

RAVENSWOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS | WINTER 2020

Semper



LOVE RAVO DAY 19 FEBRUARY 2020

PG 08
A BRAVE NEW
(ONLINE)
WORLD

PG 11
OPENING OUR
SENIOR LEARNING
CENTRE

PG 16
THE GIFT OF
LIGHT



Ravenswood



Semper, the Ravenswood School for Girls' magazine.

Semper is the magazine of the Ravenswood community.

Established in 1901, Ravenswood is a leading Uniting Church School for girls from Kindergarten to Year 12 with boarding from Year 7. As a Visible Wellbeing and Positive Education school, we focus on the whole student to build academic and co-curricular achievements while boosting confidence, resilience and physical health.

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The Old Man of Storr

by **Sophie Li**
Winner of a Young Writers Award

On the Scottish highlands lies the Old Man of Storr,
Tall, rugged pillars of rock standing mightily
Above the luscious green grass.

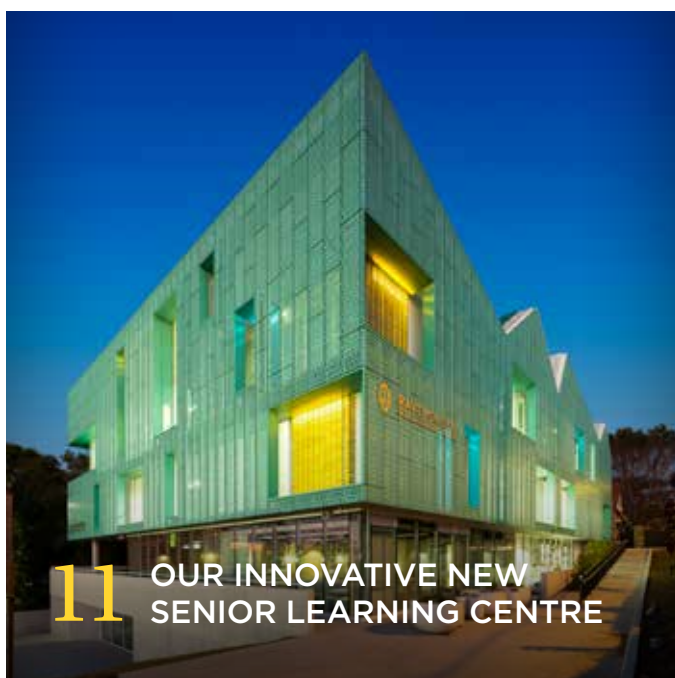
In summer, the grey stormy clouds, release the anger
It has been keeping in for so long, lashing with lightning.
But the Old Man of Storr argues, never cowering in fear.

It is autumn and the grass is basted with gradients of orange.
But unlike any other autumn,
There are hardly any trees.

Winter has come to visit just like any year.
It lays a blanket of snow just above the columns of rocks,
Just before the grass is brushed with snow.

It is early evening and the sky is stroked with colours.

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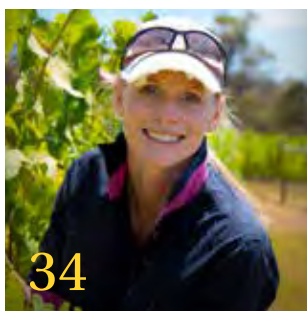


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Principal's Message

Rallying together as a community to navigate through difficult times is very much a hallmark of who we are at Ravenswood. Looking back through our School's 119-year history, we are reminded of the way our community has mobilised to offer extraordinary support to one another. Immense fortitude has been shown during periods of sacrifice and hardship that our students, staff, families, and community have sometimes faced. Indeed, if courage is defined as purpose overcoming fear, then we are indeed a courageous community - with great Ravo spirit!

It is hard to believe it was just over four months ago that we gathered on the oval for *Love RAVO Day 2020*, to

show our support for Australians affected by bushfire and drought. How moving it was to see every student from Kindergarten to Year 12, together with every staff member, standing shoulder-to-shoulder, in the shape of a heart, around the word HOPE, uniting to raise funds for those who had suffered most during the worst drought and bushfires this country has ever faced.

Hope is such a galvanising and motivating force - it inspires us to keep moving forward, turbo-charging our efforts in the tough times and encouraging us to look to the future with a sense of possibility. In many ways, our own School motto: *semper ad meliora*, is an expression of hope - exhorting us to always strive towards better things, regardless of the circumstances in which



we find ourselves. Hope is an important and powerful concept, not just for learning but for life.

Little did we know that just five weeks after our symbolic gathering on the oval on Love RAVO Day, we would again be drawing on our reserves of hope when we faced an even greater global challenge: COVID-19. Australia moved into lockdown, school campuses closed, and physical distancing became the new normal. The theme the Prefects chose for 2020: *The RAVO Connection*, could not have been more apt.

The impact of the pandemic on individuals, families, and communities – locally and globally – was, and continues to be, far reaching. Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with all who are profoundly impacted

by this pandemic, particularly in terms of health and economic hardship.

From a school perspective, this pandemic has also presented one of the most significant disruptions to education our generation has experienced. Ravenswood, along with all Australian schools, found the need to immediately pivot to an online learning model to provide continuity of education for our students learning locally in their homes and those, such as our Boarders, who worked remotely from regional Australia and overseas.

But the pandemic has also, surprisingly, provided us with opportunities for innovation, recalibration, and reinvention.

To the great credit of our dedicated and talented teachers and support staff – especially our ICT team - we transitioned to a wholly digital model with relative ease. The significant success of this change was another reflection of Ravenswood’s ability to mobilise positive change and the power of hope to inspire and connect us in difficult times.

This Winter 2020 edition of *Semper* magazine includes an account of this historic moment of transitioning to online learning (pages 8-10) during campus closure, along with numerous examples of the extraordinary flexibility, creativity and commitment, with which our staff and students adapted to this new living and learning environment. Their creative innovations included daily, live digital exercise sessions and running training; a library of workout videos and dance classes; our Friday Family Film Night; shared online theatre experiences; the Ravo Couch Choir and the Prefects’ new Instagram page.

Since our return to campus, we have found further ways to increase our sense of connection, such as the

Prefects’ vibrant and purposeful *2020 Spirit Week*, that included five days of enriching and bonding activities for girls in Kindergarten to Year 12. We also continue to look outward, through our ongoing work with the Kur-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre’s Civilian Army, which has helped tens of thousands of people in need across Sydney’s north shore.

On Wednesday 6 May, we opened our much anticipated Senior Learning Centre (SLC). The girls are certainly making the most of its beautiful, light-filled collaborative spaces, the purpose-designed individual and group study hubs, the state-of-the-art classroom spaces with writeable whiteboards, and the vistas over the campus through large clear windows. We explore the building’s innovative design on pages 10-11. It was truly a blessing to be able to open this spectacular structure upon the return of our Year 12 students to campus, when schools reopened. Our Class of 2020 has shown such resilience, optimism, grit and agility in its approach to learning and in supporting



fellow students during the challenges of the global pandemic. We are so proud of all our students – and especially these girls, in what has been a challenging final year of school. We have planted a lovely tree in their honour, in the courtyard, as an enduring tribute to them.

This issue of *Semper* also showcases some meaningful initiatives from our girls, such as building solar lights for young students from the Dominican Republic (pages 16-17); and selling seedlings to raise money for the charity, Starlight Foundation (page 20). We also share the successes of our students and Alumni, both in Australia and around the world and acknowledge our School's 15-year relationship with the International Baccalaureate on pages 14-15.

From the Archives looks back to another era, when challenges were faced and overcome during World War II and shares a selection of School and student recollections from this time, on pages 32-33.

History has shown us that crisis presents opportunity. Our students can be particularly proud of the exceptional fortitude they have demonstrated in handling the disruptions presented by COVID-19, with determination and grace. One of the inspirational quotes adorning the walls of our new building is: 'Education plus character, that is the goal of true education,' (Martin Luther King Jnr). These girls have learned so much during this time. They have advanced their understanding of harnessing and deploying technologies in, and for learning. They have also learned life lessons and built character through perseverance and an unwavering determination to overcome obstacles together – with the help of their teachers and parents.

