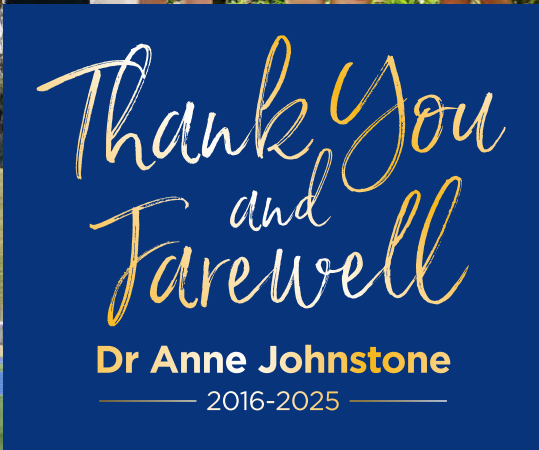


Semper

RAVENSWOOD SCHOOL FOR GIRLS | WINTER 2025



Within and Beyond

An Ode to Dr Johnstone.

Close to a decade ago,
A change came.
A change that was to sweep Ravenswood into a kaleidoscope of colours,
Colours that warmed us all.
Yellow sparks, orange flames, red blazes,
And now they burn in all of our hearts.
Dr Johnstone. Our spark. Our kindling. Our inspiration.
For students past and present, we all began our Ravenswood journey with ...

Skirts three sizes too large, hems brushing our ankles.
Entering the school gate
Hearts heavy with trepidation as the bags weighed us down.
Looking up. A smiling face. A lighthouse. A light.
Your flame lit our candles as they were gifted to us on stage.
You showed us how to burn bright and strong.
Semper ad meliora.

For each kind word and every smile,
A seed was planted within us.
For each welcoming face and every hand reached out to us,
The garden of our community was nurtured.
Propagated, watered, supported with stakes.
These seeds have grown within us.
The roots of these flowers are forever in our garden as a sisterhood.
Flowers that have survived lockdowns, floods and fires,
All setbacks that push us to look for our light.
Semper ad meliora.

Your words are the wind that dares the faltering leaf to dance again.
You use your flame to kindle others, a reason to ignite and continue burning.
Your applause holds us together.
Together we are the firm foundation of Ravenswood.
Together we grow.
Together we shine.
You cheer for bonfires and blazes.
and for every spark brave enough to flicker.
A solo sung with hands shaking,
Speaking up in class after weeks of silence.
Swimming the 25m with a smiling face.
The applause came when we took risks, when we helped each other.
When we actualised and inspired.
When we stood up only a bit taller than yesterday as we pulled our sisters up with us.
You built us a spirit. A culture. A family. Sisterhood.
Not through command, but through cultivation.
Watering our garden.
Cheering for the sprouts, the flowers, and everything in between.
You kindled the flame, and we shone.
Semper ad meliora.

Today, our hearts are full.
Our flames are ablaze.
We stand and watch from inside the gates.
Holding our torches high.
Waving goodbye,
For now it's your turn to watch us wave to you.

But you leave us now
With gardens that are thriving,
A kaleidoscope of the colours you brought with you.
The seeds you planted are now blossoming and will continue to flourish.
Our candles are alight.
Our trepidation has transformed into love and pride.
Greys artfully painted red and orange and yellow.
Candles set alight.

Semper ad meliora.
You didn't just say it.
You showed us how.

Abby McCutcheon and Leda Subasi
Poets Laureate 2025



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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Fun Fact: 100 Years of the Ravenswood Magazine (Nuntius)

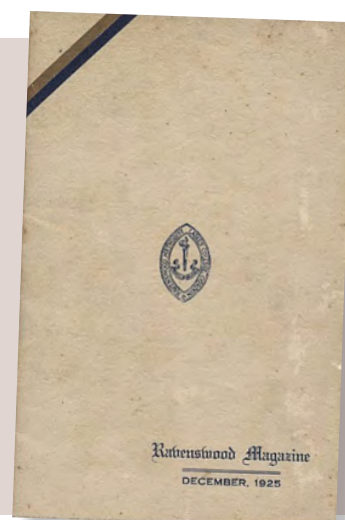
This year marks 100 years since the first edition of the *Ravenswood Magazine* was published in 1925. The magazine included eight photos, original contributions, sports notes, Old Girls news and an editorial titled 'Miss Fidler - An Appreciation', commemorating the retirement of the School's founder and first headmistress, Mabel Fidler.

The editorial said:

Miss Fidler's personality has influenced all branches of the school life and all those girls who have come

under her care, owe her a very great debt. Every girl who has been at Ravenswood will always remember the Head with love and gratitude and will unite in wishing her every happiness for the future.

Published annually, the *Ravenswood Magazine* was rebranded and named *Nuntius* in 1967. Colour was introduced in 1987, and the first full-colour edition was produced in 2005.





Principal's Message

This is an edited extract of Dr Anne Johnstone's
farewell speech, delivered on Friday June 27 2025

To begin, I would like to say thank you with all my heart for ten glorious years at Ravenswood. Thank you for being the extraordinary people you are – you will always be indelibly imprinted upon my heart and mind. I feel so indebted to you as I have learned so much because of you. I have been so inspired by you and I have grown because of you.

It is the greatest privilege to be able to walk alongside young people who are filled with such potential and such heart, spirit and soul, and to be able to, alongside the most incredible team, strive to 'kindle the flame'.

On my first day at Ravenswood with our wonderful students, I remember walking into Assembly and seeing them turn towards me like sunflowers, so radiant. Their warmth and kindness has sustained and inspired me every day ever since. Their openness, their willingness to learn, their willingness to grow, to wonder, and their willingness to shine a light on what is possible has been so profound.

On behalf of our staff, the Religious Education team gifted me a jar of scrolls filled with beautiful sentiments written by staff. I had just arrived at Ravenswood and one of the scrolls said this: 'Welcome home ... where

you belong.' I hope you can get a sense here of the generosity of spirit of our Ravenswood community. To welcome someone 'home' who has just arrived, who is hoping to make a home here as Principal with her dear family, is an incredible gift. Yet it is not a new idea.

Our founder, Mabel Fidler, in 1901 chose to name this School after her own home, 'Ravenswood'. I think that has in some way influenced the DNA of our School – it was always meant to be a place where young people would belong.

Preparing my farewell speech, a song from the musical *Rent* came to mind. The question it poses is, how do you possibly 'measure a year in life?' I spoke to my Year 9 daughter about this and Olivia advised me to be honest, in that I didn't know where to start. How do I possibly share and explain my gratitude, and also what I have been able to experience as a result of the honour of being a part of our special community? How do I begin to consider measuring it? Of course, we're not just dealing with a year, we are dealing with almost 10 years together – 3469 days and 4,999,620 minutes to be precise. And perhaps if I stay a few minutes longer, I might hit the 5 million mark!



One way to ‘measure’ it might be through our words of focus – *Grit, High-Quality Connections, Strengths, Other-Person Centredness, Hope, Resilience, Ganbatte, Inspire, Actualise* and *Grace*. These are words that have woven like golden threads through our time together.

I would like to begin with *Strengths*, because even before our students arrived in 2016, I engaged our staff team in an Appreciative Inquiry process, asking the question: ‘What would it take for Ravenswood to become a flourishing, Positive Education school?’

We began by surfacing not only the strengths that we hoped we could cultivate, but what was already there. Reflecting on this, I would like to pay credit to the past, to the nine principals who came before me. Ravenswood began with a visionary young educator named Mabel Fidler, a governess whose aspirations went well beyond the expectations of the day. Ravenswood was not to be a ‘dame school’ for girls, but a school that was all about empowering and equipping young women to be able to live lives of meaning and purpose.

As well as being a wonderful scholar in her own right, Mabel Fidler was a woman of great faith. In fact, she founded Ravenswood on the site where we are still, 124 years later – the site of the first Wesleyan Methodist Church on the North Shore – and this has always spoken to our deep values and strong Christian ethos. She was also known by her students

as a ‘great encourager’. I like to think of Ms Fidler as an early positive educator because she set as our motto, *semper ad meliora* – always towards better things. This is also an incredible motto for our lives – we all experience setbacks and adversity, but our motto is a reminder that we can bounce forward and look to the future with hope. It is also a reminder to be kind to ourselves as well: ‘*semper ad meliora* ... I may have missed the mark but I’ll do better next time. I’ll keep moving forward; I’ll put up my hand for support; try again ... always towards better things.’

Another hallmark of our founding was a focus on social justice and a commitment to making a difference in the lives of others, including investing in a cot fund to support a bed for a child in hospital.

I also think of our School song, and the beautiful lyrics that say ‘So shall we live to bless these fields, these walls, this treasured place’.

Ravenswood has been a treasured place for so many generations. This concept was beautifully illustrated when our amazing architects, Architectus, and construction contractors, Taylors, commenced building our landmark Wellbeing and Sports Centre. As they began re-grading the soil, they found what appears to be an old well on the site – a reminder of the layers of our School’s history, and even the layers of education. In the well there was an old glass ink pot (which I’m sure wasn’t purposefully thrown in there by a student!) that actually survived.

Despite the fact that we are now in the world of AI, with all the uncertainty of how that might shape education, our values as a community have remained strong since the day of the ink pot. It brings to mind the Proverb 20:5 – ‘in the heart of every person is a deep well, and the wise person draws it out’.

The word ‘educate’ has a Latin origin – *educere*, meaning to lead or to draw out. As Sir Anthony Seldon once reminded me, the renowned developmental psychologist Howard Gardner, known for his theory of multiple intelligences, suggested that, rather than asking ‘How intelligent is this student?’ we might ask ‘How is this student intelligent?’

This resonates with our Positive Education approach: it is so important to remind ourselves and each other that we are born with strengths, that we can continue to cultivate and use those strengths, and that we can deploy those strengths in our learning for our own wellbeing, as well as for the wellbeing of others. As our Prefects once declared, everyone in our community ‘strengthens the sisterhood’.

At our Appreciative Inquiry, we considered how we might draw out the strengths, the wonderful potential, of the young people we are privileged to work with, and how we might support our students to identify these strengths in themselves and in others.

That brings me to reflect on the time we spent with the transformational pioneer of Positive Psychology, Professor Martin Seligman, our inaugural Psychologist in Residence. Together, we considered how to further enrich our Positive Education curriculum and our professional learning. We were the first school in New South Wales to work with Professor Lea Waters to implement a Visible Wellbeing approach to education and we have continued to imbue the language of wellbeing at Ravenswood.

This has all helped to positively build our culture. When I ask our graduates what they found most valuable about their time at Ravenswood, they often speak about the strong rapport they have with staff and the fact that they felt valued, known and seen. It is wonderful to see that our students recognise the strengths of our staff, their expertise and the passion they bring, whether in teaching or non-teaching.

We have explored together the concept of *Grit* – that is, tenacious, dogged perseverance combined with passion, which paves the pathway to excellence. Over the past decade, we have recorded historically high achievements in the HSC and IB with a median ATAR over 90 since 2020 and 14 top ATARS (99.95) since 2017 – more than all the previous years combined. Moreover, excitingly, approximately 85% of our students have achieved their first preference at university over recent years.

I have been so inspired by our students – not just those who are on our highlights list, but also those who have had to apply *Grit* and help-seeking behaviours during hard times and those who have rallied around to help.

Of course, *Grit* is not confined to the classroom. We have seen *Grit* combined with great strengths and skills in student approaches to public speaking and debating over the years, leading them to national success in debating and public speaking competitions. We see *Grit* at AFX Camp, which is rigorous, and sometimes incredibly arduous, but so very rewarding. We have had students take on enormous challenges, including winning gold and bronze at the Rio Paralympics.

We have seen *Grit* combined with *Grace* in performances. Recently, while one of our musicians was performing at the Music Scholars Concert, her sparkling headband fell forward and completely covered her eyes, yet she played on until the end without missing a beat. *Grit* is the ability to keep going, to be agile, to respond to the challenge and to move through it. Time and time again we have seen incredible *Grit* displayed on the sports field, whether during a third round of overtime or scoring on the bell, even as the team knew it was ten points behind!

