

Autumn Edition 2020

LUCIS

**The MLC
School girl**
is at the heart
of everything
we do



The Magazine of the MLC School Family



MLC
SCHOOL

MLC School's goal for each girl when she graduates is to be:

- Compassionate to herself, interacting with others with kindness and celebrating diversity
- Courageous in her pursuits, expressing herself honestly and with integrity to live a life with purpose
- Capable of navigating change, showing leadership in adapting to the multiple paths that her future will take
- Connected to the legacy of MLC School, using it to inspire her to be an agent of change in her world

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MAKING AN IMPACT



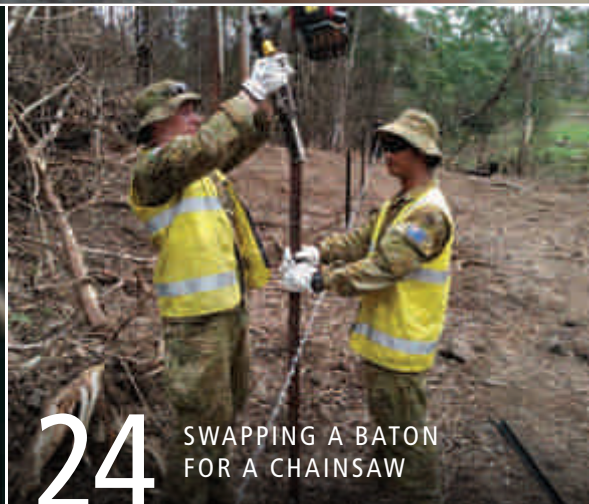
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A time of change

LISA MOLONEY / PRINCIPAL

“There is nothing permanent except change.” – Heraclitus.

The early months of 2020 have certainly been like no other, with the wide-ranging impact of the COVID-19 pandemic causing us all to have to shift to new modes of teaching and communication. As a consequence of recommendations made by the NSW Premier, on March 24, MLC School shifted to flexible learning; allowing our girls to learn from home or from School depending on the needs of their families. Overnight, we went from having over 1200 girls on campus each day, to having 30 students attending in person. A corresponding decrease in the number of staff working onsite led to a feeling of emptiness, with empty classrooms and silent corridors generating a surreal feeling of life suspended for those of us who continued to come to school. It would be easy to fall into the trap of thinking that things might never be the same or that this major, unexpected disruption might damage the very core of MLC School.

However, as I read the articles in this edition of *Lucis*, it struck me that the theme running throughout is of change. The description of the significant impact that the 1918–1919 Influenza Pandemic had on MLC School generated a new feeling of personal affinity. The Principal of the day, Miss Sutton, spoke of the ‘difficulties of the work in the early part of the year... and of the loyal cooperation of every member of the staff in their various tasks.’ More than a hundred years on, I too feel the same challenges and weight of responsibility as we navigate this time and, like Miss Sutton, am indebted to the MLC School staff for their commitment, hard work and flexibility.

Of course, change can also be exciting and a well-deserved reward for years of effort and dedication. The Class of 2019 are celebrated for their outstanding academic results and for the positive legacy that they leave. They have earned the opportunities that await them and we look forward to hearing more about their journeys beyond school. Similarly, Mr Doug Finlay has earned his retirement after 24 years of service to MLC School and 49 years in education.

Also in this edition of *Lucis*, you will read that the New Year has brought with it a change of Council Chair. I would like to record my thanks to outgoing Chair Pauline Johnston for her unwavering support, guidance and care during my first years as Principal of MLC School. Pauline is a passionate advocate for MLC School and a shining example of the MLC School graduate; intelligent, capable, poised and courageous. The School is incredibly fortunate to have had her give so much of her time over so many years. Equally, incoming Chair Eve Tsironis is an outstanding example of all that we hope the MLC School girls will become and I look forward to working alongside and learning from her over the coming years.

So it is with great pride, that I commend this edition of *Lucis* to you as a record not only of a wonderfully busy and productive school but also for the story that it tells of our positive, effective, unstoppable determination in the face of adversity, and evidence that at the very heart of MLC School is the courage to not only respond to unexpected and difficult change but to see it as an opportunity for growth.



'Overnight, we went from having over 1200 girls on campus each day, to having 30 students attending in person.'

INTRODUCING

Dr Paraskevi (Eve) Tsironis



Dr Paraskevi (Eve) Tsironis (1988) was appointed to the School Council in October 2018 and to the role of Chair of Council in April 2020. She is the second alumna to hold the position of Chair of MLC School Council.

Currently, Eve is the practice principal of Cammeray Medical Practice.

After graduating from the University of Sydney in 1995, Eve worked at Royal Prince Alfred Hospital and Dubbo Base Hospital in the areas of general medicine and surgery, emergency medicine, and obstetrics and gynaecology.

In 1997, Eve established the Warrumbungle Medical Centre in Coonabarabran, with her husband. In the same year, Eve also became a Visiting

Medical Officer in Coonabarabran, a position she still holds.

As a Fellow of both the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, Eve is a registrar supervisor for both Colleges, and is also an adjunct senior lecturer at the University of Sydney.

Involved in many medical associations, Eve has served as a Councillor of the Australian Medical Association (NSW) and the Rural Doctors Association (NSW). She was Director of General

Practice Education and Training (GPET) from 2009-2015 and is currently a member of the NSW Medical Services Committee.

Eve is interested in all aspects of general practice and family medicine, with a particular focus on paediatrics, women's health, emergency medicine and skin surgery.

Eve and her husband are also owners of a vineyard in Pokolbin and have won many awards for their wines.

Eve attended MLC School from 1983 to 1988 and was ranked in the top 1% of the state in the HSC. In her final year she was awarded the Prize for Physics (aeq), The Stonham-Bowden Prize for Year 12 Chemistry and Prize for Service to the School.

Q&A

How do you reflect on your time as a student at MLC School, and how it shaped the woman you have become?

It was a great privilege to attend one of the leading girls' schools in Sydney which was dedicated to advancing girls' education and embraced all cultures and religions whilst grounded in a Christian ethos. My time at MLC School taught me that with hard work, perseverance and a strong belief, much can be achieved. These values have helped me in all of my pursuits since school.

Reflecting on my time at MLC School, I am grateful for the hard work and sacrifice my parents, who were relatively new immigrants to this country at the time, made to give me the opportunity to attend such a great school. This meant that throughout my years at MLC School I learnt the importance of both being grateful for the opportunities we are blessed with and to make the very most of them.

What was the impetus for you joining the School Council?

The impetus for joining the School Council was my strong belief in the importance of good pedagogy and my desire to ensure our youth have strong foundations and futures. My time on the

School Council so far has given me the chance to contribute to the development of the great educational experience that MLC School offers, and I look forward to continuing to do so as Chair.

Importantly, I wanted to give back to the MLC School community – once an MLC School girl always an MLC School girl! In particular, to ensure that the girls who attend benefit from similar positive experiences to mine and grow to become bright, confident and of good character. I want to see our girls enjoy happy and fulfilling lives and contribute well to society as a whole.

What is your main goals/aims/ focus as Council Chair?

The key focus is to ensure that MLC School continues to be a leading educational institution for girls in Australia. Parents entrust their daughters' school education to us so it is our responsibility to foster an environment where they can grow and develop across all domains, especially academic, spiritual, mental and physical. In doing so, the School Council and I aim to keep cultivating a supportive community for staff and students alike and to always strive to improve our practices and approach for the benefit of our girls. I want MLC School to be

a leading light in the wider educational sphere and community at large.

You have taken on the role at one of the most turbulent times in the School's history, how do you see these days shaping the future for the School?

These are challenging times and the School Council and I will continue to do all we can to support the families in our School community and to ensure our girls still receive the high standard of education expected.

However, times of adversity are also times of opportunity for reflection, renewal and strengthening on the personal, family and community level. The COVID-19 pandemic has required great flexibility and adaptability and I am proud of our collective response as a School community so far. We will learn a lot as a school community from the changes that have been made and from those lessons, undoubtedly, will come innovative ideas and practices for the classroom and beyond.

We must have faith that we are not alone during this time of trial; we must have hope that things will improve and that with great love we will get through this being stronger and better. We walk in light of God.



MAKING AN IMP

CHAIR OF MLC SCHOOL COUNCIL, 2010–2020

After 10 years as Chair of Council, Pauline Johnston (1988) retired from the position in April.

The MLC School story may be one of empowering women, but the glass ceiling of the MLC School Council was a tough one to crack. Pauline is not only the first female Chair, she is also the first Old Girl to take on the role. Bringing her strength in management from areas such as finance, insurance and risk, together with her understanding of the School, Pauline felt her leadership needed to ensure the School responded to the challenges of education in the twenty-first century whilst never losing sight of the qualities that had stood the test of time and stamped MLC School as unique amongst its competitors.

‘The essence of MLC School is about helping girls reach their potential both academically and as human beings. This requires a holistic focus on the mind, body and spirit that meets the needs of a generation who will encounter a world none of us can even imagine. We cannot

merely teach the girls content, but we need every girl to leave MLC School competent to navigate change and adapt to succeed as the environment around her changes, secure in who she is and in her unique value.’

During her tenure, Pauline was instrumental in transforming the physical nature of the School. This is marked most notably by the building of the Senior Centre, the biggest capital project ever undertaken by MLC School, as well as Café 1886 and a significant landscaping project on the senior campus. Buildings themselves, however, were never the endpoint, but seen as a means of reshaping the delivery of learning and preparing girls for workplaces that are agile and flexible – radically different from the isolated classrooms of the mid nineteenth century that once took pride of place at the School.

‘I am very proud to have led the Council to have made such a significant contribution to the future of learning at MLC School’, says Pauline.

Pauline has also overseen an expansion of academic programs at the School. Every girl now has the opportunity to experience learning in an international context with Year 10 girls travelling to Chiang Mai. The continued growth of the School’s academic results, especially in the International Baccalaureate (IB) has cemented MLC School’s place as one of the top IB schools in not only Australia but the world.

Co-curricular offerings have flourished to be one of the largest programs offered in schools.

Under Pauline’s stewardship, the Council has implemented governance arrangements to create a stable foundation for the School to operate in the 21st century and beyond, and a new corporate structure will roll out in the coming months.

The 2020–2024 Strategic Plan was also developed under Pauline’s leadership.

‘Placing ‘the MLC School girl at the heart of everything we do’ is fundamental to the Strategic Plan. It is the unwavering focus of the Council and is critical to shaping the School’s future,’ said Pauline.

‘The Strategic Plan emphasises the key pillars of learning and teaching; pastoral care; and spiritual life.

‘The significant difference in this plan is our resolve that every decision must come back to what is best for the girls in our care. I think this is way beyond any other school’s strategic plan I have seen. It is a new way of thinking for a school, but then, very much in line with how MLC School has always approached education for girls.

‘We think outside the box.’

Pauline’s leadership has been truly transformational. Over the past 10 years, the changes to the physical, programmatic, organisational and strategic aspects of the School, will mark her legacy as profound.

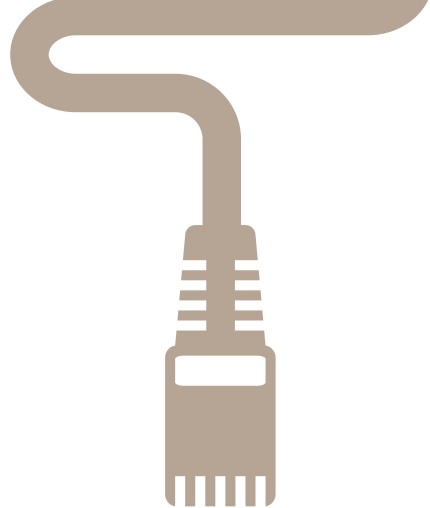
Fortunately, Pauline’s expertise and knowledge will still help guide the School, as she remains a member of the Council.

