

Semper



PG 20
NEW ERA FOR
CADET UNIT

PG 22
WELLBEING AND
SPORTS CENTRE

PG 26
RAV-CAST!
PODCASTING ARRIVES
AT RAVENSWOOD



Home

by Dixie Pan (Year 11)

You learn that belonging isn't a feeling to wake up with
Not a feeling from nothing to something
But rather like a paper boat in an ocean of love
The feeling seeps in slowly.
But when you ponder where you acquired this peculiar sensation
And trace back to the little occasions
And the joyous celebrations
You realise.

That perhaps when you stepped into these gates on the first day.
And everyday
That love was already something inherent.
Before love was ambiguous but now it's clear
That the beautiful community here
Is something to be cherished and cheered
And we sprout and shape and mould and grow each year
And in our future we pave the way, we're pioneers
And we're surrounded by joyous peers, sincere
And in times needed, they'll patiently listen and hear,
And...
Happiness has been found and it's something that to hold forever dear.

So, here's to the sense of belonging we seek
In the fabric of our school lives each day Is unique
A love that bridges age and time,
A family found, in the smiles cheek to cheek.
So let us cherish this sweet blend,
Of love and friendship without an end,
The journey we begin where each step we take,
We find our place in the connections we make.
Because at the end of the day
If it isn't love
Then what is it that fills our hearts and makes us stay?



Semper, the Ravenswood School for Girls' magazine.

Established in 1901, Ravenswood is a leading Uniting Church School for girls from Prep 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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From the Archives: 'Let Christmas In' (1964)

In December 1963 at the Junior School Presentation Day, Ravenswood students performed the Christmas pageant, 'Let Christmas In'. The following October, the performance was reprised for recording by ABN Channel 2 (ABC), then broadcast throughout Australia on Christmas Day at 5.30pm.

The pageant featured Christmas songs and musical performances. There was even an appearance by a donkey!

Alumni and former Ravenswood counsellor Marion Delprado (1970, pictured right) recalls the exciting opportunity: 'We loved it and took it very seriously, as you can see by the straight faces. The donkey, not quite so seriously. There were moments when he was quite obstinate and refused to move according to the script. At one stage he had a little accident, which sent us all into stitches of laughter. It was a wonderful experience.'





Principal's Message

What an exhilarating year of *actualising* we have experienced at Ravenswood! As we proudly reflect on the 2024 academic year, I am incredibly inspired by the way our students and staff have achieved so many meaningful goals and aspirations, demonstrating 'boundless possibility thinking', enthusiasm and an unwavering passion to strive for personal excellence. Our students have approached opportunities for enrichment and growth with our hallmark RAVO spirit, and demonstrated how integral taking action is to realising success.

There has been much to celebrate: our treasured students excelled at state, national and international competitions, earning a range of outstanding awards and accomplishing new records. We were thrilled to see so many of our Year 12 HSC students achieve recognition for their exceptional talent and effort, including a record-breaking 29 HSC nominations across English Extension Two, Music, Drama, Dance, Design and Technology, Visual Arts and Textiles and Design – a historic high for our School, with two selections announced for ARTEXPRESS and one for Young Writers Showcase. Congratulations to our talented students!

These exceptional results underscore our focus word for the year: *actualise* – an encouragement to our students to build on their strengths, develop their talents and strive for personal excellence. We sowed the seeds for this in 2023 when we looked to inspire, and this year the students were encouraged to channel the powerful motivating force of inspiration into action.

Research shows that the path to mastery and personal excellence is paved by grit – that is, tenacious, dogged perseverance combined with passion (as defined by Dr Angela Duckworth). Grit is nurtured by a clear focus on goals and consistency in daily endeavours. As Aristotle once reputedly declared, 'Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit'. This notion is supported by contemporary studies that liken habits to compounding interest – effective habits, no matter how small, have a powerful cumulative effect in the long-term, helping students to harness the momentum they need to continually strive *semper ad meliora*.

This semester, we encouraged our students to integrate small changes into their daily routine, from embracing productive and focused study practices



to healthy and productive habits of mind, including taking a strengths-based approach, cultivating an attitude of gratitude, being encouraging and supportive of one another, and focusing on the pillars of good health relating to nutrition, movement and sleep.

Of course, adhering to new habits can be challenging – it requires tenacity and persistence, character strengths that we actively support our students to develop through our Positive Education program. The ability to keep going, even on the days where it feels more effortful than exciting, can make a crucial difference in maintaining momentum on the journey towards fulfilling potential and striving always towards better things.

From its very founding 123 years ago, Ravenswood has always stood for the building of character, and for service to others and each other. Most recently, we reflected on this strength through the powerful concept of *Letsema* or ‘working together for a common purpose’. A supportive, collaborative community is vital for wellbeing and optimal learning, which is why we continue to support our students to advance forward together in community.

As our 2025 School Captain Zara West said in a recent speech: ‘Life isn’t always a straight trajectory to your goals. There are bumps and barriers and things to overcome, and it’s in these moments that Positive Education is crucial.’

This semester, our students have advanced in their endeavours at an international level, including representing Australia at the International Earth Science Olympiad in China (page 13), and participating for the first time in The Global Chinese Debating Championship in Hong Kong (page 29). In addition to being NSW Champions, Ravenswood won ‘Best Teamwork’, outperforming 70 other teams from around the world in their age group. Our amazing team of Future Problem Solving students also achieved success at the National Finals (page 29), while students excelled in individual debating and public speaking.

On stage, our talented students achieved tremendous success in music, including one student receiving an exciting invitation to play with the Barrier Reef Orchestra and the Australian Youth Orchestra in Melbourne (page 32). Our Senior School Dance Company dazzled audiences at the

annual Sydney Eisteddfod Dance of Champions in the Concert Hall at Chatswood Concourse, taking home the 'People's Choice Award' and \$4000 in prize money for their interpretation of the music from Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera* (page 32). Moreover, the Senior and Junior Dance Companies had the thrill of being chosen to perform to a wider audience on Channel 7's *Sunrise* program, articulately sharing their reflections on live television.

We were so inspired by our students' major works and talents in a range of impressive exhibitions, showcases, musicals, dance and drama productions. In sport, our students also shone this semester, with notable achievements at the elite level in snow sports, equestrian, gymnastics, rugby, basketball, table tennis, athletics and rope skipping (pages 34–35).

Our Cadet Unit also celebrated an exciting historic milestone (see page 20). In acknowledgement of the ongoing commitment our students have made since the Cadet partnership with Knox Grammar School was established in 2011, we are proud that the Unit has been renamed the Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit. With the benefit of 13 years of meaningful collaboration, it is inspiring to see students from both schools stand shoulder-to-shoulder, united in purpose and galvanised by a strong sense of camaraderie as they collaborate in service as a jointly named unit.

Striving to make a difference to others is a fundamental element of our Positive Education approach. The Gail Kelly Making a Difference Leadership Award, established by our former Chair of Council, Dr Gail Kelly, provides a student with \$10,000 to support a local or international charity of their choice. This year, we had a record 28 applicants and, in recognition of the incredibly high standard of finalists, the two runners-up were awarded \$2,500 each for their chosen charity (Dignity, and Hope in a Suitcase), in addition to the winning submission receiving \$10,000. We were so pleased to see these funds go to RizeUp Australia, who provide life-changing practical support for families affected by domestic and family violence.

Our Social Justice students have shown tremendous commitment in actualising their goals to support others, continuing their meaningful work with Days for Girls, and supporting worthy causes and charitable organisations, such as the Redfern Youth Connect Centre, Wesley Mission, Salvation Army, Compassion, Starlight Foundation, Pyjama Foundation and Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter.

Meanwhile, our Community Problem Solving Team have been working with Horton House in Gordon to

address the issue of loneliness among the elderly, while a record 116 students from Year 6 to Year 10 took part in the Write a Book in a Day competition, creating 21 online illustrated books in just 12 hours and raising an impressive \$6,283 for The Kids' Cancer Project.

Senior students also strengthened our connection with local and international indigenous communities through the Red Earth and Fiji Immersion Programs. These are truly enriching experiences for our students, encouraging international-mindedness and further motivating students to continue expanding their involvement in Social Justice initiatives.

Our collaborative efforts as a staff team to encourage our students' love of learning and ability to flourish have once again been recognised through six national educational and leadership awards (page 28). These prestigious educational awards reflect the commitment, dedication, innovation and expertise of our extraordinary teaching and non-teaching staff, and we are proud to be recognised as a leading girls' school in Australia. For the sixth time since 2017, Ravenswood was named one of Australia's Most Innovative Schools by *The Educator* magazine – an acknowledgement of our ground-breaking work in the areas of Positive Education, STEM and wellbeing.

As Global Chair of the International Positive Education Network, I am pleased to be able to share our innovative evidence-based Positive Education strategies with educational leaders around the world. Most recently, I presented, along with our Head of Positive Education at the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research in Melbourne to an audience of 63 international education delegates, including a number of principals. We know from the overwhelming research that wellbeing is inextricably linked to academic results and, by sharing the knowledge and strategies we have implemented at Ravenswood, we hope to empower other schools to embark on their own Positive Education journey for the benefit of young people and their communities globally.

Community is at the heart of our RAVO culture and throughout the year we united in characteristic vibrant spirit at a range of exciting events, including the colourful RPA Trivia Night, Chantry Golf Day, the Father-Daughter Breakfasts, and our annual Golden Girls Lunch. In 2024, we have had more Alumni reunions and tours than ever before, with over 150 Alumni joining us on campus, a wonderful reflection of the ongoing engagement of our treasured School community, which continues to go from strength to



strength. Demand for enrolments is at a historic high and we have waiting lists across Year Groups.

Our dazzling Foundation Gala Ball overlooking Sydney Harbour was one of the event highlights of the year (page 19). Thanks to the generosity of spirit in our community, the event raised valued funds for transformative scholarships and bursaries that provide opportunities for girls who might otherwise not have the chance to attend Ravenswood, as well as for new strength and conditioning equipment for the magnificent Wellbeing and Sports Centre, which will commence construction in 2025.

Most recently, our festive Carols on the Lawn event in November was a wonderful opportunity to experience the warmth and togetherness of our School community on campus, and to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas, sharing in the values of hope and goodwill (page 41).

We also celebrated the commissioning of Pastor Anna White-Atkins, whose vibrant energy and dedication has already contributed to the wellbeing of staff and students.