A powerful part of this is our *High-Quality Connections* – referred to as ‘positivity resonance’ by Professor Barbara Fredrickson, whom we are privileged to have here at this farewell event. She has just shared her groundbreaking research and insights with our Ravenswood community about how these micro-moments of connection broaden and build our capacity for learning, creativity, enhanced levels of wellbeing and even longevity.

When I think about *High-Quality Connections*, I am reminded of the Boarders who have sustained a sisterhood as they make Ravenswood their second home, both in person and also online during the pandemic. We have seen connection in the classroom, at Chapel services, on the sports field, in performances, and as different generations of Alumni come together. We have seen connection through opportunities to rally together, such as at carnivals, and we have seen it at our front gate.

I have had the privilege of experiencing countless moments of kindness and generosity in welcoming students at the gate in the mornings. At the very beginning of my tenure, I received a beautiful packet of coffee beans from a parent; a Junior School student once read me a poem she wrote about what she loves about Ravenswood – what a gift!; and our Senior students in Year 12 have received notes from our younger students on the gate saying ‘Go you!’ and ‘Don’t give up’ during their mid-year exams – how thoughtful and encouraging!



We have seen *High-Quality Connections* through the immense support of our generous Fidler Fellows and Foundation, who continue to contribute to our community. I would like to warmly thank our generations of amazing Alumni, along with our Alumni Committee led by Lisa Boyce, for the work they do to keep our community together. You have been passionate advocates of Ravenswood and offer such a galvanised sense of support.

We have also focused on *Other-Person Centredness* or, in the words of our Prefects in 2023, making a difference '*Within and Beyond*' ourselves and our community. Dr Chris Peterson, one of the most cited psychologists in the world, was once asked to define positive psychology in just three words. He came up with an extraordinary answer: 'Other people matter.' And so we have looked to serve causes greater than ourselves, such as through the Gail Kelly Making a Difference Leadership Award, which allows a student to apply a \$10,000 award to a worthy cause, including most recently for RizeUp, which provides resources for those suffering the ravages of domestic violence.

We have drawn on *Other-Person Centredness* when addressing our commitment to reconciliation and worthy causes supporting our First Nations peoples, or when working to support others through initiatives such as Days for Girls, the Red Shield Appeal, the Salvation Army Christmas Hampers and Toy Drive, and R U OK? Day. We have seen it through fundraising for those who have been through devastating drought and bushfires.

We have also been able to share our learnings with those beyond our School gates, including an inspirational cluster of schools in the Upper Hunter region of New South Wales, as well as globally through IPEN, most recently in Greece and Indonesia. It is lovely to have representatives here from Athens who have come to learn from and through IPEN. It is also delightful to note an Indonesian school now has its own wellbeing path inspired by Ravenswood!

We have actualised *Other-Person Centredness* through our Student-Led Wellbeing Conference where, just recently, 380 delegates from 40 schools across New South Wales attended, learning about Positive Education techniques from our Ravenswood students, together with student leaders from our brother school Knox Grammar.

I also wish to acknowledge our amazing parents and families – thank you with all my heart for being such willing partners with our School, and for understanding that the best way to optimise the learning experience and the wellbeing of all of our students is to work together. I want to pay particular tribute to our amazing RPA, led by RPA Committee President Katie Brown, who have sought



opportunities to *Actualise* further developments and improvements.

As I was walking across our Campus recently, I saw a crow – let's call it a raven! – sitting on the roof of the Senior Learning Centre. As it took flight, it brought to mind a bible passage in which God sends ravens to supply food for the prophet Elijah, who was in need of sustenance. I reflected on how our Year 12s are now preparing to navigate their final trial examinations and, of course, then their final exams, before they move beyond our gates to make a difference in the world. It was a wonderful reminder that we all have the ability to serve and make a difference, to nourish and respond to need.

I would also like to acknowledge our wonderful staff, who also go above and beyond to make a difference. Each time we meet as a staff team, we engage in 'What's working well': our discussions are always about student achievement, mastery and breakthroughs and highlight the level of immense support and care of our staff, both teaching and non-teaching, above and beyond! Moreover, our dedicated staff show great commitment to lifelong learning, engaging with academics and tertiary institutions in research-practice partnerships in educational neuroscience, agency, and critical and creative thinking, including sharing the wonderful work of our Curiosity Research Project internationally at the Mind Brain Education Conference in Belgium.

The concept of *Hope* has also made a difference. Our Class of 2020 gave meaningful expression to this focus word of the year, which was central in the aftermath of the 2019–20 Black Summer bushfires. What we did not know when we gathered on our Oval in formation around the word *Hope* was that it would be just a few weeks before the pandemic struck and that we would no longer be able to gather together physically for a long time as a School community.

Hope became an emblem of that year. Even during lockdown, our students looked for *Hope*, and offered *Hope*, such as through the T-Day Challenge, in which we were encouraged to take a photo of something – a leaf or a sunrise – to provide uplift or inspiration and to encourage each other. We saw so many examples of our indomitable RAVO spirit firing up our sense of *Hope*, even during the difficult times. During the COVID period, so many schools were experiencing a teacher shortage, yet our teachers stayed with us. Our retention rate is over 90% – and we have had an additional group of wonderful staff who keep coming back and offering help after officially 'retiring'.

We have experienced historic milestones, such as seeing out the end of the second Elizabethan Age together. We have weathered storms together – quite literally! – including the mini cyclone that came

barrelling across our campus while Senior School were thankfully safely gathered in Assembly and Junior School in classrooms.

Hope is not just evident in the resilience our community has shown, but also in people's willingness to grow. I was reminded of that recently when our wonderful Prefects and SRC had the opportunity to rename the R Block, a muddy area not well frequented by students. They chose the name 'Renasci' – Latin for 'renaissance' – to symbolise the re-flourishing of this area through new gardens, new growth, new learning areas, and the ability to rise up again.

It has been such a joy to see the way in which we light the way for one another. This has been infused with concepts such as the Japanese concept of *Ganbatte*, recognising that life can sometimes overwhelm us with the difficulties, the storms we face, but we are also reminded that we have strengths and, moreover, we have a toolkit of Positive Education strategies for wellbeing that we can deploy.

Professor James Pawelski, whom we are privileged to have here tonight, shared his practical wisdom and research about 'sailing through life' at Ravenswood recently – that is, responding to challenges in positive, agile and productive ways, much like a lateen sail responds to the wind. Professor Pawelski also referred to psychologist and philosopher William James, who emphasised that we should 'make our nervous system our ally' by responding to stress by reframing and taking a new approach. That is the spirit of *Ganbatte* – always moving forward, giving our best, keeping on trying, and recognising that, when we pedal forward, we don't pedal alone: we create a slipstream when we pedal together.

Our students are our greatest inspiration. Sometimes while sitting in my office with a significant pile of paperwork, I look out the window and feel this energy and inspiration, this wonderful sense of why we do what we do. Did you know we also have a star in the sky called '*semper ad meliora*'? Named in honour of Ravenswood, it was a generous gift to the School from our Class of 2016.

I hope it is a reminder to you, our precious students, that like the song Tudor House performed at our House Performing Arts Festival (HPAF) this year, you truly form 'a sky full of stars', shining so brightly by being the precious young people you are. Not only does HPAF take place just three weeks into Term at the beginning of the year, the care, support and strengths-based approach our students show for one another is particularly special. Our students work together without judgement or pressure and with kindness and *Grace*, supporting one another to shine and to be part of something bigger than themselves.

As we know, flourishing is not a solo endeavour. There are moments – such as when the Knox and Ravenswood Cadet Unit was officially renamed – that I think *but for* the amount of effort, commitment, passion and inspiration, I'm not sure our goals would have been *Actualised*. As we continue on in the years ahead, our SLC stairs stand as a reminder that we start with our talent and skills, but that we activate these with effort. That's how we climb and, in doing so, the sky is the limit to what we can achieve. Habits and focus make a difference but, importantly, we climb the stairs *together*.

Thank you to our outstanding School Leadership Team, Ms Sarah Guy, Ms Jennifer Richardson, Mrs Pamela Elliot, Mr Roger Shewell, Ms Carolyn Gavel, Ms Joanne Lee, Mr Andrew Bardsley, Ms Lindsay Crump, Mr Peter Hatzidimitriou and Mr Emmett Hope, and to those SLT members I have worked with over the years. Our SLT are exceptional individuals with an incredible reservoir of expertise and skills. Together, they are such a collective force in helping to take our cherished School from strength to strength. A special thank you also to my Executive Assistant, Sarah Matthews, and those I have worked with closely in other ways, such as through Chaplaincy, Cadets, Enrolments and Positive Education, along with Heads of Departments, the Wellbeing team, the ICT team, Finance team and the Property team.

I wish to thank our excellent School Council – Mr Peter Roach, Ms Christine Morgan, Mr Simon Benson, Ms Georgina Blix, Mr Charles Cho, Rev. Nicholas Cole, Ms Susan Horlin, Ms Mikaela James, Dr Prashan Karunaratne, Mr John McLean and Rev. Michiel Loubser – who bring with them such a significant amount of expertise, skills and strategic thinking, and give so generously of their time through school governance, as well as offering an unwavering commitment to support us to *Actualise* our potential. I particularly want to thank our superb Chair, Mr Peter Roach, who is tremendously wise, thoughtful

and unwavering in his commitment and passion for Ravenswood. I would like to thank my other inspirational Chairs of Council over the years: Mr Mark Webb (who was Chair when I was appointed), Mrs Jo Karaolis, Mr Guy Fowler and Dr Gail Kelly. It has been an honour working with these Chairs and all Council members and Alumni, Finance, Foundation, Property and Building, and Risk Committee members, over the years.

Our efforts to continue to strive towards excellence with a sense of *Hope* and possibility were showcased recently by our Junior School students, who drew on their inspiration to 'name the crane' gracing our Campus while our Wellbeing and Sports Centre is being built. From 'Percy the Perseverer' to 'Grace' and 'Faith', it was 'High Spirits' that won the day. From a Christian perspective, the 'High Spirits' banner now flying on the crane also reminds us that 'his banner over us is love' and that 'nothing can separate us from the love of God'. When we look to the past, his goodness and mercy, the Bible promises, follows us all the days of our life. His love endures forever, as does his faithfulness to all generations.

Reflecting on our shared achievements – and as the song from the musical I referenced earlier goes on to suggest – perhaps we actually measure our time with *love*. This was evident as I was working with the Year 11s at the Prefect Retreat: what they most appreciate and value at Ravenswood is our relationships – that sense of connection, compassion, *Grace* and love to really fulfill their academic potential powerfully and to flourish in all aspects of their lives. As Professor Barbara Fredrickson says, 'Love is a superfood.'

This is what we have been striving to achieve all along – to recognise the inextricable link between learning and wellbeing, to optimise the educational experience and outcomes, and infuse everything with *Grace*. That is why the RAVO sculpture stands on our Campus, an echo of the LOVE sculpture at the University of



Pennsylvania, Philadelphia (city of brotherly love) because Ravenswood is a school of sisterly love. I hope that, as you walk past our sculpture, you are reminded of something epic – that we keep moving forward together with love. As one of our students once said to me, 'I am not afraid to take risks, because at RAVO there is always someone in my corner.'

At Year 10 camp this year, a student said this to me: 'Know your worth.' What an amazing thing to say to your Principal as she is preparing to move forward! This is a real yardstick of the extent to which our students encourage one another with *Grace* and care. It reminds me of a beautiful artwork that was donated to our School, which says '*I am Enough*.' It serves to remind us not only of our love for others, but also of the love we can show for ourselves. *You are enough*. You are of inestimable value and worth, and I hope that you grow to understand this truth.

During my time at Ravenswood I was gifted a Wellbeing scarf, something I truly treasure. It was knitted over the course of a year by many different students who were waiting in Wellbeing and, as a result, there are loops dropped and little gaps. It is a reminder that our journey is not always linear, but a spiral with ups and downs. Yet together, we can create something beautiful.

We also had some beautiful sentiments expressed at our 'Take One Leave One' initiative this year, where our students were invited to share positive notes or inspirational messages such as 'Keep going', 'Choose kindness', 'Focus on the step ahead, not the whole staircase' and 'You encourage me each day'.

