ST MARY'S COLLEGE
EST.1869

ISSUE 2 SUMMER 2024

VERITAS





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EST. 1869

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St Mary's Veritas is an annual publication for the St Mary's College community. Submissions are welcome for each edition, please send your contributions to Advancement@stmarys.sa.edu.au

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Inside Cover
Students: (L-R) Tareeka Wickramasiri (Year 10, 2024), Abby Douglas (Year 10, 2024), and Lucy Caddy (Year 9, 2024) Photographer: Henry Trumble

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Festival City Photography, Occhio Photography, Henry Trumble, St Mary's College Advancement team and staff members



From the Principal
Ms Clare Nocka

"As I finish my time as Principal of St Mary's College, I feel exceptionally proud of who we are as a community. There has been so much joy for me in this place. I look forward to following the development of the school long into the future."

During the 2024 school year, St Mary's College engaged in an extensive community consultation process before launching a fresh brand position – I am.

The I am. campaign captures what we hope is the essence of the St Mary's experience. That every student who comes here is supported to be unapologetically themselves and find their path in life. We do this by supporting wellbeing for learning achievement. The two are inseparable in the formative years of childhood and adolescence.

We know that finding a path in life is not always a straight line from school, in fact it rarely is! The personal growth and learning that comes from a winding path is often the thing that makes us who we are.

The second edition of the Veritas Magazine includes a wonderful collection of stories about St Mary's old scholars making their mark in the world.

Along with celebrating these stories, throughout this year we have enjoyed our continued connection with the alumni community. This connection has happened through reunions, a high tea gathering, Women in STEM Breakfast, STEM Community Day, sports coaching, tutoring and through an extensive network of old scholars supporting course curiosity and other workshops and guest speaking events.

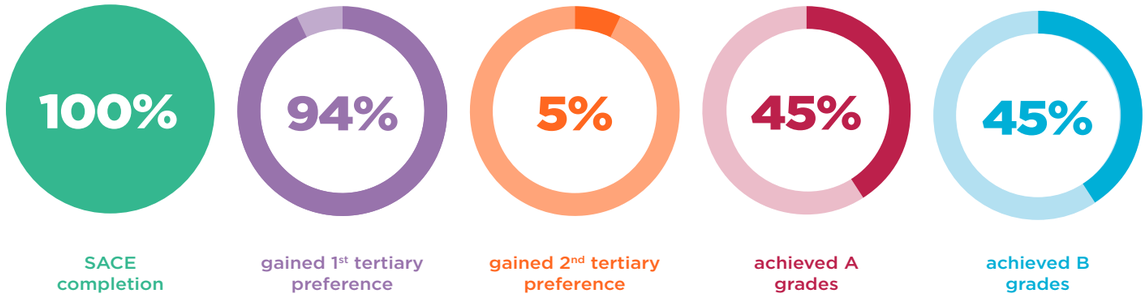
We love to hear about the impact a St Mary's education is having in the world. Enjoy the stories in the latest edition of the magazine. Share it with your friends and networks and be sure to share news for future editions. Remember to join our old scholar database, a contact list that continues to grow each year. We are also open to suggestions about what you'd like to see as part of alumni contact with the college.

As I finish my time as Principal of St Mary's College, I feel exceptionally proud of who we are as a community. There has been so much joy for me in this place. I look forward to following the development of the school long into the future.

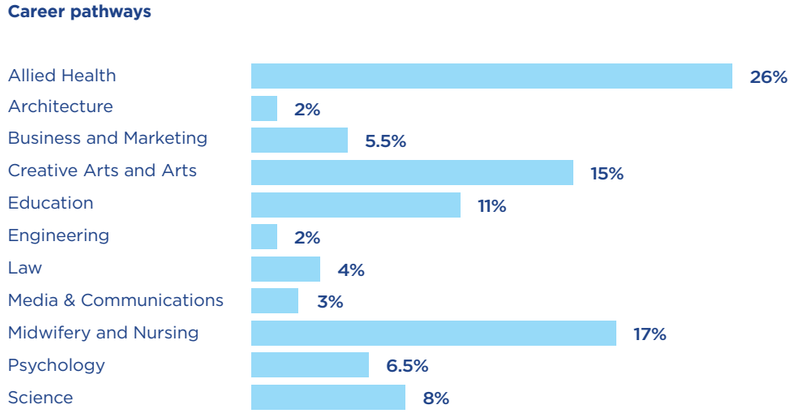
Warm regards,

Clare Nocka
Principal

SACE Results
Class of 2023



Career pathways



Merits

6 merits achieved across **4 subjects**

Information Publishing & Processing
Legal Studies
Society & Culture
Visual Art - Art

95+ — **8%** of students achieved an ATAR of **95 or over** — Top 5% Nationally

90+ — **24%** of students achieved an ATAR of **90 or over** — Top 10% Nationally

80+ — **40%** of students achieved an ATAR of **80 or over** — Top 15% Nationally

College Dux

Claudia Dnistrjanski

Achieved an ATAR of **97.90** and **one merit**























155 Years of Empowering Young Women

St Mary's College Adelaide celebrates its 155th anniversary this year, marking a significant milestone as the oldest continuously running girls' school in South Australia. Founded in 1869 by seven Dominican Sisters, the College has steadfastly focused on empowering young women through quality education.

St Mary's College has grown into a leading Catholic girls' school, from its humble beginnings in cottages on West Terrace and Franklin Street, offering education from Reception to Year 12. The College's commitment to academic excellence and community support is evident in its diverse curriculum and innovative programs, all supported by state-of-the-art facilities, including the Centre for the Performing Arts, Library/ Resource Centre, Senior Centre, and Gymnasium. Its leadership programs continue to empower students to create positive change in their communities.

As we reflect on our long history, St Mary's College embraces innovation while staying true to the core values set forth by its founders. This anniversary celebrates our legacy and reaffirms our commitment to nurturing students ready to make a meaningful difference in society.

To our Old Scholars, this anniversary is as much yours as it is ours. You are an integral part of the St Mary's community, and your continued connection to the College strengthens our collective story. As we look to the future, we carry forward the vision of the Dominican Sisters, supported by your ongoing involvement and the impact you continue to have.

Our theme for 2024 was We are Grateful

Gratitude was identified as a practice that led to a better-quality life. It stood out as a meaningful response to the complexities and challenges of the world.

As St Mary's College marked 155 years in 2024, it was an opportunity to reflect and be grateful for all this community had been.

Meister Eckhart (1260–1327), a German Dominican philosopher, preacher, and theologian, was widely regarded as one of the greatest mystics of the Catholic tradition. Mystics were said to have a special relationship of direct communication with God.

Eckhart wrote of gratitude, "If the only prayer you ever say in your life is thank you, that will be enough."

The College theme for 2024 invited everyone into a daily practice of gratitude. Families were encouraged to share how gratitude shaped their everyday lives.

Clare Nocka,
Principal



A Year in Review

Community Engagement

Our Open Day, in March 2024, celebrating 155 years, was a huge success! We welcomed new and current families and Old Scholars to our community event. It was a pleasure showcasing the fantastic opportunities we provide at St Mary's across STEM, Performing Arts, Sport, Student Leadership, and Wellbeing areas. Our wonderful volunteer parents supported the day, and we also enjoyed music from our Old Scholar band!

Community Cooking Classes

Our 2024 Community Cooking Classes were a great success, bringing together parents, students, staff and Old Scholars for hands-on culinary experiences and inspiring guest presenters. The series kicked off in July with a lively baking night. Lachlan Mackay from **Proof of Pie** guided participants in crafting homemade apple pies—a perfect opportunity for families to bake together. Later, Chef Dana from **Regency TAFE SA** hosted a Gnocchi Night, teaching everyone the art of creating gnocchi from scratch, followed by a Pink Lady mocktail demonstration and tasting. We were thrilled to close the series with a special cooking event featuring **Old Scholar Nikalene Riddle (Class of 2003),** the founder of Skinnymixers, as our guest presenter.

Thank you to everyone who joined us and our Food Technology team for making these events memorable. Please look out for our promotions for more cooking classes in 2025 as we celebrate food, learning, and community!

Parent Education Series

In 2024, St Mary's College proudly hosted the Thriving Kids and Parents School Project, a series of interactive seminars led by **College Social Worker Chrysi Santelices.** Designed for parents and carers of children aged 4-12, these sessions offered practical strategies to support children's growth in behaviour guidance, managing worries, and building healthy peer relationships. Aligned with our College's WRAP Program (Wellbeing, Relationships, Agency, and Personal Responsibility), the series reinforced our commitment to fostering students' well-being and resilience, including digital wellness. The seminars received positive feedback from attendees, who appreciated the actionable insights and the sense of community support. Given the success of this year's sessions, we're excited to announce that they will run again in 2025. Old Scholars are warmly invited to join and are encouraged to bring friends and family along as we continue to empower our children for a resilient and thriving future.

Grandparents and Special Friends' Mass

During Term 2, our Junior School students welcomed their grandparents and special friends to St Mary's College for a memorable mass and afternoon tea. This gathering highlighted the importance of family connections and the lasting bonds we share across generations. Father George spoke about the enduring love between elders and young ones during mass, likening it to God's love—a reminder of the strong ties that shape our lives. The afternoon was filled with warm conversations and shared stories, celebrating grandparents and special friends' vital role in our community. Events like this deepen the connection between families and St Mary's, strengthening the community spirit that binds us all.

Father's Day

This year, St Mary's College was pleased to host our first breakfast for the fathers and special people in our students' lives. The event offered a meaningful way to recognise the critical roles and show our appreciation for their support and dedication. After breakfast, Junior School students invited their guests into classrooms, sharing their projects and achievements. Celebrations like these reflect the core values of St Mary's College, fostering deeper connections among families and strengthening our community.

