

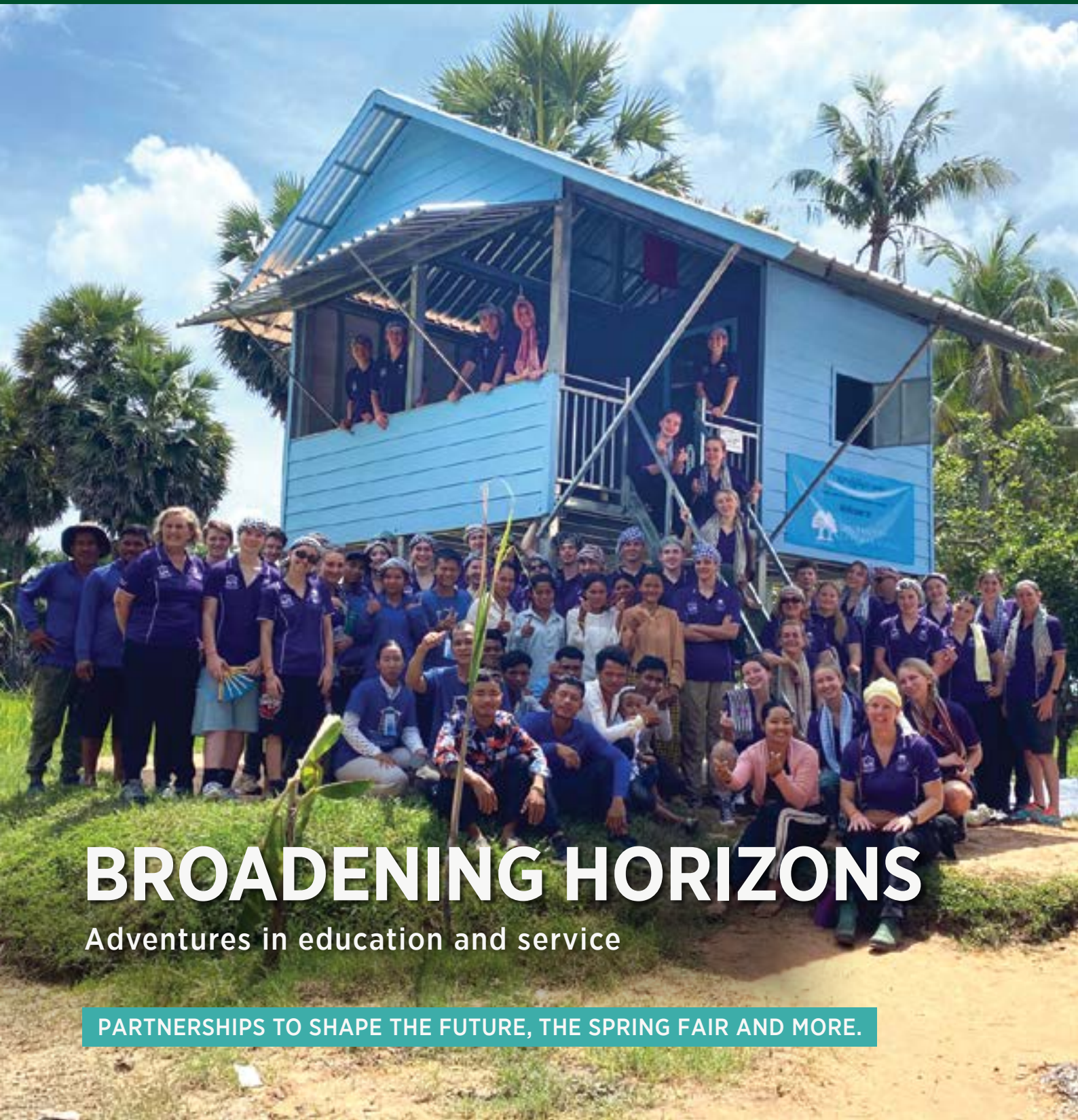


CENTRAL COAST  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

# BUNDARA

Magazine

Issue 61 • Summer 2023



## BROADENING HORIZONS

Adventures in education and service

PARTNERSHIPS TO SHAPE THE FUTURE, THE SPRING FAIR AND MORE.



BUNDARA is the biannual magazine of Central Coast Grammar School.

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Bundara is printed on Sovereign Silk. Sovereign Silk is manufactured according to ISO 14001 EMS accreditation and is FSC certified.

Central Coast Grammar School acknowledges the Darkinjung people, the Traditional Owners of the land on which the School is located. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country.

## From the Board

At the end of another amazing year, on behalf of the Board, I'd like to express our appreciation and thanks to every student, family and staff member for your personal contribution to our thriving school community.

This year, there are two individuals leaving CCGS who deserve a special mention. Our third and retiring Headmaster Bill Low (2008 – 2023) and Board member and ex-Board Chair Ken Jolly AM (2010 – 2023, Chair 2011 – 2019.)