So many students contributed and it serves as a wonderful commendation of the *High-Quality Connections* and relationships in our community.

As I conclude, I wish to thank you for the incredible opportunity to develop a special relationship with all of you. Our extraordinary students, staff, families

and Alumni will always be in my heart. Thank you also to my own family – my husband Andrew, for the incredible support, care and love and the absolute commitment shown to Ravenswood. To Jacob and Olivia, who inspire me every day: I have learned so much from you and I thank you so much for your support. To my parents, Stan and Jennifer Comino, thank you for continuing to support me every day and, as educators, for teaching me such a love of education. Thank you for being there as I acquired new skills through my Master's at the University of Pennsylvania and also my doctorate at the University of Melbourne.

The legacy I hope I leave behind is our extraordinary community – all of *you*. It is so special to consider the fact that I have had the opportunity to help your educational lives and make a difference as you continue to leave a legacy of your own. As we are reminded, research suggests that one person can influence 10,000 others. Imagine the possibilities for collective positive impact in our Ravenswood community.

I wish our wonderful Deputy Principal and Head of Junior School, Ms Sarah Guy, all the very best as she leads our community forward as Acting Principal for Semester 2 until Ravenswood welcomes Mrs Suzanne Floro as our valued eleventh Principal in January 2026.

I have no doubt that our great School will continue to go from strength to strength, in line with our motto, *semper ad meliora* – always towards better things.

*'May the lord bless you and keep you,
May the lord make his face shine upon you,
And be gracious unto you,
May he lift the light of his countenance upon you
And give you peace'.*

Dr Anne Johnstone
Principal





Flourishing Era: Farewelling Anne Johnstone

During Anne's time at Ravenswood, academic results have flourished, the campus has blossomed, enrolments have prospered and new programs have been developed. Yet while it's easy to define Anne's tangible impacts on Ravenswood over the past nine years, it's those special, intangible influences that will endure in the hearts of those within the Ravenswood community fortunate enough to have experienced Anne's magic.

The ethos of Ravenswood, in which kindness, empathy and character have become deeply embedded, is one

of those impalpable consequences of Anne's infectious personality. She has brought an intellectual rigour, matched with genuine care for the community and steely determination, to her principalship.

It has been a pleasure and one of life's joys to work closely with Anne on the School Council. We will miss her terribly but are extremely grateful for the opportunity to have had almost a decade of watching Ravenswood flourish under her leadership. Thank you, Anne.

Mr Peter Roach

Chair, Ravenswood School for Girls Council

It has been an immense privilege to work under Anne's stellar leadership and to witness her transformative impact on Ravenswood. Anne's exceptional capacity to cultivate a joyful, flourishing culture and develop high-performing teams while nurturing individuals has left a remarkable legacy.

Anne has led us magnificently – with vision, warmth and wisdom, igniting the hearts and minds of our School community, and propelling us forward, always towards better things.

Anne's pioneering spirit and unswerving optimism have shaped the culture and identity of our School, and the lives of those within it. A global leader in Positive Education, Anne has woven outstanding wellbeing initiatives into the fabric of Ravenswood, inspiring

personal and professional growth and enabling the delivery of a world-class education from Prep to Year 12.

Her calm, courageous leadership throughout the pandemic exemplified strength and grace under pressure, as she offered unwavering support and hope during that most challenging period.

Anne's leadership has left an indelible mark on Ravenswood. We are so grateful for the trust, integrity and compassion with which Anne has led us, and we will treasure the memories of this extraordinary chapter. Our heartfelt wishes go with Anne for every happiness and continued success in her brilliant career.

Ms Sarah Guy

Head of Junior School - Deputy Principal

It is said that legacy is not leaving something for people. It's leaving something in people.

After nearly a decade at the helm of Ravenswood, Principal Dr Anne Johnstone leaves behind a significant legacy. She has shaped a generation of Ravenswood girls.

Against increasing academic pressure, pervasive social media and a once-in-a generation pandemic, Dr Johnstone has helped to shape us from self-doubting young girls, to confident, ambitious and resilient women who can embrace life with 'grit'. She has done this by cultivating a deeply embedded culture – one grounded in mutual uplift and a sense of connection that permeates far beyond the gates of the School.

Dr Johnstone, or 'AJ' as she is affectionately known, has helped to shape me in so many ways. As an aspirational 11-year-old girl, I watched in awe as Dr Johnstone spoke with remarkable eloquence before large crowds, all while radiating warmth through her ever-present smile. She redefined for me what leadership could look like – showing that women can lead with grace, compassion and unwavering strength.

So while legacy is not leaving something *for* people – she has left within every RAVO girl a lasting example of excellence that will inspire them for years to come.

Zara West

2025 School Captain



I have had the privilege of serving on the Ravenswood Council and on the Ravenswood Foundation Committee with Dr Johnstone for the past eight years, including as Chair of the Ravenswood Foundation since 2022.

Under Anne's leadership, the Foundation launched the Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize in 2017 and rejuvenated the Ravenswood Foundation Commemorative Paver Program. Anne and the Foundation successfully implemented the School's first-ever 24-hour Giving Day appeal in 2021, then again galvanised the community in 2023 to raise funds to support scholarships and Ravenswood's state-of-the-art teaching and learning environments. The philanthropic events were also supported with joyous community events, including Ravenswood Foundation Gala Balls and inspiring Foundation Dinners.

During Anne's tenure and under her extraordinary leadership, the Foundation supported Council with

fundraising initiatives for a range of School facilities, including the revitalisation of the Old Girls' Courtyard, the Petre Innovation Centre, the Senior Learning Centre, the opening of the Wellbeing Path, the refurbishment of Gate 1, and the new Wellbeing and Sports Centre.

Anne has been deeply committed to the Ravenswood Foundation, transforming student lives through the scholarships and bursary program that opens new horizons of opportunities for those who might not otherwise have the benefit of a Ravenswood education.

On behalf of the Ravenswood Foundation, I thank Anne for her visionary leadership of the Foundation, and her warmth, energy, intellect and dedication to educational and philanthropic excellence.

Mr John McLean
Chair, Ravenswood Foundation

It is no coincidence that Anne's leadership as Principal of Ravenswood School for Girls has corresponded with a transformative period for Ravenswood's Alumni community. As Patron of ROGU (Ravenswood Old Girls' Union), Anne oversaw the recent decision to transition its governance from an unincorporated association to an Alumni Advisory Committee. This was an important initiative in ensuring the strong connection between past students, current students and the School.

I am honoured to have served as third President of the School's Alumni collective during Anne's principalship, following in the footsteps of Anne Nielsen (Hunger, 1972) and Sarah Beresford (1984). Anne has not only been a warm, vibrant presence at many Alumni reunions and events, including those interstate and overseas, but has been actively involved in Alumni

initiatives, including the redesign of the Old Girls' Courtyard in 2018.

In 2021, Ravenswood celebrated its 120th anniversary, and the grace in which Anne connected the School with the Alumni was heartfelt. A morning tea in honour of Alumni on Love RAVO Day and the screening of the RAVO Alive video showcasing the School's rich history were just some of the ways Anne endeared herself to generations of Alumni.

Anne, we thank you for having an indelible impact on our School. It has been a privilege to work with a visionary leader who inspires, drives progress and cares.

Lisa Boyce (Clancy, 1990)
President, Ravenswood Alumni Committee

Thank you Anne for the incredible impact you have had on Ravenswood and on our families. Your genuine care for the parent community has strengthened our connection to the School. You have always welcomed our involvement, listened to our perspectives and made us feel like true partners in our daughters' education.

As a parent, I have seen first-hand the way you have shaped Ravenswood into a place where every girl is encouraged to thrive – not just academically, but in character, confidence and compassion. You have provided our girls with a wellbeing compass, equipping them with the skills and mindset to navigate life with confidence and resilience.

You have shown us all how much we can achieve with a healthy balance of grit and grace. Your dedication to Positive Education and your commitment to the wellbeing of every student have created an environment where girls feel empowered to embrace challenges, inspire one another and become the best versions of themselves. And this culture you have built will continue to shape Ravenswood long into the future, benefiting not just the girls, but families as well.

You will be greatly missed, and never forgotten. You will always be a cherished part of the RAVO family.

Katie Brown
President, Ravenswood Parents' Association

Dr Anne Johnstone's Legacy 2016–2025



Commissioned as Ravenswood's tenth Principal

Ravenswood Institute and Ravenswood Fellowship Program launched



Petre Innovation Centre opened



Hosts inaugural Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize



Renovated Old Girls' Courtyard, designed by Charlie Albone, opened



The Gail Kelly Making a Difference Award launched

2016

Grit

2017

High Quality Connections

2018

Strengths



Positive Education introduced to Ravenswood staff and community

Introduced the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP)



Boarding offering expanded to Years 7–12 and facilities upgraded

Ravenswood becomes the first Visible Wellbeing school in NSW; Positive Education and Wellbeing Curriculum introduced from K–10

5-Year Strategic Plan 'Igniting Potential, Inspiring Passion and Purpose' launched



Hosts Community Forum with Professor Martin Seligman and 2017 PESA Conference



Receives Master of Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) degree from the University of Pennsylvania with Distinguished Capstone under supervision of Professor Martin Seligman

Awarded 2018 Australian Speech and Communication Association Award for Excellence in Communication



The new RAVO sculpture by Will Colhoun unveiled

House Performing Arts Festival at Sydney Town Hall launched

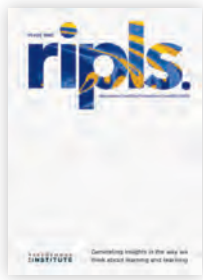
Introduced the Meliora Prize



Love RAVO Day launched



Professor Martin Seligman welcomed for a week-long program, named Ravenswood 'the leading girls' school in the world in positive education'.



Ravenswood Institute publication *RPLS* launched



Became Chair of Positive Education Schools Association (PESA) and appointed to the board of IPEN (International Positive Education Network)



120 years of Ravenswood celebrated



Ravenswood Prep introduced and Annesley House opened



Received the Phyllis Evans Medal from the Teachers Guild of NSW and Excellence Award School Principal of the Year (Non-Government) at Australian Education Awards

Ravenswood Residential College opened new Wellbeing Room

2019 Other-Person Centredness

2020 Hope

2021 Resilience

2022 Ganbatte



Welcomed Daisy – Ravenswood's first trained therapy dog, and subsequently Penny



Led School through the COVID-19 lockdown



Opened the award-winning Senior Learning Centre (SLC) on the day Year 12 returned from lockdown



Launched Ravenswood and Knox Grammar Student-Led Wellbeing Conference

Became Vice-Chair of IPEN

Giving Day introduced, raising funds for Ravenswood Foundation



Introduced pants option for student uniform



Hosted 2022 PESA Conference



New student immersion programs introduced, including Northern Territory Red Earth Immersion

Poets Laureate launched



Introduced Indigenous Emerging category in Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize

Launch of Mind Brain Education (MBE) Science and creation of dedicated MBE translation staff team



Launched *Kindle the Flame* – book celebrating 120 years of Ravenswood history



The Wellbeing Path designed and opened - first of its kind

2023 Inspire



IGNITE Junior School Positive Education program launched

Appointed AISNSW Chair of Excellence in Leadership and Teaching Council



Named Australian School Principal of the Year and School Principal of the Year (Non-Government) at the 2024 Australian Education Awards



Cadet unit renamed the Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit

2024 Actualise



Turned the Sod for The Anne Johnstone Wellbeing and Sports Centre

Announced as Global Chair of IPEN



H Block Refurbishment

New Creative Arts and AIEF Indigenous Boarding Scholarship introduced



New Podcast Studio opened



New front gates opened



Historically high enrolments, 10 consecutive years of enrolment growth and strong demand through waiting lists

2025 Grace

Received PhD from University of Melbourne. Doctoral research focused on helping young people to develop a mindset that promotes wellbeing through building wellbeing in others



Named Associate Chair of 2025 IPPA World Congress



New Renasci block opened

AWARDS ACHIEVED



The Educator's 5-Star Innovative School
(2018, 2019, 2020, 2022, 2023, 2024)



