

WOODCROFT COLLEGE

# *Courier*

Semester 1 2020





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Cover photo: Reception students enjoying the new ELC cubby house



# KEEP IN TOUCH

Are you an Old Scholar? We’d love to hear what you have been up to since leaving school.

Share your news at  
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Update your details at  
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Inside photo: Welcome to Year 8 ‘Guard of Honour’







# *P*rincipal's thoughts

by Shannon Warren, Head of College

As we began 2020, little did we know what unprecedented events would develop in the weeks and months ahead. Our country and state had already been devastated by bushfires, but the media spotlight soon turned to a pandemic that was unfolding in a province of China. Our international students returned not knowing that they would be away from their homes and families for an undetermined length of time. The virus still seemed a long way from South Australia and whilst we kept our eye on the situation, we got on with our term as we always had with camps, activities, musical auditions, instrumental lessons, assemblies, worship, meetings and beginning of year gatherings.

We had no idea that by the end of the term we would abandon in class teaching for remote learning from diverse locations, that all activities and gatherings would be cancelled, sanitising our hands would become the new norm, and that our teachers and our parents would have to be agile and responsive as their work and home lives changed, all with a few days' notice. No one would have believed it...but it happened!

Many of you know that I spent four years leading a school in New Zealand and I love the Māori phrase *He Waka Eke Noa*. Literally translated, the waka is the canoe which we are all in without exception. When paddling a waka, the first lesson is about maintaining balance.

The second is that the canoe moves faster in deep water and the possibility of tipping out is always present. The third lesson is that sometimes you cannot see where you are going, and you must trust the person who is sitting behind you to guide the way.

The meaning is, of course, deeper than this and refers to the collective consciousness that affirms belonging in a group. Waka is often used as a metaphor for a journey. When we are in a waka, there is unity in a shared purpose and the idea that together we can achieve so much more than if we work in isolation.

*He Waka Eke Noa* also describes the wonderful gift we have been given at Woodcroft during this pandemic - recognising that we are all bound together in ways that can be invisible to the eye; that there is a oneness to us as a school community; that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others and caring for those around us. It takes a team of people to get you to your destination in life. There is no such thing as a one instrument orchestra or a one voice choir.

Difficult times are made easier when we have travelling companions and someone to help us paddle. When we have the courage and confidence to be vulnerable and ask for help, we let down our guard and share what's true and real within us. The natural human response to vulnerability is empathy. Empathy brings us together and connects us with one another. It also reminds us that we're more alike than we are different.

I would like to thank the entire Woodcroft community for paddling with me. There are no words that are enough for me to express what an honour and privilege it is for me to lead the College through this time. I made great demands of my staff both teaching and non-teaching, knowing that many of them had their own stressors and pressures happening outside of work. Day after day my staff came to work, not because the government told them they have to, but because they know the value of their work and they are passionate about providing the very best education for our students.

In addition, our staff fielded the unique emotional needs of our young people as they experienced this major health crisis. They placated our little ones with gentle reassurance, informed our bigger ones with age-appropriate facts and assisted the biggest ones with plans to navigate the potential disruption of their all-important final year. They provided the consistency and routines that our students and families needed. They knew that our young people were feeling scared, frustrated and anxious. They knew that their students need normality and distraction. They worked around the clock to shift the curriculum to an online learning platform. And, as they did so, they swallowed down their own concerns, anxieties and vulnerabilities.

Our Woodcroft staff gave of themselves in personal and emotional ways that are incredibly challenging – and for that I say “Thank You”.

It is always important to reflect on times of





crisis and think about what the learnings have been. For us, our students and teachers have realised how exhausting it is to be on screens all day long. Remote learning has reminded us that powerful learning can only happen when we are engaged, energetic and focused.

Some students found they were less distracted by peers via remote, some parents learnt that there are skills in pedagogy, some students were turned onto learning more via remote, some students were more prepared to discuss errors and what they did not know, and many teachers discovered new ways of working so that students did not have to be in front of them all day listening to teachers talking.

Keeping the ritual of schooling, with its attendance taking, moments of social interaction, and students staying in contact with their peers and friends is important psychologically. This came through very strongly when we surveyed our students about their remote learning experiences. Missing their friends and teachers, missing being able to talk about their learning, collaborating and asking questions were what the students disliked the most about online learning.

It is often said that adversity builds character. Although it could be argued that living through adverse situations can refine certain characteristics within a person, adversity does not build character. Adversity reveals one's true character. Our Woodcroft character has been revealed as resilient, agile, responsive, relational and supportive. Most importantly, our community has remained steadfast and strong as we have faced an ever-changing landscape.

That being said, we are looking forward to the continuing easing of restrictions over time that will see us be able to worship together, celebrate together, play sport together and perform together.

# Junior School Captains

by Ruby Lovell and Finn Gilligan



Our inaugural Junior School Captains for 2020 are Finn Gilligan and Ruby Lovell. We caught up with them and asked about their time in the Junior School and their aspirations as school leaders.

*My name is Ruby Lovell and I am one of the Junior School Captains for 2020. I am so proud to be a Captain and be part of the Woodcroft College family.*

*I applied to be the Junior School Captain because I felt it was a great way to demonstrate my leadership skills and help the Junior School students. One of the highlights of my year so far was attending the International Women's Day Breakfast at the Entertainment Centre with Mrs Mikulcic and Mrs Warren.*

*I have also enjoyed showing new families around during school tours and telling others about our wonderful school.*

*I want all the students to know that I am open to any ideas and suggestions they have, so I can share them with our teachers. I am looking forward to helping with ongoing improvements around our school.*

*My name is Finn Gilligan and I came to Woodcroft College in Year 3 and was voted as the class SRC. Since then I have been very interested in leadership and I was lucky enough to be chosen as a McLaren House Captain this year.*

*I was very excited to apply for Junior School Captain because I'm very enthusiastic. I have a lot of ideas for events we could have at school to raise money and support charities, and make sure everyone has lots of fun. I want to expand on my ideas and make them come to life.*

*Another reason I applied for Junior School Captain is because I like to listen to other people's ideas and I can help make changes in our school by supporting other students and taking our ideas to the Head of Junior School.*

*I have enjoyed working with the Junior School staff and helping with school tours. I am passionate about the environment and have been asking for recycling bins in our school grounds. This is something I hope to achieve in the near future.*

*I am looking for more opportunities as the year progresses.*



# Early Learning Centre

by Natasha Olrich, ELC Director

It's been an exciting few months with the completion of our Early Learning Centre (ELC) occurring ahead of schedule. Hand over was completed mid-May so that we were able to commence setting up early.

