



THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE  
WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY



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# Together.

THE JOURNAL OF THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE  
WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY



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## CHAIR notes

## PRINCIPAL points

**A**s the 2009 academic year draws to a close and students' minds turn from the incredibly diverse range of activities College provides to the focus on end of year exams, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the staff at College.

I am constantly impressed at how our small yet talented team tackle the myriad of College requirements, working together to ensure our students have an incredibly supportive and well managed environment to pursue their studies and grow through extensive extra-curricular activities. And of course, the staff also manage events for other stakeholders such as conference guests, alumnae and the broader academic community within our University.

Recently I was privileged to share the outcomes of the staff values workshop and it is clear that in a very modest and unassuming manner, we have a team who are dedicated to fulfilling the higher purpose of The Women's College in every one of their daily activities.

On behalf of The Women's College family, I would like to extend my thanks to the staff, and wish everyone across the Women's community the very best for a happy festive season and a successful 2010.

*Lucinda Warren*

Chair, The Women's College Council

**O**ne year completed as Principal of The Women's College and it has been a fascinating and challenging journey! The pace of life has been fast and furious with student-led activities, such as the Spring Cocktail Party, Rosebowl sporting competitions and Palladian Cup events all competing for our students' time and energy. When combined with the primary focus of academic study, these activities suggest awe-inspiring time management skills on the part of many of our students.

In facilitating the many opportunities that make up the busy schedule of College life, I have been equally impressed by the extraordinary diligence and loyalty of our staff as well as the willingness of Council members and alumnae to be involved.

As we bid farewell to our students for the summer and move into a busy conference period, I'm confident that the College will continue to hum along efficiently and all will be in readiness for the new academic year.

In the meantime, a happy and safe Christmas and New Year to you all.

*Jane Williamson*

Principal, The Women's College



*"In helping to establish WATSA I never dreamed it would generate so much interest, gather so much support so quickly, and involve so many people from College, the communities and the alumnae network. It's a great legacy to leave to College and one of my greatest achievements at University."*

**Kristy Kennedy,**  
founder, WATSA

**2009 WATSA (The Women's College Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alliance) President Jessie Kelly (3rd year arts) recently wrote that "The Women's College is a never ending source of innovation, enthusiasm, energy, skill, daring and expertise."**

The WATSA group is about harnessing those abilities in a way that is fun for those involved, but it's also fundamentally about changing the way in which Women's girls understand themselves."

WATSA held its first leadership camp at College from 31 August to 4 September. Eighteen Indigenous girls from remote communities including Bourke, Yarrabah and Lockhart River made the trip to Sydney to embark on a packed program of workshops, guest speakers, excursions and skills development sessions. The focus

of the week was on introducing young Indigenous women to tertiary education and experiencing University and College life first hand, with a long-range view to increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women at both institutions.

Workshops in team building and personal development were facilitated by Michael Neaves and Matthew Wright, and a highlight for many of the attendees were the sessions in dancing and drumming. Camp attendees and WATSA volunteers visited US Consul General Judith Fergin, an ongoing supporter of the WATSA project, and were also warmly welcomed by Her Excellency Marie Bashir, Governor of NSW and Chancellor of the University of Sydney, who shared with the girls some of her stories and life experiences. Sadiar, a camp attendee, said that the visit was "inspirational and I left there with a feeling of awe and determination."

WATSA has appointed a new executive for 2010: Chair Emma Byrne (pictured on cover), Vice Chair Simone Briggs and Secretary Jane Armstrong. Emma says "one of my personal aims for WATSA this coming year is to engage the wider College community in the initiatives of WATSA and maintain the relationships with Indigenous communities through outreach programs." With an ever growing body of volunteers, WATSA is set to accomplish its key objects through 2010.

If you are interested in getting involved with WATSA please email [watsaprojects@gmail.com](mailto:watsaprojects@gmail.com)

# Farewell Amy



Dean of Students Amy Chaffey farewells College.

**Dean of Students Amy Chaffey will leave College at the end of 2009 after eight years' residence.**

**A**my began as a College fresher in 2001, starting a Bachelor of Liberal Studies and finishing with a science degree in 2004. She spent 2005 living out with friends before returning to College as Dean of Students in October of that year, and enrolling in a Bachelor of Engineering at UTS in 2006.

Amy held a number of leadership positions at College: she was first year representative in 2001 and intercol representative in 2003. In 2004, Yvonne Rate's first year as Principal of College, she was elected senior student. Amy has been an outstanding sportswoman throughout her career at College, competing in many Rosebowl sports and coaching hockey and rowing. In 2004 she was voted sportswoman of the year. Sport is something Amy says she and Yvonne Rate had in common, and was the

basis of a firm kinship. "Working closely with Yvonne as senior student and then as Dean of Students meant that I got to know her really well and we've become close friends. She's always been like a second mum to me."

Amy says she will take away innumerable fond memories of College. "The highlight has been getting to know the seniors in each year and establishing close friendships with them. They've been such intelligent, capable, and fun girls; I feel like I have the biggest network of Women's College friends possible." She adds: "It's been a privilege to work with the three different Principals who have been at College during my time. From Ms Bryce's 'beloved institution of learning' to the sporting achievements of Yvonne's era, and this exciting new time with Jane – each woman has made the College her own and influenced me in some way. It's really made me reflect on my own leadership style."

