

A low-angle photograph of a tree with dense foliage against a bright sky. The branches and leaves are silhouetted against the light background. In the center, there is a large, irregular orange brushstroke graphic that serves as a background for the text.

*Autumn 2023*

# Kindlings



# Acknowledgement

Kindlehill is situated on Dharug and Gundungurra land;  
we pay respects to the traditional custodians whose  
cultures and customs continue to nurture this land.

We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart, Truth  
telling about the impact and legacy of colonisation, a  
Voice to Parliament enshrined in the Australian  
Constitution and a process of Treaty making.



Kindlehill School

*Kindlehill is a K-10 school with a philosophy in Rudolf Steiner Education*

**[www.kindlehill.nsw.edu.au](http://www.kindlehill.nsw.edu.au)**

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Autumn Kindlings is a cracking collection of stories that invite the reader into the life of Kindlehill School. This year, our thematic focus is Murmurations. This is when birds flock together as in a single wing, in agile and adaptive response to their ever-changing environment. We take this inspiration from nature into our whole School community, working together in shared purpose, to weave beauty, strength and agility. Welcome to the murmuration of “Kindlings”.

*Lynn Daniel, Principal*

Front cover artwork:  
*Ascending wished skyward* (2019)  
by Guinevere Randall, Kindlehill alumni

# The Kindy Home

KIRSTY EDWARDS, KINDY GARDEN TEACHER

**A**t Kindlehill, our Kindy home is a space that is well loved and cared for. As we head into Autumn and I prepare the room for the colder season and a new term, I observe this home in the stillness of the Easter Break. I can see where children have wrapped dollies in warm blankets, knitted mice and bunnies have been squeezed into impossibly small bags and logs where they may feel safe, and dried bits of mint leaves have been left behind to feed some unknown visitor in our absence. In these observations, I

reflect on the nature of the small child, to care for and nurture the creatures (real or not, seen or unseen) that are in their 'home'.

To nurture develops naturally in the young child, as we tend to our baby guinea pigs, the chooks, the fish, and our garden. We polish the tables if they have been damaged or worn and we mulch and water when the garden looks tired and thirsty. For the Kindy child, tucking dollies into bed, serving tea at the Kindy







café, or making a campsite bigger for a lonely friend may look like simple play, however, this is the true work of the young child. The Kindy Garden provides a space where children can continue the practice of being gentle and kind, it is a place to listen and be heard and here they



have the time to discover that nurturing helps us feel nurtured, caring is how we are cared for. This is how we wish to send our children out into the world, with love in their hearts, kind words and a gentle step.



# Who am I?

S'HAILA BERNARD, CLASS 1 TEACHER

Class 1 has been exploring the question “who am I?” – such a big, big question for such little, little people. We have been chatting about all the types of families one can have, where our families come from and who our families are. We have been looking deeply into each other’s eyes to find just the right words to describe that shade of brown – I am chocolate sauce without any milk. We sketched mamas, mummies, mums, papas, dadas, dads, big bros and sisters, siblings, aunties, uncles and grandparents. We have been designing houses and drawing homes of every size and style. We of course have also been drawing and painting portraits of ourselves – both realistic and imaginative – I do quite like spikey purple hair and bright green eyes. We explored mixing paint for just the right skin colour and very much enjoyed the skin colour range of beeswax crayons.

“Who am I?” you might ask, so out of the mouths of Class 1:

*“I’m my family and my family is bigger than the world.”*

*“I’m the only one.”*

*“I am me.”*

*“I don’t know ALL of my name.”*





## Acknowledgement of Country

I recently composed this Acknowledgement of Country on a bus ride to the beach. I had been pondering the meaning of an acknowledgement and how it could be more reflective of my current understanding and the students I work with. From readings, podcasts, books, chats and quietly being in the bush I gather thoughts and words and then let it sit... until that long bus ride and the song just came.

### 2023 Acknowledgement of Country

*The Gundungarra and the Dharug are custodians of this land,*

*The sky, the bush, the creatures, the earth on which we stand.*

*I acknowledge the elders, the story tellers too,*

*The ancestors, the dancers, the songlines deep and true.*

*I sit, I look, I listen, I learn to sing along,*

*With the air, the fire the water, with Country's heart song*



# Local Surroundings

LESLEY FOXWELL, CLASS 2-3 TEACHER

Throughout Term 1, Class 2-3 have been exploring their local environment through narrative-based nature lessons, map-making, class walks, and observations of the flora and fauna around us. We began our learning journey in the relatively familiar school environment, and as the weeks progressed, we branched out to the furthest reaches of the Blue Mountains region, and beyond.

