

40th Anniversary Edition 2022

Nexus

GOULBURN VALLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL



INSIDE:

GVGS through the years

GVGS Alumni

Carolyn Harris and Alastair Evans



From the Board Chair

Hello to everyone in our great School Community from your Board.

Our School has much to look back on and celebrate after 40 years.

There was a weekend of fitting celebrations and reflections. It was a very important milestone. Many of us had the opportunity to hear from its founders about the founding of the School, its challenges and sense of pride it gave to them and to the parents who took that first (maybe scary) step of enrolling their children. I expect many of those first students can now look back with pride also. Some spoke to us about their time and experiences. It was great to hear from them.

It was also tremendous to finally meet with Vic Ryall, the first principal of the School and to hear about his time. The small, dedicated staff, running a school from football clubrooms, the first buildings, the many funding issues. He certainly looked happy to be back to see it now. Ian Rule was another school leader who we were delighted to see return. Again, the School has progressed significantly since his retirement in 2008.

We are now a significant education institution providing and striving to maintain a happy and safe environment, a strong academic framework and the chance for many families in our community to have a choice about the education of our children. The “formative

40” have now passed us. We do not forget the history nor should we because it helps us focus us on defining our future.

Thank you to Mark and staff once again for working through another school year with success. With any luck, the COVID obstacles are nearly behind us. Of course, we have all been impacted more recently by the floods through the Goulburn Valley and Northern Victoria and NSW. My thoughts are with those who have or are still recovering from their impact.

Semper Ulterius.

Andrew Galbraith,
Board Chair

Nexus is a GVGS school community publication largely brought together by members from within our community. We welcome submissions to **Nexus** from staff, students, alumni and those connected with the school community.

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Cover Photo: 1982 first assembly - Sharon Mumford and Vic Ryall

40th Anniversary

This year is a significant one for the School marking the completion of 40 years of education since 1982. The School's foundation did not involve any religious order, government or non-government organisation. This is quite unusual for an independent school and is a testament to the energy and community commitment shown by the founders. Equally the early parents showed remarkable conviction and confidence to enrol their children in a fledgling school with no history, traditions or heritage. It was a truly pioneering time.

The founder's dream was to create an environment offering a high-quality education to local children in the independent school tradition. Through their determination and sacrifice they achieved the original vision.

In May a number of celebration events were held for both the current and past school community. An assembly was held for all current staff and students. Following the assembly students took our special guests on guided tours and welcomed them to year level forums.

During the forums student representatives from each year level asked a series of questions of our guests to learn more about the School's heritage.

An open 40th anniversary event was held on a Sunday and was attended by current and past students, parents and staff. A dinner was also held for a limited number of special guests who played key roles in the School's foundation and evolution.

During these celebrations we were particularly excited to welcome the following people who shared their experiences and reflections.

- Merryn Howell - foundation student and current parent
- Chris McNeil - foundation student
- Judy Grace - current member of staff appointed in 1984
- Ian Rule - Principal 1998 - 2008
- Vic Ryall - foundation Principal serving from 1981 to 1989.
- Prue Dobson - member of the

School's Interim Council in 1979, past parent and past Board Chair, current Board Member

- Peter Johnson - one of the School's original founders who served on the Finance Sub Committee for over 40 years

Some photos from the 40th Anniversary events are featured later in Nexus.

The School's motto is a challenge to avoid complacency and to raise our eyes and dreams to possibilities. The School Board has used this opportunity as a time to look to the future while being informed by the School's history. The Board completed a deep strategic planning process early in 2022. The resulting plan "Towards 2030" was launched during our recent celebrations. "Towards 2030" sets out our mission and purpose and identifies a series of strategic initiatives to create the School's future.

Semper Ulterius.

Mark Torriero,
Principal

Departing Board Member

Sonia Priestly

Sonia Priestly finished as a Board member during 2022, having completed some five years of service.

Sonia brought her experience as a speech pathologist and saw joining the Board as an opportunity to move outside her professional comfort zone and be involved in the governance of the School. She saw joining the Board as a way to support the School's strategic direction and contribute to its long-term development. Sonia found her professional skills from the health sector very much complimented her role on the Board.

She recalls being made to feel very welcome by the Chair and fellow Board members. She found the role both challenging and rewarding, particularly as the pandemic took hold early in 2020. She found strategic planning particularly

stimulating and enjoyed hearing different perspectives Board members brought to discussions. She also enjoyed attending school functions, such as Valedictory Dinners and ANZAC Day Services as a Board member.

