

PINOAK

RECONCILIATION
WEEK

DUKE OF
EDINBURGH

THE TREEHOUSE
PAGES

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that the following publication contains images and voices of people who have died.

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Acknowledgement of Country

The writers, editors, and designers of Oxley's Pin Oak begin this edition by acknowledging the Gundungurra people - the 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.

From around town...

Last year, **Daphne Hutchison (current Year 7)** won the Grand Prize in the Springett's Arcade 'Be Part of the Art' community initiative. Her winning submission, 'Bowral', is now hanging in the David Wright Library.



COLLEGE CAPTAINS' UPDATES

RECONCILIATION WEEK

For 2023, the main theme for reconciliation week is to 'Be a voice for generations.' What does this mean, you may ask? Well, the theme aims to inspire all individuals across Australia to be a voice for reconciliation in their everyday environment, whether this be in the workplace, school or at home.

At Oxley, we held an assembly in which Jim Hall and Melissa Wiya told us their own personal stories and what Reconciliation Week meant to them. To me these stories were incredibly insightful as it allowed me to express gratitude for what I currently have instead of being concerned about what I don't have. This was then followed up by Mr. Simpson who produced an incredibly moving image of what being Aboriginal means to him and what we should take away from this week.

I believe that Reconciliation Week is an incredibly important aspect of not just Oxley College but the wider community as it allows for us to learn about our shared histories, cultures and achievements as well as helping every individual contribute to the key concept of reconciliation across the country.

John Smedley, College Captain



WELL-BEING CONFERENCE

On Friday 9 June, while the rest of school enjoyed their student free day our College Captains John Smedley, Leah Halstead, Brydie Taylor & Joe Quilty attended the

Knox Grammar and Ravenswood Girls Student Led Well-being Conference. Although it was an early start and long drive to Knox Grammar it was well worth the trip as it was a fantastic opportunity to meet other like-minded young leaders. The day was initiated by Martin Heppell (Partner and Facilitator of the Resilience Project) who addressed us on matters of gratitude, empathy, and mindfulness. His personal experiences and stories of others were an excellent way to captivate the group and created much discussion at times where we were invited to converse with other people in our group (an excellent ice breaker as talking to strangers can be a little daunting at times...).

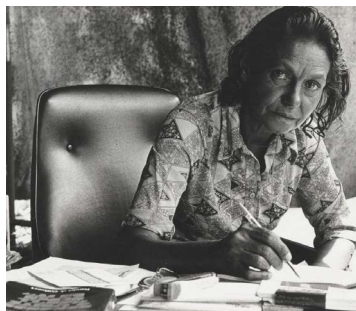
Following an array of spreads for morning tea, each of the leaders, in their coloured groups, attended 2 well-being workshops led by a group of Knox and Ravenswood students. The workshops were a hands-on method of understanding well-being through notions of self-regulation, gratitude, character strengths and resilience. The student led workshops allowed us to look at how methods of wellbeing can be translated to our own Environments both at home and at Oxley.

Overall, it was a fantastic day, which highlighted the importance of wellbeing to us, particularly in the later years of high school and allowed us to think further about how to establish the theme of regeneration at Oxley.

Brydie Taylor, College Vice-Captain



Spotlight: Oodgeroo Noonuccal



After the Reconciliation Week Assembly, its moving message – "Be a voice for generations" – has made me think deeper on how we as a school can connect with this year's Reconciliation Week theme. And my thoughts have travelled all the way to my House: Oodgeroo. My House is named after an inspirational Indigenous Australian woman called Oodgeroo Noonuccal, who is a poet, an Aboriginal rights activist, an educator and an environmentalist. As well as all of this, she was both a believer in reconciliation and stood firm against injustice.

During her lifetime, Oodgeroo Noonuccal had great achievements – from writing successful poetry to receiving numerous awards. But above all, her voice and story were heard. She was a voice for generations. She is what I think of when I consider this year's Reconciliation Week theme, and it makes me feel proud to be in Oodgeroo House!

Ruby Cochrane, Year 7

HEAD OF COLLEGE UPDATE



As we reflect on the end of Semester 1 2023, there is much to be thankful for at Oxley. Our children continue to flourish in all aspects of the College with wonderful learning, fantastic co-curricular achievements, and opportunities. It has been wonderful to be able to spend time over these last few weeks seeing the work our students produce firsthand, through events such as Year 6 Legends and Legacies, Year 3 Exploration Showcase, Year 7 and 9 Night at the Museum and the Year 10 Personal Interest Projects. I have also enjoyed spending time watching our sports teams across the breadth of the school. I would also like to wish those students who are representing their school in the Regional Snowsports Championships over the coming break all the best.