Excellence Award for Best Student Wellbeing Program
(2021, 2022, 2024, 2025)



Excellence Award for Boarding School of the Year
(2022, 2024, 2025)



Excellence Award for Primary School Teacher of the Year: Non-Government
(2022)



Winner of Best Use of Technology Award
(2024)



Excellence Award for Best Professional Learning Program
2025

DR JOHNSTONE ACCOLADES AND ACHIEVEMENTS



Award for Excellence in Communication
Australian Speech and Communication Association (2018)



Phyllis Evans Medal
by the Teachers Guild of NSW for a 'distinguished educator of great standing'



The Educator's Hot List
(2022, 2023, 2024)



Excellence Award for School Principal of the Year
Non-Government (2022)



The Educator's Most Influential Educator List
(2023, 2024)



Winner of Australian School Principal of the Year and School Principal of the Year Non-Government
(2024)



Presented annually – locally, interstate and globally – as a **leader in the field of Positive Education and student wellbeing**



Community engagement and number of events have increased, building a deeper sense of community (42% increase in community attendance up to 2024)



HSC and IB Results Improvements – Ravenswood students have achieved **14 top ATARs of 99.95** since 2016 and **6 perfect IB scores of 45** since 2021



Since Anne's arrival, the proportion of **ATARs over 90 has increased from 45% to 52%**, with **14 top ATAR's of 99.95** achieved since 2016



Co-curricular, and gifted and high potential competition participation numbers, have increased with new Co-curricular activities introduced, include VEX Robotics, Coding, Creative Writing, Science and Debating Society



2024 saw historically high HSC showcase nominations (29) and 88% of students achieved their first preference for entry to tertiary institutions



Building Towards Better Things

Last December, a colourful and spirited event on the Ravenswood Oval marked the beginning of construction of The Anne Johnstone Wellbeing and Sports Centre, which will add another world-class building to the School's award-winning facilities.

This year, the Junior School held a competition for students to 'Name the Crane'. The students submitted their ideas in great numbers, with Elizabeth Cotter (Year 3) named the winner for her entry, 'High Spirits'.

In June, a special 'Naming of the Crane and Flag Raising' event saw Year 3 students gather next to the Oval with staff, Principal Dr Anne Johnstone and Head of Junior School – Deputy Principal Ms Sarah Guy. The site's Taylor Construction project managers answered several in-depth STEM and construction questions from the eager Year 3 students before the 'High Spirits' flag was attached to the crane and lifted high into the sky.

Construction of the Anne Johnstone Wellbeing and Sports Centre is also advancing academic learning

for Senior students, with STEM classes integrating site visits.

Meanwhile, the site has been a source of inspiration for Art students. The Co-curricular Year 9 Photography Club, along with Visual Arts teacher Mr Kim Marcovitch, visited in June. After completing an induction by the senior project manager and senior site manager head, the students began exploring the various textures, shapes and lines of the build with their cameras as they were led around to various areas of the site. Taylor managers answered a range of questions by curious student photographers as they loaded up their memory cards with creative compositions, capturing the construction phase moment in time.

The Anne Johnstone Wellbeing and Sports Centre is the apex of new developments underway or completed as part of the School's Masterplan.

They include the refurbished Henry Street main gates, designed by prestigious Australian architects BVN, with input from the Ravenswood Parents' Association and students. Opened in January, the



new gates provide additional seating, improved lighting and undercover shelter for the community. Embedded in the overarching roof structure of the gates are blossoming flowerbeds and greenery.

Principal Dr Anne Johnstone told students in Assembly that she hoped that each time they advanced under the flowering gardens, they were reminded that Ravenswood is a place for them to flourish. The School motto, *semper ad meliora*, emblazoned on the sandstone, also encourages students to approach their education at Ravenswood with an 'always towards better things' mindset.

The refurbished front gates acknowledge the Darramuragal and the Guringai Peoples as the traditional owners of the land on which Ravenswood campus stands. Junior School students have been reflecting on their own story and history when walking through the refurbished gates, and considering the native, Indigenous soil on which the School stands. In particular, Junior School EAL/D teacher Mrs Melissa Mülle has been supporting Year 6 students whose interest has been piqued by the acknowledgement.

Miura Ma (Year 6) wrote in her assignment on the topic that, 'This place [Ravenswood] is as welcoming as a warm hug. Its vast, open spaces; Its beautiful, green gardens; Its modern and historic buildings all contribute to a positive and flourishing environment for all students to grow and learn. Ravenswood, a garden of dreams. Ravenswood is my school, and I love it!'

Further developments on campus include an inspirational and resplendent walkway through the H Block, and a new classrooms building (named *Renasci* by the SRC and Prefects, meaning *renew*). Opposite the Senior Learning Centre, next to the H Block, the new classroom has peaceful garden surrounds, ideal for relaxation and contemplation.

Dr Anne Johnstone reflected on these latest developments, saying, 'These tremendous developments reflect our ongoing commitment to providing world-class learning facilities that will support our students to advance forward, *semper ad meliora*, on their educational journey, both in terms of their learning and wellbeing.'



Boarders in 1938 with founder of boarding, Reverend Frank Hynes

A Home Away From Home: 90 Years of Boarding (1935–2025)

The students in the black-and-white photograph wore the uniform style of the day: some in crisp white blouses, pinafores, blazers and ties, others in tea dresses cinched with belts. Their neatly pinned bobs frame smiling faces, full of promise and camaraderie. The year was 1938, and this treasured image is our earliest photograph of Ravenswood Boarders, pictured with Reverend Frank Hynes.

Although boarding commenced at Ravenswood in 1935, it had been under consideration since 1926. Hitherto deemed 'impracticable', renewed interest led to the appointment of a sub-committee in 1933 to explore the feasibility of establishing boarding at the School. Two years later, in 1935, Ravenswood welcomed its first two Boarders into the boarding house 'Sunnyside' Middle House, Peggy Scarlett (Cameron, 1936), aged 16, and Violet Drew (Hall, 1946), aged 6.

The establishment of boarding was due largely to the efforts of Reverend Frank Hynes, Principal of Ravenswood Methodist Ladies' College from 1934 to 1948 during Headmistress Kathleen Crago's era. As Chair of School Council, Reverend Hynes' vision, energy and commitment were vital to Ravenswood's development and survival. Reverend Hynes and his wife Mabel provided a warm and supportive environment for the Boarders in their

care, an atmosphere that contributed to the positive and lasting memories of many students. As reported to Council in March 1937 by Reverend Hynes, 'The Boarders are a splendid lot. On Saturday we took them for an outing to Dee Why. They were delighted to have their last Saturday of summer at the sea.'

Those early years of boarding stand as a testament to the School's courage and resourcefulness as it withstood the challenges of the Great Depression. It was not until economic conditions improved that the uncertainty surrounding the School's future began to lift.

Wartime brought its own challenges, with overcrowded houses and restrictions commonplace. Nevertheless, the girls adapted with resilience and good humour, although 'melon and lemon jam' became dangerously unpopular. As highlighted in *Ravenswood - Educating girls 1901-2001* by Marj Binns:

[The Boarders] became so irate when the jam appeared at breakfast, dinner and tea that in desperation they made badges and after church one Sunday morning went on strike in protest.

School enrolments soared following the introduction of boarding. In 1935, two of the School's 124 students were Boarders; by 1948 (when the Hynes

family concluded their tenure), there were nearly 400 students, including 90 Boarders.

In 2025, Reverend Hynes' remarkable legacy was acknowledged by his granddaughter Mrs Stephanie Harpur (Hynes, 1962), who purchased and named a commemorative paver in his honour through the Ravenswood Foundation Commemorative Paver Program.

Life as a Boarder was documented by Elizabeth Ralston (Swan, 1953) in 'Memories of a Boarder 1949-1953'. From boarding concerts to church visits, mealtimes, mischief and outfit changes, Elizabeth recounts a treasure trove of Ravenswood boarding stories and anecdotes. She writes:

A walk through our school years from the point of view of a boarder is a walk through a girl's wardrobe. We had different garments for practically every activity.

For generations of Ravenswood Boarders, a cherished tradition was the annual Boarders' Banquet, which began in 1936, and the Boarders' Banquet card.

Often featuring playful sketches or cheeky reflections, the cards told the story of each Boarder's journey and personality. Over the years, they have become treasured archival mementos of school life and friendship. Elizabeth wrote:

All the boarders had a drawing on their card. The 'littlies' had a nursery rhyme character, and the older ones had some indiscretion or vanity captured.

Three Alumni Boarders from 1962, Helen Hunt (Wright), Christine Collins (Walsh) and Judy Dorling (Bell), recently shared their boarding memories, reminiscing happily about their valued friendships spanning more than 60 years, as well as recounting their struggles with homesickness, lack of space, privacy and food options. They reported that:

In adversity, we bonded and relied on each other. We have such positive memories of our time at Ravenswood and of the friendships that formed during our school years.

Boarding numbers peaked in 1928 with 102 Boarders. Boarding Captains were introduced in 1995, and weekly Boarders in 1998.



Top left: Mrs Mabel Hynes and Reverend Frank Hynes, 1940

Bottom left: Boarders uniform brochure from David Jones, c1940

Middle: Boarders' Banquet Card, 1961

Top right: Diana Mack (centre) after being liberated from a Japanese Camp in Rabaul, Papua New Guinea in 1945

Bottom right: HRH Melenaita Veikune (right), pictured with Ravenswood's handyman Willett, and fellow Boarders, 1939

Over the years, Ravenswood has housed Boarders in Sunnyside (Middle House), Coo-In-Noo (Bottom House), Ravenswood Cottage (Top House), Hynes Memorial Wing, Corner House and Duke House.

In 2004, Boarders moved to the newly renovated Senior Boarding House, now known as the Ravenswood Residential College (RRC). Just two years later, the School Council made the decision to close boarding at the end of 2013. However, in 2011, the decision was overturned, and boarding continued in the form of a Senior Residential College.

Liz Jessop, former Director of Boarding (2007-2015) reflects:

It was wonderful once the decision was made to reinstate boarding. We were reminded of how valuable boarding is to the community. A functioning boarding house can provide a bed, or food, for anyone in the school community. And as Principal Lorraine Smith used to say, 'It's the beating heart of the school'.

Since 1939, Ravenswood has welcomed students from regional NSW, interstate and overseas. With strong ties to Papua New Guinea, China, the United Kingdom, the United States, Hong Kong, Fiji, Tonga and Thailand, among other countries, our boarding house has long been a home away from home for girls from diverse cultures.

Arriving from Tonga in 1939, HRH Melenaite Veikune (1942) was Ravenswood's first international Boarder, and later married a Tongan prince. Diana Mack (1953) came to Ravenswood in 1948 as the first in a proud line of students from Papua New Guinea. Diana's journey is especially moving, as she and her family had been interned in a prison camp during the Second World War.

These stories, and others like them, form the rich tapestry of our boarding story, defined by courage,

resilience and connection across cultures and generations.

Over the years, Ravenswood Boarders have been supported by a succession of inspirational staff members. In 1993, the first Head of Boarding, Jenny MacLeman, was appointed, followed by Director of Boarding Allison Taylor (1997-2006).

Jenny Warburton served as a boarding Housemistress (2000-2024). Liz Jessop served as Director of Boarding (2007-2015), followed by Jacqui Gilson until 2017. Former Deputy Principal - Boarding and Community Lucy Cumming served from 2017 to 2024, and Bri Cormio has been Director of Boarding since 2023.

Today's RRC recently celebrated its third Excellence Award in four years for Boarding School of the Year at the Australian Education Awards (having also won in 2022 and 2024). The RRC offers students first-class learning, with academic and award-winning wellbeing programs allowing its 50 Boarders to thrive in a supportive environment.

Director of Boarding Ms Bri Cormio proudly reflects: 'The RRC in 2025 is thriving, filled with a spirit of sisterhood of support, love and connection. Boarders are inspired together to proudly represent the community, making the most of all the opportunities Ravenswood offers. With a sense of purpose and belonging, Boarders are supported to activate their strengths and be empowered and equipped for their bright futures.'