Sports Day R-12

R-12 Sports Day at Athletics SA Stadium. The creative themes of Country Catherines, Top Gun Thomas, DJ Dominics, and Magical Marys saw Year 12 students create a colourful and energetic atmosphere for everyone. The outstanding involvement of students and staff made the day incredibly enjoyable, and we thank everyone for their enthusiastic participation.

Congratulations to our overall winners:

Junior School Trophy: St Thomas

Meich Team Trophy: St Catherine's

Buchanan Spirit Trophy: St Catherine's

Overall Perpetual Trophy: St Dominic's

Book Week

The St Mary's College community came together for a memorable start to Book Week 2024, kicking off with a lively breakfast and parade. Junior School students showcased costumes inspired by their favourite books, bringing characters to life and filling the campus with energy and creativity. It was especially heartening to see students from Years 7 to 12 join in, rekindling their Book Week memories.

The presence of parents, friends, and families added to the community spirit, making it a genuinely collective celebration of the theme "Reading is Magic.

Year 12 Course Curiosity and Old Scholars

During Term 2, our Year 12 students were inspired by a visit from Old Scholars, who generously shared their experiences and insights into various post-school pathways and tertiary courses. These alumni,now thriving in fields like education, psychology, law, health sciences, engineering, creative arts, and hospitality, offered valuable guidance for students considering their futures.

Our Old Scholars continue to play an important role in supporting the next generation, and their words of wisdom left a lasting impact. Some advice shared included:

"It's more anxiety-inducing if you avoid tasks. Beginning the task will reduce the stress"
— Sophie, Class of 2016

"There are multiple pathways to choose from if you want to go to uni"
— Brooke, Class of 2013

"Keep your support network close and seek support when you need it"
— Abby, Class of 2022
















Our 2025 Student Leadership

At St Mary's College, student leadership is essential in fostering young women who are ready to find their place in the world. Our student leaders not only represent the community but also gather and elevate the voices of all students to help guide the college's focus each year. As the school year ends, we thank our 2024 College Captains and Student Leadership team for their contributions and wish them every success beyond St Mary's.

We want to introduce our student leadership team for 2025, who are ready to lead and contribute to our student community.

College Captain SRC: Petra T

Deputy College Captains: Emily J & Grace F

College Captain: Laurianne De J

Deputy College Captains: Selena C & Ruby H

Drama Coordinator: Gracie D

Music Coordinator: Grace H

Dance Coordinator: Addison W

Art Coordinator: Emma S

STEM Coordinator: Natalia N

Sport Coordinator: Addison F

Our community gathered recently for the **2024 Student Leadership Assembly,** where we proudly introduced our 2025 College Captains and Leadership team! It was an honour to welcome old scholar Rachel Girdler (Class of 2015), currently working at oOh!media, as our guest speaker. Rachel shared inspiring insights from her leadership journey, leaving our new leaders motivated and excited for the year ahead.

Our Old Scholars play an essential role in the St Mary's College community, inspiring current students with their experiences and achievements. Inviting them back to share their journeys gives students valuable insights and guidance for their futures. We are grateful for the ongoing connection with our Old Scholars, who continue to support and motivate the next generation.

Petra Tziavrangos,
College Captain SRC

In my eyes, leadership involves building a collective harmony within your community. A leader utilises their voice and actions to ensure each member of their community feels valued and confident within themselves. Leaders are passionate about forming an atmosphere where everyone can overcome their personal challenges and reach their full potential.

I applied for College Captain SRC, due to my desire to give back to our community. Growing up at the College has allowed me to witness the student leaders who have come before me; obtaining this privilege has inspired me to make a positive impact on our community. Our community has provided me with endless opportunities and lessons, I want to display my gratitude by continuing to help our community bloom.

Leadership is not about being one step ahead, it is about ensuring everyone is walking together as one; this is my core vision for 2025, us all walking together as one.



Laurianne De Jesus,
College Captain Justice

Leadership is about guiding others with authenticity and fostering a community where everyone feels valued and inspired to grow, creating a shared purpose through genuine connection and service, ensuring that all voices are heard.

Embracing our school's ethos of Veritas, or Truth, I've eagerly engaged in the diverse opportunities at St Mary's, each helping me uncover my own truths. From academic challenges to working collaboratively with other peers, these experiences have shaped my understanding of who I am and inspired me to pursue a leadership role where I can help others discover their own capabilities.

Co-Curricular Sport Highlights

Junior School

Over 95 students from Years 3 to 6 had the opportunity to participate in various sporting carnivals in SAPSASA and SACPSSA, including Cross Country, Netball, Athletics and Swimming Carnivals.

Many students participated in extracurricular activities after school, including Mini Hoops Basketball, Net Set Go, Kick Start Soccer and Thunder Cup Netball.

SAPSASA Representation

Eight students represented North Adelaide District in State Carnivals: Valentina P (Cross Country), Indie D (Athletics and Cross Country), Phoebe J (Netball and Athletics), Zara D (Netball), Isabella L (Netball), Ruby D (Football and Netball), Sienna W (Netball), and Evie W (Netball).

Mini Mary's Program

In Term 2, our Netball Coordinator, Amanda Shattock, worked with a Squad of Year 5/6 Mini Mary's Netball Academy students at lunchtime and after school. Our eager group barely missed a training session. It was prevalent when our students didn't drop a game in three tournaments to take out the Year 5/6 Statewide Schools Knockout Competition.

Colour Run

Students and staff from Reception to Year 12 came together for a fun-filled afternoon, building school spirit and getting active. The initiative, organised by our Sports and House Captains, raised funds for the Cambodia Immersion Tour.

A vibrant display of unity brought together the community as students ran and walked the oval, having fun dashing through as many colours as possible!

Middle and Senior School

It was another successful year for St Mary's College, competing in SACSSGSA, School Sport SA Athletics and Swimming Carnivals, and Statewide school competitions.

St Mary's College competed in Netball, Volleyball, Futsal, Australian Rules AFL Football and Basketball. Over 130 students represented the College in School Sport SA Weekly Sports competitions in Volleyball, Basketball, Badminton and Netball.

House Cup

Once again, our Sports Captains and House Captains organised sporting activities for students from Reception to Year 12. Students participated in week-long tournaments at lunchtime, such as dodgeball, basketball, and volleyball. Students of varying sporting abilities took to the court to represent their houses.

Congratulations to St Catherine's for taking out the title in 2024.

Netball Academy

St Mary's College Netball Academy Program went from strength to strength, with 88 students participating in 2024. Our dedicated netballers trained two mornings a week from 7:15-8:30 am in Terms 1, 2 and 3. We are grateful to have our old scholar students giving back to the College as coaches to ensure our students receive high-level coaching.

Thank you to our Old Scholar sports volunteers for 2024:

Netball

Cat Dalton	Class of 2020
Mackenzie Darby	Class of 2023
Tahlia Darby	Class of 2023
Maddie Paech	Class of 2023
Lily Robinson	Class of 2023
Lucy Palmer	Class of 2022
Amity Livingstone	Class of 2023
Jasmine Edmonds	Class of 2022
Cameron Golding	Class of 2021
Heather Ferguson	Class of 2022
Katia Altamura	Class of 2019

Weekly Sports

Abby Cenko	Class of 2022

Swimming

Vicky Severin	Class of 2021
Brooke Simpson	Class of 2023



Outstanding Achievements

Our Year 5/6 Mini Mary's Netball Squad won the Statewide Schools Netball Competition.

Katie S (Year 12) broke her record in the 200m Individual Medley at the SACSSGSA Swimming Competition.

Winning SACSSGSA Swimming Carnival U16 and 16+ age groups.

Winning SACSSGSA Athletics Carnival 16+ age group.

Audrey F & Keira P (Year 11) representing South Australia at the National Athletics Championships in March and All Schools Athletics Championships in December.

Six of nine teams finished the Saturday morning Netball season in the top three teams in the SACSSGSA.

Year 7/8 Div 1 and Div 2 winning School Sport SA Term 1 Volleyball.

Elke C (Year 10) and Bianca P (Year 12) represented South Australia at the Under 16 and 18 National AFLW Football Championships.

Liana I (Year 5) and Savannah D (Year 8) competed at Hawaii's Global Dance & Cheer Games.

Isabel M (Year 10) represented South Australia at the U18 National Lacrosse Championships.









Performing & Visual Arts Highlights

Music

Sounds of City Schools 2024 Bring Music to Veritas Lawns

In March, the Veritas Lawns at St Mary's College hosted the Twilight Sounds of City Schools event, featuring performances from the music departments of St Mary's College, St Aloysius College, and Christian Brothers College.

The evening showcased various musical talents, including performances by St Mary's rock bands, vocal jazz groups, stage bands, and a small jazz combo. The event concluded with a combined city schools performance of Journey's "Don't Stop Believin'," bringing the community together through music.

Supported by the Adelaide City Council, the collaboration highlighted the ongoing connection and shared commitment to fostering musical education and performance opportunities for our city school communities.

St Mary's College Performs at Floods of Fire

St Mary's College students recently participated in the 2024 Adelaide Festival's Floods of Fire, joining over 1,500 performers to raise awareness about climate change.

The Year 2-4 Choir, Middle School Choir, Concert Choir, Year 9 Dance, and Senior Concert Band represented the College, contributing to a moving event that combined music and dance to highlight environmental issues.

This experience allowed students to collaborate with others and engage with the arts in addressing global challenges. Congratulations to all involved for their hard work and commitment to this meaningful performance.

A Night in New York: A Cabaret Celebration

In August, Woodville Town Hall was the venue for A Night in New York, a vibrant showcase of St Mary's College student talent. The evening began with New York, New York by Stage Band 1 and the Vocal Jazz Ensemble, followed by impressive dance performances from the Tap Ensemble, Year 7, and Stage 2 Dancers, with routines to Putting on the Ritz, Call Me, and Sesame Street.

The grand finale, Empire State of Mind, featured 120 performers on stage, filling the hall with music and spirit.

