A cowgirl at heart

Kangaroo Valley resident Audrey Gripper is hoping to study Animal, Environmental or Agriculture Science at the University of New England next year.

In her years at Chevalier College, Year 12 student Audrey has had a great start to her ambitions, studying agriculture and as a member of the Chev Show Cattle Team that competes each year in the Kangaroo Valley Show.

"I loved doing the shows – this year we spent three days at the Royal Easter Show and it was such fun. My friend Morgan placed 4th in the State for the Junior Cattle Judging and one of our steers won the Bronze Medallion in the carcass competition.” The ultimate goal of the grower being to produce high quality meat.

Audrey started at Chev in Year 7, then spent three years living with her family in Indiana, USA. On her return to Australia and Chevalier College in Year 10, Audrey undertook studies in agriculture and has loved the experiences and opportunities the course has provided over the three years.

"Last year’s excursion to the Orange Field Days and farm visits was really interesting and beneficial. There has been such a great variety of practical learning experiences and our class group has lots of fun together learning. I’ll really miss Chev, the atmosphere of the College and the amazing group of friends that I have made – but so many of us want to continue our Ag and Primary Industry studies at tertiary level, we hope to study together again at UNE and/or at Tocal Agriculture College in the Hunter Valley, so we shouldn’t be too far apart.”

In an article on the Sydney University website, Australia’s Chief Scientist Professor Ian Chubb says “if you were looking for a wide and varied suite of career options, then in many respects the approach that is taken in a lot of agricultural sciences is the sort of approach that opens opportunities for you.” Megan Reeves who teaches Agriculture at Chev is keen to encourage interest in the ag courses at Chev “because it’s so important for our country’s future.”

Current statistics reveal that graduates in this field are in such high demand that there are six jobs for every Agricultural Science graduate in Australia.

Highlands Trade Skills Centre

Chevalier College is the site for the new Highlands Trade Skills Centre, having received a Federal Government grant of $1.5 million. This new centre, valued at more than $2 million, is currently being built and will offer specialised facilities for the teaching of Construction and Primary Industries. It will be the only facility of its type in the Southern Highlands and the only one based at an independent school between Sydney and Goulburn.

Primary Industries Trade Skills Centre

The Primary Industries TSC will have a classroom, a livestock theatre with tiered seating, holding pens and will adjoin the College’s 14 hectare working farm with fenced yards, tractor, livestock and other agricultural structures. The centre will offer a Certificate II in Agriculture. Some scholarship and bursary opportunities may be available, particularly for new students interested in starting at Chevalier College in Year 11 in 2015 to study Primary Industries.

Construction Trade Skills Centre

The Construction TSC will consist of two large workshops and separate classroom space as well as an outdoor covered work area — offering Certificate II in Construction Pathways.

While Chevalier College maintains a very high academic standard with many of its students consistently being numbered among the best in the NSW Higher School Certificate, the Trade Skills Centre opens up pathways for other career options. It is now possible to partly complete a trade qualification while still at high school as well as complete the HSC. Chevalier College also offers hospitality and sports coaching as part of its vocational education and training courses. For students, interested in agriculture like Audrey, the future looks exciting with this new facility coming to our region.

Debra Cioran

New Shoalhaven Bridge site chosen

NSW Minister for Roads and Freight, Duncan Gay recently announced that the new bridge to cross the Shoalhaven River at Nowra would be built on the western side of the existing crossing.

Mr Gay was joined by Member for Gilmore, Ann Sudmalis, Member for South Coast, Shelley Hancock, Member for Kiama, Gareth Ward, Mayor, Joanna Gash and Member of the Legislative Council, Paul Green at the announcement.

Mayor, Gash said today’s announcement would allow planning to commence on both the traffic considerations and concept bridge designs. The preferred location will allow the commencement of vital concept and planning works as the next stage of the project.

The Australian Government committed $10 million to carry out further investigations and planning for the third crossing as part of the recent Federal budget.

The NSW Government has provided $1.6 million for investigations to finalise the location of the bridge.