As I conclude, I would like to thank our parent and alumni community for their tremendous encouragement and support through this unprecedented time – it has been both humbling and inspiring. In true Ravenswood style, as we look forward to Terms 3 and 4, we will continue to strive to fulfil our School motto: *semper ad meliora*.





A Brave New (Online) World

No-one could have predicted that Term 1 of 2020 would see the School transition from the classroom to the cloud due to a viral pandemic. Ravenswood students, staff and families went above and beyond as they rose to the challenge.

Even before the Federal Government had recommended students stay at home, Ravenswood staff were working around the clock to develop a multifaceted online education experience for our students.

Our ICT team, audio-visual and production teams, School Leadership team, Subject Coordinators and teachers, all lent their expertise in redesigning elements of teaching and learning for remote access.

Other important factors were added into the mix too – risk and compliance, communications, engagement and enrolments. Student wellbeing was central to our approach, as was the flow of communication.

Finally, after two weeks of intense preparation, on Tuesday 24 March, Ravenswood launched its virtual classrooms and innovative online learning programs. The feedback from students, staff, families and our wider community was overwhelmingly supportive.

‘Ravenswood approached the transition to an online educational environment with positive determination

and enthusiasm,’ said Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone. ‘Our teachers demonstrated great agility and creativity in providing continuity of learning for every student.’

‘We were also really proud of the way the girls adapted to this new way of lesson and co-curricular delivery. As a school, we continued to work in partnership with students and parents, co-creating the most valuable online learning experience possible.’

According to Director of Technology Elizabeth Westley, the transition to online learning was made easier because staff and students had already been using Ravenswood’s online platform Connect, and the learning platform Seesaw, for some years.

‘Teachers began teaching a hybrid model from the beginning of the 2020 school year. We added Zoom, Microsoft Teams and Skype to create a flexible model, tailored to the needs of each class,’ Elizabeth said.

The girls continued to complete handwritten work and bookwork for teacher review and feedback,



‘and academic and student wellbeing remained at the core of every teacher’s role,’ said Head of Learning Innovation Carolyn Gavel.

Director of Student Analytics Peter Hatzidimitriou, continued to conduct academic consultations with students and parents to monitor the girls’ progress and to provide feedback.

The teachers’ ability to work closely with individual students, was unimpaired. ‘For students who might lack the confidence to contribute often in class, the ability to use OneNote and type their questions or comments was actually a positive,’ said Secondary School Science teacher Victoria King.

‘Students have great digital expertise and the use of instant messaging and chat for example, allowed students and teachers to explore observations together and encouraged the girls to push their thinking,’ said History Coordinator Dr Catherine Arends.

According to Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone, ‘The way that our students and staff persevered with such commitment during this challenging time was extremely inspiring.’

Highlights of Ravenswood’s Online Model:

- Student academic performance and progress remained the focus.
- Student learning was enhanced across subject areas and Year Groups, through creative project work, inspired by the societal impact and challenges associated with the pandemic.
- Our Community Problem Solving team launched *Big Sisters*, an online approach to peer to peer mentoring.
- The Performing Arts Department ran regular lessons and rehearsal sessions live or via recorded videos for girls in Kindergarten to Year 12.
- Prefects created their own Instagram page to communicate messages of support and connection to the Secondary School student body.
- Live online exercise classes were conducted for students, parents and staff, morning and afternoon and sessions of the Ravo Remote Run Club were held several times a week.
- The Sports Department created a vast library of exercise videos and PDF guides for the entire Ravenswood community of parents, students, staff and alumni.
- Community initiatives such as the Ravo Couch Choir and our weekly Friday Family Film Nights brought the community together, though we were at home.

The Support From Our School Community was Overwhelming

‘These last few weeks have been incredibly difficult and stressful for everyone and I wanted to write to you to congratulate you and your team on an incredible effort – you absolutely nailed it!’ – Year 8 parent.

‘Your transition to an online teaching and learning environment was almost seamless with everyone seeming to know where to be, when and how to operate, with a well-considered combination of channels and styles of teaching to keep it fresh and manageable.’ – Year 8 parent.

‘Both our girls are finding they are getting into a great rhythm with their study and online classes. Please pass on to the teachers how much we appreciate their hard work and commitment. We are very grateful.’ – Years 9 and 12 parent.

Reflection on Learning ‘Online’ and ‘Offline’ with Year 12 Extension 1 English.

One may only marvel at my being asked to write a moment on the transition to online learning, knowing my predilection to join the Luddites sing *Jerusalem* at the banks of the River Thames as the Satanic Mills burned. Yet, since as learners we all have multiple pathways to learning, I have long ago befriended the Keatsian concept of *Negative Capability*, the ability to sit with the unknown and see what emerges out of the dark. And challenged my students to do the same. Light follows dark.

Cal Newport’s Deep Work frames this type of cognition (albeit in the professional sphere) as: ‘activities performed in a state of distraction-free concentration that push your cognitive capabilities to their limit. These efforts create new value, improve your skill, and are hard to replicate.’ (Piatkus, London, 2016, p3).

In his book, a phrase that resonated with me as a learner, was from the MIT physicist and award-winning novelist Alan Lightman, who talks about the need to ‘recover some silence in my life’ (Ibid, p124). While no one would have chosen the events of the last few months I was, as a mentor (and introvert), interested, but not surprised, to watch the flourishing of the work in my Extension 1 class, as we worked upon the Common Module: Literary Worlds, as they ‘recovered’ in quiet. When we learn we must unmake and remake. Or unravel and rethread. This involves finding patterns and then forming our own.

Mimesis is an invaluable tool when modelling and reforming writing. The Year 12s had already been working with a toolkit that helped them unpack the openings of canonical literary texts, ranging from the Romantic to the Post-human. Our move to isolation coincided synchronistically with the girls studying Modernist texts, centring on the reflection of the interior and exterior worlds at times of great dislocation. Tracing the patterns within the texts, the girls then selected conceptual threads that spoke to them, to craft. They wrote, as one, of characters that resonated with them, in places that were embedded with symbolic weight, to create their own manifestations of these literary worlds.

The exceptional work produced was evidence of the need for solitude, sitting in ambiguity and silence to craft beautiful writing. It was an honour to have the class read their pieces to each other on our joyful return, and watch their faces as they marvelled that they had crafted with such finesse. Several of them told me how difficult they had found this writing, and perhaps that is the key. Rich texts, high stakes and courage to try when the path is not known. I congratulate the class on these pieces and the resilience they brought to world building in a brave new world.

Dr Iriini Savvides
24 May, 2020

Student Praise for Ravenswood’s Online Learning Model

Ravenswood surveyed its students on their return to school, as part of a wider evaluation of our online learning model. The response was resoundingly positive, with students agreeing that the School had done everything it could to support them; their teachers had been available to answer all of their questions and they had remained on track with their learning. The overwhelming majority also agreed that they were happy to return to school:

‘I liked how all the teachers were there to help us on email or Microsoft teams if we needed any help with anything.’

‘I liked how the Day Plans were so informative, so I was able to know exactly what I needed to do next.’

‘I was proud of still keeping the daily schedule and getting all my tasks done on time while putting 100% effort into everything I did!’



The Ravo Couch Choir - students and staff singing *Kindle the Flame*



Our Innovative New Senior Learning Centre

With its lyrical form and jewel-like blue and yellow glass that reflects the sun's glow during the day and shines in the School colours at night, our new Senior Learning Centre is a beacon of good educational design.

The development was opened on Wednesday 6 May and could not have come at a better time. It coincided with the return to campus of our Year 12 girls for face to face teaching, after weeks of learning online.

Addressing the students, Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone said, 'the smiles on your faces and joy in

your voices this morning, have filled our campus with Ravenswood spirit. We hope you enjoy using this impressive building as you transition from students of Ravenswood to young women of purpose and a future filled with lifelong learning opportunities.'

'The entire Year 12 cohort is so incredibly excited to have this gorgeous new building,' said School Captain Vivienne Yang. 'It is a space that immediately fills you with a sense of inspiration and excitement, particularly with the natural light that floods all of the floors.'

During the opening, Mrs Johnstone invited Vivienne and Vice Captains Madeleine Rudan and Danielle Fenech to plant a beautiful Japanese crab apple tree in the courtyard of the Senior Learning Centre on behalf of their Year Group.