‘Eve Tsironis will provide outstanding leadership as the new Chair. As another Old Girl, she has a deep understanding of MLC School and excellent board experience. The School is in great hands.’

NG PACT

Both teachers and students are to be commended for adopting this new way of teaching and learning.





Flexible learning

Literally overnight, in the face of the growing health crisis brought on by COVID-19, on 24 March 2020, MLC School switched to flexible learning, whereby girls were delivered the same learning whether they were at school or at home, where most chose to remain.

For girls in Year 6 to Year 12 teachers present lessons online via platforms with which the girls had become familiar – *CANVAS* or *Schoology*. The day begins and ends at the same time and rolls are marked every lesson. Teachers check in via *Microsoft Teams* and can converse with their students and instruct them on the aims of each class. For Junior School girls, the same delivery methods commenced in Term 2 for core English and Mathematics subjects. All other subjects are available using the School's learning management system, including videos of teachers, resources and teacher feedback.

The School is still open, though on the Senior campus, the rooms and corridors are largely empty. Girls in Year 12 doing practical subjects, such as Science or Textiles, attend in small groups to enable social distancing to work on their projects. In the Junior School staff still supervise the *Kiss and Drop*, help the girls who attend each day, have fun dancing for them or setting PE challenges to keep active.

Much planning had facilitated the changeover and all the staff are to be commended for their preparation and preparedness to adopt the new way of delivering learning for MLC School girls.



Family tables have become student desks.



Many pets sit alongside the girls during study time.



Sisters are now able to spend the day learning together.



ANZAC Day

LEST WE FORGET

A formal service commemorating ANZAC Day was still held at MLC School despite the social distancing issues associated with COVID-19. Significantly, it featured members of the School's cadet unit for the first time with Lilia Coman (Year 11), Olivia Clowes (Year 10) and Madison Clemens (Year 10) playing a role in the flag raising ceremony.

Music Captain, Zoe Hannam (Year 12) and Captain of Choir, Holly Miller (Year 12) opened the service with the hymn, *Abide With Me*. Rev Vanessa Williams-Henke read a psalm and Rev Viniana Ravetali performed the formal blessing.

School Captain, Amelie Roediger's Reflection looked at the story of our ANZACs and its relevance today and Principal, Lisa Moloney recalled the impact of wars at MLC School, our girls' involvement and Old Girls' service.

School Vice-Captain (Year 10 to Year 12), Lilly Dummett introduced *The Ode* and recounted its history. It was delivered by School Vice-Captain (Year 6 to Year 9), Ariana Haghighi.

The stirring sounds of the trumpet call from Year 12 musician Isabel Leung led girls across the suburbs to observe a minute's silence.

The service concluded with beautiful renditions of both Australian and New Zealand National Anthems.

Lest we forget.

The video of the service can be viewed on the MLC School YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHOJD-XA05Y>









THE CLASS OF
2019

THEIR WINGS AND FLY

After their outstanding academic achievements, the Class of 2019 returned to school on Thursday 13 February 2020 to celebrate their success at the Assembly for Academic Achievement.

The Reverend Dr Charles J. Prescott Medal was introduced in 2019 to recognise the graduates with the highest university entrance score (Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank). This medal is named in honour of the founder and first Headmaster of MLC School (1886–1899), Reverend Dr Charles J. Prescott. Reverend Dr Prescott was viewed as a progressive educationalist and was a strong advocate for the education of women and girls.

In 2020 there were **four recipients** who achieved a perfect ATAR of 99.95: Vicky Feng (2019 SRC Captain), Annike Lindhout, Rachel Wang (2019 Vice-Captain – Year 6 to Year 9) and Olivia Wu (2019 Debating Captain). They were recognised at the Assembly for Academic Achievement, along with all other high achievers from the final exams.



Head of Year 12 2019, Irene Swain, and Principal, Lisa Moloney, welcomed the girls from the 2019 cohort.

Principal, Lisa Moloney said 'I am extremely proud of our Class of 2019. Not only have they achieved outstanding academic results, they are confident, capable young women who, like those who have come before them, will continue to be agents of positive change in their own lives and the lives of others.'

In the 2019 HSC results, 64% of the girls achieved a Band 6 in at least one subject, and there were 96 instances of girls awarded a Band 6 or E4.

In the International Baccalaureate (IB), MLC School continued to excel with over 64% of the girls achieving an ATAR of 95 or over, including our four 2019 Reverend Dr Charles J. Prescott Medal winners, with their perfect scores of 45 (an ATAR of 99.95). MLC School continues to be one of the highest achieving schools in the IB in Australia. The average score at MLC School was 38, which represents an ATAR equivalent to 96.45. As a comparison, the worldwide average in 2019 was 28.5.

The Class of 2019 continued to impress. Many girls were nominated for HSC Showcase events, such as Callback (a showcase of exemplary performances and compositions by HSC students of Dance), InTech (an exhibition

'In the 2019 HSC results, 64% of the girls achieved a Band 6 in at least one subject, and there were 96 instances of girls awarded a Band 6 or E4.'

of outstanding Major Projects from HSC Industrial Technology students), ARTEXPRESS (an annual exhibition of exemplary artworks created by students for the Higher School Certificate in Visual Arts), Shape (a selection of exemplary Major Projects from HSC Design and Technology, Industrial Technology and Textiles and Design students, Textstyle (an exhibition of HSC Textiles and Design Major Projects), and OnSTAGE (a presentation and exhibition of group and individual performances and projects by HSC Drama students).

There were also early-entry University offers for a number of the girls in the Class of 2019. Vicky Feng accepted early entry into Princeton University, Annike Lindhout was awarded Macquarie Leaders and Achievers Early Entry for Bachelor of Speech and Hearing/Bachelor of Psych Honours, Capri Maher was offered

both the UNSW Commerce/Accounting and Commerce/Marketing Co-op Scholarships, Charis Chiu applied to Kings College London and the University of Cambridge (Law), Jasmine Cho has been accepted into Berklee College of Music and Imogen Greenslade has accepted a sporting scholarship to Arizona State University.

Jessica Pizzinga, who received a Band 6 in the HSC for Music, received offers for the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and the National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA).

For more information about the performance of the Class of 2019, please visit www.mlcsyd.nsw.edu.au/about-mlc-school/our-results.

Three of the four 2020 Reverend Dr Charles J. Prescott Medal Winners – Vicky Feng, Annike Lindhout and Olivia Wu. Rachel Wang was unable to attend the assembly.



The assembly was a chance for the girls to catch up.



WHAT SOME OF THE GIRLS HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THEIR JOURNEY THROUGH MLC SCHOOL

'MLC School has shaped the woman I am today, and I am extremely thankful for all the opportunities and memories. The students and staff have made MLC School the amazing school it is and has always been.'

– Jessica Kuo, 2019 School Captain

'I loved my time at MLC School. All of the staff in particular were so helpful in the Senior Years and committed a great deal of time to their students. The environment was supportive and encouraging and helped to reduce the level of stress throughout the year.'

– Annike Lindhout

'I grew as a person with the guidance of amazing and inspiring friends and teachers. This support system has helped me gain the courage to speak up and step out of my comfort zone.'

– Alyssa Nguyen

'No matter what everyone at MLC School goes through, we always go through it as a family.'

– Jessica Pizzinga

'I am so proud to call myself an MLC School girl. MLC School produces independent and strong-minded women.'

– Elle Andreopoulos

'The highlight of my time was the last two years as I really felt that I was respected, supported and enjoyed the solidarity within the year as we all went through this challenge together.'

– Eleni Charalambidis



Ce

A large, ornate theater filled with students and staff, celebrating achievements. The audience is seated in multiple tiers, and the stage is brightly lit. The architecture features intricate carvings and a high ceiling.

Celebrating Achievements

ACROSS
THE
SCHOOL

In 2019 we celebrated the achievements, hard work and commitment of our girls at our highly anticipated award events. *The 2019 Junior*

School Speech Day held in Potts Hall, was bitter-sweet. While we were very excited to acknowledge our girls academic and co-curricular accomplishments, and our Year 5 graduation, it was also one of sadness, as we farewelled our long-serving Deputy Head of Junior School, Douglas Finlay. After 24 years of teaching and serving our girls, and being a much-loved member of the School community, he is greatly missed by the whole school.

Speech Night was held once again in the glorious State Theatre. Under that stunning proscenium, girls performed musical items and crossed the stage to collect awards. The Class of 2019 also returned to be recognised and officially welcomed as Old Girls. Our guest speaker was Old Girl, Sapna Patel (2006), who is the founder of ImmiAdvisor, an online platform connecting visa applicants with reviewed migration agents and lawyers around the world. She recalled how the debating and public speaking skills she developed at MLC School helped her pitch for and win many contracts.

At the annual Sports Awards Dinner it was time to recognise and congratulate our athletes. We were honoured to have special guest, Tiana Penitani, who shared her story of representing Australia in Rugby 7s and Rugby League. She presented Lilly Dummett (Year 12) with the coveted Thelma Coyne Long Award for demonstrating excellence, fair play, integrity and ethics in sport.

The annual Debating and Public Speaking Awards took on a new format with various teams pitched against one another to make the case as to why they were the best team for the year. There was much fun and hilarity amongst the formalities

‘It was wonderful to see the joy shown by all participants as they shared their music with us.’

and presentations. Our Junior and Senior teams had a strong year, winning shields in the ISDA Debating Competition.

Mellifluous sounds swept through the Sydney Town Hall as we celebrated the Annual Music Gala Concert.

We were treated to a program of outstanding performances, including a beautiful performance of Charis Chiu’s (2019) composition, *Aisling*, by members of the Music Department. The whole

evening was incredibly professional, and it was wonderful to see the joy shown by all participants as they shared their music with us.

We also acknowledged our retiring Director of Music, James Allington’s long and distinguished career as his colleagues and family joined us to celebrate his achievements. The 2019 Gala Music Concert was a triumph and a wonderful finale to James’ exceptional career at MLC School.



Douglas Finlay farewelled by 2019 Junior School Captain, Kathleen Chron.



