ST MARY'S COLLEGE

EST. 1869



VERITAS

Old Scholars Magazine | Issue 3 Summer 2025

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The Old Scholars Veritas Magazine 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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Front Cover
Students: (left to right) Evelyn S (Year 1, 2025), and Annabelle R (Year 12, 2025).

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From the Principal
Mrs Heidi Senior

“I am made in the image of God; I am perfectly imperfect; I am capable of truth, compassionate action and growth.”

As I reflect on my first year as Principal, I am deeply grateful to be part of the St Mary’s College community. In 1869, seven courageous Dominican sisters brought a vision of education grounded in faith, learning, and veritas. Their courage and compassion is the golden thread that continues to guide us today; a thread we are privileged to weave through everything we do.

Our College identity, “I am.”, invites every girl to embrace who they are now while striving to become more: I am made in the image of God; I am perfectly imperfect; I am capable of truth, compassionate action, and growth.

This year, we are proud to introduce Growth as a new core value of the College, joining Community and Justice. Community reminds us that we are stronger together; Justice calls us to act with integrity and compassion; and Growth encourages us to embrace resilience and personal development in every aspect of life. Overarching these values is Veritas - our guiding principle of truth - which strengthens and gives purpose to our work together.

The launch of our 2025 to 2029 Strategic Plan in October marks a significant milestone in the life of St Mary’s.

This plan is not just a document; it is a shared vision for our future. It articulates how we will live our values in practice: nurturing wellbeing, fostering leadership, deepening academic excellence, and acting boldly for justice. It connects the legacy of our founding Sisters to the hopes and aspirations of every member of our community today.

Over the course of 2025, I witnessed our students live our values: stepping into leadership, supporting one another, pursuing their goals, and engaging meaningfully with their communities. Each moment reflects the enduring legacy of the Sisters, a commitment that expands beyond knowledge to the formation of people of character and courage.

To our Old Scholars, our College is a testament to the threads you wove and the stories you shared and created. I hope you find in these pages, new and familiar expressions of Veritas, our values and the spirit of St Mary’s.

Mrs Heidi Senior
Principal

Class of 2025
Academic Achievement



College Dux
Katia Principe
98.55



Proxime Accessit
Cally Stephens
97.80

100%
SACE completion

48%
A Grades

43%
B Grades

90+
12% of students
achieved an ATAR of 90 or over.

80+
42% of students
achieved an ATAR of 80 or over.

10
SACE Merits
achieved across 9 subjects.

140
A grades were achieved by students across 31 subjects.

27
A+ grades were achieved by students across 18 subjects.

15
Students studied VET as part of their successful SACE completion.

Celebrating Excellence

The St Mary's College Merit and Academic Awards Ceremony recognised the effort and achievement of Senior School students across their years at the College. The Ceremony celebrated academic progress, commitment to learning, and contributions to College life.

Special awards with strong links to the College's history were presented:

- Susan Sullivan Promise of Leadership Award - Rylee C
- Chelsea Ireland Environmental Call to Action Award - Laurianne D
- Professor Leanne Armand Science Award - Katia P
- Sr Mary Matthew OP English Award - Cally S
- Molly McInerney Merrigan Maths Award - Cally S
- Marg Emmel HASS Award - Nevada M
- Vocational Education Award - Sophie T
- Technology Award - Grace R

We warmly welcomed guest presenters with close connections to the College: Greg and Deb Ireland, parents of the late Chelsea Ireland (Class of 2018); Lynne Dansie, Old Scholar, parent of the late Leanne Armand (Class of 1985) and former staff member; and Katie Emmel, daughter of the late Marg Emmel, former teacher at St Mary's College. The ceremony also acknowledged the achievements of the Class of 2024, including College Dux Sirisha, who shared reflections on her Year 12 journey. A musical performance by Ioanna Antoniou (Class of 2024) formed part of the celebration.

For many Old Scholars, ceremonies like this recall familiar moments of recognition and encouragement. That tradition continues as each new generation of St Mary's students strives for excellence and contributes to the ongoing life of the College.

















2026 Student Leaders
Leading with Purpose and Pride







Student leadership at St Mary's is more than a title; it is a responsibility to champion the voices of our students and ensure every girl is heard. Over generations, our College has nurtured a proud tradition of student leaders who have shaped our community and inspired others to step forward with confidence. We congratulate:

College Captain (SRC) - Natalie S
Deputy College Captains (SRC) - Sana V and Tayah S
College Captain (Justice) - Abby O
Deputy College Captains (Justice) - India V and Tareeka W
Dance Coordinator - Indiana P
Music Coordinator - Izabella K
Art Coordinator - Olive B
Drama Coordinator - Charlize H
Sports Coordinator - Madison K
STEM Coordinator - Remi M

The 2026 Student Leaders embody the College's values of Community, Justice, and Growth. As they embark on their year of service, we look forward to seeing them uphold these traditions while contributing their own energy, ideas, and voices to the life of St Mary's. Their leadership is a reminder that the spirit of student voice and shared responsibility continues to thrive at St Mary's across the generations.

