

Semper

Bi-annual magazine of the Ravenswood community

Issue 49, Autumn 2016



*Welcoming Our Tenth Principal
Positive Education in Practice
The Benefits of Boarding*

Ravenswood widens her world

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Semper

Ravenswood School Magazine

Semper is Ravenswood School for Girls' community magazine and is produced twice a year.

Ravenswood is a leading Uniting Church Day and Boarding School for girls from Kindergarten to Year 12. Ravenswood focuses on educating the whole person, encompassing academic, emotional and spiritual elements.

Ravenswood opened in 1901 and has a proud tradition of working with parents, alumni and the whole community to educate students.

On the Front Cover

New Principal, Mrs Anne Johnstone with Ravenswood students in the Peace Garden.

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Principal's Message



Welcome to the first edition of *Semper* for 2016.

What a joy it is to be writing to you as the tenth Principal of our outstanding school. Every day I spend here I marvel further at the warmth and talent of Ravenswood's vibrant students, staff and community; the depth of learning and exploration that occurs here and the breadth of co-curricular opportunities offered to the girls. I am proud that we are committed to delivering a multifaceted and balanced curriculum that is about the development of the whole student and engages with the academic, cultural, spiritual and practical domains of learning. I am inspired by the active pursuit and expression of Ravenswood's Guiding Principles: *excellence, courage, respect and compassion*, both within and beyond the classroom.

The pages of this autumn edition showcase the efforts and achievements of our students as they experience rich and diverse learning opportunities provided by our dynamic staff. From the exciting journey we have undertaken by introducing the Primary Years Programme (PYP) of the International Baccalaureate in the Junior School, to the engaging production of *The Lark* and the new Positive Education approach being embedded across the school, there is so much to celebrate. This edition also highlights the contributions of broader community members. We are blessed to have such a vibrant network of current families, Old Girls, past staff, parents and friends who are highly engaged with our school.

Our new archivist, Mrs Robyn Robertson and her predecessor, Mrs Kathy Switzer are profiled here and their valuable contributions to Ravenswood celebrated. We also pay tribute to former Principal Phyllis Evans, who sadly passed away on

5 February this year. She was said to have been determined that Ravenswood would be a school 'second to none' with a commitment to intellectual rigour, a strong Christian focus and a robust curriculum that opened the door to any career path her students wished to pursue. We owe her, along with all of our previous Principals, a great debt.

As the newly appointed Principal, I am conscious of the vast contributions of each of the nine Principals who have gone before me in helping to build the school that we celebrate today. We are united not only through our roles in serving the school throughout its history but through common aspirations in striving for excellence in educating our Ravenswood girls.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for making me and my family feel so welcome in my first terms as Principal of Ravenswood. I am excited about the future and am greatly enjoying the opportunity to work with our School Council, Senior Leadership Team, staff, parents and broader community as we seek to offer our girls the very best education. I hope our students will come to realise the wisdom and significance of our school motto: *semper ad meliora*, 'always towards better things.'

As Principal, I look forward to helping our students go from strength to strength: continually learning, growing and developing in every way and encouraging them to look to the future with hope, because it is resplendent with possibilities!

Anne Johnstone
Principal



'I am thrilled to have the opportunity to lead this magnificent school.'

A New Era

Ravenswood commissioned Mrs Anne Johnstone as its tenth Principal on 15 February 2016 in a joyful and inspiring ceremony.

In attendance, along with students and staff were the Reverend Kath Merrifield, Executive Director of Uniting Mission and Education (Synod of NSW/ACT), Members of the Ravenswood School Council, Chairman of Knox Grammar School, Mr Peter Roach and the Mayor of Ku-ring-gai, Cheryl Szatow. The Acting Principal of Seymour College Adelaide, where Anne was formerly Principal and the Principal of St Peter's College Adelaide, flew in for the service. More locally, the Principals of Knox Grammar School, St Catherine's

School, Newington College, MLC School (Interim Head), Roseville College, Brigidine College St Ives, Wahroonga Preparatory School and the Principal of the Women's College, University of Sydney, were in the audience. Colleagues from The Scots College, Loreto Normanhurst and Macquarie University as well as Anne's friends and family were also present.

Extracts from the speech by the Chair of the Ravenswood School Council, Mr Mark Webb.

Mrs Anne Johnstone has an innate passion for excellence in learning whether it be for students, their teachers' professional development or her own. It has been a common theme throughout her life – Anne experienced a calling to education and pursued it. Anne Johnstone is also dedicated to helping people flourish through Positive Education. She brings to us strong expertise and skills as an outstanding visionary educator. At this part of the journey in her career we are delighted that Anne has accepted the appointment as Principal of Ravenswood. At the same time, we welcome to our community her husband Andrew, son Jacob who has begun Year 5 at Knox Grammar and daughter Olivia, who started this term in Kindergarten.

I know we will all grow to love Anne's infectious enthusiasm, wisdom, strength, dynamism and can-do attitude and the leading edge approach she takes to excellence in education in every respect: academically, culturally, spiritually, physically, as well as to fostering resilience and wellbeing.

Extracts from the speech by Mrs Anne Johnstone.

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to lead this magnificent school. Even in these first few weeks, I have experienced the warmth, vibrancy and unswerving commitment to excellence in education which are its hallmarks. I have been delighted by Ravenswood's sense of community and the strong networks it has built up over many generations. I have also been impressed by the excellent staff. Most of all I have been inspired by our vibrant, articulate and wonderful girls. Standout moments for me have included being invited through the Guard of Honour formed on Henry St by our prefects to welcome all Ravenswood girls, the special delight of introducing my own daughter Olivia to the whole of Year 12 on her first day of kindergarten, our regular chats on the front gate, visiting classes to share in some of the exciting learning experiences and travelling with our cadets to see them assembled shoulder-to-shoulder with their Knox Grammar counterparts in this rigorous and rewarding program.

Ravenswood's rich history spans back 115 years to its foundation in 1901, the year that Australia was federated. Our visionary founding Headmistress, Miss Mabel Fidler, opened this school with five girls and perhaps surprisingly three prep school boys who comprised the inaugural Ravenswood class. She was a trailblazer in education and an advocate for the advancement of women. Mabel Fidler was said to have been determined not to establish a 'dame' school for gentlewomen of the day that sought only to offer

refinement in areas such as needlework. Instead, she encouraged students to attain academic excellence and success beyond the expectations of most women of that time. For three consecutive years, girls from Ravenswood won the Sydney University Fairfax Prize for the highest marks in NSW in the Senior Examination. This reflected a quest for excellence in education that I too will pursue for Ravenswood as its tenth Principal.

I am very conscious of the honour and responsibility that has been conferred on me in my commissioning today, following in the steps of those nine Principals who have gone before me. I wish to acknowledge the unique and outstanding contribution of each of them. I especially want to pay tribute to Mrs Phyllis Evans, the Principal of Ravenswood from 1962-1986, who has sadly just passed away.

As a passionate educator, I am committed to helping each of our students fulfil their potential and flourish in every aspect of their lives. The world is changing at an exponential rate and we educators too, stand on tectonic plates. It is our role to be innovative and responsive to the shifts and changes that face our students in a highly globalised, technologically revolutionary society, while also ensuring their feet are firmly grounded in the immutable values that Ravenswood upholds as a Uniting Church school.

If what we teach our students and what they learn is to stand them in good stead in this whirlwind of change, then it is the whole girl who will prevail. It will be girls with the



attributes of grit, resilience, courage and good character, combined with academic achievement, who will affect change.

In other words, Ravenswood's commitment to offering a balanced and multifaceted curriculum that encompasses academic, cultural, spiritual and practical areas of learning, could not be more appropriate. I will strive to continue to build upon this educational offering in further developing our work in the area of academic excellence and wellbeing, through the scientifically validated framework of Positive Psychology. Research shows these areas of learning and wellbeing are mutually reinforcing, as they are inextricably linked.