Working with Peta Machell, ELC Leader of Learning and Teaching, we took deliveries of furniture and resources and set up purposeful and engaging learning environments for our youngest learners.

Care has been taken to create spaces that will encourage children to wonder, explore, interact and thrive. Our six core rooms have taken shape and you can now imagine groups of children and their teachers learning and playing together in the coming months.

Our meals area and piazza shared space are a delight to the eye with amazing imaginative play areas, safe and social places to eat, a light box table, comfortable cushions, and lots of natural light.

As playground works were completed, the rich outdoor opportunities became noticeable. With natural gross motor climbing areas, lovely fresh green grass areas for ball play, our rocky creek bed with water pooling for muddy puddle play, our yarning circle for songs and story times, and the gorgeous cubby house. We know children are going to want to spend so much time outside.

With set up complete we welcomed visits from the Woodcroft College team. Next we offered tours to families who had registered their interest or made enquiries about the ELC. Tours began on the 26 May and continue still for newly interested families.

It has been so lovely to watch visiting children engage in the environments, quickly finding some of their favourite resources indoors, with dressing up, home corners and our giant dinosaurs proving very popular. They have also been keen to discover and try something new. From our spacious cubby, to various sandpits and exploring the creek bed. We've had children not wanting to leave and trying to convince their parents they need just one more look!

Families have been blown away by the design and layout of spaces, commenting "Can we just move in?" and "It's even better than I thought it was going to be". They have loved the nature play aspects of our outdoor space and all the opportunities for learning and development inside. They have been grateful we can offer the hours that their family needs, and that we can support children attending the College's Transition Program to Reception.

Our Junior School children have also been keen to come across for a visit and of course play. All of our of Reception students, with their buddy Year 3 classes, our Year 1s and 2s have journeyed over to the ELC. They have enjoyed getting back to nature and exploring the playground. They tell us that they wish they were little again, letting us know they miss this magical time of early discovery.

With Peta's wealth of knowledge of IB Primary Years Program (PYP) planning and my skill with the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) we have been able to create the first curriculum for our young learners. This will encompass the IB PYP and the EYLF with a lens of Reggio Emilia philosophy. Our first 'Who we are' project ideas are displayed for families as they tour the Centre. We have thought about lots of ways to explore who we are at Woodcroft ELC, how we belong, how we make friends, and how we fit in to the larger College and local community.

As expected, enrolments have started coming in and we think we will be even busier at opening than we originally anticipated. The more the merrier we say!

We can't wait to open in Term 3 and become part of the 'Woodcroft way'. We look forward to welcoming connections with all areas of the College from our Junior School visits, to the Year 11 and 12 Child Studies students getting some hands on experience. How exciting that children will now be able to attend Woodcroft College from the age of 3 to Year 12!





# Wellbeing at Woodcroft

by Marty Fox, College Pastor

My College Pastor role is new in 2020. It is an absolute privilege and honour to be able to contribute to the lives of our students and staff, with things that often concern matters of the heart.

I see my role as one that contributes to culture. If you asked a Year 12 student what it is like being a student at Woodcroft College, I hope that they would say they were resilient, robust, confident contributors to society. That they have an attitude of selflessness, that they persevere when things get tough, and have the capacity to cope when life throws a challenge.

Ultimately, I would hope that they know they are loved, that there is a community of love here and, that love is patient, kind and also tough. And, by tough love, I mean that they don't just buckle under pressure and fold too easily.

Whether or not the students choose to have faith in God, the opportunity is always there for them to know that they are made in the image of God. Made with dignity, value and purpose. These are the attributes that I think my role is about. To boost self worth, to help students find their purpose in life and, if they are still unsure, then stick to the great words of Rick Warren – 'It's not all about me'. Live to give, give to others, contribute to society.

I have had the privilege of being involved in many Outdoor Education camps as Chaplain, and I have taught Religious and Values Education (RAVE) for many years. RAVE means that students have that moment in the week when they can stop, pause and reflect. We also have a lot of fun.

Our focus for this semester has been gratitude. Gratitude is a bit like air, we don't value it until it is gone. There is a lot to be grateful for. I was talking to a student about hope and it came to me that we don't hope for things we already have, we always hope for things we don't have. While gratitude is a celebration of things that we do have. To see the extraordinary in the ordinary. With gratitude you have to be deliberate about counting your blessings. It's a mindset to purposely decide to be thankful for things and we have got much to be grateful for.

Our community is a community of gratitude. Students have now started a culture of saying 'thank you' at the end of a lesson. The power of a young person's words is really amazing to see. I have had many teachers come and say to me that a student simply saying thank you has made their day.

That ability to be grateful is a wonderful thing. I value gratitude, especially in these hard days, when there is a lot of uncertainty. We have to remember there are also things that are steadfast and solid. A spirit of thankfulness is one of those things that we should hold close to our hearts in these uncertain times.

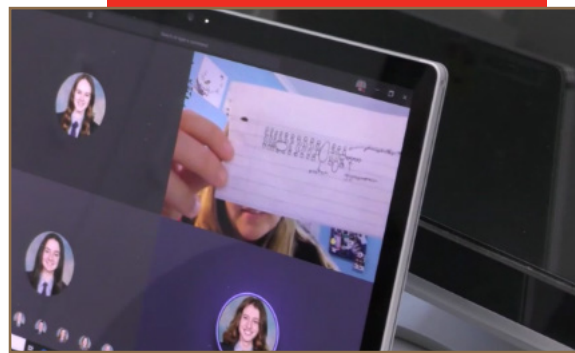
At Woodcroft College we really value learning through experience; visual learning. I think the best way for students to unpack a concept or idea is to see it visually, and then in RAVE to actually experience it. I think that's a really powerful way for students to learn.

