

THE IRIS

EDITION #07
NOVEMBER 2024
TERM 4



A FRENSHAM SCHOOLS
MAGAZINE

Bush Dance
Snapshots

A Family Legacy
The Stirtons at
Frensham

Empowering
Young Learners
Junior Duke

Study Tour
French Adventure





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“It is widely understood that the quality of teacher-student relationships is the single most important predictor of student engagement.

When students truly connect with teachers, an atmosphere is created where students feel safe to take risks, explore new ideas, and ultimately, thrive academically and socially.”

– Geoff Marsh –



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A Frensham Schools Magazine
Edition #07 – Term 4
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The Power of Teacher-Student Relationships

A Key to Engagement at Frensham Schools



As part of the Head's address at the Year 12 Dinner at the end of last term, I touched on the importance of the teacher-student relationship. I noted that one of the reasons for the success of our current Year 12 has been the positive relationships they have formed with their teachers. Research continues to indicate that strong, meaningful relationships between teachers and students are the key to exceptional learning outcomes.

It is often said that schools are only as good as their teachers. I would go a step further and say that quality teachers are the main factor in turning a good school into a great one. At Frensham and Frensham Junior School, we are fortunate to have a dedicated team of educators who are deeply committed to fostering an environment where every student is known, heard, and understood. This commitment is the dynamic that directly influences student engagement, whether behavioural, cognitive or emotional.

When we talk about engagement, it is not just about students attending class or completing school work. It is about the depth of their involvement in their learning both in and beyond the classroom—how they think, feel, and act in the learning process. It is widely understood that the quality of teacher-student relationships is the single most important predictor of student engagement. When students truly connect with teachers, an atmosphere is created where students feel safe to take risks, explore new ideas, and ultimately, thrive academically and socially.

Frensham Schools are in an ideal position when it comes to fostering these relationships. Our residential environment in the senior school and small size in the junior school allows for a level of personal connection that other schools often struggle to provide. Our goal is to know every student, not just by name, but by their individual strengths, challenges, and aspirations. This level of familiarity can enable us to better meet the learning needs of students. We know that when students feel known, they engage more fully.

To ensure that we are not just assuming but measuring our impact, we have recently participated in a number of international research projects, where gathered comparative data is used to track student engagement (*Stanford Challenge Success Survey and the International Coalition of Girls School Survey*).

These studies allowed us to track student engagement across multiple dimensions and affirm that teacher-student relationships play a pivotal role in shaping that engagement. This ongoing data will continue to provide us with valuable insights to inform our programs and practice (more information in Dr Ruth Phillips' story on page 4).

For 2025 our staff have agreed that establishing meaningful and positive relationships with our students will be a key professional learning focus. It is the quality of our relationships, the strength of our teaching, and the depth of our care for each student that will continue to define Frensham Schools as a place where young people can flourish.

Geoff Marsh

Head of Frensham
Head of Frensham Schools



Challenge Success Survey

At Frensham, we aim to truly understand and prioritise the wellbeing of our students, going beyond the clickbait headlines and developing a deep understanding of the needs of our students.

In 2023 and 2024, we participated in the Challenge Success Survey, developed in collaboration with Stanford University’s Education Faculty to gain deep insights into our students’ experiences with academic pressures, mental health, and overall wellbeing. We were fortunate to join forces with the International Coalition of Girls’ Schools, so as to compare our results with schools globally, regionally and offering a broader perspective on the needs of our young people.

The results reflect Frensham’s values and moral purpose.

*“Frensham’s values and educational ethos are based on the philosophical position that our moral purpose in life is to develop our **talents** and use them for **the common good** – to make a **meaningful contribution to the world.**”*

Frensham... where students are not just academically successful but also emotionally healthy, socially connected, and ready to make a meaningful impact on the world.



Our students reported higher levels of social connection, and optimism—than their peers both regionally and internationally. They feel more confident, engaged, and capable, with stronger relationships and a greater sense of purpose. When it comes to stress, Frensham students report significantly lower levels of stress, sleep deprivation, and academic exhaustion compared to students in other contexts. They describe their school as a unique inclusive community that is fun and strict.

An extraordinary 91% of our students feel they have a trusted adult at school they can turn to, a stark contrast to the 60% and 48% reported by students in other ICG schools and globally.

These findings underscore what makes Frensham truly special: where students are not just academically successful but also emotionally healthy, socially connected, and ready to make a meaningful impact on the world. At Frensham, we’re proud to nurture the whole child—balancing intellectual rigor with compassion, community, and purpose.

Dr Ruth Phillips
Academic-in-Residence





The 2024 Frensham Schools Bush Dance was a night to remember, filled with fun and excitement for all ages! Over 1000 members of our community enjoyed a fantastic buffet, thanks to Brendan and his team, along with a variety of thrilling activities like the bucking bulls, axe throwing, and the new Frensham classic, "Throw the Redback on the Dunny". There was also face painting, fairy floss, and popcorn to keep everyone entertained. The lively music from the Frensham Band, the teachers Band (Band 6), and Swamp Dawkins set the perfect rhythm for dancing, with special dance performances by the teachers and Gib Gate Dancers. The Cooee Competition, Foundation's Live Cattle Auction, and a lolly guessing game by Frensham Junior School added to the festive atmosphere, making it a night of community spirit and great memories. Thank you to all who attended and an enormous thank you to Keeley Devery for putting together this incredible event!







19's the Charm with the Stirtons A Family Legacy at Frensham

It's easy to think Frensham's beginnings were long ago and somewhat disconnected to current life in 2024.

Yet, it is through the Stirton Family – four generations of Frensham students – that the past is brought to life. With a strong presence in rural Australia, populating small towns and remote areas of Queensland and NSW, this family's story is told through the lives of its connection to Frensham: the women who have graduated, those who are current students, and those who are yet to come.



Jean & Jessie – The Trailblazers

The Stirton Frensham journey begins with sisters Jean Circuit (Stirton, 1926) and Jessie Crichton-Smith (Stirton, 1928) who were raised at a sheep property at Auburn Vale, Inverell. They bred and trained their own horses and were expert equestrians.

Both very skilled campdrafters, the sisters competed at many events from their local Inverell competition to the Sydney Show. Jessie was invited to compete in campdrafting at the Melbourne Show, where she won the contest in 1935.

Their uncle was Percy E Stirton. Percy had four children: Nancy, John, Percy, and Tom.



Pictured left (caption): Misses Jean and Jessie Stirton of Inverell, two well-known equestriennes. With Mrs. Solomon, of Ashford, and Miss Bessie Scott, of Boggabilla, they will represent New South Wales in the cattle drafting competition at the approaching Royal Sydney Show. – *The Land* (Sydney, NSW: 1911-1954), Friday March 2, 1934. Photos: *The Land*.

Above (caption): NEARLY DRAFTED – Miss Jessie Stirton (Queensland) winning the camp drafting contest at the Royal Show on Saturday. – *The Argus* (Melbourne, Vic.: 1848-1957) Mon 30 Sep, 1935.