I am particularly grateful to our community for their support of the launch of the Oxley College Foundation. We are pleased to announce that through our wonderful community's involvement in the 40th Birthday event and donations received so far in our Annual Appeal, we have already raised more than \$57,000. I realise that for some families it may sit uncomfortably that we are asking for further support in this way; however, as an independent school, the Government funding we receive must be used directly for the education of children. We rely on the wider Oxley community's support for any building development and bursaries for students who otherwise would not be able to have the opportunity of an Oxley education.

Two weeks ago, our staff did a deep dive into the benefits of joining the Round Square network of schools. We particularly appreciated the importance that Round Square network places on the philosophy of holistic education, where experiences across the curriculum are offered to ensure the development of positive character traits in students. For us, those traits of kindness, courage and wisdom really are at the forefront of what we do. I look forward to writing to you all in the coming semester explaining more about Round Square and how this philosophy will make an impact on the school and your children.

In sadder news, we have received the resignations of Mrs Louise Pike (Sports Administrator) and Mrs Linda Maher (Head of Diverse Learning). We wish them both all the best as they move into the next stage of their careers. Regarding Diverse Learning, we will be spending some time over the coming weeks developing a plan for the best way to support all students across the school and I look forward to sharing further details with you shortly.

Finally, I do hope you all have a wonderful break. I know many families are travelling and I wish you safe travels. I look forward to seeing everyone back refreshed and ready for Semester 2.

Scott Bedingfield, Head of College

GET YOUR **PROM** ON FOR

QUIZ Night

AUGUST 26TH AT 7:00 PM TILL LATE

PCC, OXLEY COLLEGE

\$25 per ticket (18+ yrs)
or
\$250 per table - tables of 10 adults (18+ yrs)

Cash Bar (wine only), BYO Food & Drinks

Raffles and games throughout the night

Prizes for best dressed tables, Prom King and Queen

Tickets available at
<https://www.trybooking.com/CJDVJ>

PIN OAK FAIR

4 November 2023

Come and Celebrate
Oxley's 40th Birthday

10.00am - 3.00pm
Saturday 4 November 2023
Founders Field

- Games
- Art show
- High Tea
- Rides
- Market stands
- Food stalls
- Book stalls
- Music and performances

..and much more!

Give to support

The Oxley College Foundation

The Building Fund The Scholarship Fund

OXLEY COLLEGE EQUESTRIAN DAY

Sunday 20 August
2023



**'Wyeera',
Bong Bong Picnic Racecourse,
460 Kangaloon Road, Bowral.**

All entries via: www.nominate.com.au

Entries open: **23 July 2023**

Entries close: **11 August 2023**

Open to all school age riders Yr K-12

* **Dressage** * **Showjumping**
* **Show Horse** * **Horsemanship**

ENQUIRIES:

Oxley College

Kim.McNaught@oxley.nsw.edu.au

Holly Kramer

holly@kramernoad.com.au

Raffle to be held on the day with over
\$1,000 in prizes to be won with funds to support Wombat Care Bundanoon

2023

SPOTLIGHT: DUKE OF EDINBURGH

GOLD: BUDAWANGS

With the dawning of Friday 9 June, eight brave Duke of Edinburgh compatriots assembled at the senior turning circle for what would become a true journey to remember. Our adventure, thrown into jeopardy by last minute detractors (not that we chastise their studiousness) was made possible by the likes of Ben, Bryn, Patrick and Harry, a noble complement of Silvers who traded a humble amble and splash in Kangaroo Valley for four days in Budawang Range. Us Golds, comprising of Hamish, Cameron, Bree, and myself, were immensely gracious for their willingness, an arrangement allowing for a unique and rewarding inter-year group adventure.

Setting off from Wog Wog Campground, parting ways with the last road we would see for four days (not before some customary missed turn offs and trailer woes) our party of eleven ventured forth into the unknown – including Mr. Dibdin who had graciously sacrificed his long weekend for our troubles, and Ben and Hugh of Optimum Experiences.



Over four days, our paths crossed the majestic Corang Peak and the charismatic Corang Arch. A highlight was our view of the regal Pigeon House Mountain from a commanding vantage at Yurnga Lookout. There, we honed our navigation and mapping skills, consolidating our knowledge of bearings and landforms, and learning of triangulation methods, used to clarify one's location using three reference points. This knowledge proved indispensable as we descended the flanks of Mount Bibbenluke toward Mount Cole, as our well-formed track dissolved into a maze of bushfire regrowth. It was with tenacity and style that our convivial troop reached the Mount Cole Camping Caves, enjoying a campfire under the stars paired with charged games of Mafia.



Our course then continued past the commanding Seven Gods Pinnacles (though we couldn't find all seven - another Twelve Apostle-esque geological sham) and onwards into the elusive Monolith Valley, an assault of greenery and gnarled trees impossibly poised on boulders. Upon reaching our campsite, we were schooled on first-aid responses and treatments in remote areas, whilst Hugh outlined crucial equipment for any trip.