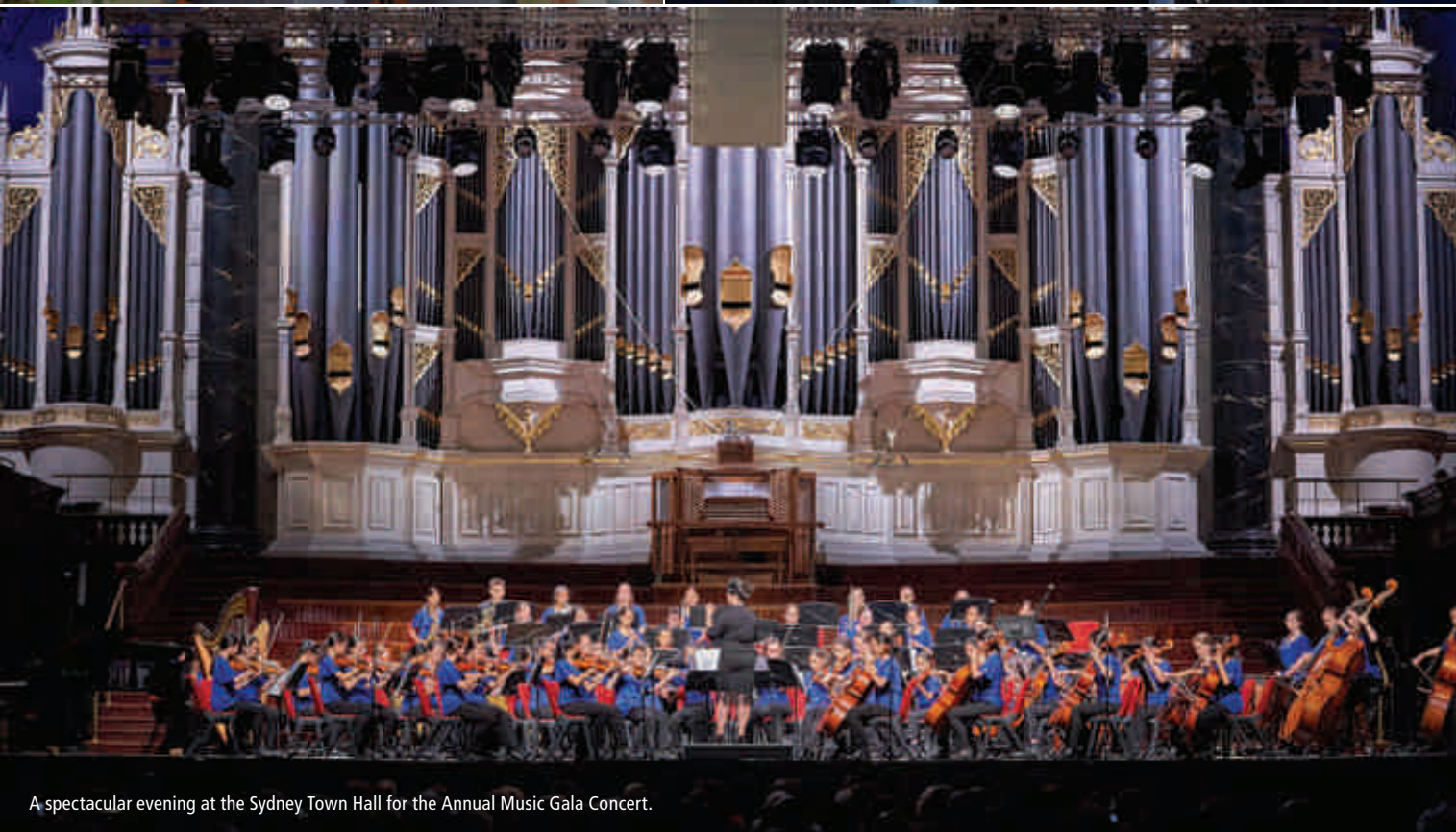
Our Senior School Captain and Vice-Captains lead the School for the last time at Speech Night.



Our 2019 Junior School Captain and Vice-Captains get ready to hand the leadership reins over.



Lilly Dummett (Year 12), Tiana Penitani and Sports Captain, Tashjan Managreve (Year 12) at the Sports Awards Dinner.



A spectacular evening at the Sydney Town Hall for the Annual Music Gala Concert.

Trevor's wealth of experience will benefit the girls of MLC School.



Music TO OUR EARS

MLC School welcomed Trevor Mee as Director of Music at the start of 2020.

He has a wealth of experience as both a musician and educator; and already the musical appreciation and talent of our girls have blossomed under his leadership.

Trevor studied violin at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music under Michelle Walsh and at Newcastle University under Elizabeth Holowell. He has performed with numerous ensembles including Hunter Symphony Orchestra, Christchurch Camerata, Intermezzo String Quartet, Jasmine Strings and Red Soda Band. During his time in the Hunter Valley, Trevor was the Coordinator of Strings at Newcastle Grammar School and Hunter School of Performing Arts and taught

violin at the Upper Hunter Conservatorium of Music. He was instrumental in forming a string section for the Star Struck Orchestra in 2007. Many of his students have gone on to have successful music careers nationally and internationally.

Trevor held the position as Head of Strings at Newington College from 2010–2019. During this time he was able to involve students in workshops with Goetz Richter (Head of Strings at Sydney Conservatorium) and members of the Australian Chamber Orchestra. Leading a successful period of noticeable growth in participation and standard of orchestral ensembles, he comes to the position at MLC School with a full understanding of needs, culture and dedication that produces a successful music department. He is excited at the wealth of knowledge and breadth of expertise in the Music Department at MLC School.

Music plays a pivotal role in shaping the image, mood and culture of a school. 'I am excited about the opportunity to work at a fellow Uniting Church school. The conviction to help young people be fearless thinkers with moral courage and compassion is one I share.

'Performing and understanding music is a great challenge and guiding young people to learn and perform stands as a grand enterprise. It contains risk, but also carries the reward of discovery and the potential of experiencing the spontaneous response an audience gives when moved by something words cannot express. Getting to watch young people experience these things is a privilege.'

Trevor can't wait to see the girls flourish.



A DAY

IN THE LIFE

Introducing Joanne Sharpe, Deputy Head of Junior School – Student Life

Joanne Sharpe has literally hit the ground running in her role in the Junior School.

Joanne is a committed educator with significant teaching and leadership experience. During 2019 she was Acting Principal at Our Lady of Perpetual Succour School, West Pymble, and she held executive roles in a number of primary schools in Sydney and Adelaide, including the previous seven years as Assistant Principal at Holy Family, Lindfield.

Joanne has taught all years from Kindergarten to Year 6. She brings a great depth of knowledge about how children learn and is innovative in her approaches to student and staff learning, particularly in literacy.

‘Days in Junior School go by very quickly, there is always something happening and never a dull moment – which is what I love about my job!’

MY DAY *

7am – My day starts early because being at school early and getting ready for the day is important to me. I like to touch base with staff so I have a handle on any changes the day may bring. Two mornings a week I attend before school academic care meetings.

8.40am – I am found in the Year 4 studio, teaching Maths. This is my favourite part of the day. I love spending time with the girls in my group, seeing them learn and grow – this is why I became a teacher and what I love about it.

9.45am – I head back to my office to do some Deputy work. I organise meetings with our Year 5 leaders; I coordinate camps; I might have an enrolment interview.

10.30am – Morning tea. Catching up with staff at this time is important, especially as I am new to the school.

10.50am – I will often have a meeting – with the Junior School executive or grades. I can also be found in the Godly Play room, joining the girls for the Reverend’s lesson.

12.40pm – During lunch I meet with leadership groups such as the Junior School Student Council (JSSC), House Captains or environment monitors.

After lunch I might head off to chapel or go to assembly or get some more Deputy work completed.

3pm – After school, I usually make my way to the Red Carpet, which is abuzz with girls leaving for the day or going to their various co-curricular activities. Some afternoons I also attend meetings or catch up with teachers to work with them on improving student experiences and outcomes.

* This was a typical day for Joanne pre-COVID-19

SWAPPING A BATON FOR A CHAINSAW

Richard Coward, Head of Bands and Head of Churunga House, was called into action during the bushfire crisis when the Australian Government enacted the Defence Reserve Service (Protection) Act 2001 to Call Out current Army reservists to assist any way they could.

Richard has been a member of the 1/15 Royal NSW Lancers since 1993 and as a current serving member was required to follow the Call Out and became a full-time army soldier, assisting during the fires.

Ninety members of the regiment turned up for duty and were deployed from 14 January 2019 to 5 February 2020. Richard returned to work at MLC School on 6 February 2020.

This is his account of his time doing duty to help communities recover from the devastating fires that gripped NSW over the Christmas to New Year period.

'The first week of the deployment consisted of signing paperwork and going to many briefings about the disaster scenarios we may be faced with. Eight members went through a chainsaw course, many more, including myself, became qualified as drivers on HiAces and Sprinters.

As a group, we departed for the Singleton Army base where we stayed for two nights before relocating to Taree.

At Taree we stayed in a Navy cadet hanger on stretcher beds and were on ration packs. Our task was to travel an hour to Wauchope where the fires had burnt through very large amounts of bush and farmland. Our job was to assist a charity group called *BlazeAid*. This group visits farmers to assess the damage done to fences, completely remove the old fence and build a brand new one at no cost to the farmer.

Our job was to be the muscle for the charity and go out with a *BlazeAid* vehicle to replace the fences. This included four to five barbed-wire fences and electric fences.

I was in a section with seven other guys, and we would repair and rebuild until the late afternoon. We then would go back to Taree for the night and repeat the following day.

Much of our work included clearing the burnt-out bush that had covered or fallen over the fence, as well as chain sawing trees to clear a space for the fence. We carried all the fencing star pickets as well as the wire, up to 1km, because vehicles could not always make it in.

We spent time talking to the farmers, learning about how close the fires came and the impact the fire had on them.

The real heroes were the volunteers who came to Wauchope of their own free will to help out. One such group of men came all the way from Copenhagen. They were all firefighters who were so moved by the disaster, they flew themselves to Sydney to help. They were fantastic guys who I can't praise enough for all the hard work they did with us.

I was very grateful for the opportunity to help out when the call came, and in the end, we repaired around 2km of fencing. The work still continues for *BlazeAid* but we were all glad that we gave them a head start. The amount of devastation equals the entire landmass of France and was five times greater than the fires in the Amazon.'





OUR LITTLEST ONES show their support

The girls in our 2019 Kindergarten class were inspired to send thank you cards to our firefighters after they read Jackie French's moving book, *Fire*. The girls thought about what they would like to say to the firefighters and then created their cards to send to fire stations throughout NSW.

WRAPPING THEM WITH love

In the midst of the devastating new year fires Robyn Langford, a teacher in the Technological and Applied Studies (TAS) Department and Head of Wade House, rallied the School community to assist the Animal Rescue Craft Guild by making joey pouches, bat wraps and koala mittens.

'Being an animal lover and seeing our beautiful wildlife suffer during the horrendous bushfires, I felt I needed to help in some way other than just giving a donation. I have a holiday house on the south coast and I had just come back from visiting Kangaroo Island, so it upset me a great deal.'

Renee Willemsen, another teacher at MLC School, directed Robyn to the Animal Rescue Craft Guild who needed pouches for the rescued joeys. Robyn then put the call out to staff and the girls for assistance, and she received an overwhelming response from people who just wanted to help.

Between 50 to 60 staff, girls and family members worked together for two days during the summer holidays in the Textiles rooms, creating hundreds of pouches, liners, wraps and mittens. The pouches varied from extra-small for the sugar gliders, to larger sizes for the joeys. There was nothing they wouldn't do – from sewing to overlocking, from cutting off threads to ironing, from folding to counting, from cutting elastic off fitted sheets to unpicking – everyone did whatever was needed.

'There were a few pouches left over from this amazing working bee, which are being donated to WIRES for the growing joeys.'

'Thank you to Renee Willemsen, Amelie Coman (Year 12), and Matilda Swann (2019) who so generously helped me organise all the activities.'

FRIDAY 6 MARCH 2020

International Women's Day BREAKFAST

International Women's Day was recognised with a panel discussion over breakfast.

This year we welcomed a panel of speakers genuinely committed to the international theme, 'An equal world is an enabled world'.

Moderated by our 2020 School Captain, Amelie Roediger, the panel included:

- Kylie Smith (1987), MLC School Old Girl, Chief Communications and Marketing Officer for MLC Australia and current parent
- Alison Mirams (1991), MLC School Old Girl and Chief Executive Officer at Roberts Pizzarotti
- Angus Trigg, Head of Public Affairs at Klarna and current parent. Angus is also member of the Waterhouse/

Vickery families whose connection to the School starts before its opening.

- Gaj Ravichandra, Registered Psychologist at Kompass Consultancy and current parent
- Frances Booth, MLC School Deputy Principal
- Ariana Haghighi, MLC School Vice-Captain (Year 6 to Year 9)
- Ethan Bateman, Trinity Grammar School Vice-Captain
- Nick Yule, Newington College Vice-Captain

The breakfast was attended by students, parents, Old Girls and boys from Trinity Grammar School and Newington College.



QUOTES FROM OUR PANELLISTS

'Progress of a woman doesn't have to be at the cost of a man.'
– Angus Trigg

'In order for girls to know they can lead; they need to see other women doing this.'
– Frances Booth

'Women need to support other women.' – Alison Mirams

'Leadership is not an accident.'
– Gaj Ravichandra

'We need to look at how to bring up young girls to lead.'
– Ariana Haghighi

School Captain, Amelie Roediger, with the breakfast panellists.