In preparing to do this, I am carefully reviewing information received from a recent and extensive parent review, along with student and staff feedback. At a Senior Leadership Team and Council level, we will be using such information to help inform our new strategic focus for this era of our school.

'Excellence can be pursued by every student.'

The Guiding Principles of Ravenswood: *excellence, courage, respect and compassion*, are deeply empowering principles for young women today. *Excellence* can be pursued by every student. The pathway to personal excellence is paved by effort, engagement, grit and perseverance. Through our focus on Positive Psychology, I will strive to help our students

discover their own strengths - recognising that each and every one of them is indeed blessed with so much within them. Each student's motivation to set out on that pathway and her ability to achieve to her best, comes when she recognises these strengths and learns how to harnesses them.

Together with our staff I will strive to help students understand recent research into the plasticity of the brain so they grasp as reality their own capacity to shape their future: building new neural networks through effort in those areas of study they choose to make their own and recognising consistent effort is crowned with breakthroughs in learning.

Of course, as we know, it is an Olympic Year and when we think about this, combined with the imagery of the Ravenswood flame, it calls to mind the metaphor of running a race. We all run our own races of personal excellence in life and strive for our own personal bests. Sometimes there are hurdles but as they say, the glory is not in never falling but in getting up every time we fall. This is where *courage* is so important.

As Principal, there will be hurdles that I too need to strive to overcome to be a good custodian of this school. What will give me the courage to go on in difficult times? I will need to dig deep and exercise grit and tenacity. I will also look to my faith and the comfort of God's word that promises, '...those who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall rise up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not grow weary, they shall walk and not faint.'

The third of our core values is *respect*. In a society where young people particularly are bombarded by messages from advertisers and the media that make them feel inadequate and deficient, we will teach our girls to focus not on what is wrong with them but on what is right, both with themselves and with other people. Respecting oneself and respecting others is at the heart of all good relationships and is a vital protective factor in the formation of character and in making good choices.

It has been a delight to observe the respectful interactions between the girls here and between staff and students. An important element in developing young people is preparing them to relate comfortably and respectfully with the opposite sex. For this reason I am delighted that Ravenswood and Knox Grammar have established opportunities for collaboration between the two schools. I look forward to developing these further in working with the Headmaster of Knox Grammar, Mr John Weeks and the Chairs of both schools, Mr Mark Webb and Mr Peter Roach. I am excited about the enriched learning and development opportunities that the building of ever-closer ties between our two schools may yield.

The final element of Ravenswood's guiding principles is *compassion*. As a school built upon Christian foundations, compassion is part of the fabric of our school. We are taught in the Bible to treat others as we wish to be treated ourselves and that the greatest virtue is love. In a passage from Micah, the question is asked and answered: *'And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'*

Girls, I am very pleased to find how strongly committed you are to service. You truly celebrate service learning through your involvement in causes locally and beyond our shores such as in Cambodia. I enjoyed being invited along to your *shoe-in march* and have been impressed by the stealth campaign you have created to generate interest across the campus in this important cause.

Our students' and community's desire to make a positive contribution to the world, both within and beyond the school gates, is very real. I hope to help support our girls in continuing to seek to live meaningful lives. This is vitally

important to their own well-being and is our mission as a Uniting Church school.

There is so much to celebrate at Ravenswood. Our school is rich with history, sustained by a strong school community and built upon a Christian foundation. But of course the most cherished part of our school is the girls themselves.

'We venture together as a community, holding aloft our school motto semper ad meliora - always towards better things!'

As the tenth Principal of Ravenswood, I will seek to honour the school's past and strive to vouchsafe Ravenswood as a secure and inspirational place of learning where students excel and thrive in the as yet unknown future. We venture together as a community, holding aloft our school motto *semper ad meliora* - always towards better things!

In conclusion, I wish to thank the Ravenswood Council, Senior Leadership Team, teachers, administration and support staff, students, parents, Old Girls and broader members of the school community for making me and my family feel so welcome here.

I would also like to thank my husband Andrew for his tremendous support (and of course our children, Jacob and Olivia) and all of my family, friends, mentors and colleagues, some of whom have even generously travelled all the way from Adelaide. I am so touched and grateful.

The Ravenswood Anthem exhorts us to *'Kindle the Flame! ... uphold this torch of light! Honour the Name that guides our lives right ... (grow stronger in faith, hope and love) So shall we live to bless these walls, these fields - this treasured place.'*

Girls, it is my goal that your Ravenswood education does indeed kindle a flame within you so that you will one day go out from here, this treasured place, to live lives of meaning and purpose that light the world.

2015

Results

In 2015, Ravenswood offered 37 HSC subjects to 122 girls and 31 subjects to 22 girls in the IB Diploma Programme.

Our graduating class' outstanding results reflect a rigorous commitment to developing their strengths, talents and abilities across a breadth of academic and co-curricular areas. Their efforts were matched by the commitment of our staff to go 'above and beyond' in delivering the very best education for our girls.

One student wrote about her experience, 'The school has equipped me with an excellent foundation for the future, providing me with avenues to excel not only academically but socially, emotionally and spiritually. I was blessed to have been educated under the guiding hands of the dedicated staff.'

More than anything, it is the young women that the Class of 2015 have become that has made us most proud. They embody the spirit of Ravenswood - vibrant, optimistic and striving always for better things.

I can't wait to see how each of them uses the skills and knowledge they have learned to enrich their own lives and the lives of others.

Semper ad meliora

Principal,
Anne Johnstone

Top ATAR 99.85
achieved by
Tammy Tan (IB)

207 mentions on
HSC Distinguished
Achievers List

1st place in
Latin Extension

49% students
achieved an ATAR
of 90 or more

78 students scored
a mark of 90 or more in a
2 unit course or 45 or more
in an extension course

31% of all results were
a Band 6 score of 90
or more

IB Diploma

Six students achieved IB Scores of 40 or more, the universally recognised indicator of high achievement.

| Name | IB Score | ATAR |
|-------------------|----------|-------|
| Tammy Tan | 44 | 99.85 |
| Lucinda Lilley | 41 | 98.80 |
| Geena Tebbutt | 41 | 98.80 |
| Philippa Claridge | 40 | 98.30 |
| Sandy Dong | 40 | 98.30 |
| Emily Hunyor | 40 | 98.30 |

Notable results

59% of students earned scores which converted to ATARs of greater than 90, with 46% achieving ATARs of more than 94. 41% of candidates received Grade 7 (the maximum) in at least one subject and 27% received Grade A in their Extended Essay and/or Theory of Knowledge (TOK).

NSW Higher School Certificate Top Achievers:

- Grace Wong 1st in Latin Extension and 4th in Latin continuers
- Lucy Sefton equal 8th Textiles and Design
- Rebecca Simpson 9th Visual Arts
- Ashleigh Stirling 9th Legal studies



Tammy Tan



Grace Wong



Lucy Sefton

Eleven students were placed on the All Rounders HSC Merit List having attained results in the top band possible for at least 10 units of their HSC courses. Congratulations to: Rhiannon Brazier, Henrietta Chui, Hannah Daghighi, Emily Dalland, Sarah Haynes, Stacey Lotkin, Alison Ma, Charlotte Owens, Lucy Sefton, Emma Webster and Grace Wong. This represents 9% of the cohort.

Subjects where all results were in Band 6/E4

- Food Technology
- Music 1
- Music Extension

Subjects where all results were in Bands 5 and 6

- Design and Technology
- Drama
- French Continuers
- Music 2
- Visual Arts

Selections to HSC Exhibitions

Lucy Sefton was selected to exhibit her Major Textiles Project in the 2015 Textstyle Exhibition;

Molly Meenan was nominated for DesignTech

Eight students were nominated for consideration for ARTEXPRESS 2015. Six students, Emily Dicker, Emma Grana, Sarah Haynes, Anthea Preketes, Rebecca Simpson and Rachel Tucker were ultimately selected to exhibit

their Major Work. Mia-Louise Adcock and Kristine Hunt were also nominated for ARTEXPRESS.

