



Pymble Ladies' College

Term 1, April 2020

Keeping Up With Our Boarders



Welcome to our first 2020 edition of *Keeping Up With Our Boarders*. As the term draws to a close, I am thankful for the many happy times we have been able to enjoy as the world has been turned upside down. This publication is a record of just some of

these wonderful goings-on both here at *Pymble* and in our wider Boarder community.

Courage, as you know, is one of our *Pymble* values and is serving us well as we negotiate our way through troubling times. Our Boarders are well practiced in living courageously and it is this value that shines through. Courage is at work in the everyday lives of our girls: Angel, who transformed her own troubles into an opportunity to help others; Sophie and Alice, two of our new Year 7 girls, who embraced the challenges of living away from home for the first time; our daring Greta who headed off to the wilds of Scotland and our rural girls who continue to face the ongoing challenges of living in drought.

In closing, I am delighted to let you know that this edition is a Boarder produced publication. Our newly formed Boarder Editorial Team (BET), led by the indefatigable Anne Graham, House Supervisor of Lang House, and a wonderful team of intrepid reporters and photographers: Alice Beveridge, Phoebe Bucknell, Sophie Laing, Hannah Weber (Year 7); Chiara Calvani, Imogen Hawkins, Giaan Jackson (Year 8) and Matilda Barwick Ellouise Galesloot, Gemma Hodge, Sarah Thornton, Mika Tyson (Year 9). I know you will agree that the girls have taken our publication to another level. Enjoy!

Mrs Carolyn Burgess
DIRECTOR OF BOARDING

A conversation with Julie Shaw, Deputy Principal

Were you ever a Boarder yourself?

No, but I wish I had been. I think I would have loved it. I have worked in a few Boarding houses over the years and enjoyed watching the sisterhood and lifelong friends that Boarders so often become.

How long have you been at *Pymble*?

Ten years.

How have you seen Boarding change since you've been here?

When I first came to *Pymble*, Boarders were not permitted to participate in activities outside of the College e.g. Club and Rep sport, jobs, dance groups, tutoring etc. The *Live it, Love it, Learn it* program is a great new initiative as is the BFF. I have seen the rules relaxed in terms of greater independence and flexibility for Boarders. Importantly, there has been an increase in the diversity and the number of Boarders from rural Australia, plus more scholarship opportunities. Boarders' Week and the Boarders' Charity Event are positive new additions, where Boarder spirit and care is proudly on display.

In the time that I have been here, I have seen many staff come and go. I have seen several renovations, bathrooms, painting, furniture and of course the recent updates in Marden and Lang. I am looking forward to seeing Goodlet completed later in the year.



All' Ultimo Lavoro – Strive for the highest

Our first month in Boarding

*Sophie Laing (Year 7),
Tullamore and Alice
Beveridge (Year 7), Young*

The start of this year has been a rollercoaster with mainly ups, but a few downs. Our families said goodbye with tears as we began our journey at *Pymble*. On the first weekend, we attended some movies and the buttery popcorn went down well with the movie, *Little Women*. Our first beach trip was fun as we were flipping off the Balmoral Wharf. This first week showed us independence. Washing was a challenge, but we accomplished it in the end. The tears arrived as we missed home but went just as quickly.

Getting used to the routine was hard as our lights are now out at 8.30pm. Chit chats seemed to go on forever as we were so excited for the next day. We went to Raging Waters for our community weekend where we enjoyed massive drops, floor moving rides and ginormous slides that knocked our socks off. We have settled in great and are loving every minute of being a *Pymble* Boarder.



International Women's Day was on 8 March – what does it mean to you?

IWD is a time to celebrate the achievements of all women regardless of who they are, what they do and where they come from. It's a time for all women across the world to support each other to be the best that they can be.

What do you think it takes to be a leader?

I think it takes self-belief. We can all be leaders; you just need the confidence and courage to take that first step.

What female (or females) inspires you and why?

So many! Different females inspire me on different days for different things. One day it's a *Pymble* student, another day it's a *Pymble* staff member or a *Pymble* parent. Other days it's someone in the community – I am always inspired by those women who challenge the status quo, who stand up against injustice and support others regardless of the cost.

What makes a successful female in your eyes?

Success looks different for every single female. I think it's about trying your hardest, learning and improving in everything you do. Success is how you measure yourself, not about external measures, like winning, or having the best job, or climbing a mountain, or being the best mother, or dancer etc. It's important to measure your success in terms of your own personal growth and not in comparison with others, otherwise most of us would never consider ourselves to be successful.