On stage



Throughout the year, girls have the opportunity to take the stage with their many talents and enthrall the audience with their performances.

A 'Wonder Fly' Success

The Middle Years Drama Company performed their production of *Wonder Fly* by Nick Atkins, a coming-of-age hero's quest set in a Sydney that looks a bit like Gotham City.

Wonder Fly director, and Dance, Drama and Entertainment teacher, Samantha Abraham, said 'The Middle Years Drama Company cast, and crew put in an enormous amount of effort over many months of rehearsals. The students balanced their academic life, extra-curricular activities and weekend rehearsals to make this production such a success. The girls developed a strong sense of leadership and responsibility during this process. It was a fantastic opportunity for them to experience all aspects of live theatre'.

Performing Baroque at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music

The MLC School Chamber Orchestra were honoured to have the opportunity to perform with the Sydney Conservatorium's Historically Informed Performance (HIP) Music Ensemble in the Verbruggen Hall at the end of 2019. The Chamber Orchestra watched HIP perform a variety of Baroque works before joining them to play Handel's *Concerto Grosso Op.6 No.10*.

This performance was the result of working with Professor Neal Peres da Costa from the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. The girls had previously spent many afternoon rehearsals with Professor Peres da Costa, who taught them how to play Baroque Music.

Cherie Pepperell from Year 12 said, 'We found it most challenging using Baroque pitch which involved us retuning our strings down a semitone. For us, every moment seemed to be of tune, however with the change to Baroque pitch it enabled us to appreciate the

Baroque style and its unique sound. We also modified our bowing to play Baroque bows and during rehearsals focused on playing our modern instruments in a manner appropriate to the era. It felt like a truly Baroque experience – the members of the Early Music Ensemble even used gut strings. This has been a technically and musically challenging experience that has enabled us to engage with other students.'

Early Years Christmas Concert – The Journey to Bethlehem

There is always a scuffle when tickets go on sale for this delightful annual Christmas Concert. To finish off the year, our youngest girls beautifully performed on stage in The Early Years Christmas Concert – *The Journey to Bethlehem*.

Even the Head of Junior School, Daniel Sandral, said it is one of his favourite events. 'This is always a wonderful end-of-year celebration and is the perfect way to commence the season of Christmas. It was also a very fitting tribute to our Junior School Music Coordinator, Mrs Annette McClure, who always organised these wonderful concerts and sadly passed away at the end of 2019.'

Fairground Fortune – A 30 Minute Opera

How courageous was Year 10, spending only three days creating a 30-minute opera? With the guidance of Opera Express, Year 10 Music worked collaboratively to produce an original opera in just 60 hours.

The girls created a 30-minute opera from scratch – writing the script, composing the music, building the sets, and rehearsing in preparation for the performance of their work at the end of the three-day incursion.

The incursion culminated with the performance of their opera, *Fairground Fortune*. The story revolved around the competitive relationship between Pruce (a crystal ball reader) and Quinley (a palm reader) and the love interest between Sonya (the sweet-toothed receptionist) and Pruce's assistant, Larry (a talkative toad). Despite the fortune-telling ability of a couple of the characters, the twist in the plot was a surprise to all, and as the final line in the libretto states, 'no one saw it coming'.

Music teacher, Karen Roberts said, 'The Year 10 girls' courage and creativity was a testament to their commitment to learn a high level of musical and dramatic creativity, and a real 'dare to be more' attitude.'



The Middle Years girls were on point during their performance of *Wonder Fly*.



Small actions make BIG CHANGE

World Kindness Day in November provided the impetus for the Class of 2020 Leadership team to surprise the Senior School girls and staff by distributing cookies.

They also circulated small cards so girls and staff could write messages of kindness to a friend or colleague, encouraging everyone to make the time to appreciate one another.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) recently made a school-wide call out for LEGO to donate to *Play Well Africa*, a charity for the many African children who do not have any toys and lack learning tools needed to reach their potential.

According to Charlie Kairaitis, the 2020 SRC Captain, 'the aim of the SRC in Term 1 was to establish a fundraiser the whole School community could be involved in. Choosing something as popular as LEGO meant that many people could bring in any old or new sets or pieces for a great cause. *Play Well Africa* as a charity was a particular draw for the SRC because the idea of our LEGO being loved by another child, and that it would play

a vital role in the development of fine motor skills and education, was very appealing to us. Another reason was that the charity was founded by a five-year-old boy. A child, just like us, wanting to share the luxuries and privileges he has with others who do not have the same opportunities. We thought this was such an awesome cause to engage with, and a great general mission to live by!’

World’s Greatest Shave is an annual tradition at MLC School. Despite the small setback of having to negotiate the current event restrictions due to COVID-19, the girls and teachers have done an absolutely phenomenal job of raising money to colour, cut and shave their hair for the *Leukaemia Foundation*. The *Leukaemia Foundation* has recently set their goal of taking blood cancer deaths to zero by 2035 and can only do so with the support towards its keystone research. In addition to research, they also provide invaluable assistance to families and patients affected by blood cancers.

The Drama Theatre was a full-house as the Dance, Drama and Entertainment (DDE) Department hosted the Annual Talent Show to raise money for the Australian Theatre for Young People’s (ATYP) Scholarship Fund to make the ATYP’s drama workshops accessible for disadvantaged young people. Entry was a gold coin donation, which enabled the audience to see a great line-up of talent featuring tap dancing, rap, Bollywood dancing, singing and card tricks.

Our Houses also choose charities they would like to support. Our Senior School girls in Leawarra supported *The Girls Refuge*, which offers short term, crisis accommodation for girls aged 13 to 17 who are going through a difficult time. The Leawarra girls and families donated Westfield gift cards just before Christmas, as well as 45 essential clothing packs, a washing machine and dryer, as well as Christmas and birthday presents for each girl in care.

The Junior School girls have also done their share of fundraising. Booralee House ran a Blue Mufti Day to raise money for *Beyond Blue*. They raised over \$4000, which is an incredible amount that will contribute towards making a difference to the lives of people around Australia who suffer from anxiety, depression and other mental health conditions.

Charlie sums up the importance of fundraising at MLC School. ‘As a Council representing our student body, fundraising is so important to the SRC because it encourages us to become active members of our local, national, and global community! Our purpose within the School is to represent the girls, to implement positive changes, help build School spirit and establish a strong community. The best way to achieve this is by giving back!’

Below: Blue Mufti Day for *Beyond Blue* was a success, with the girls raising over \$4000.



What's the Drill?

What started as a small trial for a handful of Year 9 girls, quickly took on much greater proportions when over 80 Year 9, Year 10 and Year 11 girls signed up to join with Newington College in an inaugural Cadets program. This is the first time in MLC School history that Cadets has been available to girls from Year 9 onwards.

Neil Scotney, Head of Senior School says, 'As a school, MLC School has a strong history in empowering young women and being one of the first schools in Australia to offer girls the same level of education as boys, it was a natural progression that we allow girls the opportunity to take part in the Schools Cadets Program. We are always proud of the way an MLC School girl embraces new challenges and Cadets provides the perfect platform for them to push the limits and further unpack our School values of courage, compassion, respect and growth.'

The program will provide girls with exciting and challenging opportunities to move outside of their comfort zone, work effectively in teams and develop individual character and leadership skills.

The cadet training program works within the structures and values of the Australian Defence Force. It is exciting and varied, and encompasses a range of activities such as scuba diving, rock climbing, abseiling, archery, bush navigation and camp craft. There are also leadership courses offered which are progressive in nature and teach the girls valuable life skills. The successful completion of these courses results in promotion to a higher rank. There is also an annual camp and a promotions camp.

Esther Maling (2010), Senior Sports Coordinator at MLC School, is the Cadets Coordinator. Esther says, 'It is an amazing opportunity and demonstrates that MLC School provides every chance for our girls to challenge and grow within any area of interest.

'I believe it is important that a female leads the unit as a role model and familiar face, as there will be times the girls are really challenged as females in a male-dominated field.

'I finished school in 2010 and would definitely have been a cadet if it had been available. My sister Sophia, who finished in 2012, is now a Logistics Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force, and she would have jumped at the chance to have an insight into cadet life during high school.'

Friday 14 February 2020 was the first official MLC School Cadet Unit training at Newington College. The girls met their Sergeants and Cadet Under Officers (CUOs) and the rest of the cadets in platoons for the first time. They spent time doing drill, learnt basic marching, and lined up for uniform checks. Cadet drills continue under flexible learning as much as possible.



GOING FOR GOLD IN PERU



The Duke of Edinburgh's (DoE) Award is an internationally recognised award that encourages students to extend themselves beyond the classroom. The award requires students to immerse themselves in a service, skill, physical recreation, an Adventurous Journey, and a Residential Project in order to achieve the Gold Award.

The Gold Award is the most demanding of all levels of the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and is a powerful means by which girls can practically learn and demonstrate MLC School's values of courage, compassion, respect and growth. Participation empowers girls to embrace new challenges, be adaptable and embrace opportunities.

In September 2019, 21 girls jetted off to Peru for two and a half weeks to complete their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.

The trip began with a Residential Project that included restoring the water and sanitation sites of a rural village in the township of Pongobamba, which was 3700m above sea level. For five days the girls lived in the homes of families in the local community, who welcomed them with open arms. These families shared their culture, food and skills with the girls and made them feel totally at home. 'Goodbye' was a difficult word to say when it was time to leave.

'This trip to Peru was one that brought every girl out of their comfort zone whilst providing them with experiences of a lifetime. It was not a typical family holiday it was an expedition full of adventure and challenges; while we were there the connections every girl created made Peru feel just like home.'

– Annie Gu (Year 12)

The next phase of their trip was the Adventurous Journey, where the girls spent four days exploring various Incan ruins and the rich history of Cusco. There were challenging treks with breathtaking views every day, and this helped the girls discover the glory of Incan empire. The second half of the Adventurous Journey was learning agricultural practises in the Cloud Forest, one of the richest biological areas in the world where the eastern slopes of Peru's Andes mountains descends into the Amazon River basin.

The final day was spent at Machu Picchu, where the girls were guided around the astounding architecture of the Incans. Visiting one of the Seven Wonders of the World was a fantastic way to end their trip.

In 2019, 26 girls were successful in attaining their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award and they are to be congratulated on this outstanding achievement – Madeline Bide, Sarah Day, Cassandra Economides, Natashja Eyles, Gabrielle Giannakos, Chloe Gentle, Grace Gilmore, Aleksia Grbic, Emily Huynh, Tiara Huynh, Stephanie Kalamvokis, Jessica Kuo, Isabella Leighton, Zoe Lindhout, Capri Maher, Katrina Marshall, Diya Mehta, Samantha Naayen, Olivia Otto, Virginia Peter, Laura Sutherland, Eve Telemachou, Tess Tsoi, Georgia Ventouris, Rachel Wang, Ella Woolbank.

'Our final day was spent at Machu Picchu – the perfect ending to an epic adventure... a breath-taking sight. What a privilege it has been to visit such an incredible country like Peru.'

– Cherie Pepperell (Year 12)



Leading

As MLC School's 2020 Sports Captain, Tashjan Managreve is an important member of the Year 12 leadership team.

Tashjan started as a new student at MLC School in Year 9 and soon realised that sport was the key to her making new friends. In that time, Tashjan has participated in Water Polo, Netball, Touch Football, Swimming, and Rugby – and now leads each of the 15 individual Sports Captains.

Director of Sport, Lisa Filby, says 'Tashjan has been a fantastic role model for the girls at MLC School. She has participated in numerous sports and has been committed to training sessions and the weekly competitions. She has displayed great leadership and initiative in her role as Sports Captain by organising activities such as the swimming squad barbecue breakfast, the weekly sports announcements at assemblies, and actively promoting sport along with the 15 individual Sport Captains. During these unprecedented times of flexible learning, Tashjan and her committee have worked together to provide information to students so they can still be physically active at home. She has been a positive influence during a challenging time.'

by example

Q&A

In what ways has Sport connected you to the MLC School community?