A visionary and strategic Headmaster, Bill saw the potential to grow CCGS beyond its foundation to become the outstanding school it is today. Thank you, Bill, for your collaboration with the Board through three five-year cycles of strategic planning, shaping our goals and motivating so many to achieve them. You saw what CCGS could become and worked tirelessly during the last fifteen years to make it happen.

Your personal dedication to master planning greatly assisted the Board to deliver an ambitious program of capital works – our Library, Science Centre, Performing Arts Centre, Junior School and Senior College Centre to name a few. In tandem with these innovative learning environments, you advanced next generation teaching and learning practices, resulting in outstanding academic and cocurricular outcomes. The restorative power of the gardens you have nurtured around us lifts our spirits daily.

You have remained faithful to the school's founding traditions and values, while dynamically pressing forward to make CCGS the best it can be. You can be confident in the knowledge that you leave CCGS in a strong position for our next Headmaster to continue the journey.

A business leader, with a lifelong interest in education and learning, Ken Jolly AM has Chaired and served the Board over 13 years, working together with our Headmaster to realise a shared vision. Thank you, Ken, for volunteering your time, energy and expertise in service of Central Coast Grammar School.

On behalf of the Board, I wish Bill and Ken a happy retirement from CCGS life and fulfilling adventures in the years to come.

I also extend our best wishes to you all for a restful summer holiday and look forward to a new chapter in the CCGS story in 2024.

#### Stephen Brahams FAICD

Chairman of the School Board



## From the Headmaster

As 2023 draws to a close, so does my tenure as Headmaster of CCGS.

The role of a Headmaster cannot be done in isolation. A school is a human organisation and I've been exceptionally fortunate to have been surrounded by the highest calibre of people. The support and guidance of an expert Board, the unparalleled dedication of teachers, and of course, our wonderful families, have all contributed to a thriving community of inclusion, respect and integrity.

The journey we have undertaken together over the past 15 years, filled with shared aspirations and achievements, has been a source of immense pride for me.

Together with the Board, the school embarked on an ambitious capital works program to ensure our facilities were the very best on offer. A new Performing Arts Centre, Junior School and Senior College Precinct are just some of many facilities that have expanded

opportunities and brought next generation learning practices to life for students.

As many of you know, the beautification and enhancement of our school grounds is a long-standing passion of mine. We are fortunate to have 18-hectares of space on campus and integrating outdoor spaces into learning environments has enriched the educational experience, helped promote physical and mental wellbeing and fostered a lifelong connection between students and nature.


Undoubtedly however, it is the relationships forged between students, parents and teachers that has been the cornerstone of our shared successes. In my time, I've had the great privilege of watching many young children grow into confident and capable young adults, ready to take on the world thanks to the guiding hands and expert support of our skilled teachers and their families.

Now, the next generation are returning to CCGS, with children of alumni constituting a growing number of new starters – a testament to the impact of a CCGS education.

As I step away from my role as Headmaster and look forward to my next chapter in retirement, it is the fond memories from CCGS that I will cherish. I have every confidence in the continued success of this wonderful school and the capable hands that will guide it into the future.

**William Low**

Headmaster/Chief Executive Officer



# Meet your 2024 Head Prefects

HARRY MANGOS AND SKYE GERRISH HAVE BEEN NAMED AS CCGS'S HEAD PREFECTS FOR 2024. LEARN A BIT MORE ABOUT THEM AND WHAT MAKES THEM PERFECT FOR THE ROLE - SOME OF THEIR RESPONSES MIGHT SURPRISE YOU!

## Started CCGS in...

**Harry:** Year 7 **Skye:** Kindergarten

## Activities or hobbies I'm passionate about are...

**Harry:** Soccer and piano.

**Skye:** Anything sports related, especially netball and basketball. When I'm not playing sport my favourite place to be is the beach. I love anything associated with water, from water skiing and wake boarding to surfing and sunrise swims.

## Something not many people know about me is...

**Harry:** I have an intense fear of ants. I can handle spiders or sharks just fine but can't stand having an ant crawling up my leg.

**Skye:** Every morning I have a cold shower. Most of my friends think I am crazy, but for me it's the best way to start the day.

## My leadership philosophy has been shaped by...

**Harry:** Growing up watching my soccer team Liverpool play, witnessing how a coach can get the best out of their players through encouragement, inspiration and treating each member of the team as an individual.

**Skye:** Something my nan told me, "Always leave a situation or conversation with the other person feeling better about themselves than they did before." Whenever my nan enters a room, she brightens the space and everyone in it. To me, that is what leadership is all about. It's not about badges and titles, it's about positively empowering the people

around you to reach their full potential. I believe it is often the smallest of actions, like a motivating compliment, or an encouraging smile, that can have the most profound impact on an individual.

## In five years' time I hope to have...

**Harry:** Completed my astrophysics degree and be presented with a multitude of potential career paths that can kick start the rest of my life.

**Skye:** Started university somewhere near the beach, pursuing a career I am truly passionate about. I also hope I will have backpacked through many countries, immersing myself in different cultures to broaden my perspective and gain a greater understanding of the world I live in. This is something I have dreamt about doing for as long as I can remember.