It was a memorable night, made even more special by the presence of some of our old scholars, reconnecting with the College and supporting our students. A Night in New York truly celebrated creativity, teamwork, community and the arts at St Mary's College.

Music Immersion Program for our Junior school students

As Old Scholars, you'll remember that the performing arts have always been a highly valued part of St Mary's College. Since the Dominican Sisters from Dublin, Ireland, founded the school, the arts have been a way to explore beauty, joy, and wonder.

This year, we've introduced a 12-month Music immersion program for our Junior students in Years 2 to 4. The Immersion program allows students to learn a string, woodwind, or brass instrument. The program includes regular curriculum music lessons, ensemble practice, and small group sessions with professional tutors.

We know from research—and your own experiences—that music builds skills in memory, numeracy, and language while bringing people together. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and seeing this next generation experience the joy of music is exciting.

We are proud to say the tradition continues.

Drama

"Emilia: A Voice for the Silenced"

Our Year 12 Drama students brought Emilia to life on stage this year. The play tells the story of Emilia Bassano, one of the first English women to publish poetry. Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum's work celebrated women, but her legacy was overshadowed by often being referred to as Shakespeare's alleged "Dark Lady." Her story speaks for all who have been silenced or marginalised.

As Old Scholars of St Mary's, we know the importance of raising voices. Our students reminded us of the ongoing fight for equality and justice through this performance.

Dance

Dance Takes Centre Stage at St Mary's

As Old Scholars, you'll remember that learning at St Mary's College has always taken many forms, with the arts playing a pivotal role in education. The performing arts were evident at the recent Stage 1 & 2 Dance Showcase in the Centre for the Performing Arts in Term 3.

Dance has become one of the College's popular subjects, offering students a way to express creativity and build their skills. The showcase highlighted the students' dedication and how they've embraced learning through movement and performance.

It's inspiring to see how programs like this continue to grow, reflecting the College's commitment to offering diverse opportunities for students to learn, thrive, and share their talents.

Junior School Arts Morning

Our Junior School Arts Morning at the end of Term 2 was a fantastic celebration of student achievements in Art, Dance, Drama, and Music.

The event featured lively performances from our students, including creative dress designs from Reception and Year 1, dynamic dance routines, and musical showcases by older students.

In addition to live performances, we shared videos that offered a behind-the-scenes look at classroom activities, highlighting the creative process and collaboration between students and teachers.

As an Old Scholar, you may know from experience that St Mary's College nurtures creativity, critical thinking, and emotional expression through the arts, empowering students to excel in learning and their wellbeing.

Visual Art

Celebrating Creativity: Senior Art and Design Exhibition

The Senior Art and Design Exhibition held early in Term 4 showcased our senior students' talent and hard work. Over the years, access to specialist Visual Arts teachers has given students a solid foundation in creative skills, preparing them for success in their studies.

The exhibition highlighted the diverse mediums and techniques, from traditional oil and acrylic painting to fashion, materials, and graphic design.

The event was a success, drawing families and the wider community to appreciate the outstanding work of our senior students.









STEM Highlights

STEM — Inspiring the Next Generation

St Mary's College is cultivating a passion for STEM among students through hands-on learning and meaningful opportunities.

Year 3 and 4 students tackled sustainable food production this year in STEM MAD, with two teams proudly representing the College at the SA Showcase. Selected Year 4 and 5 students participated in Inspiring Girls, attending five sessions at the University of Adelaide to explore STEM careers and connect with role models.

Led by our 2024 STEM Coordinators, the STEM Club offers hands-on activities like laser cutting, circuitry, and Minecraft, fostering collaboration and creativity.

Through these programs, students are building the skills and confidence to shape their futures in STEM, continuing the legacy of our inspiring STEM Old Scholars.

STEM Community Day

In May 2024, we hosted our inaugural STEM Community Day, inviting families and the broader public into our community to explore STEM careers and education.

Our Veritas Lawns became an expo area with universities, industry representatives, and hands-on workshops such as AI chatbots, windmill competitions, and the infamous egg drop challenge. The event was extra special, with Old Scholars in STEM fields on hand and their organisations sharing information with our visitors.

Women in STEM Breakfast

This year's Women in STEM Breakfast, themed "Indigenous Scientists are our First Scientists," was a meaningful morning where students, Old Scholars, and STEM professionals connected to inspire future women in STEM. We were privileged to hear from Dr Giselle Rampersad, Dean (Education) in the College of Science and Engineering at Flinders University, and Elisabeth Boyle, a wongi (wangkatha) woman in her final year of a Bachelor of Science (Animal Behaviour). Year 12 STEM Coordinators Chantal and Sirisha guided the event as MCs, while Senior Food and Hospitality students prepared an Indigenous-inspired breakfast, and G4C students provided barista coffee. Thank you to our Old Scholars who joined us and supported the next generation of STEM leaders.









Junior School Production

A Magical Journey Through Seussical Jr.

Congratulations to our Junior School students for their outstanding production of Seussical Jr.!

The delightful cast and crew brought Dr. Seuss's world to life creatively and enthusiastically. From Horton's bravery to the Cat in the Hat's mischief, every moment was engaging.

A special thank you to our dedicated staff, helpers, and everyone behind the scenes who made this performance possible.

As Old Scholars, we hope you have positive memories of your experiences in school productions, whether it was the excitement of performing, working with classmates, or the pride of being part of something special and being reminded of the creative energy that continues to thrive at St Mary's College.







School Trips

Italian Language, Art, and History Tour 2024

This year, students and staff embarked on the Italian Language, Art, and History Tour, exploring iconic sites and participating in cultural activities that enriched their understanding of Italy's heritage.

The tour included visits to Juliette's Balcony in Verona, a gondola ride in Venice, and a gnocchi-making master class in Florence. Students also experienced the Perugina Chocolate Factory in Perugia, Il Duomo in Siena, fresco painting at Palazzo Vecchio, and The Three Tenors concert in Florence. Other highlights were visits to the Ponte Vecchio, St Catherine Sanctuary in Siena, a farm stay in Orvieto, the historic ruins of Pompeii, and the landmarks of Rome, including St Peter's Basilica.

These tours, led by Language Coordinator Catrina Tridente, continue to foster a deep connection to language, culture, and the arts. Old Scholars who have participated in this program will appreciate the commitment of staff who make these experiences possible.

Cambodia Immersion 2024

Late in Term 4, sixteen Year 11 students and staff participated in an immersion experience in Battambang, engaging with Cambodian culture and history.

The group taught English and spent time with the children, running activities prepared before the trip. They explored local markets, prepared and shared meals, and immersed themselves in village life. They also learned about Caritas Cambodia programs supporting women through cooking, hospitality, and beauty therapy training.

The immersion was guided by dedicated staff, led by Peter Batty, Coordinator of Service Learning, Outreach, and Immersion, who ensured the experience was meaningful and impactful.

Ski Trip 2024

This year, 23 Year 10-12 students participated in the annual Snowsports adventure at Falls Creek, Victoria.

The group arrived to find 25cm of snowfall, a first-time experience with snow for many students. Over the week, they engaged in lessons to develop their downhill skiing skills, gaining confidence each day. The trip also included fun moments like building snowmen and enjoying the alpine environment.

Thank you to the staff who supported and guided students throughout the trip, creating a memorable experience for all involved.

Year 6 Canberra Trip

In Term 4, the Year 6 cohort travelled to Canberra to deepen their understanding of Civics and Citizenship. Students visited the National Art Gallery, the Portrait Gallery, Parliament House, Questacon, and the Australian Institute of Sport.

The trip provided valuable hands-on learning and engagement opportunities with key Australian government, culture, and innovation aspects. This annual experience continues to play an important role in the Year 6 curriculum at St Mary's College.


01


02


03


04



Kenmore Park Immersion

At the end of Term 2, a group of students and staff travelled to the APY Lands, venturing deep into the outback. In the Kenmore Park community, they learned from the land and the local people, gaining insight into their deep connection to family, language, place, and country. Our students learned traditional skills, such as digging for water and carving wood, while exploring the landscape alongside local students.

The journey continued with a visit to Uluru, where the connection with the community helped them better understand the sacredness of this land. The group were fortunate to see Uluru after rain, with a rare fog shrouding the rock.

This immersion experience offered a new perspective on the world, and all were grateful for the lessons we shared during our time in the country.

Thanks to the staff who made this journey possible and Old Scholar Olivia Quick (Class of 2014) for sharing her immersion experience and supporting the group.

I am Campaign

The new I Am campaign at St Mary's College reflects the voices of our community, shaped by feedback from parents, staff, students, and Old Scholars during consultations earlier this year. These conversations highlighted the strengths of our community and provided insights into areas for growth. Listening to the voices of our stakeholders continues to guide our commitment to excellence.

Grounded in our founding narrative, the I Am campaign celebrates the belief that every student is supported to be themselves and to achieve their unique version of excellence. At St Mary's, excellence is more than academic success. It includes community engagement, wellbeing, connection, and friendship. These values define our community and shape our identity as a College.

As we carry this campaign forward in 2025 and beyond, we encourage you, our Old Scholars, to see this brand as yours, too. You remain part of the St Mary's story, contributing to its legacy and future.

For all that she is, and all she can be.











I am grateful and capable

Staff Features



Eileen McCabe

When did you start working at St Mary's College, and what roles have you held?

1982 & 1983 - I worked in the Junior School as a Teacher's Aide
1988 - 1993 - Teacher - Reception, Year 1 & Year 2
1994 - 1997 - Coordinator of the Junior School & Year 1 Teacher
2000 - 2004 - Teacher Year 2
2005 - 2009 - Director of the Junior School & Year 1 Teacher
2010 - 2011 - Year 1 Teachers Part-time Teacher-Librarian
2012 - 2024 - Coordinator of Information Resources - (Teacher Librarian)

What do you love most about working at St Mary's College?

The amazing community - delightful students, families and dedicated and passionate staff who work diligently to create wonderful learning experiences for all.