After I participated in my first Touch Football trial in Year 9, I realised that there were a lot of girls just like me. Personally, it was the easiest way for me to introduce myself to other girls and allowed me to find my place within the School.

Sport means enduring tough training sessions, nail-biting games and disappointing results. This enables a team to bond in ways that may not be possible in the classroom and creates memories that will be cherished throughout an athlete's life. It has allowed me to appreciate how much my teammates, coaches and the Sports Department do for me as an individual as well as our MLC School sporting community.

What advice would you give to other students who want to play sports?

Don't be afraid if they've never played the sport! The MLC School sporting community works to improve every athlete no matter their skill level. Although getting started in a new sport seems daunting, I can guarantee that a quick conversation with me, any of the 15 individual sport captains or sports staff members, can ease the worries that any girl may have.

What do you hope to achieve as Sports Captain?

Through earlier discussions with my committee, one of our main aims throughout 2020 is to achieve increased participation in all sports. This can be done through the promotion of a

variety of sports within the student community as well as encouraging friendship groups to play socially. This would allow the girls to be surrounded by other girls they are familiar and comfortable with and will ultimately help to create a relaxed environment where they can have some fun and hopefully win!

Not only do we want to encourage new girls, we want to celebrate our superstars. MLC School is filled with girls who go above and beyond in their sport – from filling in at the last minute to making the Australian team – no effort should go unnoticed. Through our attempts to acknowledge all the amazing achievements, and by supporting the girls we already have participating, we aim to boost the overall morale of our sporting community.

How has the current situation changed what you had hoped to achieve this year?

This situation has obviously put a massive strain on sport in general. Without participating in games and training, athletes tend to lose motivation quickly leading them to disregard their regular schedules.

Individually, I haven't found it too hard to motivate myself. Often, I do fall into bad habits when I'm not playing or training, however this quarantine has allowed me more time than usual to get out and play fetch with my dog or go for a simple walk.

Concerning MLC School, I have found it a lot harder to communicate with my sporting committee, although we do not have much to talk about. We're currently working on trying to get fitness routines out to the girls to allow them more opportunities to exercise with the School community. It is hard during this time,

however I don't believe it will have major impacts on what we as a committee want to achieve during our year in leadership.

How are you maintaining your fitness and positive attitude?

Fitness wise, I'm going for regular walks with my family or sometimes just my dog, while also completing workouts that my Netball coach has sent. The internet has also been a great help in providing new exercises that then allows me to create my own sessions. Maintaining a positive attitude is undoubtedly hard during this period, however I've been able to continue this attitude through regular communication with my coaches and fellow teammates. By talking to them I'm able to get some new exercise ideas or simply discuss with them how I'm feeling. It has been a great way to release any worries or stresses I have surrounding my future in sport and I believe it is the best way to continue having a good attitude over this period.

What advice would you give to other girls missing their sport and teammates?

Keep in touch! Obviously staying active and fit is a good idea as well, but I cannot stress enough how important it is to continue talking to fellow athletes and even coaches if possible. Communication is a great way to keep your motivation high and provide opportunities for you to learn new things about you as an athlete as well as your teammates. Missing your sport and friends during this time is completely normal, do not feel embarrassed about it, speak up because I'm sure they're feeling the same.





A colourful carnival



Swimming Champions and Runners-Up

Year 6 Champion – Saskia Roberts

Year 6 Runner-Up – Kathleen Chrun

Junior Champion – Florence Jiang (Year 8)

Junior Runner-Up – Annaliese Yan (Year 7)

Intermediate Champion – Juliette Beattie (Year 10)

Intermediate Runner-Up – Madeleine Lewis (Year 10)

Senior Champion – Sarah Moller (Year 12)

Senior Runner-Up – Emily Eker (Year 12)

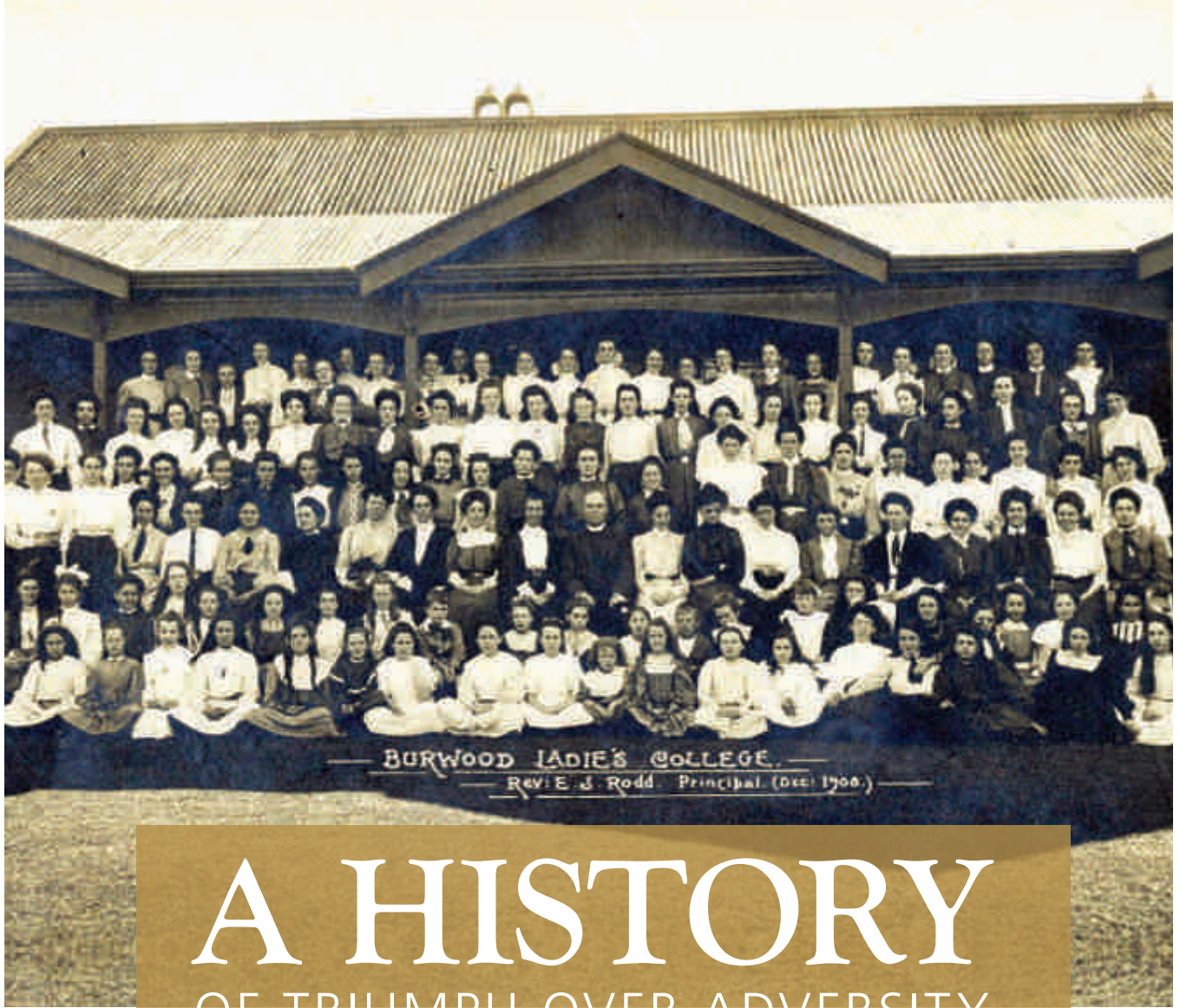
Spirit Trophy – Prescott House

Overall Point Score – Leawarra House



'It was loud, colourful and exciting! From the traditional 50m races, the relays, Splash for a Sash, the diving demonstration and the Year 12 synchronised swimming routines, there was an opportunity for everyone to participate.' – Lisa Filby, Director of Sport





A HISTORY OF TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY

A look through our historic documents reveals that there have been a number of times in the history of MLC School that the School and its community have faced adversity and hardship.

Then, as now, a resilient and supportive community of staff, students, parents and Old Girls has meant MLC School not only overcame these obstacles, but prospered.

While each of these difficulties was going on in the world our girls continued with their learning, and it was not too long after the School's opening in 1886 that 'the girls from Burwood' had gained a reputation for outstanding scholarship, with many becoming some of the first women to graduate with Honours from the University of Sydney.

The 1890s Economic Depression

The economic depression of the early 1890s; exceeded in severity only by the Great Depression of the 1930s; was an arduous time for MLC School. Unlike most other schools at the time, MLC School did not start with a bequest, but rather with an

idea: that girls should have access to the same education as boys.

A lack of funds was a constant worry for the fledgling School and when the depression hit just a few years into its life, MLC School was in dire straits. In his 1892 Speech Night report, our Founding Principal, Rev Dr Charles Prescott, stated that 'I am tempted to bitterness of spirit when I remember to what extent this little institution has been left to sail along as best it could' without financial support from the Church or benefactors. MLC School's 1936 publication *Jubilee* reports that the young MLC School 'was left to its natural and unaided growth. The wonder is, that under the circumstances, it flourished as well as it did.'

By 1895 the economic crisis had passed and the School was once again reasonably secure, although for many more years its finances remained in a precarious condition, fluctuating between small surpluses and

Above: A 1908 photo of Rev Rodd and the whole of MLC School sitting in front of the 1891 constructed Kindergarten building that once stood on the corner of Rowley Street and Grantham Road (it was demolished in the early 1920s to make way for Potts Hall).

perilously large debits. It is a testament to the young Rev Prescott's great determination and skill that the School survived its early years.