Amy will begin work with construction firm Laing O'Rourke in 2010. She's hoping to work as a site engineer on a mining infrastructure job in Western Australia. She will be succeeded in the new role of Senior Resident Assistant by Louise PROWSE (2003–06).

# Women's Education Worldwide



**From 6–8 January 2010 The Women's College will host the Women's Education Worldwide conference (WEW), a gathering of the presidents and chief academic officers of women's colleges and universities from around the world.**

**W**EW acts as an advocate for women's education, sharing best practice and fostering exchange between member institutions. The conference is expected to attract around a hundred delegates from Australia and abroad to discuss issues around the theme *Empowering women: the economic imperative*.

A keynote address will be given by Professor Denise Bradley, former Vice-Chancellor, University of South Australia, and chair of the recent review of higher education, who will speak on devising ways to empower women through education in Australia. Other key speakers include public intellectual Wendy McCarthy AO, Amanda Ellis from the World Bank's Gender Group Action Plan, and Jane Sloane, Executive Director of the International Women's Development Agency.

The conference will include strands on alumnae networks and empowering young women, including discussions on affirmative

action and policy by female student politicians from the University of Sydney.

In conjunction with the City of Sydney and the Jessie Street National Women's Library, WEW will launch the *Women's Map of Sydney* on Wednesday 6 January on the terrace of the Museum of Contemporary Art. Sydney City Councillor and Deputy Lord Mayor Marcelle Hoff will officiate at the launch, and delegates will be among the first to take the tour of sites on the map.

Grants have been provided by the NSW Office for Women's Policy for several non-metro students (tertiary and high school) to attend the conference, and WEW has sponsored travel for ten international delegates from third-world countries including Pakistan, India, and China.

**Alumnae and friends are welcome to attend the conference. For more information and to register please see [www.thewomenscollege.com.au/wew-2010-conference.php](http://www.thewomenscollege.com.au/wew-2010-conference.php)**



Plain speaking

**Eliza Forsyth may only be in the second year of her Arts/Law degree, but she's already notched up a few prizes for her speaking talents.**

**T**his year Eliza took out the Justice Michael Kirby Plain Speaking Award, a university-wide public speaking competition which tests competitors' skills through a grueling series of heats, semis and a grand final involving both prepared and impromptu speeches. In October Eliza was also victorious in the fiercely contested Intercol Oration. Tackling the topic "Money," Eliza argued that debates about money in the Australian media are mundane and cited examples of discussions we could and should be having around climate change deniers and disclosure of donations to academic research.

Eliza was also part of Sydney University's winning team at this year's Australian Intersarsity Debating Championships hosted by the University of Queensland. In December she will travel to Antalya in Turkey to compete in the World Universities Debating Championship. She is confident the experience will hone her debating skills even further: "Worlds is the highest level debating you can do at university and teams prep for months in order to compete. It's like debating boot camp!" she says.

Eliza joins a shortlist of illustrious Women's College debaters in recent years, and in recognition of her speaking talents she was awarded the Oration Cup at College Awards Dinner for 2009.

Next year Eliza will add to her debating workload by convening the Australian Women's Debating Championship at Sydney University in September.

## Web refresh

College launched its new-look website in November with an up-to-the-minute magazine style format and lots of dynamic action panels and click-ons to better navigate the site, and to provide a friendly portal to the frequently visited pages.

The new site features profiles and news, a quick links panel and simplified menu items, all available from the home page. A fantastic new feature is the addition of an online events package, enabling alumnae and friends to book and pay for events with a few clicks of their mouse. You can view the site at [www.thewomenscollege.com.au](http://www.thewomenscollege.com.au)

## Langley portrait



A naïve-style portrait of former Principal Doreen Langley painted in 1991 by E. Dey has recently been re-hung in the foyer of the Langley wing of College.

The portrait had been housed in the College archives until its recent rediscovery. Miss Langley was Principal from 1957 to 1974.

# Bridge to *China*



Victoria Sanderson performs at the Chinese Bridge Speaking Competition for Foreign University Students.

**In May Victoria Sanderson (3rd year arts) won the Chinese Bridge Speaking Competition for Foreign University Students. The Chinese language contest involved delivering a prepared speech, a question and answer session about Chinese history and culture, and a talent section in which Victoria chose to sing a Chinese folk song.**

**A**s winner of the Sydney round, Victoria was invited to represent Australia in a fortnight-long, all expenses paid trip to China to compete in the finals with 120 students from all over the world.

She left for China in the July break thinking the finals would take much the same form as the initial competition in Sydney. As she was to find out, however, "Chinese Bridge" is a major annual reality TV show with a viewing audience of forty million people.

Victoria arrived in Beijing to a hotel packed with 120 university students representing over 80 different countries. Following their every waking moment were six fully equipped television crews, and a team of Chinese university student volunteers in charge of ensuring contestants were well prepared for their speeches, that they got up on time, even that their outfits each day were appropriate.