Sonia reflects on how well served the School is by its Board, with mutual respect and leadership all contributing to this. She feels renewal and turnover are important on any Board and wishes the Board continued success in the future. Equally, the School has been very fortunate to benefit from Sonia's skills and dedication to Goulburn Valley Grammar School.

Sonia is a former and current parent, with Mitchell in the Class of 2017, Felix in the Class of 2019 and Reuben currently in year 11.



Congratulations to the VCE Class of 2021

- outperformed **91%** of Victorian schools
- ranked **3rd** out of all regional Victorian schools
- ranked **45th** out of all Victorian schools



Outstanding Achievements L-R:

Morgan Williamson (98.45), Sarah Roberts (99.8), Matthew Lowe (99.5), Hayden Reynolds (99.4), Akhil Gadde (98.05), Sophie Kamenjarin (98.8). INSETS: Reily Menhenett (99.55), Moara Smith (98.9), Mahek Shah (98.95), Lilia Tennant (99.55), Jack Vaivars (99.3)

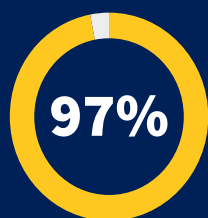
The school community sincerely congratulates the entire Class of 2021. They have been remarkable in their capacity to overcome the challenges of the last two years.

They demonstrated a deep commitment to learning despite the repeated periods of remote learning and sudden changes. We acknowledge, in-particular, the resilience of the students who experienced incredibly difficult circumstances including trauma, grief and loss.

Their involvement in and passion for music and performing arts has inspired future generations of students. The Class of 2021 have always been fine sporting competitors representing their Houses and the School.

The Class of 2021 have celebrated the importance of the most simple but powerful pleasures of spending time with and talking to peers. One of their defining characteristics has been their concern for and support of others. They have demonstrated this through their leadership, fund raising and championing of social justice. The School expresses our sincere thanks to the Class of 2021 for their rich legacy. They have indeed demonstrated the qualities of Semper Ulterius.

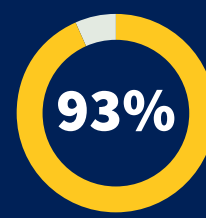
After 1st round tertiary education offers to the VCE Class of 2021



Offered a University course



Offered a course from their top three preferences



Offered a course from Melbourne, Monash LaTrobe, Deakin or RMIT Universities

2021 Dux Profile

Sarah Roberts

Sarah Roberts started at GVGS in Year 5, with her brother (Andrew Roberts, Class of 2016) a few years ahead of her. “My parents had always wanted us to go to GVGS because they thought it was a nice place to learn and grow. Once my brother was there and they saw how much he enjoyed it, they knew it was the right decision for me to go as well,” she says.

With both parents professional music teachers, it’s no surprise that Sarah has amassed a long list of musical accolades throughout her time at GVGS. Sarah also excelled academically throughout high school, with numerous notable results in ICAS competitions and formal awards for her Unit 1 & 2 subject results in 2020. “My favourite subject is maths because I like the problem solving element and I get satisfaction from working my way through a problem to the answer”.

Sarah found some aspects of online learning, in conjunction with the constant uncertainty surrounding the unfolding year, a challenge. “We got through it in the end, but for VCE it wasn’t ideal. We had to find alternative ways of doing things at home. I had a lot of lists on my desk that I would cross off when I completed a task and I consciously surrounded myself with hard copy versions of things so I wasn’t staring at a screen all day.”

To get her through her studies, Sarah relied on the support of her teachers and maintained an organised working space to keep her anxiety at bay. “The School was great and facilitated online learning really well. They gave us space to breathe when we needed it and they knew we had limits with what we could do over Zoom,” she says.

Sarah says that she feels stronger as a person having successfully completed her final years of high school during a pandemic.



“Everything will be ok, it’s one step at a time. We never thought we could do our VCE virtually, but we got through it.”

Sarah’s time as School Community Prefect in 2021 was also different to how she imagined. “We really wanted to unite everyone after the first year of the pandemic and I think we did some great work to achieve that.”

In 2022, Sarah plans to study biomedicine at The University of Melbourne and work towards a career improving the mental health of rural Victorians. “I’ve always had so much respect for doctors and medical professionals and my goal is to eventually specialise in psychiatry,” she says. “We really need to value and focus on the mental health of our whole community, it’s a fundamental part of who we are and how we function as a society.”