## The legacy I hope to leave as a Head Prefect is...

**Harry:** A lasting positive impact on individuals, year groups and the wider CCGS culture. If I can create some long-term benefits, that will be more than I could have dreamed of on my first day of Year 7.

**Skye:** That compassion and humility are at the core of fostering an environment that allows students to thrive. When students across all age groups feel valued and supported by their peers, there is space for them to discover their full potential, and focus on what is important, creating goals, and following their dreams. I believe it is the possibility of having a dream come true, that makes life exciting.



# Celebrating a Different Type of Excellence

The Middle School Grammie Awards are a new CCGS initiative recognising a different type of excellence - celebrating and bringing to the spotlight our everyday heroes.

You know who they are; they are the people around us who might not rank first in a subject, might not make the Firsts in their sporting team, but they show up with integrity, live out our school values and treat others with respect every day.

260 students participated and 57 different staff were nominated for the first round of awards, with six students and two teachers ultimately selected to be officially recognised at assembly.

The second round of awards focused on one of CCGS's core values: inclusivity. Over 280 votes were cast to recognise selfless, kind and compassionate staff and students.

"The response from students has just blown us away," said Nathan Stephenson, Deputy Head of Middle School.

"Being recognised by your peers for your everyday actions is the biggest accolade you can get. As a Middle School team, we are always exploring ways to increase inclusion, celebrate our school values and empower student voice.

"Such a fantastic response to these awards has highlighted the incredible relationships between teachers and students, between students and their peers, and just how much we all value this connection," Mr Stephenson said.

# Out and About



## STEALTHY SIDEKICKS: THE FRIENDSHIP NINJA CREW

The Junior School playground has been infiltrated by ninjas - Friendships Ninjas to be precise!

Spreading our values of kindness, inclusivity and respect, over 50 Year 6 students have been volunteering their lunchtimes to complete a duty in the K-2 playground areas. The Friendship Ninja initiative is the brainchild of CCGS Junior School teacher Mrs Megan Sproats and is an extension of the school's

URSTRONG wellbeing program.

The Friendship Ninjas have been assisting students to make connections by initiating games and other fun activities and modelling respectful friendships.

Students displaying great friendship behaviours are awarded points for their class by the ninjas, with the winning class given the Friendship Ninja trophy each week at assembly.



## 'TRY' AND STOP THEM: HISTORIC RUGBY SEASON



It has been a momentous, record-breaking year for the CCGS Rugby 1st XV team.

After an undefeated season, the team went on to take the premiership shield - the first time in 18 years - defeating Redfield College in a tense finals encounter.

As a result of their win, they were invited to compete in the prestigious Waratah Shield representing ISA Division 2. This is the first year CCGS has been invited to play at this event and, after a nail-biting game that went into extra time, our team came away with a 25-18 win against Randwick Boys High School.

Team Captain Zak Pearce said "Winning the Waratah Shield was not just a sporting achievement; it was a defining moment in my life. It taught me the power of teamwork, resilience and the unbreakable bond that forms among teammates. As I look back on that day, I am filled with gratitude for captaining the team and being part of this prestigious competition's rich history. When the final whistle blew and victory was ours, the elation and pride were beyond words."

Rugby 1st XV Coach Mr Robbie Barnard said "Since I started at CCGS, it's been my mission to win

back the ISA Division 2 Shields and to empower our young male students who play rugby to embrace their masculinity, be respectful members of our school and valued contributors to society. The unprecedented success we have had in 2023 culminated in being considered for the very prestigious Waratah Shield. The shield has held significant importance for the rugby community, not only in NSW but across Australia since the 1960s. I am proud and honoured to be part of the journey with these boys, which has cemented their legacy within the broader school for many generations to come."



## FOR OUR ELDER



*Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this story may contain images and names of deceased persons.*

The important role elders play in our families and the wider community was explored as part of our theme 'For Our Elders' during NAIDOC Week.

Every student from Kindy to Year 6 wrote about an elder who has had a positive impact in their life.

Each grade studied a different indigenous Elder past, present or emerging with the learning linked to Science and History classes.

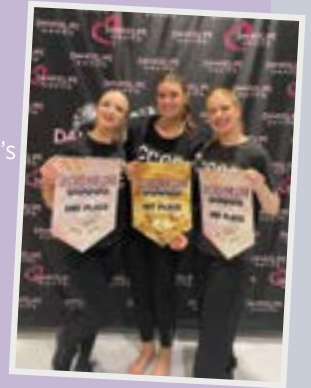
The Junior School held a Great Book Swap which raised money for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, a moving smoking ceremony with Gamilaroi Elder Aunty Tammy and a dedicated assembly focused on celebrating all Elders.

## DANCELIFE UNITE SUCCESS

CCGS dancers recently competed in the Central Coast DanceLife Unite Eisteddfod, Australia's largest troupe dance competition.

