



# LAURISTON – A SCHOOL FOR LIFE

By Sally Burns, Director of Sport.

LAURISTON GIRLS' SCHOOL HAS A LONG AND PROUD TRADITION OF ENGAGING IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY WITHIN THE SCHOOL AND IN INTER-SCHOOL SPORTING COMPETITION. ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE SCHOOL, LILIAN IRVING, WAS QUOTED AS INFORMING PARENTS IN 1913 THAT GIRLS WHO JOINED "HEARTILY IN GAMES" AND PLAYED THEM "WITH SPIRIT" WERE THE SAME GIRLS WHO "DID THEIR BOOK WORK WELL". SHE ARRANGED THE FIRST GIRLS INTER-SCHOOL HOCKEY MATCH WITH LAURISTON TAKING ON RUYTON IN 1903.

Today the emphasis at Lauriston is still on participation and developing active lifestyle habits that will remain with the students long after they leave the school. Recreational activities such as pilates, aquatics, yoga, aerobics and Running Club are held weekly at the school. Fencing, self defence classes, golf, massage, football and lawn bowls have also been extremely popular.

There is a long established and continually developing house match sporting structure. All year levels compete in house tennis, softball, netball, hockey, volleyball, water polo, athletics, swimming, diving and cross-country with the overall prize at the end of battle, the Jean Hutchings Shield, much sought after. Every girl in years 7-10 must be involved in the house events, but even though it is optional at years 11 and 12 the excellent participation and enthusiasm means that most girls join in either as competitors, team managers or officials.

In 2001, Lauriston joined with 23 other schools to form Girls' Sport Victoria (GSV). Water polo and hockey have undoubtedly been Lauriston's main strengths with GSV titles almost every year since 2001. The water polo coach and a teacher of mathematics is Jeanette Gunn. She is also the manager of the Australian Women's Water Polo team, consistently producing not only strong teams, but also many state and national representatives. Outside of the GSV structure Lauriston has excelled in rowing and snowsports and is currently the VIS Gymnastics program independent school of choice for its squad members. Girls across every sport are provided with



information about how to access their preferred choices at a community level, so that club participation in hockey, netball, basketball and water polo is at an all time high. The experience gained by this extended involvement only helps the girls and the school to develop further.

Lauriston is very proud of its many State and National representatives, the latest of whom was the gymnast Stephanie Moorhouse, who represented Australia at both Olympic and Commonwealth Games whilst completing her VCE. Stephanie is a prime example of a student whose sporting excellence was supported fully by the school with her academic work adapted to fit in with the time consuming demands of an elite training schedule.

Lauriston's unique Year 9 campus at Howqua offers each girl a huge array of physical activities that include nearly every possible outdoor education pursuit. Bushwalking, hiking, bike riding, canoeing, rock climbing, snowsports and camping are just a few that culminate in a six-day hike. The girls live and work in houses that engender the concepts of teamwork and cooperation.

Year 9 at Howqua embodies two of the School's values of courage and engagement in life through the physical activity program.

After their experience at Howqua, the girls come back to their sporting life at the Armadale campus with an extraordinary willingness to be involved, to work as a team, to take a hands-on approach with leadership and, above all, to realise that no challenge is insurmountable. The fear of the unknown and the worry about the pain and challenge of hard training and competition is no longer as big a concern. Perhaps this is why the percentage of Senior College girls in years 10-12, who actively involve themselves in one of the many sporting opportunities Lauriston provides, is amongst the highest of the GSV schools. Every girl knows that the school will do its best to cater to her sporting needs and is encouraged to participate.

Lauriston's sport department is proud of its students and hopes that every girl can develop healthy lifestyle habits from their involvement in physical activity at school and beyond. After all, Lauriston is "A School for Life".