Long Serving Staff

Long term staff hold the institutional memory and culture of the School and therefore play a particularly important role in the School’s stability and evolution. At the conclusion of 2021 we thanked and congratulated the following staff for their outstanding contribution to the School.



Jacque Birchall



Sherryn Parnell



Craig Oxley

20 Years of Service

Jacque Birchall
Gareth Jenkins - photo not available
Sherryn Parnell

30 Years of Service

Craig Oxley

Prefects 2022



BACK ROW L-R: Principal Mr Mark Torriero, Miles Sandles, Jack Telford, Nicholas von Güttner, Mitchell Dodos, Angus Burchier, Tom Nethersole, Edward Miechel and Year 12 Coordinator Mrs Chelsea Pohlner.

FRONT ROW L-R; Sharon Anthony, Anna Howell, Charlotte White, Therese Cameron, Alexandra Hatty, Ashwath Ragade, Emily Waller, Ella Rohde and Amelia Locke.

House Captains 2022

From left to right:

Dunlop House Captains – Nicholas Damianopoulos and Abbey Lamb;

Fairley House Captains – Samuel Adams and Bridget O'Dwyer;

McLennan House Captains – Alice Davidson and Nicholas McCabe;

Ryall House Captains – Samuel Campbell and Trinity Gullifer



Alexandra Hatty

For Alex Hatty, being given the role of 2022 School Captain came as a surprise but it was one which brought with it a huge honour. The 18-year-old saw it as an opportunity to step out of her comfort zone and learn more about leadership. “I wanted to have the chance to be able to directly collaborate with other leaders and members of the School to be a driving force to help bring people together,” she said.

Alex is the 2022 School Captain alongside Ashwath Ragade and they have formed a strong friendship in their role as school leaders and mentors.

Growing up on a cropping farm on the outskirts of Tocumwal, Alex has a strong interest in art and enjoys working with different mediums to tell a story. It is this sense of creativity and unique eye that

encouraged Alex to fast track Studio Arts as a subject in Year 11. She followed this by studying English, Biology, Mathematical Methods, Further Mathematics and Health and Human Development this year.

It is clear Alex approaches life’s opportunities with a “can do” attitude and talks confidently about her participation in the World’s Greatest Shave event. Alex has taken this positive mindset into her role as School Captain, saying she hopes to inspire other students to feel empowered to take healthy risks and build stronger relationships between year levels. “My peers, other students, teachers and the staff at GVGS have created and maintained an environment in which people can feel comfortable and thrive,” she said. “I have always loved being a part of the School’s culture and will always



appreciate what it has taught me and how it has helped me to embrace who I am.”

Looking ahead to life after Year 12, Alex said she would like to take some time off to travel before completing further studies at university in the Allied Health field. When asked if she had any parting words for her cohort, Alex’s answer was simple. “Enjoy this year,” she said.



Ashwath Ragade

this in mind, he ensured he made the most of his time leading the School alongside fellow School Captain Alex Hatty. “I was most looking forward to the Class of 2022 making a mark on the School we can be remembered for” Ashwath said. “Alex and I understood that the School might be divided as we returned from a couple of years of interruptions due to COVID-19. Our aim was to reunite the community through events and initiatives.” Ashwath and Alex have now achieved this and have done so with the support of the school community behind them.

This continued guidance and encouragement is something Ashwath said makes the School so unique. “GVGS is unique because while it has a great academic and Co-curricular Programme, we still have a relatively relaxed environment,” he said. “I love being a student at GVGS because we are given great opportunities to pursue a plethora of interests.” Those interests saw Ashwath study English, Math Methods, Specialist

Maths, Physics and Chemistry, while fast tracking Indonesian Second Language in Year 11.

During his time at GVGS, Ashwath also managed to play soccer and badminton for the School, take piano, flute and drum lessons and take part in an impressive number of school productions. This co-curricular experience will serve him well with plans to attend university and pursue an Accelerated Masters in Engineering, with the dream career of one day working for NASA.

As life after GVGS draws closer, Ashwath said he wanted to make sure younger students received the same great advice and guidance he was given. “I never imagined myself obtaining this role, let alone creating the changes that I have been able to help create,” he said. “Anyone can achieve the impossible. “If there are other students who doubt their abilities, I want them to know that if I could become School Captain then anyone can.”