In May, Ravenswood celebrated 90 years of boarding. Past and present Boarders and boarding staff came together to celebrate with high tea, campus tours and a visit to the RRC. The School also reflected not only on the tradition of boarding, but its place at the heart of Ravenswood's story. That is, the unique sisterhood it fosters and the family of strong, resilient women who carry the spirit of Ravenswood with them, wherever life leads.



Ravenswood Excels in 2025 Australian Education Awards

Ravenswood has once again been recognised with Excellence Awards as part of *The Educator's* 2025 Australian Education Awards.

Ravenswood's pioneering and world-class Positive Education framework and wellbeing program has resulted in the School achieving its fourth Excellence Award for Best Student Wellbeing Program in five years (2021, 2022, 2024 and now 2025).

The Ravenswood Residential College has also been awarded its third Excellence Award in four years for Boarding School of the Year (2022, 2024 and 2025), while the Ravenswood Institute – the School's innovative professional learning program for staff – has been acknowledged for its progressive and edifying work, receiving an Excellence Award for Best Professional Learning Program.

The overall winners of the Australian Education Awards will be announced in August.



Parlia-Mention

Principal Dr Anne Johnstone has been visited by the Leader of the Liberal Party for NSW, Mark Speakman, and Member for Davidson and Shadow Minister for Education, Matt Cross MP. The pair presented Dr Johnstone with an official copy of a mention from the NSW Parliament, recognising her extraordinary leadership and significant contributions to Positive Education and student wellbeing at Ravenswood School for Girls.

The parliamentary mention celebrates Dr Johnstone's exemplary leadership as School Principal from 2016 to 2025, shaping a culture of excellence as a legacy for future generations of Ravenswood students and the school community.





Internationally Renowned Psychologists Visit Ravenswood

In June, Ravenswood was honoured to host one of the world's most highly cited psychologists, Professor Barbara Fredrickson, Kenan Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at the University of North Carolina, as well as Professor James O. Pawelski, the Professor of Practice and Director of Education in the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

Professor Fredrickson and Professor Pawelski visited the School during the final week of Term 2, through their relationship with Ravenswood Principal, Dr Anne Johnstone, who is Chair of the International Positive Education Network (IPEN) and a graduate of the Master of Applied Positive Psychology (MAPP) program at the University of Pennsylvania.

'Hosting Professor Fredrickson and Professor Pawelski at Ravenswood for an uplifting Community Forum was a rare privilege for our community,' Dr Johnstone said. 'It gave me enormous pleasure to see them interacting with our students and staff across the week, answering questions and giving advice.'

Professor Fredrickson has published more than 160 scholarly papers and has received numerous awards for her research and university teaching. Her books *Positivity* and *Love 2.0* are longstanding international bestsellers. In 2017, she was honoured with the Tang Prize, recognising exceptional career contributions to human wellbeing.

Professor Pawelski has published dozens of academic articles and five books, including as editor (with Louis Tay) of *The Oxford Handbook of the Positive Humanities* and the Humanities and Human Flourishing series with Oxford University Press. He served as the founding executive director of the International Positive Psychology Association (IPPA), is a past president of the William James Society and is an ex-officio board member of IPEN.

Hundreds of parents, teachers, university academics, Alumni and community members from across the state attended the evening Community Forum, where Professor Fredrickson shared research on 'positivity resonance'. She focused on recent research in the field that provides a vital foundation

for translating scientific discoveries in positive psychology into effective practical interventions to increase positive connections, reduce loneliness and cultivate the greater good.

Professor Pawelski’s presentation highlighted recent findings of positive psychology researchers on what can help us sail through life. He unpacked the new field of the positive humanities, which studies how arts and culture can support our individual and collective wellbeing – even when we are moving through choppy waters.

The audience enjoyed an engaging Q&A, with Ravenswood students joining the visiting psychologists and Dr Johnstone to discuss skills to increase resilience and student wellbeing, as well as positive psychology insights including positive emotion and engagement, toolkits and strategies.

Professor Pawelski also addressed Senior School students at Assembly on ‘What Can Superheroes Teach Us About Flourishing?’ and met and chaired an inspirational colloquium and lengthy roundtable discussion session with the Student Representative

Council and the School Captains and Prefects. Together, they explored a range of issues and ideas around the topic ‘Stress and Growth: The Power of Stretch and Play for Emerging Leaders’.

In addition, Professor Pawelski addressed Ravenswood staff on the latest research and theories about the ‘Science of Wellbeing and the Culture of Human Flourishing: Perspectives for Educators’, as well as ‘The Positive Humanities: Education for Human Flourishing’.

During their three-day visit, Professor Pawelski and Professor Fredrickson attended the Ravenswood and Knox Grammar Student-Led Wellbeing Conference, with Professor Fredrickson speaking to educators about the implications for Wellbeing and Classroom Cultures. She focused on her Broaden and Build Theory of positive emotions and the Positivity Resonance Theory of co-experienced positive emotions, providing staff from Ravenswood and across NSW with insights to how evidence inspires action by showcasing that positive emotions have lasting consequences for individual and collective wellbeing.





2025 Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize

Now in its ninth year, Ravenswood's much-celebrated Australian Women's Art Prize reached a new high in June when more than 350 artists, families, Art Prize partners and members of the School community gathered for the Opening Night and announcement of winners.

The annual acquisitive prize, held on campus in the Centenary Centre, continues to advance art and opportunities for emerging and established women artists in Australia. With 1934 entries – the second most since the prize's inception in 2017 – the judging panel had the challenging task of shortlisting and announcing 99 finalists. Entries came from every state and territory in Australia, and included a record number of Indigenous Emerging entries.

Art Prize Patron, judge and Alumni Jade Oakley (1993) said, 'The judging panel was overwhelmed by the high quality of artworks submitted for the 2025 Art Prize, making our selection process all the more difficult.

'I'm extremely proud to see the continued growth and popularity of the Prize, and the opportunities it affords professional, emerging and Indigenous women artists across the country.'

The highpoint of the evening was the announcement of the winners of the 2025 Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize. Winner of the Professional prize was Janet Laurence (pictured above, fourth from right) for her chromogenic print artwork, *Moss Water Ice Temperature Rising*, while the Emerging Artist prize was awarded to Lilli Strömblad for her artwork, *Ode to Peaches and Cleaning*. The Indigenous Emerging Prize winner was Fiona Pompey for her work, *Tali Nguru*.

Principal Dr Anne Johnstone reflected on the Art Prize, saying, 'Our vision and mission for the Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize is to empower women artists, both professional and emerging, by providing a significant platform to showcase their works and, importantly, as Australia's most valuable art prize for women, to encourage them to continue creating art, expressing their unique gifts and perspective and having their voices heard.

Since 2017, we have received more than 13,000 entries and exhibited more than 900 finalists, and in this way, we are so thrilled to have helped offer strong support to women artists across our nation through providing meaningful opportunities for them to showcase their creative endeavors and works.'

Underscoring its status as the highest-value professional artist prize for women in Australia, the winners of the 2025 competition shared a prize pool totalling \$58,000. This included the Professional Artist Prize (\$35,000), the Emerging Artist Prize (\$7500 – supported by The Reed Family Foundation), and the Indigenous Emerging Artist Prize (\$7500 – supported by Guardian and Scarborough Foundation). Also awarded on the night – and new for 2025 – were six Highly Commended Awards (two for each category) of \$1000 each (supported by Community Bank Lindfield).

A People's Choice Award of \$2000 (supported by Edwina Palmer), plus a Derivan art pack valued at \$500, was awarded at the conclusion of the Exhibition of Finalists.

Guests and artists on the night enjoyed a memorable supper from Gold Partner Trippas White Group's Executive Chef Tony Panetta, who showcased local, First Nations ingredients and food, complemented by wines from the group's 'Women in Wine' collection.

The Ravenswood Australian Women's Art Prize is made possible by generous partners who support women artists and the arts sector. Thank you to Gold Partners, Trippas White Group and The Marshall Group; Gold Media Partners, R.M Williams OUTBACK, Active Networks, and The Australian; Silver Partners, Guardian and Scarborough Foundation, The Reed Family Foundation, Clarke Murphy Print and Community Bank Lindfield; and Bronze Partners, Ku-ring-gai Council, Kelvin Hall Floral Design, EPM Projects, Derivan, The Art Scene, and Edwina Palmer.

Following opening night, the Exhibition of Finalists ran for three weeks, welcoming thousands of art lovers.



Ravenswood and AIEF Create New Scholarship

In 2025, Ravenswood and the Australian Indigenous Education Foundation (AIEF) formed a partnership to provide boarding scholarships for rural and regional Indigenous students to attend the School.

The inaugural recipient of Ravenswood's newest scholarship is proud Gomeri, Mandandanji and Dhunghutti Year 7 student Mia Tolmie (pictured above, centre).

The Tolmie family, who live in a regional town in north-eastern New South Wales, said, 'The AIEF partnership and the opportunities available at Ravenswood are a pathway to success for Indigenous families like ours. Mia has always loved school and we have always placed a high value on education as a family. This opportunity to expose our daughter to world-class quality education within the supportive environment of Ravenswood will allow our family to flourish further than ever before. There is no way this would have been possible without this partnership and we are very grateful to all involved in its conception and implementation.'

Established in 2008, the AIEF removes many of the financial barriers preventing Indigenous students and their families from enrolling in educational institutions such as Ravenswood. The life-changing program has supported more than 1500 young Indigenous people from more than 400 communities across Australia to gain a previously unattainable education, helping fuel their dreams,

transform their lives and create a ripple effect of positive change to impact successive generations.

AIEF Executive Director Andrew Penfold AM says, 'AIEF is proud to be partnering with Ravenswood to further expand the delivery of our scholarship and pathways programs. Together we will be strengthening educational opportunities for young Indigenous women, empowering them to pursue their dreams, realise their potential and ultimately change our nation.'

The AIEF Program is a proven pathway for Indigenous students to transition from secondary education to life after school and beyond. In 2023, 93% of AIEF graduates were engaged in tertiary studies, employment or other productive pursuits. Ravenswood School for Girls looks forward to nurturing this new partnership and fostering a cohort of AIEF scholarship recipients.

Principal Dr Anne Johnstone says, 'Ravenswood is committed to nurturing the potential of every student, including those who would otherwise not have the chance to pursue such a transformational educational opportunity. This scholarship is an important step towards ensuring First Nations students from regional areas have the chance to reach their fullest potential at Ravenswood. Moreover, by establishing pathways for Indigenous students to flourish, Ravenswood embraces this wonderful opportunity to further enhance and enrich the cultural fabric of our vibrant and diverse School community.'

Student Showcase



Tiny House, Huge Heart

The Ravenswood community swelled in March for the annual International Women's Day celebration. This year, the recipient of the 2024 Gail Kelly Making a Difference Award, Ava Amies (Year 12, pictured in image on left, third from right), used International Women's Day and the accompanying Senior School Assembly to raise awareness of her chosen charity, RizeUp Australia – a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting families affected by domestic and family violence.

As part of her efforts, Ava collaborated with Tiny House Australia, which assembled an empty tiny house on the Ravenswood campus. Over three days, students, staff, families and Wellbeing and Sports Centre construction company Taylor came together to donate and fill the house with hundreds of new essential items for families in need. The School community donated over 700 items (valued at over \$8000), including much-needed household appliances, equipment and essential goods for families impacted by domestic violence. An additional \$1400 was raised at a lunchtime barbecue to further support RizeUp's work.

Service Learning Coordinator Mrs Brianna Donaldson says, 'Ava's passion and dedication has been truly inspiring, as she led our community with grace and a heart to support those in need. Her commitment to making a difference has left a lasting impact on all of us.'



Young Women of Action

Saskia Rundle Trowbridge (Year 12, pictured above) made headlines last year for her incredible bravery and skill in rescuing three teenage boys stranded in a cave as a result of swelling waters on the Northern Beaches.

Following her display of outstanding skill as a volunteer lifeguard, Saskia was acknowledged in the 2025 Northern Beaches Council Australia Day Awards as the Young Citizen of the Year.