This term, we farewelled our wonderful Deputy Principal: Boarding and Community, Ms Lucy Cumming, who has made the very difficult decision

to conclude her time at Ravenswood to relocate with her family back to Melbourne at the end of the school year. Over the past eight years, Lucy has provided valued leadership and served with great dedication, warmth and humility. We warmly thank Lucy for her tremendous service to the School and wish her and her husband Cameron, and their son Harry, all the best for the future.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the Class of 2024, led by our exemplary School Captain Laura Parker, and Vice Captains Shirley Ding and Sabine Brett, as well as the Prefects and Captains in House, along with each and every cherished member of our Class of 2024 cohort. They have given expression to their motto of 'You Glow, We Grow', serving as resplendent role models of character and substance. Their extraordinary sense of community and energetic House spirit, and their collaborative efforts to actualise their inspiring ideas and goals, has left an indelible imprint on our hearts and minds.

We also welcomed our new student leaders (page 12), whose vision for 2025 is 'Time to Inspire, Unite our Fire' - a motto that highlights our School's broader mission to ignite potential and, with the support of our wonderful teaching and non-teaching staff, to kindle the flame of inspiration that lights the



path towards personal growth. Their vision is a true expression of actualising potential and, importantly, to support each other along the way.

Regardless of whether a student holds an official leadership position or not, every valued member in the Class of 2025 has a tremendously important role to play. We look forward to them doing so with integrity and optimism, encouraging and empowering one another to seize the moment, harness their courage and passion and take the next step in advancing towards their goals.

We also look forward to work commencing on our magnificent new Wellbeing and Sports Centre as we move into an exciting phase of our strategic investment in Ravenswood's future. The world-class design supports our School's vision to enrich and enhance all aspects of student wellbeing in a multifaceted way, including through sport (page 22).

Additionally, we are delighted that work has already begun on our new front gates as part of the planned structural upgrades taking place, providing improved shelter from the weather, an extended seating area for students to wait for after-school pick-up, and better lighting for visibility and safety.

The sandstone façade, along with the flowering plant elements of the roof structure, reflect our commitment to providing both a safe and welcoming environment for our cherished students.

Beyond our shared accomplishments, both within and beyond the classroom, I am so proud of our community, who have helped to create such a warm culture and sense of connection and belonging in our School. It is such a privilege to work with our exceptional Council members, outstanding staff, inspirational students and supportive families, and School community members, both past and present. It is also a great joy to work alongside such an exceptional School Leadership Team, whose vision, collective skill and dedication helps us all actualise the strategic goals of our School. Our devoted teaching and non-teaching staff are so passionate, sharing their skills, strengths and talents with such dedication, always going above and beyond.

I wish you all a festive and peaceful Christmas break, filled with God's blessings. I look forward to another exciting start to the year, abounding with academic enrichment, vibrant co-curricular endeavours and meaningful community events.

Mrs Anne Johnstone
Principal





Celebrating the Class of 2024

The final two weeks of Term 3 were a celebration of the Class of 2024, as they prepared for their final exams and life beyond the school gates.

Celebrations began with students farewelling staff at a special Year 12 Farewell Staff Morning Tea in the Old Girls' Courtyard. Students delivered speeches of appreciation for all teaching and non-teaching staff and Year 12 music scholars Hannah Kim and Lara Dowdeswell gave a special musical performance for staff.

The final week kicked off with a thrilling staff versus Year 12 netball game in the Gymnasium. Students then celebrated their achievements and RAVO spirit in their moving Year 12 Final Assembly, where they were farewelled by staff, Year 11 and Class of 2024 Alumni mums with a Guard of Honour

onto the Oval for the rite-of-passage tossing of graduation caps.

Year 12 gifted the School a mandarin tree, planted in the Senior Learning Centre garden, to commemorate their time at Ravenswood.

Meanwhile, Year 12 Boarders bid an emotional farewell to their school 'home' at a Final Chapel Service and Farewell Dinner at the Residential College, further reflecting on and celebrating their Ravenswood education.

The Valedictory Chapel Service and Releasing of the Doves (which this year, due to the rain, was a Releasing of Balloons inside the Gym!) and the Valedictory Dinner at Miramare Gardens (featuring an entertaining flashmob dance routine by parents and teachers for the students) ended the two-week-long celebrations to mark the end of an era for the Class of 2024.



From Our New Student Leaders

As 2025 Student Leaders, we are grateful for the opportunity to assist and guide the Ravenswood community through the year to come. From the construction of our new Wellbeing and Sports Centre, to the implementation of new and exciting initiatives, the upcoming year will be action-packed, vibrant and inspiring.

We feel that Ravenswood provides a myriad of opportunities and unwavering support that enables every student to flourish in an empowering and uplifting environment.

Ravenswood is at the forefront of Positive Education and is driven by the dedication and passion of our Principal, Mrs Anne Johnstone. The School's visible wellbeing model has helped to foster an enriching and optimistic learning environment.

As students, we are privileged to be surrounded by the warmth and care of staff members who actively cultivate a nurturing sisterhood. Greeted by smiles every day, the Ravenswood community continues to unite and emit a vibrant culture that strives towards excellence.

Our aim for this year at Ravenswood is to inspire our fellow students to step out of their comfort zones and work together to further the exuberant culture of Ravenswood.

As such, we are proud to present our theme for the upcoming year: *Time to Inspire, Unite Our Fire*.

This vision reflects the importance of inspiring one another to aim beyond what is thought possible – to strive for personal growth and excellence. We encourage all students and staff to use the forthcoming year to build one another up and begin converting goals into action.

We also aspire to build upon our foundations of connectedness by urging all students to unite and work to achieve collective success. Led by our energetic Year 12 cohort, 2025 is about using inspiration to uplift others, and amplify the pride and spirit embedded within each Ravenswood girl. By bringing together the passion and strength of all students, we aim to generate a fervent energy that extends beyond the gates of our School.

This year, we invite the students and community members of Ravenswood to continue on their journeys with the passion and joy that we as leaders aim to inspire every day. We are excited to watch our spirited community embrace their *Time to Inspire*, as they *Unite their Fire* – as we support one another in teamwork, sisterhood and unity to build momentum and spark collective passion.

By Zara West (2025 School Captain), Billie Fedden and Georgia Gray (2025 School Vice Captains)





World-Class Science in an Ever-Changing World

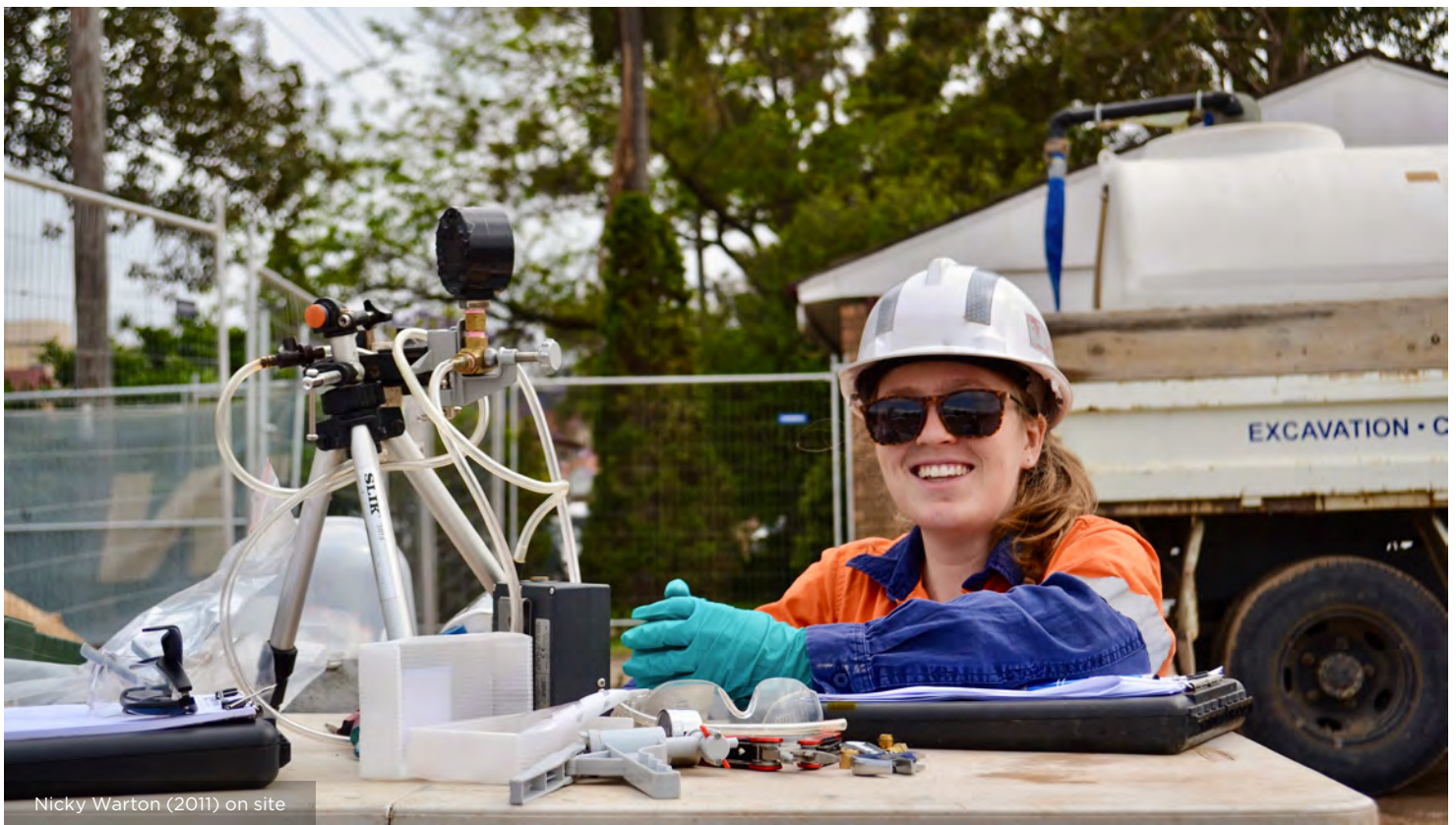
Anyone who has ever looked at a large tree stump will have noticed the beguiling concentric pattern of the growth rings. The study of these rings – dendrochronology – allows scientists to not only estimate a tree’s age but also chart diverse seasons of growth.

We can delineate similar patterns of growth and reinforcement in the story of science at Ravenswood. The ‘rings’ near the core of our story inform us about remarkable Alumni such as Grace Cuthbert-Browne (1917, pictured right) and Joan Mary Woodhill (1929, pictured far right) – esteemed figures in their respective scientific fields of paediatrics and dietetics. Both women were trailblazers, not only for Ravenswood students but for Australian women generally.



The growth rings take in the Ravenswood students who forged scientific paths in the post-war years, all the way through to the new millennium, by which time girls devoting their studies to a previously male-dominated field had become an established norm.

A close look at the Ravenswood growth ring in 2004 would show us Nicky Warton (2011), coming through the Henry Street gates for the first time as a Year 5 student. Today, Nicky explains that her background of family camping holidays around Australia had ‘triggered a love for the environment, plants, animals and ecosystems’, and at Ravenswood she found a school that would nourish her passion.



