



# NEWSLETTER

Term 3, 2022

We Believe in Education, Culture + Wellbeing



## THE SAPPHIRES

CONTINUING THE NARRATIVE

Term three saw the college production of The Sapphires go into full swing. Students learnt about the true story of the young Aboriginal women who toured Vietnam during the Vietnam War. They also learnt about their connection to the story through our Executive Director Aunty Lois Peeler who is one of the original Sapphires. Students identified aspects of the story that resonated with them, they approached these chosen story lines with pride and an incredible level of rigour to create their own short film version of The Sapphires.

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For more information visit [worawa.vic.edu.au](http://worawa.vic.edu.au)

The cast worked hard all term to prepare for filming week. Every week students participated in a range of rehearsal sessions including; Visits to Yarra Ranges Tech School to experience a broad range of filming equipment including a full green screen room. Sound and music recording in the brand new Worawa studio space. Practice on location around the school and sights within Healesville. Individual and group rehearsal opportunities to learn lines and dance routines.

The crew endeavored across the term to learn how to use current industry equipment, as well as state-of-the-art technologies to best deliver film and audio which reflected their perspectives for The Worawa Sapphires Production. They attended to the same intense rehearsal schedule as the cast, but on the opposite side of the camera. In addition to the final production these

rehearsal tapes provide a fantastic window into the learning experience as both cast and crew developed in skill and confidence.

Not to be left out, our year 11 and 12 students took on lead behind the scenes responsibilities as part of their Certificate III in Business studies. This included training in the use of the new recording gear in the studio and engineering the music which will feature in the production. Managing a student hair and makeup team during filming week and creating the overall design and structure of the production.

Though this is very much a student production, there were numerous partners who generously donated time and skills to ensure the film is to be produced to a high standard. Professional hair and makeup artist Sue Frey who trained up student hair and makeup team, and provide an introductory course

in colour matching and makeup application to the whole school. College photographer David Callow who worked with an additional crew of students to capture behind the scenes footage. The Asia Australia Foundation whose generous grant has allowed us to start our own studio. Teacher Liam Neal who led the crew and Teacher Sarah Rose McIvor who has been the director and driving force behind this production.

Everyone at Worawa is incredibly excited about what we have achieved and we cannot wait to share with you the incredible skills of our Worawa Students both in front of and behind the camera. If you would like to join us at our film premier on Tuesday 6th December please get in touch through [registrar@worawa.vic.edu.au](mailto:registrar@worawa.vic.edu.au) to be added to our Worawa Sapphires Production mailing list.





## NEW PROGRAMS - HORSES AS HEALING

Throughout Term 3, VCAL students have participated in a pilot program with Equestrian Australia and our ongoing leadership program with Haileybury. By intertwining the elements of leadership and a 'horses as healing' program, students have been provided the opportunity to develop and consolidate many personal and social skills.

Horses are amazing co-therapists. They value relationships and are honest communicators, providing clear feedback. They are also highly perceptive and respond immediately to our body language. They have a highly developed level of awareness and the ability to sense their surroundings. Horses apply this level of perception and awareness in their interactions with people.

They respond and give feedback to what is presented, providing a calm,

respectful space for us to explore our relationships and ourselves. Horses are also non-judgemental companions, they accept us and provide a space to just be ourselves, a space to relax and feel heard and seen. Horses are great teachers; they naturally embody presence and awareness.

Students travelled to Holistic Equitation in Seville, on alternate Mondays, to participate in the program run by Jo with assistance from Emma. When students entered the space they had the opportunity to connect with the horses. They also experienced other forms of healing including Art Therapy and Sound Healing. In Art Therapy, students learnt how to make dreamcatchers and macramé keyrings, as a way to lower energy levels. In Sound Healing, students learnt how sound has been

utilized in various cultures around the world for thousands of years as a tool for healing. Students explored the use of drums, a gong, sound bowls and other instruments to create sounds for healing.

By re-working the leadership program, we have been able to incorporate elements of Horses as Healing, Leadership, Self-empowerment and Self-awareness. During the alternate Mondays to Horses as Healing students engaged in the leadership component of the program with Priscilla and Alex. Students have learnt how to utilise their new skills, step into the role of teacher and prepare a program which they will deliver to Year 4 students at Haileybury and younger Worawa students at the school Athletics Carnival during Term 4.

## CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH MARY IMMACULATE – THE RETURN VISIT

In the Term 1 newsletter we included a story about a new Cultural Exchange program which saw a group of students from Mary Immaculate visit Worawa to participate in a shared morning tea and learn from our students about the Change Makers represented on the History Walk. In week seven of Term 3 Worawa returned the visit with a group of students travelling

to the Mary Immaculate campus in Fitzroy. Worawa students contributed some amazing food prepared by our chef Robin to the shared morning tea. Then they were taken around the Fitzroy Aboriginal Heritage Walk by Mary Immaculate students. The activities of the day finished off with shared dancing with the school African dance troupe. Worawa students performed North Wind. The

African dance troupe leader, Akus showed the Worawa girls some of their dance moves and everyone danced together until home time. You could tell that the girls from both schools enjoyed being in each other's company, and learning from one another. Some great friendships were formed and we all look forward to the next cultural exchange visit.