Student Profiles

Tammy Tan achieved the school's top ATAR of 99.85 through her studies in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme. She has been accepted into seven prestigious American universities including The University of Pennsylvania, Brown, Berkley, UCLA and Dartmouth and has been placed on the waiting list at Yale, Cornell and Columbia. 'I am so grateful to Ravenswood for the constant stimulation I received during my International Baccalaureate studies and the relationships I formed,' she says.

Grace Wong came first in the state in HSC Latin extension and obtained the school's top HSC result of 99.80. She is now half way through her first term of an undergraduate medical degree. 'Mrs Fontaine's Biology classes really inspired me and I am loving applying biology in a clinical setting,' she says. 'I am grateful to Ravenswood for having enriched my perspective, giving me a good attitude to life and a broad, global view.'

Lucy Sefton was one of only around 25 students to have her final year work displayed in the HSC Textile and Design display TexStyles. Her exquisite tutu was inspired by *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and represented hours of painstaking work. 'Ultimately I would love to make costumes for the Australian Ballet or Opera Australia,' Lucy says. 'I am grateful to Ravenswood for having critically analysed my work and for helping me make important decisions.'



The Power of Positive Language

The Junior School has begun to introduce Positive Education principles in a variety of ways, including by creating a conceptual framework based on the Power of Yet, an idea championed by Psychologist, Professor Carol Dweck. Students are encouraged to reframe their thinking about learning in terms of 'I haven't mastered this skill, yet' to aid them to develop a growth mindset and persevere and seek support as needed. At a recent Junior School Assembly, Year 12 Prefect Emma Brading helped her younger counterparts to remember to adopt a growth mindset by turning YET into an acronym:

'Y' stands for 'yes' as in 'yes I can!' and the power of challenging ourselves.

'E' stands for 'effort' – being willing to put in the effort required.

'T' stands for 'time' – it takes time to build new skills but perseverance pays off in the end.

It was a valuable example of the way the shared language of Positive Education can be built and extended by the students, for the students, as we strive to create a school community that truly thrives.

POSITIVELY

Flourishing

Since its inception, Ravenswood has taken a holistic approach to the education of girls. Now with the arrival of its tenth Principal, the school is embarking on a more intentional, scientifically backed strategy for student success in school and beyond.

As the daughter of a school counsellor, the inextricable link between wellbeing and academic performance has long fascinated new Principal, Anne Johnstone. After four years in the legal profession, Anne felt a calling to become a teacher and pursue her passion for education. In doing so, she soon began searching for ways to help her students thrive as learners, and as people. 'I became increasingly keen to discover how to help students fulfil their potential and flourish, and to understand why some students struggled

at school and were hampered by perfectionism or failure avoidance while others were able to bounce back from setbacks and go on to achieve great outcomes,' she says. 'I applied for a Churchill Fellowship to undertake research, based at Cambridge University, to explore how to help foster resilience in students. I became convinced of the immense value of the principles and strategies of Positive Psychology in Education ("Positive Education") which offers highly valuable tools to help students to flourish and succeed.'

Anne is a founding board member of the Positive Education Schools Association (PESA) and has been accepted into the prestigious Master's Degree in Applied Positive Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. She says Ravenswood is well placed to become a lighthouse Positive Education school. 'Ravenswood will host the next PESA national conference in 2017 and we are looking to eventually gain accreditation to model what good approaches might look like and share our practice with others.'

Positive Psychology is a relatively new branch of psychology that can sometimes be misunderstood as a light weight 'happy-ology' or simply the practice of positive thinking. Instead, it is a scientifically validated framework for wellbeing and the study of what enables people to operate at the peak of their potential, find meaning and lasting fulfilment. It helps build greater levels of *positive emotion* through establishing helpful thinking patterns and developing a positive self-concept, *engagement* through fostering a greater understanding of how to harness strengths and achieve flow; it also offers strategies for developing positive *relationships*, and encourages the pursuit of a life of *meaning* through service and being other-person centred, as well as how to achieve greater levels of *accomplishment*; each domain being a key pillar of wellbeing, encapsulated in the acronym PERMA.

Positive Education is an evidence-based approach. It aligns strongly with the school's focus on educating the whole child and our emphasis on the development of general wellbeing, strength of character and virtue. 'A review of school-based positive psychology interventions,' by L. Waters (2011) quotes a meta-analysis of 213 studies involving 270,034 students from kindergarten through high school. The analysis showed that on average, school students enrolled in a social and emotional learning program ranked 11 percentage points higher on achievement tests than school students who did not participate in such programs.

As a prevention-based framework, Positive Education has been harnessed across the globe and is used to provide psychological fitness for US soldiers heading to the Middle East and here at home, by Beyond Blue in its school-based programs.

Following an introductory course for all staff and in-depth training for a number of staff in leadership roles, the school is now devising a scope and sequence from Kindergarten through to Year 12 and programs for year groups, smaller mentor-led groups and even one on one, according to need. A new role of Director of Positive Education and Wellbeing has also been created. Parent education will also be an important part of the learning journey and we look forward to ensuring that students, staff and families can work together to optimise the opportunities for the whole community to flourish.

Towards Global Learning

Ravenswood is seeking accreditation to run the International Baccalaureate programme in the Junior School.

But what is the PYP and how does it benefit young minds?

'Imagine a classroom where children are not bound by desks. They move purposefully between activity stations, working collaboratively and individually towards mutually agreed goals that are beautifully displayed on the walls.'

The atmosphere is creative, energetic and engaged. That is the Primary Years Programme (PYP) classroom,' says Year 4 teacher, Ms Amie Nasr who taught the PYP for ten years at The King's School before starting at Ravenswood at the beginning of this year.

The Primary Years Programme was introduced by the International Baccalaureate Organisation almost 20 years ago and fits the NSW Board of Studies curriculum requirements, while allowing for student-directed learning. 'Taking on the PYP will be a road of discovery for us,' says PYP Coordinator and Deputy Head of Junior School,

Mrs Anne Gruenewald. 'It invigorates learning and teaching and enhances school community and culture. Implementation will help to develop academic, social and emotional wellbeing with a focus on international mindedness and strong personal values. The evidence suggests that not only do PYP students do better academically, they become more confident and articulate, blossoming into lifelong learners.'

'Rather than sticking rigidly to strict lesson plans, PYP teachers listen to their students' questions and direct the learning accordingly,' according to Amie Nasr. 'It is an approach that allows for differentiation and engages and extends everyone from advanced students to those who find classroom learning more challenging.'

The path to PYP accreditation takes roughly two years and Ravenswood has been appointed a consultant to work closely with staff and oversee the implementation of the philosophy and curriculum. Anne Gruenewald says that as an International Baccalaureate school, Ravenswood already has much of the documentation in place.

Head of Junior School, Mrs Cheryl Bailey, introduced trans-disciplinary learning when she arrived seven years ago and has been running weekly professional development for her teachers ever since. 'What cross-curricular study does is make learning real,' she says. 'We do not live our lives in silos, we don't have a 'Maths moment' followed by an 'English moment'. By studying this way, the girls can learn English through History or English through Science and not only gain more understanding but have more time to spend on each subject.'

PYP-style learning will continue to build as 2016 progresses. The Year 4 Camp to the Blue Mountains included elements of the PYP approach and the students have begun work on an exciting Science Technology Engineering Maths (STEM) project using the round robot device, Sphero and their iPads.

'The PYP allows both students and teachers to develop international mindedness,' says Mrs Gruenewald. 'PYP units of inquiry are motivated by the mission of the International Baccalaureate to create a better world through education.'



Compass learning made meaningful - with a sphero and iPad.



Scientific Structures

The Science Department is revelling in the newly finished Sci-Tech Centre – a boost to creativity and innovation.

