the way that it is because of the design of the USA. "

"While that sounds harsh, I also believe that money isn't something to idolise, even though it is a hypocritical statement on its own. Generally, a capitalistic economy is designed to have at least some disparity between classes making it easier for society to technologically progress through the competition and upskill above others in order to be able to earn more money overall. This innovation allows for a certain level of a lack of regulation, which is nobody's fault because generally, it's simply a period in which the legal system is catching up with technological advancements. This, coupled with the Tax Reform Act, allows our economy's competitive nature to produce billionaires.

All of that considered, I don't believe that billionaires should exist, in my perfect world wealthy people are idolised not for their money, but for giving back to communities and closing the wide gap between the highest and lowest classes and taxes would aid massively within that. However, we don't exist in that perfect world which leaves Batman, Elon Musk and others like them to be held in high opinion."

"That being said, it is important to distinguish that not all billionaires act in their own self-interest, and many contributions to society in a positive way that doesn't necessarily follow the hedonistic view of the billionaires such as Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk, though it is unfortunate that I can't think of any off of the top of my head."

- Evelyn Crowley, Year 10

**A huge thank you to Evie, Lachie and Mr Brett for your contributions to the first issue of the term!** Keep an eye out next week, as we will be jumping straight in and discussing the various ethical perspectives of GoFundMe.

Sincerely, Anouk Hakewill (Year 9)

# SCHOOL LEADERSHIP 2023

## Reflections from the 2023 Leadership team

### Beth Zupp (Monash House Captain):

Oxley is experiencing a period of change and I see the role of a leader is to offer stability and a voice in those times. I intend to support the new Principal and help Oxley transition towards a new, exciting era. I want to see Oxley thrive and I anticipate nurturing that by supporting growth across the student body, make connections and to the best of my ability, and to act as a role model. I will use my organisational and communication skills to inspire others to take pride in Oxley and use their own unique skills to help it succeed.

### Ben Ragan (Monash House Captain):

During my time at Oxley I have made connections, built confidence and found a sense of community. As an Oxley leader I would like to continue build on these values as well as showing other students the experiences I have had in a way that everyone gets involved.

### Milly Arthur (Dobell House Captain):

My goal as a leader is to inspire students to participate in as many opportunities Oxley provides. I would like students to try and see positive aspects and humour to challenges faced and learn how to work with your year group to overcome them.

### Oscar Greenfield (Dobell house Captain):

As Dobell House Captain, I want to ensure that the positive house spirit and participation continues for the next year and into the future. I also want to ensure that the new year 7 cohort is heavily involved in all aspects of college life and create bonds between the different year groups.

### Maddy Bragg (Durack House Captain):

Throughout my time at Oxley, and in Durack, I have always looked up to the previous House Captains and been inspired by their key role in the house. So, to be elected as Durack House Captain this year, alongside Alex Jurgs, was a huge achievement for me. I hope that this year Alex and I can encourage the whole of Durack house to participate in any and all events that they can and provide a role model for the younger students to look up to. Durack as a house has always been a vibrant and welcoming place for me since starting here in year 7 and I hope that I can help to provide the same energy to the years below me.

### Alexander Jurgs (Durack House Captain):

As a student leader of Oxley College I want to be able to set an example for those who are entering the college and are travelling the path of their education. I also want to be someone that can offer advice to those who need it and may be struggling with schoolwork or life at home. I also wish to inspire students to get involved in school life and house events.

### Georgie Morton (Oodgeroo house captain):

As a leader I would love to encourage the involvement of students in all areas of school, in academic and co-curricular. I would also like to be a role model and provide guidance for everyone, by setting examples and sharing advice. Specifically, as house captain I would like to create a fun and safe environment as well as a sense of community in Oodgeroo.

### Monte Francis (Oodgeroo House Captain):

I would like to be a leader to encourage the younger students to be their best selves. I think I am the appropriate option for this because I have a good rapport with younger students, peers, and teachers. I think I can lead by example and represent Oxley's values. My goal is to make sure that Oodgeroo is a safe space for all its members and to increase participation in house activities such as carnivals and events. I look forward to working with my fellow Year 12 leaders, teachers, and Oxley students during my role.

### Chloe Cassim (Florey House Captain):

As a leader of 2022 I will be a strong example to the younger students of what a lead role model of Oxley should be. I would like to focus on the involvement of students and make them feel more confident in getting involved around the school like house events and sporting events as I feel it is an important part of

one's school journey. As well as making good insight to changes of the college that would benefit and better suit students.