What are some of your proudest achievements at work and outside of work?

It has been a rich and rewarding working experience for me. Some highlights would be - being part of the Leadership team and making significant changes for the Junior School. Working with the school community as a Teacher Librarian brings me immense joy! Outside of work, I love to spend time with my immediate and extended family.

Outside of St Mary's College, what other interests do you enjoy?

Reading, Gardening and spending time with family and friends.

Who is someone you admire, and why?

Ann Patchett. Ann is a stunning writer; I have read everything she has written. Her books are beautifully written and stay with you long after reading them.

If you could only read one book, watch one movie, or listen to one song for the rest of your life, which would it be and why?

'All the light we cannot see' by Anthony Doerr. The predominant theme is war, but it is also love, courage, bravery and kindness.

What would you say if you could give your high school self some advice?

Make the most of each day.



Giovanna Iannicelli

When did you start working at St Mary's College, and what roles have you held?

I joined St Mary's College in 1980 as a full-time staff member. After a break in 1984 to raise my family, I returned in 2005 as Technologies Coordinator, a role I continue to hold, helping shape the College's technology landscape.

What do you love most about working at St Mary's College?

The students are my greatest inspiration. Their creativity and dedication keep me focused on supporting their growth. St Mary's fosters a connected, inclusive community that values diversity and promotes lifelong learning, empathy, and citizenship.

What are some of your proudest achievements?

I'm proud of integrating technology into the curriculum and creating the STEM Centre. Introducing IPP as a Stage 2 subject in 2006 was a highlight, as was seeing students excel in this area. The success of our community cooking classes this year has been gratifying. Outside work, I'm proud of my children and excited to welcome my first grandchild next March.

What other interests do you enjoy?

I love cooking for family and friends, bringing joy through shared meals. When I'm not in the kitchen, I'm immersed in books, always eager for a new story.

Who is someone you admire, and why?

Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the World Wide Web, revolutionised how we share information, paving the way for the internet-driven world we inhabit today. I also admire educators' resilience and unwavering dedication to teaching.

What advice would you give your high school self?

Have confidence, embrace challenges, and see them as opportunities for growth.



Sandra Ciccarello

When did you start working at St Mary's College, and what roles have you held?

I began as Director of Junior School in 2021, returning to my old school where I was a student from 1975–1980. The school looks very different now!

What are some of your proudest achievements?

Personally, raising three wonderful children who are thriving as adults. At work, fostering a positive, welcoming Junior School community and creating memorable learning experiences for students.

What other interests do you enjoy?

I love FaceTiming my granddaughter in Perth, reading foreign films, cooking, live music, art galleries, op shopping, and walking.

Who do you admire?

I admire people who remain positive in adversity, are kind and courageous, and make others feel valued.

Could you choose only one book, movie, or song?

The Mission—its beauty and emotion always move me.
For music, Boogie Wonderland by Earth, Wind & Fire—perfect for the dance floor!

What advice would you give your high school self?

Be confident, be yourself, and don't worry about what others think.



Tracey Thursby

When did you start working at St Mary's College, and what roles have you held?

I've been the Humanities Learning Area Leader, English Learning Area Leader, and SACE Coordinator. In 2019, I became Director of Teaching and Learning.

What do you love most about working at St Mary's College?

Our students make every day worthwhile. Their passion for justice, humour, and ambition inspires me. Seeing Old Scholars achieve amazing things on the street, in shops, or at airports is incredibly rewarding.

What are you most proud of?

At work, I'm proud of how we balance academic results with flexible pathways, helping students achieve their goals. I'm proud of my two exceptional, fearless, just, and kind children.

What are your interests outside of work?

I love travelling, especially to archaeological sites, reading, paddle boarding, and cycling. Travelling with loved ones fills me with joy!

Who inspires you?

My Mum, for her resilience, intelligence, and humour. She raised my sisters and me as migrant and single mothers, teaching us to love and appreciate people for who they are.

If you could pick one book, movie, or song for life, what would it be?

The Odyssey by Homer. This 3000-year-old epic is timeless, teaching profound life, love, and resilience lessons.

What advice would you give your high school self?

Don't worry so much; trust yourself—you are enough.

CESA Staff Awards

Congratulations Lucina Loro Parham and Alexandra Gavrilidis!

With great pride, we share with our community that two of our outstanding staff members, **Lucina Loro Parham** and **Alexandra Gavrilidis,** have been honoured at the 2024 Catholic Education South Australia Awards.

Lucina was awarded the Religious Education Teacher Award for her valuable contributions to Catholic education at St Mary's College. Lucina has been a part of our community since 2002 in various roles and has consistently demonstrated great passion and enthusiasm for Religious Education. Lucina integrates intellectual, emotional, and practical aspects to her teaching, drawing on contemporary resources and embracing religious diversity.

Alexandra received the Early Career Teacher (Secondary) Award in acknowledgment of her innovative learning initiatives, how she fosters community engagement, and her passion for enriching a learning culture. As our Humanities and Social Sciences Leader of Learning, Alexandra displays a maturity that belies her years and embodies the essence of an inspiring teacher and emerging leader.


01


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01 Alexandra Gavrilidis
02 Lucina Loro Parham

Old Scholars Mothers and Daughters Generational connections to St Mary's





Brooke Foureur

Class of 2009

St Mary's College has always been where values of kindness, compassion, and empowerment are deeply embedded in the learning experience. It was important for my daughter to attend St Mary's, just as I did, because of the supportive community and the nurturing environment that helps girls develop into confident, compassionate young women.

One of my most memorable experiences was watching Skyler win the grand final with her team as part of the Netball Academy, seeing her wear the uniform with so much pride and dedication. Skyler loves flipping through old yearbooks, finding photos of me, and sharing a laugh with her friends, which creates a beautiful connection between my past and her present.

Participating in school events like Sports Day, EYEC, and Social Justice Day brings back beautiful memories of my time at St Mary's, and it's heartwarming to see Skyler enjoying these traditions as well. The friendships she has formed at St Mary's are extraordinary; she now has some beautiful close friends, and I know these bonds will last a lifetime, just as my friendships from the college have.

Daughter

Skyler (Year 7)



Josie Downes

nee Olds

Class of 1990

In short, I wanted to continue my family's tradition of attending St Mary's. My mother and her 2 sisters attended, my sister and I attended, and I wanted my daughter to do so as well.

Growing up attending STMC gave me an embedded sense of empowerment and community. Mostly, though, I had fun going to school. I developed long-term friendships, was exposed to ideas, activities and cultures, and have wonderful memories of school.

Now that my daughter is attending, I can see the same principles and values being taught to her. She is also having fun with her friendships and making her memories there!

Daughter

Eva (Year 7)

Other generational connections to St Mary's

Margaret Olds | Mother
Mary Spher | Aunty
Catherine Scally | Aunty
Shauna Olds | Sister



Joylene Meli

nee Rocca

Class of 1996

As an Old Scholar, seeing my daughter Dominique follow in my footsteps at St Mary's College has been meaningful. St Mary's offers a broad education, from STEM and arts to sports, outdoor education, and social justice programs like supporting orphanages in Cambodia and Vietnam.

One of my favourite memories as a student was celebrating the College's 125th anniversary with a whole-school photo. In 2019, Dominique experienced a similar moment during the 150th anniversary celebrations.

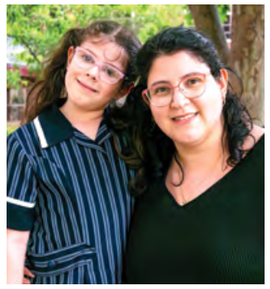
Through St Mary's, Dominique also completed her First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation, with each milestone supported by the school's strong sense of community. It's wonderful to see these traditions continue.

Daughter

Domenique (Year 5)

Other generational connections to St Mary's

Phillis Johnston | Sister
Lily Johnston | Niece
Sophie Johnston | Niece



Alicia Pastro

Class of 2017

When my younger sister Joanna graduated, I worried I'd never sit in St Patrick's Church and hear the hymn to St Dominic; I have since been blessed with two beautiful daughters. St Mary's College has been a huge part of my life, from the many hours spent at choir rehearsals and performances to volunteering at the Whitmore Square Soup Kitchen. St Mary's College supported my growth as a young person, something I always wanted for my children. Since Reception, my daughter has been supported in her education, music life, sports ability, and growth as a kind and generous person.

Daughter

Valentina (Year 3)

Other generational connections to St Mary's

Joanna Pastro (2014) | Sister



Yvonne Kranixfeld

nee Garraty

Class of 1995

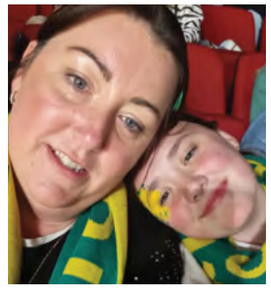
One of the greatest joys has been experiencing the St Mary's community alongside my daughter(s). At St Mary's, we're surrounded by inspiring role models and supported by exceptional, personalised care from staff who truly nurture each student's growth.

The diverse and inclusive environment reflects the real world, fostering curiosity and compassion in students. Seeing these values come to life as part of our shared journey is a privilege.

There are too many positive experiences with three daughters here for over 13 years to describe one! An overall positive experience has been seeing my children grow from 'baby' Receptions, feeling they not only belonged to this St Mary's community, but the St Mary's community also belongs to them. They have values and friendships that will last their lifetimes, just as I have from my time here.

Daughters

Liliana (Year 12)
Izabella (Year 10)
Emelia (Year 8)



Karen Rogers

nee Brand

Class of 2002

St Mary's College offers learning that allows girls of all academic levels to feel confident to grow.

Attending the Semester 1 Academic Assembly and seeing girls acknowledged not just for the result they achieve but the effort they put in, allowed us to celebrate Ella's growth since commencing at St Mary's.