It has long been known that a building's design impacts the people who live and work in it. In fact, a year-long study from the University of Salford in Blackpool in England, suggests the classroom environment can affect a child's academic progress over a year by as much as 25%.

The new Ravenswood Sci-Tech Centre, made possible by generous donations from the Ravenswood community, reflects the best of modern teaching design. Large, flexible and open plan, the rooms can be used in a myriad of ways to provoke students to collaborate on and take ownership of their learning projects.

'These new, enabling spaces are wonderful in their design because their architecture prompts our teaching,' says Science Coordinator, Mr Toby Duncan. 'In preparing a lesson, we will think about the spaces available and how they can shape and enhance the learning. We have so many more

options and can explore new ways of doing things and more creative lesson plans.'

Einstein once said, 'I never teach my pupils. I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn.' A significant benefit of the new design has been the opportunity for teachers to hand more responsibility for learning to the girls. 'The atmosphere in the room completely changes when you give them ownership of a task,' Mr Duncan says. 'The freedom inspires them.'

The light and bright Sci-Tech rooms include a flexible seating area, a practical area and breakout space. When the girls break into groups to embed a learning concept, they can choose to go down the front and use the writable surfaces, analyse data up the back or hold discussions in the breakout room. 'Best of all, the rooms all open onto a lovely grass courtyard that serves as an outdoor classroom where the students can conduct experiments, gain a better understanding of biology concepts like photosynthesis and more,' Toby Duncan says. 'We have so much great content to look at and address in the Science curriculum. Once the girls have had a concept well explained, it is wonderful to watch the enthusiasm with which they go off to explore it.'

KING OF code

A trailblazer in computer education brings inspiration to young coding fans.

As a teenager, Brendan Reville spent his spare time making computer games and distributing them online. Now the Australian software programmer lives in Seattle with a resumé that includes working on Microsoft's Xbox 360 and co-founding a start-up that produced quirky gaming avatars. Currently employed by the non-profit group Code.Org, Brendan creates the learning programs that our teachers and students use almost daily in Information Software Technology (IST) classes.

There are notoriously low female and minority participation rates in the worldwide technology industry.

Code.Org is behind the global phenomenon *Hour of Code*. It is an initiative to entice young people into coding that has been endorsed by everyone from President Obama to Hollywood stars and tried by tens of millions of people around the globe.

Brendan is devoted to Code.Org's mission to give all young

people, particularly those from low socio-economic and minority backgrounds, access to school-based computing classes. He spends three months a year in Sydney and took time out in late March to visit Ravenswood's IST students to inspire them to consider a career in technology.

'Microsoft hires all types of people,' Brendan told the girls, painting an alluring picture of life in the tech hubs of Silicon Valley and Seattle. 'It's not just about software programmers sitting in dark rooms, generating code; tech companies need people like testers, program managers and designers as well.'

There are notoriously low female and minority participation rates in the worldwide technology industry. 'Code.Org is using video interviews with female role models like Sheryl Sandberg, the COO of Facebook, to inspire the current crop of young women,' Brendan says. 'I wanted the Ravenswood students to see that they really can learn to be good at coding, they just have to persist. And there are other benefits - coding develops your creativity and trains you to think in new ways, not to mention the fact that you can change people's lives with just a short line of code.'



Above: Brendan Reville

Home Comforts

What do you get when you mix girls from different backgrounds and nationalities in a beautiful old home? Answer: More fun than you could imagine.

'I was expecting a year of loneliness,' says Jasmine Hui who arrived in the Residential College at the beginning of Term 4, 2015. 'I was worried about missing my family and my house and I didn't think I would make many friends.' Jasmine dreams of working in commerce and marketing and was resigned to spending most of her time in her room, tied to her books. 'But I found the girls here are so nice to everyone. Being in the boarding house is more like having a big family. We get our work done but we also have a lot of fun.'

Ravenswood currently has 25 boarders, roughly a third of whom are weekly boarders from Sydney, a third are from country NSW and a third, like Jasmine are from overseas. Helping each girl to build close relationships is one of the central goals of Director of Boarding, Mrs Jackie Gilson, who started at the beginning of this year.

'Our Closed Weekends are a key part of that process,' Mrs Gilson says. 'We typically hold them on the first weekend of each term and all boarders are required to stay in.' On Friday night of the Term 1 Closed Weekend, the Year 11 Captains oversaw 'get to know you' games such as a fun but competitive treasure hunt around Gordon, targeting places like the train station and good places to eat. Saturday coincided with the last day of the Chinese New Year so the group visited the Chinese markets in Chatswood, followed by bowling, laser tag and dinner at a Chinese restaurant. 'It was fun getting the others to try all the different kinds of Cantonese food that we love and teaching them about cultural things like 'common' chopsticks and 'private' ones,' says Irene Shu who originates from South West China.

The restaurant meal was one of the highlights for Jasmine who says that Cantonese food is what she misses most about home. 'The boarding house chef is really good. We have

international theme nights like Italian night, Mexican night and Spanish night. I especially love his risotto. We even have Chinese night but it is not quite the same as back home.'

'They are an extension of my own family. My daughters come to the house once a week and feel like they are part of the Boarding House community.'

On Sunday the girls visited Darling Harbour attractions like the aquarium and wildlife park before heading back to the

house for dinner. It was Valentine's Day and the chef outdid himself by cooking a delicious salmon dish accompanied by pretty rose-scented drinks. 'Dessert was a masterpiece,' says Mrs Gilson. 'It was a huge heart made up of individual desserts filled with pink cream that covered the whole kitchen table. It was absolutely stunning. Then I gave each girl a rose as a Valentine's gift.'

Though Jackie Gilson has her own young family, she is 'mum' to the girls, relishing each of their achievements and attending important events like sporting matches, plays and presentation Assemblies. She also checks in with their teachers to keep tabs on each girl's progress. 'Of course I see them as my children,' she says. 'They are an extension of my own family. My daughters come to the house once a week

'... we work hard to make it as warm and welcoming as possible.'



Main: Jasmine Hui

and feel like they are part of the boarding house community. They love having 25 older sisters.'

'I think the most important thing about running a boarding house is to try to ensure that the girls don't feel like they are leaving school every afternoon to go into another institution but to their own home,' Mrs Gilson says. 'We are lucky here because while the Residential College is in close proximity to the school, it is off campus, so there is a psychological separation between the two. Also, the Ravenswood boarding house is beautifully decorated and we work hard to make it as warm and welcoming as possible. We also keep to family traditions, such as sitting around the dinner table together at night and talking about our days. It's a very happy place.'

The Lark

Engaging a 2016 audience with a 1950s play

Jean Anouilh's *The Lark* caused artistic controversy when it hit Broadway in 1955 for its abstract approach to the re-telling of the 15th Century trial of Joan of Arc. The play within a play employs flashbacks and direct audience addresses that challenge actors and audiences alike.