Nicky Warton (2011) on site

Nicky studied geology, biology, chemistry and physics at Ravenswood and was particularly fascinated by physical geography - 'how rivers are formed, coastal processes, glaciers, understanding how soil impacts the vegetation; how the environment works in the different landscapes'. Through undertaking various science subjects at Ravenswood there were 'cool experiences and excursions that allowed us to see how the science worked out in the field.'

After graduating, Nicky completed a Bachelor in Environmental Science at UNSW and now works as an environmental scientist with the NSW Government. Among her memorable experiences are soil-mapping in Kosciuszko National Park.

In just the dozen or so years since Nicky completed her HSC, the Ravenswood growth rings reveal exceptional growth in the study of science. In 2024, more students opted for science subjects than at any time in the School's history. Nicky regards that as 'awesome news'.

'We need more women in the industry,' she says. 'We see a lot of young women coming through and the difference that it makes - not just because they are good at what they do, but also the different perspectives and understandings.'

Ravenswood Deputy Principal - Teaching and Learning Ms Jennifer Richardson (who also teaches Year 12 Biology) believes the School has a learning culture that lends itself to girls striving to extend themselves.

'To see young females coming through with an interest in science and STEM suggests they feel comfortable, empowered, and that they are in a state-of-the-art STEM environment where they can engage with their passion and learn,' Ms Richardson says.

'The teachers and lab technicians are a big part of creating that environment - one that fosters curiosity and skill development. The girls are encouraged to ask questions and to get hands-on in the laboratories.'

Ms Richardson notes that Ravenswood has added two more science laboratories to the campus in recent years. She says students understand that studying science develops powerful problem-solving abilities.

'Many of our girls see some of the issues that the world and society is facing, such as climate change, health concerns, access to water, energy sources ... There's a scientific basis under most of these global challenges and if you can understand that, you can have a voice and an impact - and make change.'

'Our students are really engaged and they can see an opportunity to make a difference. Curiosity, interest and passion for science is what we strive to ignite, and then the academic marks follow from that because they're engaged and have the knowledge, skills and dispositions to do it.'

Many science students with these qualities can be found in Ravenswood's most recent growth rings.

Year 11 student Tanya Chi speaks of the ‘universal experience of all little girls, foraging in the backyard for herbs and weeds to place into a small glass bottle, a pseudo-apothecary’. Later, her scientific spark came from the books and podcasts of Dr Karl Kruszelnicki, and once at school, Ravenswood was instrumental in fanning the flame.

Tanya says she loves Biology, Chemistry and Earth Science because of how deeply integrated they are in our daily lives, whether it be our favourite meal being flavoured with ‘ionic salts from evaporite deposits’ or our mobile phones containing ‘gold, copper and a dozen other metals which have been selected by rigorous physics research to find out the very best materials’.

‘There is so much potential in science, and it’s probably the one discipline that will never find its limits,’ Tanya says.

Tanya was selected as one of four students to represent Australia at the International Earth Science Olympiad in Beijing in August, bringing home a silver medal in the Individual Test competition.

Australian selection involved a series of exams as well as a two-week stint at the Olympiad Summer School in Canberra, where she ‘lived, breathed and ate Earth Science for 10 hours a day’, taking in lectures, fieldwork and trips to ACT outcrops.

Tanya praises the supportive network behind her at Ravenswood, adding: ‘RAVO science focuses on extending knowledge beyond the classroom. Whether it’s practical experiments, field trips or collaborative science projects, there’s a definite emphasis on exposing girls to how science functions in the real world.’

In turn, Tanya devotes some of her time to supporting and mentoring the next generation of young Ravenswood science students coming through.

Elaina Pei (Year 6) is one such student. Elaina impressed many at the School with her presentation about genetic research at the 2024 Primary Year Program Exhibition. Elaina says her inspiration came from science lessons on DNA and fingerprints.

‘I feel like there is a special science community at RAVO covering most of the modern aspects in life like energy, health and exploration,’ Elaina says. ‘By studying science, you are getting closer to learning about almost everything in life, meaning you are improving yourself and how extensive your knowledge can be.’

Elaina says she loves the fact that Ravenswood science classes are fun and engaging and can help her understand anything, from how a dog’s senses work to why black holes exist in outer space.

While Elaina is unsure whether her studies will take her down a science career path, Tanya has already earmarked a future in medicine, with a view to becoming involved in health policy.

From the perspective of someone who has previously weighed up whether to pursue a career in the field, Nicky Warton offers this advice:

‘I think a science degree sets you up really well – even if you’re not sure which branch of science to pursue. Study it at university and then explore the wide range of options that it brings.’

‘Work out what your interest is and then go for it. Your study will arm you with skills and set you up for so much in the future: critical thinking, communicating, working with people. A science degree doesn’t pigeon-hole you for a lifetime of sitting in a lab and wearing a white coat. There are so many different areas where science is applicable, whether it’s outdoors and the environment, or moving into the IT field. A science degree can take you to all sorts of places.’





Art of the Matter

Now in its ninth year, Australia's highest-value art prize for women, the Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize, celebrates the work of women artists, in collaboration with the School, to showcase innovative and laudable works of art for students and the wider community.

The idea of the Prize is to actively promote and celebrate the work of Australian women artists over the age of 18. It was originally inspired by the Countess Report (2016), which tracks gender representation in Australia's museums and galleries.

The Countess Report established that despite women representing 74% of visual art graduates, men still had three to four times the number of exhibition opportunities in Australia.

The subsequent Countess Report (2019) reported a 10 to 20% increase in the representation of women artists in artist-run spaces, commercial galleries, contemporary art organisations, public galleries, major museums and university galleries.

The 2016 report, however, was the trigger for the Prize's inception in 2017, as well as for the School's

plan to raise the profile of visual arts and highlight to students its impact.

Tasmania-based artist Elaine Green (pictured top right) was a finalist in the Emerging category early in the Prize's history in 2018 and 2019 and says that prizes are really important for helping women artists to raise their profiles and build confidence.

'I've entered quite a lot of prizes, and each one builds your confidence and spurs you on,' she says.

One of Elaine's entries, a painting titled *The Valley Woke*, was not only a finalist one year, but was selected by Ravenswood students as a theme at the annual House Performing Arts Festival in Darling Harbour. Thrilled by the honour, Elaine flew to Sydney from Tasmania to see the students' performance and says she treasures the memory.

Katrina Collins (1975) was the inaugural winner of the Emerging Artist Prize and is now a Guest Judge. Katrina won later in her career, having worked as a painter in her 20s, before putting this aside while raising her family.

'I've been an artist for a very long time as a companion piece to being a teacher and a busy mum bringing



up kids as well,' she explained. 'But I've always had a studio and I've always been working. I could not believe it when I won and was very happy to make a speech about how great it was to "emerge" at the age of 58!

'I found painting a lonely profession in my 20s and I was very happy to go back to teaching and to make space for painting around that. And that worked really well for me, but getting towards the end of a career in art education, it was really nice to think that my paintings are still reaching an audience. And since winning the Prize, of course, they're reaching a much wider audience.'

Ravenswood's Head of Visual Arts, Ms Kathryn Minkley, has been on the judging panel of the Prize for the past three years and says it's a great thing to be part of. She's proud of the School's commitment to the Prize and to art generally.

'From an educational perspective and a teaching and learning perspective ... it creates very rich connections for the students with contemporary visual artists,' she says.



'We use the works very strongly in Visual Arts. We create teaching resources when I know what works are going to be in the exhibition and I also share a document with all the Heads of Department, so they know the works that are coming in.

'Being a girls' school, it is important to promote equity for women within the visual arts, which was the basis of the reason for the Prize.

'One of the first winners, Joan Ross, is a video artist who does these incredible post-colonial works. When she won the Prize, she was a professional artist, but she was still a little bit underground. Her work now is in major art museums around the world.'

Having the students see and meet real-life role models in the art world is also important, she adds: 'For them to see how an artist can forge a very solid career out of the visual arts is quite inspiring ... It is exciting to engage with these artists. I feel very privileged that I get to meet them and have the conversations and discover their practice. And there have been occasions where I engage them in workshops or small residencies within our teaching and learning space with particular Year Groups.

'Students also have the opportunity to speak with the artists. Our Year 11 International Baccalaureate Visual Arts students are hosts at the Opening Night of the Art Prize event, so they welcome the artists. They get the opportunity to have a conversation with the artists about their practice.

'They shadow the artists throughout the evening and get to have these extraordinary conversations about material and conceptual practice. They learn about why ideas connect to their art making and what it is about the world that they're commenting on, whether it's an important social, political issue, or about the joy of art making and the joy of the world.'

Entries for the 2025 Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize are now open and close on 5 March 2025. Tickets for Opening Night (20 June 2025) are available in March. The Exhibition of the Finalists (21 June to 6 July 2025) held at Ravenswood is free and open to the public.

Visit ravenswoodartprize.com.au for more information.

Past Winners of the Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize

2017

Professional: *Colonial Grab* – Joan Ross

Emerging: *Split Complimentary* – Katrina Collins

2018

Professional: *The Fall* – Angela Tiatia

Emerging: *Marooned* – Amber Koroluk-Stephenson

2019

Professional: *Bold and the Beautiful* – Joanna Braithwaite

Emerging: *Mutawintji Dreaming* – Chris Casali

2020

Professional: *Munga Ilkari (The Night Sky)* – Vicki Cullinan

Emerging: *Watagan Balga* – Relic from a Forgotten World – Danielle Guyot

Indigenous Emerging: *Tali Womikata* – Lynette Lewis

2021

Professional: *Vault* – Caroline Rothwell

Emerging: *Contagious* – Symone Male

Indigenous Emerging: *My Sister's Birth on a Full Moon* – Imelda Wood Melamurrk

2022

Professional: *Dusking (Nature Banner)* – Lara Merrett

Emerging: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – Nazila Jahangir

Indigenous Emerging: *Woven Mat* – Melinda Gedjen

2023

Professional: *Actual Size V (Maratus Madelineae)* – Maria Fernanda Cardoso

Emerging: *Untitled (Dissolution 1)* – Alethea Richter

Indigenous Emerging: *Interference of Perception: Rhopography (Lamp)* – Freyja Fristad

2024

Professional: *Dawurr* – Gaypalani Wanambi

Emerging: *Sculpted Triangles* – Chris Gleisner

Indigenous Emerging: *Pereltye* – Nancy Long Nungarrayi and Rene Long Nungarrayi



Having a Ball! Ravenswood Foundation's Gala Event

In August, the Ravenswood Foundation welcomed the Ravenswood community to the 2024 Ravenswood Foundation Gala Ball at Doltone House at Jones Bay Wharf.

