

THE

ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE MAGAZINE

DECEMBER 2024



Flame



CLASS OF 2024
OUTSTANDING
HSC RESULTS

PAGE 2

GIRLS CONNECT
WITH LOCAL
VETERANS

PAGE 6

STAFF REACH 10
AND 20 YEAR
MILESTONES

PAGE 16

Contents

SCHOOL NEWS

- 03 Class of 2024 earns outstanding HSC results
- 07 Girls connect with local veterans, win national prize
- 10 Tamika finds herself through cultural connection
- 12 Sarah's burgeoning faith
- 14 Girls secure gold at Ethics Olympiad
- 15 Premier's scholarship sends Rebecca to Japan
- 16 Decades of dedication
- 20 Hooked on theatre
- 22 Year 9 artists design a living legacy
- 23 Building with purpose
- 24 Blazing a trail across sporting codes

ALUMNI STORIES

- 26 From the founding Alumni Committee President
- 27 Cement your place in College history
- 28 Alumna Q&A

LIVING HISTORY

- 30 From the College Archivist
- IBC Connect with us

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We work, learn and play on the sacred land of the Dharawal people, whose ancestors have been custodians of this Country for thousands of years.

We acknowledge their living culture and their unique role in Australia today, where they have performed age old ceremonies of storytelling, music and dance. We acknowledge our Elders past and present who, to this day, guide us with their wisdom.

Here at St Patrick's College, we commit to walking the path of Reconciliation. Together, we move forward into a shared future, built on mutual respect, understanding and unity.



From the Principal

As I reflect on the incredible year we've had at St Patrick's College, I am filled with pride and gratitude for our vibrant, dynamic community.

In this edition, you will read about our students and staff pursuing excellence inside and outside the classroom. Student creativity brought our College musical to life; critical thinking skills earned History Club students national accolades; grit played a key role in our athletes representing our country at global sporting events. We work to be a community where, as the Rule of Benedict prescribes, "the strong have something to strive for and the weak nothing to run from" and we are proud of our long tradition of nurturing young women to follow their passions and reach their full potential.

In 2024, we have celebrated many joyous occasions and weathered some tumultuous storms, too. At the heart of each has been our strong community; staff, families and friends of the College who never fail to assemble when called upon for support.

What a privilege it is to lead such an extraordinary, life-giving school. I am very excited for the year to come and am confident that our big-hearted community will continue to be a beacon of hope - God's hope - for our families, our local community and for our world.

Mrs Mary Leask
Principal



SCHOOL NEWS

Class of 2024 earns outstanding HSC results

St Patrick's College congratulates the Class of 2024 who achieved exceptional results in the HSC. 90 students sat the HSC exams and performed among the best and brightest in NSW, with their combined results increasing the College's state ranking by 35%.

Karli Gosling's near-perfect mark in the Business Services Exam earned her second place in the state, as well as the coveted titles of Top Achiever and Distinguished Achiever.

Seven students received an ATAR over 90, with Olivia Mason earning the College's top ranking – 98.6. Olivia, a HSC All Rounder, achieved results in the top 10% of the state in all her subjects, including Drama, Advanced English, Legal Studies, Modern History, History Extension and Studies of Religion.

Ava Coltman earned an ATAR of 96.4, receiving Band 6 results in Ancient History, Advanced English, English Extension 1, History Extension and Studies of Religion 1, with a Band 5 mark in Japanese Continuers.

Other students with an ATAR over 90 include Stephanie Elasi, 95.85; Emily Moore, 91.7; Renae Lusik, 91.6; Abbey Robinson, 91.35; and Meghan White, 90.2.

Overall, 23 students achieved 44 Band 6 results in 17 subjects, and have been named Distinguished Achievers who placed in the top 10% of the state in their courses.

College Principal, Mrs Mary Leask, said it was a pleasure to see St Patrick's students succeed across a broad range of courses and pathways.

"The College community is incredibly proud of the outstanding results of our HSC students," she said.

"Their achievements are a reflection of their commitment to excellence and their perseverance in striving to achieve their personal best."

"It has been inspiring to see our students embrace the joys and challenges of learning in their final year of high school. I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to the experienced and dedicated staff who have supported these young women to achieve their academic potential. Today, we farewell the Class of 2024 with the certainty that they are extremely well-prepared for the next chapter in their lives," Mrs Leask said.

In 2024, St Patrick's College ran 30 courses for Year 12 students, including a range of challenging STEM subjects. In addition, the College supported students to undertake a number of VET courses through external Registered Training Organisations such as Human Services; Hospitality; Tourism, Travel and Events; and Early Childhood Education and Care. The school's extensive subject offerings are part of its commitment to cater to the needs,

interests and aspirations of every student, with specialised teachers delivering personalised coursework and pastoral care to ensure every girl achieves her potential. The level of care delivered is evident in the College's latest HSC results.

The College's History Extension History Extension 1 class delivered particularly impressive results; 50% of students earned scores in the top band (E4), well above the state average which is 28% for top performers in this subject.

Another high-performing class was Design and Technology, in which 83% of students earned a Band 5 for their coursework, which requires an abundance of creative and critical thinking.

Creative and Performing Arts students picked up a swathe of results in the top bands, plus 14 nominations for HSC showcases which recognise exemplary bodies of work across the state.

Every St Patrick's College student who undertook the HSC Dance course earned a Band 5 or above and three students received a total of eight CALLBACK nominations. Kaylee Buddingh was nominated for her Core Performance, Core Composition and Major Study Performance. Taylor Hallett was nominated for Core Performance and Major Study Performance. Faith Roberts was nominated for Core Performance, Core Composition and Major Study Performance.

Over 90% of students who undertook HSC Drama earned a Band 5 or above and six students earned an OnSTAGE nomination for their Individual Performance. Nominated students included Romina Ahmad, Kate Cabungcal, Jacqueline Cooke, Emma Grant, Lauren Hughes and Olivia Mason.