> "To me, leadership is a journey grounded in truth, growth and connection, that fosters belonging in a community that values authenticity... I want to help others find their voices, just as past leaders helped me find mine."
>
> Natalie, College Captain SRC

Student Leadership Highlights
Leadership in the Community



Natalie S (Year 11, 2025)
2025 Order of Australia Association Student Citizenship Award

Congratulations to Natalie S, one of just ten students across South Australia to receive the 2025 Order of Australia Association Student Citizenship Award. Presented by Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC, Governor of South Australia, at Government House, this prestigious award recognises Natalie's outstanding commitment to citizenship, leadership and service. Her dedication to our College and the wider community is impressive, and we are incredibly proud of her achievements.



Lettysher M (Year 10, 2025)
Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN)

We congratulate Lettysher M, who completed the Rotary Youth Program of Enrichment (RYPEN), supported by Rotary Adelaide Central. Lettysher received her participation certificate after presenting to the Rotary committee about her experience in the 3-day leadership program, where she built new friendships, strengthened her networking skills, and developed teamwork and leadership capabilities. Her willingness to step outside her comfort zone highlights the positive and lasting impact of leadership opportunities on student growth and confidence.

Together, these achievements reflect the impressive potential of student leadership at St Mary's College and the power of programs that inspire young people to lead with purpose. We thank Rotary Adelaide Central and our wider community partners for their continued support in empowering the next generation of leaders.

Community Highlights

Community Welcome Evening
The year began with a vibrant sense of connection as Mrs Heidi Senior and our Student Leaders welcomed families to the 2025 Community Welcome Evening. Parents had the opportunity to meet Care Group Teachers, enjoy refreshments on the Veritas lawns, and explore pop-up displays highlighting the many diverse co-curricular programs and student opportunities that make our College so unique.

The evening was a wonderful expression of the strong community spirit at St Mary's, a place where belonging is nurtured and every student is supported to thrive.

Adelaide International Women's Day Breakfast
Our Student Leaders attended the 2025 Adelaide International Women's Day Breakfast at the Adelaide Convention Centre, joining more than 3,000 guests in support of UN Women Australia. Hosted by Senator the Hon. Penny Wong, the event featured Rachel Perkins, a proud Arrernte and Kalkadoon woman, who spoke about truth-telling, representation and the role of women in shaping Australia's story. Students met both speakers and took part in discussions about leadership and change.

Representing St Mary's College alongside 33 schools, our students stood with our Dominican family in a shared commitment to gender equality and leadership. For Old Scholars, this gathering reflects a continuing legacy: empowering women to use their voices with purpose and to lead with integrity, as so many have done before them.

Grandparents and Special Friends' Mass and Afternoon Tea
St Mary's College hosted an afternoon where Junior School students welcomed their grandparents and special friends for a mass and afternoon tea. The Junior School Concert Band provided music, and guests enjoyed snacks and drinks from the College coffee cart, Grounds for Change. It was a meaningful occasion that highlighted the continued strong connections within our community for our families and wider community.

Sounds of City Schools
Students from St Mary's College, Christian Brothers College, and St Aloysius College came together for Sounds of City Schools - a celebration of music and collaboration between our city schools. Performances showcased the talent across all colleges, culminating in a combined performance of "We Built This City."

We thank all music staff and volunteers for making the concert a memorable evening of music and community.

We also acknowledge talented Old Scholar Alexandra Mantis (Class of 2019), a current staff member, who contributed as sound technician and musician.

Community Cooking Classes
Our 2025 Community Cooking Classes successfully brought together families, friends and staff for evenings of food and conversation. Under the guidance of Chef Dana from TAFE SA, participants mastered the indulgent Dubai Chocolate Cake. In November, Chef Shana led a festive Christmas Wreath Cinnamon Roll class, sharing simple techniques to create a centrepiece for the holiday table.

We thank Chefs Dana and Shana for their generosity and humour, and everyone who joined in for making these classes such warm, community-minded occasions.

Mother's Day
The Veritas Lawns were alive with laughter and community as St Mary's came together to celebrate the women who shape our story. The event acknowledged the love and support mother's and the special women in our lives provide each day, values that many Old Scholars will remember from their time at the College. It served as a reminder of the connections that link past and present St Mary's women. Guests enjoyed barista-made coffee from Grounds for Change and a shared breakfast.

Father's Day
In recognition of the dads, granddads, and special men in our community, the College came together to celebrate Father's Day. The morning began with a whole-College breakfast, shared by families and staff. The Junior School then held an Open Morning, inviting guests into learning spaces. It was an opportunity to participate in classroom activities and students' learning.

Celebrating Book Week
St Mary's College celebrated Book Week with colour and creativity, embracing the 2025 national theme 'Book an Adventure!' All students joined together for a whole-College parade, where favourite book characters stepped onto the catwalk in a lively celebration of reading. Throughout the week, students enjoyed quizzes, crafts and story time sessions, encouraging curiosity and a deeper love of books.