The Next Generation – Stirton Cousins

Jean's daughter, Chris Whitehouse (Circuit, 1956), OAM, grew up on a cattle and sheep station north of Hay, in NSW. Her Frensham journey started when she was just eight years old. Following the bushfires of 1939 that burnt down Marchmont – the building that predated the site of the eventual location of Sturt – she was one of the very first young boarders in Hartfield.

After leaving school and completing her registered nurse training, Chris worked on a cattle station in the Northern Territory, then pursued her life's work and long career in nursing, dedicated to dementia and gerontology. She was also an aeroplane pilot.

John Stirton's four daughters: Virginia Bruce (Stirton 1959), Rosslyn (Rossie) Thompson

(Stirton, 1960), Kathryn Eagles (Stirton, 1968) and Mary Barrett (Stirton, 1973), travelled to Frensham from Mungindi, just over the Queensland border, often taking three trains to arrive for the start of term at Mittagong.

Rossie recalls, “Dad used to save up the jobs for us, and looking back, we were integral to running the property. When I was twenty-one, I was called home to help during the drought of 1965. Many of the ewes were dying with toxæmia (despite being fed) and their lambs would have suffered the same fate so each day we would take some home on the pommel of our saddles to bottle feed. We ended up with around eighty little lambs.”

Rossie believes her love of gardening was influenced by all the beauty of Frensham, with Elinor’s garden, the camellia grove, and the Sturt garden. “There was actually a garden club when I was there and the ones who were interested had their own little garden.”

As an adult, she opened her own garden for charity many times during her years at Coolah. It is the attributes of the Iris, “integrity, hardiness, courage and beauty,” that she holds dear and considers as important to the wider Stirton family.

Nancy Stirton did not attend Frensham herself. However, her daughter, Marlay Birks (Hull, 1969), was a student at the School from 1965-1969.

Percy Marlay Stirton and his Frensham-educated wife, Nesta Stirton (Kierath, 1929) had two daughters: Annabel Thompson (Stirton, 1957) and Jane Dudley-Smith (Stirton, 1963), who were raised at Moree.

Tom Stirton’s three daughters, Jenny Croft (Stirton, 1962); Veronica Bassingthwaite (Stirton, 1967); and Sally White (Stirton, 1968), lived at Cheepie, Queensland, “on the edge of civilisation in the outback” according to their aunt, Patsy Stirton.

Jenny Croft (Stirton, 1962) explains, “We drove over two hours on a dirt road to Charleville to catch the DC3 plane, which landed at

Cunnamulla, then Bourke, Nyngan, Dubbo and finally Sydney. We then caught the train to Mittagong. When the service stopped flying to Charleville, a friend would pick us up in his plane at Bourke and fly us home. Often, I would have holidays with friends if it was too difficult to get home.”

Among Jenny’s many accomplishments were her long-standing commitment to the NSW Farmers Association. She was the first woman to be elected to the Wool Committee and from there the Wool Council of Australia. She was also the first woman to be elected to the Australian Wool Exchange (AWEKS). Jenny also held a position on the rural women’s network state advisory committee.

Jenny was also a committed drought support worker for ten years for the NSW Department of Primary Industries. The aim was to support drought, flood and bushfire affected farmers with government assistance as well as being a conduit for all other agencies. She organised farming family gatherings with a focus on resilience and mental health. Jenny says her continued love of music stems from her time at Frensham. She is a member of several bands where she plays the banjolele, a banjo ukelele hybrid.

The Third Generation

The next generation of Stirtons comprised Mary Barrett’s daughter, Kirsty Wiggins (Barrett, 1995), and Rossie Thompson’s daughters, Brooke (1989) and Skye Regan (Thompson, 1996). Kirsty grew up near the town of Goodooga, in north-western New South Wales. It was during her time at Frensham that Kirsty says that her interest in jewellery and fashion took hold.

Years later, Kirsty’s grandmother handed down her own Silversmithing kit, which provided for hours of tinkering and inspiring Kirsty’s creativity. Kirsty now has her own fashion and jewellery business, Dumble Collective, and also enjoys competing in camp drafting at local shows and competitions.

The Fourth Generation – It’s Only Just Beginning

The present generation of Stirtons at Frensham: Holly Regan and Minnie Wiggins, are completing the HSC in 2024. In 2025 Holly will be working at The Dragon School in Oxford, England as a boarding assistant, and travelling around Europe during the holidays. She hopes to study a Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science in 2026. Minnie will also take a gap year in 2025 to work on a station in the Northern Territory. She hopes to study Business Law in 2026. A talented campdrafter herself, Minnie says the highlight was qualifying for and competing at the Australian Bushmen’s Campdraft and Rodeo Association (ABCRA) national finals. (Right: Minnie Wiggins – campdrafting in 2023)



But the Stirtons have not yet finished their Frensham story. Georgie, Rossie Thompson’s granddaughter, has already achieved success in campdrafting, and won both the Gunnedah and Curlewis Junior Campdrafts. She will commence Year 7 in 2025 and will become the 19th Stirton to go through Frensham. And, there are still a few more cousins who are enrolled and will fill the corridors in the years to come.

Charlotte Ostor
Fellowship and Development Coordinator

<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Stirton-9>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/page/11235724>
<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/11772291>



A Journey to Frensham Village, Surrey



Sign at the current St Mary’s Infant School much like Frensham’s motto. St Mary’s School is much like Frensham Junior School as a 90-pupil co-education learning space.

*Love of learning,
Love of life,
Love of one another.*

St Mary’s Infant School, formerly Frensham Village School

Exploring Winifred West's Roots: A Journey to Frensham Village, Surrey

Frensham was established in 1913 by the visionary educator Winifred Mary West. Our school is named after Frensham, a small village in Surrey, England, where Miss West grew up. During the holidays, I had the privilege of visiting the original Frensham to learn more about Winifred West's early life and the influences that shaped her vision for our school.



Frensham Village: An Early Love of Learning

Winifred West was born on December 21st, 1881, in Frensham, Surrey. This quaint village, with its picturesque homes and serene countryside, was the backdrop of her formative years. Her father, Charles William West, played a significant role in her early education, serving as the headmaster of the local village school. This school, now known as St Mary's (Church of England aided) Infant School, was



Winifred West

previously Frensham Village School. It is here that a young Winifred began her academic journey under the guidance of her father, who remains the longest-serving headmaster of the school.

Sadly, Charles William West passed away, prompting Winifred's mother to move from the schoolhouse (pictured below) to the nearby village of Farnham, where she continued to raise her children.



Queen Anne's School, Caversham: A Boarding Experience

With her mother's encouragement, Winifred pursued further education by applying for a scholarship to Queen Anne's School in Caversham, Berkshire. Successfully obtaining the scholarship, she boarded at the school for six years, from 1894 to 1900. Queen Anne's School (approximately a 27 mile horse and cart journey from Frensham) marked a pivotal period in Winifred's education. Queen Anne's school motto is 'Kind Hearts, Fierce Minds, Strong Spirits' which Miss West seemed to embody throughout her life. Even after she left boarding school, Miss West continued to be involved with Queen Anne's. A poster she made for a school play while she was at university is documented in 'The Scarlet

Runners: A Social History of Queen Anne's' that was kindly given to me by the school and has since been donated to the Esther Tuckey Library - currently on display.