Our final day began with pre-dawn breaking of camp, in what was an attempt to summit The Castle for sunrise. This objective soon proved wildly optimistic, reaching the foot of our ascent as the sun crept over the horizon. Over the next two hours, we contorted ourselves up a series of ropes and obstacles to its summit and were rewarded with a spectacular view of the Pacific Ocean.



Following a challenging descent to Yadbore Flat Campground, we reflected on the overwhelming success of our trip. We were privileged with four clear and mild days of unspoilt beauty, complemented by the amiable leadership of Hugh and Ben, as well as the good faith of Mr. Dibdin. Ultimately, however, it was the camaraderie of my fellow adventurers that made our time in the Budawangs so enjoyable. Our journey was a gratifying one, not only in the usual retrospective sense of a Duke of Edinburgh journey, but throughout – Bree and I, in the thick of our HSC year, lamenting our arrival at the bus. Thank you all for a sensational journey.

Patrick Muldoon, Year 12

On a cold Friday morning before the long weekend, 8 of us set out from Oxley bound for the Budawang Range to embark on a 4-day hike. For some, it was a final Duke of Ed hike, and for others a practice for further expeditions to come. The weather throughout this journey was glorious, with clear sunny days (albeit with some cold and windy moments) and no rain in sight. To complement this weather, there were stunning views of a spectacular landscape, a real highlight for many of us, including the Corang Arch, a massive sandstone bridge standing sentinel high above the valley below; Monolith Valley with its strange rock formations, narrow clefts and seemingly prehistoric vegetation; and mighty cliffs and overhangs under which we took shelter one night.

A highlight of the hike was the iconic 'Castle'. However, getting to this seemingly insurmountable craggy peak was no easy feat. The difficult ascent meant a 5am start and a

SPOTLIGHT: DUKE OF EDINBURGH

dawn hike in towards the base, where we dropped our packs and headed up. The tricky ascent required the help of ropes, and towards the top a small crevice to squeeze through (not so gracefully) to emerge onto the narrow, flat summit. We were rewarded with stunning views of the whole Budawang range, Pigeon House Mountain and a sparkling sea beyond that.



Walking time offered a lot of time for chatter and learning experiences. For the Silvers, it was about how to properly read a map, identify landforms and take compass bearings to find direction. For the Golds, a refresher on these and some more advanced skills such as back bearings and triangulation. Equipped with these new-found competencies, it allowed us to become more independent of the leaders. Becoming more independent meant that the groups had to navigate together drawing everyone on the hike much closer than we had been before. This and seemingly endless (but very entertaining) games of 'Mafia' made for a very enjoyable hike and experience that will be remembered for a long time to come.

Harry Greenfield , Year 10.

SILVER: COOLENDEL

One fine Saturday morn – on a four-day long weekend nonetheless, 12 brave year 10 students embarked on the Duke of Edinburgh Silver Practice hike. One might think that a practice hike would be objectively better than a non-practice hike. Presumably, you could simply practice crying on top of a hill and weighing up if breaking your leg was worth it so a helicopter could pick you up. But unfortunately, the Duke of Edinburgh is a rabid spreader of propaganda. A practice hike is simply a real hike, except with the promise that you must do it again.

For the first one and a half days, we hiked through the terrain, taking in the beauty of the natural landscape. We were able to witness the flora and fauna of the region, and we encountered some challenging terrain over Mount Barron (also known as Mount Ratmore), which made the hike more exciting. If by exciting, you mean perilous. Rats are terrifying. There is nothing cute about a furry creature screaming bloody murder in your ear at 3am on top of a hill in the middle of nowhere. There is no escape.

There is simply suffering. It sprints from one side of the tent to the other, and yet the moment the torch is turned on, it vanishes.



On the second day, God created the sky. We, on the other hand, hiked more hills. As it turns out, once one hike up a hill in the middle of nowhere, you have to hike back down again. And the funny thing about hiking in a mountainous area is that then another mountain pops up. And another. And another. Until you realise you have climbed six mountains and it isn't even 1 pm yet.



Then, we took to the water in support of the new Little Mermaid film. Halle is indeed our Ariel, and we did in fact almost get hypothermia from the freezing cold water.

The kayaking part was a bit challenging as we had to navigate through some rapids in quote-unquote "divorce machines" (friendships were broken, Miley Cyrus was screamed), but it was an incredible adventure.

Overall, the Duke of Ed hike was a fantastic experience, and we learned a lot about nature and ourselves. We were able to push ourselves to our limits and come out stronger. It was a once-in-a-lifetime experience that we will always cherish.