Book Week once again reminded us of the joy stories bring, connecting students of all ages through learning and a shared sense of adventure.

















2025 to 2029
Strategic Plan Launch







Honouring our past.
Shaping our future.

In October, St Mary's College gathered to mark an important milestone: the launch of the Strategic Plan for 2025 to 2029. Old Scholars joined staff, students, families, Dominican Sisters, Dominican Education Australia (DEA) Trustees, and Board Members on the Convent Lawns for an evening that highlighted the direction and priorities shaping the College's next chapter.

Guests enjoyed refreshments and nibbles served by the Food Technology team, while the College Jazz Band performed. Mrs Heidi Senior then outlined the vision and key focus areas that will guide St Mary's over the coming years.

A significant moment of the evening was the introduction of a new College value - Growth, now sitting alongside Community and Justice, and framed by the guiding principle of Veritas. This update reflects the College's ongoing commitment to supporting students to learn, lead, and contribute with purpose.

The development of the Strategic Plan was informed by feedback and insights from across the College community, including many Old Scholars who participated in consultation opportunities. Their contributions helped shape a plan that honours the College's heritage while preparing for the future.

As St Mary's moves into this next phase, we look forward to continuing the strong connection between past and present students and to seeing the Strategic Plan come to life in the years ahead.

To view the 2025 to 2029 Strategic Plan, visit our College website.



HEARTS AND HANDS

AT ST MARY'S COLLEGE

Hearts and Hands
New Parent Committee

Strengthening Community in 2025

In 2025, St Mary's College was thrilled to launch of Hearts and Hands, a new parent group dedicated to fostering connections, supporting College projects and events, and enriching the wider community.

The committee aims to focus on meaningful initiatives that enhance student experiences while building a warm and inclusive environment for families.

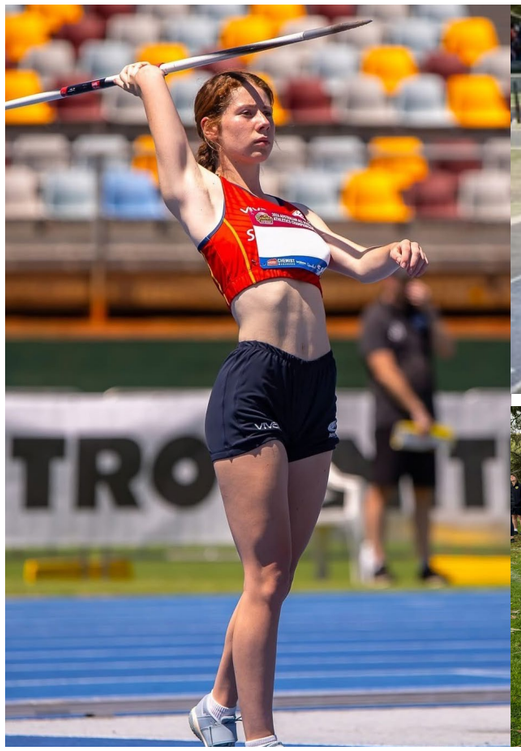
We are also delighted to welcome Old Scholar Alicia Pastro (Class of 2007), whose involvement brings both the perspective of an old scholar and the insight of a parent. Alicia's participation exemplifies the spirit of Hearts and Hands: celebrating St Mary's College's history while contributing to its vibrant future.

As Hearts and Hands continues to grow, the College looks forward to the connections and impact this group will bring. With the energy and generosity of our parent community, Hearts and Hands is set to play a meaningful role in supporting College life for years to come.



Co-Curricular
Sport








Junior School Sport

Over 95 students from Year 3 to 6 participated in a range of SAPSASA and SACPSSA sporting carnivals, including Cross-Country, Netball, Athletics, and Swimming.
We were delighted to see an outstanding number of students involved in after-school co-curricular sports, such as Mini Hoops Basketball, Mini Mary's NetSetters Netball, KickStart Soccer, and Thunder Cup Netball.

SAPSASA Representation

Six students proudly represented the North Adelaide District at State Carnivals:

- Eloise B (Soccer)
- Valentina P (Soccer)
- Indie D (Netball)
- Rubie M (Netball and Swimming)
- Mia M (Athletics)
- Scarlett M (Swimming and Athletics)

Mini Mary's Netball Program

In Term 2 and 3, 22 enthusiastic Year 3 and 4 students participated in the Mini Mary's Netball Development Program and represented St Mary's College at the Thunder Cup Netball Competition. The Thunder Cup offers primary students the opportunity to experience netball in a supportive environment, with an emphasis on sportsmanship, participation and fun. Coordinated by Netball SA, the competition empowers players to build confidence, skills, and a love for the game.