Class 2-3 explored the beauty of the land and contrast of colours through their Watercolour Paintings. We compared hot, dusty red desert landscapes, to fertile, cool, flowing rivers. The stories woven into this learning took us down the river systems that flow across the landscape, from mountains to sea. The children learned the stories of the land,

and some of the animals that inhabit these places. We travelled down to Parramatta River and Freshwater Beach as part of our learning, pointing out the villages and towns that make up the Blue Mountains along the way. We explored hiking trail maps, tourist/visitor brochures and topographic maps; plotting our homes on these maps and finding key landmarks in the area.

The class learned how to work independently in their writing, but also how to collaborate on activities together. We found a richness in sharing our experiences and stories with each other. It has truly been a joyful and immersive teaching experience this term, and the children have relished having time to be creative in their art and writing.





# Taiko rhythm in our heart

SAYOKO YANAI, JAPANESE TEACHER

O bon festival in Japan goes for one week in Summer to honour and welcome the returning spirits of our ancestors. Lively dance and songs are accompanied by enticing rhythms of Taiko drums. Our students from Kindy to High School in Japanese classes experienced their hands on the Taiko drum. Learning specific stance, movements with breath, collaborating rhythms with others were also an essential part of learning. Class 8-9 students acquired connection and appreciation with their own Bachi sticks they carved and polished.

Connecting with their breath and finding their own inner rhythms - that is my wish for every young person.



# The Plant Between Earth and Sun

JOHN DANIEL, CLASS 4-5 TEACHER

*Nature! – we are surrounded and embraced by her; we cannot draw back from her, nor can we penetrate more deeply into her being. She lifts us unasked and unwarned into the rhythms of her dance and whirls us away until we fall exhausted from her arms.... We are embedded in her, yet as are strangers to her.*

**T**hese words were spoken by Goethe 150 years ago but ring even truer today: ...we are embedded in her, yet as are strangers to her. In my lifetime, across the globe, species and ecosystems have been in perilous decline. We express our estrangement in myriad ways.

Class 4-5 has been immersed in the world of plants in our *The Plant between Sun and Earth* lesson. Steiner makes an extraordinary claim that, "...it is through learning to feel how plants belong to the earth and to the soil that the child really becomes clever and intelligent. Thinking in accordance with nature". In recent decades, we have learnt so much about the cooperative, symbiotic relationships between plants and animals, plants and insects, plants and the water cycle, plants and mycorrhizal fungi that accords so much with his thinking, as opposed to the 'survival of the fittest' thinking that I grew up with.







We endeavour to bring the children into a deeply felt relationship with their world. Relating like mycelium: interwoven, embedded, mutually supportive. It is joyful to watch them open their wide eyes to the underwater world for the first time when snorkelling; to walk, scramble, leap with confidence in our surrounding wilderness; and then to listen with stillness, to gaze in true wonder, to swim within the candlelit darkness of Winter Night, feeling the season. Health giving to the children and to Mother Earth. The root of the word 'educate' is 'to heal', ourselves and our world.

And the last word goes to Goethe,

*Spirit sublime... thou gav'st me Nature as a kingdom grand, with power to feel and endure it... then show'st me mine own self, and in my breast, the deep, mysterious miracle unfolds.*





# There is Definitely a Big, Long List of Outcomes

ERICA CHAPERLIN, CLASS 6 TEACHER



There is definitely a big, long list of outcomes, experiences and learning that comes out of Kindrehill's emphasis on Outdoor Education in the Primary School. It is a highly valued and core aspect of the School's curriculum and deeply reflects the ethos of the School.

Outdoor Education – it can make you think of Gore-Tex, ropes, bivvies, carabiners and snorkels and there was a fair amount of technical equipment that would make you excited if you were into that – I think I can admit that putting up the giant tarp with Sarah made me feel more than a little self-actualised. But there was some learning that I observed





and was part of that was not at all about equipment and human endurance.

A younger sibling came along for reasons related to the family's childcare needs and arrangements. I wasn't put out by that but I also need to admit I was blind to the idea of how much having her there contributed to the beauty of the experience, the kind of learning that was facilitated both ways and on a tinsy level, how we felt the ecology of community again.

I'm including photos of the camp. The one I like and captures some of the learning I was excited about is Ella being Adara's big sister – protector, teacher, carer. It shows roles shifting moment to moment, from teacher, student, receiver and giver. It shows the separation of age creates little spaces of freedom to be in a different, to play with that, experience something else, be seen in the potential, not just what is. We all experienced the need to protect and care, to show and educate, to be patient, to be warm and encouraging, to adjust to Adara, to little critters, to the sea, to each other. And all of that, in all of that for all us, there was so much LEARNING.