### Hugo Dyer (Florey House Captain):

My main focuses as a house leader in 2022-23. Is to develop a better and stronger house culture. As well as to improve Florey's overall participation rate. I plan to do this by working closely with Chloe and Mr Spies to develop a way to motivate people to get in and have crack and to build a strong competitive house spirit. I would also like to add on to a previous scheme of Florey might of the fortnight by adding some new and different ideas to it.

### Eleanora Berzins (Mawson House Captain):

As a leader, I wish to be able to build and develop leadership skills and make an impact by being a student that younger students can look up to. I would like to be able to collaborate with others and help in creating an atmosphere of energy, motivation, and excitement throughout Mawson. I would also like to lead by example. Not just through participation in House events, but through presenting a persistent, positive, and empathetic attitude.

### Jack Ayling (Mawson House Captain):

As a leader I would like to help create a safer environment within the Oxley community to allow current students and future students the opportunity to be themselves and enjoy every bit of their time at Oxley.

### Spencer Lewis (Prefect):

I would like to be able to encourage as many students as possible to become involved in a variety of extra-curricular activities. I have always been involved in many myself, whether that be in Monday morning choir, or part of the football team, or even off on a hike completing my Duke Of Edinburgh's award. Through this, I have learnt to broaden my mind, develop a wide range of skills and push my comfort zones. I hope I can be seen by the younger years as someone who gives everything a go and that also encourages others to as well.

### Pat Muldoon (Prefect):

As I school leader, my vision is for a more collective approach for leadership – encouraging the development and promotion of strong school culture both on campus and within the community. Together with the dynamic Prefect team, I seek to build connections between year groups for greater camaraderie and pride within our school, achieved through engagement initiatives and co-curricular events.

### Breanna Billet (prefect):

To be a leader, is to be someone who is a mentor, listener and team player. In my role, I hope to bring these qualities and more to my role in the media front of Oxley but also to abide by them all days of the week: whether it be in an informal or formal environment.

### Ella O'Connor (Prefect):

As a prefect my focus area is student wellbeing. Throughout the next year I want to come up with ways to encourage student voice and involvement in wellbeing as it is a very relevant and pressing issue. I also want to look for ways that we can use the Oxley lens as a framework for wellbeing. And in turn help to enhance the unique Oxley community and culture.

### Sophie Dunn (Prefect):

Leadership to me is more than just a role or title, it's the ability to understand the balance between listening and taking action, the ability to give individuals a voice and the ability to create a difference we want to see. Change is one of the inevitabilities of life, and as prefect for change, I will continuously strive to make this positive change. Throughout the year, parents and students alike, I welcome you to get involved in events and opportunities and be the change you want to see.



# INSPIRATION



## FILM

### *Pacific Rim*

August 10th, 2013. The first Kaiju made landfall in San Francisco, causing mass destruction in its wake. 5 days later, the military managed to bring down the beast.

Six months later, a second Kaiju attacked Manila, 4 months later, Cabo San Lucas.

That was when humanity learnt this was not going to stop.

To quote the movie 'To fight monsters, we created monsters of our own', the world's governments worked together to create giant mechs called Jaegers (German for 'hunter') to combat these ferocious beasts. Directed by bodily movements in the control pod located in the mechs head, the Jaegers were so large that they required two pilots to share the neural load.

Humanity discovered that the Kaiju came from a portal found deep in a fissure in the Pacific Ocean. All attempts to destroy the portal (which was dubbed as 'The Breach') failed, so humanity continued the seemingly endless war with the inter-dimensional creatures. As Jaeger tech advanced, Kaiju attacks were becoming less effective.

Those days would not last.

After an abnormally strong Kaiju destroyed the Jaeger 'Gypsy Danger', humanity finally realised what it was up against. Now as the number of Jaeger pilots dwindle, humanities only hope lies on an old Jaeger, a reluctant Jaeger pilot and a new recruit. These three are all that stand in the way of the eradication of the human race. And thus the most important lesson will be revealed to all...

Go Big... Or Go Extinct

Pacific Rim is an epic movie created by Legendary Pictures (the same company that created the modern Godzilla movies). This movie has action, plenty of Sci-Fi and classic giant-robot-kicks-giant-monster-butt scenes. Personally, nothing is better than watching a Jaeger being deployed. The massive scale factor in this film makes it cinematically awesome, with both the Jaeger and Kaiju dwarfing city scapes and iconic world landmarks such as the Sydney Opera House and Tokyo's famous neon streets.

