

Pymble Ladies' College



2021 Pymble Research Conference

MAKING TIME FOR RESEARCH

Welcome

Welcome to the second *Pymble* Research Conference. Following the challenges of 2020, the opportunity to gather with educators, students, researchers and academics from a range of interconnected fields is a privilege as meeting face-to-face is no longer something we can take for granted. Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to come together and discuss topics important to education and educators, and for making your own space for research.

This year's conference theme, Making Space for Research, is something that resonates with us all. Whether we are academics, school students or teachers, finding the time for measured and planned deep thinking is incredibly important – we all know this – but it is difficult to achieve. Why is this the case? Why is research often pushed aside, when research findings and the benefits of new insights and understandings are so highly regarded and valued? Importantly, how can we find ways within our communities and our own practice to promote educational research and support one another as researchers?

There is, of course, no magic wand to create space, time and funding for research, but instead, I treasure the magic of the first step. I urge colleagues and students to 'begin anywhere', to make a start, and then to do a bit more. It is a challenge to begin, especially when this involves scoping out the full project and going through the organisation and ethics processes, once the wheels of inquiry begin turning, the passion and driving curiosity generate their own momentum. When others get involved as participants, co-researchers or critical friends, the energy builds further.

Today is also the launch of the *Pymble* Institute! The College's home of research, innovation and professional learning is committed to driving thinking in education, especially in areas that make a positive impact in the lives of girls and women. Through building skills in research, innovation and education, the *Pymble* Institute has an exciting role to play in making connections across the community in order to amplify our capacity to make a difference. We look forward to future research partnerships and informal sharing with our wider networks.

Those of us within the *Pymble* research community extend a very warm welcome to colleagues sharing their time by presenting at this conference. We thank them for their commitment to education and lifelong learning, and to the growth of the young people in our collective care.

Enjoy the chance to come together, to listen, share, respond and grow in your own skills and understanding.

Dr Sarah Loch

DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

Program of events

Please [click here](#) to register

| LAUNCH OF PYMBLE INSTITUTE AND OPENING OF PYMBLE RESEARCH CONFERENCE | |
|--|--|
| 3.30PM | WELCOME Dr Sarah Loch DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE |
| | ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY Maddy Morris (YEAR 8 STUDENT) – PYMBLE INDIGENOUS SCHOLAR |
| | LAUNCH PRESENTATION VIDEO Dr Kate Hadwen PRINCIPAL, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE |
| | CONFERENCE INTRODUCTION Dr Sarah Loch DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE |
| 3.50PM TO 4.20PM | KEYNOTE PRESENTATION: Dr Janet Dutton <i>Making space for research</i> <i>Dr Janet Dutton has extensive experience as a lecturer in teacher education, a leader of teacher professional development and as Head Teacher in government and independent schools. Janet has worked developing assessment and curriculum at national and state level organisations and was the Chief Examiner, English for the NSW Higher School Certificate, 2011-2016. Her areas of speciality include Secondary English curriculum and HSC English, creative literacy pedagogy, teacher motivation and retention and teacher identity, voice and reflective practice. Janet's teaching and research promotes the ways creative pedagogy can enrich student learning and one of her current projects involves developing strategies to enhance pre-service teacher reflexive practice.</i> |
| SHARING SESSIONS | |
| 4.20PM TO 5.20PM | Option A and Option B will be run simultaneously at the times listed over the page |

Program of events

| OPTION A | |
|---|--|
| <i>Option A and Option B will be run simultaneously at the times listed below</i> | |
| 4.20PM TO 4.35PM | <p>Lucy Clark and Charlotte Hartin</p> <p><i>Why you need to know about academic journals – student perspectives</i></p> <p><i>In 2020, Charlotte and Lucy developed their own original research and, throughout that process, learned the importance of students’ understanding of research and how to enter the world of academics. Lucy is also an artistic gymnast and coach and her interest is in the area of sport and how people can better develop their sporting skills. Charlotte loves digging deeper into research and learning more about topics in depth. She enjoys rowing for Pymble and playing tennis.</i></p> |
| 4.35PM TO 4.50PM | <p>Melissa McMahon</p> <p><i>What works best in HSC teaching at Pymble?</i></p> <p><i>Melissa is the Director of Teaching Excellence K-12 at Pymble Ladies’ College and a passionate English teacher in the Senior School. She has held a variety of curriculum leadership roles over the past 23 years and is a strong advocate for teacher agency, autonomy and voice.</i></p> |
| 4.50PM TO 5.05PM | <p>Tamara Sweetman</p> <p><i>Student Expression Through Film Learning: ‘Home’</i></p> <p><i>Tamara is the Head of Drama at Pymble Ladies’ College. She leads the Kindergarten to Year 12 Co-curricular Drama and Years 9 to 12 Curriculum programs. She has recently completed her Masters of Philosophy in Research, Education, at the University of Sydney by investigating Boarding students’ stories of home through filmmaking. Tamara is a Associate Editor for Drama Australia of the Australian Drama Education Magazine and Editor for the Drama NSW E-Magazine, as well as a past Vice-President of Professional Learning for Drama NSW.</i></p> |
| 5.05PM TO 5.20PM | <p>Charlotte Armstrong</p> <p><i>A new perspective on data and analysis in Extension Science</i></p> <p><i>Please replace with</i></p> <p><i>Charlotte is in Year 12 at Pymble Ladies’ College and has always held a passion for science and the environment, which has influenced her Senior School subject choices, which include Earth and Environmental Science, Investigating Science and Science Extension.</i></p> |