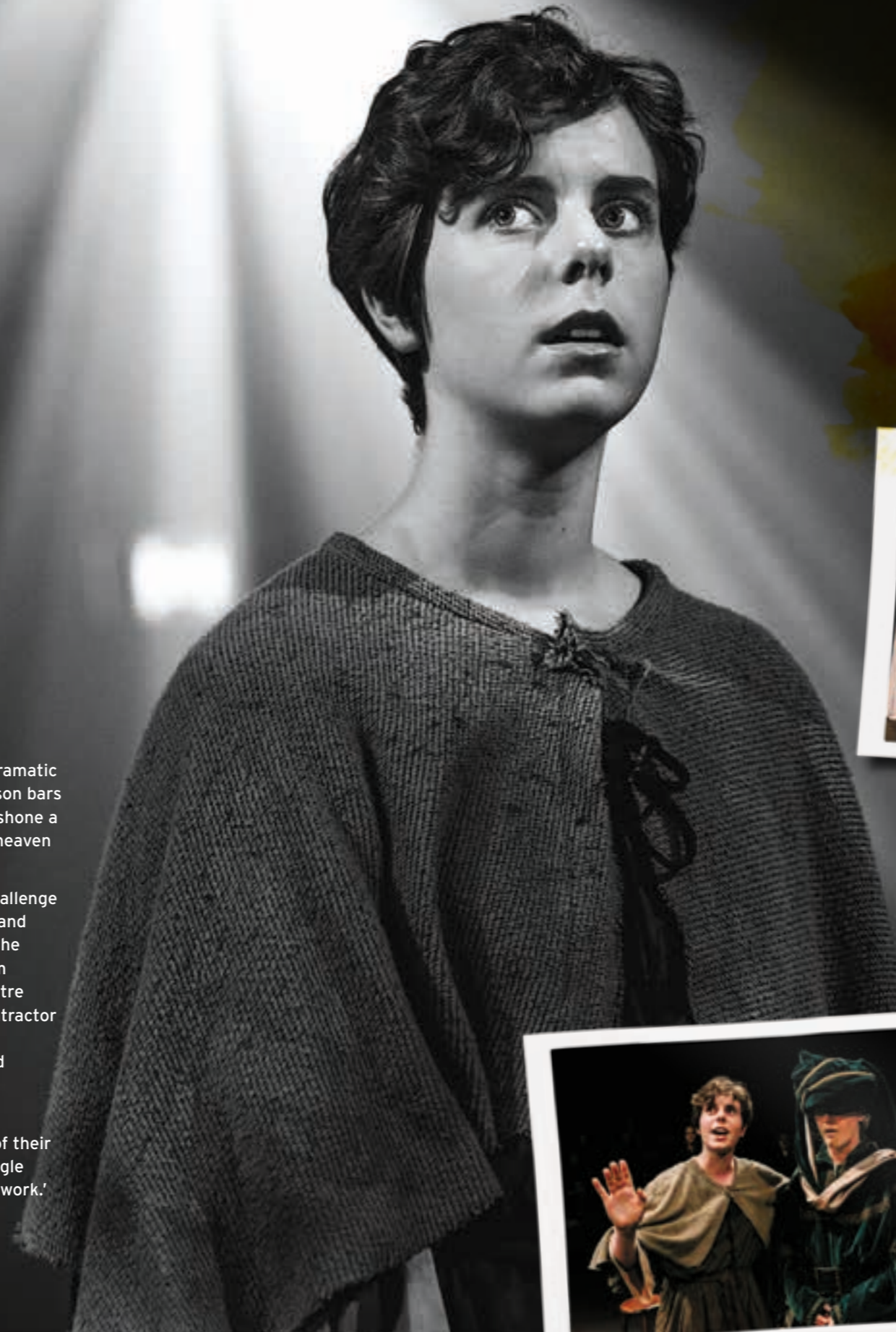
'Joan was the most enriching character I have ever played,' says Year 11 student, Amanda King, who starred in the production, depicting with depth and assurance the teenage French military leader burnt at the stake.

The Ravenswood production reversed theatrical convention by seating its audience on benches and cushions on the stage and having the actors perform around the tiered seating normally reserved for the audience. 'The play is set in a courtroom so to have the Grand Inquisitor from the Spanish Inquisition, for example, sitting up high, accusing Joan, while the audience looks up at her, worked very effectively,' says Drama Coordinator, Mr Chris Bird. Meanwhile, Performing Arts Technician, Mr Conor

Fitzpatrick's lighting design heightened the play's dramatic effect. He used stencils to cast images of a lark, prison bars and stained glass windows in the muted space, and shone a dramatic shaft of light on Joan as she ascended to heaven at the end of the play.

Ravenswood tackles a classic play once a year to challenge its students with time-honoured language, settings and characters. *The Lark* cast researched the period of the Hundred Years' War and gained further insights from external director, Saskia Smith, of Monkey Baa Theatre Company. 'It's rare for a school to make use of a contractor in a directorial capacity,' Mr Bird says. 'It provides a wonderful opportunity for the students to watch and learn from a professional working director.'

'The students really embraced the experience,' says Ms Smith. 'The production went smoothly because of their maturity and professionalism and their ability to juggle the demands of a production alongside their school work.'





Up and Running

Talent and hard work has led to national triumph for Year 9 student Emily Britton but the humble track star prefers to keep a low profile.

Emily Britton was as surprised as anyone when she smashed her personal best at the Australian Junior Athletics Championships in Perth in March to win the U16 Hurdles in a time of 12.69 seconds. Her parents first enrolled her in *Little Athletics* when she was in Kindergarten on the suggestion of a preschool teacher who had noticed her running in the playground. Then, as an eight year-old soccer player, other parents remarked on how easily she outpaced her opponents. But even by the time she was 11, Emily's real ability was not yet apparent. 'I can remember when I was younger I was always smaller than a lot of the other girls in competition,' she says. 'Most of them were also faster and stronger than me. But I really enjoyed it so I kept turning up every week regardless.'

It was about three years ago that something kicked in. Emily decided to view the sport more seriously, starting sprint training with a coach twice a week and a short time later,

taking up hurdles. She broke the CIS 80m Hurdles record in Year 7 representing Ravenswood and came fourth in the Australian All Schools Final. In Year 8 she came 2nd at CIS.

The next stage was a Strength and Conditioning Screen set up by Annabel Davies in the Ravenswood Strength and Conditioning Centre to reduce her risk of injury and increase her performance capacity. Coupled with a growth spurt and gains in maturity, focus and concentration, the 14 year-old saw significant improvements.

Emily now completes two hours of strength and conditioning and four hours of hurdles training each week, along with twice weekly soccer and tennis.

'Even though she's been improving steadily, her win at nationals still just amazed us,' say her parents. 'What is really remarkable is her attitude. She just never gives up. If she doesn't do well in a race she just tries to focus on doing it better the next time. With every little success she's had along the way she has just raised the bar for herself a little higher.'

Emily dreams of one day running at international level. Though quiet and unassuming, her steely grit and determination suggests she might just succeed.



Main: Emily Britton

'History is just a really good story and there are so many stories here that need to be told'



Robyn Robertson and Kathy Switzer in the Learning Resources Centre

Histories

Entwined

When the archival baton passed from Kathy Switzer to Robyn Robertson at the beginning of 2016, it was a transition rich with connections and symmetry.

The most prized possession in the Ravenswood archives is first Headmistress, Mabel Fidler's Bible, circa 1901. The leatherbound edition with its thick, yellowed pages is currently on display in the Learning Resources Centre. It is the key piece in an exhibition that new Archivist, Mrs Robyn Robertson is staging to strengthen the Ravenswood community's connection with its history.

'I love the quote by Theodore Roosevelt, "the more you know about the past, the better you are prepared for the future," says Mrs Robertson (who is affectionately known as Robbie in Ravenswood circles). 'I am keen to increase the value placed on the archives and to give current girls an appreciation of what came before us.'

Mrs Robertson started in the role of Ravenswood Archivist at the end of last year, a position she fittingly carries alongside that of History teacher. Her personal connection with the school is longstanding and deep. She has been employed under five Ravenswood Principals in her years as an English and History teacher, Head of the Middle School and now Archivist. She is also a former parent, former student and former Vice Captain of the school. 'Robbie is a Ravenswood encyclopaedia,' jokes her predecessor, Mrs Kathy Switzer who first met Robbie in the mid-eighties when they played district netball together. 'I can't imagine anyone better for the role.'

If anyone is a tome of knowledge about the school, it is Mrs Switzer herself, who was enrolled as a student when she was six years old. Like Robyn Robertson, Kathy Switzer is a former Ravenswood parent and has worked with five Principals. She has also served as Treasurer and President of the Old Girls' Union and is a member of the bequest group, the Fidler Fellows. Even her granddaughter is enrolled at the school.