‘This new tree stands as a tribute to the Class of 2020, who have shown such resilience, optimism, grit and agility in their approach to learning and in supporting their fellow students during the challenges of a global pandemic,’ Mrs Johnstone said.

The Senior Learning Centre was designed by architectural firm BVN, who are also responsible for Ravenswood’s Mabel Fidler building, which won the Sir John Sulman Medal for public architecture in 2012.

Principal of BVN Phillip Rossington, said: ‘The Senior Learning Centre presents Ravenswood as a forward thinking school with contemporary yet sensitive architecture. Ravenswood thought long and hard about how to provide for a multiplicity of teaching and learning styles and the result is a development that is the School’s most agile and flexible learning space to date.’

Shaun Cohen, Director of COWYN Building Group, said: ‘COWYN is delighted to have been involved in such a challenging yet rewarding project. We have built hundreds of educational facilities over the past 60 years, with none as striking as this. The students are blessed to have such an amazing facility to promote collaborative learning and we wish the Ravenswood community a smooth transition into the new building.’

The features of the new building include:

- A tiered area, individual study nooks and large expanses of glass that provide unique learning spaces and draw light into the centre of the building.
- Stunning coloured bricks of yellow and blue that sparkle and reflect the sun’s glow, inspiring creativity and positivity.
- A sprung dance floor on the lower level that opens onto a kitchen garden.
- Extensive landscaping and contemporary social spaces that provide easy access to the surrounding buildings and our Ravenswood oval.
- Materials chosen for their longevity, integrity and sustainability.
- A significant solar array on the roof that takes full advantage of the building’s sunny northern aspect.





Year 12 Gratitude for the Senior Learning Centre

- 'We've been sitting here, in S3.05 (arguably the nicest room because of the windows), and couldn't help but admire the view. We cannot wait until it rains, because we're so high up I can imagine feeling like I'm part of the storm. We are also loving how spacious it is, and how it's compatible with both relaxing and studying.'
- 'It's been such a gift to be able to come back to school with my entire grade, and the joy is palpable between the girls. As a group, we've been exploring different areas across the building to sit in during our breaks.'
- 'We're emailing to send you our thanks for the thoughtful layout of the building, and the effort you have put in to ensure a fantastic space for the senior girls. It's an honour to be the first Year Group to use the space.'
- 'The past two evenings, I stayed behind in the SLC to study, and have loved watching the sunset through the vast windows. This is a fantastic space to work and I love it!'
- 'I really like the colour scheme and I feel like I'm more productive and positive because of this space.'
- Poem about the new building written as a Positive Education gratitude exercise:

*Ravishing view makes even the worst day seem brighter.
Awaiting the rest of the School to come back and enjoy
this with us.
Vibrant vibes.*

Overall aesthetic motivates us to work harder.



15 Years of the International Baccalaureate at Ravenswood 2004-2019

In 2004, Ravenswood became the first school on the upper north shore to introduce the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme. Today, more than 15 years on, we are still the only school in the area offering this esteemed qualification and our IB students continue to excel

The International Baccalaureate was established more than 50 years ago, with the noble aim of creating a better, more peaceful world, through a curriculum that rewards rigour, individual initiative and personal responsibility.

Last year, Ravenswood celebrated 15 years as the only school on Sydney's upper north shore to offer the IB Diploma Programme (IBDP). The anniversary coincided with the release of some of our best academic results. Two girls, Holland Touw and Clare Gim, achieved perfect scores of 45 out of 45 – a feat attained by less than one per cent of students worldwide.

Ravenswood's delivery of the IB also achieved a high appraisal from the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO). IB schools undergo an intensive audit every five years. Among its commendations, the IBO recognised Ravenswood's ability to support students of varied learning needs and use of data analysis to hone performance. It found no areas of delivery that required adjustment.

'It was a very pleasing outcome, reflective of our depth of commitment, not only to students studying for the IB but also the Higher School Certificate. We are privileged to offer a choice of pathways that cater to a wide range of students and their varied needs and interests,' said Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone.

As a global qualification that encourages critical thinking and breadth and depth of learning, the International Baccalaureate Diploma sets students up for university success. Its unique elements are a 4000-word Extended Essay on a question of the student's own devising; Theory of Knowledge (TOK), which asks: *When does belief become knowledge?* and is threaded through all IB academic courses; and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS), in which students engage in purposeful, meaningful, experiential learning over 18 months.

The 2019 School Captain Hannah Walsh, contributed to charities such as Days for Girls, Dementia Australia and Studio Artes for her CAS. 'Not only did I meet extraordinary people who continue to inspire me today, but I developed an invaluable appreciation for the contribution of others within both our local and global communities. It also trained me in areas such as discipline and time management, which aided me in my academic study,' she said.

Fellow 2019 Vice Captain Sian Hamilton, examined the question, *How accurately mathematical modelling can predict the progression of poliomyelitis in Nigeria and consequently assist with economic and social development?*

'By combining Global Politics and Mathematics, I was able to explore one key role of mathematics in society, showing how modelling the spread of disease to make accurate predictions was crucial for development. I did not realise at the time that this research would become so relevant in 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic', said Sian.

During her Ravenswood years, 2019 Vice Captain Jasmine Eatough, won numerous awards in the National Latin Exam. She turned her love of ancient languages and history, into an Extended Essay on Roman politics, that examined the ways the Romans *facilitated their selfish ambition as opposed to governing in the interests of the people in fifth and sixth century Rome.*

'The Extended Essay is extremely challenging and requires lots of perseverance,' she said. 'I had to overcome so many obstacles and complete numerous iterations but looking back, I am grateful for the academic skills that I gained.'

Ravenswood's IB offering begins with the Primary Years Programme (PYP) from Kindergarten to Year 6. Its curriculum is designed to develop



L-R Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone and IB students from the Class of 2019, Hannah Walsh, Sian Hamilton and Jasmine Eatough

children’s conceptual understanding and independent learning skills, through collaborative, trans-disciplinary and inquiry-based units of work. The PYP journey culminates in an exhibition of learning, where Year 6 students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding to the School community and external guests.

‘The overall standard of the girls’ presentations is astounding and often well beyond what you would expect of students of their age. The Primary Years Programme is an exceptional foundation for Secondary School achievement,’ said Head of Junior School - Deputy Principal Sarah Guy.

A sign of the success of the IBDP at Ravenswood, is its continued growth. In 2020, more than 40 students



Clare Gim



Holland Touw

commenced the IBDP, our largest cohort to date and a 25% increase on 2019.

‘I am understandably very passionate about the IBDP, particularly for its capacity to tap into the students’ innate curiosity, inspiring them to think as global citizens and preparing them to one day positively influence the world,’ said IB Coordinator Monique Connor.



The Gift of Light

Ravenswood Vice Captain enlists the help of Year 8 students and their Science teachers, to shine some light on the devastating impact of energy poverty.

Seventeen-year-old Ravenswood Vice Captain Madeleine Rudan (Year 12), adopted the cause early this year, engaging every student in Year 8 to help construct 168 solar lights for dispatch to children in the Dominican Republic.

The girls built the lights during their regular Science classes, while studying electricity, its environmental impact and the mechanics of solar energy. After assembling each light, they attached a hand-written letter of support, making their gift even more personal.



The project was made possible by Madeleine's selection as the 2019 recipient of the *Gail Kelly Making a Difference Leadership Award*. Her prize was the opportunity to oversee the donation of \$5,000 to the charity of her choice.

'I came across SolarBuddy through one of its partner organisations, the Kokoda Track Foundation,' Madeleine said.

'Having walked the track myself in 2018 with the Ravenswood team and experiencing what it is really like to live for 10 days in a remote environment with

nothing more than a torch, it became apparent to me that this was a large issue in our world currently. SolarBuddy gives students in the developed world an insight into the issue of energy poverty and the opportunity to make a tangible contribution to the lives of others around the world.'

The lights will contribute to the creation of almost 370,000 study hours for Dominican Republic children over the course of three years. They also represent a renewable energy benefit equivalent to more than 430 seedlings, grown over 10 years.