OPTION B

Option A and Option B will be run simultaneously at the times listed below

4.20PM TO 4.35PM

Liam Hume and Debra Owens

How can student voice be amplified by Year 10 Elective Geography students at Pymble so that they are future ready?

Liam has been teaching Geography at Pymble Ladies' College for six years since migrating from the United Kingdom in 2015. In Liam's current role as Celestino Project Lead, he developed a passion for harnessing the power of industry partnerships for providing unique, real-world learning opportunities for students. The partnership between Pymble and Celestino has been embedded into the Year 10 Elective Geography course.

4.35PM TO 4.50PM

Kieran Dale-O'Connor

Our community, our place: the Te Awakairangi program

Kieran is an Inquiry Learning Leader at Pymble. Prior to this, he was a secondary English teacher for six years, during which time had roles in faculty leadership, pastoral care of refugee students, restorative practices, and library management. He also co-designed and taught Te Awakairangi, a cross-curricular and place-based program of learning for senior students.

4.50PM TO 5.05PM

Mariel Lombard

The Primary/Junior School to Middle School transition

Mariel is Head of Year 7 and is an avid French teacher. She has been at the College since 2012 and has worked within the Wellbeing team over the past six years in both the Middle School and Upper School. Mariel has a Masters in Educational Leadership (School Education) and is passionate about student wellbeing and girls' education.

5.05PM TO 5.20PM

Ryan Stewart

Henry Kendall: An outsider reporting violence and massacre on the Australian frontier

Ryan is a researcher at the University of Newcastle (Australia) and History teacher at Pymble Ladies' College (Sydney, Australia). Ryan's PhD research is centred around settler memories of frontier violence with First Nations peoples in Australia and the representations of Indigenous peoples in settler-centric local histories and historiography.

Conference conclusion

Keynote presentation

Dr Janet Dutton

LECTURER, MACQUARIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, MACQUARIE UNIVERSITY

Making space for research

Dr Janet Dutton has extensive experience as a lecturer in teacher education, a leader of teacher professional development and as Head Teacher in government and independent schools. Janet has worked developing assessment and curriculum at national and state level organisations and was the Chief Examiner, English for the NSW Higher School Certificate, 2011-2016. Her areas of speciality include Secondary English curriculum and HSC English, creative literacy pedagogy, teacher motivation and retention and teacher identity, voice and reflective practice. Janet's teaching and research promotes the ways creative pedagogy can enrich student learning and one of her current projects involves developing strategies to enhance pre-service teacher reflexive practice.

Teacher research was once innovative practice but increasingly it is what good teachers do. So how can teachers make space for research? In this keynote I offer Socio-Spatial Theory (Lefebvre 1991, Soja 1980) as a lens through which to understand the dynamics of the teacher researcher role and advocate for a 'nimbleness of gaze' (Dutton, 2017) that supports teachers to pivot to an inquiry stance.

Abstracts and presenter information

OPTION A SPEAKERS:

Lucy Clark and Charlotte Hartin

YEAR 10 STUDENTS, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

Why you need to know about academic journals – student perspectives

In 2020, Charlotte and Lucy developed their (own) original research and, throughout that process, learned the importance of students' understanding of research and how to enter the world of academics. Lucy is also an artistic gymnast and coach and her interest is in the area of sport and how people can better develop their sporting skills. Charlotte loves digging deeper into research and learning more about topics in depth. She enjoys rowing for Pymble and playing tennis.

Through the opportunity we had to interview Associate Professor Nicole Mockler, we developed an understanding of the importance that being able to access academic articles has for students. While this is worked into the curriculum, the importance of research skills for day-to-day research is essential as students go into the next generation.