There has been a window to our personal lives of late and students have had the chance to see their teachers be vulnerable, human, to make mistakes and I think this is really important for them to see this side of us.

As teachers we set the culture, if we're a bit grumpy the class will be grumpy. If we're annoyed, the class will be annoyed, but, if we're grateful the class will be grateful, it's the same if we're calm and at peace, the students will be calm and at peace. This flows over to family life as adults; if we're calm at home our children will have an environment of calm, if we value our home life, our children will see that and they too will be grateful. Having gratitude is contagious, it can spread.







# *Virtual Learning Reflection*

by Rachel McCall, Director of Quality  
Learning and Teaching



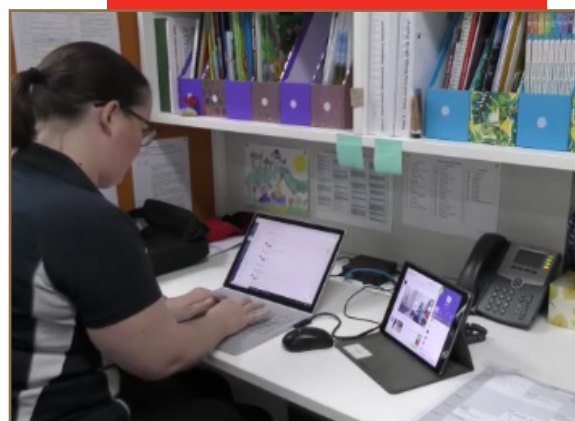
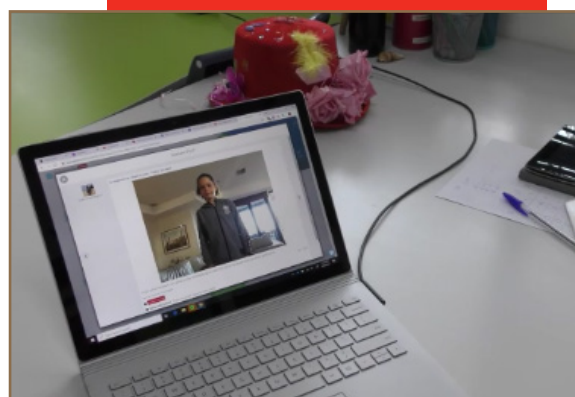
Due to COVID-19 developments in South Australia, the College moved to a hybrid virtual learning model on Wednesday 25 March.

Classes were delivered online through our Learning Management Systems Canvas and Seesaw. Due to updated government recommendations on Wednesday 1 April, the College moved to a full virtual learning model. This was a time of great uncertainty for all of the College community, but by working together we were able to push forward in our unique Woodcroft way.



Staff and students experienced a very different version of school at this time. Teachers sat alone in classrooms with their computers and waited for their students to sign onto chat forums. A few YouTube careers may even be launched as teachers prepared lesson delivery by recording themselves going through the content and then giving students directions on the learning activities they needed to undertake.

Students were often able to apply skills taught in class to their home situations, coming up with circuit training sessions for PE, and, in Home Economics, preparing a meal for the family from ingredients found in the pantry.



Students were particularly appreciative of staff efforts at this time and noted that clear routines, Canvas announcements, and video tutorials were very positive features of our virtual learning model. Students in the Junior School were engaged through Seesaw. Teachers posted lesson content, created videos and engaged in online chat forums to support our youngest students through their learning.

While we were all delighted to return to face to face teaching in week two of the term, there were a number of silver linings to come out of the virtual learning experience. The rapid adoption of certain technologies has given teaching staff even more resources to draw upon when planning learning experiences for their classes. Students were also able to further develop their digital technology skills, and many relished the opportunity to become more independent learners - being at home in comfortable clothes was greatly enjoyed as well.

What was most strongly reinforced was the importance of relationships in education. The fact that teachers and students had already been able to establish strong in-person working relationships, meant that our classrooms were able to function in a virtual world.

That staff and students were so keen to return to school further reinforces that these connections were sustainable online, but really continue to flourish in an in-person environment. A school without students is a lonely place to behold and we were thrilled to see them pouring through the gates again on Monday of week two.

I would like to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of the entire College community throughout this challenging time. Teaching staff worked tirelessly to support the students in front of them and those online, while simultaneously learning new technology to enable them to move to a completely online classroom.

Support staff were incredibly flexible in adapting to the needs of staff and students to ensure continued success in learning and teaching for all. Our students did a fantastic job adapting to this new mode of learning, and staff were incredibly appreciative of the support families provided to ensure that learning continued at home.



# O Outdoor Education

by The Outdoor Education Team and Middle School Camp Leaders

Our Outdoor Education Program is growing at Woodcroft College. As well as the Year 3 sleepover and camps in Years 4 to 10, we have now introduced the 'Outdoor Education' subject for students studying Stage One SACE.

There is a great deal of enthusiasm towards year level camps and many recall lasting memories from these experiences. The programs provide experience based learning; developing healthy relationships with yourself and others. Continuing these positive experiences in the senior years was a very exciting prospect for the Outdoor Education team.

The Year 11 students who chose the inaugural Stage One subject did so with enthusiasm and commitment to the unknown. The subject is designed to take students on a journey of experiences, learning about natural environments along the way.

Term One started at a frantic pace with day excursions preparing the students for the upcoming snorkelling peak experience with *Explore Marine Sanctuaries* and a three day kayak camp. As the COVID-19 situation developed it was fortunate the students had numerous prior camp experiences to draw on to help them stay positive with the news of cancelled events.

As the new 'Indoor Ed' model was developed the Outdoor Education team were blessed with unwavering support from parents, meaning students were still able to complete a day walk, leading their family and friends while working around the social distancing restrictions.

It was impressive to hear about these experiences in a positive light, and the enjoyment and bonding that occurred with families.