Meanwhile, Hayley Paterson (Year 10, pictured above) has been recognised on the 'Ones to Watch' list for the NSW Women of the Year Awards. The list highlights girls and young women aged 7 to 15 who demonstrate a single act or ongoing acts of courage, bravery and strength. Hayley was acknowledged for her commitment to the local Indigenous community in helping to break the barrier of language and recognition.



A Voice on the World Stage

Year 12 student Tanya Chi has been crowned 2025 World Champion of the global public speaking and debate competition Re:Solved.

Re:Solved is designed to fuel interest and participation in public speaking and debate among students aged 13 to 18.

Representing Australia, Tanya was flown to Toronto, Canada in April to compete in the four-person debate final before a panel of expert judges, alongside her debating partner Dillon, who represented South Korea.

The motion put to competitors this year was, 'In 2025, America can no longer be considered a democracy.' The student debaters were then tasked with speaking on this motion for between six and eight minutes.

Tanya says of the experience: 'The best thing about debating is thinking about both sides of the story, forcing yourself to set aside your pre-existing biases and look objectively at an issue.'

This is the second consecutive year that a Ravenswood student has been awarded the title of Re:Solved World Champion, with Catherine Swemmer (2024) receiving the honour last year.

Ravenswood's Coordinator of Voice Mrs Kathy Stewart says, 'It is wonderful to see our students shining on the world stage, showcasing outstanding skills in public speaking and debating. It takes time and effort to excel in this landscape and the earlier students commence their journey, the better.'

Imperial College Competition

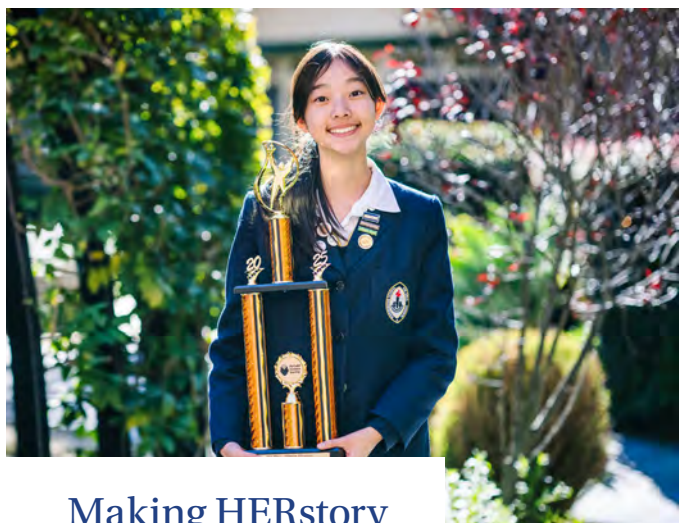
Four innovative, creative thinkers in Year 8 have reached the final stage of a global competition hosted by the prestigious Faculty of Natural Sciences at Imperial College London.

The quartet – Iris Li, Taamirra Kashif, Avery Singh and Alexandra Pitman – qualified for the June final with their video entry detailing a solution to support the wellbeing of prisoners re-entering society. The students then presented their solution to a panel of experts from the faculty and fielded questions about their research.

The purpose of the competition is to motivate young people to engage with science, to encourage them to work together as part of a team and to involve them in a fun activity that is motivated by their curiosity and drive.

Deputy Principal – Teaching and Learning, Ms Jennifer Richardson says, 'We are so proud of Iris, Taamirra, Avery and Alexandra for this remarkable achievement. As a team they have demonstrated not only their exceptional scientific thinking abilities, but deep empathy and global awareness - qualities that we are proud to nurture at Ravenswood.'

Student Showcase



Making HERstory

Following their great success at the National Future Problem Solving Finals in Melbourne in October, four Ravenswood students – Aanya Karunaratne (Year 9), Sara Kou (Year 9), Audrey Li (Year 10) and Fiona Wang (Year 6) – travelled to the International Future Problem Solving Competition held at Indiana University, USA, to compete against 1,500 champion problem solvers from around the world, representing 11 countries and 30 US states.

Sara Kou achieved third place in the middle age division of Scenario Writing. Scenario Writing competitors had two hours to write a creative scenario of up to 1,000 words, with their creative story using the challenging conference topic, 'The Future of History', as inspiration.

Mr Josh McMahon, Head of Gifted Education and High Potential Learning, says, 'We are incredibly proud of Sara, Fiona, Aanya and Audrey. Their leadership and dedication to our School's guiding principles was on full display as they represented both Ravenswood and Australia on the global stage.'

ArchiBOLD

For the fourth year in a row, a Ravenswood student has been selected as a finalist in the Young Archie competition – the junior version of the prestigious Archibald Prize, an Australian portraiture art prize.

The national competition invites artists aged 5 to 18 to create a portrait of someone special to them. Judges this year selected 70 Young Archie finalists from more than 3200 entries.

Among them was Sue Ni Tung (Year 12), for her portrait of her friend Jess, titled *Friday, period 4, math*. 'I wanted to capture both the ecstatic and hazy moments that we've shared: the fervour of high school,' Sue Ni explains in her caption.

Chuyan Chen (Year 10) was also selected in the Young Archie Honourable Mentions list, for her portrait *Grandma and her apron*, on display at the SH Ervin Gallery alongside the Salon des Refusés.

Ravenswood's Head of Visual Arts Ms Kathryn Minkley says, 'It's so inspiring to see these young women engage with the joy of artmaking and express their creativity. They should be very proud of these fantastic portraits that express authentic connections to others.'

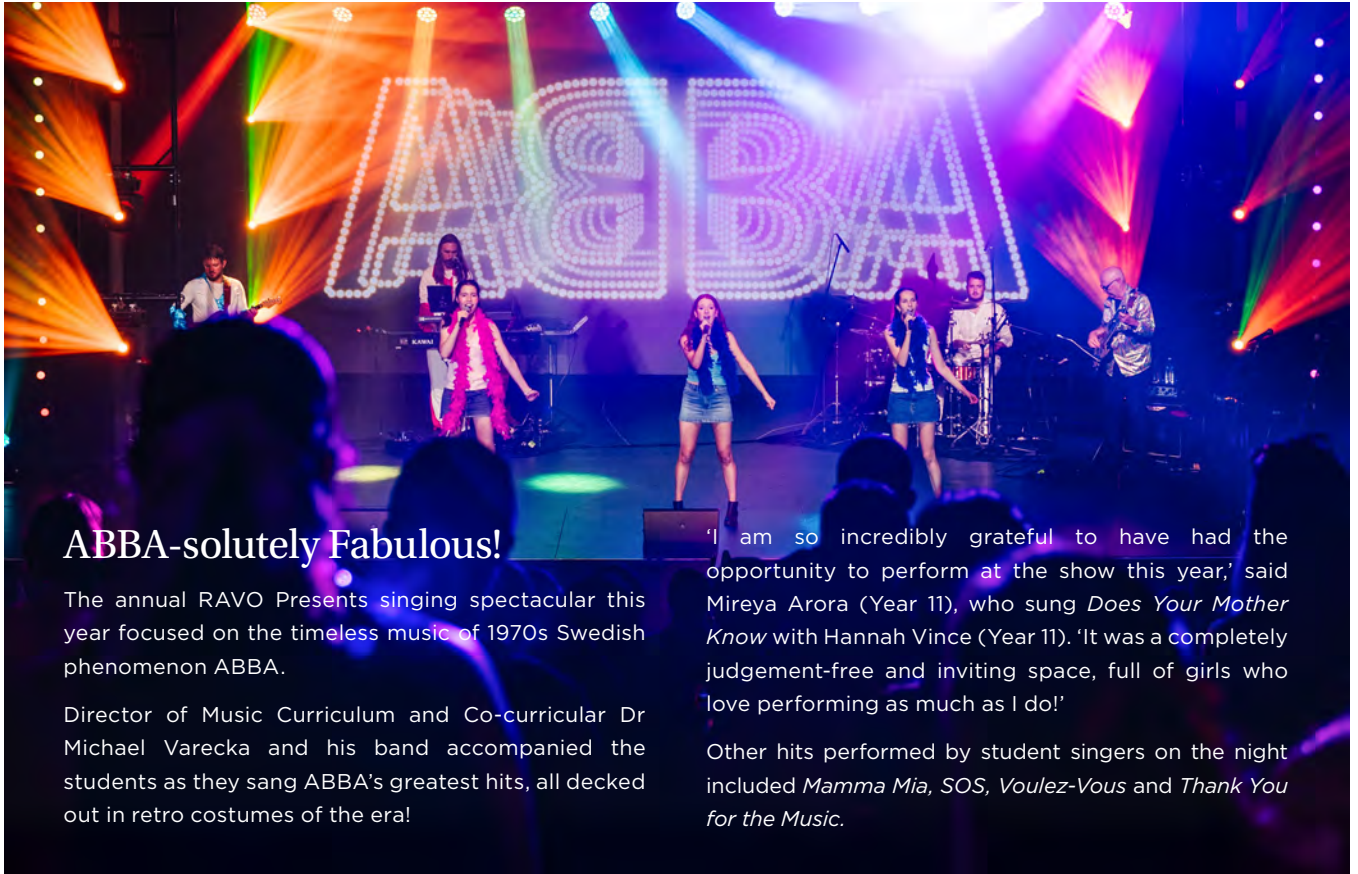


InVINCible!

Fifty-six Ravenswood students participated in the annual da Vinci Decathlon at Knox Grammar School over three days in May, with the Year 5 team crowned state champions!

Students in Years 5 to 11 competed in teams of eight and were tested across 10 disciplines: Engineering, Mathematics, Code Breaking, Art and Poetry, Science, English, Ideation, Creative Producers, Cartography and Legacy.

Vying against 80 other schools from across NSW, Ravenswood's Year 5 team – Sienna Colville, Anna Hattersley, Lois Lo, Elly Park (captain), Carrie Sun, Alexis Tran, Josephine Wang and Cara Xiao – were overall state champions, and also finished first in the Ideation and English disciplines. The team were supported in their preparation by classmates Ella Gao and Penny Perdriau.



ABBA-solutely Fabulous!

The annual RAVO Presents singing spectacular this year focused on the timeless music of 1970s Swedish phenomenon ABBA.

Director of Music Curriculum and Co-curricular Dr Michael Varecka and his band accompanied the students as they sang ABBA's greatest hits, all decked out in retro costumes of the era!

'I am so incredibly grateful to have had the opportunity to perform at the show this year,' said Mireya Arora (Year 11), who sang *Does Your Mother Know* with Hannah Vince (Year 11). 'It was a completely judgement-free and inviting space, full of girls who love performing as much as I do!'

Other hits performed by student singers on the night included *Mamma Mia*, *SOS*, *Voulez-Vous* and *Thank You for the Music*.

Music Scholars Shine

In March, 15 Ravenswood Music Scholarship recipients performed for an enthralled audience at the annual 2025 Music Scholars' Concert.

Held in the Auditorium, the students in Years 7 to 12 each performed a movement of music on their chosen instrument. Composers ranged from classical artists such as Mozart and Haydn to modern women composers Rebecca Clarke and Emma Greenhill.

The concert was a special occasion for Year 12 Scholars Daniela Bazouni (clarinet), Alice Moon (viola), Paisley Motum (violin) and Zoe Ty (violin), who have each contributed significantly to Ravenswood during their tenure.

Director of Performing Arts Mrs Heather Aird says, 'We are so proud of our Music Scholars, who are all leading in their respective ensembles at a very high level. Each student brings joy to their peers, allowing us to flourish within the Music Program.'

In May, the school's resident string quartet – comprising Zoe, Paisley and Alice, along with Rebecca Wu (Year 7) – finished third (out of 30 schools) in the Chamber Music Section of the Sydney Eisteddfod, performing the music of Webern.

Two further music scholars achieved acclaim this year: Sienna Kim (Year 9) was selected to perform violin in the Australian Youth Orchestra's Young Symphonists program, while violist Hannah Tsai (Year 7) performed with her quartet, The Piccolos, giving a stunning performance of Robert Schumann's *Piano Quartet in E-flat major, Op. 47* at a Musica Viva workshop in Melbourne.



Student Showcase



Winnie the Pooh Kids

In a wonderful introduction to stage performance, students in Years 3 and 4 entertained us with a heart-warming adaptation of some of the stories and characters from A.A. Milne's classic novel *Winnie the Pooh*.