Daughter

Ella (Year 7)



Lucy Hope

nee Parker

Class of 2004

As an old scholar, I fondly remember St. Mary's College as a positive community of inclusion. As a parent to girls with diverse interests, it was important to me that my girls were fostered not only academically but supported in whatever endeavours took their fancy or wherever their natural talents took them. I fondly recall being involved in many extracurricular activities at the college. Favourite memories include participating in the school production "Super Star Music Factory", performing on stage with Glen Shorrock at Norwood Town Hall and participating in Catholic Schools Music Festivals.

I am impressed by the many varied extracurricular programs and experiences the college offers, which depend on the students' interests. It was important to me that the girls were in an environment where these opportunities were available to them whether they decided it was a path they wanted to follow.

My eldest, Scarlett, is now interested in music, and both girls thoroughly enjoy participating in the junior school productions and sports days.

Florence (Year 4) was born with a condition of short stature. Florence has grown into a confident young girl, brimming with enthusiasm, who is not afraid to be heard decibels above the rest of the class. She has a strong friendship group and has become very gregarious, something we, in part, attribute to the supportive nature of the college community.

My youngest daughter, Harriet, who will commence in 2025, has a particular interest in art - something I am confident she will be supported to develop further whilst at St. Mary's. I know she will have a community of young women looking out for her on the playground.

Daughters

Scarlett (Year 6)
Florence (Year 4)
Harriet (Reception 2025)

Old Scholars Paving the way as Future Educators

Three of our Old Scholars are now working as Education Support Officers at St Mary's College while pursuing their goals as future educators.



Layla Aoukar

Class of 2021

What is your current work and study status?

Bachelor of Primary Education (honours) going into my fourth/final year. Working at my family's cafe and as an ESO at St Mary's.

What is your professional goal?

My professional goal as a future teacher is to create an engaging and supportive learning environment where every student feels seen, heard and valued. I strive to inspire curiosity, participation, and inclusivity and to implement teaching methods that empower students to become independent thinkers and lifelong learners.

What area of St Mary's are you currently working?

I am currently doing ESO work within the year 5/6 cohort.

What do you love about your work at St Mary's?

I am grateful for the opportunity to return to St Mary's, where I can continue to learn from, collaborate, assist the teachers, and engage with students daily. This experience allows me to gain further understanding and insights beyond my university placements. It has allowed me to evolve as an educator and individual continuously.

What is your professional goal, and how has or will St Mary's help you?

At St Mary's, I'm gaining valuable insights from experienced educators, expanding my teaching toolkit with new strategies to shape and enrich my future practices.

Who is your mentor in your role at St Mary's, and what takeaways do you have working with them that you will implement in your future workplace?

At St Mary's, I work across three classrooms (Year 5 and 6's), collaborating with three teachers who each bring unique teaching methods. My mentors taught me the value of adaptability, differentiation, student-centred learning, and flexibility in lesson planning. These insights will help me create an engaging, inclusive environment where all students feel they belong and have a place within the classroom.



Tahlia Darby

Class of 2023

What is your current work and study status?

Currently, I am undertaking a gap year. I work at St Mary's as an ESO and have coached netball this year. I plan to study Secondary Teaching next year.

What is your professional goal?

My goal is to become a qualified secondary teacher. I will start studying in 2025. My goal as a teacher is to create a safe learning space where people feel comfortable growing emotionally, academically and socially.

What area of St Mary's are you currently working?

Relief ESO. I worked in Year 8 classes last term and now Year 4 and have been on a handful of athletics days and camps supporting staff and students throughout the year.

What do you love about your work at St Mary's?

I love the variety of experiences and learning opportunities I get. Working with various children and getting to know them and their learning styles has made my time here enjoyable.

What is your professional goal, and how has or will St Mary's help you?

My goal is to become a Secondary Teacher. Being an old scholar at St Mary's, I thank them for allowing me to grow personally and gain courage. I will be inclusive and accepting of everyone, just as St Mary's has taught me.

Who is your mentor in your role at St Mary's, and what takeaways do you have working with them that you will implement in your future workplace?

Inclusive Education Coordinator Georgie Amadio has extensively mentored me at St Mary's. She has supported and encouraged me to try new initiatives with literacy groups. In my future workplace, I will be confident in adapting to learning and have confidence in myself.



Brooke Simpson

Class of 2023

What is your current work and study status?

I am studying for a Bachelor of Primary Education (honours), where I specialise in maths. Also working as an ESO at St Mary's.

What is your professional goal?

My professional goal is to become a primary teacher, where I can create a safe, welcoming and empowering environment for children to learn and grow. I want to change the fixed mindsets to become more positive about learning and help every student reach their best potential.

What area of St Mary's are you currently working?

I currently work as a curriculum ESO, supporting the year 5s and 6s with their learning.

What do you love about your work at St Mary's?

St Mary's College is a very welcoming and empowering school where every community member feels equal no matter who they are. Working at St Mary's has shown me a side of the school I haven't seen before, like the opportunities that staff and students can access. This privilege makes me realise why I do the job that I do and why I want to get into the teaching field.

What is your professional goal, and how has or will St Mary's help you?

My professional goal is to become a primary teacher, where I can create a safe, welcoming and empowering environment for children to learn and grow. St Mary's has supported me to reach this goal by allowing me to work in a classroom setting and support various students where I can help them reach their full potential. In the future, I plan to use the experience from working at St Mary's and utilise it in my classroom.

Who is your mentor in your role at St Mary's, and what takeaways do you have working with them that you will implement in your future workplace?

While working at St Mary's, I have been very fortunate to work alongside Nicole Cremona, Olivia Angel-Keys and Matt Pastro. These three teachers have shown me different approaches to learning and things I can use in my future teaching.

Old Scholar Features

“Throughout my time at St Mary’s, I learned… to not let anybody tell me what I am capable of, the only person that will ever know that is you… Always remember your talents and do not let anyone dull your sparkle…”



Alexia Damakos

Class of 2017

Hi, I’m Alexia Damokas, graduate of St Mary’s College (Class of 2017). I am a singer songwriter, working under the artist name “aleksiah”. I studied a Bachelor of Music at the University of Adelaide and am currently in the second year of my career as a full-time musician, a year that’s been a whirlwind of joy and challenges.

Throughout the last two years, I have played shows with some of my favourite bands from when I was a teenager, such as Cavetown (UK), Lime Cordiale and Ball Park Music to name a few. I’ve played a sold-out headline tour this year, performed in stadiums all throughout Australia, have had my songs mentioned in publications like Vogue, won 4 SA Music awards, had over 2 million listens on my recently released an EP, and someone’s even gotten a tattoo of my work, which even now still seems crazy to me.

I have done things I never would have dreamed of, and it’s because even when I was knocked down, I got back up, as tough and heartbreaking as it felt at the time.

Throughout my time at St Mary’s, I learned how important it is to have thick skin, and to not let anybody tell me what I am capable of, the only person that will ever know that is you. To any bright soul who reads this, always remember your talents and do not let anyone dull your sparkle, you are special.



Nikalene Riddle

Class of 2003

Nikalene Riddle nee Aharidis (Class of 2003) Nikalene is an award-winning author, recipe developer and community leader of Skinnymixers. Skinnymixers is amongst the largest and most active online health and wellness communities, focusing on healthy recipes and lifestyles. For the past 10 years, she has self-published 19 bestselling cookbooks, which have sold over 500,000 copies in 72 countries worldwide. She now has the most significant social media presence for Thermomix content worldwide. Her latest book, ‘SkinnyAmerica’, became an international bestseller in under 20 minutes after its release, and she retained the number one position on Apple iBook.

St Mary’s has always been a significant part of Nikalene and her family’s lives, with all five Arharidis daughters attending the college. Her EA Marianne (Mez) has two daughters (Chloe & Chelsea), who are also current students. This enduring connection has seen Nikalene frequently present for students and families at St Mary’s, where she shares her love of cooking and inspirational recipes.

Among many awards for entrepreneurship, Skinnymixers was the first South Australian business to be a finalist for a StarTrack Orias Award. Nikalene also won the Shopify Build a Better Business ‘Highest Percentage Growth’ award in 2017, where they spent two weeks with Tony Robbins and other mentors and even rang the New York Stock Exchange opening bell! Nikalene is passionate about creating healthy food without sacrificing taste, and this passion has seen her grow a Facebook community of over 250,000 like-minded people.



Claire Ratican

Class of 2008

Claire is an archaeologist specialising in the British Viking Age and the Late Iron Age of Scandinavia. After completing an Honours Degree in Archaeology at Flinders University, Claire moved to England to study a Master of Philosophy at the University of Cambridge. Upon its completion, she became the first-ever recipient of the Cambridge Australia Newnham Scholarship, which offers funding for outstanding female students from Australia who wish to conduct doctoral research at the University of Cambridge. Claire completed her doctorate in 2020 and has recently published her research with Routledge, which attempts to move beyond traditional gender constructions using burial data, giving voice to women who have often been voiceless throughout history.

Claire retrained as a primary school teacher after completing the PhD and is the History Subject Lead at her school.

Claire states: “I adore my job, which allows me to speak to children about history from all places and periods while also helping further develop staff so they can enrich their students’ history learning”.

In September of 2024, Claire’s book was released.

Scan the QR code to access a 20% discount on my book.
Available directly from Routledge or through Amazon and Booktopia for Australian audiences.

Julia Clarke

Class of 2020

My journey in sports has been full of growth, resilience, and rewarding experiences. I began playing football in 2015 with North Adelaide in the SANFL Talent Shield after years of playing netball. In 2016, I joined Hope Valley's U16s team, winning the premiership and runner-up best and fairest. I then moved to Broadview in 2017, where I achieved runner-up best and fairest, and then best and fairest in 2018, while continuing to play in North Adelaide's Talent Shield program.

At 16 and the end of year 10, I joined North Adelaide's Senior Women's SANFL team for the 2019 season, playing every game, including the Grand Final. That year, I also represented South Australia in the U18 State Team after three years of missing out on the U16 selection. The same year, I returned to Broadview, where we won an undefeated premiership, and I placed third in the best and fairest after playing just half the season.