Violet FitzSimons & Anouk Hakewill, Year 10



Junior School Weekly Awards

Week 5

- K:** Isobel Chapman
Dulcie Chalmers
Edward Coombes
Ailie Watson
- 1:** Pippa Rodgers
Charlie Motycka
- 2:** Eden Mason
Clara Peebles
- 3:** Thatcher Dunlop
Jack Reilly
Lachlan Sutherland
Oliver Johnson
- 4:** Amelia Gordon
Harry Berry
Chloe Barton
Raj Sidhu
Hannah Cochran
James Gregory
Cameron Bailey
Angus Kean
- 5:** Imogen Fox
Fergus Talman
Charlotte Bentham
Eddie Calkin
- 6:** Mariella Vlahakis
Isabella Sicari

Week 8

- K:** Hewin Walsh
Charlie Goff
Amelia Kindred
Alexander Cascun-Henry
- 1:** Matilda Wolstencroft
Archie Gaunt
- 2:** Max Chapman
Freddie Patterson
- 3:** Joshua Lawrence
Thomas Apostolatos
Piper Winn
Harrison Peebles
- 4:** Abi Cullen
Hudson Ahern
Eric Mussett
Max Curr
- 5:** Leo Le Guay
Beatrix Pearce
Ollie Coram
Sophie Hutchison
Elodie Ahern
- 6:** Flor Alia Pereira Merlini
Raphaella Abreu
Rhodes Feller
Ivy Bacon
Sienna Patruno
Ayden Hosseinzadeh
Jemima Anson

INTRODUCING... THE TREEHOUSE PAGES

WHAT'S GOING ON?

The Treehouse Papers Issue 1 (2023) has been devised by students in the Year 6 Writers' Studio. Chief Editors, **Lisa Mussett** and **Evelyn Hammond** have been leading a team of students, under the guidance and supervision of Miss Candelori.

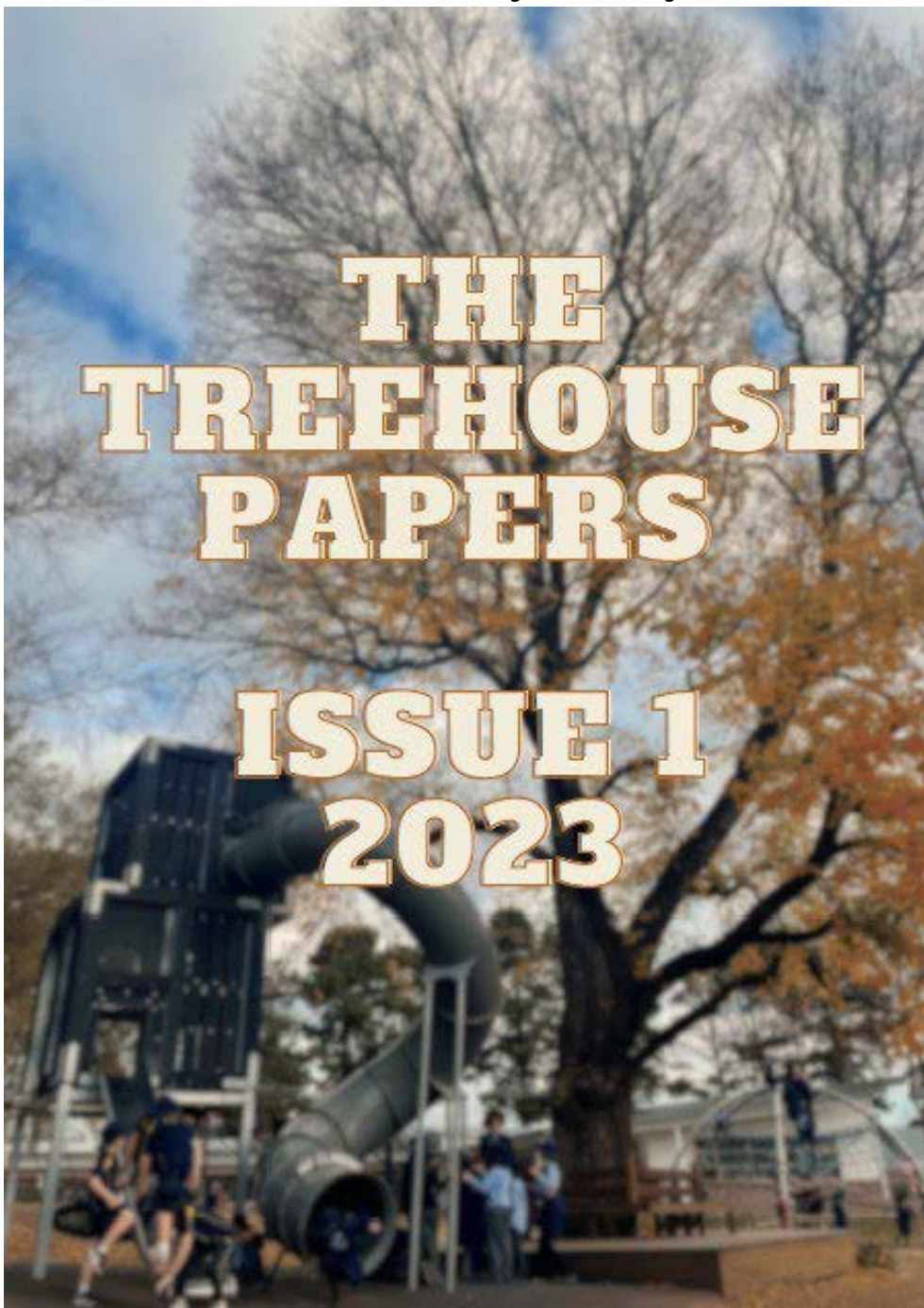
The team includes **Raphaella Abreu, Madi Chamley, Oscar Choo, Pixie Hanson, Maeve Ryan, Sienna Patruno, Ava Stocks** and **David White**. Once per week these 10 students gather for a Writers' Studio lesson and collaborate their ideas for articles to be included in The Treehouse Papers.