Move over Top Gun. When I grow up, I want to be a Jaeger pilot!

Thomas Clark, Year 9



## BOOK

### *Divergent*

Dystopian Romance. Two words that perfectly sum up the book Divergent by Veronica Roth.

In a world ravaged by human failings of greed, ignorance, lies, cowardice, and needless aggression; a new city emerged. The city is divided into factions, amity valuing kindness, dauntless valuing bravery, abnegation valuing selflessness, erudite valuing intelligence and candour valuing honesty. At 16, every person takes an aptitude test to determine their faction and then they choose which faction they want to be in. Beatrice was born into abnegation; however, her test results were inconclusive. Her test showed that she does not fall into one of the factions, but three, Erudite, Abnegation, and Dauntless. This is called 'divergent'. When her time to choose arrives, she follows her heart and chooses to be selfish but brave, abandoning her family and choosing Dauntless. While switching factions takes fearlessness, Beatrice soon learns that if she wants to be initiated into the faction, it will take much more than a simple choice. With only ten spots available and her new romance with her dauntless instructor, Beatrice struggles to make her way in a ruthless initiation trial and discovers not only what she's truly made of, but what it truly means to be Divergent.

Divergent is Veronica Roth's debut novel and has sold over 32 million copies. Divergent is one of those books where you disappear into the story, escaping reality. It is the first in the dystopian trilogy and grips readers through every chapter. Divergent has everything a rainy-day book needs, action-filled gripping plot, competition and a secret, slow-burn romance. The story is fast paced with full on action throughout. It contains elements of humour alongside some seriously brutal scenes, especially during Beatrice's initiation into Dauntless.

The dystopian romance, Divergent, is a book I could recommend to anyone.

By Lucy Anderson, Year 8



## BOOK

### *Less*

Pity the plight of the gay white man. Not so notorious as his heterosexual counterpart, yet more socially privileged than his queer counterparts, his popular sympathy has been drained by virtue of cultural success. Take the most recent adaptation of Austen's "Pride and Prejudice", "Fire Island". Joel Kim Booster propositions the Bennet sisters as a gaggle of queer people of colour, while the sinister Mr Wickham, or in this case, Dex, uses a seraphic physique and Instagram politics to seduce dazzled prospects. But the gay white underdog whose tragedies we mourn? A far harder sell.

This the unfortunate conclusion reached By Arthur Less, protagonist of "Less by Andrew Sean Greer, 2017 Pulitzer winner. Less, like Greer, is a gay, middle-aged white novelist, whose latest novel, "Swift" is dismissed rather quickly by his publishers, to his disbelief. A sombre tale of a white, middle aged gay man sauntering through San Francisco á la Leopold Bloom. Less quickly realises that he has been petrified by his character's obstinate self-pity, that "gorgon of Caucasian male ego."

In a whirlwind of language, wonder, and utter liveliness, Less outruns his ex-lover Freddy Pelu's wedding across the globe, from Mexico to Japan. The ultimate indulgent book gives any reader an indescribable warmth rising in their chest, the persistent dramatic irony sending characters spiralling toward certain disaster, without the gritty, realistic (and oftentimes unnecessary) purview within novels today that dictates the characters fall victim to consistent heartbreak.

By Anouk Hakewill, Year 9

# BIG ISSUE

## Her Majesty

At the start of the year, Violet FitzSimons (Year 9) entered *The Queen's Commonwealth Essay Competition 2022* (the patron is Camilla Parker Bowles). The instruction was to "write a speech for Her Majesty to deliver at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting". After waiting nine months for the result, Violet has received the Silver Award for runner up.

*It's a very prestigious competition and the longest running essay prize in the world. What a huge achievement.*

I would prefer to start this speech with pleasantries, polite greetings and insightful metaphors but instead I stand before you truly incapable of expressing myself with such restrictions. As a commonwealth we have always favoured the turn of phrase, preferring the beauty of words over that of the common, well-loved sentences that slide into our conversations so easily and with such modesty. But as I stand before you, I feel as though it would be a dis-service to hide the beauty of this commonwealth in niceties, to duck between sentences to express my gratitude, my pride, my joy.