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## THE WORAWA DREAMING TRAIL

The Worawa Dreaming Trail was developed by Aboriginal Elders as an educational tool to record and celebrate aspects of traditional culture and lifestyle of Victorian Aboriginal tribes and clans.

The Dreaming Trail introduces the general public to a special

understanding of the natural world and Aboriginal cultural heritage through the promotion of Aboriginal science, technology and history.

The Worawa Dreaming Trail symbolises the Aboriginal values associated with land: Respect, Relationship and Responsibility

which form the basis of education associated with Caring for Country for Worawa students.

The Dreaming Trail experience commences on a bushland path where plants traditionally used for food, medicine or craft are identified.



# Voices of Students

All articles written by Worawa Students

## STORYTELLING AND WRITING COMPETITIONS

Our students in year 7-10 have been busy developing their skills with the written word. Throughout the term they have participated in a variety of expressive writing tasks and competitions. The term started with an inspiring Storytelling Workshop, presented by ABC's Takeover Melbourne producers. Students were given questions and a writing process to follow, that had them thinking about and sharing their own stories. After this, students explored poetry as a means of expressing oneself, then moved from their personal stories to shared Aboriginal stories, producing posters and a variety of written pieces under the 2022 NAIDOC theme "Get up! Stand up! Show up!" As the Term came to a close students brought together their new learning and skills in a final research project, answering the question "What does it mean to be Aboriginal?"

We will need to wait before sharing the two entries which have been short listed for the 2022 Takeover Melbourne competition, but please enjoy reading a few of the amazing pieces produced by students for the "Get up! Stand up! Show up!" and "What does it mean to be Aboriginal?" tasks.

## GET UP, STAND UP, SHOW UP

**G**et up, Stand up, Show up. Let's celebrate Naidoc Week and share our cultures.

**E**quality is in our hands. We need to fight for equal rights in Australia for Aboriginal people, it isn't fair!

**T**each our ways, our culture, our story. We need to teach our ways, our culture and our story so that our side can be heard and others understand it.

**U**se your voice. Let others hear what you've got to say. Everyone's important and worthy of having a voice!

**P**ut mob first. They'll always be the ones who are there for you.

**S**tand proud. Be proud of your culture, don't let people push you down.

**T**alk it out. Talk out your problems, don't hold them in and let it affect you.

**A**ncestors are guiding you. Our ancestors are guiding us and keeping us safe.

**N**o shame. Don't have shame, we ARE aboriginal and don't let anyone say different.

**D**isappointed and disadvantaged employment opportunities. Aboriginal people have disadvantages in employment opportunities which IS NOT fair!

**U**nderstand your culture. Understand your stories and culture that's being told to you.

**P**ut effort in to make a change. We need to put effort in to make a change in our country.

**S**hare our stories and culture. We need to let people hear our stories and culture, and share the culture around.

**H**onor elders past and present. We need to honor our elders and what they've been through for us.

**O**ldest living and surviving culture. We are the oldest living and surviving culture, being on this land for at least 65,000 years.

**W**e stand as one. We need to stand as one, we are family and shouldn't have hate for each other!

**U**nlimited family. Our mobs are so big, we always have someone to turn to, to talk to.

**P**roud of our culture. Be proud of the person you are and the history that we have of our ancestors. We are aboriginal!



## POETRY WINNER

My tears were shed like a river, soon enough they made an ocean  
Coz my love for you was nothing compared to a love I will feel again  
My heart aches for you every day and every night no matter where I am  
The loss I grieve for you will not heal anytime soon  
But at least I know you're somewhere not too far  
Somewhere in arms reach  
Where I can pull you in to feel your last breath  
Even though I can feel you breathing all around me all the time  
And I know that when I look up at the night sky I see you shining the brightest  
When I saw you, it was like ballerinas dancing gracefully around my heart  
And when we joked you would make me laugh like a hyena  
When you sang me and my siblings to sleep you sang as if you were turning to an angel  
When we cried you were always there telling us it's okay  
You were always never too far from us  
You were the one who brought the first words out of my mouth  
You were the first one who I said I love you to  
You were my grandmother, my best friend  
Someone I could tell my everything to  
When you were down I would always pretend to be like a parrot  
Seeing you smile widely was my number one thing  
In my eyes you were filled with pure joy like a hummingbird  
Cause they are a symbol of beauty and peace and wonder.  
Matezsea Wellington - Year 7 - Moruya NSW

## THE DIARY OF A BLAK GIRL

Dear Diary,

Today at school I was told I had to say Acknowledgement of Country in assembly. But every time I do it, I feel shame because I get mocked and teased. I was even thinking about not attending because I didn't want to hear the giggles of disrespect. Then, all of a sudden, I hear the voice of my grandmother "Get up Katiana." I get up and walk my way to the front of the gym and proudly say the acknowledgement.