Describing the role of School Captain as “one of the greatest honours that a student could be given”, Ashwath said he did not expect to be awarded the position. So with



GOULBURN VALLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS • 1982-2022



**CELEBRATING 40 YEARS
1982 – 2022**

The following photos are from the School archives from different eras of the School's evolution.



GOULBURN VALLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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GOULBURN VALLEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS • 1982-2022



40th Anniversary Celebrations

On the last weekend in May the School ran a number of events to celebrate our 40th Anniversary.

A dedicated 40th anniversary themed assembly was held for all current students and staff. A Saturday dinner was held for a limited number of special guests who played key roles in the School's foundation and evolution. A Sunday open event was held for all interested members of the community. At each of these events special representatives from the foundation years spoke about their reflections. The following photos are from these events.







Carolyn Harris

Don't Hold Back

Goulburn Valley Grammar School alumni Carolyn Harris is proof that if you set your mind to something you can achieve it. Carolyn, Class of 1989, has had a passion for music for as long as she can remember and has now made a successful career out of it.

Carolyn grew up in a house where classical music was regularly played and enjoyed. During primary school she played the recorder in ensemble until she was old enough to start learning flute. "When I was young I attended concerts with my family" Carolyn said.

Once commencing at GVGS, Carolyn's love for music grew. She joined the Fairley House choir and school band and participated in the annual musical, eisteddfods and the annual Easter and Christmas celebrations. "The Music Programme was a big part of my school years as I found it hard to knuckle down at studying mainstream subjects," Carolyn said. "Being part of ensembles kept me going and most importantly helped me find my tribe. For some kids it is sport or debating or chess club, but for me it was music."

Carolyn's passion saw her study a Bachelor of Music degree at ANU

School of Music in Canberra, with her eyes firmly set on becoming an orchestra member. This dream soon came true, landing a position with the Opera Australia Orchestra. She then earned a seat with the Sydney Symphony Orchestra, where she has been for the past 17 years. As a second flute player, Carolyn says her role involves both individual and group performing. "It may be in harmony or unison with the principal flute player's part and occasionally is completely solo," she said.

Whilst it is a dream come true, Carolyn admits it comes with a lot of work and dedication. "We have four or five rehearsals during the day at the start of a week and three or four performances, usually in the evenings at the end of the week. Individual practice also fits in there somewhere," she said.

Looking back on her career path, Carolyn encourages any budding young musicians to give it their all. "If music is your thing then don't hold back. There are so many ways to enjoy creativity in music so choose your own path and make your own way down its many twists and turns," she said

Alastair Evans

Something Special

Alastair Evans (Class of 2009) has always enjoyed sports. “I’ve always liked running, but it’s something I’ve come to love as I’ve gotten older,” he says. “I enjoyed the Cross Country when I was at school and got back into running when I moved home to Australia from New York in 2020 and all the gyms were closed due to the pandemic.”

A combination of his passion for fitness and wanting a way to honour his late mother, who passed away in 2016 from Multiple Myeloma, led to Alastair setting himself the ambitious challenge of running over six marathons across four days and fundraising for the Snowdome Foundation.

Starting in the Melbourne CBD and finishing in his hometown of Echuca, Alastair ran the route his mum regularly took when she was receiving her cancer treatment. Two-time Olympian, Brett Robinson worked with Alastair across several months to get his fitness to a level where he could complete the 270km trek. “It was so important to have Brett as a mentor,” he says. “He wrote me a progressive training program and we started preparing in January this year.” Alastair admits that the run was much harder than anticipated, with much of it across hilly countryside and the majority of his training being undertaken on the notoriously flat landscape of Echuca.

Keeping him motivated throughout was his support crew, comprising of his family - including sister Georgie (Class of 2013), brother Hugh (Class of 2011), friends and many GVGS alumni, some



of whom ran alongside him during the journey. Alastair managed to raise almost \$140,000, which will go towards clinical trials and preventative treatments for Multiple Myeloma patients through the Snowdome Foundation.

Looking forward, Alastair hopes to continue his philanthropic efforts and another ultra-endurance event in the future is not off the cards. “We’ve created something really special this year and we would love to do more fundraising in the future,” he says.