Amazing performances from our dedicated dancers resulted in a first place for Lyrical (with the highest score of the entire competition), second place for Lyrical/Contemporary and second place for Jazz.

Congratulations to Emily Herbert, Esther Hunter and Mia Deane (pictured left to right).



## STUDENTS 'READ, GROW, INSPIRE' DURING BOOK WEEK

Award-winning and best-selling Australian authors visited the school as part of Book Week celebrations, inspiring students through storytelling and workshops.

James Foley, Wai Chim, Lisa Shanahan and Luke S. Kennedy each brought their unique perspectives to students from the Junior School to the Senior College.

Younger students were awestruck by the creativity of Ms Shanahan who uses her imagination to see a Wimbledon winning tennis racket from a simple object such as a wooden spoon.

Ms Chim imparted wisdom on authentic writing, encouraging students to see creativity as connecting ideas that were never connected before. Mr Foley gave unique insight into what it means to be an author and illustrator, even sharing some secret tips of character design.

Senior students were moved by Mr Kennedy's empowering life journey and how his writing helped him build a new life. Lessons of resilience and courage left a lasting impact on those who heard him speak.

Of course, no Book Week is complete without the annual Book Parade. The Junior School delighted in dressing as the villains, heroes and comedic characters that fill their favourite books. A wonderful week to celebrate our love of literacy!



## AUTHOR PEN PAL PROGRAM PROVIDES PAGES OF INSPIRATION



Year 6 students have embraced a new initiative known as the Author Pen Pal Program which fosters a unique connection between Australian authors, illustrators and students.

To ignite their love of literacy, students have had the privilege of engaging with renowned Australian authors including Di Wolfer, Tamara Moss, Sami-Ellen Bound, Danielle Corrie and Jeremy Lachlan. These talented authors have become pen pals with our students, embarking on a journey of creative exchange.

The exchange of postcards and letters has revolved

around favourite books, insights into the life of an author and exploring the intricacies of the writing process. This has not only enriched the students' literary experiences but has also allowed them to gain valuable knowledge from experts in the field.

Author pen pal, Danielle Corrie joined her Year 6 pen pal class for their library lesson, giving a captivating presentation and question and answer time.



## A 'FORCE' TO BE RECKONED WITH

Sam King, Jai Cook, and Daegan Foti (Year 6) have achieved remarkable success in the national ANSTO Think Science! competition.

Organised by Australia's Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO), the competition encouraged students to conduct a hands-on scientific investigation on a topic of their choice. Several CCGS teams participated in the competition, with all of them choosing to explore the topic of 'Forces', aligning their projects with the Science content covered in class.

In this rigorous competition, which featured over 1,000 students from across Australia, entries were evaluated by experienced science educators at ANSTO.

Samuel, Daegan, and Jai were recognised with a Highly Commended award for their outstanding project 'The Hot Wheels Experiment'. Their investigation delved into the force of friction and explored the impact of different surfaces on the distance a car could roll.

To witness the results of their compelling experiment, take a closer look via the QR code on the left!



bilby





## EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION: A UNIQUE JERSEY CEREMONY



Every year, a cherished tradition marks the commencement of basketball season. The Firsts Girls Basketball team eagerly awaits the moment they receive their playing singlets just before their first home game.

This year players nominated a female staff member who has left a lasting impression or had a significant influence on them during their time at school. These staff members were then invited to a special presentation of the jerseys to players.

Basketball Convenor, Mrs Kim Vernon-Elliott said, "I find it inspiring to promote and uplift women in sports, but even more importantly, to acknowledge these role models who our players hold in high regard, look up to, and can turn to for support when necessary."

She continued, "This year's presentation focused on those who provide invaluable mentorship and support behind the scenes, shaping these girls into the exceptional individuals that they are. It was an honour to have so many women in the room who have not only left a lasting impression on our students but have also played a pivotal role in shaping their academic and sporting journeys."

CCGS staff members Anne Reed, Jodi Clements, Kerry Armstrong, Georgie Jefferies, Alex Morrison and Sandra Peebles were chosen to present the girls with their jerseys.

The CCGS Firsts Girls Basketball team consists of Emily Auld, Olive Dahl, Priya Fawcett, Skye Gerrish, Jenna McLeod, Mackenzie Mikkelsen, Taylah Mikkelsen, Lana Pavy, Jessica Rattray and Jess Stone.

## NORTH CHALLENGE



A team of Year 10 students took on the challenge of helping to address the growing housing shortage on the Central Coast as part of The North Challenge.

Their project proposed a village of eco-friendly, tiny homes which would focus on accessibility while also accommodating the needs of the elderly. Their project included plans to quickly and efficiently construct and effectively market the village.

They were awarded Highly Commended by the panel of judges made up of industry experts, with a specific mention of the values they included within their proposed business.

35 students from the Central Coast region took part in the challenge which also provided students with mentoring sessions and workshops, giving invaluable insight into the future of sustainability and business.



## STUDENTS DIG NEXT GENERATION LEARNING

A real-life Australian archaeologist gave Year 2 students first-hand experience of the importance of historical objects as part of their Next Generation Learning project.