How do you motivate and encourage aspiring young women? Do you have any tips?

I encourage aspiring young women to believe in themselves and to back themselves. My tip is to encourage girls to seek the support and help of others. Life is tough, and we all need to reach out to others to get where we want to go. No woman is an island!

Throughout your journey in life, how important was support from family?

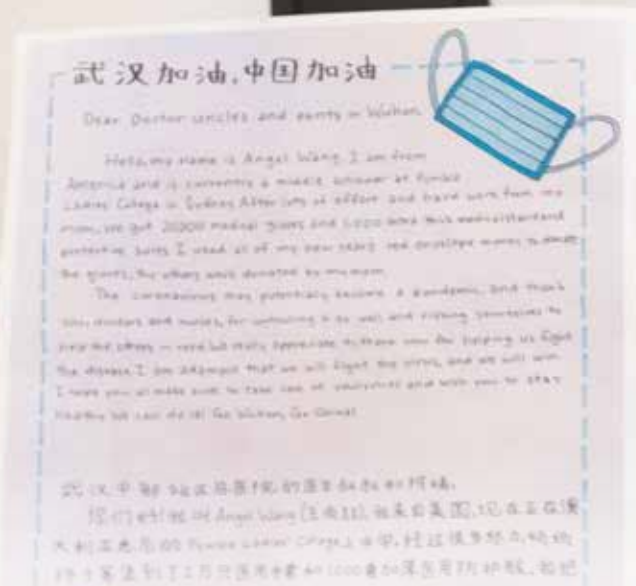
My family has always been my cheer squad in the background. I've lived away from my parents and brothers for most of my life but my immediate family (husband and children) have always cheered me on! I grew up as the only girl and throughout my life, my dad was always my biggest fan. Sadly, he died just over two years ago. My life has been different ever since. I miss him every day.

Over your life, is there anything you wish you could have done differently?

I wish I had backed myself from an earlier age. I've always been a pretty confident person and taken risks, such as living and working interstate and overseas, away from my parents and brothers. However, I think I should have been braver and challenged myself career-wise sooner than I did. That said, life is good. I am fortunate and grateful to be healthy and working in the best school in Australia!

Where would you like to see Boarding at *Pymble* in ten years' time?

In ten years, I would like *Pymble* Boarding to be known as the best girls' Boarding school in Australia. Not because we have the best facilities but because we will continue to build on our positive culture and unique programs that will enable every Boarder to feel brave, determined and ready to step up and out and lead men and women in any way they choose. Go girls, you are on your way!



A heartfelt gift

Angel Wang (Year 8), Beijing, China

As a result of the coronavirus, Year 8 Boarder, Angel Wang, was living through a 14-day isolation period on her return from China. During this time, Angel and her mother saw pictures of their friends experiencing enormous difficulties due to the extreme shortage of medical goods and protective suits. Angel decided she needed to help.

I am from Beijing, China. The pandemic coronavirus that is going around China right now is a very severe issue and I experienced it during my stay in China for the summer break. Even in Beijing, which was not the main area affected by the coronavirus, everywhere you go, you see people wearing masks. Even going to the drug store, everyone you see there is buying face masks.

After I went back to Australia for school, more and more people were infected in China. I got messages from my Mum and she said that they couldn't even leave the apartment building anymore because the neighborhood didn't want any more people to get infected. Everyday there is somebody to bring food for them.

Knowing the problem is way worse in Wuhan, where the virus started, my Mum and I donated 20,000 medical gloves and 1,000 extra-thick safety suits. I used my New Year's money to donate the 20,000 yuan to buy the gloves and suits, the others were donated by my Mum. I am truly thankful to have doctors and nurses, who risk themselves for others. I am sure that we will fight the disease.

My mum said, "Angel wrote a letter to the doctors and my friend in Wuhan sent the print-out letter along with the goods to the hospital. I am so proud of Angel as a Pymble girl and hope that her heart-touching effort may encourage Angel and more girls to contribute love to the world".