As a cohort, the Class of 2024 has demonstrated that it's possible to be committed to both one's peers and one's goals. Their learnings from their school years, inside and outside the classroom, have prepared them well to navigate the next stage of their lives. Congratulations, girls.

TOP ATAR RESULTS



Olivia Mason

98.6



Stephanie Elasi

95.85



Renae Lusik

91.6



Meghan White

90.2



Ava Coltman

96.4



Emily Moore

91.7



Abbey Robinson

91.35

St Patrick's College
and St Gregory's College
present



Music and Lyrics by
John Foreman and Anthony Costanzo
with Additional Music and Lyrics by Kate Miller-Heidke
Book by Dean Murphy and Pip Mushin

Originally developed for the stage by Aspect Entertainment and Sounds
Write Productions in conjunction with Lascorp Entertainment and Fractured Limb Productions
Original production directed by Dean Murphy & Pip Mushin

Licensed exclusively by
Music Theatre International (Australasia)

Friday 20 June
7.30pm

Saturday 21 June
2.00pm and 7.30pm

St Patrick's College
Mary Sheil Centre



JOIN OUR MAILING LIST



AND BE THE
FIRST TO
KNOW WHEN

TICKETS GO ON SALE



Girls connect with local veterans, win national prize

St Patrick's College students have been awarded first prize in the National Anzac Day Schools' Awards for a passion project through which they recorded the stories of local servicemen and women, then built a website to publish their research.

In addition to taking out the top spot in the competition run by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, these students were awarded the Brigadier Bill Rolfe AO Award for Veteran Involvement.

The student-led project titled, "Our local veterans: Discovering, recording and reflecting on stories of service", was completed at lunchtimes and outside school hours by members of the History Club and aimed to preserve the first- and second-hand stories of service personnel.

The girls conducted 14 interviews with veterans and their families. Interviewees were invited to bring an object from their military service to discuss and were asked a range of questions, including about the challenges they faced during and after their service. Each participant sat for a portrait taken by Year 10 student, Hannah Buckpitt. When the content was complete, the website build was led by Year 12 student, Isabelle Slade.



Many of the military personnel were parents or relatives of the students and the girls reflected on how the project helped them view their family members in a new light.

Particularly poignant is the interview Year 8 student, Hope Schwarze, conducted with her grandfather, John Matthew Purkis, who served in the military for 19 years, including in the Vietnam War. Mr Purkis passed away just a few weeks after the interview.

"Every year, I have marched with my pop on Anzac Day," Hope said.

"This year was my first time marching without him. He taught me what Anzac Day is about and now, in his absence, I will wear his medals, and my great-grandfather's medals, with pride and carry on their legacy."

"My grandfather and his inspiring stories have taught me how to be courageous and to believe in myself. He followed through with his childhood dream to serve in the army. When he returned, he lived with no regrets. He saw the best in everyone and everything, even though he had experienced the worst," she said.

Year 12 student, Caitlin Reynolds, documented the story of her great-grandfather, Harley James Daley, who was 34 years old when he enlisted in WWII in 1940. While serving, Daley was captured by Japanese soldiers in Malaysia. He spent four years in brutal POW camps, including Changi. As a Warrant Officer, Daley was

responsible for 200 Allied soldiers in Changi prison and risked his life documenting his experiences in a diary which he buried each day. Upon returning home, Daley resumed his former position with Ingleburn Municipal Council, which was later amalgamated with Campbelltown Municipal Council. He made a significant contribution to the local area, helping to facilitate Campbelltown's transformation from a small country town to a burgeoning city.

"Learning about my great-grandfather has allowed me to reflect upon the experiences of those who have served – they hold our national stories, our local stories and our family stories," Caitlin said.

"It is these experiences that help us understand the sacrifices of those who came before us."

Other stories are closer to home, like those of Pippa Rindermann, Year 7; Coralyn Garcia, Year 8; and Willow and Chaiyya Robertson, Years 8 and 10; whose fathers served in conflicts including Afghanistan and Iraq.

"There is a long history of military personnel in our family, including our father, who was a member of the 2nd Commando Regiment, which served on the front line in Afghanistan," Chaiyya said.



"He also served in Iraq and East Timor, alongside his close friends. My father, like so many others, selflessly gave of himself to protect the liberties we hold dear. Their sacrifices are etched into the fabric of our nation's history, reminding us that freedom is never free."

St Patrick's College's History Club students are well-known in the Macarthur region for raising awareness about women's contributions to war and regularly attend Anzac Day parades and memorials wearing replica uniforms worn by servicewomen throughout history.

Through the website project, Laura Zapiain, Year 12, helped ensure the work of servicewomen from South Western Sydney, such as nurse Elizabeth McRae, is remembered.

"The life of Elizabeth McRae serves as a moving example of the difference that one person's commitment and service can make," Laura said.

"Her passion was nursing, and she served courageously in WWI. Her experiences in Egypt, France, England and Gallipoli demonstrate the need for endurance in the face of difficulty. Her community's deep appreciation is shown by the warm welcome she received upon her return. In renaming Elizabeth McRae Avenue in her honour, her legacy lives on."

These young women are passionate about making historical sources widely available and, to that end, collaborated with the Campbelltown Library Local Studies Team to learn to record their interviews in high-quality formats. Their work is now part of the Campbelltown Library Oral History Collection.

The St Patrick's College community is exceptionally proud of the students in the History Club. Their volunteer efforts and extracurricular projects not only enhance their own learning but also bring history to life for the community. The school congratulates the girls on their awards and on the incredible historical archive they have created in honour of the men and women who have served our country in war and peace.





Tamika finds herself through cultural connection



Like many teenagers, Tamika-Bree Hornby has spent time grappling with her identity. Unlike many, Tamika will graduate high school with a strong sense of self and a surety about how her cultural roots have influenced her aspirations and worldview.

An Aboriginal young woman, Year 12 student Tamika-Bree has become a much-loved and respected mentor to First Nations students at the College.

"I love them like they're my siblings," Tamika-Bree said.