Netball Academy

It has been another outstanding year for the St Mary's College Netball Academy, with 89 students proudly representing the program in 2025. Throughout Terms 1, 2 and 3, our dedicated netballers committed to early morning training twice a week and represented the College in the SACSSGSA netball competition on Saturday mornings. In addition to their Academy commitments, many of our students represented St Mary's College in a range of carnivals, Statewide Schools Knockout Competitions, and interstate opportunities.

Reconciliation Round

Our Netball Academy proudly participated in the SACSSGSA Reconciliation Round. Our Open A1 and Open A2 teams wore our Indigenous dress with dignity as they secured close wins against Mercedes College. Both Colleges came together in the spirit of connection and reconciliation, celebrating the importance of honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through sport.

SMC v CBC Birthday Cup

During Term 3, our Year 12 students delivered an exciting and closely contested netball match full of exceptional skill and sportsmanship. We are thrilled to announce that St Mary's has once again retained the Birthday Cup, an honour we have proudly held since 2017. A special congratulations to our Year 12 players for their outstanding performance, and to their supporters for bringing incredible energy to the sidelines.

We extend thanks to our 2025 Sport Captain, Addison F, and our House Captains for their leadership and coordination in making this annual event such a success.

Middle and Senior School Sport

It has been a successful year across SACSSGSA, School Sport SA Athletics, Swimming Carnivals, and Statewide Schools Competitions. St Mary's College competed in Netball, Volleyball, Futsal, and AFL. More than 130 students also represented the College in School Sport SA Weekly Competitions, participating in Volleyball, Basketball, and Badminton.









House Cup
Our 2025 Sport Captain, Addison F, together with our 12 House Captains, organised a week of house tournaments for students from Reception to Year 12. Students of all skill levels took to the court to compete in Dodgeball and Volleyball. This year, St Mary's House claimed the overall House Cup victory.

Individual Excellence | Representing South Australia
- Sienna W (Year 7) represented SA in the 12 and Under division at the Australian Netball Championships (Ballarat in October)
- Clara F (Year 9) represented SA at the 2025 Australian National Age Championships (Brisbane in April) and at the Water Polo East Cost Challenge (Melbourne in July)
- Keira P and Audrey F (Year 12) represented SA at the Australian Athletics Championships (Perth in April)

Individual Excellence | Representing St Mary's College
- Scarlett M (Year 4) and Rubie M (Year 6) were awarded Age Champion titles at the SACPSSA Swimming Carnival
- Clara F (Year 9) set a new Under 16 Freestyle record at the SACSSGSA Swimming Carnival

Outstanding Achievements | College Teams
- Under 15 Athletics team won SACSSGSA A Grade Carnival Age Champions
- Year 9/10 Division 1 Volleyball team won the School Sport SA Volleyball for Term 2/3
- Year 7 Netball team won SAUCNA Junior Carnival
- Year 7/8A Netball team finished second at the Catholic Girls Middle School Netball Carnival



Sports Day

In early 2025, St Mary's College held its annual Reception to Year 12 Sports Day at the Athletics SA Stadium. The event brought together students, staff, and families for a day of teamwork, friendly competition, and house spirit.

This year's House themes - Catherine's Carnival, Thomas' Toy Story, Dominic's Disco, and Mary's Marine - set a lively tone for the day, filling the stands with colour and energy.

Congratulations to our winning teams:
- Junior School Trophy: St Thomas
- Meich Team Trophy: St Mary's
- Buchanan Spirit Trophy: St Dominic's
- Overall Perpetual Trophy: St Catherine's

A special thank you to our Old Scholar volunteers, whose support helped the day run smoothly: Brooke Simpson (Class of 2023), Katie Simpson (Class of 2024) and Mackenzie Darby (Class of 2023). Their involvement reflects the lasting connection our Old Scholars share with the College community.





Co-Curricular
Performance and Visual Art

South Australian Schools Band and Orchestra Festival
This year, our music students proudly represented St Mary's College at the South Australian Schools Band and Orchestra Festival presented by ABODA, joining more than 170 ensembles from across the state. Their outstanding performances earned multiple awards across concert and stage band sections, showcasing the skill and strength of our Performing Arts program.

Gen Connection Concert
Students from St Mary's College joined peers from Nazareth Catholic Community, St Michael's College, and Blackfriars Priory School for the 2025 Gen Connection Concert - a vibrant showcase of jazz, emerging talent, and community spirit. Held just weeks before Generations in Jazz, the event provided ensembles with the opportunity to share their polished performances with a live audience, showcasing the collaboration, passion, and musical excellence thriving across our schools.

Adelaide Choral Eisteddfod
Our Concert Choir and Middle School Choir delivered exceptional performances at this year's Adelaide Choral Eisteddfod, held in the beautiful Elder Hall at the University of Adelaide. The Concert Choir impressed both audiences and adjudicators, earning second place with an outstanding score of 98%. The Middle School Choir achieved a triumphant first place in their section, an inspiring back-to-back win following their success in 2024. It was a wonderful celebration of vocal excellence and dedication from our young performers.