Current and future parents, staff, Alumni, partners and friends of the Ravenswood community came together to raise funds in support of the Ravenswood Building Fund (for state-of-the-art equipment for the new Strength and Conditioning Centre in the new Wellbeing and Sports Centre) and the Ravenswood Scholarship Fund (to support life-changing scholarships and bursaries for students).

Hosted by Fox Sports presenters Tony Squires and Alumni Eloise Sohier (2012), the black-tie fundraiser was a high-spirited affair, with breathtaking harbour views, lively Olympic-themed heads or tails (thanks to Platinum Partner The Princeton Review), energetic live music from the Baker Boys Band, a wellbeing zone, RPA photobooth, raffle, silent auction, and a very *audible* auction led by Craig Marshall from The Marshall Group (Gold Partner).

Chair of Ravenswood Council Peter Roach described his delight in seeing the School host its first Gala Ball since 2019: 'A night like tonight reinforces the ethos of Ravenswood, and is a reminder of why parents send their daughters to Ravenswood!'

A highlight for many on the night was a moving Q&A hosted by Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone with Alumni and Deputy Chair of Ravenswood Council Christine Morgan (Krummel, 1978) and three current Ravenswood student scholarship recipients: 2024 Boarding Captain and Rural Residential College scholarship recipient Maggie Farquhar (Year 12),

Alumni scholarship recipient Maren Haldane (Year 11) and the Kim Buchan All Rounder scholarship recipient Willow Holm (Year 7). Along with Christine, the three shared their experiences of holding a Ravenswood scholarship, including the difference it has made to their life and education.

Reflecting on her time at Ravenswood as a scholarship recipient, Christine said, 'Over the decades since I was at the School, I've come to acknowledge the core strength that came from receiving an education that would not have been possible for me normally. It showed me that a Ravenswood education is about unlocking potential, about becoming inquisitive - using every part of ourselves.'

Maggie illuminated guests about the intangibles that Ravenswood provides its students, saying, 'I find myself applying the Guiding Principles and Positive Education in everyday life and big situations,' she said. 'It's not until you are put in a new situation or one in which you're challenged that you realise the values and concepts are instilled in you.'

The Ravenswood Foundation wishes to thank and express gratitude to the community members who attended the Ball, generously contributed funds and donated or purchased auction items.

The 2024 Ravenswood Foundation Gala Ball was made possible thanks to generous partners: The Princeton Review, The Marshall Group, Sonic Sight, Solid Ground Landscaping, Gordon Doctors, G.H. Mumm, Coco Republic, Skipping Stone Photography, Naked Life Non-Alcoholic Beverages and CMP (Clarke Murphy Print).



New Era for Cadet Unit

The Presentation of Colours and Investiture of Senior Rank in October at Knox Grammar School marked the first official event since the renaming of the Knox Grammar School Cadet Unit as the Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit.

In 2011, 40 Ravenswood students became the first to join the Knox Grammar School Cadet Unit, and since then Ravenswood's valued collaboration has gone from strength to strength.

Today, almost 350 Ravenswood students from Years 8 to 12 are part of the Unit - the largest in Australia, with nearly 1300 Cadets. The official renaming of the Unit reflects the collaborative spirit between Ravenswood and Knox Grammar and their commitment to purposeful endeavours as brother-sister schools.

Ravenswood Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone says, 'The renaming of the Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit is a proud moment in the history of our School. Since 2011, Ravenswood and Knox have worked together to provide our Cadet students with the opportunity to learn the benefits of respect, service, leadership, integrity and teamwork, and outdoor education skills.

'The renaming of the Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit reflects our ongoing commitment to fostering meaningful, shared co-educational opportunities for our students that help them to fulfil their potential and flourish while developing grit, resilience and leadership capacity. Students also have the opportunity to forge lifelong friendships along the way.'

Both schools' names and mottos are now incorporated into the Unit's updated logo and badge. Likewise, the existing Knox blue and black



Abbey Taylor SUO (Year 11)



colours have been extended to incorporate the Ravenswood gold.

Miss Annabelle Osborne, Second-in-Command of the Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit, says 'I have seen first-hand the strength, resilience and purpose that our students gain from being involved in the Cadet program. Our students have earned leadership roles within the unit and are valued, respected members of the cadet community.'

Abbey Taylor (Year 11), the second-ever female Senior Cadet Under Officer (SUO) says, 'It is such an honour to be named the SUO of the newly re-named Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit, especially as we enter a new era in our alliance with Knox. I look forward to leading and representing the Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit to the best of my ability.'



New Wellbeing and Sports Centre

In an important milestone for the Ravenswood campus, the Turning of the Sod event in December marked the start of construction of the new Wellbeing and Sports Centre, advancing the Ravenswood Masterplan for teaching and learning environments.

The Centre will be an important visible expression of the School's multi-award winning Positive Education program and philosophy. Positive Education recognises that learning and wellbeing

are inextricable and that a holistic education offers exciting opportunities both within and beyond the classroom - including through sport and the arts.

Designed by architectural firm Architectus and constructed by Taylor, both award-winning firms, the Wellbeing and Sports Centre will be a world-class educational facility with spaces that support and contribute to all aspects of student wellbeing.

The Centre offers state-of-the-art wellbeing spaces and sporting facilities, including a great hall and



gymnasium; basketball, netball and roof-top tennis courts; a new strength and conditioning centre; and an expansive foyer to showcase the Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize and other community events.

Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone says, 'The sod-turning ceremony for our magnificent new Wellbeing and Sports Centre marked the beginning of an exciting phase of development that supports our School's award-winning vision to enrich and enhance all aspects of student wellbeing, including through sport.

'Importantly, the world-class design also provides an inspirational space to accommodate our vibrant

student and staff population, along with parents and broader community members, further fostering a strong sense of connection and warmth that is a special hallmark of our Ravenswood community.

'The learning spaces support our commitment to nurture and challenge our students to actualise their potential, support their wellbeing and inspire within them a sense of passion and purpose.'

Luke Johnson, Principal Architect of Architectus, says, 'These facilities will transform the Ravenswood campus, and form a beautiful and welcoming edge to the sports field at the centre of the campus, providing a new hub centred around wellbeing, sport, learning and the display of art.'

2025 School Captain Address Wellbeing and Sports Centre Turning of the Sod Ceremony

For the last 10 years, sport and wellbeing have defined my life. Whether it was playing soccer as a kid, going for a run to clear my mind, or simply taking time to rest and reset, I've come to learn that these things are more than just activities, they're lifelines. This is something we all share. Sport and wellbeing bring people together to uplift communities and remind us just how capable we really are.

I've learned that having a positive attitude made me perform better and that taking risks makes me improve. I've learned that hard work beats talent, when talent doesn't work hard.

But more importantly, wellbeing has helped me overcome adversity. I've learned that when I make a mistake, not to beat myself up but to learn from it. I've learned that negativity is contagious and brings down team performance. And I've learned life isn't always a straight trajectory to your goals - there are bumps and barriers and things to overcome, and it's in these moments that Positive Education is most crucial. As tennis champion Rodger Federer says, 'the best in the world are not the best because they win every point, it's because they know they lose again and again - and have learned how to deal with it.'

So today is a very special day for me personally, and for future generations of RAVO students because today marks the day when we start on a journey to create a space dedicated to my two favourite things: sports and wellbeing.

It's in this state-of-the-art building that some of you, along with future generations of RAVO girls, will actualise your dreams. You will gather together to learn, to appreciate art, to play sport, to have fun or to just simply reflect.

This building is a celebration of the work of our dedicated and passionate principal Mrs Johnstone, who is globally recognised as one of the best, most influential educators - and who is the driving force behind our globally recognised Positive Education program. It is a physical manifestation of her incredible creativity and leadership.

It is one of the many legacies that Mrs Johnstone will leave - to make wellbeing visible and to unite Ravenswood as a community.

This building marks the beginning of a new era filled with promise, growth and boundless opportunities for all.

By Zara West (Year 11), 2025 School Captain



AI in Education

No sooner had the world reopened after the pandemic than educators began to face a new wave of uncertainty: the rise of artificial intelligence (AI).

This peaked with the advent of ChatGPT, which hit 100 million unique users within two months of its launch on 30 November 2022. Suddenly, students had free and easy access to a tool that could potentially write their homework in mere minutes, prompting a flood of concerns about the future of education.

'At no time in history have we faced such an extraordinary speed of technological change,' says Ravenswood Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone, who also sits on the Strategy Panel of AI in Education to help steer the strategic direction of the implementation of AI in the UK education sector. 'Our mission is to find the best path forward to supporting students' wellbeing so that they can thrive in a world that is increasingly AI-driven. This requires active, ongoing dialogue between leading academics, educators and students.'

Our AI Adoption Strategy

Mr Ken Wong, Ravenswood Coordinator of Professional Practice and the Ravenswood Institute, says Ravenswood recognises that AI is not a replacement for human creativity and expression, but rather a complementary tool.

'We are continually examining how this technology can improve teaching productivity and quality,' says Mr Wong. 'We are also looking at ways to empower critical awareness of GenAI so that students understand human agency and recognise the distinctiveness of human expression.'

Ravenswood staff have engaged in a range of professional learning opportunities focused on Generative AI (GenAI) technology, including presentations from experts from the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), the Association of Independent Schools NSW and other external bodies, as well as internal sessions facilitated by the ICT team and key teaching staff to share knowledge and expertise.

Through our connection with UTS, Ravenswood formed a research partnership with leading academics and researchers in the AI field to further understand how the use of AI can support teacher practice. An AI in Education Professional Learning Plan Team (PLP)

of 28 teachers was formed with the goal of harnessing the power of GenAI to elevate student learning experiences.

'Overall, the project demonstrated AI's potential to transform educational practices by aiding in the development of revision materials, differentiated lesson plans and formative assessment tasks, as well as enhancing lesson interactivity and fostering creativity,' says Mr Wong. 'Recommendations for managing student data security were raised and the continued experimentation and documentation of the use of AI in education will drive further insights and advancements in this field.'

AI Policy Development

At the end of 2023, the Australian Government released the 'Australian Framework for Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Schools', which seeks to guide the responsible and ethical use of GenAI tools in ways that benefit students, schools and society. These guidelines continue to evolve as technology evolves and as our understanding of the benefits and implications of GenAI tools progresses.

Through a collaborative process with the Teaching and Learning team and Senior School teachers, the Ravenswood Academic Honesty and Ethics Policy was updated to reflect the school's position on the use of GenAI tools in assessment, specifying that these are to be used solely as a source of information that should be acknowledged and referenced accordingly. GenAI tools are viewed as another source of information: just as with any other source, before using any material produced by a GenAI tool, students are required to critically analyse, evaluate and verify the information for accuracy.