In 2020, I juggled my Year 12 studies, music commitments at St Mary's College, and playing for North Adelaide amidst the pandemic. Despite the challenges, I won my first SANFLW premiership with North in an undefeated season. Music was an integral part of my time at St Mary's, playing trombone in the school's bands from Year 9 to 12. My experience as St Mary's House Captain and my involvement in music helped me build resilience, which translated to my sporting success. 2020 was an incredibly tough year, especially football wise; it was a year of intense personal growth and stepping outside of my comfort zone. Without a foundation of resilience, I can confidently say I would not be where I am now.

In 2021 continued my football career alongside studying Mechanical Engineering at the University of Adelaide. In 2022, I won my second SANFLW premiership with North Adelaide, and by 2023, I became the fourth North Adelaide player to reach 50 SANFLW games, all before turning 21. In 2024, I was honoured to join the leadership team, win the club's Best and Fairest award, and became the women's games record holder at the club. I have also represented South Australia twice at the U23 level.

The values I developed at St Mary's, particularly through the music program and leadership roles, gave me the confidence to face challenges head-on. Music in particular allowed me to begin to break down my fear of failure and perfectionist traits, which have both been challenging to face throughout my football journey. I believe my journey is one of consistent and continuous improvement, hard-work, grit, and a willingness to push beyond my comfort zone. I love challenging myself, not to be someone I'm not, but simply to be more than I am now, striving towards the best person and footballer I can be. With this has come uncomfortable hard times and challenging opportunities, but with resilience and a supportive community it has led me to accomplish goals I once thought impossible to reach.

Rachel Van Brussel

Class of 2014

At the end of Year 12, Van Brussel felt torn between her two greatest passions, fashion and music. With a strong desire to travel, Rachel embarked on a gap year to explore the world. Her three-month sojourn through Europe, followed by a life-changing decision to settle in Milan as an English tutor, would catalyse her future endeavours.

The experience of living in Milan, often hailed as the global epicentre of fashion, played a pivotal role in solidifying Rachel's determination to study Fashion Design. Upon returning to Adelaide, she studied a Bachelor of Creative Arts, majoring in Fashion Design at Flinders University in partnership with TAFE SA. Her academic journey was marked by immersive experiences, including two transformative exchange programs. The first took her to Hong Kong and Mainland China, where she delved into learning and buying immersion programs. The second was a captivating study stint at the Institute of European Design in Florence, Italy, where she completed a series of subjects that were credited towards her degree.

Rachel later moved to Melbourne, to work as a Creative Producer. Her role was far from ordinary, a complex blend of creativity, communication, and client liaison. She was a driving force behind the development and execution of fashion photoshoots that catered to a diverse array of clients and purposes, spanning commercial, campaign, business, and personal needs.

Rachel attributes part of her journey to our College. "In my experience, St Mary's instils that being smart is cool and being an individual is a good thing, whilst giving us the tools to, as women, enter the world with confidence, strength, liberation and education - something that very few women in our world don't get to so openly experience and be empowered by."

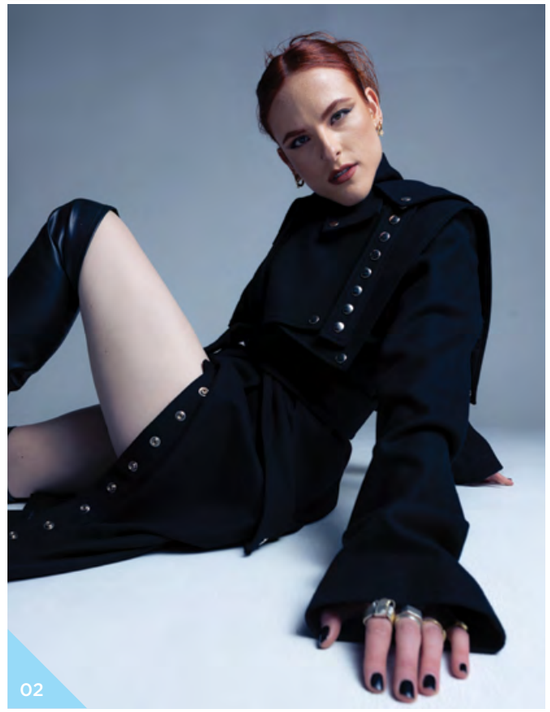
Since graduating, Rachel has built an extensive career in design, production, and styling, contributing her expertise to an array of distinguished brands across local, national, and international markets. Her work has recently extended to major fashion capitals, including London, Milan, and Paris.

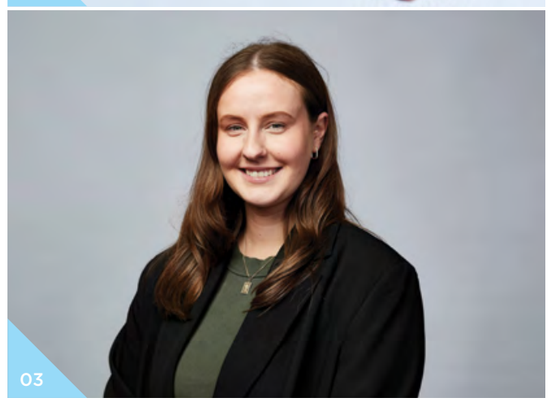
Throughout her career, Rachel has collaborated with an esteemed portfolio of brands such as Katya Komarova, Toast Society, Simone Perele, Sans Beast, House of Rolfe, and Rose Forde, showcasing her versatility and commitment to excellence in each project she undertakes.

She is currently nurturing her own namesake brand, set to launch in early 2025. While still in its early stages, this enterprise reflects her vision of Australian-designed, ethically made, 'slow' fashion. Rachel's long-term aspiration is to transition from working under others to being entirely self-sufficient, with her own fashion label as her flagship endeavour.



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01 Julia Clarke
02 Rachel Van Brussel
03 Rachel Girdler

Rachel Girdler

Class of 2014

When I graduated from St Mary's College in 2015, I didn't have a definitive career path. St Mary's had instilled a sense of purpose in me, a desire to do something meaningful, so I initially pursued primary education at UniSA. I loved working with kids and felt teaching could be a natural fit, a career that allowed me to make a difference. But, after my first teaching placement I realised that while I enjoyed working with children, teaching in a classroom setting wasn't my calling. While this was a daunting discovery, I'm grateful that it opened me up to exploring other options.

Reflecting on my strengths and interests, I felt drawn to marketing, a field where creativity, strategy, and communication are key. Marketing aligned well with the skills I'd begun building at St Mary's—particularly in creative subjects like drama, where I learned how to think on my feet and communicate effectively. So, in 2018 I commenced a marketing degree at UniSA. During this time, I was also working part-time at Coles but felt ready to tackle something more challenging and aligned to my new career aspirations.

Then came a full-time opportunity at oOh!media, an outdoor advertising company. Taking on the role of sales coordinator was a huge leap, as it required adjusting my university degree to part-time and switching to online studies. The foundational resilience and work ethic I developed at St Mary's was crucial during this transition, allowing me to adapt to my new normal. My time at oOh!media was transformative, with hands-on experience in media sales and the support of an incredible team.

After 2.5 years, I felt ready to advance but held back, questioning my readiness for a full sales representative role. Instead, I took the opportunity to work at Carat, a global media agency and one of our clients, where I worked as a media planner/buyer on large campaigns for clients like Cancer Council SA, Beaumont Tiles and South Australian Police. It was a demanding role, but the high-profile projects I worked on built my confidence significantly. Carat helped me develop the skills and self-assurance to eventually step into the role I'd once hesitated to pursue.

When a sales representative role opened again at oOh!media, I returned, this time with the skills and invaluable knowledge I'd gained working on the client side at Carat. Since then, I've been fortunate to be part of an exceptional team whose efforts were recognised in 2023 when we won SA Sales Team of the Year at the Media-i Awards.

I was also individually nominated as SA Outdoor/Cinema Salesperson of the Year, and we've been nominated for both awards again in 2024. Additionally, I was honoured with the Rising Star award for SA at the Outdoor Media Association awards this year, achievements that feels even more meaningful thanks to my journey's twists and turns.

While my career certainly hasn't been linear, I'm grateful for each experience and challenge as they've shaped me, and each become valuable opportunities for my personal and professional growth.

Claire Victory

Class of 2001

Claire has volunteered at St Vincent de Paul Society since she was ten. Over the past 30 years, she has been a member of a parish Young Vinnies group, youth and adult conferences, councils, committees and special works, and worked as the School Liaison Officer in SA for three years during her university studies.

2019 Claire was appointed National President of the St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia. Not only was Claire the first woman elected to the role in Australia, but she was also the first South Australian to fill this role and the youngest President in Australia in Vinnies' 165 years of existence. Claire studied a Bachelor of Law and Legal Practice and other courses at Flinders University and worked in private practice for 15 years, primarily in employment and injury law. She is currently the director of the industrial team at the nurses' union. Claire is a frequent keynote speaker and inspiration for the students of St Mary's, particularly in the areas of justice and equity.


01


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Liana McCurry

Class of 2000

My name is Liana McCurry, and I attended St Mary's College from Year 8 in 1996 through to completing Year 12 in the year 2000, where I had the privilege of serving as Deputy School Captain. In that role, I was fortunate to represent the school at interstate events. While I wasn't entirely sure about my future path after Year 12, I knew I wanted to pursue higher education and enrolled at the University of South Australia. There, I completed a Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies in 2003. I then continued my studies and earned a Bachelor of Education in Junior Primary/Primary Teaching in 2005.

I began my teaching career in 2006, and over the next eight years, I taught at both primary and secondary levels in public and private schools. A significant portion of this time was spent teaching primary school music, including a year spent teaching in the UK.