This issue, other Year 6 students were given the opportunity to submit a self-written article on any of the categories. The following students provided an article for Issue 1: **Andy Clothier, Hadley Morgan, Gabi Von Sperl, Mariella Vlahakis** and **Eli Winn**. We thank them for their contribution.

We hope you enjoy reading The Treehouse Papers Issue 1.

[Access Issue 1 of The Treehouse Papers here!](#)

Also available via the Parents Page on the College Website



Flag fight

It's time for another hard look at our country's flag and the divisive history it represents, writes Violet FitzSimons, Year 10.

In Year 2, the highest accolade you could receive was the title of flag flier. We would be on our best behaviour in hopes that our teacher might let us scurry out into the cold and pull the flag up its pole. This involved lots of "shotty not tying" and not getting back to class for a good ten minutes - an ideal way for an 8-year-old to spend a Monday morning.

We were too young to realise what the flag meant. Or that people argued about what it meant. That our flag was in fact the most politically controversial thing to be worn by a toy koala. Which is honestly kind of bizarre because it is the most boring flag ever. Canada's got the maple leaf, France the tricolour stripes, South Africa that cool line thing and we've just got England at night.

That's actually a bit from Jerry Seinfeld, who perfectly encapsulated the overwhelming underwhelm of the Australian flag. We're essentially stuck in a permanent couples costume with New Zealand.

...our flag upsets so many people.
It's become the rope in a constant
game of tug of war - pulled left
and right, in a state of constant
tension, causing rope burns on the
hands of whoever grabs hold.

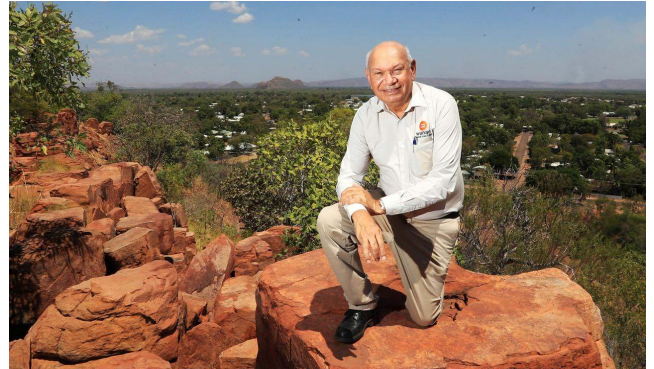
And yet our flag upsets so many people. It's become the rope in a constant game of tug of war - pulled left and right, in a state of constant tension, causing rope burns on the hands of whoever grabs hold.

But that doesn't make sense. A flag is a piece of fabric. How can that hurt anybody? So let's unpack this troublesome flag. Unfurl it, if you will.

The founding principle of our flag is the British Empire, subtly represented by the Union Jack in its corner. A little-known fact: all countries under British rule had identical flags. Canada, Kenya, New Zealand, and India all bore the same pattern, but instead of our southern cross, they were identified by their own crests and emblems.

This seal of ownership is painfully apparent on our unchanged flag, whilst other nations have sought to find more individualistic designs since the fall of the empire. Quite frankly, I don't think we need a reminder of Australia's colonisation: systemic racial injustice forms its own Union Jack across the nation without the constraints of a flag.

Ian Trust, an Aboriginal man from the East Kimberley and the executive chair of Wunan Foundation, constructed a thought experiment that illustrates the true im-



Ian Wunan wants us to think about how our flag represents systemic racism and disadvantage.

All the opportunities Australia has to offer are on the other side of the river. Work, culture, livelihood, stability. To cross the river, you have to learn how to swim - to read and write. The only way to do that is to go to school. But many Indigenous parents have reservations about sending their children to these institutions, which have been the cause of such pain in the past.