*'Our Outdoor Education class was supposed to go on a kayaking camp which sounded like a lot of fun but sadly it had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. However, to improvise we had a new assignment which was to take on a leadership role during a day walk. This gave us more opportunities to take charge as we are still learning and growing as young adults.'*  
Megan Lowe (Year 11 Student).

In the Junior School our Year 3 students enjoyed their first taste of being away from home with classmates, when they packed their gear ready for a fun sleepover at school. They enjoyed games on the College Green, a BBQ dinner and a movie before bed. The next day they were up for a shared breakfast and out for a fun filled day at The Beachhouse at Glenelg.

Our Year 4 students enjoyed new experiences at Mylor Adventure Camp, where they worked in teams building bridges and trying low ropes. They took risks with the flying fox and big swing, and learnt about ecology with yabbying and fishing.

Fortunately, our Year 6 students were able to get over to Narnu Farm on Hindmarsh Island for a glorious week, before restrictions hit. Having a camp so early in the year is the perfect chance for the well-established and newer pupils to bond. Our teaching staff also value this early opportunity to get to know their Tutor Group and see how they react when confronted with new challenges.

Students had the opportunity to horse ride, learn about fish ecology, kayak the Coorong, cockle and learn about bush tucker. It was an action packed time for our students and the value they gain from these experiences is clear for all to see.

Year 7 camp was almost eclipsed by a rapidly evolving situation, but with stringent distancing and hygiene practices in place, the camp was able to take place.

Having the Murraylands Aquatic Centre for our exclusive use was a bonus and students were led through eight engaging and challenging sessions including: small boat handling, catamarans, kayaking, knee-boarding, skiing and stand-up paddle boarding.

Within 30 minutes of arriving students were out on the river with many of them being towed behind a speed boat on a kneeboard!

The Murray River is such an amazing setting for a camp and staff always rise early from their tents to see the morning mist roll down the river until it is burnt away by the rising sun. It's an exhausting half a week but this camp is often cited as a favourite by our older students.

Our Year 8 students attended *South* at Middleton Caravan Park, located on the beautiful South Coast, Fleurieu Peninsula. Students operated in activity groups of 12 to 14 during the day. They challenged themselves, developed team work skills, and enjoyed outdoor activities with the support of their peers, Tutor Group teachers and experienced Outdoor Education instructors.

The students surfed the waves at Middleton, developed their navigating skills and attempted a 15m abseil at the Bluff, sometimes with a pod of dolphins below.

The Encounter Bikeway is a great bike trail where students can work on their bike skills while riding 16km through Port Elliot and Victor Harbor.

We used Encounter Lakes for our kayaking sessions and as always the quiz night and mini Olympics built up some good excitement, laughs and competitive spirit in the evenings.

The outdoor experiences, journal writing, activity debriefs and camp meetings teach students valuable qualities and life lessons. Year 8 Camp focuses particularly on the art of good conversations, inclusion versus loneliness, gratitude, and encouragement.

Sharing experiences is powerful and creates common ground and memories that develop close bonds between students and staff. Having this camp early in the year is a great opportunity to build connections that can enhance wellbeing and learning.

We might have been slowed down by COVID-19 but it is great to reflect on what was still possible in Semester One.







# Science at Woodcroft

by Tracey Matyk, Head of Science and  
Dr Leone Shapter, Scientist in Residence

At the core of every lesson in the Middle and Senior School Science curriculum is exploration of the natural world. Taking our everyday observations and finding different ways to explore, explain and extend our knowledge of the way in which our universe operates.

Of course, our primary focus is investigation through practical work which facilitates the development of scientific inquiry skills. Sometimes this involves a set activity which students follow. They subsequently spend time analysing results to deduce if they match their observations. At other times this involves an open investigation where students design their own fair test to explore an observation they have made. For example, Year 7 students investigate how parachutes work and our Year 9 students explore the best way to keep a cup of tea warm.

The deconstruction of a problem is a challenging process, but eventually the students are rewarded with a practical investigation which allows them to not only develop their knowledge of their target research question, but tinker with equipment to gather reliable, valid and precise results.

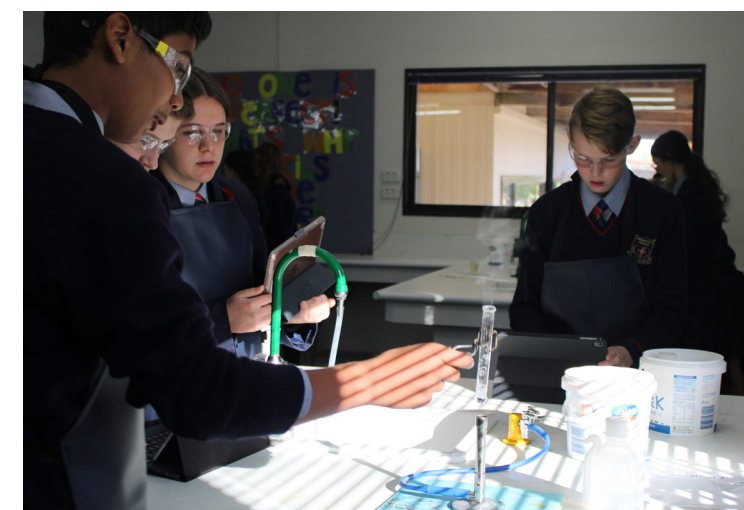
Our other primary investigation is through Science as a Human Endeavour. Looking at the application of science in society to solve problems or further understand contemporary challenges we face as a society, allows students to apply their knowledge and understanding to real world experiences. For example, students have explored organ donation, genetic diseases, the establishment of nuclear power stations and the effects of tourism on Uluru.

These tasks allow students to see Science out of the laboratory bubble – that when we apply scientific development to society, we sometimes get it very right but also that mistakes have been made. The key teaching moment is that each mistake is an opportunity for further knowledge which can then be applied to the latest scientific and technological innovations.