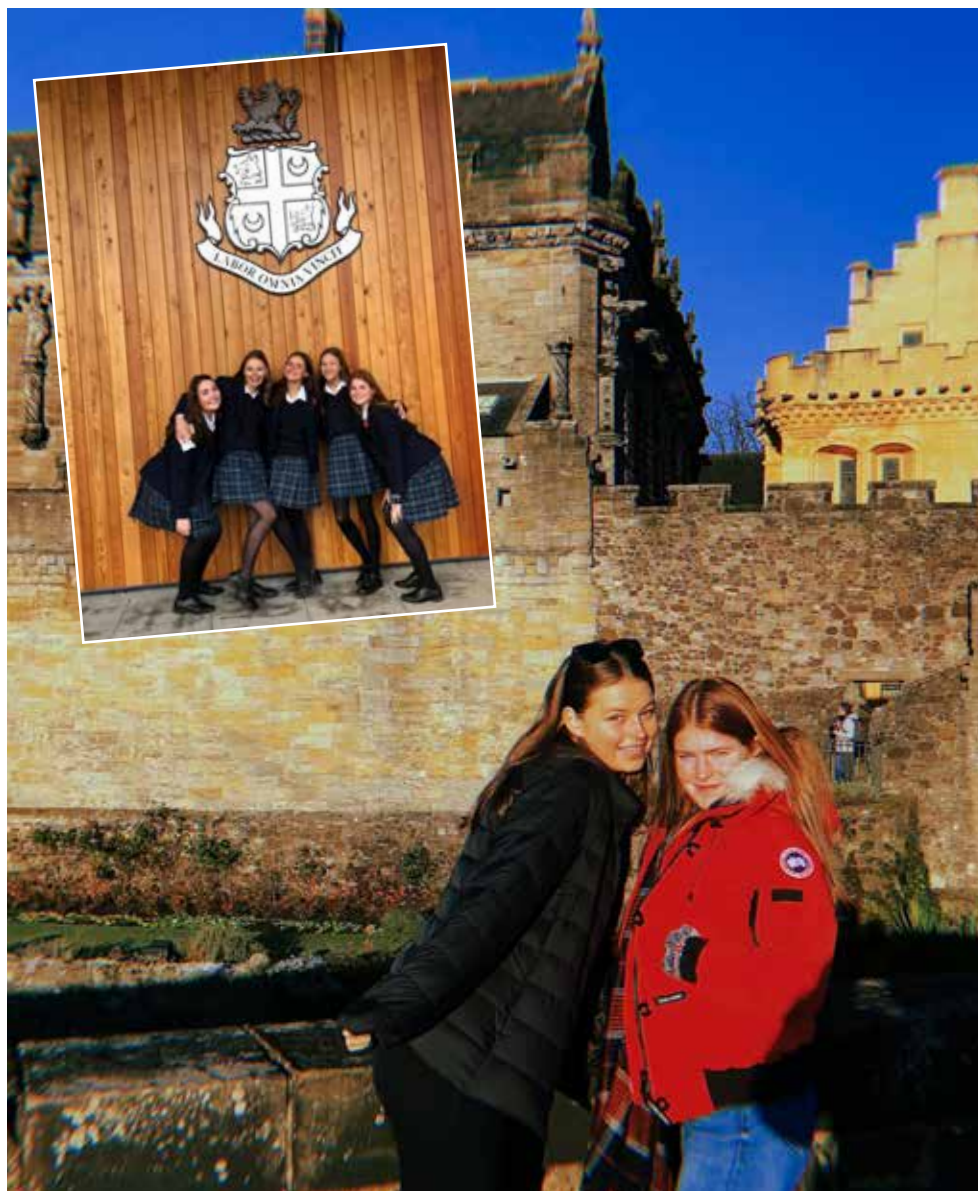


Exchange – Strathallan School, Scotland

*Greta Roberts (Year 11),
Wagga Wagga*

At the end of Term 4 last year, I travelled to Scotland and attended Strathallan School for five weeks with two other Pymble girls. The school was located north of Edinburgh and about a 15 minute drive from Perth. With the help of my exchange partner Dani, I was able to explore and immerse myself in everything Scotland had to offer. Together we visited Glasgow, Edinburgh, Perth and Sterling, just to name a few.

Boarding at Strath was an incredibly eye-opening experience which I absolutely loved as it meant I really got to know the whole school community. Tradition was very important to Strath. Most mornings I woke up to the sound of bagpipes and every Wednesday we had to wear floor-length kilts. Exchange gave me the opportunity to mature in different ways and taught me to be adaptable, independent and broaden my perspective.



Valentine's breakfast

Mika Tyson (Year 8), Moree

The Valentine's Day breakfast was a time where all our beautiful Boarders came and had breakfast together to share sister-love with one another. It was the best thing I have seen; the balloons floating in the air, the lollies on the tables and the little cupcakes. The breakfast wouldn't have been so special if it wasn't for our Director of Boarding, Mrs Burgess, our Head Boarder, Isabel Wilson and our fantastic Boarding Prefects. A massive thank you to the lovely girls who put so much effort into making the Valentine's Day breakfast special. It was a great time and was nice to see big smiles on the girls when they came in. There was so much laughter with the girls sitting around the tables having breakfast with their friends. I hope we can do it every year.