For if we have learnt anything from the turmoil our world has experienced these past few years, it is that the beauty of our people is something that shines through in the simple moments. The rainbows that painted London's windows, the teddy bears littered in Australia's doorsteps, the 7pm cheer for the medical workers in Vancouver, which, to this day, is yet to stop. This commonwealth, our people, are so much more than this speech, this day, this meeting. Our people deserve for their joy, compassion, and strength to shine through in the decisions that we as leaders have made and will continue to make in the face of adversity.

Our commonwealth has seen dark times, but the mindset we bring to solve the problems of today need not be reflective of the confusion within the online political landscape, or the anger we have seen in the streets, in protest signs and in hearts. The mindset we must bring to address today's issues must be one of clarity, one of precision and one of empathy. And with that, please allow me to bring this question to the discussion.

What must be the focus of this gathering today, the cornerstone of our thoughts and arguments?

What must we always keep in mind as we listen and learn from each other?

As a commonwealth we have a population of 2.5 billion people. More than sixty percent of these people are aged 29 and under, representing one third of the world's young people. Essentially, our commonwealth has the ability to dictate the success, the livelihood, and the knowledge of one third of the future population. This is incredible power. But more than this, the commonwealth has the responsibility to provide the best future possible for these young people, and in doing so, for the world.

If we are to ensure the quality of their future, we must consider three variables: the environmental, the social, and the mental realities of our youth. On the political stage we often see these issues addressed in that order exactly: from the most physically tangible to the least visible in our society. We cannot make this mistake. For if we start with issues of environment and preach about statistics and case studies, we will have made no progress. We must begin with the issues that our commonwealth, our people, face mentally as it is the epicentre of our functioning world.

What we must place as the cornerstone of today's discussion is the people. While it is tempting to focus on headlines and fixing the physical problems at hand – which of course is vital – we must also consider those who are experiencing these problems firsthand. We must consider the people who walked

on the bridge, lived near the bridge, talked about it and saw it washed away by floods as well as the durability of the planks and the cost of replacing the object itself. We must consider their loss, their confusion, their hurt and their hope for the future. Because it is the people who will ensure the bridge is maintained and left-undamaged and the people who will encourage their neighbours to walk on it again and the people who will walk with them.

As a commonwealth it is very difficult to find an approach that will work for our each of our nations, for each set of experiences and histories and cultures. So we must focus on the one thing that is universal: the human reaction to change. For if we are to improve we must change, and if we are to thrive we must re-vitalise and re-imagine. So I suggest we start with what we offer in terms of community support and education for the youth.

What can we do as a collective to improve the mundane for our young people? What can we do to improve their expectations and respect for themselves? What can we do to allow our young people to change and grow?

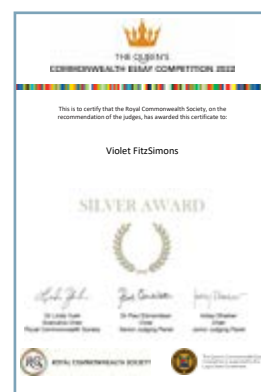
Whether it be a series of cultural courses available to students of all backgrounds educating them on the arts and literature, or a set of interactive experiences that each child will be given the opportunity to enjoy, we need to act to support our young people— our future— in what has been a very confronting time. We need to support them in their learning with quality therapists and councillors, teaching support and safe spaces.

I know I speak about the small scale, about the moments behind closed doors instead of the momentous ribbon cuttings, but I assure you this investment of our time is far more valuable though perhaps less immediately visible. We cannot forget the human element, the youthful element, the growing element of our commonwealth as we strive to address world issues and protect our citizens. We must allow, and tailor to our humanity because it is what will make our future brighter.

In closing, I do not wish for my address to be something which lingers in your mind only until I step of the stage. Because I did not speak to you today simply to allow you to nod at my use of vocabulary or smile kindly at my pauses. I spoke to you today about people. I spoke about the daughter of your school friend, the little boy you see walking his dog down the sidewalk. The young people who still haven't learnt their times tables despite their teachers protests and the young people who will one day stand and deliver addresses just as we did before them. I spoke about the people, because the people do not need to be spoken for but spoken to.

The people need to learn, to thrive, to adapt and to support each other. The people are the future of the Commonwealth.