With music and lyrics adapted from Disney's legendary Sherman brothers, the Junior School students endeared themselves to the sold-out audience in the Lorraine Smith Auditorium in June.

Director of Performing Arts Mrs Heather Aird says, 'We love working with the Years 3 and 4 girls as they bring joy and zest to each rehearsal – and of course to the live performance. We were very pleased to welcome lots of guests, including our Prep students. What a delight to share the skills and talents of our Ravenswood girls with our community.'



An AUSTEN-tatious adaptation

This year's drama production for Years 9 to 12 students was a modern adaptation by Sara Pascoe of Jane Austen's iconic novel, *Pride and Prejudice*.

Directed by professional actor and director Lizzie Schebesta – who also directed Ravenswood's productions of *Shakespeare in Love* (2023) and *The Book of Everything* (2024) – students collaborated with a handful of male students from Barker College in three highly engaging performances in June.

Performers were even required to learn early-nineteenth-century dances, and a song from the original production.

Head of Drama Mr Chris Bird says, 'The students did an extraordinary job under the skilled and experienced guidance of their director, Lizzie Schebesta. Each member of the cast stepped out of their comfort zone to embrace their character with energy and commitment, and to vividly re-create the world of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.'



HPAF – Raising the Roof

One of Principal Dr Anne Johnstone's many legacies at Ravenswood will be the hugely popular House Performing Arts Festival (HPAF), which now signals the beginning of each academic year in the most spectacular and decibel-bursting manner.

At the Sydney Town Hall in February, the entire Senior School experienced the thrill of being on stage and performing to a full house of fellow students, staff, parents and friends.

This year's theme – *Faster, Higher, Stronger, Together* – challenged the students to reach for new heights, to explore areas of the performing arts not within their wheelhouse and to work as a united, cohesive team. The Houses brought their theme to life across the five categories of Choral, Dance, Drama, Costume and Design, and Technology and Media.

Performing Arts Prefect Paisley Motum (Year 12) reflects on her final HPAF production, saying, '[It] was a spectacular celebration of creativity, teamwork and talent and as usual, a tremendous success. The excitement filled the Town Hall in a heart-warming display of RAVO community and support as all students cheered for the competing Houses.'

'Each House brought so much passion and energy to the stage, with every student involved in their House's inspiring performances, which each focused on the Olympic theme words of *Faster, Higher, Stronger – Together.*'

As with all Ravenswood events involving the four school Houses, an eventual winner was adjudged, and Dr Johnstone announced Tudor as the 2025 HPAF Champions.

Paisley explains how each of the Houses excelled in its allocated theme. 'Windsor captured the energy of Faster, the winning House Tudor soared with their portrayal of Higher, York powerfully displayed Stronger, and Stuart embodied unity and connection with Together.'

Director of Performing Arts Mrs Heather Aird says, 'The House Performing Arts Festival is a wonderful way to kick-start the year and expose all Senior Ravenswood girls to the areas of Choral, Dance, Drama, Costume and Design, and Technology and Media. We were so proud of our student leaders, who took their House to another level of performance and who have raised the bar even further!'



Student Showcase

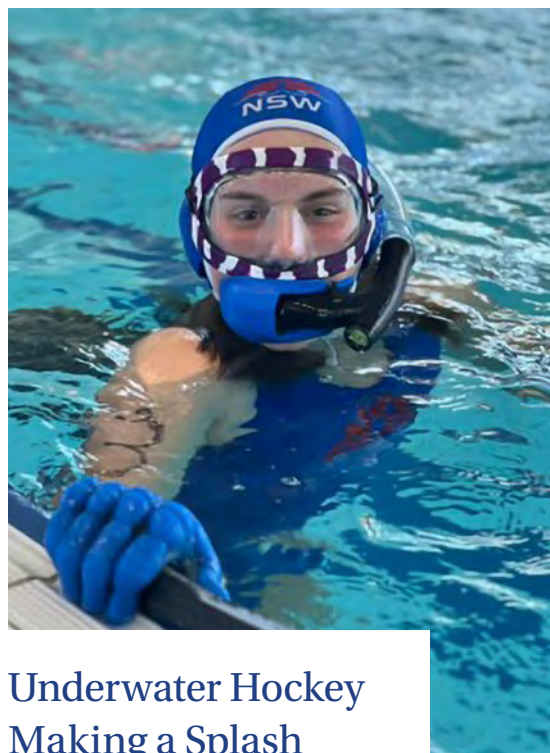


National and State Swimming Success

Georgina Fife (Year 10), Amelia Robinson (Year 11), Kirrily Woods (Year 11), Jessica Persson (Year 9) and Racquel Wu (Year 11) represented IGSA at the NSW CIS Secondary Swimming Championships in May, with Georgina, Jessica and Kirrily selected to compete at the 2025 NSW All Schools Swimming Championships.

In April, five Ravenswood students, Racquel Wu (Year 11), Jessica Persson (Year 9), Willow Holm (Year 8), Georgina Fife (Year 10) and Amelia Robinson (Year 11), participated in the Swimming Australia Age and Multi-Class Swimming Championships in Brisbane. The week was full of fast and fierce racing, with Ravenswood swimmers competing with the best in the country.

In the Junior School, Evelyn Sun (Year 5) competed at the NSW CIS Swimming in the Girls 8-10 years 50m Breaststroke in March, winning the gold medal. Evelyn progressed through to the NSW PSSA Swimming Championships representing the NSW CIS team, where she went on to win a silver medal in the final.



Underwater Hockey Making a Splash

In January, Hayley Paterson (Year 10) represented NSW at the 50th Australian Underwater Hockey National Championships in Victoria. State representative teams showed off their skills underwater as they battled in breathtaking chases to hit a 1.5kg puck through the water and into a goal. The NSW Under 19s manager confirmed Hayley was one of the youngest players selected to play NSW representative underwater hockey at this level, and one of only two girls in the squad. She was awarded the 'Vulture Award' for the competition by the NSW Under 19s coach.



Bullseye for Hannah

Having first picked up a bow just 18 months ago, Hannah Park has made a stunning ascent in the world of archery.

Last year, the Year 9 student won First Place in the Under 16 Female Recurve category at the Indoor National Championships in Queensland. She followed this achievement by representing NSW at the National Youth Archery Championships in Canberra earlier this year, participating in multiple events and placing sixth overall.

Director of Sport Mr Edward Ellwood-Hall says, 'It's been wonderful to see how much Hannah has accomplished in such a short time. Her dedication and passion for the sport is truly inspiring to the entire Ravenswood community.'



On the Fast Track

Senior School students re-wrote the history books, setting five new School records at the Senior School House Athletics Carnival at Sydney Olympic Park Athletic Centre.

The day showcased impressive performances and strong House spirit, with more than a thousand people from the RAVO community turning up to cheer everyone on and enjoy the day. A record number of School records were broken – indicating the outstanding ability of our students in each year – and Tudor were crowned House champions.

Caitlyn Yu (Year 8) continued her dominance in javelin, competing in the NSW Junior Athletics Championships in March and finishing third in the Under 14 Girls division. Caitlyn was also selected to represent NSW in javelin at the 2025 Australian Little Athletics Championships in Adelaide, where she won a gold medal in the Under 13 Girls Javelin. The NSW Under-13 team also won the Trevor Billingham Trophy.

Annika Boys (Year 12), Mia Hooton (Year 10) and Annalise Quintana (Year 8) also qualified and competed at the 2025 Australian Junior Athletics Championships (Track and Field). Mia won a silver medal in the Under 16 Years Women's 800m, Annika ran a personal best to finish fourth in the Under 18 Years 400m Hurdles, and Annalise finished fourteenth in the Under 15 Years 90m Hurdles.

Table Tennis Star Secures State Bronze Medal

Endora Chen (Year 10) participated in the 2025 NSW Junior Invitational Top 10 Table Tennis Tournament in March. This prestigious tournament brought together the top 10 Under 19 table tennis players from across the state. After nearly eight hours of intense round-robin competition, Endora emerged among the top players, securing third place.

Fencing Achievements

Hayley Wei (Year 7) placed third in the Women's Épée event at the ranked-state 2025 Roberta Nutt Intermediate Individual Fencing Competition in May. She also competed in the 2025 RA White/AJ Rae Event, winning the gold medal with her teammates in the Women's Team Épée event. The tournament was a qualifier for the upcoming 2025 Australian Intermediate Schools Championships.



House Cross Country Carnivals

In February, St Ives Showground was alive with energy as students from the Junior School came together for the much-anticipated Junior School House Cross Country Carnival. The event was a celebration of participation, with students giving their all in a fun and supportive atmosphere, and Windsor crowned the champion House.

Fifteen students were selected to compete at the IPSHA Cross Country Carnival in April. Eloise Lombardo (Year 6) was selected at that event for the IPSHA team, which will compete at the NSWICIS Championships.

The Senior School Cross Country was also a vibrant celebration of endurance and House spirit, as students rose to the challenge with enthusiasm and determination. The event was a testament to resilience and camaraderie – rain and cool conditions only added to the sense of achievement. Congratulations to Tudor House for claiming first place and to the 53 students who were selected to compete at the IGSA Cross Country. Eleven students were then selected to compete on the IGSA team at the NSWICIS Championships.

Student Showcase



Gymnastics Success

In March, Victoria Wei (Year 10) represented Australia as part of the Australian Rhythmic Gymnastics Junior Group at the Aphrodite Cup in Athens, Greece. She also represented her country in the same category at the Sofia Cup in Sofia, Bulgaria in April. Victoria's group qualified for the Hoop final in the Aphrodite Cup, and in the Sofia Cup her group qualified for both the Hoop and Clubs finals.

Victoria was also selected to represent Australia at the 3rd Junior World Championships in Bulgaria in June, competing against 63 other nations. (Her team was fortunate to train for two weeks with the Bulgarian National Team.)

In May, Victoria competed at the NSW Senior State Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships and made the State team. Also competing at these championships were several other accomplished Ravenswood rhythmic gymnasts. Cara Gavagna (Year 11) delivered an exceptional performance, placing fourth overall in Level 10, out of 16 gymnasts. Cara was also crowned Hoop State Champion, earning a gold medal, and secured a silver medal in Clubs.

Leona Asahina (Year 10) competed in the Senior International division, placing sixth overall and winning a silver medal in the Ribbon apparatus – a fantastic result at this elite level. Zoe Wang (Year 5) had a successful competition, finishing fourth overall in Sub Junior International in a field of 11 strong competitors. Zoe also earned a bronze medal in Clubs.

Cathy Gao (Year 6) performed beautifully in the Pre Junior International division, finishing fifth overall and placing fourth in Ball. Susie Chen (Year 12), the Ravenswood Rhythmic Captain, competed in her final individual competition with grace and determination, placing fifth in Ball in Level 10. Cara Xiao (Year 5), also competed in the Sub Junior division, placing seventh overall and achieving sixth in Clubs.

Cara, Leona, Zoe and Cathy will join Victoria in representing NSW at the Australian National Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships on the Gold Coast this July.



Rope Skipping World Championship Selection

Stella Adam-Smith (Year 7) and sister Bronte (Year 5) competed in the ACT/ NSW State Jump Rope Skipping Championships in Canberra in May.

Bronte secured two silver medals (Single Rope Team Freestyle and Speed Relay) and a bronze for Individual Overall. She secured her place at the upcoming National Championships in Brisbane, a testament to her talent and commitment to the sport.

Stella achieved a silver in Single Rope Team Freestyle, and two bronze medals in Double Dutch Freestyle and Double Dutch Speed. Stella's performance earned her qualification for the National Championships in Brisbane, as well as selection for the Junior World Championships, to be held in Kawasaki, Japan.

Alumni



Recent Leavers' Reunion

In February, the School and members of the Ravenswood Alumni Committee welcomed back to campus the Class of 2023 for the annual Recent Leavers' Reunion.

Held in the Old Girls' Courtyard, it was a wonderful reunion for the new Alumni, who reconnected with each other, staff and colleagues. The Class of 2023 were also excited to see new campus developments, such as the new H Block cut-through, the new Renasci block and The Anne Johnstone Wellbeing and Sports Centre under construction.