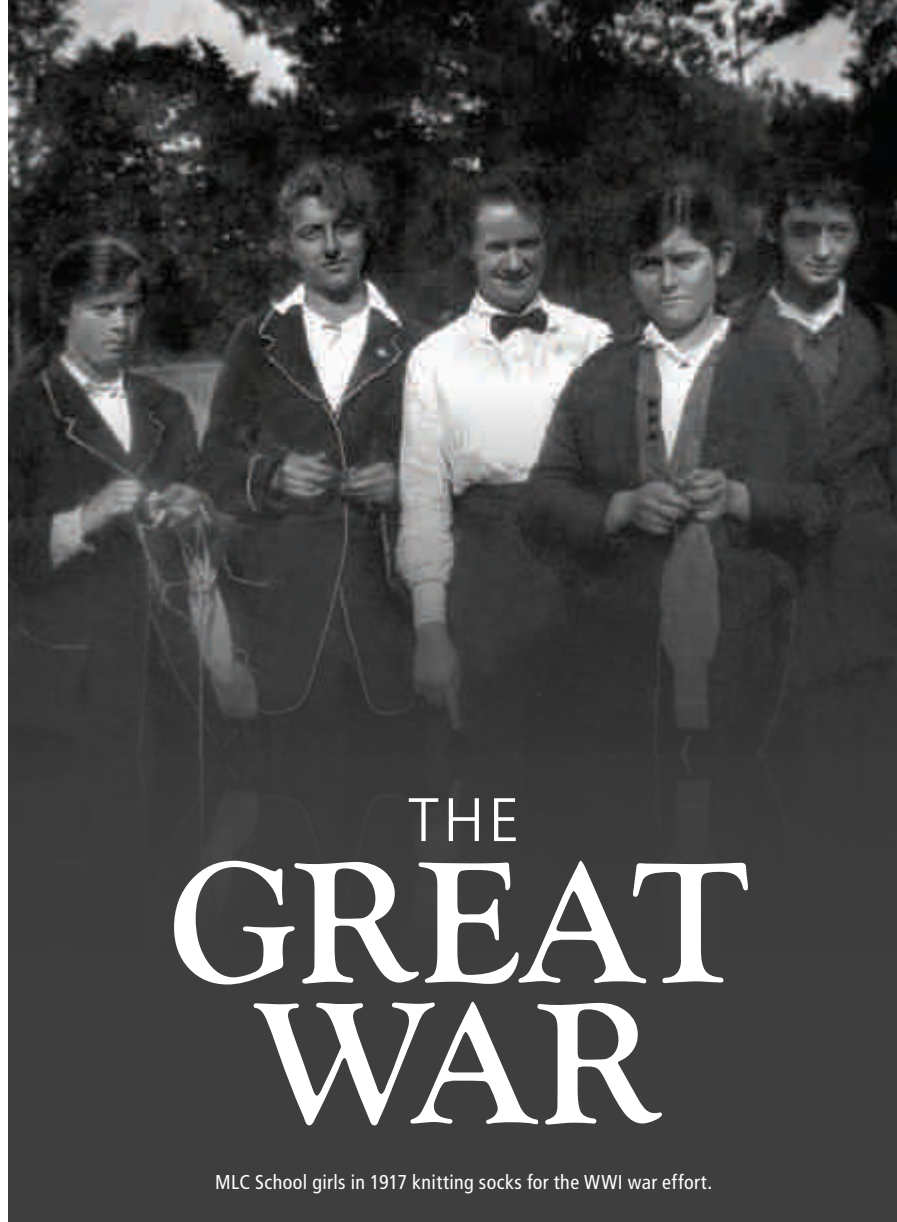
An unnamed author in *Jubilee* reported that the financial troubles during this time were all 'behind the scenes. The financial problems of a school are no concern to its pupils. Whether it makes money or loses it, they live their life in another sphere.' This is particularly true since during this period the Kindergarten building was constructed (1891), Schofield Hall was opened (1892), *Excelsior* commenced (1894), and the girls were doing well in the University Entrance Examinations (the precursor to the Leaving Certificate, and then HCS/IB), so to any outside observer the School appeared to be in a good position.

The time the School almost closed

Throughout the early 1900s financial problems continued to plague the School and the premises were mortgaged in order to keep the School operating. Reports by the Principal at the time, Rev Edward James Rodd, show that even he had grown despondent and took a pessimistic view of the future. The MLC School publication *Jubilee* (1936) reports that by 1913 'affairs reached a crisis, and for the first time in its history, a cry was seriously heard which not even the disasters of 1893 had evoked, that the School must be closed.'

The Vickery and Waterhouse families (which still have connections to the School today via a current student and an Old Girl) led the charge, and through their efforts the proposal at the Methodist Conference that the School be closed and the buildings used as a theological college was defeated. Furthermore, they pressed a resolution that the Conference assume the liabilities of the School. For the first time MLC School was financially supported by the Church in the same way the Church had been supporting our brother school, Newington College. MLC School's future looked bright.

Many years later one Old Girl stated, 'I was at MLC School during some of its most difficult days. Now that I know what was going on it helps me understand why those times were so difficult and makes me feel proud about the School's subsequent achievements.'



Eleven of our Old Girls were nurses during WWI at Gallipoli and the Western Front, witnessing the brutality of war and heroically rising to the challenge.

One of these Old Girls, Elsie Cook (Sheppard, 1907) featured in Peter Rees' book: *The Anzac Girls: The extraordinary story of our World War I nurses*, which then became the six-part ABC series *Anzac Girls*. She is also one of only three women listed on the Burwood Memorial Arch.

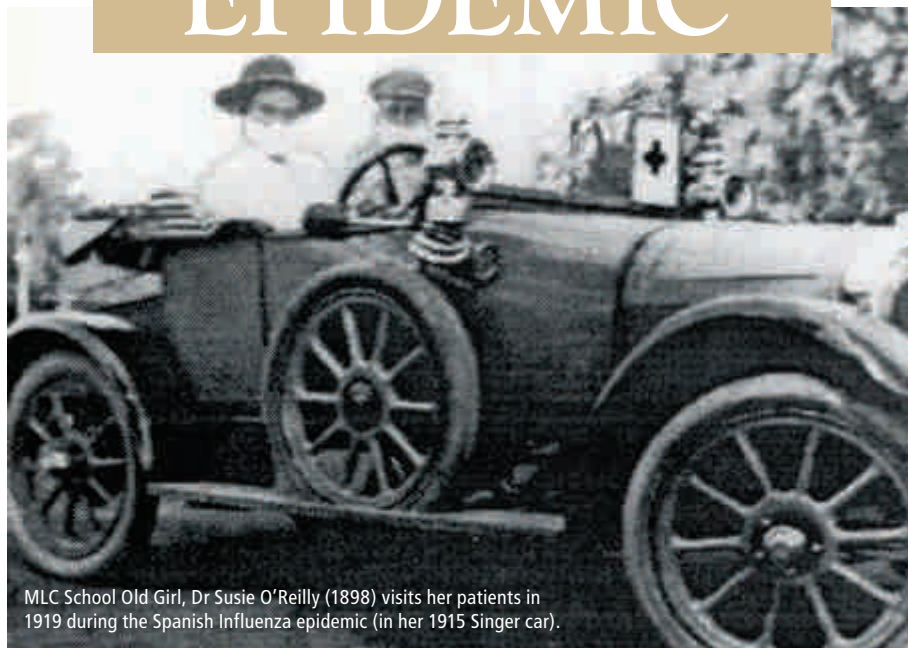
Having survived the crisis of 1913, when closure seemed imminent, the School once again began to make progress. Not two years later, the chaos and tragedy of World War One began and again MLC School, like the whole world, was thrown into turmoil. Grief, civil and industrial unrest, the great strikes of 1917, rising prices, a lack of supply of goods, and

failing businesses were the norm for everyone at this time.

MLC School girls, like many girls throughout the country, contributed to the war effort by providing so-called 'comforts' for the troops. The girls threw themselves into their tasks and 'did their bit for the War'. By the end of WWI the girls had knitted over a thousand pairs of socks, most of which were sent in parcels to Newington Old Boys at the front. The girls also arranged and supported fundraising functions such as fêtes and bazaars, with the proceeds predominantly going to the Red Cross.

Old Girl Hilary Wheen (Webb, 1918) reflected in *Jubilee* (1936) that 'Though these were years of war and desolation, they were years of earnest endeavour, which was not unrewarded, and for three years in succession there was not one failure in either Intermediate or Leaving Certificate Examinations. Possibly the striving of our fighting brothers to win, inspired our girls to strive to win through also'.

THE SPANISH INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC



MLC School Old Girl, Dr Susie O'Reilly (1898) visits her patients in 1919 during the Spanish Influenza epidemic (in her 1915 Singer car).

The great celebrations at the end of the War on Armistice Day, 11 November 1918, had hardly died down when the world was struck by the Spanish Influenza epidemic – arriving in Australia with the returning soldiers.

Schools, theatres and other public meeting places were closed, and the community did its best to try to avoid spreading the disease. Despite all efforts, the disease caused more than 11,000 deaths throughout Australia.

The day-to-day reality was grim and daily life at the School, as elsewhere, was disrupted by discomfort and inconvenience. Girls who travelled to School on trains were required to wear cotton masks, which were also worn, 'for safety's sake', in the School's classrooms. The opening of the 1919 school year was delayed in the hope that the epidemic would pass. When school did resume, the Boarders were quarantined for several months.

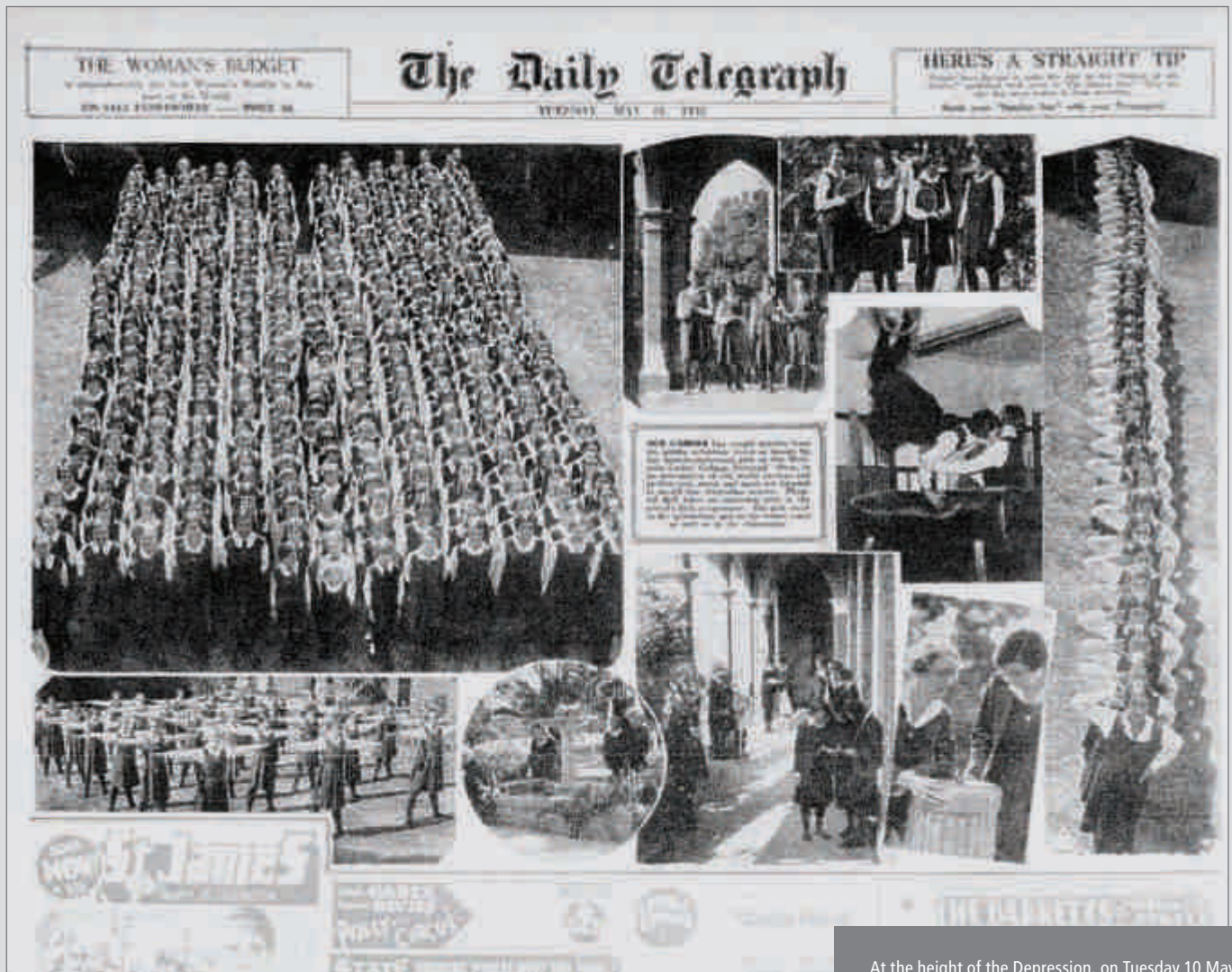
A daily ritual was the Boarders' procession to the School Clinic for 'inhalation', and when any school holidays came around they were all 'lined up four abreast, in turns, with a thermometer in each mouth' to be medically examined before being permitted to travel home on the train.

The influenza epidemic curtailed sport during 1919 as matches against other schools were abandoned and many families chose to keep their daughters at home during this time.

Headmistress, Miss Mabel Sutton, spoke at Speech Day at the end of 1919 of the 'difficulties of the work in the early part of the year... and of the loyal co-operation of every member of the staff in their various tasks'.