"I feel like I'm actually doing something good and something important by making them feel like they have someone other than a teacher or their family to go to when they need support. Sometimes, the girls just want to chat, other times they need help with an assignment or they just want to complain about how hard Year 8 is! We don't judge each other, we love each other no matter what. Some of them are very cheeky and we joke around a lot. I've never come away from spending time with them in a bad mood. It always makes me happy."

This informal peer mentorship for Aboriginal students began with the appointment of Aboriginal Liaison Officer, Mrs Michelle Lemeki, in 2023. Her role formalised the tailored pastoral care provided to Aboriginal students and fostered greater cultural awareness in the wider school community.

Mrs Lemeki's arrival at St Patrick's was a pivotal moment for Tamika-Bree, who had distanced herself from her Aboriginal identity when her grandfather passed away the year before.

"I'd always been really passionate about telling people I was Aboriginal, it wasn't something I wanted to hide. That was because of my pop, he would never hide it, even if he was going to be judged by people because of it. When he passed away, I stopped going to Koori Homeroom, I wasn't involved in NAIDOC Week activities, I totally stopped everything because he was the reason I was doing it, and I felt like there was no point. I was moving through my grief," she said.

A meeting with Mrs Lemeki ignited in Tamika-Bree a desire to work her way back to embracing her heritage.

"From the day I met Mrs Lemeki, something shifted in me, and the connection that we have is one that isn't going to be broken. Mrs Lemeki's role at St Pat's is more than just an Aboriginal Liaison Officer; she is a support system, an at-school mother, a friend and an inspiration to all of the Aboriginal girls here."

For the past two years, Tamika-Bree has been an integral part of the planning and execution of NAIDOC Week activities at the College. At the 2023 NAIDOC Assembly 'For Our Elders', she shared her grandfather's life story and, at the 2024 event, she led the ceremony, which included a dance choreographed by the students.

"The dance was probably my favourite part of that Assembly," Tamika-Bree said.

"There was a lot of symbolism in it. The theme was 'Keep the Fire Burning' and our dance really reflected that, with the older girls walking up to the younger ones in a gesture of passing them our knowledge, because we're like their older sisters and they're the future of our Culture; we all are, really."

Tamika-Bree said she was grateful to attend a school that genuinely embraces and values First Nations culture, from the College's allocation of resources and staff to its commitment to a Reconciliation Action Plan and its education of the whole student body to develop cultural sensitivity.

"One of the best things about going to school here is, you don't feel like you're being judged for being who you are."

"After every NAIDOC Assembly, I have students from non-Aboriginal backgrounds say to me how amazing the Assembly was and how good it is to see our culture. We've also had some non-Aboriginal girls participate in our activities this year, which I think is really important."

Tamika-Bree Hornby graduated in the Class of 2024, having undertaken an ATAR HSC pathway. Alongside her HSC qualification, she earned a Certificate III in Human Services through NSW SWS Local Health District and will soon commence work as an Assistant In Nursing, under the direction of Registered Nurses at Campbelltown Hospital.

Prior to the release of HSC results, Tamika-Bree was offered an unconditional early entry place at the University of Wollongong to undertake a double degree in Law and Psychology, which she accepted.

"I want to specialise in child protection; that's what my mum does," Tamika-Bree said.

"I'd like to work out in the bush for a few years as a social worker in a remote community."

Sarah's burgeoning faith

Two years ago, Year 12 student Sarah Valleau wouldn't have considered herself religious. Her mother is Anglican and her father is Catholic, and her parents wanted Sarah and her brothers to have freedom to choose their religious beliefs.

"Growing up, religion just wasn't really my cup of tea."

That changed when she transferred to St Patrick's College in Year 11.

"When I came here, I really appreciated how openly and non-judgmentally religion was discussed."

St Patrick's College is a school of Good Samaritan education; families of all faiths are welcome and the values of compassion, service and justice shape daily life inside and outside the classroom. All students attend regular Catholic masses and Religious Education classes and, in the senior years, students are given the opportunity to study the foundations of different faiths, fostering respect and understanding in the wider community.

It was this exploration of religion, particularly at her Year 11 Retreat under the mentorship of Mr Joel Duval, Mission Coordinator, that piqued Sarah's curiosity about Catholicism and her place in it.

"I had so many questions! Like, what is prayer for? How do I pray? Do I need to go to Church? How does Catholicism actually make meaning in our lives? And the answers were really eye-opening. That's when [classmate] Hannah [Yates] and I started talking about baptism," Sarah said.

Sarah discovered that Catholicism resonated deeply with her values and aspirations and provided her with a sense of belonging and self.

She made plans to be baptised in Canada, to share the experience with her extended family but, as her faith journey evolved, she joined her friend Hannah in making the decision to take the sacrament at St Mary MacKillop Parish, Oran Park.

The road to the ceremony was rigorous, and the girls undertook intensive classes in preparation to receive the sacraments of baptism, communion and confirmation under the instruction of Parish Priest, Fr David Catterall.


Sarah said she was supported by her whole family in her faith journey, but her grandmother's guidance was especially instrumental in helping her to become closer to God.

"She's such a kind person," Sarah says of her grandmother. "One time, I was watching Masterchef and she asked me to turn it off. I said, 'Why?!' and she said, 'I don't like it when Gordon Ramsay degrades the chefs when they're doing such good work!' That's the type of person she is!"

Her grandmother, Cecile, was Sarah's sponsor at her baptismal ceremony.

"It was really moving to have the water poured over us and, at first, I felt like I had to feel something really big but I was just feeling contentment with what was happening," she said.

"My family were all crying, and Mr Duval and his wife were there, shedding a few tears, too!"



Since the ceremony, Sarah has continued to grow in her faith, supported in part by the mission and outreach opportunities at the College, such as a Rosary group that meets at lunchtime on Mondays.

"It's such a nice group, even if you don't know how to pray the rosary and just want to go there to talk to other people who want to connect with God and with each other."