The dig site was set up on the grounds of CCGS where students set to work to methodically take accurate grid drawings, document what they found and ask critical enquiry questions about what they uncovered.

# A FAREWELL TO REMEMBER:

## A celebration of Headmaster Bill Low

As Headmaster Bill Low prepares to leave behind a 15-year legacy at CCGS, the community has taken the opportunity to thank him for his contributions to the school and wish him well for the next chapter of his life.

The year started with the Headmaster's last annual Welcome Gathering. As parents and staff came together, both the P&F President, Lana King, and the Chairman of the Board, Stephen Brahams, spoke passionately about Mr Low's incredible contributions to the school.



the Performing Arts Centre and made possible the incredible achievements in this area of CCGS life each year since it was built.

Throughout the year Mr Low has delighted in getting out and about with students, sparking joy and fun along the way. Kindergarten

made their way to their first Easter Service, led by the Headmaster dressed as the Easter Bunny. During the Book Week Parade, a mischievous looking Cat in the Hat accompanied Where's Wally (Head of Junior School, Mrs Rita Boys-Smith) for a lap around the Junior School playground.



In tribute to Mr Low's years of support for the Performing Arts, a cocktail event was held ahead of the opening night

of the Senior Production of We Will Rock You. Colleagues and friends of the school gathered to celebrate Mr Low's vision, almost a decade ago, which saw the conception of

We look forward to continuing to celebrate the Headmaster as the term draws to a close. Be sure to check out website [ccgs.nsw.edu.au](http://ccgs.nsw.edu.au) for all the action.

The best leaders are those that can lift the performance of a team through aspiring high and then enabling the team to reach or exceed those aspirations. I've had the joy and honour of watching Bill steadily and purposefully achieve that with the CCGS staff and students in the years he's been Headmaster. His legacy is a wonderful school in all respects, but most particularly in the culture and team he's inspired. Well done Bill!

**- Alan Williams, past Board Member and past CCGS parent**



The Hunter family, together with the broader school community, owes a great debt of gratitude to Bill for his service to CCGS over the past 15 years and we are very grateful for his continued mentoring and support provided to our three children post-graduation.

Bill has made a very significant contribution to the school's standing within the community, enhanced building programs and improved academic achievement.

CCGS has been extremely fortunate to have received such loyal and dedicated service from a person such as Bill who has consistently demonstrated a rare and broad range of skills in successfully carrying out duties and responsibilities far in excess of that ordinarily expected of a Headmaster.

**- Rob and Lee Hunter, past CCGS parents**



The continued support and guidance I've received from Mr Low for my athletic career has been nothing but extraordinary - particularly the reception I received from the CCGS community during the Tokyo Olympics, for which I am eternally grateful. His commitment to staying engaged and interested in past students' lives is reflective of his exceptional character and leadership. To this day he's an outstanding role model and pivotal person in our community. I'm proud to have attended CCGS during his tenure and wish him the best for this next exciting chapter of his life.

**- Charlie Hunter, Alumni (2014)**

On behalf of the P&F I wish Bill many congratulations on his retirement. As a past student and now parent myself, I can see and appreciate the ambition and action Bill has put into making the school campus and facilities best in class.

"To plant a garden is to dream of tomorrow" and we thank Bill for his passion to make the grounds bloom, and creating space for our children to also grow and flourish.

**- Lana King, P&F President**

Bill Low is an experienced educator with a broad and deep leadership career. Success and influence are two common features that have been apparent in every role in Bill's career. As the Headmaster of CCGS, Bill has led an outstanding school and made it even greater. The aesthetic beauty of the school, the quality programs on offer and the intangible 'feel' that is so vibrant and pervasive owe much to Bill's leadership. Whilst doing this, Bill has also influenced the sector more broadly through his involvement with the Association of Independent Schools (AISNSW).

Our roles at AISNSW have given us the privilege of working closely with Bill. He has led debate, influenced people's thinking and provided important advice. Bill's contributions are always insightful, always honest and sometimes, not what you want to hear, but usually what you need to hear. At these times, there can be robust discussion, yet it always finishes with the relationship intact and often stronger. Bill has had an outstanding career, been an exceptional leader and we are pleased to call Bill Low a friend of AISNSW and a friend of ours.

**- Darryl Buchanan and Kelly Borg, AISNSW**

Bill's contributions to the school and its growth are vast with some being more obvious than others and far too many to list. However, three overarching areas come to mind.

Bill cherishes the opportunity to grow the community. This includes the local business sector, tertiary institutions, families, and students throughout the Central Coast fostering consistent growth. He can take great pride in student and teacher achievements in all areas of academics and extra-curricular efforts both nationally and internationally.

Connectedness. To professional institutions, sitting on all councils within the Association of Independent Schools and AHISA. Recognising the essential need to keep abreast of the shifting landscape of education. Modelling respect and appreciation for all cultures has seen CCGS enjoy a thriving exchange program as well as interesting visitors from all parts of the world.