Macayla Wu

Hitting the High Notes

Two Ravenswood pianists experienced the dream of a lifetime in early March, making their debut on the stage of one of the world's most prestigious cultural institutions - Carnegie Hall in New York.

Ravenswood Music Scholar Allyson Wu (Year 7) and her sister Macayla Wu (Year 5), achieved the rare honour after each winning first prize in their age categories at New York's Golden Classical Music Awards International Competition.

Allyson, who has hopes of one day becoming a professional concert pianist, performed *Waldesrauschen* by Franz Liszt and practised for around 15 hours a week in the lead-up to the event.

'Performing at this prestigious venue as a soloist gave me a deeper understanding of how challenging it is to be a musician and achieve a high standard,' Allyson said. 'It was an honour and a memory in my musical journey that I will treasure forever.'

Ten-year-old sister Macayla, who plays the violin and viola in addition to the piano, performed *Sonata No. 16 in C Major, K545* by Mozart, which has been her favourite piece since she was two years old.

'The preparation was hard, but enjoyable,' she said. 'I was looking forward to performing somewhere I'd never been. It was such an amazing experience and I'll never forget it!'

Tiarn's Art Takes New York

Fifteen-year-old Tiarn Garland and her artwork inspired by Australia's recent bushfires caused a sensation in America's centres of power in March.



Tiarn Garland and New Jersey Senator Cory Booker

Despite her youth, Tiarn Garland (Year 10) is already a prolific artist who has won six awards and 10 nominations in Australia and overseas for her drawings, which predominantly feature animals in their natural habitat.

When bushfires raged near her north shore home in November 2019, she said she decided to use her art to express her distress at 'the sustainability struggle happening in my own backyard.' The resulting artwork, *Here today... but tomorrow?* depicts a koala in the foreground, clinging to a lone branch, as a not-so-distant bushfire ravages the trees behind.

It was this powerful piece of artwork that was selected from nearly 200 entries from more than 20 countries as the winner of the World Wildlife Day 2020 International Youth Art Contest in New York.

Tiarn was flown as a special guest of honour to the United Nations Headquarters in New York to attend an official World Wildlife Day function on 3 March. Here, a panel comprised of members of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora Secretariat, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), announced Tiarn as the overall winner.

The competition was based on the theme, *Sustaining all life on Earth*, and jury members said they were struck by the level of detail in Tiarn's drawing, particularly the koala and its lifelike gaze.

Tiarn and her artwork also featured at the Paley Centre for Media in New York during an advanced screening of the new movie, *Hope*, by English primatologist and anthropologist, Dr Jane Goodall. Then came a series of events in Washington DC, and meetings with some key American political figures, including New Jersey Senator and one-time Presidential hopeful, Cory Booker.

'Through my artwork, I wanted to convey how nature's fragile balance can be quickly destroyed - sometimes, in such short a time as days or even hours - and to evoke action to tackle the immediate and longer-term impacts that threaten wildlife. Sustaining life on earth means making sure all of us have the same chance to survive,' Tiarn said.

The Year 10 student received another accolade in May when she was engaged by one of the world's largest art supply companies, Faber Castell, to collaborate on a number of creative projects.



Bronte's Seedlings of Support

As a Year 6 student, waiting in hospital for a second round of surgery, Bronte Taylor (Year 9) discovered a silver lining to what felt like a scary situation — the Starlight Express Room. 'When I found out I was still sick, I panicked ... worried that it might get worse,' she said. 'The Starlight Express Room was a place for children to go to have fun and forget that they were having medical procedures.'

The Starlight Foundation charity has introduced Starlight Express Rooms in every hospital in Australia. Most are stocked with craft materials and games and manned by a Captain Starlight, to entertain younger patients and their families.

Bronte appreciated the Starlight Express Room so much, that when she was discharged from hospital, she decided to find ways to support its work.

From mid-2018 until December 2019, she devoted over 50 hours to recycling bottles and selling on Facebook, seedlings she had grown in her garden. Bronte's ventures generated \$1000 for Starlight Wish, a branch of the Foundation that grants special experiences to sick children.

Not satisfied with her efforts, Bronte pledged at the beginning of 2020, to raise \$2000 more. The government lockdown due to COVID-19 put paid to her plans to sell seedlings at open gardens and made it more difficult to collect bottles. Instead, Bronte has been focused on boosting her seedling stocks.

The Bronte's Seedling Selection range now includes up to 25 different summer and winter seedlings. It features plants chosen for their culinary versatility, such as tomatoes, lettuce, chillies, beetroot and beans. The plants are sold at six-weeks-old, ready to place in the soil. Each is accompanied by Bronte's growing tips for best results. Bronte also sells mini terrariums, featuring succulents for home decoration.

Bronte has read that the pandemic has increased interest in kitchen gardens and buying edible plants and is hoping that this will impact her sales, once the My Open Garden program and the Sydney Edible Garden Trail, have re-opened. 'I plan to continue raising money for Starlight for many years to come,' she said.

Bronte's Seedling Selection is available for purchase via Facebook.



Assisting the Elderly During COVID-19

The Ravenswood community has joined efforts to support elderly and disabled members of the local community, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our Cadets, students and parents are contributing to the Ku-ring-gai Neighbourhood Centre Civilian Volunteer Army Project, supporting vulnerable people to stay safe at home. Each week they pack

fruit and vegetables for distribution, deliver food, medication and health and safety brochures and check in with the elderly and isolated by phone.

'It has been a great opportunity for students to be able to show compassion and give back to the community during this difficult time,' said Ravenswood Cadet Prefect, Unit Second in Command Gabriella Pancino (Year 12).



Anna Shines Online

Music Captain Anna Chung (Year 12), was selected from a field of international applicants, to perform in the Philadelphia International Music Festival Online Masterclass at the end of April. The Masterclass was led by Mr Ricardo Morales, Principal Clarinet of the Philadelphia Orchestra, one of the 'big five' symphony orchestras in America. 'This opportunity has helped me realise the importance of connection and music, as well as ways to become a better performer!' Anna said.



Making Strides in Maths

Sydney Bao (Year 9) is sharpening her mathematical skills through participation in the prestigious University of Sydney's Mathematical Problem-Solving Correspondence Program (MaPS), in conjunction with the Australian Mathematics Trust. Sydney gained selection for the challenging online course, as a result of her success in the 2019 Australian Intermediate Mathematics Olympiad and Australian Mathematics Competition.



Sisterhood of Students

Conscious of the impact of the government-imposed lockdown on young people, Ravenswood students in Years 8-9 have initiated the *Big Sister* program, to provide girls in Years 5-6 with friendship, support and advice online.

The project is the Years 8-9 girls' entry in the Community Problem Solving Program (CmPS), an international competition which teaches powerful lessons about applying problem-solving strategies and skills to real-world concerns.

The *Big Sister* program saw the Years 8-9 girls pair up with a student in Years 5-6 during the government-imposed lockdown, communicating with them via Zoom or Microsoft Teams once a week. They learned about each other's lives, discussed the challenges of isolation and baked treats, made crafts and played games.

The girls are now continuing their online activities even though on-campus learning has resumed, and their friendships are blossoming.

'It is really good having something to look forward to during the week. If you have a lot of homework or it is

really stressful, you know that something is coming up that you really enjoy. You get to talk to someone and do things together and find things that you both like,' said Grace Page-Dickinson (Year 6).

'I really enjoy having a better relationship with someone in an older age group so they will always be there to just help me with homework if I need it,' said Amelia Robinson (Year 6).

'*Big Sisters* could not have arrived at a better time. Right from the get-go I saw a change in Amelia's demeanor. After each call, she excitedly told me of the new things she had learnt, the new books she planned to try and when she would next get to speak to her 'big' sister. The program is no doubt a positive contribution to her overall development as a strong, confident young woman,' said Year 6 mother Sarah Robinson.

CmPS involves thousands students from around the world each year. The competition is being held online in 2020, with submissions due on 20 August.

Sport

NSW Junior Athletics Championships

Six Ravenswood students qualified for the Australian Championships (which were to be conducted in March), after stunning performances at the NSW Junior Athletics Championships.