Above: Alice Fergusson outside Queen Anne's School
Below: Newnham College, Cambridge



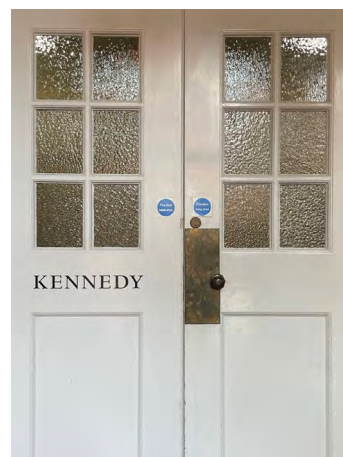
Newnham College, Cambridge University: Breaking Barriers

Winifred West's academic ambitions led her to Newnham College, Cambridge, a significant milestone in her journey. Founded in 1871 as a women's college, Newnham represented a beacon of hope for women seeking higher education in an era when universities largely excluded them. Winifred's time at Newnham not only broadened her academic horizons but also solidified her commitment to advancing education for women, a cause that would later define her career.

Frensham, Mittagong: A Vision Realised

Inspired by her experiences and education, Winifred West founded Frensham School in Mittagong in 1913. Her vision was to create a nurturing environment that fostered academic excellence and personal growth, drawing on the principles and values she had absorbed throughout her life. Winifred retired in 1938 but continued her educational legacy by opening Sturt in the grounds of Frensham in 1941, further cementing her influence on education in Australia.

Although Miss West passed away in 1971, her legacy lives on through Frensham School and the generations of students who have benefited from her vision. My visit to Frensham village in Surrey was not just a step back in time but also a reminder of the enduring impact that one person's passion and dedication can have on the lives of many.



Conclusion: Bridging the Past and Present

My journey to Winifred West’s birthplace, Frensham, has deepened my appreciation for the history and values that underpin our school. By visiting the places that shaped Winifred’s early years, I have gained a greater understanding of her vision and commitment to education. It’s remarkable to think that a small village in Surrey, England, could profoundly influence the founding of our school in Mittagong, Australia. As we walk through the halls of Frensham today, we are walking in the footsteps of a legacy that spans continents and generations.

Alice Fergusson
Year 11



There are apparent threads of connections between Miss West’s formative environments and our school – features in buildings and nature.



Frensham Bids Farewell to one of its Longest-serving Staff Members

After twenty-two years of steadfast and dedicated service, Frensham Schools’ Business Manager, Patrick Duck, recently finished his time at Frensham. Pat has played a pivotal role in nearly every aspect of the Schools’ operations during his time at Frensham Schools. Whether overseeing the accounts, wrangling contracts, or dealing with the complexities of infrastructure, systems or strategic planning, Pat’s guiding hand has been a cornerstone of the Schools’ continued success.



When employed by Julie Gillick in 2002, three weeks after the birth of his second child, Pat recalls that Ms Gillick handed him a contract with an extremely short job description, then elaborated with the comment, ‘the role is to do everything’. Pat quickly clarifies that by ‘everything’, she meant anything unrelated to education — and that is exactly what he’s done. Says Head of Frensham Schools, Geoff Marsh, ‘Pat has played a key role in the growth and development of Frensham Schools over the past twenty-two years. He has a deep and considered understanding of our culture and values and has offered wise and loyal support to the three Heads he has worked with.’

Moving to Frensham from their terrace house in Bondi Junction was an easy lifestyle choice for Pat and his small family; they loved the Highlands and just a few years earlier, he and his wife, Old Girl Natasha Wainberg, had

STAFF PROFILE

exchanged wedding vows on the front steps near the Deer Pond. The legendary Head of Music at the time, Ian Cooper, played piano for them, and it was Pat's introduction to just how unique the School is. When talking about Frensham, Pat states that it is not just the School that is unique but also the girls themselves. He says believes that you can walk into a room anywhere and 'always pick a Frensham girl'. He also says that, 'the cultural connection of the girls is like nothing else. They remain friends forever, but its more than friendships. A Frensham girl is never shy, and she makes an effort to get along with people. There's a confidence and a friendliness, but also a willingness to take a risk with new situations or people. I think that comes from the residential model of education, where the girls learn to get along with everyone.'



Pat says the aspect of his role that has been most striking is that no two days have ever been the same, 'I have enjoyed it immensely. Of course, the cyclical nature of the calendar can be relentless too, and it focusses the mind on time passing.' With time in sharp focus, Pat and Natasha have been planning their move to the beach for some years, with eventual retirement in mind. During Covid they renovated their house in Jervis Bay and now Pat is taking on a role in Wollongong, where they will live during the week. He will go back to his accounting roots working for the Wollongong City Council Financial Services Department. 'It's the lifestyle and the climate

we like there,' says Pat. 'we've always loved the beach, and it's a short trip to where our three kids are all living in Sydney.'



But Frensham Schools will always hold a special place in Pat's heart. His and Natasha's son, Michael, who now works in the corporate risk division at a major consulting firm, began his educational journey at Gib Gate. Their daughters, Lulu, who is studying Commerce, Marketing, and International Relations, and Eliza, who is currently pursuing Nursing after initially studying Medical Science, also attended both Gib Gate and Frensham. Natasha, who now works remotely for the Federal Government in a communications role, dedicated a decade to Frensham as the Fellowship Coordinator. The Duck family's connection to Frensham is deeply woven into its history, and his legacy of meticulous stewardship will be long remembered. As someone who has worked closely with Pat for nearly two decades, Geoff Marsh is quick to acknowledge the significant void his departure leaves, 'There is no doubt that Pat Duck will be greatly missed.'

Sarah Clutton
Parent & temporary
Staff Member





Empowering Young Learners Through Independent Adventures

As parents and educators, we should remain on the lookout for opportunities to foster independence in our children. Providing children with independent experiences helps them feel more confident and prepared for future challenges. Personally, I have always been a staunch advocate of raising independent children. From a young age, my own children would make their breakfast on a Saturday and Sunday morning, while two tired parents tried to get just a little bit more sleep! Yes, the kitchen was a mess afterwards and yes, it required pouring milk from the 3L jug into a smaller jug the night before - but the rich learning and growth for our children made it worthwhile.

We can easily fall into the trap of doing things for children which they can actually do for themselves. Although it might be 'easier' in the moment, we can be robbing our children of lessons learnt, challenges conquered, and confidence built.

To support and encourage our Frensham Junior School students to grow as independent adventurers, we are excited to launch a new initiative in 2025 - **The Junior Duke Program**.

What is the Junior Duke Program?

The Junior Duke Program is a structured framework that encourages primary-aged children to take on challenges and learn valuable life skills outside the traditional classroom setting. The program focuses on themes of leadership, teamwork, and personal responsibility, all while promoting a sense of adventure.

Junior Duke is not associated with, nor endorsed by, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Key Components of the Program

- 1. Skill Development:** Participants embark on a series of challenges that promote skills such as cooking, gardening, first aid, and even basic financial literacy. Each task is designed to be fun while also teaching essential life skills.
- 2. Goal Setting:** Children learn the importance of setting personal goals and working towards achieving them. This not only boosts their self-esteem but also instils a sense of accomplishment.
- 3. Community Engagement:** The program encourages students to get involved in

their communities through volunteering and service projects. This fosters empathy and a sense of belonging, as they understand the impact of their contributions.