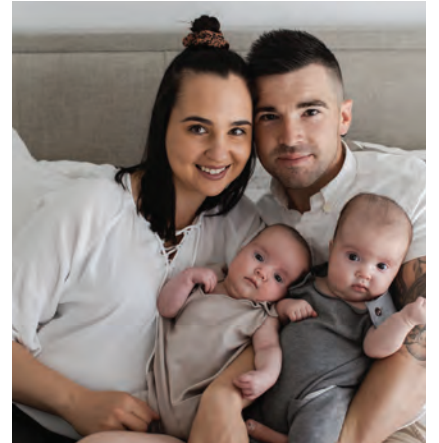




Nick Mills (Class of 2004) and Natalie welcomed daughter Harriet Marie in April 2021.



Fiona Davies (Class of 2001) and fiancé Rob Harmeston welcomed Alfie in May 2021. A brother for Arlo (aged 3 years).



Catherine (nee Hart, Class of 2013) and husband Luke welcomed identical twin boys Orlando and Rocci in July 2021. The Davis family are living in Tatura.



Alannah O'Kane (Class of 2004) and husband Sam Casey welcomed Frances O'Kane Casey on September 28, 2021. Frances is a sister for Beatrice (aged 3 years) and Theodore (aged 2 years).



GVGS staff member Serrin Monk and husband Hayden welcomed Pennie Louise Rothwell Monk on October 15, 2021. Pennie is a sister to Ollie (aged 5 years) and Poppie (aged 3 years).



Rebecca Hamilton (Class of 2012) and partner Jake welcomed Eli McKelvie Dooley on December 11, 2021.



Ivy Davidson (Class of 2006) and partner Lachy welcomed Finn Moran on January 4, 2022. A brother for Hudson.



GVGS staff member Megan Semmens and husband Luke welcomed Jack William on June 23, 2022. A brother for Maisie (aged 3 years).



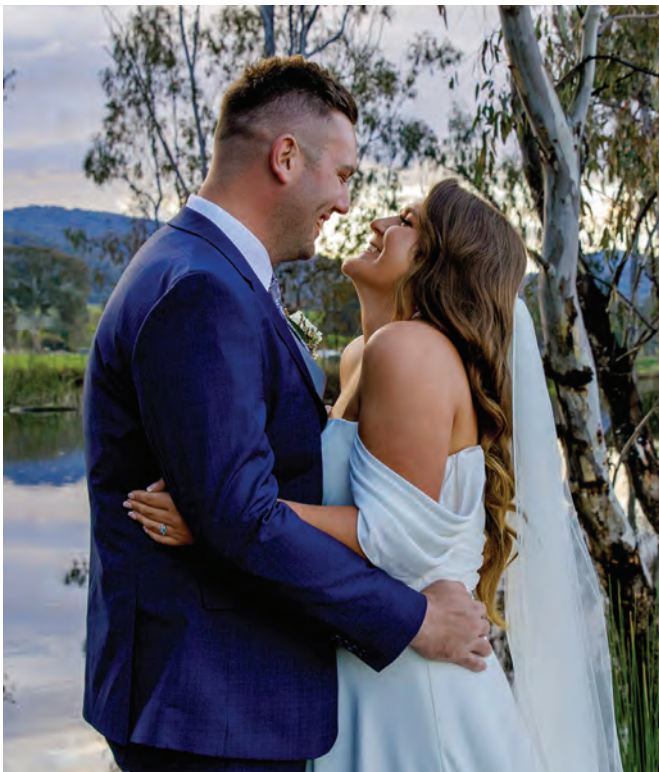
Jemma Doyle (Class of 2008) and partner Matt Harris (Class of 2008) welcomed Elsie Rae earlier this year.



Will Taig (Class of 2009) married Grace Cunningham at “The Peak” in Lorne on December 17, 2021.



Grace Wittingslow (Class of 2013) married Jacob at a private property on January 16, 2022.



GVGS staff member Emma Buckingham married Brad Forber during the recent school holidays. They were married at Pizzini Wines in the King Valley.



GVGS staff member Dion Prince married Madita Lauer in November at a ceremony held at Mitchelton Winery, Nagambie.

BROADWAY *Today*

The 2022 Senior Production “Broadway Today” was a revue style production performed in May which included compositions from productions such as Les Miserable, Mary Poppins and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Performances included chorus, small group and solo items. The revue used contemporary staging and lighting that emphasised the student performances and engaged the audience.



Disney THE LITTLE MERMAID JR

The Middle Years Production “The Little Mermaid JR” was performed over three nights in August. The cast and support crew spent many months preparing for the production. Participating in a production is a wonderful opportunity for students to be part of and strengthens community connections.



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SEMPER ULTERIUS

For upcoming events visit www.gvgs.vic.edu.au