Victoria described the contest as "a rather unique experience: the show is so famous in China I guess the organisers thought

we would know all about it. But none of the contestants knew what they were in for." Victoria spent the two weeks in China travelling, being examined, performing, taking part in cultural activities, including trying her hand at Peking opera, kung fu, calligraphy, and singing the Chinese Bridge theme song on the Great Wall, at the Beijing Summer Palace, on trains, buses, and, at one point, on an aeroplane.

Contestants were treated like celebrities throughout their stay, even before the show had aired. "People would come up to us wanting photos and we'd say 'we haven't even been on TV yet, we're not famous or anything!' And they would reply 'Oh but you will be'."

Victoria says that given the choice, if she'd known what she was getting herself into, she probably wouldn't choose to be on a reality TV show again. And although she didn't win, she was thrilled to have had the opportunity to compete. "I think the biggest thing I got out of it," says Victoria, "was that it really showed me the value of just saying yes to things."

# Mentoring gallery *and* Women in Law



College celebrated a year of successful mentoring relationships with the biennial Women in Law dinner on 28 August held at College, and end-of-year mentors' drinks on 2 November, hosted by mentor Joanna Strumpf at Paddington art gallery Sullivan + Strumpf.

**Top row, l to r, mentors' drinks:** Joanna Strumpf and Principal Dr Jane Williamson; Council members Jaqui Lane and Jane Mathews AO; Jane Williamson with students Alice Blain, Cate Wright and Edwina Tidmarsh. **Centre:** Mentors and mentees on the terrace at Sullivan + Strumpf. **Bottom, Women in Law dinner:** Speaker Justice Julie Ward; Jess Walker, Mary Walker (GHANTOUS: 1975-78) and John Walker; Marie Bridger with students Daria Orjehk and Isabelle Guyot.



# Archival treasures



*congratulations  
affectionately  
Louisa Macdonald.*

**Elizabeth Vickery was fifteen years old when her grandmother Florence Gee (SAUNDERS: 1900–01) died. She remembers her grandmother as a wonderful woman who owned numerous books, who could be strict at times and who instilled in her the value of an education, particularly for a girl.**

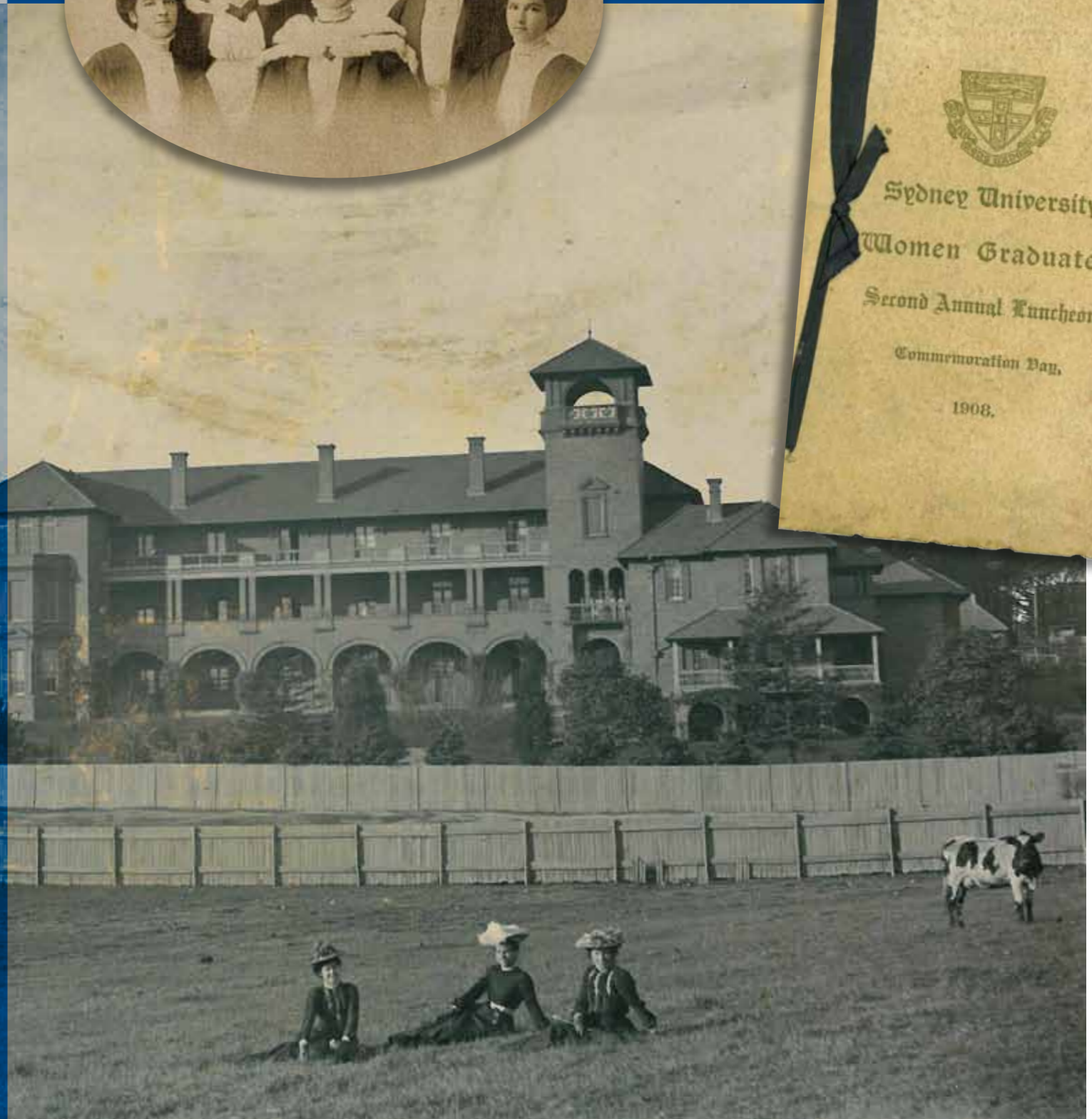
Elizabeth has recently made a donation to College of a collection of significant archival material discovered in her grandmother's Strathfield house after the death of her aunt, Florence's only daughter Alison, in 2006. The house had been in the family for almost a century.