Concert Band Showcase
The St Mary's College Concert Band Showcase brought together our Junior, Middle, and Old Scholar Concert Bands for a celebration of music and community. Our Old Scholar Concert Band featured Emily Dennis (Class of 2021), Leif Lawrie (Class of 2021), Frankie Maiese (Class of 2022), Milana Golotta (Class of 2023), Maddison Selby (Class of 2023), Caitlin Murray (Class of 2023), Carla Abishara (Class of 2024), Isis Golotta (Class of 2024) and Alexia Flaherty (Class of 2025).

A highlight of the evening was the special appearance by the Australian Army Concert Band, an extraordinary opportunity for our students to perform alongside professional musicians. The night concluded with a breathtaking combined finale, featuring over 70 musicians united on stage in a memorable performance.

Stage 2 Drama Production | *Antigone Now*
Our Stage 2 Drama students captivated audiences with their bold and contemporary performance of *Antigone Now*, a modern reimagining of the classic Greek tragedy. Showcasing impressive talent and emotional depth, the cast explored powerful themes of justice, identity, and the influence of a single voice. Congratulations to the dedicated cast and crew on an outstanding and memorable production.

Senior School Dance Showcase
The CPA was filled with creativity during the Senior School Dance Showcase, featuring performances from Stage 1 Dance and Stage 2 Creative Arts - Dance students. Inspired by workshops with leading Australian artists throughout the year, students shared work that reflected their passion and artistry.

Junior School Arts Morning
The Junior School was buzzing with energy as families gathered for a joyful celebration of the Arts. Students from every year level took to the stage to share what they have learnt in Visual Art, Dance, Drama, and Music throughout Semester 1. It was a vibrant showcase of creativity, growth, and the impressive artistic achievements of our youngest performers.

2025 SALA Exhibition | *Pilgrims of Hope*
The 2025 SALA exhibition, *Pilgrims of Hope*, was a colourful celebration of faith, creativity, and community. Featuring works from Reception to Year 10, the exhibition showcased an inspiring collection of paintings, drawings, sculptures, and mixed-media pieces, all responding to Pope Francis's Jubilee message of hope and unity.

Senior Art and Design Exhibition
The Senior Art and Design Exhibition showcased the creativity and skill of our Senior School students through an impressive collection of works. Featuring painting, sculpture, textiles, digital design, and mixed-media installations, the exhibition highlighted both technical excellence and powerful personal expression. The College community gathered to celebrate our young artists, who were widely praised for their originality and artistic vision. It was wonderful to see many Old Scholars in attendance, returning to support the creativity of our current students. Pictured (bottom left, right page): Dominique (Year 12) with her family at the Senior Art and Design Exhibition - Craig, Leif (Old Scholar, Class of 2021), and her mother Kristina Lawrie (née Smith, Class of 1991).












Back to the 80's
Year 7 to 12 Musical

St Mary's College presented its production of *Back to the 80's* by Neil Gooding - a show that filled the stage with energy, laughter, and familiar tunes. Before four sold-out evening performances, the cast and crew shared their work in a special preview for our Junior School and visiting students from St Thomas School and Our Lady of Grace School.

Students from Year 7 to 12 participated in the musical by performing on stage, playing in the band, designing sets and costumes, managing backstage, and welcoming audiences front of house. Their teamwork and commitment brought the story to life, which highlighted the strong sense of community that defines St Mary's.

We thank our dedicated Arts staff and volunteers who supported students through months of rehearsals and preparation. The success of *Back to the 80's* was the result of genuine collaboration and shared pride.

Audience members described the show as "professional," "fantastic," and "thoroughly enjoyable," with one writing, "As a teenager of the 80's, so many memories came flooding back. Thank you for allowing us to laugh and reminisce about a wonderful era."

For many Old Scholars, College productions remain some of the most memorable experiences of their time at St Mary's, whether centre stage under the lights, part of the backstage crew, or playing in the band. Each generation has its own stories of long rehearsals, quick costume changes, and the shared thrill of opening night. *Back to the 80's* carried that same spirit, connecting today's students with those who came before them.







Cambodia









Teaching, Learning and Growing Together

In July, a group of Year 11 students and staff approached the Cambodia Immersion experience with open hearts and minds. After visiting the Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Cheung Ek Killing Fields in Phnom Penh, the group travelled to Battambang, where they spent 10 days teaching English, creating fun activities, and learning about Caritas Cambodia programs that support education and community development.

Having prepared teaching resources throughout the year, students engaged with young people from remote villages who were continuing their education through the Providence Centre. Through shared language, laughter, and friendship, these interactions created a deeply enriching experience for all involved.

Immersions not only broaden students' understanding of global cultures and histories but also demonstrate the transformative power of education. By supporting learning opportunities in communities such as Cambodia, students foster empathy and a lasting appreciation for the role of education in shaping futures.