I have always been a little interested in intergenerational structures within society and I am aware of the particularity of school where you spend 12 years with people every day doing things who are exactly the same age - which is weird, right? And not really how the world is...

People are thinking about that especially as 'content' is no longer the driver of

education, it is now more about the skills to solve complex problems... it's an interesting lens or platform through which to rebuild community, to value the differences between us, to give space and opportunity to be in different roles and relationships to each other and to educate ourselves more profoundly. My hope would be that through difference, rather than homogeneity, we practise tolerance, celebration and above all kindness to every living thing and solve the difficult problems of our times.

Learning alongside and by others who are less the same as you strikes me as an important thing.

The tiny, tiny snippet that we saw during our Outdoor Education was absolutely because, biased as I am, that group of children is spectacular. Adara was the strong and beautiful star and Mother Nature, as always, held us in her sweet arms but also absolutely gave us a nudge about where to put our thinking, our heart and our working.



# Come to Your Senses

LYNN DANIEL, PRINCIPAL

**D**iscernment of Truth, beauty and goodness are the very essence of what is nurtured through Steiner education. Essentially, we speak of 12 senses and through these we experience and relate to the world around us. We are embedded in the world through our senses. When cultivated, they can deepen our sense of what it is to be human in this time and what it is to live fairer and kinder, in relationship to human and more than human kin.

## **The First 7 Years: I belong, I am sheltered**

When we cultivate the bodily senses of touch, life, movement and balance in the young child, we are essentially supporting them to feel safe, sheltered, nourished, and to have a deep sense that I belong. Archetypally, picture the child at play beneath the shelter of a tree beside a river, nested into the natural world. Trust, hope and a sense of wellness, are the soul qualities that ripen from the nurturing of these senses.

## **7 – 14 Years: Socialising the senses**

Sight, taste, smell and warmth are the feeling senses that socialise a child to what is of value in family, culture and community. In this phase of childhood, ideally the child is guided to experience the beautiful soul of her people and place. This happens for example through taste – the foods that nourish the palette

of the child but also induct it into culture and tradition. Taste extends also to the styles of clothing we wear, whether we dance, live immersed in music, celebrate the changing seasons with ceremony. These senses educate the values of the child and also, guide them to curiosity, empathy and compassion for those who are different.

## **14 – 21 Years: Conscious inter-relating in their world**

Hearing, speech, the sense of understanding the thought of another and the unique being-ness of another (sense of ego), are the thought senses. These senses help the young person establish a conscious relationship to the worlds around them, seeking principled and purposeful engagement as the key orientation for their lives.







What is it to be human in these times? Raising a child can be a radical (to the root) action for planetary wellbeing. When we raise children who feel nourished and safe, who are curious and compassionate, who act from a deep sense of inter-connectedness, we raise children who are oriented to the healing of our planetary crises. With composer and cellist, Pablo Casals, we can tell our children:



A recording of a recent talk by Lynn to parents and carers, *The Gift of the 12 senses*, is available from the office.

*Do you know what you are? You are a marvel. You are unique. In all the years that have passed, there has never been another child like you. Your legs, your arms, your clever fingers, the way you move. You may become a Shakespeare, a Michaelangelo, a Beethoven. You have the capacity for anything. Yes, you are a marvel. And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like you, a marvel? You must work, we must all work, to make the world worthy of its children."*

# BURAN NALGARRA – Strength & Learning Through Togetherness

GEORGIA ADAMSON, DRAMA TEACHER

**O**n Tuesday March 28, we launched the new Kindlehill Senior High School program, Buran Nalgarra – Strength & Learning Through Togetherness, at Mt Vic Flicks. The event was also the premiere screening of Michael Joy’s documentary, *A Murmuration*, and was a night of song, big ideas, and connection.

Guests were greeted by musical performances from former student Alina Caganoff singing her original songs outside the cinema, and Year 9 student Ashoka Mostafa playing the cinema’s piano inside. After a beautiful Welcome to Country from Uncle Lex, in which he shared the story and wisdom of the stringybark – the inspiration for the name of our Senior High School program – Lynn shared the vision for our small seed, radical-to-the-root, big idea.

The Buran Nalgarra curriculum is built around Kindlehill’s core commitment to social and ecological responsibility and takes inspiration from the Funds of Knowledge and Problems That Matter pedagogies: philosophies which recognise



the value of purpose-driven, place-based learning that draws on the knowledge inherent in the community and engages students in addressing real world problems that matter.