Florence Louisa Saunders was the third of five daughters, born in 1882 in Port Macquarie, where her father William Saunders was an Anglican Minister. The family moved to Sydney where William Saunders died at age 44 in 1896. The girls were schooled in Dulwich Hill and then at St Catherine's Clergy Daughters' School. All five sisters attended Sydney University and two of them, Eva and Florence, came to live at Women's College.

Remarkably, eldest daughter Eva (at College 1893–96) matriculated from school at age 14 and entered Sydney University, funding herself by winning Yaralla and Councillors' Scholarships and receiving her Bachelor of Arts with Honours in 1897 at age 17. She worked as a teacher in various dame schools and by 1900 she was assistant mistress of the Shirley School at Edgecliff. Younger sister Florence followed in her footsteps, graduating with her BA in 1903 and, joining her sister, she taught to provide money for the younger sisters to come to University.

Elizabeth's donation to College includes material that has not seen the light of day for over a hundred years: a photograph of College taken around the turn of the century (main photo), showing three College students (one of them perhaps Florence herself) seated on the lawn near a grazing calf, an original letter from Principal Louisa Macdonald to Florence dated 28 March 1903 congratulating her on her academic achievements (top left), and an invitation from Miss Macdonald to attend the students' Christmas dinner. The collection also contains Sydney University handbooks, commemorative songbooks and programs (including the menu card from the 1908 women graduates second annual luncheon, above right), and a lady's ticket to the inter-collegiate boat race on 9 May 1900, still in its original envelope (above). A receipt for Florence's £21 College fees in 1901 and a copy of a photograph of the five Saunders girls (Pearl, Florence, Eva, Septima, May, above right) in caps and gowns completes this very special collection.

Florence's teaching career came to an end in 1910 when she married mining engineer Ernest Gee and had three children. Elizabeth Vickery's father was the eldest son of the marriage. Her daughter Susan Fuller (VICKERY: 1986–88) BArch and her niece Sarah WEBSTER (2000–02) BCom were both residents of Women's College.





MERILYN BRyce

# From the Alumnae President

Gardens may rest in winter but not your committee – the AGM on 1 August, our first Women's College Writers' Festival on 22 August, and the ever popular Wisteria Lunch on 20 September have kept us beaver-ing away.

2009–2010 is a transition year for the WCA Committee with several members either finishing or having finished terms of office, and others changing positions.

Melissa Robins has completed her term as Treasurer having done this demanding job with expertise, a beady eye for detail and good grace. Kate Treloar did not stand for re-election as Secretary, given her increased responsibilities working with children with developmental disabilities and their parents. Kate has been an outstanding Secretary. Happily for us, both Melissa and Kate continue as committee members. Polly Johnson is reversing demographic trends and moving to the country. We lose her both as Membership Secretary and as a committee member. A public and government relations specialist – we will miss her mastery of these areas.



Amelia WALKLEY (2006–08) explains the rigours of editing student publications at the inaugural Women's College Writers' Festival in August.

Demonstrating that Women's certainly is 'for women who shape the future', all of us who attended the reunion lunch following the AGM enjoyed an absorbing talk from Caroline Pidcock, Principal of Pidcock Architects, which is renowned for its ecologically sustainable designs.

*Writing from the Self* – the inaugural Women's College Writers' Festival on 22 August – was a great success for the breakfast get together for speakers and facilitators through a crowded and exciting day, which explored the process of writing, the creative drive, manuscript development,

publishing and much more. The festival was prompted by a wish to highlight the work of writers, editors and publishers who had been at Women's, and we were delighted that many of our speakers and facilitators were alumnae or current members of College. They included Ann Moyal, Louise Austin, Kate Calhau, Jill Hickson, Elizabeth Knight, Kate McClymont, Amelia Walkley and Nadia Wheatley.

Cocktails with Chris Taylor of The Chaser, who gave us an insider's peek at writing for comedy, sent everyone on their way. Special thanks go to Vice-President, Jacquet Hicks, who headed the festival task force, and to Victoria Harper whose incomparable knowledge of writers and editors brought us many of our speakers.