By Violet FitzSimons, Year 9





# SENIOR GALLERY



# GOOD & OTHER NEWS

## Ethics Olympiad

This year we participated in our first Middle School Ethics Olympiad competition with two teams of 5 from Years 8 & 9. Our teams represented the college exceptionally well and were successful. One of our teams will be participating in the international round against students from Hong Kong, Singapore and New Zealand. Only top schools from each regional Ethics Olympiad have been invited to this event. The members of the team are Violet Fitzsimons, Lucy Anderson, Abigail Hunt, Liam Halloran and Isla Terry.

The Ethics Olympiad is a competitive yet collaborative event in which students analyse and discuss real-life ethical issues. It differs from a debate in that students are not assigned opposing views rather, they defend whatever position they believe is right and win by showing that they have thought more carefully, deeply, and perceptively about the cases in question. The event encourages and promotes ethical awareness, critical thinking skills, civil discourse, international engagement, and an appreciation for diverse points of view.

This came from the organisers:

Oxley College (Grey) was awarded the Gold Medal, Sydney Boys High School (Blue) was awarded the Silver Medal and North Sydney Girls High School (White) the Bronze medal. Queenwood (Orange), Sydney Boys High School (Red), Queenwood (Black), North Sydney Girls High School (Grey), Emanuel School (Light Blue), Oxley College (Green), The Scots School (Grey) and Bishop Druitt College (Aqua) were all very close behind in that order. The medals will be posted to the relevant schools tomorrow.

The following teams received honourable mentions from the judges. Danebank (Blue), Bishop Druitt College (Green & Aqua), Emanuel School (Grey & Blue), St Brigid's Catholic College (Orange & Navy), Marsden High School (White), The Scots College (Grey), Oxley College (Green and Grey) North Sydney Girls High School (White), Queenwood (Orange) and Sydney Boys High School (Blue and Red).

We are incredibly proud of all the participants who took a risk and tried something new, well done all! By Stacey Taylor

## Year 8 OLE Week Camp

### Year 8 OLE Week Camp

As they always say, there are two types of fun. There is type 1 fun, known simply as fun, which is enjoyable in the moment. There is also type 2 fun, miserable whilst it's occurring, but fun in the way that you can look back and think 'actually, that wasn't so bad!'. Before heading off on our camp, Year 8 heard a lot about the different types of fun, and I think we can all agree that our OLE week camp was type 2 fun. This was a new experience for most of us - school camps in the last few years haven't gone ahead due to Covid. So, being away from home for 5 days was definitely challenging!

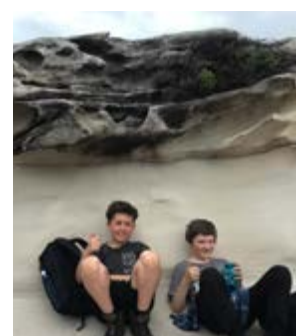
Day to day, on camp, we would wake up in the morning, get up reluctantly, and pack up the tent so it could be moved to the next campsite along with our bags. Then came breakfast, where we all discovered the joy of powdered milk (just kidding). Most days, we would leave camp in our groups in the morning, with a packed lunch spread between us. The first two days of camp were part of a practice for Duke of Ed, meaning we were responsible for navigation. Trusting Year 8s with navigation was not a good idea - it often ended in us getting lost and having to retrace our steps, but at least everyone learned some navigation skills! After walking for most of the day, we would set up camp in the next campsite, and be allowed to see friends in other groups.

A few of the hikes we did had amazing scenery - the coastal walk on the last day from Bundeena to Wattamolla had incredible views, across wind-sculpted sandstone cliffs and the out to the horizon. On that day we also ran into a decent-sized red belly-black snake, and it wasn't spotted until we were almost right on top of it! As you can imagine, this gave the group leaders who saw it right beneath them a big shock. On another day, the plans to canoe between campsites had to be modified at the last minute, which ended up with us catching a bus, a train, and a vintage ferry to our next campsite! There was also the unofficial competition of who could get to camp first. Racing the other groups to the next camp took everyone's minds off the walking, as we discussed how much we were leading by, and how to stay in front.

There were elements of camp that could be classified as type 3 fun - not fun at all but makes a great story later. Hearing rustling behind the tent at night and finding out that there is a 'mischief' of rats or a sly fox just the other side of the thin canvas, certainly fits into this category! So would almost capsizing the canoe because there's a massive water spider crawling up your leg!