*A Murmuration* tells the moving and inspiring story of Kindlehill’s 2017 Healing Place, Healing Home project and speaks to the impact we can have when creativity, community and education intersect. This story captures the spirit of



taking our learning into the real world, which underpins our approach for Buran Nalgarra, and illustrates the opening of hearts and rewriting of stories that can occur when our learning is connected to a greater purpose. So, this moving and inspiring story, is a way to share our Senior School vision with something tangible. The response to the film was overwhelmingly positive – people were moved to laughter and tears and were excited to talk about where and how this kind of deep community collaboration can happen next.

After the screening, we were joined by Guinnie Randall and Olivia Wylde, alumni students who were part of the Healing Place, Healing Home project and who treated us to a beautiful rendition of *Sing You Brave People*, the song which wrapped up the Healing Place, Healing Home performance and features in the documentary. Their sweet harmonies were the perfect place to rest for a moment after taking in the story of *A Murmuration*.

The event was attended by representatives from many of the Blue Mountains' environmental, social justice, and community organisations, and marked the beginning of a conversation about how what they do as environmentalists, social justice advocates, community workers, and change makers can be invigorated by a connection to education that addresses the big and complex issues of our time in ways that engage and empower our young people.



Rowe Morrow inspired us all with her clear and undeniable call for change in how we educate our young people and the need to place the environment and our relationship to place at the heart of everything that we do.

This was a night of big ideas and our audience walked out into the misty mountain air abuzz with ideas for how we can work together to create genuine and meaningful change in our community, excited and inspired to connect and collaborate.

*A Murmuration* will be screened at Kindlehill in May, when we share our vision for Buran Nalgarra and the next step in the school's evolution with the school community.

# High School Art Camp

STEPHANIE DAWES, HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER

**K**indlehill camps are a learning experience like no other. Run by the staff and students – and, in Primary School, the parents, too – they are a truly collaborative adventure.

In March, High School's students and teachers travelled to Ganguddy for a three-day immersive experience on Wiradjuri Country as organised by Geography and Gardening teacher, Sarah. The days were warm and the nights, cold, but the temperature of the Cudgegong River was perfect for swimming.

Whilst Kindlehill High School students are no strangers to our extensive outdoor education program, this camp was unique: with a focus on visual and creative arts, students and teachers were learning from, communing with and creating on, Country.

Upon arrival after setup, PDHPE teacher Lindsey guided us in making pinch pots

using clay mixed with a small handful of river sand which was then dried in the sun and fired in the glowing coals of the campfire overnight.

On the second day, Visual Arts teachers Adam and I lead sessions in ways of seeing and drawing. Students conjured the landscape over a charcoal wash by chalking in the highlights and pushing back the deeper tones, and then familiarised themselves with the stunning







bark patterns and curled leaves of surrounding trees by replicating their shapes, colours and tones with pastel on card.

Wood Tech coordinator Derek had students carving and whittling around the fire, sharing techniques to create spoons and creatures and, on both days, our principal Lynn guided students in creative journalling. Wandering off to write alone atop pagoda boulders or secreted away behind a tree, students were gifted culinary and musical terms as inspirational metaphors, and after twenty minutes of writing in isolation, returned

to share the sights, sounds, textures and spirit of Country.

On our last day, student artworks were curated by Sarah and displayed in situ at the base of the giant pagodas that lined the site. As students moved through this sacred space to experience their collective work, the maturity and authenticity of each piece was evident to us all.

For some students it was their first camp, and for High School's first camp of the year, it was a deeply meaningful way to connect with and create on Country.

# Wood Craft Program

DEREK JOHNSTON, WOODWORK TEACHER

The blending of the practical and artistic is an important element of Steiner education and wood craft and carpentry are excellent opportunities in this regard.

Starting in Class 4-5 students begin their journey in developing their confidence and will when working with wood. The early program begins with carving and whittling along with the use of simple hand tools. Recently students have created small carved animals, and ornamental “wind spinners”. These simple projects lay groundwork for understanding the properties of wood while creating fun and aesthetic projects.

In Class 6 students have completed simple toolboxes, bowls and relief carved boxes. This extends the challenge with respect to precision joinery, while allowing the students flexibility with respect to artistic and aesthetic design.

Year 7 students have just completed a set of “cajon” drumming boxes that will feature in a performance at the Autumn Fair and be used as extra seating in the High School.

The aim as students become stronger and more capable into High School years is to further develop precision joinery skills

along with artistic design. High School students have been involved in various practical projects for the School and can feel a sense of pride and accomplishment when their projects become ‘part of the furniture’ of the School.