Academic dishonesty is not a new concept – there have always been students who have copied others' work. In the past, peers were often implicated, but Google is now the more likely source of plagiarism. Technology has increased the speed and ease with which content can be generated, yet quality teaching and learning does not rely on content alone – information serves as a base for Socratic learning.

High-quality education involves testing students' reasoning and analytical skills through open-ended collaborative dialogue and exposure to different human perspectives within a learning community. Skills such as computational thinking, problem solving, critical thinking and creativity will increasingly

be required in a society where information is readily accessible. These skills are best honed with the guidance of a teacher.

AI in Teaching and Learning

'Teaching is evolving as we recognise new ways in which technology can form an exciting springboard for enriching learning, deepening student analysis and engagement and supporting academic rigour,' says Ms Jennifer Richardson, Deputy Principal - Teaching and Learning.

This year, Ravenswood was announced the winner of Best Use of Technology Award at the 2024 Australian Education Awards for its use of 6th Generation Class Virtual Reality (VR) technology that allows educators to implement state-of-the-art immersive learning and assessment experiences.

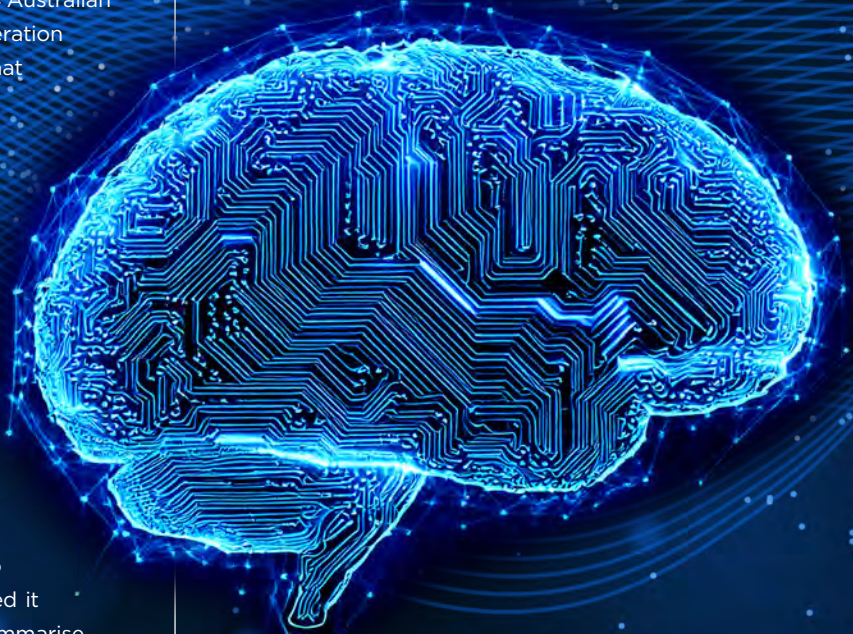
Teaching staff have been guided to selectively integrate GenAI tools into the classroom and educate students about their benefits and limitations. Ms Elizabeth Westley, Ravenswood Director of ICT, says, 'As a result, teachers have taken up different strategies to enhance their teaching through, for example, the use of ChatGPT and Co-Pilot, as a way to generate examples for students to compare and critique. They have also used it to generate creative writing prompts, summarise text and generate mind maps. Our teachers are also trialling the use of Generative AI applications to develop topic outlines, lesson plans, quiz questions, marking rubrics, ideas for differentiated content and other administrative tasks.'

The Ravenswood Library Resource Centre, in collaboration with the Ravenswood Digital Learning Leader, has created a 'micro credential course' focusing on 'Information Fluency Foundations'. This online interactive course assists students to understand and engage in the iterative research process, apply this to topics in every class, identify ethical information use and develop the skills to be critical when deciding which information sources are appropriate. All Year 7 students have undertaken this course, which is now being rolled out to other Year Groups.

The Future of AI in Education

'Ultimately, technology should enhance, not hinder, teaching and learning,' says Mrs Johnstone. She acknowledges that because GenAI has the power to take over routine tasks, it also has the potential to unlock more space for creativity, innovation and robust debate.

'Our job as educators is to develop young adults who will go out into the world and make a positive difference. As well as knowledge and understanding, they also need to develop character strengths - a



strong understanding of human nature, a solid moral compass, social cognition and the ability to collaborate and communicate effectively in a community. These are things AI simply cannot teach because, right now, it does not think or feel like a human.

'Education is the backbone of a flourishing society, and as educators we must successfully navigate the delicate balance between harnessing the benefits of automation while enhancing human agency, fostering intellectual curiosity and encouraging collaborative learning, reflection and personal growth. Our teaching practices will continually evolve, but our mission and vision remain the same: to support our students to find their passion and purpose and to ignite their potential.'



Ray-Cast! Podcasting Arrives at Ravenswood

Following the Best Use of Technology Award at the 2024 Australian Education Awards, Ravenswood continues to forge ahead as a school of innovation with the installation of a state-of-the-art studio in the Learning Resource Centre specifically designed for podcasting.

Custom-built in Spain and installed in November, the studio provides students with an innovative space to actualise their creative and STEM passions and skills.

‘The initial idea was to use podcast creation as a hook to encourage our students to share their thoughts and opinions about literature as well as issues that are close to their hearts,’ says Ms Margaret Tracey, Head of Learning Resources. ‘The idea developed from there last year and we created the RAVO Readers Podcasting group.’

‘These students loved the idea of taking the traditional book club to a new level and they embrace the idea of their voices encouraging other students to share in their love of reading.’

The studio is a custom-designed booth made with eco-friendly, durable materials. Its air-conditioned, sound-proof comforts allow for distraction-free conversations among up to four people, each using industry-leading RØDE microphones attached to adjustable arms. The studio is designed to allow further flexibility, with the latest recording and editing software technology.

‘The podcasting studio will enable students to experience media literacy in an authentic setting,’

says Ms Tracey, ‘and engage literacy and audio skills through the production and publication of their podcasts on RAVO Connect for teaching and learning purposes.’

Students engaged in audio creation at Ravenswood are learning the multi-faceted aspects of the medium, including the steps for creating a podcast.

Arya Balyan (Year 7, pictured top right), an enthusiastic member of the RAVO Readers Podcasting group, says she loves podcasting because it allows her to share her views on topics she is passionate about. She believes podcasting has become a popular medium because of its ability to actualise ideas. ‘People listen to podcasts for a range of reasons,’ Arya says, ‘such as seeking to get help with something they need from an expert or simply listening for entertainment purposes.’

Ms Tracey adds, ‘Podcasts created by students involve all elements of literacy – namely writing a script, reading, speaking and listening to other points of view. But the studio lends itself to much more than just podcast creation.’

‘It may be that a student wishes to record their speech or musical piece, or possibly create a tutorial podcast to help fellow students. There is no limit to what can be created and achieved through the studio.’

Ms Tracey’s desired outcome for the new podcast studio is a simple but important one, ‘I hope that students will develop their own voice, grow in their critical thinking and become better listeners.’

Staff Achievements



Australia's Top Principal!

In August, Mrs Anne Johnstone, Ravenswood School for Girls Principal, was announced the winner of the prestigious Australian School Principal of the Year at the 2024 Australian Education Awards.

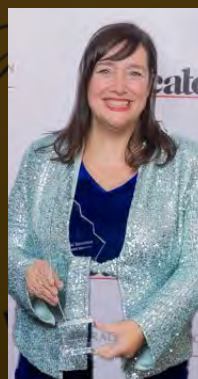
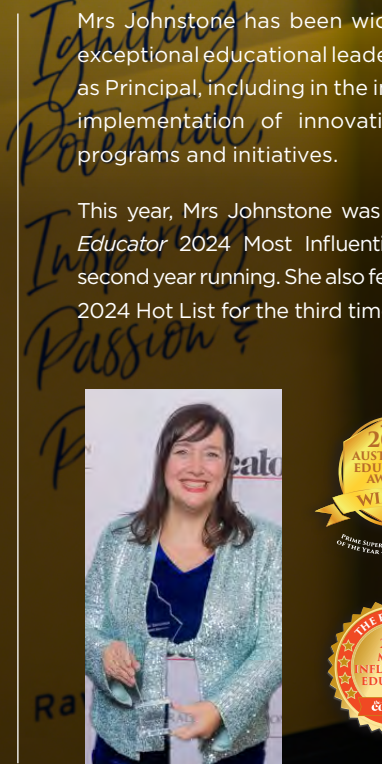
On the same night, she was also named the School Principal of the Year (Non-Government).

'I am so proud of our Ravenswood school community and am inspired every day by our students, staff and families,' Mrs Johnstone said after receiving her Australian School Principal of the Year trophy at the awards' gala dinner at The Star Event Centre in Pyrmont. 'It's an honour to receive this award and I share this accolade with them, and my family.'

'It truly is the greatest privilege to work with our extraordinary staff, supported by our School Council, to help students fulfil their potential and flourish in their education and in all aspects of their lives. Education is a wonderful calling and a most meaningful opportunity to make a positive contribution to the world! I'm incredibly humbled and grateful.'

Mrs Johnstone has been widely recognised for her exceptional educational leadership and contributions as Principal, including in the introduction, design and implementation of innovative Positive Education programs and initiatives.

This year, Mrs Johnstone was also recognised on *The Educator* 2024 Most Influential Educator list for the second year running. She also featured on *The Educator's* 2024 Hot List for the third time in three years.



Staff Achievements



Ravenswood Crowned ... and Crowned and Crowned!

Alongside Mrs Anne Johnstone's achievements, the 2024 Australian Education Awards conferred on Ravenswood School for Girls several additional honours, including the Best Use of Technology Award, an Excellence Award for Best Student Wellbeing Program (the third time in four years) and an Excellence Award for Boarding School of the Year (for the second time in three years).

Highlighting the School's embrace and adaptation of sixth-generation virtual reality (VR) technology, the Australian Education Awards judges gave Ravenswood the nod for the tech award for its innovative use of technology in teaching and learning.

Ms Elizabeth Westley, Director of ICT, says: 'The integration of VR technology at Ravenswood has provided opportunities for immersive, interactive learning activities that significantly enhance student engagement and motivation.'

The technology provides Ravenswood teachers with the tools to plan and implement state-of-the-art immersive, engaging learning and assessment experiences in the Junior and Senior schools, enhancing overall educational outcomes.

Ms Westley says: 'VR's immersive nature has been proven to boost engagement and learning motivation, and we have observed this in our Junior School students especially. VR allows students to experience situations from a first-person perspective, such as walking through ancient ruins to being surrounded by a natural disaster.'

The VR technology has also assisted with teamwork and social skills, and the School has seen high engagement and active student learners, increased questioning and excitement during innovative hands-on learning experiences.

In December, Ravenswood was also named *The Educator* magazine's Innovative School of the Year for the sixth time in seven years under Mrs Anne Johnstone's leadership (2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023 and 2024).