Some would say that we're all closer now, as a year group, after going through camp together and being able to complain about the same things. Others would think that we all hate each other, as a result of seeing each other for 5 days straight! Either way, camp gave everyone something in common, which is important. Shout out to all the teachers and staff that organised the whole thing, and the teachers that chose to come with us. Having to deal with Year 8 for 5 days straight is something for which to be congratulated! This year's Year 8 OLE week camp is definitely a camp to remember for a time to come...

By Elsie Hanson & Liam Halloran, Year 8



WE ARE  
DELIGHTED TO  
BE CELEBRATING  
**OXLEY'S 40TH**  
BIRTHDAY IN 2023.

**KEY DATES FOR  
YOUR DIARY**

**20.05.23**  
**SATURDAY 20 MAY 2023**  
**40TH BIRTHDAY**  
**BLACK TIE COCKTAIL PARTY**

Featuring the amazing John Field Band.  
Dinner and dancing at Centennial Vineyards.  
All parents will be warmly welcomed and  
more details to follow.

**04.11.23**  
**SATURDAY 4 NOV 2023**  
**THE PIN OAK FAIR**

A large community fair at Oxley College  
with a marketplace, rides, produce, games,  
memorabilia, archives, entertainment and  
much much more. This is an opportunity for  
the whole Oxley community to get involved  
and to share our beautiful grounds with  
visitors from far and wide.



# GALLERY





# NEWSFLASH

## CRICKET

Congratulations to Joe Quilty (Year 11) who scored his first maiden century against Oakhill College on Saturday 29 October scoring 110. Joe developed an outstanding partnership with Will Torr (Year 9) combining to make a 150 run partnership. The previous week Joe also took 6 wickets in an outstanding bowling spell.

Congratulations to Myles Magill (Year 8) who in the same weekend who scored a hatrick against St Patricks 3rd XI finishing with figures of 4/11.



## ATHLETICS

Harry Keats, Year 6, has had an exceptional year in Athletics. Culminating in the award for the Most Outstanding Athlete in NSW and he received the Queen Elizabeth Jubilee trophy for having the best performance overall at the NSW All Schools State Championships Athletics. Here is a list of his achievements so far:

- NSW Athletics State Youth Championships (Feb 2022) - 2 x State Champion titles: 1st place U14 400m, 1st place U14 800m (running in age category above).
- Little Athletics State Championships (March 2022) - 3 x State Champion titles: 1st place U12 400m, 1st place U12 800m, 1st place U12 1500m (running in correct age category).
- Athletics Australia National Youth Championships (March 2022) - 1 x National medal: 3rd place U14 800m (running in age category above).
- USATF National Youth Championships (New York, July 2022) - 2 x USA National titles: 1st place 400m, 1st place 800m.
- NSW All Schools State Cross Country (July 2022) - 1 x State Champion title: 1st place 3km (12 year boys).
- NSW Little Athletics State Primary Carnival (August 2022) - 5 x State Champion titles: 1st place 100m, 1st place 200m, 1st place 400m, 1st place 800m, 1st place 4x100m relay.
- Australian All Schools National Cross Country (August 2022) - 1 x National medal: 2nd place 3km (12 year boys).
- CIS Athletics Championships (September 2022) - 3 x Gold medals: 1st place 200m, 1st place 800m, 1st place 1500m. Harry also set a new CIS State record in 800m of 2:09 at this event.
- NSW All Schools State Championships Athletics (October 2022) - 2 x State Champion titles, 3 x State medals: 1st place 800m, 1st place 1500m, 3rd place 200m (all 12 years boys).

Harry also set a new State record at this event, running the 800m in 2:09.87, breaking a 27 year old State record.

In late November, Harry will be competing at the Australian All Schools National Championships Athletics (Brisbane) where he will be competing in the 800m and 1500m events.

We wish Harry all the best for his future events.

## NGUNUNGULA

### JOIN OUR YOUTH COMMITTEE

Do you want to contribute to youth programming and events at Ngunungula?

Then why not join our Youth Committee?

The Youth Committee are a group of young people, aged 13-18 years, from all over the Southern Highlands region. The Youth Committee contributes to shaping programming and opportunities for young audiences at Ngunungula.

Apply [here!](#)



**SPRING CHAMBER  
MUSIC CONCERT**



John Martin piano, Edwina Carter flute,  
Alex Donaldson clarinet  
2pm Saturday 26th November  
Oxley College Bowral  
[www.trybooking.com/CDOKV](http://www.trybooking.com/CDOKV)