Emma Polikowski (Year 9) was crowned NSW Champion after winning the U16 Shot Put title, Jessica Maciver (Year 11) placed second in the U18 100 Metre Hurdles and Bronte Hodson (Year 11) finished third in the U18 Javelin.

Year 9 student Zara Perry, placed second in both the U16 Multi-Class Javelin and Shot Put, with third place finishes in the Discus and Long Jump. Madeleine Huyskens (Year 10) eclipsed four seconds from her previous best performance, completing the U17 1500 Metres in under four minutes and saluting the judges in fourth position.

With a fourth-placed finish at the 2019 IGSSA Championships, Ravenswood Athletics is building significant momentum.



NSW Senior Levels Athlete of the Year

Anya Patel (2019) has ended her school gymnastics career on a high, after being named NSW Senior Levels Athlete of the Year. She also won second overall at the State Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships, after winning gold for Clubs and bronze for Ribbon. 'I knew about my nomination but it was such a strong field that I was more surprised than anyone when they announced my name,' she said.

Anya has hung up her leotard to study for a Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Advanced Studies at the University of Sydney. As a competitor, she trained for 16 hours a week, using focused repetition to perfect her form. 'Rhythmic Gymnastics is challenging because of the high level of flexibility and dance expression that it demands. It requires hours of training with your teammates and over the years, they have become my closest friends,' she said. Anya now hopes to mentor younger students and remain connected to the sport.



IGSSA Captain Selection

Ravenswood Softball Captain Annika Smith (Yr 12) was awarded the honour of captaining the IGSSA representative team during Term 1. Annika's leadership and match-play were of the highest order, culminating in her selection to the NSW CIS team.



Festival of Music and Dance Lights up Town Hall

The second annual House Performing Arts Festival at the Sydney Town Hall in February, was a triumph of multidisciplinary artistry and student achievement.

Every Secondary School student in each House, came together to interpret a Ravenswood Guiding Principle: Stuart explored *Compassion*, Tudor *Excellence*, Windsor *Respect* and York *Courage*.

'The fifth Guiding Principle, *Optimism*, was present in the thought-provoking and uplifting combinations of choral, dance, drama, technology and media, and costume and design, presented by each House,' said Performing Arts Captain Lauren McKibbin (Year 12).

The annual Festival aims to stretch the students' creativity and organisational skills to their limits,

under the expert guidance of speciality Performing Arts staff, House Patrons and Mentor teachers.

Each House achieved an exceptional standard within a tight timeframe but it was York who won the night, for the second year in a row.

'It was a good challenge to come up with a performance comprised of drama, dance and musical elements, as well as coordinate and inspire students, from Years 7-12, throughout the rehearsal period,' said York Captain Charlotte Peet (Year 12). 'Each Captain learned lessons that I am sure will help us in our future careers and we all gained fun memories from uniting across Year Groups and getting to know so many different girls.'



Staff Spotlight

Ravenswood Role in IB Diploma Quality Process

Language teacher Ann Giannantonio, has been selected by the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) to help ensure the accurate and consistent marking of its new German Language syllabus.

A former Chief HSC Examiner for Japanese and German, Ann is working in collaboration with an IB teacher from London and an IB teacher from Armenia, to establish an online marking standard known as the Quality model, for all German Language IB examiners to follow.

Teams of international examiners will be trained to mark strictly according to the Quality model, or risk being excluded from the marking process by the software. Ann herself, will oversee a team of eight examiners. 'I feel privileged to have a voice in the setting of fair and differentiated marking expectations and grade boundaries and look forward to bringing this knowledge and perspective back to Ravenswood,' she said.



Ravenswood's Newest Author

Languages teacher Elaine He, has authored a valuable text book for International Baccalaureate Diploma Chinese B Standard Level (SL) and Higher Level (HL) students and teachers. *VOYAGE - IBDP Chinese B Reading Comprehension Skills* is a reading comprehension and Theory of Knowledge (TOK) resources title. It includes Chinese reading texts from authentic resources such as news articles and blogs, which Elaine says make language learning more true to life and reflect the language variations and cultural diversity of China and its diaspora. Elaine is already focused on her next project: a collaboration with IT professionals to create an e-learning platform for Chinese language.



Fearlessness Award

Director of Psychological Services Penelope Moussa, has been recognised for her work as a clinical psychologist and a mental health and recovery advocate by the international organisation One Woman.

Penelope received the Fearlessly Helping Others award on 29 February, at the One Woman Fearless Women's Summit in Sydney, for her work at Ravenswood and with external charitable organisations.

'There were many speakers at the summit - women who had moved through adversity into empowerment. It was the most humbling and privileged experience to hear their stories. Their courage was awe-inspiring,' said Penni, adding that she was also, 'deeply humbled' to receive the award.

'... I believe that when women come together, we can truly make a difference in the world, one woman at a time.'



Academic Excellence



James Martin

Social Science Coordinator James Martin, has been awarded a Master of Educational Leadership degree from Macquarie University and the Macquarie University Award for Academic Excellence, recognising James' grade point average attainment throughout his program of study.

'I used my Master's to explore how to effect positive change within schools, particularly how professional learning can support change and constructive innovation that enhances student learning,' said James.

Currently in the process of creating 'new opportunities for intentional, structured and strategic collaboration' with his Ravenswood colleagues, James is developing activities that will enhance students' critical skills and learning outcomes.

'I am interested in ways my colleagues and I can leverage our shared experience to pursue change that has been informed by data and teacher observation, in order to develop critical skills in our students,' said James.



Juliana Whiteman

Coordinator of Academic Studies and Science teacher Juliana Whiteman, has received her Master of Educational Leadership from Macquarie University and won the Macquarie University Award for Academic Excellence.

Over the course of four years, Juliana engaged with educators across Australia and the world. She used Ravenswood as her case study, including for the development of a hypothetical proposal for the sustainability and growth of Positive Education at the School.

'I hope that I will be able to use my learning to continue to support my colleagues and the School's leadership just that little bit better, and always to work towards improving the learning outcomes for each and every student,' said Juliana.



Heather Allan

Applying the findings of her thesis to her role at Ravenswood, is the next focus for Mathematics Coordinator Heather Allan, who was recently awarded a Master of Educational Leadership at the University of New South Wales.

Heather said that among the key take outs from her thesis, titled *Evaluation of Professional Learning in Mathematics*, is that the culture of professional learning at Ravenswood, has been effective in promoting learning amongst the staff.

'The findings will help me to focus the individual professional learning of the Mathematics staff, so that we can collectively develop and address student learning needs,' she said.

Fostering Women of the World

As Australia's Deputy Ambassador to Vienna, Ravenswood Alumni Alison Drury, drove initiatives to advance women in the sphere of global affairs. Alison shared tips for thriving in a male-dominated workplace and raising future female leaders, when she was guest speaker at our International Women's Day Breakfast.

Alison Drury (1995), returned from Austria in January, having served not only as Deputy Ambassador to Vienna but Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations. An official to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the 42-year-old also supported efforts to ensure Iranian compliance with the 1995 Iran Nuclear Deal. Her other career highlights include Middle East Peace Process analysis at the Australian Embassy in Tel Aviv and experience in counter-terrorism and regional security.

'Diplomacy is perceived to be a glamorous field but the reality can be very different,' Alison said. 'While at times you are exposed to enormous privilege, you can also find yourself on the front line of a crisis, something I experienced when posted to Israel during the 2006 conflict with Hezbollah, with bombs dropping just 40km north of our residences,' she said.

As with most high-profile careers, women working in diplomacy face an additional challenge - a lack of gender equality. Alison cited a 2015 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) review, which revealed that despite equal numbers of men and women recruited at graduate level since the mid 1980s, the number of men in leadership positions, including ambassadors, far outweighed the number of women.

Since then, Alison said numerous initiatives have been employed to bridge the gap, including gender representation targets and a cultural shift towards family-friendly working arrangements. Particularly significant has been the appointment of two female Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Julie Bishop, followed by Senator the Hon Marise Payne, and the first-ever female Head of DFAT, Frances Adamson.

Alison herself drove two schemes to promote women in international affairs: Group of Friends for Women in Nuclear and International Gender Champions. The number of females in senior executive roles within the Australian diplomatic corps, including Heads of Mission, now stands at roughly 40%.