Our busy season was rounded off by the Wisteria Lunch on Sunday, 20 September, when a capacity crowd squeezed happily into Main Common Room. This year the wisteria bloomed as we remembered it and, thanks to the gardener's deft work, potted wisteria cuttings were there for us all.

Please let us have your news.

**Meryl yn Bryce**

# Best friends

**Anda PILMANIS and Jennie GREENWELL met at College in 1983, when Anda was completing a Law degree and Jennie was doing a DipEd. They spent a year together at College and went to the opera every week. Jennie now teaches extension history at a Sydney high school. Anda lives in Denver, Colorado, where she is Divisional Estate Manager for the Salvation Army.**



Anda PILMANIS and Jennie GREENWELL in Denver, 2002.

## ANDA

Jennie had an interesting character in that she wasn't into rock'n'roll like everyone else at College. I'd been to the opera once before I met Jennie. She was seriously into it, and we went a lot – sometimes two or three times a week! We'd buy student rush tickets for \$5 and we usually got the seats that were reserved for VIPs who hadn't turned up – that was the only way we could afford to go. We always got dressed up; Jennie had these wonderful flowing dresses, capes and coats that she wore to the opera, and she still does.

After uni I went home to Tahmoor and Jennie had an apartment in Surry Hills, but we still went to the opera on a regular basis. We'd meet at the Opera House after work and eat dinner in the interval. In summer we'd go to opera or symphony in the park with all of our College friends and catch up that way. Or we'd go to the theatre and the ballet together. It was very personal going with Jennie. She would bring flowers for the performers and we'd go to the greenroom after the show. It always surprised me that she wasn't keen to be involved in some formal way with music because she knew so much about it – probably more than the performers!

Jennie has never found the right guy but she always wanted to have a child. She adopted a little girl from China 6 years ago. We discussed it a lot and she had it all planned out – she knew it would be hard work being a single mum but she's

very patient and tolerant and Helena is the perfect child for her – she's very outgoing and friendly, like Jennie.

We moved to America in 2000. Jennie has come to visit twice and I've been back in Australia about four times. Last time (in July 09) we walked around the botanical gardens and looked at the Opera House! We don't talk as often as I'd like because we're both in very busy phases of our lives, but when we do it's like we were talking yesterday. If it hadn't been for Jennie I would never have married my husband. I wasn't sure about him at first – he was an engineer working at the steel works – but he liked opera! Without Jennie's interest in opera, it would have been a different life. And I can't imagine that.

## JENNIE

Anda was sharing an ensuite room at College with the one other person I knew from Newcastle Uni. Anda's room was amazingly decorated – so colourful and ours were so boring. We hit it off straight away. Anda was extremely outgoing, very friendly and enthusiastic about things. She had these wonderfully outrageous ideas and she could fit an enormous amount into her day. I don't know when she studied because she had an incredible social life – she was much more social than I was, but she managed to get really good marks seemingly effortlessly.

We went to the opera a lot that year. It was the first time I'd lived in Sydney and it was so exciting because we didn't have the same opportunities in Newcastle. Anda's worst trait is that she's never on time! She's always

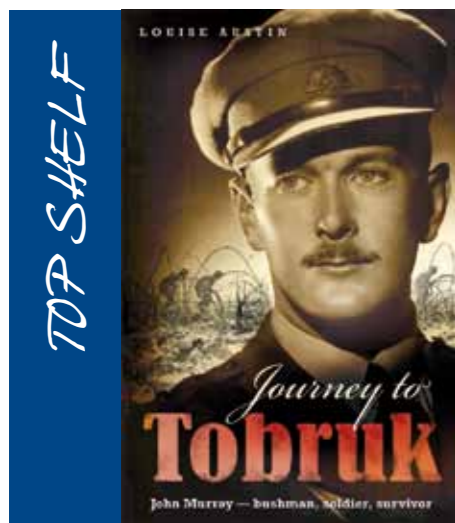
late. I've spent many hours waiting for Anda, but anyone who knows Anda would say that, especially her husband!

Anda was very supportive when I made the decision to get Helena. She was so excited for me – she bought baby books and out of the blue beautiful dresses would arrive from America in the post. In many ways we've got quite similar ideas of parenting so it's a pity we can't see each other more because Anda would be a brilliant role model for me – her kids Tia and Andris are amazing. They're just so sensible and fantastic, I can't praise them enough.

I went to visit Anda in America just before I got Helena and I remember thinking I wanted my kids to be like that. I watched Anda carefully to see how she did everything. I took Helena to Denver about two years ago and all the kids hit it off so well. Anda and Peter are great talkers and I remember sitting round the table for hours after dinner, having stimulating conversations about politics, the kids, everything – it was just so refreshing. Anda's been through all the stages I haven't got to yet with Helena, so I really value her opinion.

Temperamentally we're very different – she's much more outgoing than me and I'm much more reserved. But we have so much in common. I'm so lucky to have met Anda – her upbringing was very different to mine but our core values are the same.