Where Are They Now?

*Samantha Bear,
Pymble Student 2004-2013;
Boarder, 2009 to 2013*

My *Pymble* journey started in 2004 as a Year 3 student, but my fondest memories are those I created during my Boarding years between Years 8 and 12. As an only child, being a Boarder gave me the sisters I never had, and I formed incredibly strong friendships that I continue to cherish.

It still makes me chuckle to reminisce on some of our creative weekend antics – before the days of social media and TikTok, we amused ourselves with self-choreographed dance routines in our dorm rooms... looking back now, I'm rather glad Instagram hadn't been created yet!

I lived in all three Boarding Houses, finishing my time in Lang as the College Head Prefect in 2013, a role that challenged and rewarded me. My involvement in a wide range of co-curricular activities, including Dance, piano, Drama, Chorale, Cross Country, Touch Football, and Tennis, among others, was one of the most enjoyable aspects of my time at *Pymble* and helped me maintain a healthy study-life balance.

I have always had a passion for learning and knowledge, especially for English and History, and knew quite early on that I wanted to become a teacher. I received an ATAR of 99.85



and received encouragement from my teachers and parents to pursue this career. After taking a gap year in 2014 and working at St Catherine's School for Girls in Bramley, UK, I returned to Australia to commence my five-year combined Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education (Secondary: Humanities and Social Sciences) degree at the University of Sydney. I lived on campus at St Andrew's College and worked casually in Marden House as an Academic Tutor. In my fourth year of university, I became a live-in Assistant House Supervisor in Goodlet House, a role I absolutely loved and one that consolidated my passion for working in Boarding.

Last year, I spent a semester at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. This was an unforgettable experience in which I learned about Canada's history, forged amazing international friendships, and witnessed the country's phenomenal natural beauty firsthand. Being a Boarder at *Pymble*

prepared me for this experience – having to be self-sufficient in a foreign (and very cold) country could be challenging at times, but the resilience, resourcefulness and worldliness I had developed as a *Pymble* girl served me very well.

After my return, I moved to Geelong in Victoria, to complete my final teaching placement. I graduated from university with a double major in History and English and a High Distinction average. Most excitingly, I have signed a full-time contract at Geelong Grammar School and am teaching English and History across both the Middle and Senior Schools. I am eager to be involved in the School's co-curricular and pastoral programs, including coaching sport, teaching Ballet and looking after Years 10 to 12 students in one of the Senior girls' Boarding houses. I am living on campus at Geelong Grammar with my partner, who is also an English teacher.

I am so thankful for the 15 wonderful years with the *Pymble* community and for where my experiences with the College have led me – I am proud to say that I will always be a *Pymble* girl.



Dust and rain

Hannah Weber (Year 7), Walgett

DUST...

The relentless dust storms have been very hard to cope with. We call the dust Bush Glitter to make it sound a bit more user-friendly! The fierce wind and high temperatures make it very hard to go outside in the middle of the day. Daily farm jobs have to be carried out early in the morning or late in the evening. The dogs spend a lot of time sitting in their water dishes to keep cool.

Water troughs have to be checked daily, because if there is a pump or pipe failure, it can mean that the horses and sheep could die of thirst. Feeding out grain hay in the dust and wind is difficult and irritating. Hay gets in your eyes and hair and into your boots. The sheep keep their heads down low and eat until every last straw and piece of grain has gone. Did you know that sheep have great eyelashes? That helps them keep out the dust and hay from their eyes.

Mini mountains of bulldust have built up around grass butts and fence lines. They have unique ripple patterns on them and remind me of sand dunes in deserts. The farming paddocks don't have enough soil moisture to even grow a weed...and the kangaroos and emus optimistically dig up old plant roots to eat.

A lot of birds have made their homes in our garden. Mum has amazingly kept the garden green with bore water, so it attracts all types of birds. Galahs, red-rumped parrot, corellas, pale-headed rosellas, magpies and lousy jacks call the trees in the garden home.

We have sold the sheep, so they won't get to eat the new grass in their paddocks when it eventually rains.

RAIN...

It finally rained...some rain...120 mm...and I missed it because I was at school! Mum and Dad have sent photos and videos of what the paddocks look like. It is definitely not the end of the drought, but it is a great start. The paddocks look like someone has spray-painted them lush emerald green.