As the mother of a daughter and two sons, one of Alison's key messages at the Breakfast, was that female empowerment starts at home.

'My husband and I actively focus on developing our children's respect for other points of view and their critical thinking - encouraging them to ask why things are as they are and not to accept the status quo. 'We make sure we model behavior that promotes equality and challenges stereotypes. My husband has at several times been our children's primary carer, responsible for the cooking and cleaning, school pickups and looking after the baby. When choosing books to read to our children, we look for alternatives to stories that feature princesses rescued by a prince,' she said.

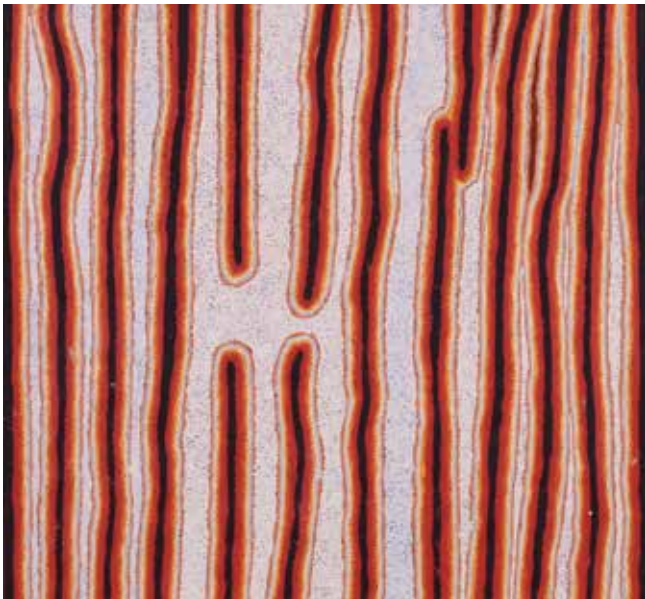
To the number of Ravenswood senior students in the audience considering an international career, Alison underlined the power of persistence and determination. It was the terrorist attacks of September 11 that inspired her to switch from the insurance industry to diplomacy but the route wasn't smooth. 'I stayed up all night applying for a role with the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade,' she said. 'When I not only missed out but failed to win a DFAT graduate position the following year, I marched to Canberra and made an appointment with DFAT Human Relations to find out what I needed to do to get in. From there, I drove across town to the Australian National University and signed up for a Master of International Relations. First I studied for a Graduate Diploma and then on the back of my High Distinction averages, won a full academic scholarship the following year for the Master's program.'

By 2004, Alison had started work with DFAT as a graduate and has not looked back since. 'The moral of my story is to not worry if you are not sure what career you want to pursue - just focus on your strengths and interests. Also, don't be afraid to change paths - earlier experiences won't be wasted. Finally, be ambitious and reach for the stars - you might not get there but you won't end up with a hand full of dirt either!'





Finalist: *Suffolk Sheep* by Janet Luxton, 2020 Art Prize



Finalist: *Tjiturrulpa* by Eileen Napaltjarri, 2020 Art Prize



Finalist: *The Inaccessible One* by Patricia Van Lubeck, 2020 Art Prize

Record breaking entries received in 2020 Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize

In only its fourth year, the Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize has cemented itself as one of the most sought-after visual art prizes in the country for women. More than 1380 entries were received across the Professional, Emerging and Indigenous Emerging Artist categories in 2020, representing a 77% increase since the inception of the prize in 2017.

'We believe this is testament to the strong need and desire of Australian women to use this Art Prize as a platform to express their voice,' said Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone. 'It is particularly significant considering the disruption and devastation caused by the drought, bushfires, floods and COVID-19, experienced across Australia in the months before entries closed in March.'

The 2020 Art Prize is also significant, due to the introduction of the Indigenous Emerging Artist Prize, which gives Indigenous women a platform to share their stories and promote their creative talents.

After many hundreds of hours spent judging the inspirational artworks, Jennifer Turpin, Kathryn Hendy-Ekers and Edwina Palmer selected 107 finalists. Announced on 16 April, they represent every state and territory across Australia.

Guest judge Hadyn Wilson, will join Jennifer, Kathryn and Edwina in the final selection of winners in each category.

Hadyn, who works from studios in Wollombi and Sydney, has a diverse art practice including painting, public sculpture, low-relief paper sculpture and experimentation with different mediums. He has had countless solo and group exhibitions throughout Australia and overseas and won a number of significant prizes.

Due to COVID-19 health and safety precautions, the events associated with the 2020 Prize had to be postponed. Ravenswood now plans to hold the Opening Night on Thursday 26 November and the Exhibition of Finalists between Friday 27 November and Saturday 12 December.

The Art Prize would not be possible without the generous support of its sponsors. Ravenswood is extremely grateful to Platinum Sponsor: Stockland; Gold Sponsors: R.M. Williams OUTBACK, Active Networks, Crestone Wealth Management and Park West Foundation; Silver Sponsors: The Art Scene, Buildcorp, Clarke Murphy Print and Macquarie University; and sponsor of the Indigenous Emerging Artist Prize, the Tritton Family.

The Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize was conceived to inspire, promote and connect women artists across Australia, whilst giving current students opportunities to explore the potential of a career in art. 'It is our hope that this Art Prize gives women artists a greater platform for their creative expression and a greater opportunity to showcase their works - to be seen and heard, not only in Australia, but around the world,' said Mrs Anne Johnstone.

From the Archives

Recollections of World War II

Among our archival collection are documents that contain the recollections of two Alumni about the tumultuous time of World War II.

Mrs Schreijaeg-Gilmour (Gilmour, 1949) was in Year 4 in 1942 at the height of the Pacific war. In a recent letter to the School, she recalled how air raid drills became a normal part of the Ravenswood routine.

'The Japanese invaded Sydney Harbour on 31 May and on 1 June 1942, and torpedoed Double Bay and surrounds,' wrote Mrs Schreijaeg-Gilmour. 'When sirens went off, the whole school would go to the air raid shelter where we would sit with a cork between our teeth to avoid biting our tongue if we were bombed.'

It was a similar experience for Alumni Miss Joan Goff (1948). Miss Goff, who years later returned to Ravenswood as Deputy Principal, participated in the Ku-ring-gai War Oral History project. The 1995 interview was conducted by then student, Mrs Sarah Courtney (Scurr, 1997). (Mrs Courtney is now the Tasmanian Health Minister and is featured on page 30 of this issue.)

In the interview, Miss Goff recalled teachers calmly taking students to their allotted area during air raid drills. On their school belts, every girl carried a small bag containing earplugs, a piece of rubber to bite on, and emergency rations that included - much to the children's delight - a packet of Lifesavers and chewing gum!

'But no-one was allowed to touch any of it unless there was a big drama and there never was a big drama, so there it stayed,' explained Miss Goff.

To support the war effort, Miss Goff said students happily gave up their pocket money to contribute to the Cot and War Effort Fund, which was mistakenly referred to as the 'cotton wool fund' by the young students.

Knitting was also popular, and students and parents spent hours making scarves, socks and jumpers for the troops.

'We all knitted furiously,' recalled Miss Goff. '... [My mother] knitted madly the whole time the war was on. She was a pretty proficient knitter, so she got to knitting the V-neck jumpers. She was also one of a team that did camouflage netting and that was a very long project.'

Students sent their knitted items to the war front with notes about who made them and where they came from.

'Occasionally, you'd get a letter back ... it was really quite sweet of them,' recalled Miss Goff.

Mrs Schreijaeg-Gilmour also has vivid memories of knitting: 'For the war effort, we knitted in class - navy-blue scarves for the airmen and khaki for the men in the army,' she said. 'We knitted in rib - two knit, two purl - for one-and-a-half yards.'

Outside the School gates, both women recalled that food rationing was in place and food coupons were used up until 1949. Certain goods, including linen, towels, clothing and rubber items such as sports shoes were in short supply, as was petrol. Ravenswood's silk uniforms were replaced with cotton; the silk being diverted to parachute manufacture.

Train and home windows were blacked out and secured against bomb blasts; families built dug-out shelters.

The local area still had farms, orchards and dairies and many people, said Miss Goff, grew vegetables and kept chickens to supplement their food coupons.