**Tell us your best friend story. Please email [vp@thewomenscollege.com.au](mailto:vp@thewomenscollege.com.au)**



**A review of *Journey to Tobruk: John Murray – bushman, soldier, survivor*** written by Louise Austin published by Pier 9

Louise Austin (OLDHAM: 1963–65) celebrated the launch of *Journey to Tobruk* at College in August 2009

## A voice from a war

At the age of 24 John Murray came to Sydney from the outback and joined the Australian Imperial Force. Throughout the Second World War he served with the 2/13th Battalion being promoted through the ranks from private soldier to acting Major and Brigade Intelligence Officer. John Murray was twice mentioned in dispatches and made a Member of the Order of the British Empire in the post-war honours list. He first demonstrated his courage under fire during the legendary defence of Tobruk in North Africa and confirmed his leadership skills in the deadly Huon Peninsula campaign in New Guinea in 1943.

The siege of Tobruk needs little introduction to an Australian audience but so few Australians know about the offensives against the Japanese in New Guinea in 1943 that Dr Peter Stanley, former Principal Historian at the Australian War Memorial, once described them as a green hole in our history.

Louise Austin, in writing a biography of her uncle John Murray, entitled *Journey to Tobruk: John Murray – bushman, soldier,*

*survivor*, has not attempted to rewrite either of these campaigns but what she has done is reveal an extraordinary treasure, Murray's letters to his mother written whilst on active service in North Africa, New Guinea and other theatres of that great war.

Murray was a prolific letter writer, intelligent, literate and self reflective. His correspondence provides us with a window into his generation. Austin supplements Murray's letters with private interviews conducted with her uncle sixty years after the events he survived, and described in his letters. She laces the story together with her own research, and what emerges is a most engaging and very human story that provides a uniquely personal perspective on the war and the impact it had on the lives it touched.

After the war Murray returned to the bush, became a pastoralist and entered politics. And he continued to write to his mother. Louise Austin has preserved his story by sharing those letters and her book allows us to hear a voice from our past.

**Brad Manera**



## Val Street

Principal 1981–1989

Born 16 April 1936

Died 1 July 2009

The year 1981 was unique in the annals of The Women's College. For the first and only time, the head of the College was a man, Bill Haysom, who had been appointed Acting Principal following the brief tenure of Dr Leonie Star's successor, Mrs Katharine West. As the College Council returned to its short list, a new name was suggested by Miss Betty Archdale. The name was that of Val Street, Community Relations Officer at Abbotsleigh who, later that year, was appointed Principal.

Val was born in Britain in 1936 and came to Australia in July 1960, at the age of twenty-four. She worked at Abbotsleigh from 1970.

Her appointment to The Women's College was controversial. She was not an academic and did not enjoy the influential social and familial connections of some of her more privileged predecessors. What her detractors failed to realise was that life as the head of a college for women in the 1980s was not for the faint hearted.

With greater personal freedom and more choice of places to live, the College was experiencing a rapid student turnover, with less participation in College activities and fewer senior students to provide stability.

Academic results were disappointing and increased affluence and changing social values had given students a freedom they were often ill equipped to manage, resulting in anti-social behaviour and some expensive vandalism. Meanwhile, government financial support for university colleges was coming to an end, placing increased pressure on the College to be self-sufficient.



On the practical side, Val was well able to cope with invasions by drunken male college students who often found themselves facing the diminutive but determined form of the Principal in the College corridors during their night time exploits. Dubbed by them 'the small round mound of sound', these encounters usually resulted in a speedy retreat by unwanted visitors. 'All care and no responsibility' was Val's motto for the role of the College, as she encouraged students to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to influence that of their peers.

For her part Val worked hard to build good relations with the University, to provide financial support for able students from all backgrounds and to increase the number of students from country high schools. "I see College as a great support mechanism for students" she wrote "and not a social club for the wealthy". By the 1980s the value of many of the College's old awards had diminished and Val promoted the College Foundation to revivify scholarships and prizes. Opportunities for paid work in the College during vacations and in term time also helped students to pay their own way while at the same time improving relations between students and the permanent staff.

By the time she resigned in 1989 the tide had turned. Students were staying in College longer, were achieving more Distinctions and High Distinctions and new scholarships were assisting the academically able from all backgrounds, while the increasing use of the College during vacations helped its finances. As Val herself acknowledged, this was not all of her doing. Attitudes had changed during her time as Principal as the freedom of the 1970s gave way to the student conservatism of the 1990s. Students now recognised the need to work, as well as to have a balanced social life and college residence, which had once been rejected as restricting, offered an ideal environment in which these two could be achieved.

Val's new life after College saw her begin her own educational consultancy firm and her continued involvement with numerous community and educational interests including the University of Sydney Faculty of Education. In her leisure time classical music, friends and the beach at Balmoral played major roles. Val was an exponent of 'life long learning' way before the term was coined. She gained her first qualifications working for local government and later took degrees by correspondence from New York State and the University of Oregon. But perhaps her proudest moment was when she was awarded the degree of Master of Education (honoris causa) from the University of Sydney in 1992.

In 2001 she suffered a major aneurism and eventually had to surrender her independence for nursing home care. In this, as in the rest of her life, she demonstrated great courage, and her optimism and cheerfulness continued to energise those around her.

Friendship and the ability to engage with young people were her special gifts. She was generous, fearless and loyal – and she was fun.