Being able to interpret and understand an article from the world of academia is a skill that is essential for life. For this to be accurate and an effective part of students' education, it would be more reliable for students and make their education more worthwhile if they knew how to access journals. We would like to enable teachers to educate students in a way that would make it a constant and a norm.

Melissa McMahon

DIRECTOR OF TEACHING EXCELLENCE,
PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

What works best in HSC teaching at Pymble?

Melissa is the Director of Teaching Excellence K-12 at Pymble Ladies' College and a passionate English teacher in the Senior School. She has held a variety of curriculum leadership roles over the past 23 years and is a strong advocate for teacher agency, autonomy and voice.

Whilst many factors influence HSC success, in-school variance between classrooms and teachers is well-established in the research literature as the leading cause of variance in student performance. Teachers, not schools, purportedly make the biggest difference to student outcomes.

In *What Works Best in Education*, Hattie contends that schools need to recognise expert teachers, as this expertise can drive all students upwards. Year in, year out there are teachers who consistently unlock the potential of our students. What is their secret? What do our most effective HSC teachers do in their classrooms? What factors influence their success?

There is a significant body of Australian research already in existence about high impact teaching strategies and in 1999, Ayres, Dinham and Sawyer conducted a study of 25 high-performing Department of Education HSC teachers to understand successful HSC teaching.

The methodology employed in my action-research project closely follows the Ayres et al approach, but in a *Pymble* context.

Abstracts and presenter information

OPTION A SPEAKERS (continued):

Twelve highly successful HSC teachers were identified, they were observed teaching two senior classes, participated in a follow-up interview and their students were surveyed and interviewed.

Through this methodology, I hope to generate a set of teaching and learning strategies that are working in our unique context.

Tamara Sweetman

HEAD OF DRAMA, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

Student Expression Through Film Learning: 'Home'

Tamara is the Head of Drama at Pymble Ladies' College. She leads the Kindergarten to Year 12 Co-curricular Drama and Years 9 to 12 Curriculum programs. She has recently completed her Masters of Philosophy in Research, Education, at the University of Sydney by investigating Boarding students' stories of home through filmmaking. Tamara is a Associate Editor for Drama Australia of the Australian Drama Education Magazine and Editor for the Drama NSW E-Magazine, as well as a past Vice-President of Professional Learning for Drama NSW.

This research is focused on enabling an opportunity for Boarding students to create films about their identity, and what 'home' means to them. The study aims to understand whether using filmmaking pedagogies allows these Boarding students to communicate their stories and what affordances does the film learning have for the students.

The presentation will focus on the findings from this research study. The findings suggest that when students are involved in film learning, there is an increase in self-reflection on home and identity and students gain confidence in their self-expression. A sample of the case studies (the students and their artefacts) will be shared and the findings, which has insights for student self-expression projects in exploring concepts related to identity or stories that are of importance to them.

Charlotte Armstrong

YEAR 12 STUDENT, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

A new perspective on data and analysis in Extension Science

I am currently in Year 12 at Pymble Ladies' College. I have always held a passion for science and the environment which has certainly had an influence on my subject choices for Year 12 which include Earth and Environmental Science, Investigating Science, as well as Science Extension.

A year or so ago, I went to my first Science Extension class with absolutely no idea about what I got myself into. After some introductions, my teacher, Dr Spence, started talking about data and datasets. Like many of my fellow students I frowned. I thought to myself: 'data, isn't it just for computers and data scientists, why do I need to look at such boring material?' I can't tell you how wrong I was at the time. My opinions have become so disparate, taking a full 180. So, what has changed?

It was only when I moved into my Year 12 subjects that I truly realised the immense value of using data. This asset was particularly important for my subject, Science Extension.

OPTION B SPEAKERS:

Liam Hume and Debra Owens

GEOGRAPHY, BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
(GBE) TEACHERS, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

How can student voice be amplified by Year 10 Elective Geography students at Pymble so that they are future ready?

Liam has been teaching Geography at Pymble Ladies' College for six years since migrating from the United Kingdom in 2015. In Liam's current role as Celestino Project Lead, he developed a passion for harnessing the power of industry partnerships for providing unique, real-world learning opportunities for students. The partnership between Pymble and Celestino has been embedded into the Year 10 Elective Geography course.