As a result, only 45% of Indigenous students complete their Higher School Certificate, compared to a 75% success rate of their peers. These kids are sucked down the river and into the mouths of the crocodiles. It's a vicious cycle of intergenerational trauma.

What Ian Trust shows us through this image is not an undefined, ruthless hatred towards the constraints of our country, the constraints of our flag; it's an endless struggle to fit in, to make it work. The weight of that issue drops into our hands without much prompting. It's not well concealed by the flag's stitchwork. The next weight, however, doesn't lie in the dark blue, but in the Union Jack - and its ever-fraying edges.

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complete their Higher School
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Allow me to introduce you, ladies and gentlemen, to the Republican movement, whose goal is to establish Australia as a country separate from Britain and outside of the constitutional monarchy - also known as those who don't get to experience the joy of a Queen Elizabeth cookie tin. The Republican movement takes issue with the Union Jack. They loathe the hold that the Empire still has over

Australia, its ghostly hands still pulling strings in our government to this day.

Their discomfort is less to do with the past, and more with the future. Their famous tagline is "Don't you want your children to have the opportunity to be the President of Australia?" My mother wants the same for me but isn't quite bothered to fight for constitutional change and has been known to suggest I marry a prince of some European country instead. Same end result, different country.

But unfortunately, we can't all marry princes, and Australia finding its footing as an independent country has been a long time coming. So, who's tugging at the other end of the flag?

Nostalgia. One in three Australians want the flag to stay the same, which isn't a majority but it is a message. There's hesitancy there. Our soldiers, including our Anzacs, have all fought in the name of that flag. That flag was shown when Kathy Freeman received her gold medal, when Ian Thorpe gained the most medals ever won by a single Olympian, when Ash Barty won Wimbledon.

Even Albanese was sentimental when asked if he wanted to change the flag, commenting "I'm always very proud to stand in front of the Australian flag and I think anyone who is a member of the Australian Parliament should do so as well."



Identity politics and the Australian flag are the political cartoonist's dream. Cartoon by Mark Knight.

And so we see the fight unfold, the flag and all its symbolic meaning the centre of a brawl unlike any other. That's the thing we don't like to talk about: how our rope burns got there. Spoiler alert: very rarely do debates have to turn into a tug of war. But that's what this conversation over changing the flag has become.

It's childish and volatile and perhaps one of the greatest examples of political discourse in Australia.

It's childish and volatile and perhaps one of the greatest examples of political discourse in Australia. As much as I love our Parliament's informal register and extremely creative insults, this constant refusal to acknowledge the perspective of the opposition, each party tugging with all their might, claiming the title of morally righteous,

is all too familiar.

We pretend it's in good sport, this flag fight. The old hands at the game tugging to the right, towards the flag remaining the same, barely acknowledge their opposition who've just arrived on the scene and are trying desperately to bring the flag to the left. There is no middle ground, no empathy; instead, we see politicians at each other's throats, protestors ready to tear down the barricade over a piece of fabric.

The irony of it all is that we've created the greatest division in our country over the one thing that unites us all: our nationality. We're united in the fact that we're stubborn and brave and we hate authority. We're Australian.

That's nothing to be ashamed of. But perhaps we should take a closer look at that the way we're handling our debates, our identity, our reconciliation. Our flag has been rolled into a very dense, messy burrito of all the issues plaguing our nation. We've sunk to the level of Year 2 students, rushing into the playground and clawing at the sides to see who can win.

We've sunk to the level of Year 2 students, rushing into the playground and clawing at the sides to see who can win.

We can do better. Informality in our discourse doesn't mean a lack of respect. Multiculturalism doesn't mean division and misunderstanding. Saying sorry isn't embarrassing, but neither is loving something that is flawed. The beautiful thing about loving something is that once you get over the fear of it changing, you realise you want it to be better. You want it to be the best. We can love our flag, love our nation, and still want change. We can be proud and mournful. We can be respectful of the past and still want independence.

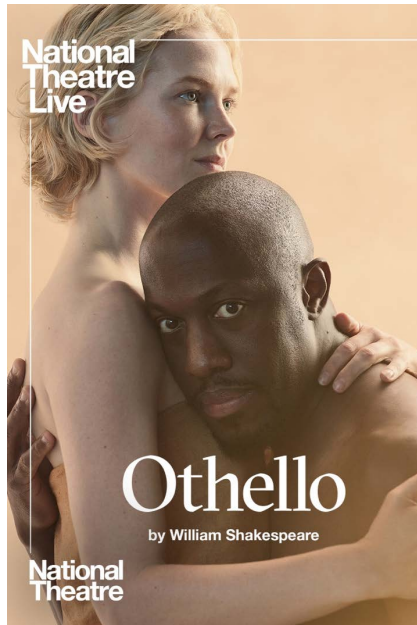
Discussing these things is important. Unpacking our history and national identity is a pressing political issue. Pay attention to the word unpack. As long as we keep these issues stitched into our flag, off the ground and out of reach, we'll never be able to action change. Our issues are at ground level – they're messy and blurred. Separating them from us as something regal and quite literally not on our level is ridiculous.