Baby Mitchell grass is shooting upwards and growing well. Dad has been spraying the zillions of weeds that have grown on the farming paddocks. He keeps the weeds under control so that they don't take the moisture and nutrients for winter crops that he will grow, like wheat and chickpeas. The farm dams have water in them again, and our two rivers at Walgett, the Namoi and the Barwon have a great flow of floodwater in them. The people in town keep driving down to the rivers to look...maybe they still can't believe that the rivers are flowing again? Mum and Dad are hopeful that the season has changed, and that it is going to rain more frequently.



GAPS 2020

Each year, Pymble hosts a number of gap year students from around the world.

This year, we have Gappies from England, Scotland and the US. The girls are rostered to work in Boarding and in departments and faculties around the school. This opportunity provides fantastic experiences and the chance to make new friends while enjoying working abroad. Meet our 2020 Gappies:

I'm **Jess**, and I'm from Wrekin College in Shropshire. City life in Sydney is very different to home. Being a Gappie at Pymble has been a pleasure – sometimes I wish I was a Boarder myself! We get stuck into

everything, from Boarders get Baking, to excursions to Luna Park. I'll never forget the memories I've made here. Looking ahead, after Pymble, I will go on to study English Literature at Bristol University (hopefully all the reading I've done on my gap year will pay off!)

I'm **Miranda**, I'm 18 and I'm from a small village called Chipping Norton. It's only three times the size of Pymble. Being a Gap is so much fun as you get to see Australia and meet new people, as well as getting to know the different Boarders and looking after them.

My name's **Ali** and I'm from the border between the US and Canada and I have very much enjoyed being a Gap. Before I head to university and to life beyond, I have learnt so much about myself, life, the value of hard work and the beauty of living somewhere new in the past few months. The fact that

I have the chance to explore a new place every weekend is amazing, and I would recommend it to anyone with even the faintest desire to see more of the world.

Hi, my name's **Flic** and I'm from London, England. I am the youngest of five children and I also went to Boarding school in the UK. I love sport; I play a lot of netball and I'm hoping to continue to play at university. I have three dogs which are border terriers. My favourite things about Australia are the weather, the coffee and the mangoes.

My name's **Hannah** and I'm from Edinburgh, the capital of Scotland. I have a younger brother and a younger sister who are 17 and 15 years old. I enjoy playing hockey and my favourite thing about living in Australia is the sun because I'm addicted to the beach and also the iced coffee!



Athletics achievement

Kailyn Joseph (Year 12), Cherrybrook

At the beginning of March, I was lucky enough to go to Brisbane for International classification and compete in the Queensland State Athletics championships. It was a fantastic week spent with good friends, new learnings and great results.

For International classification, besides the medical results, you are required to do a range of physical and skills tests where classifiers assess your level of capability and accordingly decide on your class. I'm classified as T37, which means you can easily see a physical impairment on one side in both limbs.

The competition went really well and I was lucky enough to come away with a Season's Best in both my 100-metre Sprint and Long Jump. I was particularly proud of my results in Long Jump as my jumps gave me a lot of confidence and are heading in the right direction leading into Olympic trials. I came back home and the next day I competed in the NSW Open Long Jump again, where I was happy to collect my second bronze from the week with more good jumps despite the long week in Brisbane. Back home and training again! Let's see what the rest of the season has in store.



STOP THE PRESS

Kailyn Joseph has just been awarded a prestigious Kurt Fearnley scholarship.

[Click here to find out more](#)

Swimming achievement

Recently the NSW Combined Independent Schools Awards Presentation Evening was held to celebrate the outstanding sporting achievements of primary and secondary students throughout 2019. Congratulations to our Year 12 Boarder, Claudia Neale from Blaxland, who was awarded a Blue for her achievements in Swimming, which included some outstanding results at the NSW CIS and NSW All Schools Swimming Championships. These achievements culminated in Claudia being selected into the NSW Swimming team, which competed at the School Sport Australia (SSA) Swimming Championships. Claudia had a phenomenal SSA Championships achieving Gold in the 17 Years 50 metres Backstroke, Silver in the 50 metres and 100 metres Freestyle and 200 metres Backstroke and Bronze 17 Years Individual Medley. Congratulations Claudia!