Environment. Although the outstanding development of the physical environment is obvious, Bill's commitment to the learning environment and facilities are second to none ensuring teachers and students are provided with the foundational infrastructure for development.

Bill will go on to enjoy a well-earned retirement as he passes the baton to the next in line for the leadership of a great school. From strength to strength.

**- Denise McDonough, Past Head of Senior College (2006-2020)**

Central Coast Grammar School is possibly the most beautiful school in Australia. Bill's botanical knowledge and eye for colour and detail is reflected in this amazing campus.

CCGS has outstanding facilities. Bill's team efforts with other agencies, the Board, staff, parents and students have resulted in the magnificent Performing Arts Centre, the new Junior School and Senior College. And more.

The extra-curricular activities are second to none. Bill continued the traditions of house families, service, sport and the arts, tours and exchange programs among many other activities and introduced wonderful new programs alongside academic rigour.

The students enjoy their school life and espouse good values and their successes are evident in so many fields. As a parent or teacher that is what one ultimately hopes for.

CCGS is one of the best schools in Australia. It is now time for Bill to reflect on his exemplary achievements and his legacy that will live on.

**- Judy Stokes, Past Board Chair (2001-2004) and past CCGS parent**



# Broadening Horizons: CCGS's Adventures in Education and Service

In 2023, CCGS enthusiastically welcomed back its international programs for students. While each program is unique, they all share a common objective: to enhance our students' understanding of diverse cultures and community perspectives, fostering the development of CCGS students as global citizens.

## **CAMBODIA SERVICE PROGRAM**

The Cambodia Service Program has been successfully running for over fifteen years and provides students with a unique opportunity to participate in a global service program. Interactions with Cambodian families who receive donations create a space for gratitude and a firsthand understanding of global imbalances.

Throughout the year, a dedicated team of 34 students and eight teachers worked tirelessly to raise the necessary funds to construct five homes in collaboration with Volunteer Building Cambodia.

When the September holidays arrived, our students and staff embarked on a transformative journey to remote Cambodian villages, carrying with them all the tools and

supplies required for this meaningful endeavour. Upon their return, the group left behind not only five well-constructed homes but also installed solar panels on each, ensuring sustainable energy sources. In addition, they provided five clean water wells, five sanitary toilet facilities, and distributed 40 essential care packages, along with substantial rice donations to support local Cambodian families in need.

The two-week itinerary also included cultural activities in Vietnam, such as visits to Sapa tribal village, a homestay with local people, and interactions with local schools.

Since the program's inception, the CCGS community has proudly raised over \$400,000 and built 213 houses.



## EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Our student exchange program offers Year 10 students the chance to engage in a long-term, reciprocal stay with a host family. This immersive experience enables students to fully integrate into another culture, school, and family.

This year, 20 CCGS students embraced local life in Japan, the USA, Canada, Ireland, and Germany. Throughout these experiences, students found personal growth and independence as they overcame challenges without their usual support networks, adapted to different learning styles and subjects in other schools, and built positive intercultural relationships.

## INTERNATIONAL TOURS

Over the years, our students have embarked on sports, science, performing arts, outdoor education, and cultural tours to countries such as France, Japan, China, Hawaii, Singapore, England, New Zealand, and the USA.

In 2023, these tours included:

**Performing Arts Tour, UK:** A group of 52 students from Years 8 to 12, accompanied by 6 dedicated teachers, embarked on a remarkable journey to premier arts venues in London, Lancaster, and Stratford. Their experiences included dance and musical theatre classes at renowned studios like Danceworks, Thomas Page Dance and Pineapple Studios. They had the opportunity to watch '42nd St' at Saddlers Wells and meet the star of the show, Adam Garcia.

The tour also featured a visit to the Royal Shakespeare Company and participation in three educational workshops, among other unforgettable moments.

**French Study Tour, New Caledonia:** In an exciting inaugural event, 18 students and 3 teachers embarked on a week-long French immersion program in New Caledonia. They dedicated 12 hours to French lessons at CREIPAC, a prestigious language school in Nouméa. Beyond the classroom, students honed their language skills while exploring local markets and enjoying the delightful cuisine at nearby restaurants. The tour also included captivating excursions such as a cruise to the Amédée Lighthouse, visits to Le Parc Forrestier, Tjibaou Cultural Centre, a scenic Tchou Tchou train sightseeing tour, and a heartwarming visit to a local high school.

**Incoming Tours:** In addition to visiting exchange students from Ireland, Germany, USA and Canada, CCGS also had the privilege of hosting incoming tours from our longtime partner schools, Kanto Daiichi High School and Ueda Nishi High School in Japan. These visits offered all CCGS students a valuable opportunity to spend quality time with their Japanese peers, fostering a deeper understanding of Japanese culture and language.

**Upcoming sports tour:** In April 2024, almost 50 students across rugby, hockey, netball, and futsal teams will embark on a Winter Sports Tour to Canada and Fiji. Our athletes eagerly anticipate the thrill of competing against international teams, making new friends, and experiencing local culture as they stay with host families.

