

Stories from the Archives: World War I – Knitting for Victory

A century ago knitting was an important activity for PLC Sydney students. Indeed, at times it was the biggest single activity that occupied the girls. Why? Knitting was a way the girls helped the war effort.

In September 1914 the *Aurora Australis* declared “The motto adopted by the girls this term seems without doubt to have been – ‘Knit for the Knight is going.’ It has been the fashion to knit unceasingly and unsparingly. . .”

In December 1915 the magazine published a poem which began:
Knitting, knitting, knitting
Hear the needles click,
For to help the soldiers,
They must e’en be quick.

That same month the Ashfield Branch of the Red Cross Society offered prizes of 5s and 2s 6d for the best pair of socks knitted by a past or present PLC girl under the age of 20.

Queen Mary’s Private Secretary sent a letter -- on Buckingham Palace stationery – to the College in December 1916: “The Queen has duly received the bale of socks you have so kindly sent for our Soldiers and Sailors.”

Knitting socks takes considerable skill. There were approved patterns with exact instructions to follow. Our Chaplain, Mrs Morphew, has used these directions to knit a pair of World War I approved socks.