Old Girl and Boarder, Hilary Wheen (Webb, 1918), reminisced that although her time at MLC School was during the years of the War and the epidemic, her greatest memory is of 'a staff full of love and earnest endeavour'.

The full gravity of the situation was perhaps lost on the writer of the verse *A Lament*, appearing in *Excelsior* in August 1919, but it does provide a glimpse of the measures that the School authorities took to keep the girls safe.



At the height of the Depression, on Tuesday 10 May 1932, *The Daily Telegraph* photographed the girls of MLC School. This is the front cover. The small article in the centre reads: 'Our camera has caught minutes from the golden schoolday hours as known by the smartly uniformed girls of the Methodist Ladies' College, Burwood. Here, in an atmosphere of old world gardens and architecture, study and sport are blended to mould fine Australian women. Physical drill plays an important part in the school's daily programme. The girls excel in the gymnasium and on the tennis court as well as in the classrooms.'

The Wall Street crash of 1929 led to a worldwide economic depression and in 1930 the Australian economy collapsed. At the height of the Great Depression in Australia in 1932, unemployment reached a peak of 32 per cent; hundreds of thousands of Australians were out of work.

Fortunately, at this time MLC School's finances were in a healthy position and it was better placed than many institutions to withstand the worst effects of the economic crash. The Editorial in the June 1931 issue of *Excelsior* acknowledged that MLC School was relatively insulated from the events that were devastating so many other sections of the country: 'Our national distress reflects on us more than it affects us'.

The tone had changed somewhat by the next issue (December 1931) of *Excelsior*. The editorial was titled 'Courage'. In it the writer quoted Sir James Barrie (author of *Peter Pan*): 'Courage, he said, is the 'staff we want for our journey through life, and though we may lose it, we must find it again, and learn to use it, and

cling to it more than ever'... Because of slender purses, too soon must some of you say farewell to the school that you love. Keep a good heart... and greet the unseen with a cheer!'

As the Depression deepened, more people were affected and this filtered through to the School. 'Slender purses' meant that some students had to leave and that many potential enrolments did not materialise. From 1930 to 1932 enrolments fell by about 100 students. It was not a position of crisis but it did raise concern, as well as great sympathy for those girls who had to leave.

Old Girl, and mother of two Old Girls, Elizabeth ('Daisy') Blessing (Healey, 1898) wrote in 1936's *Jubilee* that her 'dear old

school has many happy memories, and I am thankful that my two daughters were able to attend it... The depression hit many parents very hard. Several had to remove their girls when the storm broke, and others who had hoped to send theirs were unable to do so.' Daisy concludes with 'May the School and the goodness it radiates be everlasting!'

As before, a national emergency spurred the charitable instincts of the girls and their teachers. Money was collected and sent to benevolent institutions, and garments were knitted for the needy. During the winter of 1931 more than sixty patchwork quilts were made by the girls and sent to the Central Methodist Mission.

World War II

COMES TO AUSTRALIA



The 7 December 1941 attacks by Japanese forces on Pearl Harbour, Philippines, Guam, Malaya, Singapore and Hong Kong, sent shock waves through the Australian community, and the distant European War suddenly felt much closer to home. The United States, previously a neutral nation, immediately declared war on Japan and Australia followed suit. It was the start of the Pacific War.

On 15 February 1942 the British colony of Singapore, seen by many as the last bastion between Australia and the advancing enemy, fell to the Japanese. Four days later Darwin was bombed and a series of air raids on Broome and Wyndham in Western Australia and further attacks on Darwin panicked the country. Australians, standing virtually unprotected in the face of the Japanese onslaught, feared outright invasion.

MLC School during World War II

1940 was an unnerving year for MLC School. At the beginning of the year, our Principal, Rev Henry Foreman, suddenly died, and by the end of the year, Old Girl and Headmistress for 28 years, Mabel Sutton (1896) had reached retirement age and was leaving. This meant that the School's two top executive positions were vacant almost simultaneously, at a time when the nation and its institutions were under serious threat.

World War II created a constant state of anxiety for MLC School's administrators. They had to be prepared for the possible need to evacuate the girls to rural regions, the ever-present danger of bombing, and the threat of invasion. The years 1940 to 1942 were lived in a state of constant alert. The (understandable) attitude of parents was another source of worry and the fluctuating enrolments reflected parental fears for the safety of their daughters. Most of the girls, not fully aware of the gravity of the situation, enjoyed the drama and excitement of air-raid alerts and trench drill, however those responsible for the wellbeing of the School and its students found the experience exhausting and harrowing.

Apart from the physical dangers there was the real possibility that the School's buildings would be taken over for military use. High-ranking American officers had visited MLC School and other schools and a letter had been sent from the Headmistresses' Association to the Prime Minister seeking

1939–1945

exemption for the schools. The reply was noncommittal; some private and government school were commandeered, but happily, MLC School was not among them.

MLC School's response to 'the most disturbed and difficult time in the School's history' and its continuation after the crisis, is a tribute to our Headmistress, Dr Gladys Wade (Miss Sutton's successor). Dr Wade's incredible skills, determination and complete dedication to MLC School ensured both the safety of the girls and the School's continuation.

Measures instigated by Dr Wade for student protection, and the contingency plans she developed, include converting the halls of the Tower Wing into air-raid shelters, laying sand-filled bags throughout the School as a protection against incendiary bombs. The girls reported that 'sandbags and buckets of sand littered almost every corridor and doorway'. By March 1942 air-raid trenches were dug in the Sports Field and within a month these had been boarded, floored and had drainage installed. MLC School was prepared for the worst.

The 1946 issue of *Excelsior* celebrating 60 years of MLC School included an article from Dr Wade: 'Slit trenches made in the field, weekly air-raid practices so that every girl knew exactly her shelter position, every girl carried a compulsory first-aid kit, staff trained in how to deal with incendiaries...' describes what life at MLC School was like at that time. The degree to which normal school life was disrupted by the War can be understood from an inquiry from a Boarder who was leaving the School in 1945: 'What is MLC School really like? I have only known it during the War years when our lives have been governed by 'blackouts' by night and regular Air-Raid practices.'

Air-raid drill became a regular feature of School life and the students quickly became accustomed to the routine. Six long peals of the School bell and the whole school would spring into action: 'The air-raid bell rings. We very quickly form a double line in our

classroom and wait for our form mistress. As soon as we are allowed to go, we hurry to our shelter – a table in the boarders' dining room. Chairs are quickly pulled out and we crawl under. We put on our ear pads, a handkerchief or rubber in our mouth, and sit there till the bell rings again telling us we may return to our classroom' a student recalls in the MLC School publication *Walk in the Light* (1986).

Nightly alarms often awoke the Boarders and sent them scurrying for shelter, although, as they turned out to be false alarms, any sense of fear receded and they became routine disturbances: 'A tinkling bell heralds the approach of the Japanese, each boarder grasps her dressing-gown, slippers (if she can find them), tucks a pillow under one arm and a rug under the other and hurries with dignity to her place of refuge. Familiarity breeds contempt apparently, for we no longer jump with dismay at each fresh 'false alarm', we only sigh for loss of sleep' a Boarder recalled.

The rationing during WWII necessitated a (begrudging) relaxation of the normally stringent standards of uniform. During 1942 the Executive Committee approved the wearing of short socks for sport (as opposed to the stockings that were required up until then), with a warning that 'modesty in attire should be guarded'. Dr Wade's sensible attitude was that 'the child is more important than her clothes' and a slight degree of flexibility was permitted. Another noticeable change was the School Badge, which was unobtainable during these years. Before the War it had been a silver-plated metal badge; after the War it became a metal badge enamelled in blue and gold.

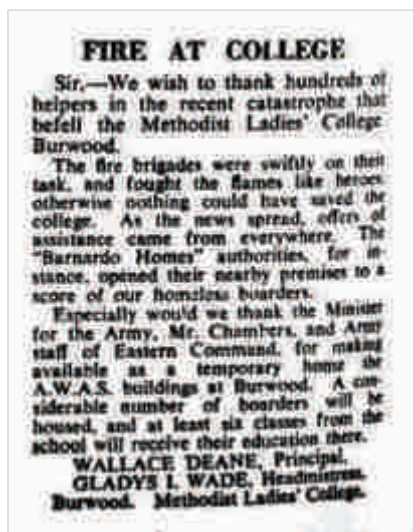
As they had done during the First World War and again during the Depression, the students of MLC School responded in a time of need. Throughout the years of the War they undertook an array of activities, contributing their ingenuity and hard work in support of the war effort. They devised fundraising schemes, held fêtes and market

days, gave concerts, organised stalls of various kinds, sponsored prisoners of war through the Red Cross and, of course, laboured hard and long at such tasks as knitting scarves and other woollen garments. Money was raised, and goods and clothes provided, for a wide range of deserving causes.

Summer images: After the Pearl Harbour attacks, the Headmistress of Annesley School in Bowral, Miss Praytor called MLC School's Headmistress, Dr Gladys Wade, and gave all MLC School girls the chance to spend the worrying summer at Annesley. Miss Praytor gave up her summer holiday and stayed at the School to take care of the MLC School girls from 26 December 1941 to the end of January 1942.



THE FIRES THAT CHANGED THE SCHOOL



The Sydney Morning Herald, Monday 24 March 1947, page 2. Courtesy of Trove, National Library Australia.

Fire of 1947

The end of WWII and the 1946 celebration of MLC School's 60th year had not long concluded when, during the night of 21 March 1947, a large fire broke out in the science labs within the Prescott Wing that once stood in the area where is now the main entrance and the Drama Theatre.

As a result of the destruction caused by the fire, all of the Boarders, the whole of the primary school, and the entire administration department were relocated to 'Broughton' in Duffy Street, Burwood (originally, and now again, known as 'Woodstock').

It wasn't until six months later, in September 1947, that school life returned to normal. The MLC School publication *Walk in the Light* (1986) noted that 'the School not only survived perhaps the most difficult period in its history till that point, but that it managed to thrive and even prosper in adversity.'

A media article published on the day of the fire, commended the way the boarding

MLC School girls reacted calmly and with fortitude:

GIRLS' COLLEGE FIRE – Calmness Saves Tragedy

While flames licked the woodwork and smoke poured through halls, fifty girl boarders of the Methodist Ladies' College, Burwood, marched calmly out of the building when it blazed early this morning. As the girls marched to safety, blazing rafters and white hot plaster fell behind them, but not once did they break orderly ranks.

Experienced fire officers said that only the calmness of the girls prevented a tragedy.

Fire of 1977

In the early hours of 7 January 1977 a fire ripped through the historic corner of MLC School causing severe damage to the Prescott Wing, the Schofield Wing and the Central Wing of the Boarding House. Fortunately, as it was the school holidays, no one was on the premises and so the damage



‘Overcoming adversity has been a central theme at MLC School both in teaching and in practice.’

was restricted to property. At first it was also feared that the Boarders’ Dining Room (now the MLC School Chapel) with its beautiful ceiling and parquet floor had been irreparably damaged, but fortunately this piece of Mrs Schofield’s bequest has remained with us.

The fire, it was later discovered, had been deliberately lit by thieves who were attempting to cover their tracks after breaking in and stealing some television sets.

Within days of the fire, a large band of builders and volunteer workers, including students, Old Girls, parents and friends were on site, working to ensure a smooth commencement to the school year.

In Principal Rev Cornwell’s letter to parents and the School community immediately after the fire, he stated that ‘the rebuilding taking place has been the symbol of resurrection and I am sure that whilst we have many regrets, there will be for us a rising to even greater heights’.

Overcoming adversity has been a central theme at MLC School both in teaching and in



practice. The determination, resilience, and persistence of staff, students and the MLC School community has enabled the School to push past its adversities and prevail.

The School’s success was not determined by its skill in avoiding challenges but rather how it powered through and became stronger as a result. With the uncertainty and anxiety of

the changes that have become part of our lives during the Coronavirus pandemic, we can be reassured that with strength and courage, life at MLC School will once again return to normal.