Debra is a practising classroom teacher. Currently part of the GBE team at Pymble Ladies' College. She has authored a number of Geography and Business Studies textbooks including the three editions of Geography for Global and Australian Citizens, Geo Broadsheets and Macquarie HSC Geography Revision Guide. As well as being an experienced HSC marker, Debra has been a GTA NSW Councillor and has presented student lectures for the GTA NSW and professional development courses for teachers through the AIS NSW.

Our research into amplifying student for Year 10 Elective Geography students is being undertaken at Pymble in collaboration with Dr Susanne Pratt, a lecturer in the Faculty of Transdisciplinary Innovation at UTS and Celestino, the company responsible for planning and implementing the new Sydney Science Park in Western Sydney.

This has provided us with a unique case study for our research and with an opportunity to make space for research in GBE at Pymble.

This collaboration and research focus on promoting student voice and STEM pathways in Stage 5 Geography to build transdisciplinary capabilities in Geography. The research focuses on engaging students, parents and teachers, to foster student voice so that future learning and pedagogical practices can be developed which aim to bolster student capacity and future pathways by building transdisciplinary capabilities.

Kieran Dale-O'Connor

INQUIRY LEARNING LEADER,
PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

Our community, our place: the Te Awakairangi program

Kieran is an Inquiry Learning Leader in the Conde Library at Pymble. Prior to this, he was a secondary English teacher for six years, during which time had roles in faculty leadership, pastoral care of refugee students, restorative practices, and library management. He also co-designed and taught Te Awakairangi, a cross-curricular and place-based program of learning for senior students.

Five years ago, a colleague and I started planning a new cross-curricular course for senior students at the school where we worked in New Zealand.

Our attempt to contribute to this mission was creating the Te Awakairangi programme (the Māori name for our local region and river, literally meaning precious river).

Abstracts and presenter information

OPTION B SPEAKERS (continued):

We asked ourselves how we could best utilise the precious resources of our community. We decided to plan a cross-curricular course where everything, within reason, would be based around principles of place-based education, and tangata whenuatanga (a Māori concept which encapsulates, among other things, the idea that Māori culture, language, and identity are all integral to learning).

Mariel Lombard

HEAD OF YEAR 7 AND FRENCH TEACHER,
PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

The Primary/Junior School to Middle School transition

Mariel is Head of Year 7 and is an avid French teacher. She has been at the College since 2012 and has worked within the Wellbeing team over the past six years in both the Middle School and Upper School. Mariel has a Masters in Educational Leadership (School Education) and is passionate about student wellbeing and girls' education.

The transition from primary to secondary school is a significant event during a young person's educational journey. It requires students to make a substantial adjustment to their educational setting. This means adjusting to new surroundings, new teachers and new peers; learning new rules and routines; and understanding new ways of learning. It also means adjusting to a disruption of young people's social network.

This presentation will discuss a recent review of the transition processes at *Pymble* and recommendations which were provided to refine the current programs and activities.

Ryan Stewart

HISTORY TEACHER, PYMBLE LADIES' COLLEGE

Henry Kendall: An outsider reporting violence and massacre on the Australian frontier

Ryan is a researcher at the University of Newcastle (Australia) and History teacher at Pymble Ladies' College (Sydney, Australia). Ryan's PhD research is centred around settler memories of frontier violence with First Nations peoples in Australia and the representations of Indigenous peoples in settler-centric local histories and historiography.

Violent contact experiences between First Nations peoples and settler-colonists on the Australian frontier were seldom reported in graphic detail by the European participants. This lack of primary source material has posed problems for historians Australia-wide in their efforts to try and piece together what exactly transpired on the frontier in remote geographical locations. Such is the case concerning the frontier period on the Central Coast of New South Wales.

Australian poet Henry Kendall bemoaned in 1875 that the early frontier history of this region (then known as the Brisbane Water District) had already been largely forgotten by settler-colonists.

My research explores Kendall's accounts of violence and massacre/s in the region and his designation of an Indigenous man in the district as the 'last of the Brisbane Water blackfellows.' Whilst not a historian, my presentation argues that Kendall did have a sense of urgency in reporting the contact stories of the region and that Kendall, as an 'outsider' to a region, was able to more freely report the episodes of violence that participants, eyewitnesses and local residents were unwilling to bring to print themselves.

My research examines the impact his two-part article had on the construction of settler-oriented local histories of the Central Coast in the twentieth century and argues that the content of Kendall's article, as it relates to the frontier contact history of the region, has been both misunderstood and misused.

A video produced by the team at the University of Newcastle called the Central Coast First Contact heritage project can be watched here.

**[https://protect-au.mimecast.com/s/
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SCAN TO READ MORE ABOUT
PYMBLE INSTITUTE



Pymble Ladies' College

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