She said that there was a pervasive awareness that people - especially the women - were missing husbands, fathers and sons, some of whom never returned from the war.

During this time, due to labour shortages, Miss Goff added that most students rallied to help clean the School. Every day, the students polished their wooden desks, swept the Assembly Hall and classrooms, and helped in the garden.

'And we were very proud of it, too,' said Miss Goff when recalling their efforts.





Playing a Crucial Role in the Battle Against COVID-19

Ravenswood Alumni Sarah Courtney (Scurr, 1997) is the Tasmanian Minister for Health, Minister for Women, Minister for Strategic Growth and Minister for Small Business, Hospitality and Events. She was elected to parliament for the north eastern seat of Bass in March 2014.

Like Health Ministers the world over, Sarah's focus in recent months has been on urgent efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19.

In an interview with *Semper*, Sarah said 'Tasmania is particularly vulnerable to the virus, as it has the oldest median age of all Australian states and territories. It led the nation in cruise ship bans, border controls and other measures and was quick to impose stricter controls on the north west of the state, due to a cluster of cases diagnosed there. From early on, testing and personal protective equipment (PPE) for hospital staff, was prioritised.'

'The Tasmanian Government's number one priority is keeping Tasmanians, including our health care workers, safe and secure during the COVID-19 pandemic,' Sarah said in a statement. 'I would like to reassure staff that we have an appropriate level of PPE supplies across all regions of the state, so that our frontline workers can safely respond to patients' clinical needs. Additionally, PPE is a critical focus of the Health Emergency Coordination Centre, which

will drive statewide coordination of a new COVID-19 PPE model.'

Reflecting upon her time at Ravenswood, Sarah said, 'Having left Ravenswood over two decades ago, I have been fortunate to retain many of the strong friendships I forged during my school days. These friendships have endured many life changes, and it seems that the large geographical distances that have existed, sometimes spanning continents, have only served to strengthen the bonds. These friends have supported me through tough times and helped me celebrate my achievements.'

'I also have many fond memories of the amazing teachers, particularly across maths and science who inspired me, teaching with dedication, pride and endless enthusiasm for their subjects and their students.'

On leaving Ravenswood, Sarah studied for a Bachelor of Chemical Engineering (First Class Honours) and a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Sydney. Prior to her political career, she worked in the business sector, holding senior roles in the institutional finance industry for almost a decade.

Sarah is also a keen viticulturist with a Master of Wine Technology and Viticulture from the University of Melbourne and her own boutique vineyard in the Tamar Valley.

Alumni Designer to the Stars

Bridget Yorston (Curren, 1999) is one-half of the internationally-celebrated fashion label Bec and Bridge, a brand recognised in style circles as the epitome of cool.

‘Someone once described the brand to us as being all about Girl Power and we’d agree with this sentiment - we’re about making women feel confident and modern and we love the idea of women supporting other women,’ Bridget said.

Bridget met her friend and business partner Becky Cooper on their first day of a Bachelor of Fashion Design and Textiles course, at the University of Technology Sydney, in 2000. Their business partnership began almost by accident, when they personalised a pair of jeans for a friend, using patches and dye. The jeans caused a sensation and by graduation year, Bridget and Becky were supplying them to several stores, had won a \$10,000 business award and been selected to present their graduate collection at the 2004 Australian Fashion Week.

‘Looking back, we were really quite naive,’ said Bridget. ‘We started our brand with no industry or business experience and whilst we wouldn’t recommend that people set out this way, we think in our situation, it worked. It forced us to learn and understand every aspect of the business. We made loads of mistakes along the way but thankfully we were young and resilient and happy to learn and grow

from these mishaps. A tip to starting a business is to be open-minded. Allow room for things to happen organically and to evolve, even if it means deviating from your original plan. Listen to your customer and never be too proud to accept constructive criticism.’

Today, the company has 100 staff, seven shopfronts and international representation in stores from Selfridges to Harvey Nichols. Its inspiration is the ‘70s and ‘90s, attracting customers who range in age from 14–50.

‘Getting picked up by David Jones back in 2006, was a big pinch-me moment. Also seeing our pieces on some incredible girls like Beyoncé, Taylor Swift, Jennifer Lopez, Bella Hadid and Kendall Jenner, has been a highlight,’ Bridget said.

Despite their celebrity clientele, Bridget and Becky say they are committed to making their designs attainable. ‘We pour our heart and soul into our pieces, working hard to keep them at an inclusive price,’ Bridget said.

Alongside tourism, hospitality and the arts, fashion designers are being significantly impacted by the scale of the global pandemic, COVID-19. Bec and Bridge recently featured in the Harper’s Bazaar article *The Australian Fashion Brands to Support Right Now*, along with a Marie Claire piece titled, *10 Slip Dresses to Work from Home In*, as the mood turns to buying local, in these unprecedented times.





L-R Becky Cooper and Bridget Yorston

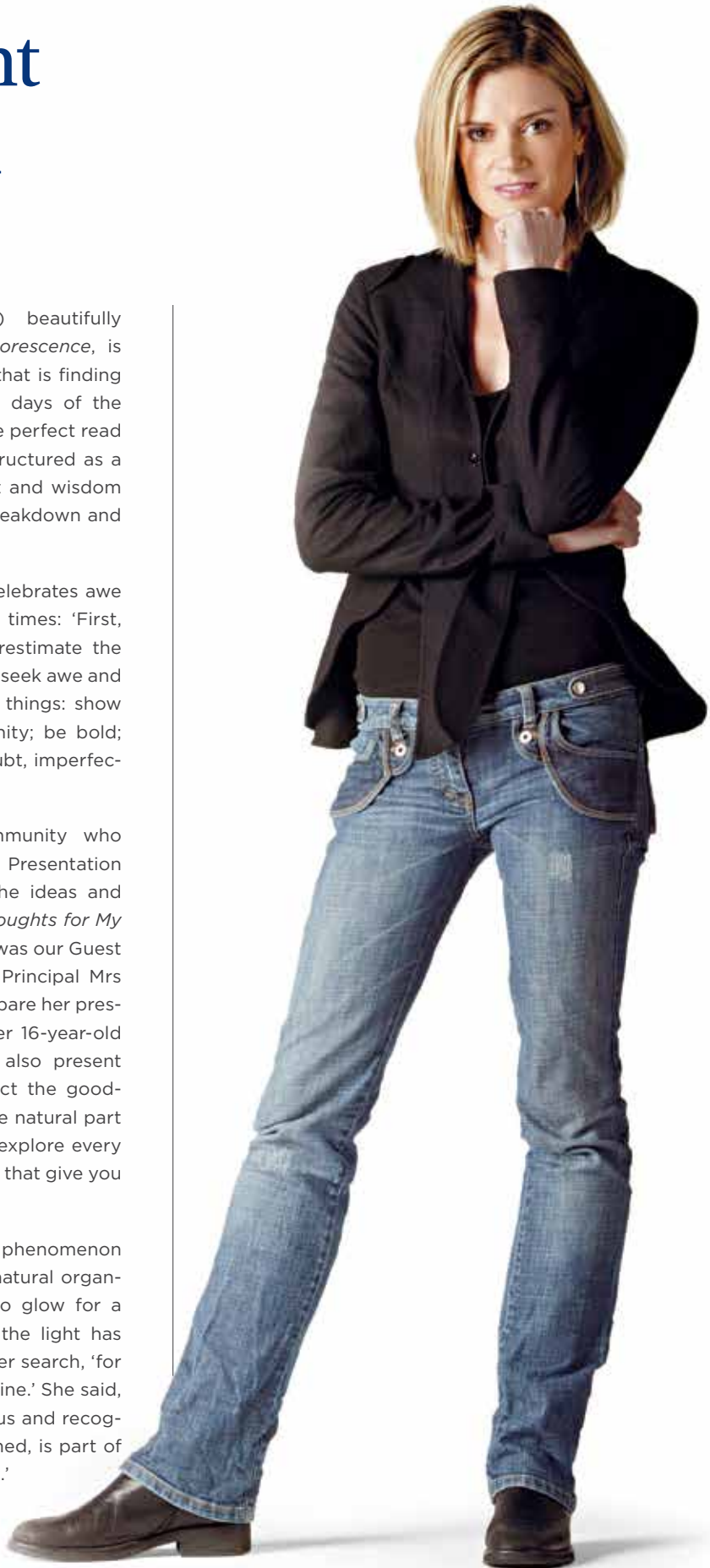
The Light Within

Alumna Julia Baird's (1987) beautifully crafted new release *Phosphorescence*, is an inspiring salve of a book, that is finding wide appeal, during the challenging days of the COVID-19 pandemic. Described as 'the perfect read for our times,' *Phosphorescence* is structured as a series of essays that offer the insight and wisdom Julia gained through a relationship breakdown and a cancer diagnosis.