For The Women's College, she was the right woman, at the right time.

**Rosemary Annable**



**Margaret Joan Holmes**  
(READ: 1927–30)  
10 September 2009  
(aged 100)

Margaret Holmes studied arts and medicine and attained a Bachelor of Science degree

in 1932. During her time at Sydney University she was elected to the first SRC, served as co-president of the Student Christian Movement and worked for the settlement movement.

She used to joke about the little car her father bought her so she could drive home to Wahroonga (a long and lonely drive before the Harbour Bridge was built) – she and Miss Williams, the Principal, being the only car-owners at College at the time. She also credited Phyllis Nichols, lecturer and College tutor, with enabling her to pass Physics I to enter medicine, as girls were not taught physics at school in the 1920s.

She married fellow medical student T.A.G (Tag) Holmes and they had six children. She was made Member of the Order of Australia in 2001 in recognition of her lifelong work for peace and justice, particularly her founding of the NSW branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. She actively championed Aboriginal empowerment, the environment, proper treatment of asylum seekers, and independence for East Timor and West Papua. In her nineties she vigiled at Kirribilli House in protest against our entering the war in Iraq and was still writing letters, petitioning, and making submissions until the end of her life.

She was a remarkable woman who lived for others; a great networker, a true peace-maker, interested in everybody and everything. A biography, *Margaret Holmes: the life and times of an Australian peace campaigner*, was launched at The Women's College in 2006.



**Catherine Mary Lovell**  
(1964)  
16 June 2009

Catherine Lovell's life was led in her own adventurous, unconventional, interesting, way. She was an out in

front of the gang, anti-authority sort of gal, as happy and at home on the back of a motorbike on a summer evening off to see a surf movie as in front of a class teaching Japanese or attending a Sufi retreat. She ran her own race and was her own woman.

In 1959 Cathy started High School at SCEGGS Redlands having won the highly competitive external scholarship. She was a school prefect at SCEGGS and achieved a brilliant leaving certificate – in the top 10 in the State in both French and Latin.

She went on to study Japanese at Sydney University. Her university career was described as "long, rich and colourful," and she graduated in 1970.

In 1971 she went to Keio University in Japan on an Australia Japan Business Cooperation Committee scholarship. On her return to Australia in 1973 she taught Japanese at Killarra High School, and later for nineteen years at Pittwater High School. Cathy was a gifted teacher whose energy and enthusiasm inspired many.

In the early 1980s Cathy began what was to become her lifelong involvement with Beshara, attending the esoteric school at Karnak which Diane Cilento had established. She lived for a time at Chisholme House, a Georgian manor house on the Scottish moors, with similar seekers from around the world. Her daughter Angela was born in 1990.

Cathy was an excellent wordsmith; she had a brilliant mind and her language skills were truly legendary.



**Beryl May RICH**  
OAM (1939–44)  
9 October 2008

Born in 1921 in Wagga Wagga, Beryl Rich studied medicine at Sydney University, graduating with honours in 1944.

She worked as a resident in women's medicine in hospitals in Sydney, with the aim of specialising in obstetrics, but then established a solo practice at Berowra on the northern outskirts of Sydney. It was here that Beryl became involved in home births, a practice she was to continue throughout her professional life, meeting the needs of the post war baby boom, and the regular shortage of maternity beds.

She spend time in the late 1950s as Chief Medical Officer in a scantily equipped remote outback hospital in Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory, before moving with her family (including her four children) to Condobolin in central NSW, where she again worked in a solo practice, on call seven days a week, 24 hours a day. During this busy time she managed to qualify as a Fellow of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners, and obtained professional post-graduate qualifications in obstetrics and anaesthesia.

She subsequently worked as a GP in Wagga Wagga, Canberra and Queanbeyan, continuing to deliver babies wherever she was needed. Indeed, no place was too remote for her to be there ready to welcome a new child into the world. In 1994–95 Beryl worked at the Armidale Aboriginal Health Service.

She was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 1996 "for services to medicine, in particular Aboriginal and women's and baby health." Beryl retired from general practice in 2001 at the age of 80.



# Staying connected

NEWS FROM SOME OF OUR ALUMNAE

# Model ALUMNA



Please send us your news for the next issue of *Together*:  
vp@thewomenscollege.com.au



At the Louisa Macdonald Oration in May 2009. Above: Janet PHIPPARD (1969–70) and Suzanne HOWARTH (1981–84). Below: Yvette BLACK (1999–2002), Elissa BRIDGE (2001–05) and Annabel POPE (2002–04).

## 80s

**Anda Arnold**  
(PILMANIS 1980–84) LLB LLM  
Anda is living in Denver Colorado and is a Divisional Estate Manager for the Salvation Army. She would love to hear from people from her era: [apilmanis@pilmanis.com](mailto:apilmanis@pilmanis.com)

## 90s

**Clare CHAFFEY**  
(1999–01) BHS (RadTher)  
Clare is working as a sonographer on the south coast of NSW and is a partner in an animal sonography company.