We need to discuss these issues with kindness and empathy. But before we even attempt that, we need to take these issues from our flag and lay them out on the table. Not romanticised, or regal, or untouchable. We don't need to be careful in laying them out – we need to be curious. We need to be excited, just like we were in Year 2 – but instead of pulling the flag up its pole, we need to bring it back down to our level.

Violet FitzSimons, Year 10

Othello at the cinema

The National Theatre's production of 'Othello' has something for everyone - and makes some interesting choices when it comes to manipulating the source material, writes Sami Barker, Year 11.



Director
Clint Dyer

Cast
Giles Terera
Rosy McEwen
Paul Hilton
Tanya Franks

Release date
23 February
2023

Distributed by
National Theatre
Live

On 15 May, the Year 11 English Advanced cohort embarked on an excursion to the local cinemas in Bowral, Empire Cinema. We all got the opportunity to immerse ourselves into a theatrical version of Othello that had been recontextualised into the 21st century, a significant alteration to the atmospheric setting of the original Jacobean/Elizabethan era. The performance respected and upheld the properties and key dialogue of the original body of text and by many methods altered our perceptions of the narrative. Its dramatisation was a vital characteristic contributing to its success, creating lasting impressions for us as an audience.

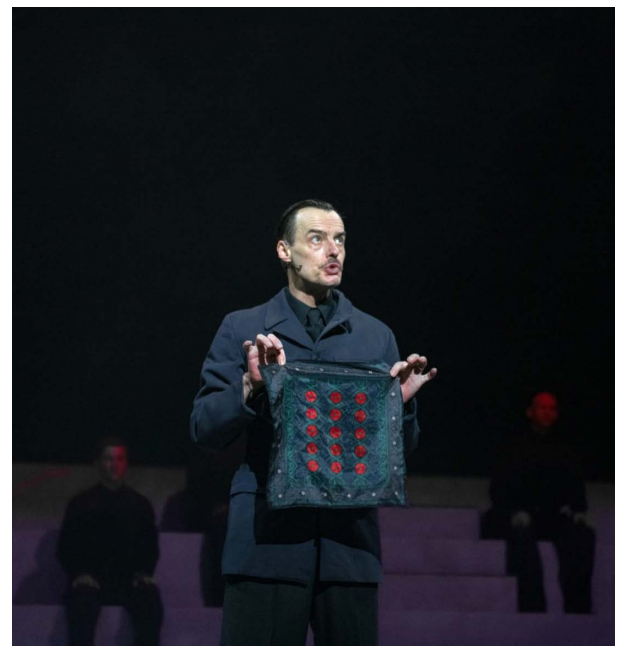
A modernised version of Desdemona, was this effective or not?

Although we believe the actor consolidated Desdemona as a character and she effectively communicated her complex emotions, she had an unconventional approach to the character. In the original body of text, she was portrayed as a naive and honest woman. The modernised production shifted her from the fair maiden archetype and made her less well-mannered and more ignorant to manipulative behaviour, but because they changed her character to more independent and opinionated, it strayed too far from the original text and didn't resonate with us as an audience.

The role of body language

The exaggeration of body language articulated

within the production was communicated purposefully and altered the portrayal of the text positively. For example, the first opening scene opened in media res, a differentiation to the play which positively influenced our understanding of the complexity of Othello's character and how it embodied his establishing values of his early characterisation. Furthermore, body language was expressed through the suffocation of Desdemona. It translated to us as an audience as a lot less violent in Desdemona's defensive manner than in the much-lauded Globe Theatre production. The body language communicated a rather soft demeanour, contrasting to the intensity of the scene and the dialogue.



Paul Hilton portrays a suitably evil Iago. Photo: Myah Jeffers

The dynamical shift of staging and lighting

The employment of lighting in the production was intentionally effective; it allowed the audience's attention to be targeted on dialogue between characters, and therefore removed distractions from other elements on the stage. Furthermore, the director utilised lighting to add emotive light around the ensemble members, whether they were communicating movement or emotive expressions. Next, the staging of the production commanded the audience's attention. The positioning of the characters imbued each scene with nuanced meaning, like Iago and Othello conversing on the side of the stage during a particularly manipulative exchange, versus Cassio and Bianca conversing on the other side of the stage to highlight their isolation.