4. Independence and Resilience: By navigating challenges independently, children build resilience. The program emphasises learning from failures and celebrating successes, teaching participants that both are integral to personal growth.

Join the Adventure!

We will share more detailed information about the Junior Duke program with students and

families in Term 1, 2025. The program will be delivered by school staff and will require parents to take an active role in supporting their children to reach set goals and challenges. Junior Duke reaches far beyond the classroom – the whole family can get involved by completing a variety of challenges. We look forward to our students developing new skills and talents as independent adventurers.

Lucy Gregory
Head
Frensham Junior School



Term 4 Sports, Debating and Tournament of Minds

This term, all students have the opportunity to participate in after school skill-based sports sessions being delivered in the Frensham Sports Hall at the Gillick Sports Complex. FlippaBall (modified water polo) has had an enthusiastic response in its inaugural season at The Centenary Pool. We entered an U10 mixed basketball team in local competition with the team enjoying morning training at the Sports Hall on the Frensham campus and students also participating in morning cricket skills at the Gib Gate campus.



In the Winter season, we had many students participating in local sporting competitions in hockey, netball and soccer. We congratulate all students and a special mention to the U9 netball team who progressed to the semi final for their age group. We also note Lola Gilkeson and Camille Muir (Year 5) who competed in the Interschool Snowsports competition over the winter.



We are also delighted to share some recent individual successes achieved by students.

Valentina Hercus (Year 6) recently competed in CIS Athletics Carnival in High Jump and Long Jump, progressing to PSSA Athletics Carnival for long jump.



Chelsea Trudgeon (Year 5) competed at Level 4 in State Gymnastics titles, achieving 3rd place overall for her age group.

Mae Hagen (Year 4) swam in NSW State Championships and came 3rd in 100m and 6th in 50m backstroke.

Iliana Hercus (Year 5) gained 1st place in the 90 cm open class (open to all ages) and 2nd in Children's class in the NSW Equestrian State Jumping titles.

Valentina Hercus (Year 6) 2nd place in Juniors class in the NSW Equestrian State Jumping titles.

Aria Proctor (Year 2) Year K-2 Champion Rider, Primary School Rider and winning the Champion Junior Rider Perpetual Trophy at Oxley College's Equestrian Day.

Debating

Two Frensham Junior School Debating teams entered the IPSHA Gala Debating Day hosted at Macarthur Anglican School in the first week of term. Each team had one debate as the Affirmative side and one as the Negative side and the topics were That YouTube is better than TV and That we should ban all pet shops in Australia. The teams were exemplary representatives of our school, winning 2 out of 4 debates and the adjudicator noting that one of their wins was the best debate of the day. Congratulations to Elizabeth Beckhaus, Poppy Chin, Amelie Gardiner, Madeleine Hannah, Tilly Mollison (Year 6), Lakey Boyes, Lola Gilkeson (Year 5) and Alula Gerstl (Year 4). Thank you to Mrs Neilson who took the teams to the day and Mrs Croger who prepared them for the debates.

Tournament of Minds

The Frensham Junior School Tournament of Minds team competed in the South Coast Region at UOW in Wollongong in September. Congratulations to the team of Poppy Chin, Lucia Braham, Madeleine Hannah, Tilly Mollison, Sofia Wilson (Year 6), Lola Gilkeson and Camille Muir (Year 5) who were awarded Honours. They prepared with Mrs Graham, honing their problem-solving and teamwork



skills and prepared the Arts long term challenge which involved developing a creative interpretation in response to the Challenge with artistic expression in the form of dance, song, theatre and Visual Arts over six weeks and also undertook a Spontaneous Challenge on the day.

Anne Graham
Deputy Head



THE Disney Aristocats KIDS

We believe we are unique at Frensham Junior School in that each year, every student performs in a musical and when they reach Year 6, all students in the class have a lead role. This opportunity for all students to participate and the supportive role of the younger classes has a cumulative effect. Their confidence grows and they have the older students role model the leadership on stage. The enthusiasm that all students bring to these annual performances is amazing. This year the musical was The Aristocats Kids, and Mrs Anne Graham said, 'It was the best ever!'



Our Second Giving Day - Tuesday 17 September 2024

We are sincerely grateful for your generous support of the Winifred West Schools Foundation Giving Day on Tuesday 17 September. It was a wonderful day, with students from Frensham Junior School sharing a picnic lunch with our senior students—a reminder of the strength and connection within our community.

Thanks to your kindness, we raised over \$530,000 for our Bursary Fund, which provides financial assistance to students who otherwise might not have had the opportunity to attend our school.



The gift of a Bursary can transform a student's life—providing opportunities they would not otherwise have and ensuring that the benefits of a Frensham education are accessible to those who need it most.

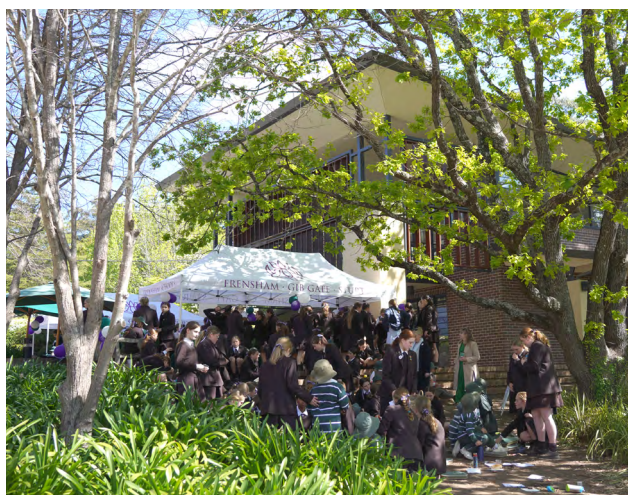
This support underscores how much our community values all that Frensham Schools has to offer. It's clear that our shared commitment to the values of empowerment, personal growth, and making a positive impact extends beyond individual students, enriching the wider community.

As we move forward, this day reminds us that, while we are fortunate to receive, we are equally fortunate to have the opportunity to give. We look forward to announcing the specifics of how the funds will be used at Final Prayers.



The impact of your contribution will be felt for decades to come. We know that a Frensham education offers far more than what can be measured in academic terms; it shapes character, inspires purpose, and builds a lifelong sense of community.

Jackie Dalton
Director of Philanthropy





Back to Frensham for the 2024 AGM

The Frensham Fellowship Committee held its 2024 AGM earlier this year on Saturday 15 June.

During her address, President of Fellowship, Sam Kennedy (Samantha Greig, 1991), described her time at Frensham. Sam highlighted the commitment her parents made to the school.



Her father steered a committee to raise funds for the construction of Kennedy House. This, Sam says, helped foster her understanding and appreciation of volunteering time for something worthwhile. This gift of involvement, of serving others, of giving to a community, strengthened for her, a sense of belonging.