Mrs Switzer first became involved in the Ravenswood archives when the school needed an assistant to help prepare for the centenary in 2001. 'I spent months developing relationships with Old Girls who were prompted by the 100 years celebration to rekindle their own relationships with the school,' she says. 'Many donated photos and other memorabilia. It was a great help but there are still a lot of holes to fill.'

During Kathy Switzer's ten years as Archivist, the field underwent enormous change. Now, along with the research and collection of oral histories and physical relics, the role involves the digitisation of seemingly endless paper records and the management of 'born digital' records. Issues relating to legal compliance add further complexity.

'These skills can be acquired and expert external contractors can be sought,' Mrs Switzer says. 'What is difficult to find is someone like Robyn, who has a deep and abiding passion for the school and can provide a continuity of care for its stories.'

Indeed, it is the opportunity to collect and preserve Ravenswood's stories that fills Mrs Robertson with most enthusiasm for her new role. 'History is just a really good story and there are so many here that need to be told – and before it is too late!' she says.

In Memory

PHYLLIS MARY EVANS MBE, BA, DipEd, MEd, FACE
(24 September 1920 - 5 February 2016)

Phyllis Evans was Ravenswood's first non-Methodist Principal and one of the most influential figures in the school's history. Her 25 year tenure began in January 1962 and spanned much change, including the school's transition from Ravenswood Methodist School for Girls to a Uniting Church school in 1977. Miss Evans can be credited with making Ravenswood a more academic school, fostering intellectual rigour and in particular, the study of languages. She introduced the *Wyndham Scheme* and effected dramatic alterations to the school's structure. While Miss Evans valued external examination results very highly, she remained committed to Ravenswood being non-selective.

Music flourished under Miss Evans' leadership. 'Kindle the Flame' became the school song and the Music Festival, with House Choirs, was introduced. Ravenswood's infrastructure was also significantly redeveloped. *The Phyllis Evans Wing*, opened in 1978, was named in her honour, while a new library was opened in 1971 and a *Multi-Purpose Complex*, including a pool, in 1984. Miss Evans called this complex 'the most ambitious building project ever undertaken by the school.'

Some claim that Miss Evans' approach was overly conservative and strict, particularly towards the end of her tenure.

Certainly, she 'held the line' and strictly adhered to her principles, not shying away from disciplining students and giving parents strong advice. Her commitment to the school was shared by her Deputy, Miss Joan Goff, with whom she had a close working relationship and lifelong friendship.

Phyllis Evans received widespread acknowledgement for her involvement in the education of students and teachers. She was President of both the Teachers' Guild and Australian Heads of Independent Girls' Schools in NSW and a delegate to several Parliamentary Committees and the Schools Commission. She argued vehemently against the introduction of the four-term school year, believing that it would reduce effective teaching time. In 1983 her services to education were recognised through the award of an MBE.

Miss Evans had experienced declining health since a fall in September 2015 and passed away at Whitehall Nursing Home, Lindfield on 5 February.

Acknowledgements:

Robyn Robertson, Ravenswood Archivist
Jenny & Neil McLennan



Development Office Report

One of the highlights for us in the Development and Community Relations Office is the opportunity to meet regularly with members of the Ravenswood family.

Our team is closely interconnected with the Ravenswood Parents' Association, (RPA), Ravenswood Old Girls' Union (ROGU) and the Ravenswood Foundation and supports the school by organising events like the Welcome Cocktail Party, New Parents' Dinner and Father-Daughter breakfasts.

The Development and Community Relations team provides networking and mentoring opportunities for our youngest alumni (from the CareerSearch event to babysitting opportunities) to our eldest Old Girls (through events like the Golden Girls luncheon) for those who left the school 50 years ago or more.

In addition to fostering relationships and collecting and recording the memories of those who walk through the school gates, we also look to secure the future. Through the many donations and gifts of staff, alumni and Old Girls, Ravenswood is flourishing but there is still much that can be done.

We would like to acknowledge the 118 donors who so generously contributed \$92,414 to the Ravenswood Building, Library and

Scholarship Funds in 2015. Members of the Ravenswood community will soon receive an invitation to donate to the 2016 Annual Giving appeal to support a leading-edge, high-quality education for our girls now and in the future.

As always, you are welcome to contact Liane Leslie, Development and Relationships Manager on 9498 9865 or lleslie@ravenswood.nsw.edu.au

Liane Leslie
Development and Relationships Manager

Below: We gratefully acknowledge the donation by the former students of Annesley School, Bowral, that enabled the purchase of the new Junior School cubbyhouse.



2016 Reunion Dates

Reunions provide an opportunity for Old Girls to rekindle and foster friendships and reconnect with the school as it continues to evolve. The Development Office is happy to assist you with the organisation of your reunion.

Below are details of the reunions with dates set for 2016:

| Reunion | Date | Organiser | Contact Details |
|----------------|-----------|----------------|--|
| 30 Year (1986) | 13 August | Jane Beresford | janeyberesford@yahoo.com |
| 40 Year (1976) | 8 October | Fiona Phipps | fionap@royalfarwest.org.au |
| 60 Year (1956) | 31 May | Dorothy Logan | pmdelogan@bigpond.com |

Please contact the Development Office on **02 9498 9825** or at developmentoffice@ravenswood.nsw.edu.au. For international and interstate reunion information, please email lleslie@ravenswood.nsw.edu.au



Ravenswood Foundation

It is through the foresight, dedication and commitment of many generous benefactors since the school first opened its doors to students that Ravenswood has been able to teach, support and encourage thousands of young women.

The Ravenswood Foundation recognises that this school is a leader in girls' education and for generations has produced successful young women who make their mark on the world. Our role is to invest in the future of Ravenswood and every student who wears our uniform.

What an amazing opportunity we have to look to the future with the appointment of Mrs Anne Johnstone as our tenth Principal. Her ideas and plans for the immediate and long-term future direction deserve all of our support.

The objective of the Ravenswood Foundation is to anticipate and provide for the funding needs of the school, over and above what is provided by school fees and government grants. This support is given through the generosity of our community by donations and gifts directed to the Foundation's fundraising programs.

Through the Foundation, families can choose their own legacy to Ravenswood. This often aligns with the interests and achievements of their daughter while at Ravenswood. A gift to Ravenswood is an act of generosity which will change our students' lives every day for generations. It may even begin a new chapter in the history of Ravenswood. It will allow the school to continue to promote excellence, to attract and retain the most deserving and brightest students, to build state-of-the-art facilities, to support our facilities and ensure that our students face the world with the best education we can give them.

Gifts to Annual Giving help Ravenswood establish a wide variety of specific programs, including building and grounds refurbishment, student scholarships and bursaries, library, and IT resources. All Annual Giving gifts go directly and

immediately to fund the area nominated by the donor. These gifts are tax deductible.

Ravenswood is proud of its strong sense of social justice and inclusiveness; accordingly we are keen to expand our scholarship and bursary base to continue to grow the Ravenswood tradition of embracing students from all backgrounds. This will be made possible through the generosity of our community.

The Foundation also encourages bequests to Ravenswood. We honour and cherish the members of our community who have decided to reach beyond their own lives and, in doing so, enhance opportunities for future generations of Ravenswood girls by thoughtfully including the school in their will. Everyone who makes a bequest to Ravenswood and notifies the Foundation is automatically a member of the Fidler Fellowship, and is assured of the ongoing gratitude of the school.

The Foundation looks forward to your involvement as we honour Ravenswood's heritage and invest in our girls' future. If you are considering joining the Foundation as a Board member, or making a gift or bequest to the school, please contact Ms Liane Leslie, Development and Relationships Manager: lleslie@ravenswood.nsw.edu.au or (02) 9498 9865.

In closing, I would like to bring to your attention the most glittering event of 2016, the Foundation's Gala Ball, to be held at the Art Gallery of New South Wales on Saturday 30 July. All Ravenswood parents and staff are warmly invited to attend.

*Ms Suzanne Stanton
Chair, The Ravenswood Foundation*

Ravenswood Old Girls' Union

Welcome to the girls who have recently joined ROGU, in particular the young women from the class of 2015.