Headstone Project

Remembering the Past, Inspiring the Future

In November, our Year 9 students brought history to life at West Terrace Cemetery through the Headstone Project SA. After researching World War I veterans, they attended a moving commemorative service honouring nurses Sister Christina McLean and Sister Isabella Parkinson, and soldiers PTE Arthur T. Anderson, PTE Frederick A. Parker, and L/CPL William Ryan of the 27th Battalion AIF.

Supported by Mrs Heidi Senior, Ms Ziah Case, Mr Michael Brown MP, the Macclesfield RSL Sub-Branch, and families of the veterans, students gained a profound understanding of courage and service.

Experiences like this go far beyond textbooks, fostering respect and a lasting connection to history. Through the Headstone Project SA, future generations continue the work of remembering and honouring those who served. To date, more than 200 St Mary's students have researched 110 graves, including 50 previously unmarked, ensuring that the stories of sacrifice are never forgotten.







Remembrance Day

Honouring Service, Remembering Sacrifice

On November 11 at 11:00 am, our St Mary's College community gathered in solemn reflection for our Remembrance Day Ceremony. Together, we paused for a minute's silence to honour those who have served and sacrificed for our country.

Old Scholar Madison Selby (Class of 2023) returned to perform The Last Post, and we were joined by community members who have served, or are currently serving, in the Australian Defence Force. Wreaths were laid by students whose family members have served, past and present, followed by a special morning tea shared in gratitude and remembrance.



Year 12 Graduation Dinner

This year, we gathered in Adelaide Oval's Magarey Room to celebrate the Year 12 Graduation Dinner for the Class of 2025. Students, families, and staff came together to mark the completion of the graduates' final year at the College.

The evening included shared meals, speeches, and a formal ceremony acknowledging each student as they concluded their education at St Mary's. This event also marked the moment the Class of 2025 became the newest members of the St Mary's College Old Scholar community.

We congratulate the graduates and welcome them as Old Scholars. We look forward to their ongoing connection with the College and their participation in future Old Scholar events.







End of Year Eucharistic Celebration

The End of Year Eucharistic Celebration (EYEC) is a longstanding tradition at St Mary's, reflecting our Catholic Dominican heritage and commitment to community. In December, the College gathered at St Francis Xavier Cathedral to farewell the Year 12 students and mark the conclusion of the 2025 school year.

Grounded in our 'I am' theme, the readings and prayers acknowledged the many layers that make up our vibrant community. Father Charles Lukati encouraged gratitude in everyday life, as a reminder to give thanks to God for our families, friends, and blessings. The Prayers of the Faithful, shared in various languages, recognised the diversity within our community, and the music highlighted the talents of our musicians, enhancing the celebration.

For those attending, the celebration offered a moment to reflect on their time at St Mary's; the experiences shared, the milestones achieved, and the friendships formed. As Old Scholars, you may reflect on your own End of Year Eucharistic Celebrations and the sense of connection and belonging that has continued beyond your school years.

To conclude, Junior School students and the future Year 12 students formed a guard of honour, lining the Cathedral to farewell the Graduating Class of 2025. It was a moving reminder of the bonds that unite our community across all ages and a joyful expression of the spirit we treasure at St Mary's College.

Staff Farewells

Guiding generations of students, inspiring colleagues, and shaping the St Mary's community with patience, humour, and unwavering commitment

The St Mary's College community thanks our departing staff for their dedication and service, and wishes them every success in the next chapter of their journeys.

Farewell Maureen van Heuven
43 Years of Dedication





"Maureen's dedication, kindness, and calm presence have left a lasting legacy for generations of students and staff."

After an extraordinary 43 years at St Mary's College, Maureen is stepping into semi-retirement, leaving behind a legacy that generations of students and colleagues alike will remember. For many Old Scholars, Maureen needs no introduction: the teacher who could turn a tricky maths problem into a lightbulb moment, who made science experiments both fascinating and manageable, and who always greeted you in the corridor with a warm and encouraging smile.

Maureen began her teaching journey in 1983, a different time at St Mary's. Communication between staff relied on spirit duplicators, printed memos, and occasionally, a brave student sent on a message-running expedition. Computers, email, mobile phones, and graphic calculators were unheard of. Over the decades, Maureen not only adapted to every educational and technological change but also embraced it with calm determination, moving seamlessly from chalkboard to interactive screens, from exercise books to Microsoft OneNote, from stopwatches to Vernier data collection systems, and from the trusty scientific calculator to the graphics calculator emulator.

But Maureen's influence has never been limited to her mastery of technology or curriculum. She is remembered for her patience, calm presence, her humour, and the ability to diffuse a chaotic classroom. The encouraging words when a student needed them the most, and quiet guidance was offered to colleagues navigating the many challenges of teaching. For countless Old Scholars, Maureen's classroom was a place of learning, reassurance, and sometimes, laughter at her clever asides.