Four new Committee Members were elected at the AGM: Sally Brazier (Colless, 1993); Alex Byrne (Tierney, 1994); Kate Gell (Tonkin, 2002) who has taken on Treasurer of the Committee; and Kathini Harris (2002). They join existing

Committee Members: Susie Arnott (Margaret Taylor, 1959); Pook Austin (Cameron, 1968); Cath Brennan (Raynolds, 1979); Sally Jeffrey (Grieve, 1969); Cathy Mathews (Catherine Wayland, 1969); and Lou McMichael (Louise Cowlshaw, 1969)

Special thanks to retiring Committee Member and Treasurer, Kate Waldren (Herbert, 1990); and departed Committee Members Julia Laverty (Forbes, 1980) and Jane Worner (1990) for their service to the Fellowship Committee.

All Committee Members share in their desire to give back to the Frensham community and remain deeply connected to their school through these voluntary positions.

The Fellowship Lunch followed with guest speaker, Edwina Waddy (1990). She took us on a journey back to her time at school and the opportunities she embraced that shaped her career spanning thirty years in film and television. Edwina is currently the head of Australian Content at Roadshow Films. Prior to this, she ran programming and strategy for ABC2 and the ABC Comedy channel across television and iView. Edwina was also a Commissioning Editor and Executive Producer for ABC Factual & Documentaries and spent several years with the Specialist Factual Department at Channel Four UK.

As the Committee looks beyond 2024, Fellowship will continue its work with a full



Fellowship Committee (L-R) – back row: Sally Brazier, Cathy Mathews, Pook Austin, Sam Kennedy; middle row: Lou McMichael, Cath Brennan, Kate Gell, Kathini Harris; front row: Alex Byrne, Susie Arnott. Absent: Sally Jeffrey.

calendar of events to broaden and strengthen the ties across its membership through engaging in events both in Sydney and regional New South Wales.

Thank you to Sam Kennedy and the Fellowship Committee for their fantastic work this year and for keeping Fellowship connected.

Thank you to Sarah Crouch (1995) for her delightful floral arrangements for the meeting.

Charlotte Ostor
Fellowship and Development
Coordinator



Mrs Ros Buick, Edwina Waddy, Sophia Tomkins (Harris, 1990), Antonia Badger (Waddy, 1997)





The French Study Tour 2024 started with two weeks at the *Ateliers FL* (French Language school) in Biarritz and finished with five days in Paris during the September-October holidays. The students who participated were Anna Boag, Zanna Collins, Alex Frith, Alice Gilder, Chloe Herbert, Claudia Maple-Brown, Emme Powell, Tallulah Reid and Skye Spong.

Accompanying staff were Mrs Sally Hannah, Mr Greg Hannah, Mme Kerry Lennon and her husband, Steve.

What was special about this Tour?

Accommodation

The students were paired with and placed in homestay families chosen by the *Ateliers FL*. The families were well known to the French school, having hosted students for a number of years. We visited all the families and were impressed by their enthusiasm and dedication to giving our girls a safe and welcoming home where they could speak French every evening and learn about home life in France.

Timing

Other tours have taken place over the Christmas holidays. This gives more time in the country, but during the coldest period of the year. We wanted to experiment with a trip during the early autumn when we hoped

to find more favourable weather conditions, which we did.

The French School

Finally, by attending a French language school, we hoped to make the most of the two weeks of class time. With a reciprocal exchange, students attend classes with their host sister and any learning during the various lessons can be haphazard and depend on the focus of the student in the different lessons.

During this tour, the students attended three hours of classes every morning based around their established learning needs. Their teacher, Isabelle, conducted lessons in French, helping the girls to develop and fine tune their listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar skills.

Biarritz: a surfside French city with a Basque flavour

Biarritz, accessible by plane or the very fast train, TGV, is a small, safe city well serviced by an extensive transport system of free electric buses, paid buses and trains. It is a walkable, seaside town with safe beaches and a lively town centre focused on the covered market.

After morning classes, the school planned outings for us. Activities included a walking tour around Biarritz to give some history and get us oriented, visits to the Aquarium and

the Cité de l'océan, surfing lessons, a bowling afternoon in Bayonne and a weekend trip on the TGV to Bordeaux. We loved our stay in Biarritz and the balance of experiences on offer. The girls enjoyed a measure of independence around the structure of morning classes and afternoon activities, catching the bus to and from school every day and swimming as often as they could. While surfing lessons were an obvious highlight, the girls were introduced to the importance of the Basque identity of the region in their families and learned to play *Pelote Basque*, a ball game that is a mix of tennis, squash, and handball with a scooped mitt called a *chistera*.



A weekend in Bordeaux

On Saturday 5 October we jumped on an early morning TGV and settled in for a two-hour trip to Bordeaux. A beautiful, historic town on the banks of the Garonne, Bordeaux is a big, lively city, the home of great food and fine wines. It is also the home of the tallest sand dune in Europe, the *Dune du Pilat*, which we climbed twice! Our visit was completed by a walking tour and river cruise where we tasted the local sweet treat, *les Canelés bordelais*.

Paris

We were sad to leave the delightful coastal town of Biarritz and the host families who had become our home away from home, but the City of Lights beckoned. On Friday afternoon

11 October, we jumped back into the TGV for a four-hour trip to Paris where we arrived at the bustling Gare Montparnasse.

We packed as many unique Parisian experiences as possible into four days and five nights including several meals in authentic French bistros, shopping time at the *Galeries Lafayette* and the Champs Élysées, climbing to the top of the Eiffel Tower and walking the length of the Champs Élysées from the Arc de Triomphe. We saw *La Joconde* (the Mona Lisa, much smaller in real life) and other treasures of the *Louvre*, and the great artworks of the Impressionist era by Degas, Van Gogh, Renoir, Monet and Manet at the *Musée d'Orsay*.

Thanks to Mrs Hannah's knowledge of the theatrical scene in Paris, we saw a French production of the *Bald Soprano* by Eugene Ionescu in the Théâtre de la Huchette where the show has run non-stop since 1957! We also had an amazing behind the scenes visit of the Palais Garnier where we were able to enter the private box of the *Phantom of the Opera*.



A walking tour of the *Quartier Latin* brought this most ancient part of the city to life for us all as we strolled past the nearly completely restored *Cathédrale de Notre Dame*, built over several hundred years from 1163-1345 through streets leading to the first university of Paris, the *Sorbonne*. We were unable to visit Notre Dame, but ducked into its contemporary, the church of *Saint-Séverin*, where we could admire the gothic architecture and stained-

glass windows. We even came across bronzed scallop shells embedded in the roadway, indicating the pathway to *Saint Jacques de Compostelle*.

We continued through small streets whose names tell of ancient occupants, *Rue des Prêtres*, or occupations like *Rue de la Parcheminerie* past a mediaeval home, now museum of the Middle Ages, *le Musée de Cluny* to the home of a more modern occupant, the *Place de l'Estrapade*, home of *Emily in Paris*!

Stéphane Beraza, master crêpe maker and owner of the crêperie *Caramel Sarrasin*, closed his restaurant to outsiders for one evening to give us a master class on 'real French crêpes'. We learned how to make crepes from scratch using his secret recipe, then cooked our own in the compact kitchen of his restaurant. They were delicious!

