



Pymble Ladies' College

EX-STUDENTS' UNION INC. (ESU)

2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It is my pleasure to write the 88th Annual Report to members and special guests in attendance at the Ex-Students' Union (ESU) Annual General Meeting (AGM).

2017 has been a busy year for the ESU Committee. I am pleased that the Committee completed the ESU's contribution to the Centenary Precinct Pledge of \$100,000 this year.

The Committee arranged and participated in many events this year, some of which included:

1. Annual sponsorship of the ESU scholarship for two daughters of life members
2. Annual sponsorship of the Indigenous Scholarship Program uniforms
3. Artist in Residence Grant - given to Dr Kristie Spence for the development of the College's first Robotics program
4. Mothers and Grandmothers Morning Tea
5. Indigenous Scholars Morning Tea
6. Career videos of alumnae filmed by Year 7 film students at the Annual Careers Expo
7. Support of the College's Indigenous Scholarship 10th Anniversary Dinner
8. Commemoration Day Chapel Service with guest speaker, composer Dr Alicia Grant (1996)
9. Garden Party Chicken and Champagne Stall and Crested Goods Stall to showcase products of alumnae
10. Networking Breakfast with guest speaker, non-executive director, Christine Bartlett

We welcome all alumnae to join us at events and to provide suggestions and assistance to run further events that may appeal to alumnae. Looking forward, we have organised a Golf Day and lunch at Avondale Golf Course for Wednesday 22 November 2017 to which all are welcome – even if you are not a golfer - as it is a lovely occasion to catch up with friends over lunch.

We are also in exciting talks to run the AlumNow Art Event again in 2018 and I thank Gill Ross-Edwards and Philippa Graham for their considerable time and energy. Dates will be confirmed in the coming months. I encourage all here to support the event by attending with friends and family and buying the art. It is a fantastic occasion to showcase our alumnae's creative careers, bring us together and achieve our purpose.

The composition of the Committee changed substantially at the last AGM with the roles of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Assistant Secretary and several general committee positions being filled by members new to the Committee. Our initial priority was for the largely new Committee members to understand their statutory and governance responsibilities. The main reason for this prudence was to ensure we fulfilled these responsibilities and acted with integrity. In doing so, we believe that it will ultimately preserve the positive reputation of the ESU and of the College.



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Charity status had been sought last year, after the new Constitution was accepted at the 2016 Annual General Meeting. That status brought with it roles and responsibilities under NSW Fair Trading legislation and the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) regulations. The Committee determined that it needed to spend some time understanding these new and more onerous responsibilities, in light of our current activities. These included that our public officer confirm that our activities were “for the public benefit”. Since our scholarship is for the daughter or granddaughter of an Ex-Student, we were concerned that this put us outside of “public benefit”. After seeking advice from three advisors, the Committee determined that we did not meet this strict requirement and accordingly, we made the decision to de-register the ESU as a charity.

This de-registration has little impact on current operations because its main benefit was a small tax saving. If the ESU wants to pursue activities that benefit the public in the future, this will be possible under our new constitution.

This year, the Committee updated the ESU’s document retention processes by scanning our key documents and information and saving them to a secure repository in the cloud. For the chain of new committee members, our information is now readily available digitally. It seems a simple measure but we believe that it will help to ensure that the association smoothly runs into future generations. Separately, the Committee identified operational savings in its insurance policy.

The Committee also spent time discussing our purpose and value proposition to members and how this has shifted over time. The College has 19,858 alumnae with 7,344 (37%) being current members of the ESU. In past years, members paid primarily for the cost to receive the Pymbulletin by post for life. In recent years however the College has emailed or posted publications and invitations to College events to all alumnae, regardless of whether they are ESU life members or not. We welcome feedback from our members on our value proposition and how we can enhance and develop it as needs and interests change.

Until five years ago, alumnae would pay for their own life memberships. However, in these past five years, we have agreed an automatic life membership approach with the College whereby Year 12 students are asked to complete an ESU membership form and the College pays for their membership fee if they choose to complete this form. I thank the College and in particular Vicki Waters for their support of the ESU and partnership in this regard. 202 new members have joined the ESU from the Year 12 class of 2016. For any alumnae not covered under the automatic life membership agreement with the College, the Committee resolved to cap the life membership fee to \$240 in order to ensure continued affordability.

The way that we communicate with our members continues to evolve. We now interact periodically with members through mail, email, as well as in more immediate ways such as social media on Facebook and LinkedIn. One Pymbulletin was sent this year, as well as an ESU eNewsletter. There are 2,249 members on Facebook and 161 members on LinkedIn. Recently, we consolidated our LinkedIn account with that of the College. As most working ESU members update their LinkedIn profiles actively and add the College as their high school, LinkedIn will be a very efficient way for us



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to keep track of our alumnae and understand what they are doing. To this end, I encourage all alumnae to link their LinkedIn profiles to that of the College.

I wanted to take this opportunity to encourage our members to join the Committee. We have a lot of fun as a Committee organising and participating in events. We also need a diversity of views on how we can evolve the ESU to meet the changing needs of the College and alumnae. Our Committee and alumnae have full and exciting lives. We want to celebrate their achievements and at the same time recognise that they are busy with many competing demands. We therefore need to actively consider ways to simplify so that we spend our time on what matters – connecting alumnae and bringing them back to the College.

In this context and given we are in a time poor world, we have looked for ways to work smarter and not harder. We have reviewed the previous meeting model of monthly meetings (a challenge for those who work in the city). We have introduced conference call facilities for members to join meetings by phone and in 2018 we are reducing our meeting frequency to every 6 weeks. We are reducing our crested goods inventory since sales have been relatively low and we will be rotating who represents the ESU at College events during the day. We welcome any further ideas in this regard.

I would like to extend a warm invitation to all members to join our Committee meetings as they are not just for Committee members. If you would like to join, please contact one of us for details on date and time. We generally meet in the Heritage Centre under the chapel on a Tuesday or Wednesday at 7pm.

I would like to thank the ESU Committee for their energy, support, friendship, enthusiasm and sheer hard work. I really admire and appreciate you all - each of you is an amazing woman with unique skills, energy and enthusiasm.

I also thank the College for their support. In particular, Vicki Waters, for her support, partnership and ideas. We appreciate the time that Vicki gave us this year in explaining the College's vision and the approach to their academic direction. We also thank Katrina Corcoran and Kelly Mancey in the Alumni and Marketing departments for their assistance along with Roger Shewell in the Finance department and Ian McDonald in Development. I personally thank Sue Everingham, a former ESU President, for her friendship, advice and time.

Lastly, I thank all attending our AGM as your support and feedback is valued.

Li-Enn Koo (1991)

**President
Pymble Ladies' College Ex-Students' Union**