Dear Diary,

I was sitting in a park when I heard a woman talking on the phone about how Aboriginal people are just lazy and get money from the government. I put my head down and I hear a whisper "Standup Katiana" I then approach the woman and stand up for all Aboriginal people and tell her that what she was saying is wrong and not okay.

Dear Diary,

My friends wanted me to go shopping today but my mob was going to a protest for Blak rights. I wanted to hang out with my friends but I wanted to support my mob. My heart was telling me one thing and my mind another, Then I felt something brush past and say "Show up Katiana!" That's when I decided to show up for my mob and make my ancestors proud.

Katiana Zboril - Year 9 - Castlemaine Vic

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ABORIGINAL?

Being Aboriginal in my opinion is intense because you hold responsibilities for your people and land and everything you do is being judged by Elders.

Being Aboriginal you are connected to your land and people, you are expected to hold responsibilities, you've got amazing art that tell art that have been tracked hundreds of years back in history.

Being Aboriginal you are able to carry our historical knowledge in stories that are told through art, dancing and singing.

Being Aboriginal is not just about skin color it's about being connected together as one, our souls being one with the earth, being able to listen to nature.

For hundreds of years we've been able to keep our historical stories about how the lands were created from our ancestral beings.

When we go out family hunting we let nature speak to us and tell us what to take to keep balance in our ecosystems.

We sit down with aunties and grandmas while they tell stories about our history and take time to teach us techniques to create cultural items so we can grow up and tell our kids for them to tell theirs.

Also, it has us having our souls connected to the lands we have nourished over hundreds of years and to just feel the earth beneath our feet and just know how nature combines us all.

Shantay Morris - Year 10 - Darwin/Walpiri NT

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## LAKE MOUNTAIN SNOW TRIP

After a two year hiatus due to Covid, Worawa was welcomed back to Lake Mountain Alpine Resort for our annual whole school snow trip. Most girls participated in the trip and there was excitement all around, as for many this was their first-time seeing snow. The trip up the mountain felt like it took ages but it was definitely worth the wait! Being able to make snowmen and toboggan down the hill at a fast speed was so much fun! When we arrived it was freezing and it even started raining, but we were given proper snow clothes and the rain led to snowing later on during the day which was magical. The excitement and smiles on everyone's face was a delight. The trip was definitely a day to remember!

**Nevaeh Collier – Year 9 Wagga Wagga NSW**

## B'NAI B'RITH VICTORIA

B'nai B'rith Victoria is a Jewish service organisation similar to Rotary Club International and dedicated to help in the community. Geshet Rabin Unit as part of the above association, supports the work of Worawa Aboriginal College and has been actively supportive of the College over the past couple of years.

Principal Dr Lois Peeler AM has spoken to B'nai B'rith Victoria on several occasions and was honoured at the Chanukah Reconciliation event at Federation Square on 5th December 2021. Geshet Rabin Unit was invited to participate in ' Lotjpadhan B'yahad' (Talking Together) seminar at Worawa on 6th April this year. Worawa Principal Lois Peeler was invited to speak at the opening of the B'nai B'rith Conference on 11 September. We hope that the association between B'nai B'rith Victoria and Worawa Aboriginal College will be long and fruitful.

## HEALESVILLE SANCTUARY

On Monday 5 September, a group of Worawa students visited Healesville Sanctuary. It is wonderful to be able to return to our local zoo and participate in conservation and fighting wildlife extinction. It was a pleasant afternoon of meandering through spaces filled with native flora and fauna from throughout Australia.

Highlights reported by students included cute, fluffy koalas sleeping in trees and lively echidnas that confidently strode around their enclosure. Another favourite were the hoppers - grey kangaroos from Western and South Australia, red kangaroos from Central Australia, tree kangaroos from far north Queensland, and Victorian rock wallabies.

Almost unanimously, the best part of the outing was the "Spirits of the Sky" performance that showcased well trained birds of prey. "Kevin" the talking cockatoo impressed us all with his intelligent chattering, the magnificent parrots dazzled us with their beautiful colours, and the barking owl frightened us with its low swooping.

Amidst the entertainment was also the important message of the need to prevent extinction by preserving the bird's homes, the trees, which can be done by the simple act of purchasing toilet paper made from recycled materials.

Overall, it was a wonderful outing filled with learning and fun.

## BANGARRA

On Wednesday the 31st of August, all students went into the city to watch a dance performance called "Sand Song" by Bangarra. The dance was a mix of contemporary and cultural dance styles and told the story of the Wangkatjungka/ Walmajarri mob's history.

We had the amazing opportunity to sit in the front rows of the theatre and could really feel the emotion and the truth being told through the dancers moves. It was an amazing experience.

After the performance, we had the opportunity to talk with the dancers. We learnt about the hard work that goes into becoming a professional dancer.

We also learnt about the process of creating a performance like Sand Song, gaining permission from Elders to share their history and incorporate cultural dance. To remember the event we all took a photo together.

**Katiana Zboril - Year 9 Castlemaine VIC**