**Edwina HANRAHAN**  
(2001–03) BA  
Edwina is finishing a Diploma of Education in 2009 and hoping to move to Byron Bay.

## 00s

**Catriona DUNCAN**  
(2008–09)  
Catriona attended the 18th International Youth Leadership Conference in Prague in July, an experience, she says, that “changed my perspective on political issues and inspired me to make changes for a better tomorrow.”

**Emily HURTZ**  
(2008)  
Emily is playing in the Australian Hockeyroos team as a striker.

**Katharina JOHANSSON**  
(2002–04) BEcon SocSc LLB (Hons)  
Katharina is working in a London firm with records management and is considering doing an MA in records management next year.

**Meg PARSONS**  
(2005–08) PhD  
In January 2010 Meg will begin a three-year postdoctoral fellowship at Melbourne University to investigate the impacts of climate change on the health and well being of remote Australian Indigenous communities.

**Nicola PATERSON**  
(2002–05) BCom (Lib)  
Nicola is moving to Melbourne to take up a position as Senior Strategy Analyst with Coles. She has been working in Management consulting with LEK for the past four years.

**After studying medicine at Sydney University, Ann Felton (KENDALL: 1953–56) was ‘discovered’ in 1958 and became one of the world’s top models, earning \$1000 a week by 1960.**

Ann has had cause to revisit her modelling career this year with the publication of *In Vogue Australia: 50 years of Australian Style*. Her image appears multiple times in the book including a celebrated photo by Helmut Newton under the wing of a Flying Boat. “I didn’t have a clue I was going to be in the book,” she says. “Friends saw a flyer in a newspaper with my picture on it. I was so surprised to see it – my modelling career was so long ago that I don’t tell people about it any more.”

Her career is legendary among her College contemporaries, as is her romance with husband Neil, who spotted her through the window in a friend’s room in the Williams wing as he walked past College with a group of friends from artillery school in 1956.

The pair were engaged ten days later, with Principal Betty Archdale’s blessing. Ann had been enrolled in medicine but was concerned about the strain a medical career would put on her marriage. After her fourth year she wrote a thesis in pathology and graduated with a BSc (Med), taking a job as a food technologist before moving across to pharmaceutical giant Pfizer. It was while she was working at Pfizer that renowned Australian fashion photographer Laurie Le Guay asked her to do some modelling.

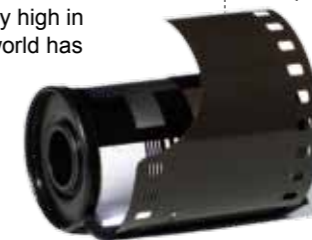
Ann worked as a model for two years in Australia before heading overseas. By this stage her star was on the rise: she was named model of the year in 1959 and influential New York agent Eileen Ford sought her out.

Ann walked into Ford’s office one day in 1960; that same afternoon she was being photographed for *Vogue* in a fur coat in the vault of the Chase Manhattan Bank. Ann worked for the world’s top magazines and cosmetic companies until her second son was born in 1966, when she returned to Australia and retired from modelling. Throughout the 1960s she was feted by the Australian press for her “immaculate, band-box look.”

Ann says that although the level of professionalism was very high in the 60s, the modelling world has changed significantly: “It is so different today because there is so much ability to change the look after the shoot. Retouching was very

expensive in my day and not often done. No one starved themselves either – Eileen Ford used to tell some of the girls to have blueberries and yoghurt for breakfast if they needed to drop a few pounds.”

Ann’s husband Neil has kept a comprehensive archive of her work: photographs, news clippings, and other memorabilia as testament to her stellar career. However Ann says she always saw herself more as a medical student than a model: “It was never that serious for me although I always worked professionally. I felt I was slumming it.”



# EVENTS calendar

**WOMEN'S EDUCATION  
WORLDWIDE CONFERENCE**  
Wednesday 6 to  
Friday 8 January 2010  
Alumnae and friends are  
welcome to attend.

**CHANCELLOR'S DINNER**  
Monday 22 March 2010

**ALUMNAE MORNING TEA**  
Saturday 10 April 2010

**MENTORS' DINNER**  
Monday 19 April 2010

**RECENT LEAVERS' REUNION**  
Monday 10 May 2010  
Welcoming those who have left  
College in the last 10 years.

**MOTHER DAUGHTER DINNER**  
Saturday 15 May 2010  
Invitations will be sent  
early in Semester One.

**ALUMNAE AGM**  
Saturday 24 July 2010,  
with lunch in the Main  
Common Room.

**FATHER DAUGHTER DINNER**  
Saturday 11 September 2010  
Invitations will be sent early  
in Semester Two.

**WISTERIA LUNCH**  
Sunday 19 September 2010  
For alumnae who entered  
The Women's College in  
1970 and before.

For details of all events,  
see the website  
[www.thewomenscollege.com.  
au/events-list.php](http://www.thewomenscollege.com.au/events-list.php)

Email [community@  
thewomenscollege.com.au](mailto:community@thewomenscollege.com.au)

Or contact Jacinta Walpole  
Phone: +61 2 9517 5008

All events take place at  
The Women's College  
unless otherwise stated.



**THE WOMEN'S COLLEGE**  
WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

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Tiffany Donnelly

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### Our cover:

WATSA President Emma Byrne with  
camp participant Courtney Barker.



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