From the outside, Science is often seen as a right or wrong subject, students learn the facts and apply them to various situations. Modern, innovative Science curriculum focuses on the creative and critical thinking skills needed to solve the world's problems in various contexts. Collaboration with their peers under the guidance of staff also enables students to develop their ability to work with others, often the sum of their efforts results in significantly greater learning opportunities.

The primary example of this in our community is the IB Group Four Project, where students work in groups, across the three sciences, to design and carry out their own independent investigation.

Staff may be guided by the curriculum but it is the learning of our students which motivates us. When our students make connections between a contemporary issue, their current learning topic, something they observed at home or their experimental design and results, we feel reassured that we are developing citizens who will engage with society with a confident, solid insight of the scientific principles that underpin our understanding of the natural world.







Science in the Junior School has inquiry at its heart with a strong connection to the world around us.

Students learn about the earth's resources and the importance of water in our world and the connection to the environment as they explore living things and our impact on the environment.

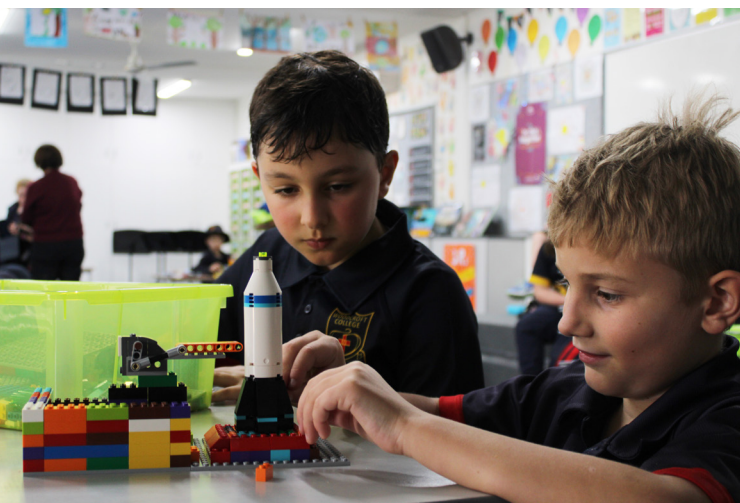
There has never been a more important time in our world to develop critical scientific literacy within our community. Thinking beyond our world to space exploration and the future opportunities of Space in our State, students use EV3 Lego Robots to complete space exploration challenges as science, maths and technology come together in the classroom.

Science reaches beyond the classroom with the introduction of our wonderful chickens, Rosie Reynell, Mabel McLaren, Maisie Morphett, and Hetti Hardy, and the opportunity to take learning into the Nature Garden.



Students can follow their interests in Science clubs and Lego challenges. Semester Two will give students in Years 3 and 4 the opportunity to participate in the first Lego Explore Challenge.

As students move through the different stages of our school, they can engage further in Science and STEM clubs, and participate in different challenges and competitions.



Currently students are participating in the Tech Girls Competition, Food and Fibre Science Investigation Awards, Robogals Science Challenge, Commissioner's Digital Challenge and the Oliphant Science Awards.



# Social Justice Group

by Wes Chambers, Rachel Empson and Meagan Yeoman

Like everybody else on the planet we had our plans for 2020 turned on their head. However, we still managed a productive start to the year.

There has been some considerable work raising awareness in the College community about a number of key social justice issues. The main focus has been on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals that were proposed by the United Nations in 2015. It is hoped that many of these will be addressed by 2030.

In Term One students on the team presented Goal 12 to our Middle School and linked it to recycling. They also presented Goal 2, addressing the problem of hunger.

Another significant initiative has been reaching out to elderly people in the aged care facility at Trott Park. Some of our Year 7 students have written and sent letters, sharing their own experience of the pandemic lock-in and asking about their life and experience. This is one of a number of initiatives we are taking in conjunction with Anglicare this year.

Currently a number of students are looking at ways to address the issue of 'Black Lives Matter' in a thoughtful and caring way within the College community.

We believe that the emphasis on social justice reflects the caring compassionate heart that is so evident in the College community.

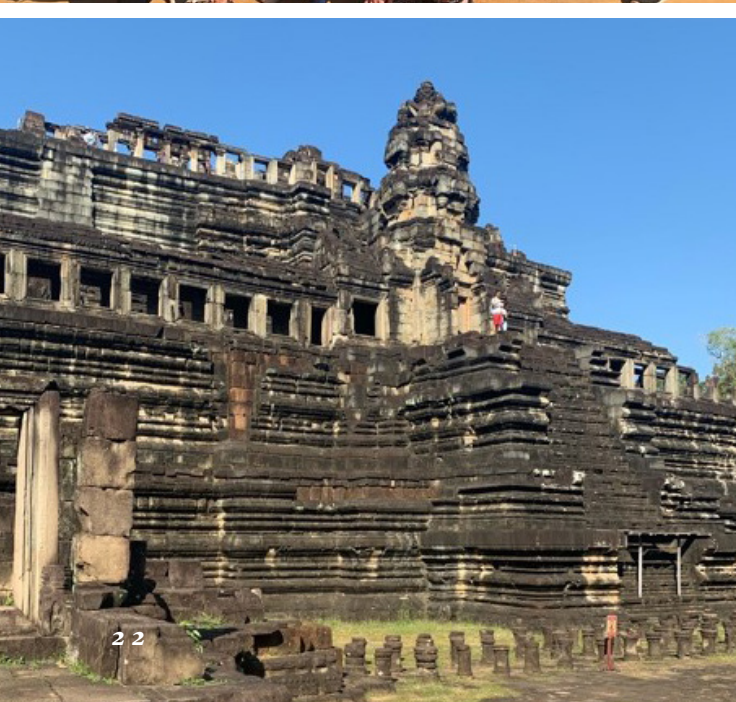
At the end of Term Two we had our first fundraiser selling hot dogs and hot chocolate drinks to students celebrating 'Music on the Green'.