Her dedication to St Mary's College has been unwavering. Maureen has taught generations of students, supported colleagues, guided new staff, and quietly shaped the culture of the College over four decades. She has seen four principals, experienced countless curriculum reforms, and witnessed the rise and fall of technologies, trends, and even uniform styles. Through it all, she remained the epitome of professionalism, integrity, and warmth.

As Maureen moves into semi-retirement, we celebrate not only her decades of service but the countless memories she has created at St Mary's. Old Scholars, who were once her students, will recall the lessons she taught, the encouragement she offered, and the humour she shared. Staff who have worked alongside her will remember her wisdom, calm presence, and unwavering support.

Congratulations, Maureen, on 43 remarkable years at St Mary's College. We, as a community, thank you for your dedication, kindness, resilience, and laughter. The College community - past and present- will miss you dearly, and we can only imagine the adventures that await you in this next chapter.

Celebrating Sandra Ciccarello
Old Scholar and Retiring Staff



“Frequently described as the heart of the Junior School, Sandra brought her whole self to St Mary’s College each day - leading with warmth, generosity and unwavering care.”

Sandra Ciccarello (Class of 1981) has come full circle at St Mary’s College, serving most recently as Director of the Junior School and concluding an extraordinary 40-year career in education.

As a student, Sandra fondly remembers her English teacher, Mrs Swift, and her Italian teacher, Ms O’Connor, whose influence left a lasting impression. Among her most cherished memories are the College formals, filled with celebration, and the pride she felt as a student leader. She proudly belonged to St Catherine’s House.

Sandra began her teaching career in 1984 at Kildare College before gaining experience in Brisbane and Melbourne. Upon returning to Adelaide, she joined Cabra Dominican College, where she spent 18 years in various roles. During this time, she also stepped away from the classroom to raise her three children. In 2021, while on leave, a twist of fate saw Sandra invited to apply for the role of Director of Junior School at St Mary’s College. What followed became a fitting final chapter of her career.

During her time at St Mary’s, Sandra played a pivotal role in shaping the structures that now define the Junior School. She was instrumental in implementing the Laser Literacy program across Reception to Year 6, strengthening literacy and numeracy outcomes through explicit instruction, targeted intervention and thoughtful use of data. A lifelong learner, Sandra generously shared her expertise, supporting professional growth and innovation across the staff.

Known for her constant presence around the College, Sandra had a remarkable ability to be exactly where she was needed, supporting students, families and colleagues with compassion. A gifted listener and restorative leader, she ensured every person felt seen, heard and valued. The Junior School flourished under her leadership as a vibrant space filled with energy, joy, and more than a little glitter.

Her advice to her high school self reflects the wisdom she shared so freely with others, “Don’t get caught up in what people think or say about you. Be confident to do your own thing.”

As Sandra retires, she reflects on St Mary’s College as far more than a workplace, “it has been a community defined by deep connection.” She leaves with gratitude for the opportunity to share her final years in education with such remarkable students and colleagues. We wish Sandra every joy in retirement, including treasured time as a much-loved Nonna.

Celebrating Angela Covino
Education Support Officer





“Watching my daughters grow into strong, capable young women at St Mary’s has been one of my greatest joys. Their time at the College gave them confidence, friendships and opportunities that continue to shape their futures. I feel incredibly proud of all they have achieved, and excited for everything still ahead.”

For over 13 years, Angela has been a dedicated and much-loved member of the St Mary’s College staff, significantly contributing to the Junior School. Her commitment, warmth, and energy have shaped countless experiences for our students and families across the years.

Angela’s connection to the College runs even deeper as the mother of four St Mary’s graduates: Natahlia (Class of 2014), Alysia (Class of 2016), Francesca (Class of 2018), and, most recently, Annaliese (Class of 2023). Juggling the demands of working in our busy College environment while supporting her daughters through their education is a testament to Angela’s perseverance and genuine love for our community.

As Angela commences a new role at another Catholic school closer to home, we extend our gratitude for her outstanding service and dedication. She leaves a legacy of kindness and commitment, and she will be greatly missed by staff and students alike. We wish her every success and happiness in the next chapter of her journey.

Staff Spotlight
Celebrating Our Educators



Anna Fontanelli
SACE Coordinator

Background and Role

Anna Fontanelli has been part of the St Mary's College community since 1985. Over the years, she has taught Year 8 to 12 Mathematics, Economics, Computing Studies, and Religion. She served as Mathematics Coordinator for over 20 years and is currently the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) Coordinator, shaping the Senior School curriculum and supporting students in their final years of at the College.

Why Anna Loves St Mary's

"I love the vibe of the place. There is a feeling that you get when you walk into the College; it is special. I love my colleagues, some of whom I have worked with for over 30 years, and many now dear friends. And of course, I love the students I work with every day; they keep me young!"

Career Highlights

Anna says one of her proudest professional achievements was leading the Mathematics faculty as a Learning Area Leader, building strong programs and nurturing students' confidence in the subject. Outside work, she is equally proud of her beautiful family.

