



## Case Study 16

### Conde Library, Pymble Ladies' College

Pymble NSW

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# Conde Library Pymble Ladies' College

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In these days of laptops and the ceaseless expansion of the Internet, libraries may seem obsolete. However with information coming into its own as a commodity, libraries have taken on a new lease of life.

The new Conde Library at Pymble Ladies' College on Sydney's northern fringe, reflects this with seminar rooms as well as areas for individual study and contemplation, liberally sprinkled with network connections and multimedia facilities.

The library is grafted onto a 1938 brick building, about two-thirds of which was retained. "We literally cut the all the windows on the rear facade of the original building down to the ground to create almost a colonnade-type arrangement internally," explains Andrew Pender of PMDL Architecture & Design. "The original building runs roughly north-south and we created an L-shaped wing running east-west and spanned the inside of the L with a further curved wing. That created an internal courtyard and two-level circulation around the inside of the L."



**“A particular challenge was maintaining as much of the original building fabric as we could...”**



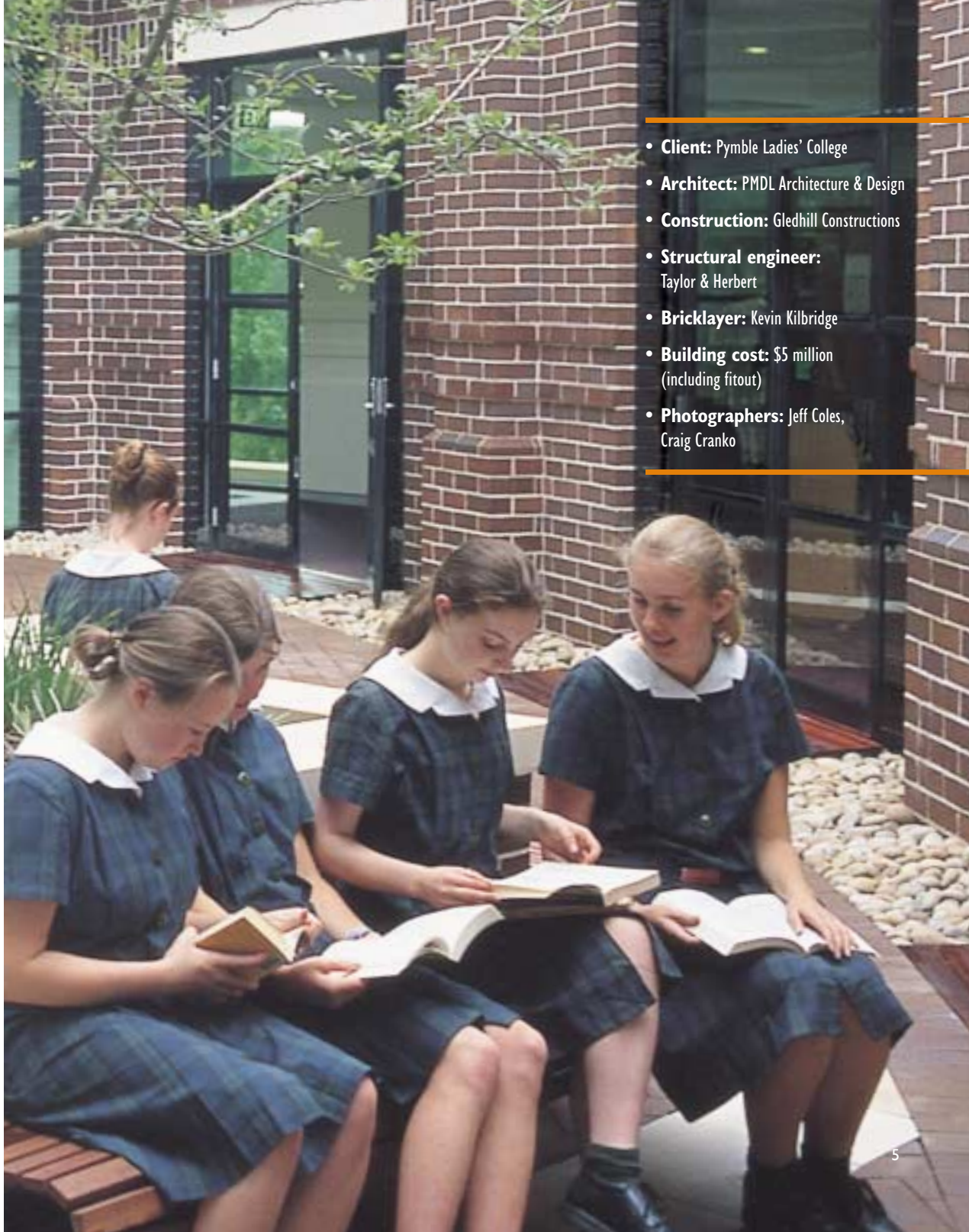
The dramatic curve of the facade is partly a response to the aspect but it also acknowledges that this is now a major pedestrian entry to the senior school. The two storey sections carry a tiled, gabled roof reflecting those in other campus buildings, whereas the curved areas are single storey (above the basement) with a roof terrace.

A range of shaped bricks were used to replicate detailing in other campus buildings, including plinth stretchers on the piers and squints in every second course around arches.

“A particular challenge was maintaining as much of the original building fabric as we could and matching into that as well as we could so that the new and the old met fairly seamlessly,” Pender recalls. “In areas where we could provide physical separation by using glazing at the end of circulation spaces, that worked very easily. But there were other areas where we had to tooth into existing work and that was actually done very well. The match of the brick meant that once you get a little bit of age on the mortar you won't be able to tell where things start and finish.”

The Conde Library was opened in March 2001.





- **Client:** Pymble Ladies' College
- **Architect:** PMDL Architecture & Design
- **Construction:** Gledhill Constructions
- **Structural engineer:** Taylor & Herbert
- **Bricklayer:** Kevin Kilbridge
- **Building cost:** \$5 million (including fitout)
- **Photographers:** Jeff Coles, Craig Cranko

**This page:** The glazed, brick-paved courtyard is at the hub, where the old building joins the new, creating a welcoming area for the girls.

**Page 4- Top:** The mass and detailing of the two storey elements reflects that of other campus buildings.

**Left:** A range of shaped bricks were used to detail the arches, in keeping with similar details on existing buildings.

**Lower right:** The dramatic curve of the facade opens the building to the aspect and provides a new gateway to the school.