Honorary Fellow

Congratulations to the School's Coordinator of Professional Practice and the Ravenswood Institute, Mr Ken Wong (pictured centre), who was commended in October by The Teachers' Guild of New South Wales with an Honorary Fellowship Award.

Mr Wong has a Master of Education from the University of Sydney and more than 20 years' experience in the education system coordinating adult professional development.

Student Showcase

RAVO Speaks on the Global Stage

In August, Ravenswood participated for the first time in the Global Chinese Debating Championship in Hong Kong. As NSW Champions, the 10 Ravenswood students (six in Year 11 and four in Year 10) competed in four competitions across the six-day event. The girls had to debate on topical subjects such as AI, digital gaps in society and environmental protests.

Ravenswood Language Teacher Ms Elaine He says, 'Debating against teams from around the world was a learning experience for the girls that they will remember for a lifetime, exposing them to diverse perspectives and challenging them to think critically on a global scale. They were also humbled by their opponents' great performance.'

The Ravenswood debaters performed strongly and, when pitted against the eventual champions from Shanghai in the group stage, only lost by 1.5 votes.

Ravenswood won the Best Teamwork Award, outperforming 70 other teams in the 15 to 17-year-old group, including those from the US, Australia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Taiwan and mainland China. Isabella Chen (Year 10), Dixie Pan (Year 11) and Bobo

Lao (Year 11) also won the overall Best Debaters Award.

'I am extremely proud of the girls' seamless teamwork, showcasing their remarkable ability to listen, support and build on each other's ideas,' Ms He says. 'I am particularly impressed by their ability to stay focused and support each other under pressure, which not only speaks to their resilience but also to their dedication as a team.'



Problem Solvers of the Future

Sixteen Ravenswood students competed in October at the 2024 National Finals of the Future Problem Solving Competition in Melbourne.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2024, the Future Problem Solving competition provides students with a variety of challenges designed to empower curious young people to become change-makers.

Ravenswood's scenario writers had great success at the National Finals, with Sara Kou (Year 8) winning Writer of the Day in the Middle Division and Cinny Yuan (Year 6) winning the same title in the Junior Division. Fiona Wang (Year 5) came second in the Junior Division.

Following their success at the National Finals, Fiona Wang, Cinny Yuan, Sara Kou and Audrey Li (Year 9, pictured right) have been invited to attend the International Future Problem Solving Competition at Indiana University, USA, in June 2025.



Student Showcase

What Matters Wins!

Three Ravenswood students have been shortlisted for the Whitlam Institute's annual student writing competition, 'What Matters?'

Entrants submit 600 words on an issue important to them, in the form of fiction, non-fiction, poetry or prose. This year, the competition welcomed over 5000 entries from 1251 schools across Australia. Three Year 7 Ravenswood students (Sofia Cheung, Emily Powell and Abigail Wu, pictured right) were shortlisted in the Year 7 and 8 category.

Gough Whitlam's legacy of involving young people in shaping Australia's future has certainly continued with literacy excellence at Ravenswood!



Record HSC Showcase Nominations

The Class of 2024 have received a historic high 29 HSC Showcase nominations across English Extension 2, Music, Drama, Dance, Design and Technology, Textiles and Design, and Visual Arts – with three students selected*.

Year 12 student Esmé Tew's work has been selected for Young Writers Showcase and Year 12 students Sera Fung and Izzy Colbert have both been selected for ARTEXPRESS. The HSC showcase events celebrate exemplary work in each discipline from a statewide field of HSC candidates.

Deputy Principal – Teaching and Learning Ms Jennifer Richardson says the record number of nominations 'is a testament to the students' hard work, creativity, and commitment, as well as the support of our dedicated and talented teachers. These projects not only showcase sophisticated techniques and skills that students have refined throughout their course but also address meaningful problems within the community, demonstrating the students' ability to merge innovation with purpose and creativity.'

*As at time of printing.

Positive Education to Parliament!

In October, Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone and a small contingent of Ravenswood school leaders ventured to NSW Parliament House to present to 20 students from 10 schools about Ravenswood's wellbeing approach and the impact of Positive Education on the wellbeing of young people.

Mrs Johnstone was accompanied by Head of Positive Education P-12 Mrs Kate Barbat and Head of Senior School Mrs Pamela Elliott, who spoke about using Positive Education as a roadmap for igniting wellbeing change.

Also attending were 2025 School Captain Zara West and 2025 Positive Education Prefects Madeline Lappin and Erin Brady, who spoke about how

Ravenswood's Positive Education program has helped to strengthen their wellbeing, enabling them to thrive in and out of the school environment.





2024 Book Week

Book Week is always a favourite on the Junior School calendar, encouraging students to embrace their most treasured pieces of literature and to dress up as their favourite fictional character for the fun-filled Book Parade.

This year's theme was 'Reading is Magic', and the week was packed with enchanting and spellbinding activities for the students to enjoy.

RPA Secretary, parent and magician Mr Mark Brady, who dressed up as Willy Wonka, captivated students with mesmerizing magic tricks based on literature. This included magically transferring a golden ticket to inside an unopened bar of chocolate - inspired by Roald Dahl's beloved *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

Principal Mrs Anne Johnstone, dressed as Mary Poppins, hosted the Junior School Book Parade. Parents, guests and students were entertained by the cavalcade of student and staff creative character costumes and a magic show performed by the 'Magic Misfits'. Each class was also awarded one of the Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA) Awards' short-listed books to enjoy in their class library.

Ms Megan Murphy, Teacher Librarian K-6, says, 'Book Week has become a significant event across the nation. It provides an opportunity to celebrate books of high literary and artistic quality by Australian authors and illustrators.'

Other events throughout the week included Prep to Year 2 students enjoying a visit from Gordon Library librarians, who dramatised a selection of books shortlisted for the CBCA Awards.

Award-winning author Sami Bayly, who has written and illustrated six books, also visited Ravenswood, speaking to students about the artistic and writing skills needed to be an author and illustrator.

With many of her books focusing on natural history, Sami demonstrated how to draw some of the world's most unique animals, including sea creatures, which captivated students' imagination.

Ms Murphy summarises, 'Book Week highlights to students the importance of reading and inspires and excites them to journey through the worlds that books offer.'



Student Showcase



Dance of Champions

Ravenswood's Senior School Dance Company competed at the annual Sydney Eisteddfod Dance of Champions in the Concert Hall at The Concourse, Chatswood.

The School was awarded \$4000 in prize money, which is being reinvested into Ravenswood's thriving Dance department.

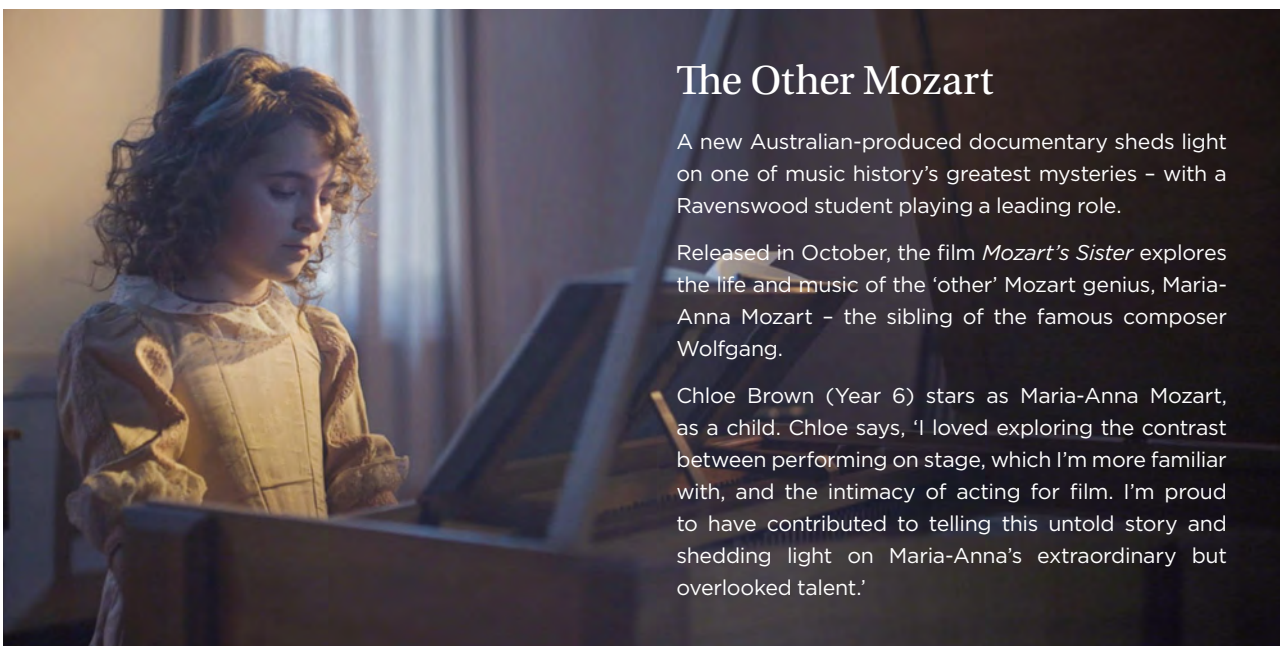
Miss Ebony Keys, Ravenswood Dance Coordinator, says, 'Coming home with the People's Choice Award was certainly a testament to the girls' hard work and commitment to representing Ravenswood with pride.'

In the morning before the performance, the Senior and Junior dance companies also had the thrill of being chosen to appear and perform on Channel 7's popular *Sunrise* breakfast TV program, demonstrating their skills to the nation.

Violin Virtuoso Victory

Violinist, music scholarship recipient and 2024 Performing Arts Prefect Hannah Kim (Year 12) was awarded First Place in the Open Instrumental section at the Australian Concerto and Vocal Competition in Queensland, and also secured Second Place in the Young Instrumental category. Hannah performed at the competition's gala concert and after winning the section, was invited back to Townsville to play with the Barrier Reef Orchestra.

Director of Music Curriculum Dr Michael Varecka reflects on Hannah's time at the School. 'Hannah has made an outstanding contribution to the Ravenswood Music program over the past six years. As Concertmaster in the Symphony Orchestra, she has shared her talent and passion with other students, contributing musical insights, encouraging practice and leading by great example.'