She is grateful to have found clarity and peace through Catholicism.

"I think religion is one of the things that gives people purpose and shapes their values. It has changed the way I hold myself and respect myself; I have a path to follow. It makes me feel secure, comforted. It's amazing.

Girls secure gold at Ethics Olympiad



St Patrick's College students have earned first place at the prestigious Australian Ethics Olympiad; it was the first time students from the College have entered the event.

Isobel Blackman, Clara Byrnes, Brooklynn Dalibozek, Mikayla Faro, Alexis Masters, Libby McCauley and Eliza Tannous faced teams from 20 other schools, excelling in every round of the challenge.

The Olympiad requires young people to develop critical thinking, collaboration, communication and civic engagement skills as they grapple with complex moral conundrums. Using advanced ethical frameworks and perspectives, they build and critique their own and others' arguments to questions such as, "Is telling the truth to close family members and friends more important than telling the truth to strangers?" and "To what extent, if any, do family (or friend) locator apps conflict with their users' privacy?"

The College's second team, made up of Michelle Ajani, Sienna Caruana, Jayleigh Dryden, Olivia Puckrin, Hope Schwarze, Harshpreet Sidhu and Abbygael Thomas, also earned a fantastic result at the Olympiad; they were awarded an honourable mention by the judges in recognition of their thoughtful analysis, depth of knowledge and clarity in presenting.

Students from our winning team will represent the College and the country in February 2025 at the International Ethics Olympiad, which includes competitors from qualifying schools in America, Canada, China, India, New Zealand and Singapore.



PREMIER'S SCHOLARSHIP SENDS REBECCA TO JAPAN

Rebecca Murphy, Year 10, won a prestigious NSW Premier's Anzac Memorial Scholarship. She is the fourth student from St Patrick's College to receive the award since its inception in 2008.

The scholarship sends Years 10 and 11 students on an overseas study tour to develop their understanding of Australian war history. Rebecca was one of just 20 selected from over 180 applicants.

Rebecca's scholarship application included a compelling 1,000 word essay on Australian courage, endurance and sacrifice in war and peacekeeping operations. It was chosen by a panel of representatives from the NSW Government, the Anzac Memorial and the History Teachers' Association of NSW.

At St Patrick's College, Rebecca is a committed History student, a member of History Club and a Japanese language learner, so she was well-prepared to immerse herself in the sights and sounds of Tokyo, Hiroshima and Osaka.

"It was one of the best experiences of my life."

"Being a historical trip, we spent most of our time absorbing the rich, complex past of Japan, which included everything from viewing artefacts of the samurai from the Middle Ages to walking around the city of Hiroshima, listening to recounts of the fateful day in August 1945 when the city was attacked with nuclear bombs. I learnt so much about Japanese history and culture and also about the relationship between our two nations and how that has changed over time."

Discover the girls' school advantage



St Patrick's
College

OPEN DAY

Saturday
22 February 2025

REGISTER NOW



Click the link or
scan the QR code
to register to visit
St Patrick's College.

Decades of dedication

In 2024, we celebrated the commitment, loyalty and expertise of our long-serving staff members as they reached milestones of ten and twenty years of service to St Patrick's College.

10 YEARS 2014-2024



MS MELISSA GOODSELL

TAS Assistant

What makes St Patrick's College a great place to work?

Being the TAS Assistant gives me the opportunity to share my lifelong passion for food and cooking with students and staff. I love to see the smiles on the girls' faces when that scone is as light as a feather or the cake has risen perfectly to the top of the tin. It's priceless to witness their excitement when they're picking the lettuce they have grown or finding a precious passionfruit in the depths of the vine that the cockatoos have missed!

What has been your proudest moment as a member of the College community?

My proudest moments have been seeing all three of my daughters graduate as St Pat's girls. The College has been an integral part of their journey to womanhood. It has given them opportunities to develop their strengths and follow their passions in a safe and nurturing environment with a strong community focus on belonging.



MR TIM STEVENS

Learning Support and Special Projects Teacher

What makes St Patrick's College a great place to work?

Firstly, the grounds and facilities are truly lovely, making it a beautiful place to be each day. I am always grateful to walk to class through our gardens and trees, surrounded by natural beauty. Few schools have the grounds that compare. Next would be the students, who are so genuinely interested in learning, which frees up so much time to enjoy the process of learning in class. Finally, I would say the staff, who are so accepting and supportive of each other and the students and who make amazing learning experiences happen each day.

Share an event you've experienced at the College that you think exemplifies what it means to be part of the College community.

One notable experience from my teaching career was supervising a Year 9 camp during an exceptionally rainy season. Our group embarked on a hike to the abseiling course situated at the top of a mountain. Given the early start and our expectation to return well before dinner, we had packed lightly.

However, the persistent rain significantly slowed our progress. By the time we completed the abseiling activity and prepared to descend, darkness had begun to set in. Due to our original plan to return before dark, the group had not brought torches. As a result, we had to navigate a two-hour descent in complete darkness, made more complicated and uncomfortable by heavy rain.

The students demonstrated remarkable teamwork and resilience. They formed a human chain to ensure everyone's safety, and their positive attitude and mutual support were commendable. I was immensely proud of how the students looked after one another and remained upbeat despite the challenging conditions.

20 YEARS 2004-2024

MRS MICHELLE PARKER

Mathematics and Science Teacher

Share an event you've experienced at the College that you think exemplifies what it means to be part of the College community.

Over the years I've been at the College, there have been countless events that have truly embodied the St Pat's spirit. Two events in particular stand out to me: Polynite and the talent quest. These events highlight the many talents of our girls, but also the way students and staff come together, encourage one another and celebrate the diversity of who we are as a College community.

Describe a funny moment in the classroom that still makes you chuckle.

Many years ago, when Kahoot was first developed and I started using it in lessons, my Year 12 Maths class wanted to play it every lesson. During their last maths lesson, we played several revision Kahoots. For the final game, I let the girls use nicknames instead of their real names. Some of their choices were puzzling until I displayed the leaderboard on the projector screen at the end of the game, when the names were read out in order they made up the phrase, "Mrs Parker loves Maths."