On our final day in Paris, we headed out early on the RER C for the nearby town of Versailles where we had a 9:00am appointment to visit the eponymous chateau and admire the extensive and beautiful gardens. Some final resting and packing time in the afternoon ensured we were dressed and ready for a special last night of fine dining at *Elsass*, where specialties from the Alsace region were on offer. Nearly everyone tried the meaty, garlicky snails!

By 7:30 am the next day we were on our way to Charles de Gaulle airport where we said farewell to Madame and Monsieur Lennon and farewell to Paris, for now.

Every student gave the best of herself throughout the tour, demonstrating care and concern for one another, open-mindedness and respect for everyone with whom they came into contact. We have shared an extraordinary adventure together and promised to meet in Paris again five years on.

Sally Hannah
Head of Drama
Kerry Lennon
Director of Languages



Journey of Growth: Reflections on Friendship, Change and Gratitude at Frensham

As we continue our journey through the school year, Friday Morning Prayers delivered by students offer a thoughtful reflection on the many challenges and opportunities we encounter along the way. Each Friday girls have highlighted a different aspect of life at Frensham—whether it's embracing change, appreciating what we have, or taking risks. From celebrating the power of education and the importance of mental health, to acknowledging the incredible impact of teachers and the Year 12s' departure, these reflections encourage us to pause, appreciate, and grow. As we navigate our personal and collective journeys, may we find inspiration in these words and remember the importance of seizing every moment, embracing change, and supporting one another through both the highs and lows.

Matilda Graham and **Lottie Firth's** reflection on friendship and connection at Frensham highlights the deep impact of relationships in shaping a supportive and empowering community. "If we look at Maslow's hierarchy of needs... right in the middle of the pyramid is the notion of love and belonging," they note, underlining how core values at Frensham nurture this sense of connection. From boarding life, where "girls become like sisters," to the "Crack" and "Shadow" programs that promote leadership and mentorship, the School fosters meaningful bonds across year groups. Lottie shares, "Walking to class, playing touch, going on a walk... have become some of the most memorable moments of our friendship," showing how simple interactions can lead to lifelong relationships. The importance of teacher-student connections is also emphasised, with Matilda explaining that teachers at Frensham become "mentors and role models," guiding students not just academically but personally. In conclusion,

they encourage their peers to embrace these opportunities, as "it is a unique and special aspect of Frensham" that will be deeply missed.

Holly Regan and **Scarlett Francis** reflect on the unique opportunities that Frensham offers students at every year level, highlighting how these experiences foster a supportive and close-knit community. In Year 7, everything is new, but the excitement of "a massive sleepover with your friends every night" and quirky traditions like "calling cupboards 'cubies'" help ease the transition. Year 8 marks the start of leadership, with students becoming "role models for Year 7" and learning the importance of helping new students, such as teaching them how to make milo. Year 9 introduces global learning opportunities, like "Holting" in the Holt and visiting nursing homes, along with the chance to begin the Duke of Edinburgh program. In Year 10, students take on more leadership, becoming mentors to Year 7s through the "Crack" system, and forming lasting bonds with their "Cracks." Year 11 brings greater responsibility with leadership roles and preparation for the "nerve-racking prelim exams." Finally, Year 12 is a time for reflection as students experience their "whole lot of lasts" and prepare to leave, with Scarlett and Holly noting, "It really has gone by so fast." They encourage younger students to embrace every opportunity and "create lasting memories" that will stay with them forever.

Penny Cay and **Alice Hansen's** reflection on International Day of the Girl calls attention to the power and potential of girls worldwide. The 2023 theme, "A Girl's Vision for the Future," emphasises that girls, like the women before them, have the power to shape their futures. The authors highlight the historical struggles women have faced, particularly in sports, referencing the 1928 Olympics where

Journey of Growth: Reflections on Friendship, Change and Gratitude at Frensham

the women's 800m race was initially ridiculed by the media. Despite misinformation about the race, including claims that women were too fragile to compete, the event showcased groundbreaking athletic achievements that were dismissed, delaying women's inclusion in the event for decades. Penny and Alice suggest that pop culture often sends subtle messages discouraging women, but Frensham girls, empowered by education, can rise above these limitations. They urge students to consider their responsibility as educated young women, particularly when millions of girls worldwide are deprived of education, like in Afghanistan. Education can lead to global benefits such as gender equality, better health, and economic growth, noting that an educated woman is more likely to improve her community. To support gender equality, they suggest simple actions: kindness, advocating for education, and staying informed about global issues. Penny and Alice encourage girls to call for a world where girls have no limits in realising their potential, encouraging readers to take action in shaping a more equal future.

Tempe Arnott and **Skye McLelland**'s reflection for Mental Health Month and World Teachers Day encourages us to focus on the positive in a world filled with chaos. They acknowledge the real challenges we face globally and personally but emphasise the importance of shifting our focus to gratitude and hope. "Gratitude helps us to understand where we are and how lucky we are," they note, encouraging us to appreciate the small things, such as the rare chance of even being born—"only a 1 in 400 trillion chance." They also advocate for seeking out stories of success, like the "Ocean Cleanup" project, Tasmania running on 100% renewable energy, and the resurgence of rhino populations, which highlight the progress being made in environmental and conservation

efforts. Tempe and Skye remind us to be "the light we wish to see" by spreading kindness and leading by example, citing Anne Frank's belief that "nobody needs to wait a single moment before starting to improve the world." The reflection also celebrates the role of teachers in fostering positivity, growth, and confidence in students. On World Teachers Day, Tempe and Skye encourage everyone to "thank your teachers for their positive energy" and their dedication to creating nurturing environments that inspire and uplift. In conclusion, they challenge us to choose hope and kindness, saying, "Be the reason someone else believes that things can get better."

Claudia Henderson and **Amelia Hartnell**'s reflection on stepping outside our comfort zones underscores the importance of embracing new experiences for personal growth. They note that humans are creatures of habit, but trying new things broadens our perspectives and teaches resilience. Drawing inspiration from Mark Zuckerberg, who famously said, "The biggest risk is not taking any risk," they argue that avoiding risks exposes us to even greater losses—such as missing opportunities and failing to realise our potential. The authors emphasise that life doesn't wait, and the most meaningful moments often come from stepping out of our comfort zones, a theme they relate to their time at Frensham. They remind readers of how short life is, noting that after the age of 18, we only have 1451 months left, urging everyone to seize every opportunity to learn and grow. At Frensham, students can find many ways to challenge themselves, from sports like tennis and water polo to creative outlets like drama and debating. The authors also highlight the significance of embracing new traditions, such as Diwali Day, which fosters a sense of cultural awareness and celebration. Claudia and Amelia echo Wayne

Journey of Growth: Reflections on Friendship, Change and Gratitude at Frensham

Gretzky's quote, "You miss 100% of the shots you don't take," urging everyone to try new things without fear of failure, as it is the only way to make life truly exciting.