Kindlehill School

# Kindling a Light

We believe education is a social deed. Our purpose is to educate children and young people to be powerfully equipped in becoming individuals who contribute to creating a more compassionate and fair society for all.



**Year 7 Orientation Day:  
Wednesday 31st May**

2023 Year 7 students are invited to join us for a day in our High School. Discover our facilities and meet your teachers and fellow students. For information and bookings please contact (02) 4757 4402 or [community@kindlehill.nsw.edu.au](mailto:community@kindlehill.nsw.edu.au)

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*"when you know that someone is good  
at working with their fingers, you also  
know they are likely to have supple  
thoughts and ideas"*

*Rudolf Steiner*



# Family/tree

SARAH DANIEL, GARDENING TEACHER

So many stories begin beneath a tree. The great activist Wangari Maathai, the mycelial forest ecologist Susanne Simard, the Chipko TreeHuggers...all their stories begin with a child laying beneath a beloved tree, fingers tracing roots as they dig into soil seeking connection, nutrients and water. They begin with a child inhaling the scent of leaf litter- sweet decomposition feeding life, gazing into the canopy sparkling with life, insects, birds and little creatures nesting. A child watching the mist rising from exhaling branches or climbing into bows that will hold all of you, sturdy, without fail.

It is not only biological processes that take place around trees, there is also a process that takes place in us. The child laying under the tree or held in steady branches, they drink from the enchanting elixir of wonder, they fall in love with the world and hopefully, never recover.

We all have family trees, you know, the trees that we live with, the ones you see every day, perhaps in your garden, on the road seeing you off, by the track you walk each afternoon or in the park where you picnic. Maybe you've noticed them, the graceful gesture of their language. Maybe you've felt their shade, breathed in their scent, or even tasted their fruit.

This term in gardening, I asked the kids, who has a special tree? Turns out, they all do. Some trees are great playmates, others offer fruit, some are ladders to the sky world and others are newly planted,

some thrive, and others manage a single surprising lemon occasionally. Without fail, they have a story, they have been noticed, they are loved.

When we look to our tree friends so much becomes visible: the seasons, bringing blossoms or gumnuts, turning leaves or bark striping and falling; the nutrient cycle and its gentle connection to life and death; the water cycle as roots draw up water and leaves release it; even the miracle of photosynthesis, a process that we simply would not be here without! We learn that paying attention to the living world around us surprises us into gratitude and reverence. We live in a wonder-full world!

So, who are your family trees? Go! Visit your elders. They always have their cups ready, brimming to fill yours.





# Weaving Into Community

## – Candle Making for Winter's Night

Imagine a community of family, friends, co-workers, and distant acquaintances. Together they hold the same truth and love for what they know is needed in this changing world. They understand that we need to nurture our children and our bodies, we must care for the animals and land on which we live, and even when we are tired and rushed, they will stop to watch a bee gently kiss at the blossom or the dew glistening on the spider web.

A community can hold all these things to great value, however if we act alone the journey can feel too great and lonely.

As we pull together and weave the threads of the Stringy Bark tree, we are reminded that a single thread can break, however, when we weave ourselves together in community, we become strong and filled with purpose and hope. The woven stringy bark can become a symbol of friendship in a simple band made for a loved one, or it can be the wick for a light to shine into the world.

The bees from which we gather the wax for this light work tirelessly for their community. Caring for their queen and babes who dream in their wax cradles, pollinating the fruit trees and all the while they communicate through song and dance. A bee may make only one teaspoon of honey in its lifetime, every golden drop is a gift.



At Kindlehill we share the story of strength of weaving into a community; we are learning to weave our own wick, taking the time to sit, chat and connect as you work with your hands. We dip this wick into pure beeswax and reflect on the gift of the bees, friendship, and the good work and shining light we can take into the world.





You are invited to

# *A Murmuration*

A documentary by Michael Joy

As our world undergoes fundamental social and ecological change, it is imperative that the way we educate and prepare our young people for this world evolves accordingly. Kindlehill School is ready to change the story of education with the launch of our Senior High School Program, Buran Nalgarra – Strength and Learning Through Togetherness.

We invite community organisations and hubs, social enterprises, and businesses to engage with us in developing collaborative real-world projects to create positive change in our community.

Please join us for the launch of Buran Nalgarra and the premiere screening of the documentary, *A Murmuration*. Filmed and edited by Michael Joy, it tells the moving and

inspiring story of the Healing Place, Healing Home project instigated by Kindlehill School, and speaks to the impact we can have when creativity, community and education intersect.

**7pm, Wednesday 24th May**  
**Performance Space**  
**Kindlehill School**