Decades of dedication continued

20 YEARS
2004-2024



MRS POLA NICOLAOU

Mathematics Teacher

What makes St Patrick's College a great place to work?

The College is a great place to work not due to a single factor, but rather a combination of many elements that fit together like pieces of a puzzle. It is the colleagues with whom I work; the individuals who surround me in the staffroom and the leadership team that guides us. The environment in which we work also plays a significant role. Most importantly, it is the remarkable young women who pass through the school gates, who are open to learning and personal growth, and allow us as teachers to transform their worries into confidence.

Describe a funny moment in the classroom that still makes you chuckle.

Prior to the recent renovations, the upper floor of H block served as the Mathematics Department. Approximately 15 years ago, a significant incident occurred involving a large huntsman spider in my classroom. At that time, Mr Paul Ashkar was in the adjacent room administering an assessment task to his senior students.

Everything was under control until the spider began to move towards me at the front of the room. Overcome with fear, I ran out of the room screaming, prompting the girls to follow suit. Paul, visibly agitated, emerged from his room and demanded, "What on earth is going on? Who is causing all this commotion? My class is in the middle of an important exam!"

The girls stopped and turned to look at me. Slowly, I raised my hand, indicating that I was the source of the disturbance. Paul gave me an incredulous look, turned back, and returned to his class without another word!



MS SHOBNA SHARMA

Mathematics Teacher

Share a moment, event or relationship you've experienced at the College that you think exemplifies what it means to be part of the College community.

St Patrick's College has been a safe haven for me through the many ups and downs of my life. It has been one of the stable pillars of my life that I could depend upon, through friendships forged with staff in the Mathematics Department and other faculties.

When I had my first child, in August 2011, I was blown away by the love and support given by the College community at this crucial event in my life. I had migrated from Fiji 18 months before starting this job in 2004 and I didn't have any relatives in Sydney, but the St Pat's community made up for that by showering my bub with gifts, small and large; things I hadn't even realised I needed! Not only were there gifts of the material kind, but I had two staff members who lived close by at the time, Ms Anita Lusby and Mrs Janine McLeod, pop by nearly every day to give me a hand with the baby. That baby is in Year 7 this year and is proud to call herself a St Pat's girl. She still counts Anita and Janine as her adoptive grandmas.

Describe a funny moment in the classroom that still makes you chuckle.

One day, I walked into a Year 8 class to find all the girls with their heads on the tables, pretending to be fast asleep. So I decided to go along with it, telling them very loudly that it was a good thing they were sleeping already because I was super tired too, so I was going to sleep, but I was feeling sorry for them because they had never heard me snore!

I started making snoring sounds - really funny snoring sounds that sounded more like a lion's roar than actual snoring - which prompted the girls to burst out laughing and they had to drop their pretence of being asleep.



MRS TARNA TANNOUS

Year 10 Coordinator, Visual Arts Teacher

Share a moment you've experienced at the College that you think exemplifies what it means to be part of the College community.

St Pat's is a very unique place to work and I am grateful for every day that I get to spend as a part of the community. Our College masses are moments that are always impactful and highlight the loving relationships that are developed here. The ability of the choir and cantors to bring tears to my eyes is unique. In Term 3, I am always reminded of the special connection that is fostered between staff and students when Year 12 students graduate in a powerful ceremony with their parents present. As a long-standing staff member, I have been fortunate to attend many milestone masses, including our 180th anniversary celebration, where we took the entire school community to St Mary's Cathedral. These occasions fill me with pride, reminding me of the deep history, vibrancy and care that define our College community.

Describe a funny moment in the classroom that still makes you chuckle.

In my first few years at St Pat's, I was teaching a Year 8 Food Technology class. I was doing a choc chip cookie demonstration. As it was one of the first practical lessons with this particular class, I was being very precise, emphasising all the steps so they would be able to execute them confidently. I instructed the girls to add the chocolate chips and stir the dough with a wooden spoon. The dough was very firm and through sheer brute strength, I snapped the wooden spoon in half, causing a huge explosion of chocolate chips across the classroom! The girls thought this was the funniest thing and could not stop laughing the whole lesson. I challenged them to break their spoons in the same way during their cooking lesson, which they were unable to do, but they had lots of fun trying!

Hooked on theatre

In 2024, the performing artists of St Patrick's College and St Gregory's College joined forces to present *Peter Pan the Musical*. Hosted by St Gregory's College, the production captivated audiences and brought Neverland and its iconic characters to life.

The musical showcased the exceptional talent and rigorous training of our Drama, Dance and Music students, as well as the technical skill of the many students who formed the stage crew in specialised roles including hair, makeup, costuming, set design, sound and lighting.

It was the highlight of the year for many of our girls, and they highly valued the opportunity to collaborate with their peers and to gain performance experience on a high-quality production.







YEAR 9 ARTISTS DESIGN A LIVING LEGACY

This year, a group of Year 9 Visual Arts students embarked on a project to create a mural that united the College community.

The result is a vibrant and meaningful piece of art located under the COLA. This living mural evolves yearly, with each graduating cohort contributing their handprint and signature. It stands as a lasting symbol of their unique journey and cherished memories at St Patrick's College.

At the heart of the mural, the green grass beneath the tree represents our dedicated staff, who nurture and guide our students throughout their time at the College. Staff members contributed their handprints to the mural, symbolising their invaluable service and commitment to our community.

This initiative was brought to life by a talented group of Year 9 students, guided and supported by their Visual Arts teacher, Ms Verena Heirich. The students involved were Kaitlyn Adams, Alexandra Davis, Charlotte Good, Rachel Harrison, Salisa Jintakaveewat, Ella Kessanis, Lilith Mallitt, Sofia Molina, Aariana Paudyal, Maliha Paudyal, Meralyn Paudyal, Srinika Prodhan, Gracie Rogan, Ciara Sammarco, Jenna Smith, Seraphina Tamang and Juliet Wolland.