Chloe White and **Jocie Corbett** reflect on the bittersweet emotions surrounding the Year 12s' departure, reminding the school community to appreciate the fleeting moments and relationships that define their time at Frensham. They highlight the importance of appreciating what we have before it's gone, referencing Joni Mitchell's song Big Yellow Taxi, which reminds us, "Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got 'til it's gone." Chloe and Jocie explain the psychological concept of hedonic adaptation, where we take for granted what once excited us, and encourage students to recognise and appreciate the simple, everyday things that might be overlooked. In the wake of the Year 12s' departure, the writers urge everyone to pause, acknowledge their blessings, and cherish the present moment. Ultimately, they emphasise the importance of gratitude and encourage the school to make the most of their time together, creating memories and embracing the opportunities ahead, as time passes quickly.

Alice Mulligan and **Lilla Stanford** reflect on the importance of embracing change as a catalyst for personal growth, using the character Judy Hopps from Zootopia as a model. As Judy navigates challenges and embraces new beginnings, she becomes "the best version of herself," demonstrating that change is necessary for progress. Alice and Lilla highlight the changes students are experiencing at Frensham, from Year 7's preparations for the end-of-year play to Year 11's exam preparations. They acknowledge that while change can be intimidating, it

fosters resilience and adaptability, leading to growth. Alice and Lilla encourage students to appreciate the opportunities Frensham offers to try new things, from debating to visiting nursing homes, which help foster meaningful connections and expand personal horizons. As Judy Hopps says, "I'll keep on making those new mistakes," urging everyone to embrace the discomfort of change as a path to growth and success.

Sophie Rankine
Marketing and
Engagement Manager





Frensham / Bowral Blacks Girls Rugby 7s

From relatively humble beginnings, the Frensham/Bowral Blacks Girls Rugby 7s squad has grown from one team of twelve players to more than 50 players in four teams across three different age divisions.

Without local competition, our senior 1st and 2nd, intermediate and junior sides made their way to Sydney each week to play in the premier independent girls school rugby Sevens competition, the *Chloe Dalton Cup*. This was Frensham's second time competing in such a rarefied atmosphere.

The competition is the independent girls schools equivalent of GPS/CAS rugby, and is played over 6 weekends in Term 3. Each team plays each other twice to determine semi-finalists, who then play off for the title. All teams play each other at the one venue- either Pymble Ladies College or Loreto Normanhurst.

The Frensham squad trained in addition to their winter sports every Wednesday in Terms 2 and 3 and were ably coached by Peter Walters, Scott Staniforth, Steve Talbot, Ben Hindmarsh, Richard Whitehead, Andrew Cox, Abbey Larkings and Edie Staniforth (2023).

The intermediates (U16s) and Senior 2nds (U18s) were very much new to the game and ended 5th in their respective 2nd Division competitions. Every player was a novice and will surely benefit from this years' experience in years to come.

The Juniors (U14s) had a very exciting season, outclassing all to remain undefeated and win the 2nd Division championship.

The Senior 1sts (U18s) having not yet fielded a full-strength team in the first 5 weeks of the cup (exams, other sports injuries, social and family commitments) entered finals week in 4th position. However a stoic defence and some impeccably executed set pieces saw Goliath fall to David, and Frensham were in the decider, taking on the slick Monte team in the Final. Determined defence from Monte meant that Frensham was held up twice, locking up the scores at 14-14 at full-time, sending the game into golden point extra time (first to score wins). After more than 5 minutes into extra time, a desperate chase led to a try saving tackle, followed by a turnover at the breakdown and a quick transfer to a free player. In a flash, the try was scored resulting in a much-coveted 1st Division title for Frensham.



Off the back of these competitions, Tempe Arnott and Rachael Connor were selected for the Illawarra Representative Rugby team, and Willow Hindmarsh and Arabella Whitehead were selected for Randwick. During the holidays Willow and Arabella were also advised that they were selected in NSW Waratahs academy squads for 2025. Both girls have been also selected for the Pasifika Youth Cup, which is a huge carnival celebrating the heritage and culture of Polynesian & Indigenous influence. With up to 72 teams involved it is the biggest single venue rugby event run across junior rugby in the country.

While the two championships and individual successes are nice to have, the camaraderie and satisfaction built around achieving and executing skills for a collective goal is the real reward. The growth of Rugby 7s at Frensham is hugely exciting and we are already planning excitedly for the 2025 season.

Andrew Cox & Peter Walters
Rugby 7s Coaches

Sports Dinner – Captain’s Speech

As you know rugby is a new sport we are lucky enough to have at Frensham. In only our second year, I’m happy to report that we had nearly seventy girls playing rugby this term, which makes up two senior teams, one intermediate team and one junior team. For some context, this time three years ago we only had enough girls to make up one team, where we played in an open division where the girls quite literally squashed us between their legs like nothing else. How the times have changed!

We have had some very exciting opportunities this year provided to us by Bowral Blacks and Frensham. The first being the Kiama Trial game hosted at the Bowral rugby grounds on the 25th of May. It was a mixed team of intermediates and seniors, and for the majority of the girls it was the first ever game of rugby. Nonetheless, every girl went out there and gave it their all. I’d love to say that we won, but with only two



members of the Kiama team actually coming to the trial game, it was basically Frensham vs Frensham, just one playing in a Kiama jersey.

On the 22nd of June, Frensham held their 3rd annual Rugby 7s Gala Day. It was a big day for the girls, competing against a number of schools including Kinross, Monte, Loreto and Canberra Girls Grammar. This day allowed the girls to get a taste of what was in store for them in Term 3 and we are very grateful to all the individuals involved who made this day possible.

The Chloe Dalton Cup

For everyone who is unsure of what the *Chloe Dalton Cup* is, it is a very competitive competition played at PLC Pymble and Loreto Normanhurst every weekend of Term 3. It is dedicated to Chloe Dalton, a female athlete who played for the Australian Rugby 7’s Olympic side, and is very enthusiastic about women’s sport and gender equality, on and off the field. Every weekend the girls play two to three games against a variety of schools and from those games, win or lose, it will determine your place on the last weekend. This year, the intermediate team and the Senior 2nds both placed 5th just short of making finals, but still played their hearts out in their last games and we are proud of their efforts this season. Well done to these girls.

The junior team placed in the top four and were up against Kinross in the semi-finals. After an amazing semis game it put them in the finals against Ravenswood, where they won 12-7.



You girls all played phenomenally, and I don't think Mr Cox could be more proud!

Onto the Senior 1sts. We placed 4th going into the semis and beat the top of the table Pymble who were also the winners of the *Chloe Dalton Cup* in 2023. Then we were up against Monte in the finals. It was a hard-fought game ending with a tie at full time – 14 all. This led us into a third five-minute half where the first try wins. With two 'held up tries' and one try saving tackle from Lily Haddrill, Arabella Whitehead finally made a full field run scoring the winning try just before the bell, winning us the Grand Final and the *Chloe Dalton Cup*.

I'd like to take the time now to say a massive thank you to all the coaches and individuals involved. Mr Cox, Richard, Steve, Ben, Scott, Edie, Abby and of course Pete. Every one of you have been dedicated to ensuring our success this season. You take the time out of your Wednesday and Saturdays to coach us, and your dedication is reflected in every girl and how much they have improved this season, so thank you.

And then finally, to the girls. I am so grateful to each and every one of you, because without your love and support for the game, rugby at Frensham wouldn't be what it is today. You all continuously show up every weekend and leave everything you have on the field. I am super proud of you all, and you should be so proud of yourselves. I'm sad to leave but I know rugby is being left in good hands.