Above all, it is a work of hope that celebrates awe and wonder as a way through dark times: 'First, pay attention. Second, do not underestimate the soothing power of the ordinary. Third, seek awe and nature, daily. Fourth ... well so many things: show kindness; practise grace; eschew vanity; be bold; embrace friends, family, faith and doubt, imperfection and mess; and live deliberately.'

Members of the Ravenswood community who attended our 2018 Secondary School Presentation Ceremony, will recognise some of the ideas and language expressed in Chapter 17: *Thoughts for My Son: The Art of Savouring*. Julia Baird was our Guest Speaker that year and Ravenswood Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone, had asked her to prepare her presentation, 'as if she were writing to her 16-year-old self.' The result was advice that is also present in the book, such as: 'carefully collect the good-hearted like shells on a beach, find the natural part of the world that brings you joy and explore every corner of it, deliberately pursue things that give you strength.'

Phosphorescence is named after the phenomenon by which stored light is released by natural organisms or substances, and continues to glow for a noticeable time after the source of the light has ceased. Julia said the book is about her search, 'for light within, for what makes people shine.' She said, 'Life is tempestuous and life is precious and recognising that those two things are twinned, is part of the secret of the truly phosphorescent.'



Behind-the-Scenes in Hollywood

Logie winner, Daytime Emmy Award nominee and Ravenswood Alumni Tammin Sursok (2001), stars in the recently released film *Braking for Whales*, alongside Tom Felton of *Harry Potter* fame. Tammin co-wrote the screenplay with her husband, Director Sean McEwan, finishing it the day before their wedding. The comedy centres on an endearing pair of estranged siblings, who bond during a road trip to fulfil their dead mother's last wishes. Tammin's past credits include the huge ratings success *Pretty Little Liars*, the American daytime soap opera *The Young and the Restless*, and *Home and Away*. She is also an accomplished musician with a 2005 single that reached the top of the Australian music charts.



Alumni Camilla Hayman (2012) is one of a handful of female editors working in the male-dominated area of documentary series production in Los Angeles. She is quickly climbing the ranks, most recently working on the documentary *Tiger King*, as the only woman in a team of seven. Camilla's previous credits include the Netflix documentary *Fyre: The Greatest Party That Never Happened*. 'I am conscious that I can play an important role by injecting a female perspective,' she said. Camilla dreamed of working in film and television from a young age and studied at the New York University Tisch School of the Arts. She hopes to expand her career into narrative production editing in the near future.



Lighting up the World Stage

Virtuoso violinist Sonja Schebeck (2003) has carved out a distinctive niche for herself in the international classical music scene, through an exciting combination of fire tricks, physical theatre and superlative sound. Based in Vienna, she enjoys a diverse career that includes performances described as, 'a cross between Tim Burton films and operas by Georges Bizet.'

Sonja has also toured extensively across Europe, the UK and Australia with the esteemed violinist and violist Nigel Kennedy. She now leads his Orchestra of Life and the Extra Sounds Ensemble. Sonja's other credits include the creation of the performance groups *Concertos on Fire* and *The Freestyle*

Orchestra. She is a regular guest with the with the Wiener Symphoniker, English Session Orchestra and Concertino Wien.





Celebrating our Cherished Golden Girls

When strong storms hit Sydney in November 2019, closing Ravenswood for two days and cutting power to tens of thousands of homes, the much-anticipated annual Golden Girls' Lunch, had to be postponed.

Ravenswood thoroughly made up for the delay on 28 February this year, when we welcomed over 200 cherished Alumni from 50 years ago or more, for a sit-down lunch, characterised by joyful reminiscing and much hilarity.

Year 5 students were the chaperones and emcees for the event and led the Golden Girls through an archival display of photos and memorabilia from 1938 to 1969. 'It was fun looking at the old uniforms and talking to the Golden Girls about what it was like to be at school back then,' said Georgina Fife (Year 5). 'They had to wear white gloves and make sure that they were always clean and they even got detentions if they went into the street without them on!' said Gabrielle Fazl (Year 5).

A highlight of the Lunch came when the School Anthem *Kindle the Flame* was played and a number of Golden Girls stood up, re-living their schoolgirl days. For our older Alumni, it was a chance to learn the song, which was not introduced until 1963.

As a parting gift, each guest received a handmade bookmark, decorated with a haiku poem about gold, written by a Year 5 student.

'I was very pleasantly surprised to feel the sense of community in the room and the absolute joy exhibited by so many of the attendees,' said Alumni Committee member Liz Frizell (1986).



H A I K U

A Gift from Year 5 to our Golden Girls

'You are like a star
Your memories are precious
In your heart of gold.'

'Golden pure leaves fall
As pure as your heart of
gold
Let your kindness shine!'

'A golden firebug flies
In the evening spotlight
A beacon of hope.'



Community News

Summer Memories – Welcome to 2020 Cocktails

So far, 2020 has been a year like no other; but back in February, well before we had any inkling that COVID-19 would send the world into lockdown, life was continuing as normal, and to herald in the start of the new school year, Ravenswood held its Welcome to 2020 Cocktails event.

Around 600 parents gathered on 21 February for a relaxed summer evening of mingling and conversation in the Old Girls' Courtyard.

Countless new friendships and connections were started at the event, as guests chatted over sparkling wine, canapés and platters of Italian and Lebanese fare. We created cherished memories to carry us through the past months and also through the months ahead, when life as we remember, begins to slowly re-emerge.





Vale

We offer our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of the following Ravenswood Alumni.

Joy Hill (Lathom, 1941)

Joy Hill (Lathom, 1941) passed away on 20 April 2020. Born in 1924, she was enrolled at Ravenswood between 1937-1941 and a member of Tudor House. Joy's close friendship with fellow Alumni Verne Caradus (1941) and Pixie Errey (Rothery, 1941), continued throughout her life. On leaving Ravenswood, she enjoyed a career as a librarian and contributed to the community as a volunteer coast guard. Joy was also very active on the global stage in helping to raise awareness for AIDS funding. Joy felt passionate about this issue and lobbied international governments about the need to maintain funding to AIDS services, including making a public address to the New Mexico Congress.



Ravenswood students in 1941. Back row (L-R): Margaret Norton, Verne Caradus, Patricia Edwards, Norma Cheetham. Front row: Pixie Rothery and Joy Lathom.

Carolyn Barlow (Hill, 1969)

Carolyn Barlow (Hill, 1969) passed away on 19 June 2019. A lover of travel, she enjoyed senior management roles in the travel industry and achieved numerous professional awards. Carolyn commenced at Ravenswood in 1960 and was a member of Windsor House. After meeting Belinda Sims (Rudder, 1969) in Junior School, the pair became lifelong friends. Carolyn is survived by her two children Nadia and Leith, and her beloved husband Lindsay, who described her as intelligent, ethical and forward thinking. 'Few words could convey the extraordinary person that she was, the extraordinary life that she lived, or the extraordinary impact that her passing had on those who knew and loved her,' he said. 'She was a delightful person and a funny lady, who could do the best, most hilarious imitation of a performing seal one could ever see!'

Diana Margaret Grant (1959)

Sue Crombie (Ritchie, 1960)

Jody Page (Schubach, 1960)

Beverly Ann McDouall (Pyke, 1960)

We report on the passing of Ravenswood Alumni in every edition of *Semper* magazine. If you would like to provide information regarding an Alumni Valedictory, please contact Sarah Beresford, Head of Development and Alumni, on (02) 9498 9953 or at sberesford@ravenswood.nsw.edu.au.



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