We are very thankful for the very capable leadership provided by our Ambassadors Manika Sareen and Freya Ma, who run our meetings and lead events.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS







# Cambodia Tour

by Richard Graham, Head of Years 6 and 7

Cambodia is a country with a rich, interesting history but a more recent troubled and harrowing past. In Term Four of 2019, 12 students and two staff made Woodcroft College's first ever study tour to explore the culture and to learn first-hand about the work of *Children in Families (CiF)*, the organisation that Woodcroft College supports through their fundraising endeavours. Led by Stacie Ellinger (Woodcroft College Old Scholar) and Suray Reuk, CiF supports Cambodian families in fostering children, recognising that a home is the best environment for children to grow and develop.

Arriving exhausted in Phnom Penh, we were immediately struck by the humidity but with no time to acclimatise, we were whisked wide-eyed into the crazy traffic and warm night. The first of many tuk tuk rides (always led by Pat, whose war cry was 'hold onto your bags') immediately immersed us in the first of many multi-sensory journeys of unfamiliar sights, delicious aromas of street food vendors and brief windows into the trials and tribulations of those that live and work in the Cambodian capital. Totally compelling.

Next morning, after a delicious breakfast, we had our first experience navigating a Cambodian market and an opportunity to practise bartering. We interspersed sightseeing with sessions led by CiF and other Non-Government Organisations. Through these workshops, the staff at CiF challenged our thinking around conventional notions of charity and how orphanages and other charitable organisations can be well-meaning but ineffectual in creating sustainable change.

We explored notions of privilege and recognised that in Australia we are fortunate to be in this position and, as a result, we have power and that we have a responsibility to use this power wisely. We used monies raised to buy resources, books and toys for outreach workers who support foster families.

We travelled into the rural province of Svay Rieng, near the Vietnamese border, to meet the staff that work in the provinces. This allowed the students an opportunity to see how different rural life is to that of the city. We all enjoyed the change of pace.

Highlights of our time in Phnom Penh included learning traditional Khmer dancing, cooking and - after a few language lessons - the simple interactions in Khmer with the locals.

In contrast, exploring the modern history of Cambodia and the regime of the Khmer Rouge was harrowing, yet it felt essential that we understood this dark period of history. Visits to Tuol Sleng, a school that was used by the Khmer Rouge for torture, and a trip to the Killing Fields were heartbreaking and required us to unpack and debrief what we had seen.

Moving six hours north to Siem Reap allows you access to the jaw-dropping world heritage site of Angkor Wat. You could spend three days exploring this temple city in the forest. However, a full day allowed us a thorough exploration of the highlights.

Ta Prohm is being reclaimed by ancient tree roots, Bayon Temple has 54 towers with large imposing faces gazing in all directions and Angkor Wat itself does not disappoint. Reflected in the moat that surrounds it and teeming with monkeys, it is breathtaking. We enjoyed the vibrant night markets and wonderful food in Siem Reap.

All our participants, staff included, had their perception challenged especially in regard to notions of poverty, family and charity. I am also sure this has lit the touchpaper for future backpacking adventures, and opportunities to experience different cultures as well as championing the social justice cause. To think we packed all this into 12 days.





# Future Leaders

by Ben Taylor, Head of Outdoor Education

We had a strong group of Future Leaders sign up for the end of year New Zealand trek. The itinerary saw the group trek the Rees-Dart Track with a side trip to the Cascade Saddle.

We left Adelaide with some trepidation of what the weather was bringing and these concerns turned out to be well-founded. November saw an early season of heavy rains and these continued well into December. At its peak, the flow of water in the Dart Valley was twenty times the average, and New Zealand is a wet place to begin with. We considered our plans closely and got some up to the minute local advice at the Queenstown office of the Department of Conservation. The rain was so heavy that we couldn't even get to our planned accommodation in Paradise.

Time for a new plan! First we did a return day walk from the Routeburn Shelter to Harris Saddle. The rain continued throughout most of the day but there were times when the rain stopped and clouds opened up to reveal scenery that left us in no doubt why this was one of the most famous walks in the world – New Zealand has scope for some pretty good backup plans!

We then went back for an update on the weather situation and decided our best option was to drive around towards Milford Sound, to The Divide and experience the other side of the Routeburn Track, this backup plan was turning out better by the day.

We had very fit and capable students so we planned a tough five day trek including the Caples and Greenstone trails. The first day we followed the Routeburn Track all the way up to Lake MacKenzie, which was completely flooded and the track beyond was closed. We headed back to Lake Howden. We crossed the McKellar Saddle and stayed at the Caples Hut, then did the gruelling ascent into Steele Creek.

Staff were extremely impressed with the grit of the Future Leaders group. Throughout this tough trek and during all the itinerary changes there was not one word of complaint. They all made the most of the situation and the rewards were amazing mountain scenery and quality shared memories.

The walk out via the Greenstone Valley was easier, but still provided breathtaking scenery.

We returned to our starting base in Arrowtown and enjoyed some Christmas shopping in Queenstown before the flight home to warm welcomes from families at the airport.





# European Cultural Tour

by Elyse O'Malley, MYP Coordinator

At the end of last year we held a European Cultural Tour for two staff and eight students.

Our first destination was Italy. We explored Desenzano del Garda, visiting an ancient castle, Roman ruins and the cathedral. In Milan we visited the magnificent Duomo di Milano, and brushed up on our science at the Leonardo Exhibition. We also enjoyed our first Christmas market.

Verona, the home of Romeo and Juliet, was a highlight. We saw Juliet's balcony and Castelvechio, from where we admired the spectacular Adige River flow around the city. The Arena di Verona was a must see. Once the home of gladiator fights, it now hosts operas and concerts.

In Venice we meandered through the streets, along the canals and over bridges to find Piazza San Marco. We attended a glass blowing demonstration, before visiting the Bridge of Sighs.

On our final day in Italy we shared a homemade lunch with the Italian students and were presented with a certificate and gift from the host school. We finished with dinner at a pizzeria.

Our first destination in Germany was Erkelenz, where we were greeted by the Mayor and the local press! From there we travelled to Cologne and visited Kölner Dom, Germany's largest cathedral.

We visited our first German Christmas market, where we were tempted by delicious smelling food, hot chocolate and beautiful Christmas decorations.