Scarlett Francis
Captain of Rugby



Maths Club

On Tuesday 22 October, we hosted an engaging session that brought the world of vectors to life, inspired by the character **Vector** from *Despicable Me*. The evening began with an introduction to vectors, where students explored the essential concepts of magnitude and direction, all wrapped up in a reference to the iconic character **Vector**. This foundational understanding set the stage for our hands-on learning experience.



We learned to use compasses to read bearings in a vector style, developing our navigation skills in a fun way and applying what we'd learnt to real life. This was the highlight of the evening; a thrilling treasure hunt around the campus, where we followed vector directions in two teams to find chocolate prizes, collaborating and applying vector fundamentals. To wrap up the evening, we played a Kahoot quiz reinforcing the concepts learned, adding a competitive edge that kept everyone engaged.

Overall, this session was an engaging, collaborative, and hands-on way to learn about the fundamentals of vectors and apply math to real-life experiences. The combination of teamwork, competition, and adventure made for an unforgettable evening!

Estella Loesser and Brooke Graham
Year 11



Book Club Kick-Off

Welcoming Asha Badhni-Chipperfield and Elizabeth Laverty

The library's latest book club meeting was a special one, marking the start of a new chapter under the leadership of Asha Badhni-Chipperfield and Elizabeth Laverty, who have recently taken on the role of Heads of Library Communications. Asha and Elizabeth welcomed members to an evening that celebrated both the classic and modern in the literary world.



A Classic Theme for the Evening

The theme of the evening, *The Classics – Traditional to Modern*, set the stage for an exciting exploration of literature that spans the ages. The event took place in the cosy and atmospheric North Room, a perfect setting for discussions about timeless stories and new favourites. The evening was further enhanced by a delightful spread of treats, including the Frensham kitchen's renowned hot chocolate, served alongside an array of sweet nibbles—all enjoyed in charming vintage teacups. This combination of the old and new was a fitting introduction to the night's activities.

A Book-Focused Welcome

Asha and Elizabeth began the evening by engaging the group in a lively discussion about the classic novels everyone had read during the recent term break. This conversation



highlighted the diverse range of literature that resonates with readers, from older classics to more contemporary works. Among the books shared were:

- *White Nights* by Fyodor Dostoevsky
- *Looking for Alibrandi* by Melina Marchetta
- *Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger
- *The Power of One* by Bryce Courtenay
- *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald
- *Animal Farm* by George Orwell

The conversation flowed seamlessly, as members reflected on the lasting impact these books have had on their reading lives. It was clear that these classic novels—whether published decades ago or more recently—continue to spark meaningful connections for readers of all ages.

Book Speed-Dating: A Fun Twist on Book Selection

After the discussion, the group moved on to a more interactive activity—book speed-dating. This fun exercise involved spending a few minutes with four different books, briefly exploring each one before voting on which



book(s) they'd like to read for the first book club meeting next year. The format made for a fast-paced, energetic way to discover new titles and spark interest among the group.

After several rounds of enthusiastic voting, three books emerged as the clear favourites:

- *The Selection* by Kiera Cass
- *All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr
- *All the Bright Places* by Jennifer Niven



With such a close vote, it's clear that these three books will offer a variety of themes and experiences for the book club to explore in the coming months.

Susie McGlenn
Teacher Librarian



Gold Duke of Edinburgh's
International Award Expedition

Gold Expedition

Duke of Edinburgh's International Award



During the holidays seven girls, Rachael Connor, Hannah Day, Sophie Goodisson, Tabitha Wild, Madison Walters, Claudia Henderson and Jocelyn Corbett, embarked on a challenging Gold Duke of Edinburgh Adventurous Journey along the South Coast. The journey pushed them to their limits, but it was filled with laughter, wildlife, and perseverance. The first three days saw them kayaking down the Clyde River, where mishaps like getting stuck on rocks and nearly capsizing were frequent. While some struggled with equipment and exhaustion, moments of humour kept the group going, such as when Madi and Sophie couldn't stop laughing and made the camp leader drag them down the rapids to avoid capsizing.

The journey became even more difficult when Jocie and Claudia, battling a broken rudder, were forced to zigzag down the river. However, they were heartened by encouragement from Tabby and Rachael singing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." By the time the girls reached the campsite, the group was soaked but relieved to sit around a warm fire, drying off and sharing stories. The final day of kayaking proved to be the hardest, with open waters, strong winds, and large waves. However, sightings of dolphins and penguins kept the group distracted from their seasickness.

After saying goodbye to Rachael, the group switched to hiking, which involved a tough climb up steep stairs and coastal trails that left everyone a little out of breath. Along the way, they encountered diverse wildlife, including turtles, dolphins, and whales, as well as swooping plovers and hungry possums. The group also dealt with a midnight tick scare,

which was quickly resolved with help from the camp leader.

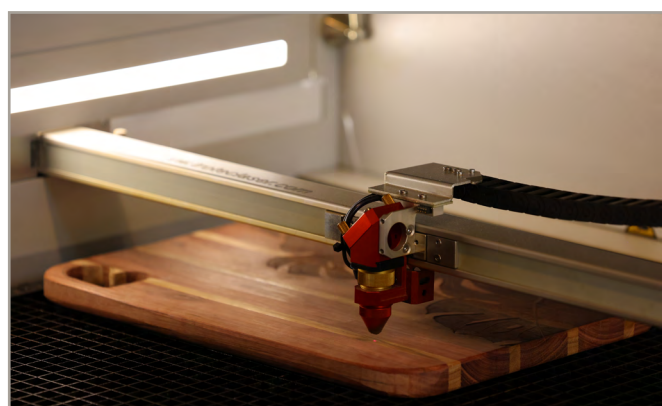
The journey was a powerful lesson in resilience, teamwork, and self-discovery. The girls learned how to push through discomfort and realised that it's not always about the destination, but about how you handle the challenges along the way. Through their experiences, they learned to appreciate small joys, like a warm fire after a long day or the beauty of nature and recognised that the hardest moments often lead to the most growth.

Shane Green

Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Coordinator



Year 10 Enrichment Week – Sturt Workshops



Year 10 Enrichment Week – Sturt Workshops



FRENSHAM'S PRODUCTION OF

Disney THE LITTLE MERMAID

Music by
ALAN MENKEN

Lyrics by
**HOWARD ASHMAN
& GLENN SLATER**

Book by
DOUG WRIGHT

Directed by
SALLY HANNAH

Based on the Hans Christian Andersen story and the Disney film produced by Howard Ashman & John Musker and written & directed by John Musker and Ron Clements

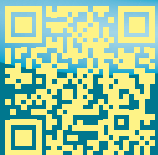
Musical
Direction by
**MICHAEL
SPENCER**

Originally Produced by
**Disney Theatrical
Productions**

Licensed exclusively by
Music Theatre International
(Australasia)

PUBLIC PERFORMANCE
FRIDAY 6 DECEMBER

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE
SATURDAY 7 DECEMBER



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TICKETS \$30/adult | \$15/child U12

7.30PM – CLUBBE HALL, FRENSHAM, MITTAGONG