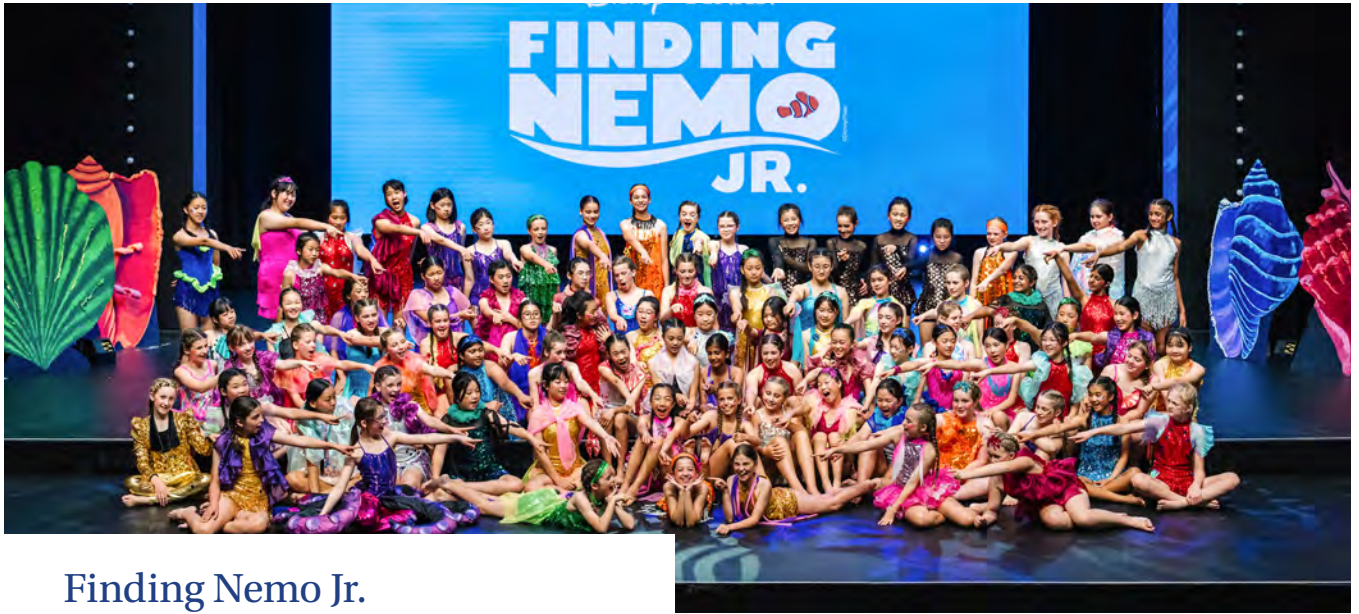


The Other Mozart

A new Australian-produced documentary sheds light on one of music history's greatest mysteries - with a Ravenswood student playing a leading role.

Released in October, the film *Mozart's Sister* explores the life and music of the 'other' Mozart genius, Maria-Anna Mozart - the sibling of the famous composer Wolfgang.

Chloe Brown (Year 6) stars as Maria-Anna Mozart, as a child. Chloe says, 'I loved exploring the contrast between performing on stage, which I'm more familiar with, and the intimacy of acting for film. I'm proud to have contributed to telling this untold story and shedding light on Maria-Anna's extraordinary but overlooked talent.'



Finding Nemo Jr.

Over two evenings in November, Junior School students swam and splashed their way across the stage with a watery production of *Finding Nemo Jr.*

The musical adaptation of the much-loved 2003 film *Finding Nemo* allowed for 85 Ravenswood students to showcase their talent, rousing audiences with sparkly costumes and infectious songs such as 'Go with the Flow' and 'Fish Are Friends Not Food'.

'The Year 6 students were fabulous to work with,' says Mrs Heather Aird, Director of Performing Arts. 'They embraced new choreography and challenging songs, and developed their characters.'

Mrs Aird says she was also proud of how the students embodied the show's message to 'keep on swimming'.

4 A.M. by Jonathan Dorf

In November, a stage play exploring the behaviours of teenage insomniacs – Jonathan Dorf's *4 A.M.* – placed Year 7 and 8 students centre-stage before a live audience.

This year's production also allowed Drama Captain Matilda Mülle to experience a directorial role, supported by a handful of Year 10 students as assistant directors.

Mrs Heather Aird, Director of Performing Arts, says, 'This was a wonderful opportunity for students to integrate across Year Groups and showcase their drama skills on stage.'

'Characters took us on a journey exploring what it is like to be awake when the rest of the world is asleep.'

The Inn-Spectors

This year's Junior School Nativity was a re-working of the traditional Christmas story. The K-2 students produced a wonderful rendition of Nikki Lewis' *The Inn-spectors*, in which health and safety officials come to examine the living conditions of baby Jesus in Bethlehem.



Student Showcase

National Table Tennis Champion

Endora Chen (Year 9) recently represented the New South Wales Table Tennis Association at the 2024 National Table Tennis Championships in Perth. The competition welcomed the best players from across the nation, competing in an intense 12-day tournament.

Endora's dedication and skill led to great success at the Championships, where she won the gold medal in the U17 mixed doubles category and bronze medal in the U15 girls' team event.

Endora also competed in the 2024 NSW Junior Open Table Tennis Championships at Olympic Park in the U17 Girls' Singles division, winning a silver medal against many strong opponents.

Director of Sport and Campus Supervision Mr Cameron Childs says, 'Endora demonstrates incredible grit and determination regarding her dedication to training to become the best possible player that she can be.'



No Horsing Around

Estelle Meppem (Year 8) has enjoyed tremendous success at the Arndell Interschool Equestrian Championship. With her trusty steed – Revelwood Noble Touch – Estelle claimed a slew of top-line honours, including Supreme Rider – Intermediate Category; Champion Rider – Intermediate Category; 1st Place Handler; 1st Place Rider; Reserve Hunter Show Horse; and 2nd Place Best Presented.

Go West!

Ravenswood's 2025 School Captain Zara West has recently climbed to the mountaintop with her football club side, winning the U18 Football NSW Girls' Youth League One Championship.

Playing in the right fullback and wing back positions, Zara was involved in her team scoring the only goal of the game. Able to keep the opposition at bay for the remainder of the match, the team emerged victorious, completing a memorable season in which Zara was awarded 'player of the match' honours on five occasions.



Stella Skips to World Championships

Stella Adam-Smith (Year 6) has achieved great success in the sport of Rope Skipping.

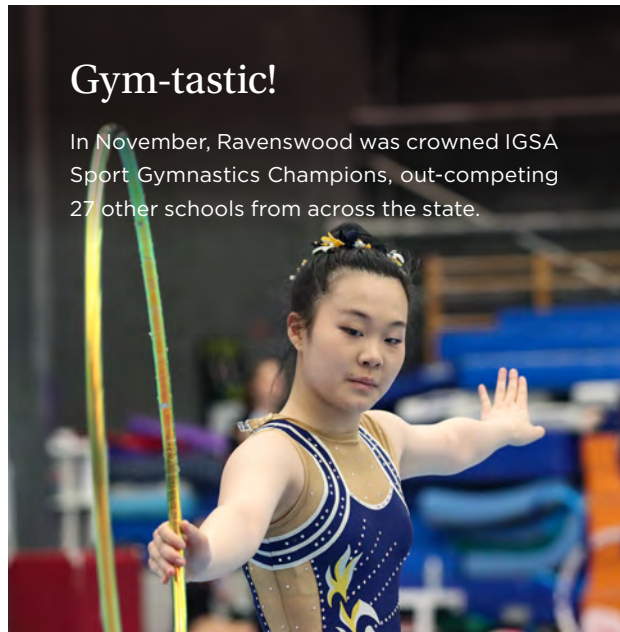
In August, Stella made her debut at the NSW/ACT State Rope Skipping Championships and won three medals: gold in the Single Rope Team Freestyle (Female 11-12), gold in the Double Dutch Speed Relay (Female 11-12) and silver in the Single Rope Speed Relay (Female 11-12).

Stella added to these achievements in late September at the National Championships in Canberra, claiming the national title in the Single Rope Team Freestyle discipline (Female 11-12). She also won bronze in the Double Dutch Speed Relay.

Stella has subsequently been selected to represent Australia in the Group Routine at the 2025 World Skipping Championships in Kawasaki, Japan.

Director of Sport and Campus Supervision Mr Cameron Childs says, 'Stella has enjoyed a meteoric

rise in the sport of Rope Skipping this year, and 2025 promises to be even more remarkable as she represents her country and Ravenswood on the global stage.'



Gym-tastic!

In November, Ravenswood was crowned IGSA Sport Gymnastics Champions, out-competing 27 other schools from across the state.



Basket-haul

The Senior Firsts Basketball team showed grit and tenacity during the finals to defeat competition leaders Frensham in the Southern Highlands and claim IGSA Sport Division Championship honours.



Sevens Heaven

The Senior Firsts Rugby 7s team remained undefeated in the Chloe Dalton Rugby Sevens Secondary Schools Competition, winning every one of their 12 matches and the grand final premiership.



Archives and Alumni

An Adventurous Spirit

On a warm spring morning during the 'Eight Hours Day' October long weekend in 1924, a group of Ravenswood students gathered on the school grounds, clad in school uniform, with navy box-pleated serge tunics, white blouses, ties and school hats, and carrying their rucksacks. There was a sense of adventure in the air: the girls were about to set off on their first overnight.

Accompanied by their beloved Geography and History teacher Miss Barbara Fulton, the group of eight students were fondly known as 'The Mob at Ravenswood' and included Bonnie Aveling (1926), Janet Budden (1925), Joan Snekker (Channon, 1925), Margaret Love (Darling, 1926), Edna Harrington (1926), Isobel Mallock (1926), Aida Orr (1926) and Joyce Woodhill (1926).

In 2002, Joan Snekker and Margaret Love shared their recollections of these journeys with the Ravenswood Archives, alongside a wonderful collection of images depicting two treks.

'Not only did Miss Fulton teach us the love of learning,' recalls Joan, 'but she made History and Geography come alive. Without her inspiration and help we would never have had such joyful school days.'

Throughout 1924 and 1925, the group travelled from Berry to the Kangaroo Valley and Moss Vale (pictured below in 1924), and from the Oaks through Burratorang Valley up to the Kings Tableland and on to Wentworth Falls, staying in accommodation along the way ranging from a boarding house to a farm hut with hessian walls and windows.

'They were wonderfully carefree days,' reminisced Margaret. 'We sang as we marched along, and everybody talked and waved to us, for it was a very venturesome experience in those days, especially

as we were all girls accompanied by a young female teacher, who except for her dress, looked as carefree as the rest of us.'

It was through this unique and memorable experience that the students bonded over a deep connection to nature, camaraderie and adventure. For over a century, this spirit of adventure has imbued the Ravenswood experience, with a strong focus on recreation and education combined. In 1975, this was strengthened through the introduction of the Duke of Edinburgh's Scheme.

Now The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, this global framework for non-formal education challenges young people to 'dream big', celebrate their achievements and make a difference in their world. Through developing transferable skills, increasing their fitness levels, cultivating a sense of adventure and volunteering in their community, the Award helps young people to find their purpose, passion and place in the world to become, as the Award promotes, #WORLDREADY.