After a short bus ride over the border we arrived in Maastricht, in the Netherlands. We split into teams and competed in a scavenger hunt through the city centre, learning about its history along the way.

Next, we visited Paris, France, arriving at midday and setting off to see everything we could. At the Louvre we saw the Mona Lisa and got lost among the vast exhibitions. We were able to admire the beauty of Notre Dame from the outside, as it wasn't open due to its devastating fire.

We spotted the Eiffel Tower from everywhere we ventured, before experiencing its sheer size up close. The twinkling lights at night were amazing.

We then visited the Arc de Triomphe, which is surrounded by the largest and most complicated six lane roundabout we have ever seen. We finished with a walk along the Champs-Élysées.

Two of our students, Evan and Freya, share reflections on their most memorable destinations; Berlin and Munich.

## Berlin by Evan Henning-Pols

Berlin! Berlin was by far my most favourite place of the trip. Beautiful sights and wonderful people.

Fresh off the train from Erkelenz, we dropped off our luggage in the hostel and made our way to the Reichstag. Equipped with our own headsets we took a self-guided tour around the dome, with the British voice in our ears informing us of the monuments of Berlin, visible from where we were.

Day two was a day of museums, with the East Side Gallery and the DDR Museum, a very exciting and fun experience. Day three was more sombre, a trip to Sachsenhausen concentration camp, providing a day of reflection.

Berlin was the best, a wonderful experience I will never forget, and I'm so happy I got to experience it with such wonderful people.

## Munich by Freya Ma

For me, Munich was the most memorable city that we toured. We visited some of the most famous landmarks, such as Marienplatz, where we learnt about the Maypole tradition, which is similar to a game of 'Capture the Flag'. In the evening, we had a delicious meal at the famous beer hall, Hofbräuhaus (but without the beer).

Europe's history is embedded in everything, which made it such an overwhelming experience. The biggest reminder of its history was the architecture. The tour guide, who cheerfully took us through the city, grew solemn as he stopped to show us the plaque outside the Old City Hall, where, in 1938, the Nazi Propaganda Minister initiated what would be known as the 'Night of Broken Glass', the beginning of the Holocaust. It served as a grim reminder of what humanity was and still is capable of. It was a humbling experience.

If you want to experience the rich culture, history and school life in Europe, I strongly recommend this trip.





# High Performance Athletes Program

by Petra Lorenz, HPAP Coordinator

As High Performance Athletes Program (HPAP) Coordinator I am pleased to announce the following initiatives for 2020 and recap on some of the program highlights in Semester One.

We launched our HPAP Canvas course which offers students weekly updates on the latest events that are happening on the HPAP front. This included how to respond when the season ends unexpectedly, elite behaviours at home, down time, motivation whilst in isolation, nutritional habits, recipes, physical exercises, stretching for flexibility, and maintaining a healthy mind and body.

As a school we belong to the World Academy of Sport and have the benefit of receiving newsletters and updates from around the globe. As a nation we are fairing well in being able to return to local training slowly, which our athletes are very excited about as well as a bit anxious.

We meet every three weeks in the morning before school. Some of the activities have included a presentation and Zoom workshop with Jaye Sippel, Head Trainer at Port Adelaide Football Club. He discussed the return of student-athletes to sport and training with the key concept of goal setting and resilience.

We met Dan Kirk, Sports Scientist from Nexa High Performance Sport and a former SANFL footballer turned national athletics para-athlete. Dan tailors strength and conditioning programs for multi-sport athletes and was a very motivational speaker. He examined the ‘finding your why’ concept. He was open in sharing his personal experiences of achievements and disappointments and how he bounced back and created a new dream.

As a group we have been making nutritious smoothies and juices, eating healthy snacks and debriefing which has been some of our favourite parts of the program.

In the future, we will work with Maddie Lawson for ‘Flexi Fridays with Madds’ in the gym to build on flexibility in a relaxing and soothing environment. In partnership with Flinders University Sport, Health and Physical Education Department student-athletes have been tested in agility, strength, speed, jumps and endurance and tracked to create an ‘athlete passport’ as part of the program’s professional practices. This will benefit both our students and their coaches for their sport, as well as developing skills and collaboration with the University. I look forward to developing the program further in the coming months.

The athletes have been sending in their action photos for the new HPAP feature wall in the gym foyer, as well as featuring in our HPAP blog.

It is important to build routine and stability for student-athletes and not having this constant has been an anxious time for many of our students. As we turn now to the new normal we will continue to be here for extra support and to create an atmosphere where they can both learn and play their chosen sport to their highest and best abilities.

We are very proud of our HPAP athletes and wish them all a smooth transition back into training.







2020 SWIMMING CARNIVAL RESULTS

*Middle School Trophy*

1st Hardy	553 points
2nd Reynell	540 points
3rd Morphett	551 points
4th McLaren	514 points

*Senior School Trophy*

1st Reynell	474 points
2nd McLaren	419 points
3rd Hardy	412 points
4th Morphett	336 points

*Overall House Shield*

1st Reynell	1014 points
2nd Hardy	965 points
3rd McLaren	933 points
4th Morphett	887 points



# Where are they now?

by Catherine Murphy, Director of Marketing and Advancement

We were disappointed to have to put our Reunions for the Classes of 2020, 2010 and 2015 on hold in Term One. We always love hearing and sharing the stories from our Old Scholars who attend the events. We will look forward to catching up later in the year.

Fortunately, we realised that we did not have to go very far to find a group of Old Scholars to share their stories. Right here at the College we have a number of staff who attended Woodcroft for their schooling. We asked them to reflect on their favourite memories as a student and why they now love working here.



**Hannah Guy**  
2013 Graduate

**What is your current role at the College?**  
Relief Teacher and Coach

**What do you remember the most about being a student at Woodcroft College?**

Being involved in the Outdoor Education program, specifically Quest and Duke of Edinburgh (now the Future Leaders program). A memory that stands out is canoeing along the Glenelg River with Mr Cook and

Mrs Warner, we were a group of about 10 and Mr Cook proceeded to tell everyone we saw that he and Mrs Warner were the parents of 10 kids going on a family holiday. The shock on everyone's faces was hilarious. Another highlight at Woodcroft was having the opportunity to play every single sport I could and Mrs Wilson making her special peanut butter cookies for our teams (a tradition that still stands I believe).