Smelling the roses

*Sarah Shields, Horticulture
Leading Hand*

I have always enjoyed the outdoors. I guess this stemmed from growing up in a bushland shire where there were always trees to climb and plant life to become acquainted with. When school ended, I hated the thought of having a job where I was stuck inside all day while the sun and fresh air passed me by. It made sense to explore the world of horticulture and see if it was for me. So far so good!

I get a great amount of pleasure from working in a garden area, making a massive mess and creating something that is beautiful to behold and that others also get pleasure from. This is true of the community here at *Pymble*. They love that they have these amazing green spaces to live, study and work in and the positive feedback I receive from students and staff is incredible! I feel privileged to be part of the team that keeps the beauty alive!

Working at Pymble Ladies' College has also meant that I have had the opportunity to share my horticultural knowledge and experiences with the students – including the Boarding girls. Together we have established raised garden beds for the Boarders to grow their own herbs and vegetables in and have even harvested enough in the past to supply the kitchen with produce for their evening meals. Growing your own produce is extremely satisfying and it teaches a valuable lesson as to where our food comes from and the time and effort it takes to produce it. These spaces also allow the Boarding girls a chance to get their hands dirty and have a break away from the classroom or the pressures of homework.

Gardening and tending your crops are great ways to calm your mind, ease tension and anxiety, all while enjoying the fresh air with your friends! Even a trip to the mulberry tree can help! The Boarders' mulberry tree offers a great escape to all who pass it when it is in

full fruit. This amazing tree looks after itself and needs very little intervention from my team to do what it does best. It has become an amazing meeting point for humans and wildlife alike and its incredible annual bounty puts a smile on everyone's faces!

The College grounds have evolved dramatically in its 104-year history and I envision that the future green spaces will become even more interactive with the community around them, inviting people in to see, smell, feel and taste the environment around them. Everyone needs to connect with nature occasionally, whether it be laying on the grass in the sunshine, sitting on a bench under the shade of a tree, reading a book or stopping to smell the roses.

For the Boarders this is their home away from home, and it's my job to make it look and feel as warm, welcoming and homely as possible, inside and out!



The ups and down of farming

Matilda Barwick (Year 9), Gravesend

In farming you always brace yourself for the ups and downs, but no one was ready for this.

In 2015 we had a great year, one of the better years we could have, we received our average rainfall which was 670mm. 2016 started off great, everyone was happy. But in September we had our last decent fall of rain and we ended up with 500mm for the year.

Then it started to get very dry. 2017 was very tight and short of rain – well, that's what we thought at the time. We tried to stay optimistic hoping things would change but the drought didn't stop there, finishing the year with just 450mm. In 2018 we had a miserable summer and winter crop where nothing came up because there was no rain. For the year we had the lowest rainfall ever recorded – 340mm, with also our hottest summer with an average of 38 degrees for January.

2019 was the big and nasty year. We did not plant and continued to feed all of our stock. It hardly rained and we ended up with only 162mm, less than half of our worst ever recording.

In 2020 we finally saw the clouds; moisture was in the air. We have started the year with hope, receiving 170mm over January and February. The dams are filling up and the stock is out.

Do you think that we can come out of this stronger than ever? Without a drought.



New Girls' Concert

Sarah Thornton (Year 9), Dubbo

The creativity, the practice and the nerves all for one essential performance – it was officially time for the 2020 New Girls' Concert! The postponed closed weekend meant we had a little more time to get nervous, but everyone felt the excited buzz and encouragement of the older Boarders.

The girls from Dubbo, Forbes, Hong Kong and China demonstrated some interesting beauty techniques with the 'no-hands make-up challenge'. The future of Boarders' dance culture was looking strong with some great creative performances from Year 7 and Year 9, and what night of dancing would be complete without someone busting out The Worm.

The concert concluded with the original New Girl Song being performed in unison. This fun night marked a warm welcome into this friendly and inviting community. It signified the beginning of our Pymble Boarder adventure where we will experience once in a lifetime opportunities and long-lasting friendships.





Raging Waters

Alex Johnson (Year 12), Grenfell

Raging Waters was an extremely enjoyable day for all girls that participated. Our Pymble Boarders competed in their houses to try and score as many points as possible for the very prestigious Angus Cup. Points were awarded for participation on the vast array of rides as well as bonus points for going on the more challenging and exhilarating rides.

Congratulations to Marden House who won the overall points score – it is safe to say they had all the daredevils! Congratulations also goes to Lang, Goodlet and Hammond girls. Your enthusiasm was contagious and made the day so much more enjoyable. I would also like to thank all staff that attended, you made the day run smoothly and it was great to see some of you on the rides!