In colloquial terms: we’ve done it before; we’ll do it again.

uniform changes

THROUGHOUT THE YEARS



In the early years of MLC School there was no official uniform, but girls were expected to be modestly dressed and well covered (from neck to ankle), even in the heat of summer.



The hat styles changed over the first few years but the MLC School crest was constant.



During the early 1920s a shorter, pleated, dark blue tunic was introduced to replace the somewhat matronly long skirts and long-sleeved blouses.

This tunic was worn throughout the year.



In 1955, a compromise to comfort was made with the introduction of a summer uniform. This consisted of a blue and white check cotton frock with white cuffs and collar. The frock had to fall below the knee and stockings still had to be worn year-round.

By the end of the 1960s, the rise in hemlines and the growing acceptance of the mini-skirt could not be resisted, and uniforms at MLC School were being worn well above the knee.



1886

1901

1906

1910

1909

1925

1937



In 1906 the Boarders 'formed a deputation and approached the Headmistress, Miss Wearne, to ask for a uniform'.



From around 1900, although there is not yet an official School uniform, students are identified as MLC School girls by the hat with the MLC School crest on the hat band.



As a School uniform had not yet been introduced by the School administration, in 1910 the senior girls took it upon themselves, during the holidays, to make a 'uniform' of their own design and to all arrive for school on the first day in this attire.

The first MLC School uniforms were a long-sleeved white blouse and a calf-length dark blue skirt which included a light blue stripe just above the hemline.

The inspiration for this 'uniform' was the sports 'uniform' worn by girls in the hockey and basketball teams. To distinguish their team in inter-school sporting events, the girls chose to wear an outfit comprised of a white blouse and calf-length dark blue skirt with a light blue trim at the hemline.



1916

During the 1910s, a dark blue tie was added to the uniform



In 1937 the School uniform changed to a navy tunic with a pale blue pencil stripe and a pale blue blouse. The same tunic is still worn today as the winter uniform for all Kindergarten to Year 9 girls.

Until 1955 the tunic was worn year-round. In summer the uniform consisted of the tunic with a shorter sleeved pale blue blouse and no blazer. (Gloves to and from School and stockings were still mandatory.)



Max Dupain, 1971.
MLC School Archive Collection.



Button variation throughout
the mid-1970s



In 1984 the Senior School
uniform changed dramatically.

Old Girls from that era refer to
the uniform as 'the hostile' in
reference to flight attendants
who were at the time called air
hostesses or 'hosties'.

Year 11 and Year 12 uniform



Year 7 to Year 10 uniform

1955

1979

1984

2000



In 1979, there was a slight change to the summer uniform: the collar
was altered and the decorative white buttons were discontinued.



Year 10 to 12: Skirt, blue shirt (long sleeve
winter, short sleeve summer) and blazer



Kindergarten to Year 9: Winter – tunic with blue
shirt and blazer. Summer – dress

uniform changes

THROUGHOUT THE YEARS

ITEMS THAT ARE NO LONGER PART OF OUR UNIFORM

THE WEARING OF GLOVES TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Until 1970, it was a regulation for MLC School girls to wear navy gloves (black gloves were also acceptable in the early years), to and from School all year round. 'It was a very strict rule that gloves should be worn on entering and leaving the College.' Dorothy Paine (Furner, 1918)

In 1970 the School decided that gloves did not have to be worn during the hotter days of summer – the girls greatly appreciate this concession. By 1975, gloves became mandatory only with the winter uniform, and by the mid 1980s gloves had ceased to be part of the regulation day-to-day MLC School uniform.

DINNER DRESS

Until the 1970s, formal School occasions such as Speech Night and the weekly Boarders' church service at the Burwood Methodist Church, required the wearing of a white pleated dress, white gloves and thick, flesh-coloured 'bullet proof' stockings. This outfit was part of the MLC School uniform ensemble and was referred to as 'Dinner Dress'.

While Boarders wore the Dinner Dress once a week, the Day Girls were required to purchase the Dinner Dress for the once-a-year Speech Night. Two weeks before Speech Night, all girls were obliged to wear the Dinner Dress at School for an inspection to ensure an even hem length for the group photo.

Girls in 1935 wearing tunic, hat, gloves and stockings, all of which were mandatory in both winter and summer.



Circa 1940 MLC School girls in full uniform.

Girls dressed in the MLC School 'Dinner Dress' ready to head to the 1946 Speech Day.



the past



Principal's welcome cocktail evening

Though rain threatened this popular annual event, the evening was a great success with current and new parents and carers packed into The Daphne Line Hall to celebrate the beginning of a new year at MLC School.

The talented student and staff bands entertained the crowd throughout the night.





SPORT

YOUNG OLD GIRLS STAR IN SPORT

Imogen



Imogen Greenslade (2019) has followed up her strong performances for CIS in basketball by being signed by Arizona State University where she will study and play basketball.

Imogen was a member of the New South Wales U20 Team which won Silver medal at the National Championships last year, and won many accolades including MLC School's Basketballer of the Year.

'Arizona State has been with me from the beginning of my college journey and I immediately felt at home amongst the team and coaches,' Greenslade said. 'Also, I'm interested in studying theatre and ASU has one of the best theatre programs I've ever seen.'

According to the Arizona State website: 'We are really excited to be adding such an athletic, talented post player to our already top ranked class,' coach Charli Turner Thorne said. 'You would never know Imogen started playing basketball a little later than most when you watch her skills and instincts for the game. I think she will be especially effective with her defense and rebounding right away. Imogen embodies all the important attributes we value in our program. She works hard, is a giver and plays with courage whenever she is on the floor. I know our fans will definitely enjoy getting to know her fun personality.'



Breanna



Congratulations to Breanna Scott (2019) who competed at the 2020 Melbourne Gymnastics World Cup and placed 6th in the finals in the floor event. Breanna is an artistic gymnast and performs in the vault, bars, beam and floor.



Giving

BACK

Subeta Vimalarajah (2011) commenced at MLC School in Year 7 in 2006. During her time at school, Subeta developed a passion for both feminist issues and helping others which has been a focus of her life past school.

Subeta's interest in others and the issues that affect them made her a natural spokesperson for the Pink Tax Movement in 2015. Subeta launched a campaign with GetUp! calling for the removal of GST on sanitary products. Later in 2015, she co-founded a not-for-profit that trains volunteers to deliver gender equality workshops in high schools across NSW.

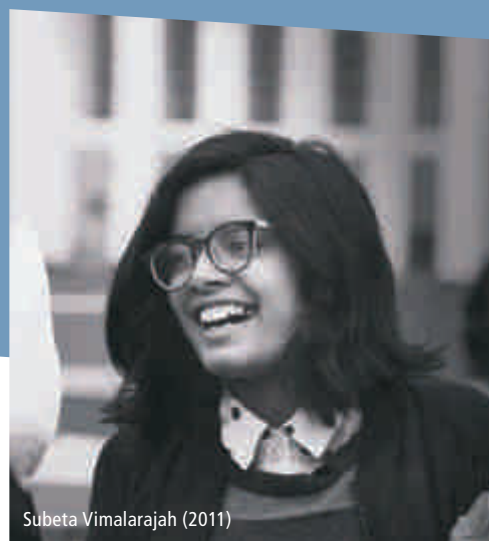
Subeta's journey, however, may have been very different if Principal, Mrs Barbara Stone, had not offered her a bursary to continue her education at MLC School. Subeta's potential was obvious to many and this bursary not only benefitted Subeta, but the School benefitted from her involvement, both as a student and as an Old Girl.

'I will always be grateful that I was given the opportunity to be an MLC School girl. MLC School exposed me to many mentors and to values I still hold.'

Subeta now works in Canberra as a constitutional lawyer at the Australian Government Solicitor (which is part of the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department).

Helping girls like Subeta is the motivation behind the MLC School Bursary Initiative. This Initiative will benefit current girls at MLC School, as well as the daughters and relatives of Old Girls. It will also enable the School community to reach out and provide opportunities to girls who would not otherwise have the opportunity to attend the School. The MLC School Old Girls Union has generously agreed to support the Bursary Initiative with a significant donation.

If you are interested in supporting other young women like Subeta, enrol or remain at MLC School through the Bursary Program, please contact Heleen Fourie on 02 8741 3129 or hfourie@mlcsyd.nsw.edu.au.



Subeta Vimalarajah (2011)



'I will always be grateful that I was given the opportunity to be an MLC School girl. MLC School exposed me to many mentors and to values I still hold.'



FAREWELL

Mr Finlay

After 24 years of outstanding service to MLC School, Mr Douglas Finlay, Deputy Head of Junior School retired at the end of 2019, to take up some travel and spend time with his wife.

There were many fond farewells from staff, students and parents occurring over his last few weeks, properly recognising his outstanding contribution to the School and so many girls' lives. For many generations, Doug imparted knowledge, shared his outlook on life and instilled his strong values and expectations of what makes an MLC School girl different.

In Principal, Lisa Moloney's words, 'Doug Finlay's care for the girls, common sense, educational expertise, and his commitment to MLC School was exceptional. Girls and their families from across the School have benefitted from his wisdom and guidance over many years.'

Without doubt, Doug Finlay is an MLC School treasure. The love and affection felt by the whole school for Doug is captured in the words the girls sang at his farewell assembly, to the tune of *I am Australian*: The new words were created by former Junior School Music teacher, Mrs Annette McClure, who we also sadly farewelled at the end of 2019, after a battle with cancer.

*From the dusty fields of Bathurst
He came to MLC
He became the ancient heart
The keeper of the flame.*

*Mr Finlay taught us right from wrong
He checked we wore our hats
For twenty-four short years he's been
The heart of MLC.*

*He loves to teach mathematics
Do you know pi's 3.1
41 5 9 26 535
Ad infinitum*

*We'll miss your mighty roar
We'll miss your care each day
You are part of our fabric
Your heart is MLC.*

*We love you Mr Finlay
And from all of us here today
We'll share our light and sing with one voice
You are, we are, the team at MLC.*

Tours

One of the best ways to decide if MLC School is right for your daughter and your family is to come and see the School in action. However, at the moment for the safety and wellbeing of all the community, a visit is not possible.

So, until we can welcome you back on campus, we will be hosting virtual tours instead.

You will have the same opportunity to hear from our Principal and Heads of School, and get a real feel for our students and our facilities. You can ask questions and interact with our staff.

2020 SCHOOL TOUR DATES

Thursday 28 May 2020, 10.30am – Virtual Tour

Tuesday 18 August 2020, 10.30am

Thursday 12 November 2020, 10.30am

To register for a tour visit mlcsyd.nsw.edu.au or email enrol@mlcsyd.nsw.edu.au.

– B O O K I N G S A R E E S S E N T I A L –



SCHOLARSHIPS



MLC School's mission is to educate and inspire young women to be fearless thinkers with moral courage and compassion, to be agents of change in their own lives and the lives of others.

The MLC School girl dares to be more and it is MLC School's aim to open up opportunities to girls who might not otherwise be able to attend the School through our scholarship and bursary program.

A RANGE OF SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2022 ARE AVAILABLE, AND APPLICATIONS WILL OPEN IN TERM 4, 2020.

For more information visit mlcsyd.nsw.edu.au or email enrol@mlcsyd.nsw.edu.au.

If you are interested in a confidential conversation about how you can help change the lives of girls by helping them enjoy the benefits of an MLC School education,

please contact, Heleen Fourie, Development Manager, on 02 8741 3129 or email hfourie@mlcsyd.nsw.edu.au.



MLC
SCHOOL

**A UNITING CHURCH DAY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS,
PRE-KINDERGARTEN TO YEAR 12**

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CRICOS No. 02328D

The Uniting Church in Australia Property Trust (NSW) (trading as MLC School)

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