**What do you love about working here?**

The wonderful students and the amazing staff! My favourite part of the day is the hellos and smiles I get walking to lessons and at recess and lunch, everyone is so kind.

**Did being a student here influence your decision to want to work here, if so, how?**

I had such a positive experience at Woodcroft, so much so it inspired me to become a teacher! At the many schools that I work at during the year, my favourite will always be Woodcroft College.

**Rhiannon White**  
2018 Graduate

**What is your current role at the College?**  
Music Administrative Assistant

**What do you remember the most about being a student at Woodcroft College?**

My favourite memories about school always involve music. Whether it be the seven Arts Showcases I took part in, the six school productions, or heading to the USA in 2016 and 2018. It is such an honour to be back and helping out with the Music Department, and making sure students have the same positive experiences that I was lucky to have.



**What do you love about working here?**

What I love about working at Woodcroft is the community. The staff and the students are all so friendly and really welcomed me into my role here. It is also really rewarding to see how much the Music program encourages students to be themselves.

**Did being a student here influence your decision to want to work here, if so, how?**

Yes definitely! Woodcroft College was a great environment to learn in throughout the seven years I attended as a student, and it's a place where I feel comfortable and respected. It is such an honour to have been hired to work in a department that meant so much to me in my schooling years. I am very thankful for all of the opportunities Woodcroft College has given me as both a student and an employee.



**Benjamin Ryan**  
2019 Graduate

**What is your current role at the College?**  
Sports Administrative Assistant / Football Head Coach / Coach

**What do you remember the most about being a student at Woodcroft College?**

Quest, Melbourne Cricket tour and playing the various sports for the College.

**What do you love about working here?**

Coming back to such an easy environment and having the right support staff around me to bring out the best in me.

**Did being a student here influence your decision to want to work here, if so, how?**

It made it easier, as I already understood the culture and values of the College. I wanted to provide more opportunities within the sporting scene for our students.





**Kristi Snares**  
2010 Graduate

**What is your current role at the College?**  
Year 2 Teacher

**What do you remember the most about being a student at Woodcroft College?**  
My favourite memory was being a part of the musical productions each year. As a teacher, I was lucky enough to be involved with the first Junior School Musical last year.

**What do you love about working here?**

I love the amazing staff I work with. I am also very grateful to be a part of a great school community of students and parents.

**Did being a student here influence your decision to want to work here, if so, how?**

Yes, although I only attended Woodcroft College from Year 8 to Year 12, I was lucky enough to have my final university placement in the Junior School and I thought it would be a wonderful place to work!

**Bec Cullen (nee Cowling)**  
2002 Graduate

**What is your current role at the College?**  
Visual Arts/Design Teacher

**What do you remember the most about being a student at Woodcroft College?**

Slightly cliché but spending a lot of my lunch times in the Art Rooms when I was a Senior student. At the time we had a darkroom, where I spent many hours developing photographs for my Art finals.

**What do you love about working here?**

Woodcroft has such a supportive environment that allows for many opportunities for inspiration. Watching the students at Woodcroft learn about unfamiliar topics and master new skills reignites my own desire to learn. Their growth reminds me of how important education is and gives me constant opportunity to grow. Woodcroft supports this development. There is such a great culture at Woodcroft, from the students to your co-workers.



**Jessica Mikulcic**  
2015 Graduate

**What is your current role at the College?**  
OSHC Educator

**What do you remember the most about being a student at Woodcroft College?**

I remember being a really dedicated student. I was always motivated to do my best and I believe that resulted from having teachers who had faith in me. I think that blend of dedication and motivation with teachers who had faith in my abilities, helped contribute to what I have achieved up until this day, including graduating with a Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) degree.

**What do you love about working here?**

The community. It has such a positive influence on my experience at work. It is such a close-knit, warm community that makes anyone feel welcome. The students are a reflection of that, they always manage to put a smile on my face no matter what the day brings. My role is such a rewarding one; I am able to help students with their homework, teach them how to bake, work with craft, encourage creativity, play sports with them, teach them new things, and expose them to positive and new experiences on excursions.

**Did being a student here influence your decision to want to work here, if so, how?**

Absolutely, I was a student who attended OSHC regularly throughout Junior school and I had some of my most enjoyable and memorable experiences there. I wanted to be a part of that and witness other students having the same opportunities.

**Maddy Shores**  
2016 Graduate

**What is your current role at the College?**  
Enrolments Assistant

**What do you remember the most about being a student at Woodcroft College?**

I really enjoyed that students got to have a go at everything. I loved that I was able to try out all aspects of Home Ec, Tech, Art and Music, I didn't choose any of these subjects in high school, but these subjects went on to form a lot of the hobbies that I have today.

**What do you love about working here?**

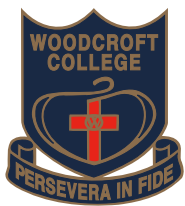
The culture. Staff and students all have a mutual respect of one another and it feels as though everyone is working together towards the same goal.

**Did being a student here influence your decision to want to work here, if so, how?**

It did, the staff at the College always seemed to get along better than staff at other schools.







## Seeking new College Council member

*Do you have legal or governance expertise?*



Working in consultation with the Head of College, the Council plays an important role in the life of our school. From ensuring the College is successful in achieving its mission, to contributing to key strategies and maintaining future financial viability.

The Woodcroft College Council is seeking to appoint a new member with experience and skills in either governance or legal matters.

If you are interested in learning more, please contact our Head of College, Shannon Warren.

E: [warren\\_s@woodcroft.sa.edu.au](mailto:warren_s@woodcroft.sa.edu.au)

## WOODCROFT COLLEGE

### *Early Learning Centre*

### Enrolments now open

Woodcroft College ELC  
143 Bains Road, Morphett Vale 5162  
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[www.woodcroft.sa.edu.au](http://www.woodcroft.sa.edu.au)

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