2025 Alumni Reunions

For help organising a reunion, please email alumni@ravenswood.nsw.edu.au

To find event information for your reunion, visit ravenswood.nsw.edu.au/community/alumni/reunions

5-Year Reunion (Class of 2020)

Date TBC

Event organisers: Maddie Rudan and Chloe Lappin

10-Year Reunion (Class of 2015)

Saturday 1 November 2025

Event organiser: Stacey Lotkin

20-Year Reunion (Class of 2005)

Saturday 15 November 2025

Event organiser: Lara Kamenos

30-Year Reunion (Class of 1995)

Saturday 9 August 2025

Event organisers: Catherine Wong (Dunston) and Georgina Spong (Walmsley)

40-Year Reunion (Class of 1985)

Date TBC

Event organiser: Susan Livermore (Wynn)

50-Year Reunion (Class of 1975)

Thursday 16 October 2025 (at Golden Girls' Luncheon and event after)

Event organiser: Selina Pyle (Eckles)

57-Year Reunion (Class of 1968)

Friday 7 November 2025

Event organiser: Di McKenzie-Rabu (Blackford)

60-Year Reunion (Class of 1965)

Get-together at the Golden Girls' Luncheon on Thursday 16 October 2025

63-Year Reunion (Class of 1962)

Wednesday 22 October 2025

Event organiser: Helen Hunt (Wright)

Golden Girls' Luncheon – Save the Date!

Thursday 16 October 2025

The annual Golden Girls' Luncheon will be held on campus for Alumni who left Ravenswood 50 years ago or more. The luncheon is complimentary and a wonderful way to re-connect, hear from our Acting Principal and visit the campus. At the 2025 Golden Girls' Luncheon we will welcome our newest Golden Girls, the Class of 1975.

Coming Up in 2026

We encourage our Alumni to start planning their reunions early. School reunions are a wonderful way to reconnect with school friends and celebrate significant years since leaving Ravenswood. Our reunions are all about reigniting the Ravenswood spirit and are a great opportunity to catch up with friends you may not have seen for some time.

Ravenswood school reunions are generally held to mark 5, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60 and 70 years since leaving the School. However, some year groups choose to celebrate more frequently – reunions are not restricted to these milestone years.

Ravenswood organises and hosts the annual Recent Leavers' Reunion and the Golden Girls' Luncheon; these are held on campus in February and October each year, respectively.

All other reunions are organised by one or more representatives or a working group from each cohort, with support from the Ravenswood Alumni office. Email enquiries to alumni@ravenswood.nsw.edu.au

Coming Up in 2026

Recent Leavers' Reunion (Class of 2024)

February 2026 at Ravenswood – invitation will be sent later this year by Ravenswood.

5-Year Reunion (Class of 2021)

Event organiser needed

10-Year Reunion (Class of 2016)

Event organiser needed

20-Year Reunion (Class of 2006)

Event organiser needed

30-Year Reunion (Class of 1996)

Event organiser needed

40-Year Reunion (Class of 1986)

Event organiser needed

50-Year Reunion (Class of 1976)

Event organiser needed

60-Year Reunion (Class of 1966)

Event organiser needed

70-Year Reunion (Class of 1956)

Event organiser needed

Golden Girls' Luncheon

October 2026 – date to be confirmed



Did You Know?

Career Advice from Alumni

In June, 60 Ravenswood Alumni returned to campus, generously volunteering their time to share their career stories at the annual Alumni Careers Networking Evening.

More than 90 senior students, parents and guardians benefitted from hearing about diverse career journeys and insights into life after school.

Alumni and current parent Angeline Nicholas (Foong, 1994), expounded on her current role as

Senior Communications and Engagement Advisor for the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure. Angeline spoke about her career progression and lessons learnt, and gave practical advice to students to help them to navigate life after school.

Attendees also enjoyed hearing and learning from numerous Ravenswood Alumni as part of the various panel Q&As in the Senior Learning Centre.

Alumni Reunions



The Class of 1955 celebrated 70 years since leaving Ravenswood, enjoying lunch at Runaway Spoon in Lindfield in April. Nine Alumni enjoyed catching up with friends and reminiscing about their days at Ravenswood.



The Class of 1990 celebrated their 35-Year Reunion in May with drinks and a campus tour of Ravenswood, followed by dinner at the Greengate Hotel.

Alumni

Generations Breakfast

One of the many highlights on the Ravenswood Alumni Committee's calendar is the annual Generations Breakfast. Held in the Centenary Centre, the event brings past and present Ravenswood students together and strengthens the deep bond between Alumni families and their daughters.

This year, more than 80 attendees enjoyed the breakfast festivities, including 30 Alumni mothers, grandmothers and aunts. These women represented 20 different year groups, from the Class of 1953 to the Class of 2006. Sarah Robinson (Newton, 1992) spoke on behalf of the Ravenswood Alumni Committee.



Double Stroke of Success

Ravenswood Alumni Whitney Duan (2012) has been selected as a finalist in the 2025 Archibald Prize for the second year in a row.

Her portrait of singer Rainbow Chan, titled *Banquet*, has been on display at the Art Gallery of NSW from 10 May and follows her successful entry in 2024 with her portrait of fashion designer Jordan Gogos.

Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship

Paris Lay-Yee (2022 School Vice Captain, pictured second from the right) was one of five recent recipients of an Australian Association Foundation Scholarships, announced by the Governor-General, Her Excellency, the Hon. Sam Mostyn AC following a Round Table Conference at Admiralty House.

Paris is currently attending the University of Technology Sydney, undertaking a Bachelor of Communication (Strategic Communication), Bachelor of Laws. Her scholarship was donated by the Order of Australia Association.

Paris says, 'I am incredibly honoured to be a recipient of the Order of Australia Association Foundation Scholarship. The greatest benefit I will get from this scholarship is the mentorship, where I have the priceless opportunity of working with a mentor who has been recognised in their field. This scholarship



will allow me to continue working in the communities and initiatives I'm already involved in. This has strengthened my resolve in advocacy work, so I hope to one day work at the United Nations!'

Alumni Weddings and Vale

Weddings



Eloise Sohier

In March, Eloise Sohier (2012) married Anthony Gribble in front of 135 guests at Willow Farm in Berry on NSW's South Coast. Five of Eloise's six bridesmaids were from her 2012 cohort: Katarina Hubner, Isabelle Cohen (Slack), Danielle Pugliese, Jessica Coventry and Karina Mears.



Ashley Garner

Ashley Garner (More, 2012) married Luke at an intimate wedding for 90 family and friends at Pasadena in Church Point. Members of her 2012 cohort attending were bridesmaids Katarina Hubner (who introduced the couple) and Lauren Steggles, plus close friends Isabelle Cohen (Slack), Danielle Pugliese, Jessica Coventry, Eloise Sohier, Chloe Tooth (Davies) and Karina Mears.



Vale

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

Vivienne Bradley Honor

(Nicklin, 1948) (1932–2025)

Valerie Ann Stewart (1968) (1950–2025)

Raelene Seeto (1990) (1972–2021)

Ruth Peirson (1982) (Passed away in 2024)

Lindsay Reeler (1978) (1961–2024)

Angela van Wyk (Parker, 1951) (1935–2025)

Community



Lest We Forget

At a moving ANZAC Commemorative Senior School Assembly, Ravenswood students and staff were joined by community members who have served our country, as well as relatives of former servicemen and women.

The School was honoured to have Class of 1988 Alumni, Rear Admiral Katherine Richards AM CSC, as the guest speaker at the special Assembly, led by the Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit.

Rear Admiral Richards' illustrious career in the Royal Australian Navy spanned more than three decades, and she was recently appointed Chief Engineer of Engineers Australia. She gave a moving address to students, cadets, staff and special guests about the significance of ANZAC Day, and why it stands as an annual reminder to remember the fallen, and to pursue a life of service.

'As I reflect on over 36 years in the service of our nation, I think we do this best when day in and day out, we centre our lives not on our ambitions, or on money, or on our quest for popularity or acceptance – but rather we say that we will put others ahead of ourselves, and with no expectation of reward, recognition or accolades,' Rear Admiral Richards said. 'This is the very essence of service. It is not limited to those who wear a uniform. It is universal in its character because it is a mindset. In short – anyone can serve.'

Inspired by Rear Admiral Richards' address, Principal Dr Anne Johnstone said she believed it would have a lasting impact on everyone present.

'Every year we unite as a School community to pay tribute to those who served and to reflect on their resilience, loyalty, bravery and perseverance in

the most challenging of times,' Dr Johnstone said. 'At this year's service, it was so meaningful to hear our Alumni guest speaker, Rear Admiral Katherine Richards, reflect on how, by taking an other-person-centred approach, we honour the ANZAC legacy of working together, in community, with purpose, grace, compassion and good character.'

The Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit Annual Field Exercise (AFX) Camp in April demonstrated Rear Admiral Richards' advice of 'putting others ahead of ourselves and working together'. An eight-day bush camp near Lithgow, the annual pilgrimage provides an environment where Ravenswood and Knox Grammar students work together with a strong sense of collegiality, purpose and inclusivity to develop life skills, including teamwork, leadership, resilience, self-efficacy, discipline and agility.

The first AFX Camp under the new banner of the Knox Ravenswood Cadet Unit was inspirational for the Unit. Cadets showed camaraderie and a sense of purpose and belonging as they shared challenges, built their leadership strengths and formed new friendships while undertaking hiking, navigation, abseiling, archery, canoeing, raft-building, 'mud runs', bushcraft, medic activities and a range of team-building exercises.

Miss Annabelle Osborne, KRCU 2IC – Ravenswood Staff and Students, says, 'AFX camp is the highlight of the year for our Cadets and staff. It gives our students the opportunity to practise resilience and to challenge themselves in a safe and supportive environment. The weather this year couldn't have been better and we are so grateful we were able to experience a full eight-day camp – only the second one in six years!'



Mother and Daughter Chapel Services

In the lead up to Mother's Day in May, Ravenswood hosted three special Mother and Daughter Chapel services for mothers, grandmothers, aunts, carers and their daughters, bringing together generations of the RAVO community.

Led by Pastor Anna White-Atkins, and with the Junior Strings Ensemble performing, the two Junior School services (Prep to Year 2 and Years 3 to 6) saw students make their guest a custom bookmark and a special collaborative bracelet.

The Senior School service celebration featured glow sticks, musical performances and the poignant tying of floral ribbons, symbolising unique mother-daughter bonds.

Complementing the festivities was the annual RPA Mother's Day Stall, where students browsed and bought an array of gifts for their mothers and special mother-figures.



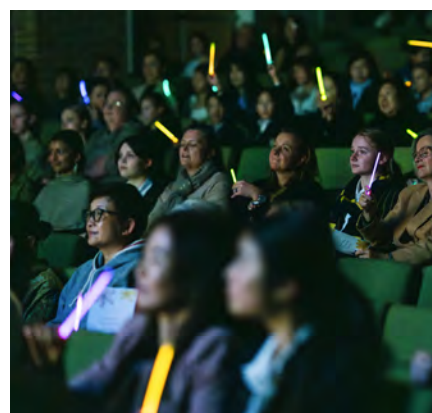
Paving the Way

Despite inclement weather, the Ravenswood community gathered in the Centenary Centre to celebrate the revealing of the 2024-2025 Ravenswood Foundation Commemorative Paver Program.

More than 70 current students, Alumni and members of the Ravenswood community bought personalised pavers to add to the Old Girls' Courtyard, joining the over 1200 existing pavers already laid since the program commenced.

Principal Dr Anne Johnstone highlighted the warmth associated with leaving a physical legacy at Ravenswood, while Ravenswood Foundation Committee member and past parent Mr Rod Seeto expressed his gratitude to families who bought pavers, with proceeds going towards the Ravenswood Building Fund to facilitate major capital projects and building projects.

Community



Selected photos from Parent Welcome Cocktail Reception, Easter Hat Parade, Term 1 Commencement Assembly, RPA Ladies Lunch, ANZAC Commemorative Service, and Mother and Daughter Chapel Services