# A partnership that will shape our future

Year 9 Science students are leading the way, shaping the future of cities and discovering sustainable solutions to modern development challenges.



The Sydney Science Park STEM School Challenge immersed students in developing a city of the future - from the ground up - harnessing the ideas and imagination of young people to shape their future world. CCGS was honoured to be selected to work alongside schools from across NSW as part of this unique, year long project-based learning experience.

## FIELD DAY

The project, which is run in conjunction with the CSIRO and Celestino, kicked-off at a field day on the future city site earlier this year.

Hands-on learning provided the foundation for our students to start thinking about their focus areas of urban agriculture and energy. Using science and technology principles, students explored complex issues such as 'How could Sydney Science Park maximise the potential for renewable energy generation?' and 'How can we create novel spaces that support urban agriculture and the production of local food?'

## AN EXPERT WORKSHOP

To extend the learning from the field day, Dr Simon Toze, Principal Research Consultant with the CSIRO, visited CCGS students to work through their ideas, share his expertise and provide constructive feedback.

Science teacher, Mrs Michele Hockey said, "This project has provided a rare opportunity for students to collaborate and engage with top industry experts."

"Our students applied the skills they learned from the field day to think outside the box and find solutions to real-world problems," Mrs Hockey said.

"Most importantly, their experiences have demonstrated how their learning in Science can be applied outside of school. Their eyes have also been opened to new industries and career pathways that they might not have been aware of," Mrs Hockey added.

## SHOWCASING THEIR LEARNING

The involvement in the project was directly connected to in-class learning, with a showcase marking the culmination of their research.

Students worked in groups to develop an idea and create a model of their solution for an area of concern around building a smart city.

The winning group - RAT Turbine (an acronym for their names Rishi, Adam and Thomas) - developed a method of harnessing existing practices to make electricity through the collection of rainwater.

By utilising already collected rainwater, they developed a method of generating electricity while also retaining the rainwater for alternate uses around the house.

They conducted their own experiments, collected data and built a proof of concept working model which used a one metre pipe and computer fan to generate a small amount of electricity from water.

## GRAND FINAL CHALLENGE DAY

The project culminated in the winning group working together with different schools from around NSW to adopt personas of people who might live in the future Sydney Science park and consider innovative solutions to meet their needs.

The personas or characters included an international worker, a First Nations family and a 13-year old student among other demographics. Through undertaking an 'empathy tank' an understanding of how their persona might feel about their problem formed the foundation of their thinking. Skills in brainstorming - encouraging wild ideas, deferring judgement and being visual - helped to build on their solutions.

Each team pitched their ideas and students from CCGS were part of teams that placed second and third as nominated by a panel of expert judges, a wonderful conclusion to their journey immersed in the world of sustainable futures.



# We Will Rock You – Senior Production

Across four incredible nights, over 140 students from Years 7 to 12, along with 15 skilled staff, rocked the Performing Arts Centre with 'We Will Rock You', the musical by Queen and Ben Elton.

Energetic and futuristic performances brought to life the smash hit songs from super group Queen with the audience singing, clapping and dancing along throughout.

The band ensured the sounds of smash hits like 'Under Pressure' and 'Killer Queen' could be heard across Erina Heights and intricate and energetic dance choreography reflected the eccentric rock elements of the score. The energy and enthusiasm of all performers was equally matched by the bright, eclectic costumes, sets and props.



# Madagascar Jnr – Junior Production

In an amazing showcase of talent, over 100 students from Year 6 dazzled audiences in Madagascar Jnr.

The colourful and vibrant performances offered amazing energy and plenty of opportunity for audiences to 'move it, move it!'

Two casts performed the show, each working together to create an unforgettable experience for the 1,200 family, friends

and members of the community who attended.

As is tradition, the matinee events welcomed CCGS Junior School students, as well as several local preschools. One of the preschools were so impressed they sent a special note with messages of support and thanks to all the crew.



# CCGS P&F Spring Fair: A spectacular return to fun and community!

AFTER FOUR YEARS THE MUCH-LOVED CCGS P&F SPRING FAIR WAS BACK! IT WAS WONDERFUL TO OPEN OUR GROUNDS ONCE AGAIN TO OUR COMMUNITY AND ENJOY SUCH A BEAUTIFUL DAY TOGETHER.

There was plenty on offer - delicious food, rides, markets, stalls by our student Young Entrepreneurs, and a popular pre-loved market.

When not taking a spin on the dodgem cars or battling it out on the inflatable obstacle course, kids lived it up in the Kids Zone with face painting, craft, show bags and slime-making.

Crowds were wowed with incredible performances by our choirs, music bands, ensembles and dance troupes, before an epic dance party to end the day.

Parents were found enjoying the entertainment, food and drinks in the Garden Bar, catching up with friends over Devonshire Tea in the cafe or simply relaxing on a picnic blanket enjoying a splendid spring day in the sunshine.