In 2014, I secured a permanent position at Glenelg Primary School, where I taught music to 800 students. Two years later, in 2016, the Department for Education offered scholarships for teachers to pursue master's degrees, and I was awarded one of these scholarships. I decided to focus on mathematics education and began a Master of Education in Mathematics Education, transitioning from music to teaching in a junior primary classroom. I completed my master's degree in 2019.

In 202, I began teaching at Ardtornish Primary School, a challenging time to start at a new school due to the pandemic. Initially teaching a Year 1/2 class, I transitioned to a Year 3/4 class the following year. In 2021, I received the Public Education Primary Teacher of the Year award, recognising my innovative approach to teaching mathematics through Explicit Instruction and a multisensory methodology.

In 2022, I was awarded a Churchill Fellowship, a prestigious scholarship to undertake an international research project. My project focused on exploring best practices in mathematics education in high-performing countries. This opportunity took me to Singapore, Japan, Finland, Estonia, Canada (Vancouver), and the USA (Hawaii), where I gathered valuable insights into global education systems. The findings from my research highlighted key commonalities between Australian education and practices in these high-performing countries.

The same year, I began my role as Assistant Principal at Salisbury Primary School, an institution at the forefront of education innovation in South Australia. Since 2016, Salisbury Primary School has been leading the way in adopting the Science of Reading and the Science of Learning, and I'm proud to have been a part of their journey.

I have recently resigned from the Department for Education after 19 years in the profession. I am moving into starting my own business in educational consulting.

The St Mary's value of Veritas has always stuck with me. It reminds me of the quote: Do what is right, not what is easy. I have tried to use this quote in my life and the lessons that I learnt at St Mary's College.

01 Claire Victory
02 Liana McCurry



"We were always encouraged to actively support our communities through initiatives like the Vinnies Winter Appeal, Can Drive Collection, and Social Justice Day; I always looked forward to these events!"

— Vasilia Antoniou

Vasilia Antoniou

Class of 2021

Since graduating from St Mary's three years ago, I've been fortunate to study a double degree at the University of Adelaide – a Bachelor of Laws and a Bachelor of Arts with a major in Criminology. Transitioning from the supportive and nurturing environment at St Mary's, where I had close relationships with my teachers, to a more independent university setting was initially challenging. I had to adjust to a new learning structure where I needed to be proactive and seek support when required. However, the resilience and time management skills I developed at St Mary's helped me stay focused and confident, knowing I could succeed in this new environment.

One of the most enriching aspects of university life has been connecting with others who share my dedication to justice. I've formed incredible friendships with people who share my commitment to social issues, which has broadened my perspective on diverse social challenges. During my second year, one of my friends gave me an opportunity to undertake a volunteer position with an organisation called SYC in their Youth Justice Division.

In this role, I've worked alongside case managers in SYC's Integrated Housing Exits Program (IHEP). This program helps young people at risk of homelessness who have had interactions with the justice system transition from South Australia's youth training centres into independent housing. Throughout their tenancy, these young individuals are supported in developing their independent living skills and addressing factors contributing to reoffending. In my position, I assist case managers in supporting youth justice clients in both custodial and community settings, participating in the IHEP, Community Service Order Program, and Ignition Program. My responsibilities include reviewing case plans, administrative work, transporting clients, supporting young people in court, and running programs with young people in custody. This position has also allowed me to liaise with Department for Human Services (DHS) case managers, court staff, and lawyers.

The highlight of this role is running the Ignition program at the Kurlana Tapa Youth Justice Centre. Ignition is a 17-module program that teaches independent living skills to young people. It has been profoundly rewarding to build connections with young people and witness their personal growth, resilience and determination to make positive changes.

Reflecting on my journey, I realise how deeply St Mary's instilled a passion for social justice in me and an understanding of the importance of giving back. My teachers always encouraged open and honest conversations about local and global social justice issues, inspiring me to consider those who are most vulnerable. We were always encouraged to actively support our communities through initiatives like the Vinnies Winter Appeal, Can Drive Collection, and Social Justice Day; I always looked forward to these events!

While working within the youth justice space was not a path, I initially envisioned for myself, I am incredibly grateful for the experiences and insights these opportunities have provided. Although I am still uncertain about my career's direction, I am learning to embrace this uncertainty. Sometimes, it's okay to veer off the original plan—trying new things can lead to unexpected and fulfilling opportunities in the "big wide world"!

Old Scholar Achievements



Chloe Singh

Class of 2021

I graduated with a Bachelor of Health Sciences from Bond University. This was a 2-year accelerated degree, meaning a 3-year bachelor's degree was completed in 2 years. Studying for a 3-year degree in 2 years resulted in having to be at university all year round from January to December, having exams every few months and no mid-semester exam break. My time at Bond University led to many different opportunities such as mentoring programs, university camping trips, job networking opportunities, student galas, and a free sausage sizzle every Wednesday. While I am not currently pursuing further degrees or working a job within my field, my degree has led to gaining a full-time job in the Australian Government sector that requires me to use the skills and my ability to adapt to both St Mary's and Bond University have taught me.



Kate Marie Lewis

Class of 2004

I have loved art all my life. Studying art at St Mary's College contributed significantly to my artistic journey. Since school, I have continued my artistic practice by studying for my Health Sciences degree, Honours, PhD in neuroscience, moving to San Francisco for a postdoc at UCSF, returning home and starting a family. This year, I was fortunate enough to have my acrylic painting, Twist, chosen as a finalist for the Waterhouse Natural Sciences Art Prize. Seeing my yellow-tailed black cockatoo painting exhibited alongside all the other beautiful pieces in the South Australian Museum was such a thrill. The Waterhouse exhibition is one that I have always enjoyed as a visitor, and I never dreamed that one day I would have a piece in such a prestigious art prize. Now, I am working towards developing my art practice to write and illustrate children's picture books.

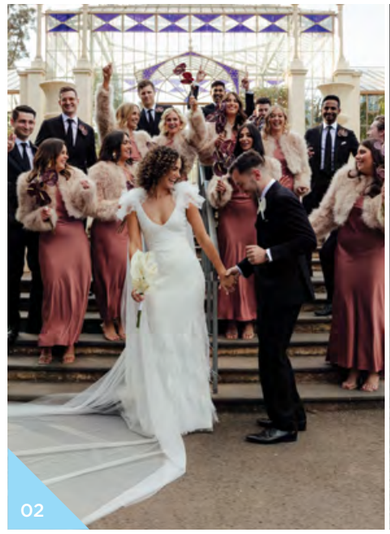
We also wish to congratulate Kate for her selection as one of the two emerging SA Literary Fellowships for 2025 by Writers SA and the State Library of South Australia.

Wedding Bells


01






02




03


04



01 Isabella Formichella (nee Deluca | 2012) married her partner, Michael at St Patrick's Church on 26 April 2024.

"Being married in St Patrick's Church was very special; it was where I graduated and celebrated my sacraments. Also, having our family photos in front of the Chapel and in the Convent Lawns at St Mary's (the secret gardens, as we used to call them) brought back lovely memories."

02 Paloma Chehade (nee D'Addario | 2012) married her partner, Luke at the St Ignatius Church on 11 May 2024, after 5 years together.

"Our wedding came together with an amalgamation of cultures, and we incorporated traditions from our Italian, Lebanese and Greek heritage into the celebration. We were thrilled to be able to share it with our closest family and friends, and it will be a day we will remember forever."

03 Georgia Brass (2011) got proposed to while holidaying in Japan!

"My engagement is to a guy that I met while at St Mary's as he was a CBC boy!"

04 Victoria Wiseman (nee Ridegwell | 2012) married her partner, Dominic at the South Australian Museum on 9 March 2024, after 5 years together. Emma Tripodi and Lidia Sidone were bridesmaids who attended St Mary's College from Reception to Year 10.

"We married on a 42-degree day at the South Australian Museum; despite the heat, we had our best day surrounded by our closest friends and family."

Little Ones



01





02





03



Do you have a special moment you would like to share with our St Mary's College community? Please send your submission to Advancement@stmarys.sa.edu.au

01 Leah Nazari (nee Kennedy | 2014) has three children, Leroy, Celine and Kamila, to husband, Mohsen.

"Having 3 under 3 has kept my husband and I very busy the last few years. But we wouldn't have it any other way! I have 2 girls and 1 boy just born this year. And our family is now complete as a family of 5!"

02 Regan Grace (nee Smallacombe | 2009) gave birth to Bobbi June Grace on 4 September 2024.

New parents, Regan and Colby were also featured in our first edition of Veritas, celebrating their wedding.

03 Vicki Patiniotis (nee Poupoulas | 2000) and her husband Terry welcomed a girl, Lydia Irene Patiniotis, on 6 Jan 2024.

A little sister for Manoli - both enjoy coming to Little Sprouts Playgroup.

Old Scholar In Memoriam

Rosemary Yelland OP

1940 — 2024



When Rosemary met the Adelaide Holy Cross Dominican sisters in 1962, she was already a young teacher with a class of ninety Reception students in Ringwood Victoria, where the Dominicans had been invited to take over the school.

A creative and resourceful person, Rosemary loved teaching, across many year levels and in four different states. She loved literature, was a gifted artist, ecologist and advocate for justice and brought energy and enthusiasm to whatever the challenge at hand.

She relished the opportunities which teaching gave her to help young people discover their own creativity and to find and cherish the beautiful in life. This carried over into her commitment as a Foster Carer when, for a number of years, we were able to offer a welcoming, secure and safe home for children who needed such support. Her mandate that we could not do this without pets was non-negotiable! One of those children, now living in USA, also chose St Mary's as her school.

Rosemary taught at St Mary's in the 90's.

When we gathered to celebrate and give thanks for Rosemary's life at her funeral liturgy this year, several of her friends from St Mary's joined us. The memories and anecdotes shared gave great testimony to a generous and loving life well spent among kindred spirits for whom education, in its broadest sense, remains a life-long commitment.