Their creativity, teamwork and vision have left an enduring legacy for the St Patrick's College community.





BUILDING WITH PURPOSE

St Patrick's College is committed to providing high-quality learning environments. Our capital works program continues to ensure our historic campus facilitates future-ready graduates and our spaces are developed to meet the academic, social and career needs of young women.

In 2024, our building projects included a covered outdoor learning area (COLA), which functions as an open-air classroom and undercover seating area. The bright, inviting space adjoins six spacious classrooms, all of which have also been recently refurbished.

Pattie's Cafe has been the talk of the College for the past six months, particularly on Tuesdays and Thursdays, when it opens to serve staff and students hot beverages and a menu of delicious snacks that are made in-house. VET Hospitality students have demonstrated they are workplace-ready in the working cafe, practising customer service, food safety and hygiene principles when they fling open Pattie's doors to a perennial crowd each week.



Blazing a trail across sporting codes



Charlie Haddad has Olympic ambitions and has proven she's got the grit to achieve them. This year, among other accomplishments, she was scouted to join Lebanon's first-ever women's touch football team and played at the Touch World Cup in Nottingham, England.



Run by the Federation of International Touch, the event brings together the best touch football players from around the globe and the Year 10 student was the cream of the crop; she was the top try-scorer on the Lebanese Women's Open Team, with six tries under her belt, and she was named Player's Player at the end of the tournament.

"Representing Lebanon's first-ever women's team was a privilege," Charlie said.

"Playing in the World Cup felt surreal until we stepped out at the Opening Ceremony. Half of my teammates joined us from Lebanon and, despite having never trained together before, we worked hard to coordinate our game."

The team played nine games in total, racking up four wins against Belgium, Papua New Guinea, Canada and Ireland.

Charlie said the competition helped her develop a lot more than just on-field skills.

"The biggest lesson I learnt was that it's not always about winning."

"I am most definitely a fierce competitor who loves to win. But when I was away, I learnt that winning isn't all that mattered. I enjoyed myself so much, no matter the results. Looking back, there is nothing I would want to change about the experience. We went out every game and played our best; every single one of us played our heart out and played proudly for our country. I have grown stronger as a player and an individual. We definitely won as a team and made our countries and families proud."

A sporting asset to the Australian-Lebanese community, Charlie was also scouted to play for the Lebanese side at the Oztag Australian Invitational Challenge. The team qualified for the semi-finals and finished fourth in the competition overall.

You'd be forgiven for thinking that Charlie was too busy to fit anything else into her schedule, but she not only kept up with her academic schoolwork, she made strides on sporting fields at home.

Charlie played on the Wollongong Diocesan Touch Football team and was then selected to the NSW Combined Catholic Colleges Touch Football Team, which secured third place in a tough and tightly fought competition. Proving she is a skilled player and a model of sportsmanship, Charlie also received Player's Player at this event. She went on to compete in Regional and State Cups, with her teams earning third place at both events.

At the same time, Charlie was blazing a trail in athletics, and was named National High Jump Champion U16 Girls at the 2024 Australian Junior Championships in Adelaide. Charlie cleared 1.71m, just 1 cm short of her personal best, despite a torn hamstring.

Charlie is a respected leader among St Patrick's College athletes and an integral member of a number of College sporting teams. She is well on her way to achieving her ambitions of continuing to play football at an international level and to represent Australia in high jump at an Olympic Games. Off the field, Charlie's love for sport has influenced her professional goals and she is planning on a career in sports physiotherapy.



HANNAH SOMERSAULTS ONTO WORLD STAGE

Through determination and tenacity, Year 8 student, Hannah Pulbrook, has represented Australia at the prestigious FIG Aerobic Gymnastics World Championships, held in Pesaro, Italy.

Hannah competed in the iconic green and gold in the Age Group Trio.

This remarkable achievement is a testament to the countless hours of hard work Hannah has devoted to her sport and the College is proud to see her compete among the world's top athletes.



KAITLIN SHINES IN FIJIAN TEAM AT NZ TOURNAMENT

Kaitlin Kumar represented her Fijian heritage at the First Nations Polynesian Basketball Tournament in Auckland, New Zealand.

Kaitlin played with the U17s Sydney Fijians, which was the only girls' Fijian team that participated in the tournament.

Over 500 young people converged on the event. They travelled from more than 10 nations to compete in a tournament with connection to culture at its heart.

ALUMNI STORIES

From the founding Alumni Association President



I was part of the Graduating Class of 1990; a momentous year when the Mary Sheil Centre was opened and our uniform included brown socks and brown shoes! Oh, how times have changed!

I became the founding President of the Alumni Association in 2009. The organisation was the brainchild of past Principal, Mrs Sue Lennox, and aimed to maintain the connection between past students and the College. I remained President until 2016. Both my daughters also attended St Patrick's College, graduating in 2016 and 2018. They are also current Alumni Committee members.

The Alumni Association was founded by an amazing group of ex-students, who came together to formalise our community of past students and to raise funds for Years 11 and 12 scholarships.

Fast forward to 2024, and the Alumni community has grown in numbers, with approximately 1,400 members who are still overseen by an amazing Committee, made up of ex-students from many different graduating years.

CURRENT ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

President

Erin De Rooy – *Class of 1999*

Vice President & Communications Officer

Hayleigh Campbell – *Class of 2016*

Treasurer

Amadee Thotawatta – *Class of 2021*

Secretary

Monique Keogh – *Class of 1990*

Membership Officer

Stephanie Ellsmore – *Class of 2019*

ALUMNI COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Georgia Keogh – *Class of 2018*

Tavara Sofa – *Class of 2022*

Rhiannon Kernot – *Class of 2019*

Stephanie Alchin – *Class of 1980*

Alumni scholarships have been awarded to students over the last 14 years and have assisted them in achieving their dreams and continuing their studies at the College in the senior years.