There are three levels - Bronze, Silver and Gold. Participants embark on literal and figurative journeys of personal growth, through outdoor expeditions, skill development and community service.

The scheme was launched in the United Kingdom in 1956 by HRH Prince Philip, together with Kurt Hahn, a German educationalist, and Lord Hunt, leader of the first successful ascent of Everest. Its original aim was to motivate boys aged 15 to 18 to complete self-development activities to take them through the period between adolescence and adulthood.

However, within the first year of its establishment, the age limit was reduced to 14 and in 1958 a girls' program was launched, with the two schemes amalgamating in 1969.



Prior to 1975, Ravenswood students hoping to gain the Duke of Edinburgh Award completed the scheme outside of school. In our inaugural year, 51 students participated (with 26 Silver and 25 Bronze) and in 1976 Ravenswood's first Gold Award was conferred to Kerrie McLean (Broadhurst, 1976) by HRH Prince Philip at the Conservatorium of Music in Sydney.

Since 2017, more than 1100 Ravenswood students have registered for the Award at either Bronze (693), Silver (203) or Gold (227) level. Participation has continued to grow in 2023-24, with 162 participants registered.

Ravenswood is now a licensed Award Centre, undergoing an annual quality assurance process to maintain a high level of compliance, quality and integrity in the delivery of the Award.

Over the years, the Award has been strengthened by many passionate staff leading, empowering and supporting students to reach their full potential.

Miss Phyllis Evans, Headmistress (1962-1986) reported in the 1975 edition of *Nuntius*: 'Due to the enthusiasm and energetic involvement of Miss Elizabeth Hogg, a new appointee to the Teaching Staff in 1975, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme has become a reality at Ravenswood.'

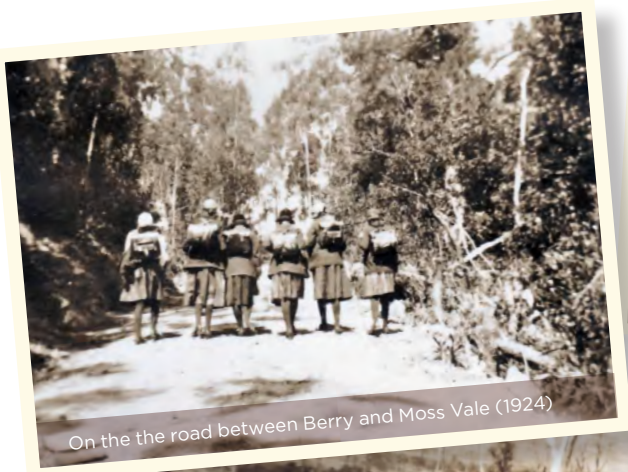
The Award is now supported by staff who serve as volunteer Assessors from Sport, PDHPE, Cadets,

Performing Arts, TAS, Languages, RE and the Service-Learning opportunities at the School. Previously lead by Mr Hugh Turnbull, the program has been overseen by Award Leader Mrs Deanna Paraska since 2009.

In her final year as Leader in 2024, Deanna received her Medal of Recognition for Long Service from HRH the Duke of Edinburgh at a ceremony at Government House in Sydney.

The Award recognises Deanna's 'outstanding commitment and contribution promoting non-formal education and learning and the development of young Australians since 2009 and her unwavering dedication and commitment to supporting the growth and development of students through The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award'.

Almost 50 years since its introduction at Ravenswood, The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award continues to offer our students a transformative, holistic experience, aligning firmly with our philosophy and guiding principles and providing a range of experiences to develop the whole person through a balanced education - echoing the student spirit from the 1920s. These pioneers not only challenged societal norms but also forged bonds through their shared experiences in nature. By recognising this historical link, we can inspire our students to continue the legacy - to find their passion and purpose and to become #WORLDREADY.



On the the road between Berry and Moss Vale (1924)



Leaving for The Oaks to Wentworth Falls trip (1924)



Rest time on Berry to Moss Vale trip (1924)

Alumni Reunions

From recent Alumni (Class of 2019) to our fabulous Golden Girls (Class of 1974 and prior), Ravenswood's reunions kindled friendships and ignited the RAVO spirit.



Class of 2019 - 5 Year Reunion



Class of 1974 - 50 Year Reunion



Class of 2014 - 10 Year Reunion



Class of 1968 - 56 Year Reunion



Class of 2004 - 20 Year Reunion



Golden Girls' Luncheon - Class of 1964



Class of 1994 - 30 Year Reunion



Class of 1962 - 62 Year Reunion



Class of 1984 - 40 Year Reunion



Class of 1979 - 45 Year Reunion

2025:

2023 Recent Leavers Reunion - 6 February

Class of 2020 (5 Year)

Class of 2015 (10 Year)

Class of 2005 (20 Year)

Class of 1995 (30 Year)

Class of 1985 (40 Year)

Golden Girls' Luncheon (50+ years:
Class of 1975 and prior) - 16 October

Class of 1965 (60 Year)

Class of 1955 (70 Year)



Please use QR Code for more information.

Alumni Weddings and Vale



A Tuscan Fairytale

In June 2024, Whitney Duan (2012) married Eden Caceda at Villa Olimpia in Tuscany, Italy. The couple met at the University of Sydney in 2013. The intimate ceremony was before a gathering of 50 guests, including Ravenswood Alumni Daisy Ding (2012), who was maid of honour. The wedding took place shortly after Whitney had been announced as a finalist for the 2024 Archibald Prize.



Wedding of Hope

On 6 January 2024, Hope Williams (2011) married Alexander Tapp at Merribee on the South Coast of NSW. Her bridesmaids included her sister, Violet Williams (2016), who walked her down the aisle. Hope and Alexander honeymooned on safari in South Africa and now live in Notting Hill, London, where Hope practises as a barrister.

Remembering Miss Carolyn Trotter (1940–2024)

Joining Ravenswood School for Girls in 1970 as a teacher and Music Director, Mrs Carolyn Scara (née Trotter) transformed the Ravenswood music program, bringing music into the classroom as well as implementing choral and instrumental opportunities and vibrant musical productions.

As described by a student, 'Miss Trotter's musical motivational brilliance turned our ordinary voices into the polished performance of a lifetime.'

After 17 years at Ravenswood, Carolyn retired in 1987. Her legacy was ensured when, in 1984, the Carolyn Trotter Studio (fondly referred to by students as the 'CT Studio') opened in recognition of her incalculable contribution to the music culture of the School.

Carolyn passed away in October and will be sadly missed by our community.



Vale

We offer our heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of the following Ravenswood Alumni and past staff members:

Rosemary Elizabeth Badman (Raymond, 1950) (1932 - 2024)

Elaine Carr (Melrose, 1956) (1938 - 2024)

Beatrice (Pixie) Errey (Rothery) (1941) (1925 - 2023)

Ruth Faerber (Levy, 1938) (1922 - 2024)

Pamela May Finch (Denney, 1951) (1934 - 2024)

Alison Hunter Flegg (Cameron) (1961) (1944 - 2024)

Margaret Lock (Cooper, 1959) (1942 - 2024)

Lynce Middleton (Lacey, 1944) (1929 - 2024) (Ravenswood staff: Physical Education /Tennis Coach 1947 - 1951)

Gayle Robertson (Hawkins, 1962) (1945 - 2023)

Kay Thiel (Ravenswood staff, Ancient History and Religious Studies 1980-1996) (1934-2024)

Toni Tidswell (1978) (1960 - 2024)

Janeth Towell (Oldroyd, 1952) (1935 - 2024)

Claire Warburton (Jones, 1947) (1931 - 2024)

Cynthia Dawn Wells (Smith, 1926 - 2024)

Ann Jocelyn Woods (1965) (1949 - 2024)

Community News



Renowned Experts Visit Ravenswood

Ravenswood is committed to educating and empowering the Ravenswood community beyond the classroom. The Ravenswood Community Forums series provides Ravenswood parents, staff, Alumni and their families opportunities to hear the latest wellbeing and parenting insights, advice and strategies from leading experts.

This year, Ravenswood has welcomed six wellbeing and parenting experts on campus.

The first two Community Forums of 2024 featured Dr Judith Locke, speaking about strategies on raising resilient, confident teenagers, and Paul Dillon, who offered advice on keeping teens safe from alcohol and drugs.

Next, Australia's foremost cyber safety expert Susan McLean delivered an insightful Ravenswood Community Forum on online safety, cyber bullying and the impact of digital reputation on future opportunities. She provided the community with up-to-date insights to keep young people safe in the constantly changing digital world.

In Term 3, Ravenswood also welcomed back one of the most in-demand social media and cyber safety education and training organisations, Safe on Social, for a vital forum on keeping our daughters safe online through education and empowerment.

Kirra Pendergast, Safe on Social founder, presented an essential update for the community on the latest strategies for staying across what young people are accessing online and offered valuable and practical advice, tools and techniques for how to have important social media and online conversations.

Tyson Greenwood, Director of URSTRONG, presented an online Ravenswood Community Forum for Junior School parents and their daughters, sharing skills and language to foster healthy, feel-good friendships and a culture of kindness.

Rounding out the 2024 Ravenswood Community Forums was popular co-host and parenting expert on Channel Nine's *Parental Guidance*, Dr Justin Coulson (pictured), who shared knowledge from his top-rated parenting podcast *Happy Families*. Speaking to staff, parents and Alumni across two sessions, Justin explained the important role parents and guardians play in developing resilient children, and provided coping strategies and tips to help parents support their children with challenges.

Head of Positive Education P-12 Mrs Kate Barbat says, 'As a school which prioritises and promotes Positive Education, the Ravenswood Community Forums are an important opportunity for parents, staff and Alumni to learn about and be inspired by the latest research in the fields of wellbeing and parenting.'

A Very RAVO Christmas!

This year's Carols on the Lawn event was a spirited, festive afternoon and evening for the Ravenswood community, featuring Junior Grade Choirs, Vocal Ensembles and RAVO Voices, Dance, Cadets, Knox Pipes and Drums, hands-on activities and rides for the kids, a variety of markets and stalls - plus a jolly visit from Santa Claus!

Over 2,500 attendees enjoyed the beautiful Christmas market stalls, activities and food provided by our Boarding students, RPA and a variety of local organisations. More than 300 toys were donated to the Salvation Army Toy Drive, and the Ravenswood Social Justice Team filled 76 Salvation Army Christmas hampers for families in need.



Community News





Selected photos from the Ravenswood Foundation Gala Ball, Father-Daughter Breakfast, RPA Trivia Night, RPA Chantry Golf Day, Wellbeing and Sports Centre Turning of the Sod Ceremony, Year 12 Final Assembly and Class of 2024 Valedictory Dinner.



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