Sharon Orchard

Class of 1980 | Passed away at 60 years old



Sharon Orchard's compassionate spirit touched countless lives through her dedication to the care of others. A highly regarded Registered Nurse at the Women's and Children's Hospital, Sharon devoted her career to the well-being of children, bringing kindness, expertise, and warmth to every patient. In recent years, she focused her caring nature on her elderly mother, who lived in Wallaroo and worked in aged care, ensuring dignified, attentive support to older people.

Sharon's connection to St Mary's College was heartfelt; she often spoke highly of the school and shared her admiration with others. She will be fondly remembered by all who knew her.

Old Scholar In Memoriam

Ashleigh Young

1992 — 2023



Old Scholar Ashleigh Young was a remarkable figure in the world of sports, both on the field and behind the scenes, as a passionate coach and sports administrator. Her journey began with a deep-rooted love for competitive sports, inspired by watching her father on the football field. This passion drove her to excel in various sports throughout her schooling and pursue a career dedicated to fostering the growth and development of women's sports. With a bachelor's degree in Sport and Recreation Management, Ashleigh's professional journey saw her making significant contributions across different roles, including the Football SA, SANFL, Norwood Football Club, Sacred Heart College, and Wilderness School.

Throughout her varied roles, Ashleigh's vision was clear: to lead programs that allowed young female athletes to reach the highest levels in their sports and ensured they found joy and camaraderie in team sports.

Ashleigh's untimely passing at the age of 31 due to complications from her asthma has left an indelible mark on the community she so fervently served. Remembered as a mother figure, mentor, and friend, her legacy is one of warmth, care, and unwavering support for the aspirations of young women in sports. Her work's profound impact and inspirational spirit have touched countless lives, leaving behind a legacy that will inspire future generations of women in sports.

The Marjorie Jackson-Nelson Centre for Women's Sport

The Marjorie Jackson-Nelson Centre for Women's Sport provides professional development opportunities for women in sport to play, lead and change the game for future generations by incrementally increasing and developing the number of women in sport.

Ashleigh Young Scholarships

In honour of Ashleigh's incredible life and contributions, a scholarship fund aims to continue her mission by supporting professional learning opportunities for women in sports. This initiative seeks to empower other passionate individuals to follow in Ashleigh's footsteps, ensuring her vision and dedication to women's sports live on and flourish.

Marjorie Jackson-Nelson CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S SPORT Powered by SPORT SA

Reunions & Gatherings

Class of 2023 Collection of Yearbooks

The Class of 2023 returned to St Mary's College during the year to collect their yearbooks, reconnecting with classmates and staff as our newest Old Scholars. This gathering was an excellent opportunity for them to share stories about their lives since graduation, with many already embarking on studies, apprenticeships, travel, and new work experiences. Old Scholars reunited and reflected on their school life at the college, bringing back the sense of community that defined their time at St Mary's. It was inspiring to see the paths they are forging and to welcome them into the Old Scholars community.



Classes of 1994, 2004, 2014

In 2024, Our Old Scholars from the Classes of 1994, 2004, and 2014 recently returned to St Mary's College to celebrate their thirty-year, twenty-year, and ten-year reunions.

The evening began with a campus tour led by Principal Clare Nocka, showcasing the College's new buildings and facilities. Old Scholars strolled through familiar spaces, reminiscing about their school days and sharing stories of their time at St Mary's College. It was a chance to reflect on the past while celebrating the present.



Many attendees expressed enthusiasm for staying connected with the College through supporting programs such as mentoring, tutoring, and career advising. These initiatives allow Old Scholars to inspire and guide the next generation of students, reinforcing the importance of being part of a vibrant and supportive community.

The reunion provided a wonderful occasion to reconnect with classmates and current and former staff. The warm and welcoming atmosphere was a testament to the enduring bonds they formed at St Mary's College.

We look forward to hosting more reunions in 2025 and continuing to celebrate the special connection shared by our Old Scholars.



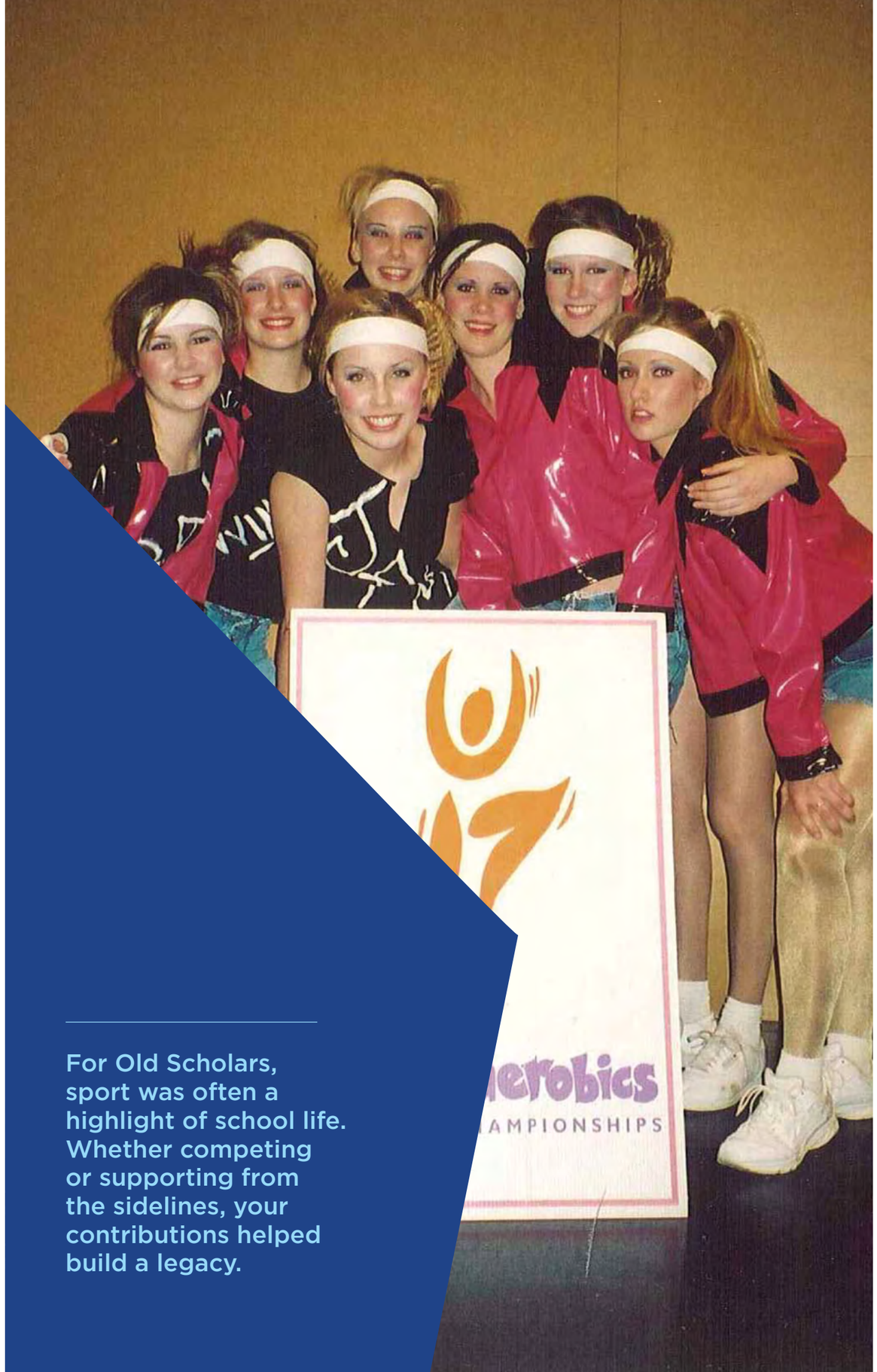
From the Archives

155 Years of St Mary's College Sport

Sport has been a key part of St Mary's College life for 155 years. In 2024, as the world celebrates the Olympic Games, we reflect on how sport has shaped the College's history and community.

Volleyball, swimming, athletics, tennis, and netball have been central to school life for generations, fostering teamwork, resilience, and connection. Interhouse competitions and sports days united students, creating shared memories and school spirit. Even dance aerobics was a popular sport during the eighties and nineties! This tradition continues today, with students encouraged to participate in various sports. Sport remains vital to the College's mission to empower young women.

For Old Scholars, sport was often a highlight of school life. Whether competing or supporting from the sidelines, your contributions helped build a legacy that continues to inspire current students as they strive for their own goals, on and off the field.



For Old Scholars, sport was often a highlight of school life. Whether competing or supporting from the sidelines, your contributions helped build a legacy.











2025 Events

Enrolment Events:

Principal's Tour Dates

Term 1 Thursday 6 March

Term 2 Wednesday 14 May

Term 2 Wednesday 18 June

Term 3 Thursday 7 August

Term 4 Thursday 30 October

Come and Try Dates

Term 2 Thursday 22 May

Term 3 Thursday 14 August

Term 4 Thursday 13 November

Community Events:

Sounds of City Schools
Wednesday 12 March

7-12 Musical
Wednesday 10 - Saturday 13 September

Community Cooking Classes

Term 1 Monday 7 March

Term 2 Monday 12 May

Term 3 Monday 25 August

Term 4 Monday 27 October

Parent Education Series:

Term 1 Week 9 Wednesday 26 March

Term 2 Week 6 Wednesday 4 June

Term 3 Week 7 Wednesday 3 September

Reunions for 2025:

Classes of 1985, 1995, 2005, 2015
November

Class of 2024
April

Classes of pre-1975 High Tea
Date TBC

ST MARY'S COLLEGE

EST. 1869

If you have something interesting to share, including work updates, personal achievements, elite level sporting achievements, or have recently celebrated an engagement, wedding, or baby, please send through your photos and some brief information to be included in the next edition.

Submit your story to **advancement@stmarys.sa.edu.au**

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram **@StMarysCollegeAdelaide**