The Alumni Association also hosts events throughout the year. Our first event of the year is the International Women's Day Breakfast, where we invite alumni back to the College to give guest speeches, including a recap of their memories at St Patrick's.

We are also privileged to host the Year 12 Alumni Breakfast, held to congratulate and recognise the Graduating Class during their final week at the College. This event is an excellent opportunity for the Alumni Committee to bolster their connection with current students.

Our last event of the year is the Annual Reunion Event, open to any alumni of the College. These reunions are a mix of drinks, a walk down memory lane via a College tour and the delight of old friends reuniting. This event has only been running for a few years and has already garnered a tremendous response, with some alumni travelling from interstate and overseas to attend. One year, some ladies re-enacted their "friendship group lunchtime circle" sitting exactly where they sat over 30 years ago in front of the West Wing Block.

So, if you are an ex-student, we would love to hear from you and ensure that we have your up-to-date contact details in our system. Once a St Pat's girl, always a St Pat's girl.

Send your details to:
alumni@saintpatricks.nsw.edu.au

Warm regards,

Monique Keogh

Founding President,
Alumni Association
Class of 1990

Cement your place in College history



The Sue Lennox Alumni Walk runs along the front of Westview Design Centre and features the names of current and past students who wish to leave a lasting legacy at the College.

Organised by members of the College Alumni Association – Erin de Rooy, Stephanie Alchin, Amadee Thotawatta, Monique Keogh and Hayleigh Keogh – the initiative donates profits to the school after pavers are purchased.

We invite alumni and current families to be a part of this tradition by purchasing a paver engraved with your name or a special message. It's a meaningful way to commemorate your connection to the College, while supporting future generations of students.



**Interested in ordering a paver for
you or your family members?**

[Click the link](#) or scan the QR code.

NURTURING OUR COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Hello, St Patrick's College community!

I am thrilled to introduce myself as your new Community Engagement Coordinator. As a proud St Pat's alumni, returning to the place that played such a significant role in shaping who I am today is both an honour and a joy.

At St Pat's, I gravitated towards cocurricular activities such as debating and public speaking, keen to absorb the additional academic support the College offers. Through these activities, I met some of my closest friends. At the conclusion of my time at the College, in 2019, I was proud to be elected Vice Captain of the College. Through this position, I learnt many transferable skills that I have found invaluable in my professional journey post-high school.

My time at St Pat's was filled with cherished memories and invaluable lessons, and it feels wonderful to be back in a capacity where I can contribute to the community that gave me so much. I am committed to maintaining and enhancing the vibrant spirit of our school, ensuring that every interaction and event upholds the values we hold dear.

In my current role as Community Engagement Coordinator, I work closely with the College Parents & Friends Association to bolster the culture within the school through events such as the Father-Daughter Dinner Dance and the Mother-Daughter High Tea. I also work in tandem with the Alumni Association, tapping into our rich database of former students to give back to the College and guide current students. Looking inward, I also collaborate with staff to organise school-run events that shine a light on the exceptional work of both staff and students.

Further to this, my position encompasses the management of the College's social media channels and mediation of the Alumni Facebook page. It is through these platforms that we keep our community updated with the happenings of St Pat's, including notices about special events running throughout the year. To be kept in the loop of the amazing things that are happening at the College, I strongly encourage you to follow the College's Facebook and Instagram accounts, and for our alumni to join our Alumni Facebook page for information on annual reunions.

I look forward to reconnecting with familiar faces and meeting new alumni. Together, we can continue to build a community that thrives on collaboration, compassion and excellence.

Warm regards,

Payton Ivancic

Community Engagement Coordinator

Alumna Q&A

We sat down with Kim Ulrick, Class of 1986, following the publication of her debut Young Adult novel, *Bad Country*.

Set in the outback town of Wallaby Rock, the story follows 18-year-old Laura, who has the gift of second sight, and is the only one in her town who isn't surprised when two young football stars are found dead at the bottom of a gorge. Laura is drawn to the gorge, despite its dangers, and the story that unfolds forces the reader to consider whether we shape our environment or if our environment shapes us.

In addition to praise for her book, Kim has been honoured at the 2024 Banjo Paterson Writing Awards, where she took out the prestigious Short Story section with "Shame the Stars", inspired by the 75-year love story between her grandparents.



Growing up on a dairy farm on the South Coast of NSW must have been a unique experience. How has your rural upbringing influenced your writing, and can you share any specific moments from your childhood that inspired your debut novel, *Bad Country*?

Growing up on a dairy farm and then moving to other properties during my formative years definitely impacted my outlook on life and my writing. There was no internet and we were told to go outside and play but were also expected to pitch in and help with farm chores. We had machinery for the milking of cows but I can still milk a cow by hand. I spent a lot of time roaming the bush as this is where I felt most at home, most connected and grounded. I felt the power of nature and sometimes the eeriness of the Australian bush around me. Like when the hairs on the back of your stand up for no reason. This was the case ever since my teenage years and this strong connection to place sparked my interest in psychogeography, leading me to wonder how much our geographic environment shapes our behaviours and if the land, like people, holds onto memories.

What was the biggest lesson or challenge you experienced in writing your book?

Patience and acceptance. I wrote the first full draft of over 100,000 words in around three months and I thought I was ready to be published. The reality was quite different. I shared my draft with my immediate family and my good friend who is a fantastic writer and editor. She suggested I cut around 20,000 words and restructure the story. From there, I sought a

manuscript assessment from an external editor who suggested further major edits and cuts. That was hard to digest. I had elements of the story and characters that were important to me personally, but from a reader's perspective slowed down the pace and plot. I wanted to get *Bad Country* out as soon as possible but had to be patient and action the feedback. In the end, it made *Bad Country* a much better read and I landed a publisher.

Tell us about your post-school journey and the experiences that prepared you to become an author.