The past six months have been a busy time for the ROGU Committee. We held a high tea in October to farewell our outgoing patron, Ms Vicki Steer. Old Girls from the past ten years attended and enjoyed reminiscing about the changes Ms Steer had brought to the school during her time as Principal. We thanked Ms Steer for her service to the school and wished her well in her new position at Cornish College in Melbourne.

On Remembrance Day we were delighted to witness the unveiling of the new War Memorial on the Peace Lawn. The idea for a memorial was initiated by the Old Girls' Union to acknowledge the contribution of service women in the past and to provide a place of reflection for current students. It is an elegant, contemporary structure consisting of five etched glass panels and was designed by Year 11 International Baccalaureate students with the guidance of Visual Arts Coordinator, Ms Edwina Palmer. Our thanks go to all those who contributed to bringing the project to fruition.

The annual Golden Girls Luncheon was held on Remembrance Day to coincide with the unveiling of the War Memorial. Many Golden Girls were able to attend the ceremony and then join us for lunch. Robyn Robertson, who was appointed as the school Archivist following Kathy Switzer's retirement, spoke about the importance of Old Girls to the school.

Old Girls once again undertook the running of the cake stall at the RPA Summer Carnival in November. The stall was capably organised by Jenny Wells, with assistance from members of the committee and Old Girls who are within the school. The event was highly successful and received great support from the Ravenswood community.

I welcome all Old Girls to become involved with the Old Girls' Union and to support the following events during the year:

Class of 2015 Back to School: Friday 19 August

Golden Girls Luncheon: Thursday 17 November

RPA Summer Carnival: Saturday 19 November

*Mrs Anne Nielsen (Hunter, 1972)
President, ROGU*



Above: War Memorial/Remembrance Day/Golden Girls' Luncheon



Ravenswood Parents' Association

The Ravenswood Parents' Association (RPA) had a particularly productive year in 2015.

We funded the new staircase leading from the Old Girls' Courtyard up to the Roof Terrace, an investment of \$70,000. This work has made the space more accessible to the girls, and made the Roof Terrace a more viable venue for social events. The RPA also contributed to the newly erected War Memorial on the Peace Lawn to the tune of \$15,000. Finally, a contribution of \$6,000 to Science Technology Engineering and Maths (STEM) enabled the purchase of robotic kits.

The 2015 Sports Lunch, Golf Day and Christmas Lunch were all well attended and enjoyed by all. I would like to thank Don Tritton for organising a fathers' table at the Christmas Lunch, and we hope this becomes an annual event.

'... we are the ultimate role models for our children.'

An undoubted highlight for the RPA was to host the new-look and renamed Ravo Summer Carnival last November. The success of the event is thanks to an amazing and committed Carnival Committee: David Williams, Kate Smith, Cassandra Gordon, Don Tritton, Louise Hayman, David Brookes, Anne Whitehead, Adam Bate, Alex Bogle and Kath Grigor - were

wholeheartedly supported by Ms Liane Leslie and her Development Office team.

Attendees enjoyed roaming circus performers, great home-produced food, market stalls, fun rides, a high tea, an amazing Art Market and more. We also introduced the *Battle of the Bands* and aim to make it a signature element of the carnival moving forward. All will attest that the music lent an incredible vibe to the day and attracted many visitors from near and far who would normally not attend this Ravo event. The carnival will return again this year on Saturday 19 November.

In 2015 the RPA Facebook Group was initiated as another way to keep in touch with the parent community and share important news. This closed group is for parents/guardians of current Ravenswood students; only members can post and view content. Simply search 'Ravenswood Parents Association' in Facebook and ask to join.

We are in for an exciting and dare I say positive year ahead. In keeping with the Positive Education ethic championed by our new Principal, Mrs Anne Johnstone, I want to encourage all parents to tap into their own positivity, to be proactive, enthusiastic and involved; after all, we are the ultimate role models for our children. I look forward to being part of a growing community spirit in 2016 and beyond.

*Colin Frost
President, RPA*

Where are they now?

COLEMAN, Wendy (Drewe, 1952) was a boarder at Ravenswood and after graduating, went into Physical Education. She taught in Vancouver, Canada, for two years, then spent several months in Europe before wending her way back to Australia. Back home, she married Eric and taught from 1956 to 1989, taking time off to have her children, Mark and Suzie. She is now a proud grandparent to Lillie, aged 15.

For the last ten years, she has been extremely involved with the Hallidays Point Community Church, particularly the 'Kids Klub', which is for children from Years 3 to 6, and the fortnightly 'Over 55s' luncheon. She also swims every morning at the local seaside pool.

FAIRFAX, Louise (Walsh, 1968) cut short her academic career in Psychology - after postings at several universities - to devote more time to family commitments and sport. At that time she was representing Australia at Orienteering. With less to juggle, her sporting results improved, and she went on to represent Australia 65 times - in athletics, triathlon, duathlon and the 'funny' sport of tower racing - earning nine world top 15 places, and many international titles. After retiring, she gained nine gold medals and one world record competing in World Masters Championships.

Never one for a quiet life, Louise has completed a PhD in German Literature and in the last two years, while caring for her increasingly unwell husband, she has been blogging about the mountains she climbs, complementing these accounts with photography. She has amassed 43,000 page views; her relatively new Instagram site now has close to 5,000 followers; she has won several photographic competitions and been featured by many international hubs, including one run by *National Geographic*.

Since deciding to climb all of Tasmania's highest peaks in 2012, she has summited more Abels, as they are called, than any other female except one, mostly lugging her tripod and very heavy camera with her on the multi-day expeditions. Louise's love of bushwalking dates back to her days at Ravenswood when a new geography teacher, Miss Harris, arrived and took her class to the Blue Gum Forest.

Along with these activities, Louise has sung in a series of choirs, also following on from the fabulous groundwork laid

by Kerry Evans at Ravenswood. She plays and loves the CDs that have been made from when she was in that choir. In her spare time she also coaches debating at Church Grammar in Launceston, and from time to time is delighted to connect with Ravenswood girls at national competitions.

COMPTON, Carolyn (Baker, 1988) is currently teaching Technology and Visual Arts at Murupara Area School in a small rural community called Murupara, in the North Island of New Zealand. This comes after being Head Teacher of Administration at Casula High School in Sydney. Wendy lives at Lake Okareka, and has hosted international students who visit the area to see 'Rotorua and Hobbits.' Carolyn invites any Ravenswood students who are planning a trip to New Zealand to get in touch via the Development Office to organise a home stay.

BRITAIN Belle (2010) has completed a Bachelor of Business Management majoring in Event Management at the International College of Management Sydney located at the beautiful Manly Beach. Her degree consisted of a mixture of both theoretical and practical study, part of which involved nine months of industry training working for an event planning company and a function centre. She was also a part of the team that ran a charity event at the Orpheum Theatre to raise funds for The Children's Hospital at Westmead in 2013.

Belle began work at Avondale Golf Club in 2013 as a food and beverage attendant and is now their Function Co-ordinator. Her role involves organising the various club functions as well as corporate events, school functions and weddings. Belle has even been lucky enough to organise a few Ravenswood events, including the Ravenswood Association of Past Staff luncheon and some Mother-Daughter dinners.



Reunions

30-YEAR REUNION - CLASS OF '85

Held on Saturday 10 October 2015, the Class of 1985 met up at the Greengate Hotel, Killara. It was an absolute cracker of a night, with lots of laughter, stories and 'OMG' moments. The night went so quickly, and everyone looks, gosh, so young - not! It honestly still feels like we left school a couple of years ago.

A tribute to all those absent friends, in particular Gaynor Wilson, Penny Wines, Beth Florence and Lisa Brown, who are forever in our hearts.

The plan is for our next reunion to be a country party, either in 2016 or 2017, at the wool shed on the property of Pip Smith (Martin). Stay tuned for further details.