Rosy McEwan's Desdemona was powerful in parts, but took great liberties with the source material. Photo: Myah Jeffers

The exaggeration of specific dialogue that added meaning to the play's key concerns

The production shed some light on significant moments of dialogue that were forms of diegesis and brought additional meaning towards the phrases. The dialogue added to the social critique within the play, including misogyny, xenophobia, and hierarchal power. For instance, Desdemona's delivery of "These men, these men!" exhibited her grief at her misogynistic treatment, the desperation within the actor's voice within the production truly adding gravity to the words and resonating with us as an audience. Furthermore, another great example of the effectiveness of dialogue is in Brabantio's phrase, "She fell in love with what she feared to look upon." This line was delivered with an aggressive tone and largely reinforced Othello's isolation and the wider societal opinions for us as an audience. Overall, dialogue greatly contributed to the success of the production.

Othello's character arc

Within the production, Othello's character arc was somewhat lost in translation, as we thought Othello's uncomplex transformation into a villain was too immediate; an entire, non-delayed transition meant we lost a sense of the complexities of his character. This is a direct contrast with the original play's portrayal of Othello, as he slowly acquiesces to the violent stereotypes associated with him and slowly succumbs to Iago's manipulation. We felt as though the original play communicated his character more effectively as he doesn't lose complete virtuous aspects of his character and how he performed actions in 'honour.'

Critical perspectives of other students:

Isabelle Wright: "I thought the beginning implementation of media res was highly effective. I also think this greatly added to Othello's initial characterisation and painted an establishing image of his reputation and pre-tragic persona. I also thought this production of the play didn't expertly portray the complex relationship between Othello and Desdemona; I felt as if they were fighting all the time or were established as only lovers or enemies and not the complex in-between state their relationship was in. Furthermore, I felt as though Desdemona's characterisation within the production was highly ineffective; the acting didn't quite portray what I felt the original text had given depth to. Lastly, I felt as though the dramatic use of lighting and staging made the production really engaging for the audience and further enhanced the treatment of the play's themes. Overall, I liked most elements of it, but it could have been improved.

Overall, for a modernised set adaptation, the production was wholly effective, enjoyable and atmospheric for maximising audience entertainment. The production celebrates a lot of vital aspects of the original body of text and production, for instance Shakespeare's nuanced treatment of patriarchal and xenophobic social structures, the characterisation of key characters and the selection of original dialogue which makes the text so significant. In conclusion, I enjoyed watching the production and as a cohort we are very thankful for such an immersive excursion to support our Critical Study of Text unit.

Sami Barker, Year 11

DUKE OF ED SILVER HIKE



DUKE OF ED GOLD HIKE



A large collage of 20 photographs showing Year 10 students at a PIP Expo. The students are displaying various projects, including posters, laptops, clothing, and models. The expo is held outdoors in a courtyard area with trees and buildings in the background.

YEAR 6 LEGENDS AND LEGACIES



YEAR 9 DRAMA PERFORMANCE



YEAR 4 VISIT GUULA NGURRA NATIONAL PARK



YEAR 3 EXPLORATION SHOWCASE



GOOD & OTHER NEWS

Achievements

Swimming

A huge congratulations to **Annabel Arnot (Year 10)** who has been unstoppable in the pool. She has qualified for the NSW Swimming Country Championships at the end of the month in the following events: 50m Breaststroke, 100m Breaststroke, 200m Breaststroke, 50m Freestyle, 100m Freestyle, 200m Freestyle, 50m Butterfly, 100m Butterfly and 100m Individual Medley. Incredible work, Annabel!



Cricket

Congratulations to **James Moylan (Year 7)** on his recognition as the Highlands District Cricket Association's Under 12 Representative Player of the Year. He is to be congratulated on his winning captaincy of the Inter Association Under 12 Rep team - the first in many years for this division. Over the July holidays, James is playing in the Under 15 International Cricket Academy League tournament on the Sunshine Coast with ex-Test player coach Jason Krejza. Well done, James!



Football

Congratulations to **Oscar Lambie (Year 11)** who played in the CIS Secondary Open Boys Championships last month.

Has someone you know in the Oxley community achieved something spectacular? Make sure to let us know!

Email us: jade.mclaughlin@oxley.nsw.edu.au

Rugby

Congratulations to **Phoenix Sparke (Year 11)** who made it through to the Semi-Finals of the U18 State Rugby Championships.



Cross Country

A big well done to the 15 Years Girls Team - **Zara Love (Year 9)**, **Elsie Hanson (Year 9)**, **Mollie Kettle (Year 9)** and **Ella Loiterton (Year 9)** - on their win at the NSW CIS Cross Country Championships at SIEC.

Harry Keats (Year 7) came away with the win in the 13 Years Boys event. **Amelia May (Year 11)** is to be commended on her 8th place finish in the 17 Years Girls, as is **Milo Shepherdson Woodhead (Year 7)** on his 9th place finish in the 12 Years Boys events.



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