I went to university in Canberra and studied Communications, majoring in Journalism. I was a junior writer and researcher for The Australian Financial Review in the Canberra Press Gallery but they couldn't take me on as a cadet in Canberra. I landed a marketing job with the Australian Protective Service (now part of the AFP) and helped to get more women into the service. I had a range of jobs with different agencies including working with Indigenous communities across northern Australia to raise awareness of quarantine threats, and with law enforcement agencies on the impact of organised crime. I also worked on various national policy initiatives. I met my husband in Canberra and we later raised our son and daughter there. I left the public service in late 2020 and last year, my husband and I moved to the NSW south coast. I reconnected with my love for storytelling and joined local writer's groups, participated in writing competitions, listened to authors and attended writing conferences.

In what ways was your time at St Patrick's College formative for you?

My wonderful 3-Unit English teacher, Ms Milne, was incredibly passionate about books, stories and writing. She encouraged us to think about what the author was saying and why. This pushed me to pursue journalism. I have always loved writing and storytelling; some of my poetry appeared in the school magazine. I also had a great history teacher, Mr Hughes, who prompted my research into early Australian settlements, reflected in my book. I had a few close friends at St Pat's and in *Bad Country*, I tried to capture that love for family and the bond between friends; the kind of bond where you will stick your neck out to defend your mate. Laura Murray, the main character, does just this.

Tell us about any moments, teachers, friendships or cultural experiences that are particularly memorable from your school years.

Both Ms Milne and Mr Hughes had lasting impacts on my life. Lunchtimes with my friendship group led to many entertaining incidents, including the time I achieved the record for the most Milky Way chocolate bars I could stuff in my mouth! Those light-hearted moments are the ones that stick with you. I represented St Pat's in inter-school debating in Year 11, and came third, and also participated in several drama productions and regional athletics carnivals.

***Bad Country* by Kim Ulrick**



LIVING HISTORY

From the College Archivist



St Patrick's College for Girls Archive was formally established in 2012 to preserve the heritage of the College. The Archive is an educational and historical resource serving the needs of the College community.

Our Motto is, "Preserving Our Past, Celebrating Our Future".

The importance of preserving and sharing the history of our College cannot be understated. It is a history that spans almost 185 years.

As the College Archivist, my key responsibilities are to catalogue, index and preserve current holdings. My days often include researching our past using online tools such as Trove or through interviews with past students, staff and Sisters of the Good Samaritan. I also educate our students by providing information sessions and class-time access to the Archives, thereby involving them in acquiring additional College memorabilia to add to the collection. I also work hard to maintain and update Honour Rolls, produce photographic records of renovations and building works and seek out grants for which we might be eligible to apply.

Our current holdings include a uniform collection (authentic and replica), documents (original and copies), thousands of photographs, original artifacts dating from 1830, memorabilia from alumni, a small museum featuring donated items, trophies, historical books and furniture. We are a trailblazer among schools in the Macarthur region with our expansive Archives.

We welcome all donations of College memorabilia and will happily make copies of documents and return the originals so that you may always have a piece of the College with you. Perhaps you have a mass booklet, an award, a yearbook, a College badge or an old uniform (pre-1980). Please help us preserve 185 years of tradition shining a light on women's education in Macarthur.

I can be contacted by email:

jcavallin@saintpatricks.nsw.edu.au or by calling the College.

Occasionally, on College's social media channels, we seek help from the community in identifying details in old photographs.

If you would like to get involved in the College archives, you can start here! The College is seeking information on the following artefacts. If you can shed light on these, we would love to hear from you.

In the 1990's, Sister Leonie Darcy conducted an oral history interview with Mrs Jesse Boylan. A cassette tape was produced and placed in the College Archives for safekeeping. That tape is now missing. We believe that it was borrowed by a St Patrick's student – sometime in the 90's or very early 2000's – who was doing a research project and forgot to return the tape to the College. If you have any knowledge about this tape, please contact me. All enquiries are confidential.

Do you know the location and contents of a time capsule created in 1978 by the students in Mrs Writer's class?

We have a small plaque reading "Presented to St Patrick's College Year 12 1988". If you remember this, perhaps you can provide more details?

Mrs Joanne Cavallin
College Archivist



Celebrating
185
years in 2025

Gala Ball

2025

LEGACY *of* LIGHT

Join us for an evening of gourmet dining, live entertainment and the chance to make a difference. All funds raised support scholarships for young women in South Western Sydney.

Saturday 15 March 2025, 6:30pm

Campbelltown Catholic Club

A formal event



HOSTED BY

Cameron Daddo



WITH ENTERTAINMENT BY

Samantha Jade



Purchase
tickets here

[Click the link](#)
or scan the QR code.

Connect with us

We value our bond with all members of our College community. In 2025, we will be celebrating our 185th anniversary and we have a number of exciting events planned that we would like to share with you.

Members of the general community are invited to follow St Patrick's College on social media – simply scan the below QR codes for your preferred platforms.

Our alumni database is currently in need of an update, and we would like to ensure we have our ex-students' most up-to-date contact details. Alumni can update their details via our College website. They can also stay connected by joining our St Patrick's College Alumni Facebook group and following us on our official College social media platforms.

For those who do not use social media, stay in touch with us via post. Send your updated contact information to us at:

St Patrick's College
4 St Johns Road, Campbelltown
NSW 2560

Or email the College at:
community@saintpatricks.nsw.edu.au

Your continued connection with St Patrick's College is deeply appreciated, and we look forward to sharing in the exciting moments ahead as we celebrate our College's legacy and future.



**Update your details
via the college website**

[Click the link](#)
or scan the QR code.



**Join the Alumni
Facebook group**

[Click the link](#)
or scan the QR code.



**To follow the College
Instagram page**

[Click the link](#)
or scan the QR code.



**To follow the College
Facebook page**

[Click the link](#)
or scan the QR code.



St Patrick's
College

St Patrick's College
4 St Johns Road,
Campbelltown NSW

02 4629 2999
enrolments@saintpatricks.nsw.edu.au

saintpatricks.nsw.edu.au

St Patrick's is a College of Good Samaritan education.