Many thanks to reunion organisers Sue Wynn and Heather Anderson.

50-YEAR REUNION - CLASS OF '65

Imagine the anticipation of the 24 newly minted 'Golden Girls' who met up at the Greengate Hotel, Killara, last November. For the Sydney-based, it was exciting enough, but imagine the preparation involved for Lindsey, who had travelled from Darwin; Lyndall from Tyagarah, New South Wales; Dean and Margie from Maleny, Queensland; and Barbara from Melbourne.

There was much fun, laughter and love. We each gave a brief synopsis of our lives since leaving Ravenswood. Lots of photos were passed around, and some have since been donated to the school archives.

It was a pleasure to have Liane Leslie pop in, and we were all delighted to receive from her on behalf of the school two glass coasters embossed with the Ravenswood Crest and inscribed with the words 'Ravenswood Golden Girl'. These will be treasured.

It was a wonderful day - though too short - and we plan to enjoy another five years from now!

We thank the Staff Development Office and Liane Leslie for their help in tracking down past students from the Class of '65, along with the 'girls' who networked.

Margie Thomas (Baker, 1965)



RAVENSWOOD ASSOCIATION OF PAST STAFF

The Ravenswood Association of Past Staff (RAPS) has been busy since its inauguration on 9 September 2015. About 40 members attended a Christmas high tea held at The Landings, Turramurra, while Mrs Anne Johnstone was guest speaker at another high tea at the same location on 11 April. Mrs Lynne Tucker has succeeded Mrs Judy White as President. She and her committee (pictured) have more enjoyable RAPS events planned for the rest of the year.

Weddings

TAYLOR, Lauren (2005) married Christopher Curtis on 23 January 2016 at St Clements Anglican Church, Mosman. They were married by Lauren's uncle. The reception was held at The Taronga Centre, Mosman. Sarah Edwards (2005) served as bridesmaid. Amanda Wong (Algeo), Jessica Micallef (Smart), Kathryn Lee, Caroline Wood and Kelly Short (all 2005) attended. The happy couple spent their two-week honeymoon relaxing in Moorea and Bora Bora, Tahiti.



Obituaries

SMEAL, Deanna (1943) graduated from Sydney Teachers College in 1962 and began her teaching career in Home Science at Grafton High School in 1963. Then followed appointments to country high schools in Lismore and Armidale. With a family transfer to Sydney in 1968, Deanna taught at Cheltenham Girls High, the Correspondence School, Cumberland and Galston High Schools. In 1986, Deanna applied for a position at Ravenswood and was appointed to the Home Economics Department by the Principal, Miss Phyllis Evans. Deanna taught for 22 years at Ravenswood and readily adapted to a change in the curriculum to Design and Technology which included teaching woodwork and textiles.

However Deanna's speciality was teaching Food Technology to girls in the senior years. Deanna was a popular, devoted and highly respected teacher with an easy-going manner. Her students worked hard for her and their efforts were rewarded by consistently high HSC results. Deanna was a well-read person in her subject and always aware of new scientific developments in commercial food production. Even after retiring in 2008, Deanna continued in a casual teaching role. Her bakery class was always fully booked when Deanna imparted her skills to the girls in baking bread, pizza and especially her popular Hot Cross Buns.

Deanna will be dearly missed by her family and friends. Memories live forever in our hearts.

Malcolm Smeal

HARP, Norma (Lever, 1946) who died in April last year is fondly remembered above all, for her love of singing. Her enthusiasm was infectious, and she started a music club at school. Norma's ambition was to play the lead role of Carmen in Bizet's opera, and she achieved this, performing at the Conservatorium of Music. But she was also a good student, and earned a degree in Social Work, after which she worked to support child sufferers of cancer and their families.

Norma is survived by a son and twin grandsons.

Hilary Jones (Rayward, 1946)

ARMSTRONG, Beverley (1964) the eldest daughter of Jack and Josie Armstrong, was born in Melbourne on Christmas Eve 1947. When her family moved to Sydney, she started at Ravenswood at the age of ten. A year into her nursing training at Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital, her family, Bev included, returned to Melbourne and she continued training at the Alfred Hospital, graduating in 1969. Bev then specialised in midwifery and started conducting home visits, accompanied by a domiciliary nurse.

The independence and freedom of field-work suited Bev and in 1971 she transferred to the Royal District Nursing Service. Bev thrived in this role and sometimes visited up to 21 general and postnatal patients in a day, many of them in Housing Commission high-rise blocks. She did ongoing training in Stoma Therapy and moved to Heidelberg and then Camberwell Centres, where she worked as Assistant Supervisor.

Pamela Tipping (Armstrong 1969)

HUGHES, Joan (Crawford, 1950) was born in 1931 and boarded for a few short years at Ravenswood. Her earliest education had been with a governess on the family sheep property. Joan's formal schooling came to an end at the age of sixteen when her parents purchased 'Glenfenzie', a grain and mixed farming property near Gunnedah and Joan's assistance was required. Later she and her husband Geoff Hughes bought 'Glenfenzie' (their marriage spanned almost 65 years and produced four sons). To supplement their income they started a school bus service. Naturally, Joan became a driver. As a couple they always made time for volunteering, including 40 years' involvement the Police Citizens' Youth Club. Joan's tireless efforts for the SES were recognised with an Australia medal.

Cancer cut short what had been a vibrant and busy life, in December 2015. Joan is sadly missed by her husband, sons Steven, Brian, Ronald and Robert and their families.

Geoff Hughes

READING Anne Denise (died 9 January 2016)

a graduate of London University, was appointed as a Latin teacher by Principal Phyllis Evans in 1975 and became head of the Languages Department 20 years later. During the late 1980s, she combined two of her greatest loves and started the extremely popular Ravenswood language tours of Europe. When the role of Year Coordinator was introduced at Ravenswood, Denise was the inaugural Year 7 Coordinator, a task she embraced with creativity, superior organisational skills and immense compassion for the girls in her care.

Upon her retirement in 2010, she was made a life member of the Classical Language Teachers' Association.

In retirement, Denise and husband David relocated to the Sunshine Coast. Denise threw herself into life in her new community. She volunteered at Tourism Noosa in Hastings Street and was seen on one occasion modelling clothes for a fundraising event.

Vale, Denise, you were a treasured teacher, leader and mentor.

David Garner, Deputy Principal, Head of Secondary School

PAGETT, Vicki (Harris, 1974), daughter of Jo Harris (Law, 1950); granddaughter of Helene Law (Shipton, 1913) (1956-2015)

Mum was a proud Old Girl of Ravenswood. Upon leaving high school, she became a formidable primary school teacher and over her career spent time in both Sydney and rural primary and high schools. She was a passionate and dedicated teacher and had a lasting impact on her students, their parents and her colleagues alike. She is remembered as a vivacious friend, strong leader and a woman not afraid to correct your grammar or call a spade a spade.

She was to us, our adoring mother. She raised the four of us girls on an isolated sheep property but instilled in us a zest for life, a creative flair (for some of us) and an unyielding belief and confidence that the world was indeed, our oyster. Mum fought her breast cancer battle with strength and courage. We love you to the moon and back.

Kate, Amy, Sophie and Georgi

2016 Events

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Secondary School Musical, Grease | 22-23 June |
| Gala Ball | 20 July |
| HSC Music Recital and Major Works Exhibition .. | 24 August |
| Open Morning | 25 August |
| IB Visual Arts Studio Works Exhibition ... | 13-16 September |
| Golden Girls' Luncheon | 17 November |
| RPA Summer Carnival | 19 November |
| Secondary School Choral Festival | 28 November |
| RPA Christmas Lunch | 1 December |
| Combined Carol Service | 4 December |

2016 Term Dates

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Term 2 | Tuesday 26 April to Friday 24 June |
| Term 3 | Wednesday 20 July to Friday 23 September |
| Term 4 | Tuesday 11 October to Wednesday 7 December |



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