CHECK OUT MORE  
ACTION FROM THE  
SPRING FAIR



“Celebrating the Spring Fair wasn’t just about rides, show-bags, and face painting - it was an opportunity to come together on campus and connect. New students explored the grounds, discovering the community they were excited to join, grandparents delighted in the sales skills of our young entrepreneurs, and families were entertained by our exceptional performing arts ensembles. We gave back to local charities and came together to enjoy a day of sunshine on our remarkable grounds. The P & F was proud to have supported the school in delivering this flagship community event.”

- Lana King, P&F President





VITA ET SCIENTIA  
JUNIOR SCHOOL

# From Student to Teacher:

## Halle Osborn's Inspiring Journey in Education

**Inspired by her Junior School teachers at CCGS, alumna Halle Osborn has been studying Primary Education at Macquarie University. As part of her final placement, she recently spent three weeks at CCGS alongside Kindergarten teacher Mrs Nicole Morrison. Here she gained valuable real-world insights into classroom management and curriculum delivery.**

Halle credits her own teachers, in particular Mr Steve Dunstan, Miss Fiona Grant (pictured) and Mrs Sonja Holden as her inspiration to pursue teaching as a career. "These teachers always went above and beyond to create the most positive learning experience for their students, and this is the kind of teacher I strive to be every day," shared Halle.

The school's focus on well-rounded education through cocurricular offerings has also influenced Halle's approach to teaching. "When I was a student at CCGS, I was passionate about music and played the flute in the Junior School band. I was very fortunate to be taught by professional musicians and I think it is great that the teachers at CCGS can get involved with various clubs and cocurricular activities as part of their teaching role. In my future career, I hope to do the same," said Halle.

During her placement at CCGS Halle remarked that it has been amazing to see what goes on behind the scenes to give the students of CCGS such a positive educational

experience. "The transition from student to teacher has not been as hard a challenge as I thought it would be, due to the great processes, people and culture at CCGS.

After a pause during the COVID years, CCGS is delighted to once again be hosting student teachers. Placements typically range from a couple of weeks up to a term.

Mr Damon Cooper, CCGS's Deputy Head, Teaching, Learning and Data Analytics explained "Student-teachers are the future of the teaching profession. We want to make sure we help them learn the critical skills they need before they step into their own classroom for the first time."

"Our teachers are expert practitioners and practical placements, such as the kind Halle recently completed, provide our staff with the opportunity to share their experience and skills with the next generation of teachers," Mr Cooper added.

**"I'm in awe of how incredible the new Junior School Campus is. The flexible design creates a collaborative teaching and learning environment... it is an inspiring place to work."**



# Alumni Profile: Patrick McGimpsey

In the time since graduating, Patrick McGimpsey is already fully embracing his own advice of “don’t fear the road less travelled as with persistence and passion you can turn any interest into a successful career”.

## **You graduated in 2019, what have the last few years held for you?**

My plan was to take a gap year traveling in South America, but COVID-19 quickly derailed those plans. I got a chance to work for a finance company as a fraud and AML (Anti-Money Laundering) officer because of the rise in online scams during the pandemic.

I found a big problem when I started the job – the company was losing a lot of money to crypto-related fraud and scams. I recognised the opportunity and put together a training session for my team about these scams and how to spot them.

An Australian start-up called CryptoTaxCalculator noticed my work and hired me to work on the complex problem of crypto taxes. I started in a fluid role across support and product when there were only 10 people in the company. There are now almost 40 in the team and I have taken on the role of Product Marketing Manager. I get to travel all over the world while working and regularly attend and speak at conferences across Australia, Europe and the U.S.

Deep crypto knowledge and experience in the Web3 industry is extremely scarce and in demand, so these skills have really helped me in my career. To further my career and share knowledge with others, I started writing for several large publications in Australia. Currently, I’m the lead crypto writer for Forbes Advisor Australia. I also help other Web3 companies, advising them on their content and strategy.

I’ve managed to turn my love for the ocean into another job as a certified freediving instructor. Freediving helps me relax and disconnect from my busy life, I love introducing others to the sport and coaching them on their journey.

While I’m doing all of this, I’m also studying Economics

and Computer Science part-time at the University of Sydney. I’ve realised though, that when it comes to crypto, being passionate and learning on your own can be more important than a degree.



## **What is your proudest moment from your post-school life?**

One of my proudest moments was landing the job at CryptoTaxCalculator. This was a major turning point for me, as it marked the moment where I transitioned from simply being passionate about crypto to actually working within the Web3 industry. It wasn’t just about securing a job, but about stepping into a role in a field that I deeply care about and look forward to contributing to each day. It felt like I had finally achieved a goal of aligning my career with my passion.

## **What is one piece of advice you would give to your high school self?**

Don’t fear the road less travelled. Society may push you towards ‘safe’ and conventional careers, but I’ve found that with persistence and passion, you can turn any interest into a successful career - be it a cutting-edge sector like Web3 or a physical pursuit such as freediving. You are the architect of your own story. Go all-in on what you love and be the best at it.



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