Hobbies and Inspirations

Anna enjoys spending time with her family, walking her dog along Henley Beach, going out with friends, and travelling. She admires paramedics for their courage and dedication, describing them as a "gift to our society."

Personal Mantra

"Don't worry about the little things, just be a good person. Leave a room better than when you entered it."

Highlight as a Staff Member

"Working in the Senior School team as the SACE Coordinator has been marvellous!"

From Students to Staff

Returning to inspire, lead, and shape the next generation at St Mary's

We are proud to celebrate our Old Scholars who have returned to St Mary's College as staff, bringing their passion, experience, and love for learning back to the community that shaped them.

Old Scholars on Staff



Terry Cooper - née Forner (Class of 1985)
Year 3 Teacher

Favourite Teacher
Mr John Zandona and Ms Rocco Shirippa. They were young teachers who interacted well with us and made learning fun.

Most Memorable Moment
Our Year 9 Easter play. It was a musical performed in the church.

House
St Thomas

Why I Chose to Work at St Mary's
A job became available in 2005, and I applied. It was strange walking through the gates as an adult and being interviewed in the nuns' area, which was always out of bounds when I was a student. I had not returned to St Mary's since graduating in 1985!

Roles at St Mary's College
I began in a Year 4 and 5 class. Over the years, I have moved between Year 1, Year 3, and Year 4.

Advice to My High School Self
It is good to have fun and enjoy yourself, but a little bit more study wouldn't hurt!

Key Highlights as a Staff Member
I love seeing the girls I taught in Junior School develop and grow, culminating in their Year 12 Graduation.



Vanessa Campbell - née Burge (Class of 1998)
Assistant to Teaching and Learning and Senior School Team (ESO)

Favourite Teacher
Mrs Irvine, my Social Studies teacher, was my favourite because of her engaging lessons, her encouragement to explore ideas, and the genuine care she showed her students.

Most Memorable Moment
One of my most memorable experiences at St Mary's College was the friendships I built. The connections I made with classmates during school have continued and remain an important part of my life today.

House
St Dominic's

Why I Chose to Work at St Mary's
St Mary's College gave me so much as a student - support, guidance, and a sense of belonging. This community helped shape me, and now I get to be part of that journey for others.

Roles at St Mary's College
I started working at St Mary's in 2024 as Assistant to the Director of Teaching and Learning and Director of Senior School.

Advice to My High School Self
Trust your abilities and explore new paths.

Key Highlights as a Staff Member
One of the highlights of my role has been reconnecting with the teachers who once guided me and seeing their impact continue in students today.



Alexandra Mantis (Class of 2011)
Music ESO and Technology

Favourite Teacher
Ms Stubberfield - she was a fantastic teacher.

Most Memorable Moment
Travelling to Ireland in 2009 for a music tour with the Music Department.

House
St Dominic's

Why I Chose to Work at St Mary's
I was already familiar with the friendly, welcoming community and culture at the College, so I knew it would be a fantastic place to work.

Roles at St Mary's College
2019 was my first year at the College, and I was hired to work part-time in Music Technology. From 2020, my role changed to full-time as Music ESO and Technology.

Advice to My High School Self
Try more new things because you never know what you will end up loving. Staying curious is much more important than staying comfortable.

Key Highlights as a Staff Member
A key highlight has been working with the music team and contributing to some incredible performances and musicals. Watching students from Reception to Year 12 grow in confidence, creativity, and musicianship has been rewarding and is one of the best parts of my role.



Georgie Amadio - née Toth (Class of 2012)
Director of Personalised Learning

Favourite Teacher
My Italian teachers, Signora Angela Caporaso and Signora Catrina Tridente, were such supportive and caring teachers. They always encouraged me to keep learning Italian up until Year 12, and I still use it to this day!

Most Memorable Moment
In 2011, I travelled with a group from St Mary's College and Nazareth Catholic College to Italy. The trip taught me a lot about culture, history, and independence. It was a great way to immerse myself in the language - and enjoy some gelato and pizza along the way!

House
St Dominic's

Why I Chose to Work at St Mary's
St Mary's has always been very special to me. It is where I grew in confidence, became myself, and aspired to be the best at whatever I put my mind to. By teaching here, I hope to inspire my students to love learning and embrace opportunities, both inside and outside the classroom.

Roles at St Mary's College
From 2013 to 2016, I worked in OSHC while completing my Bachelor of Education. I began teaching at St Mary's in 2022 and am now the Director of Personalised Learning.

Advice to My High School Self
Be true to yourself. Always do your best and be kind.

Key Highlights as a Staff Member
A highlight has been teaching students I met in OSHC. I have also enjoyed being part of traditions like Justice Day and EYEC, and watching fantastic musicals and performances. It brings back fond memories of playing clarinet, flute, and bassoon in the music ensembles.



Catherine Dalton (Class of 2020)
Coordinator of Netball

Favourite Teacher
I had many great teachers, which makes it tricky, but I would have to say, Ms Petrilli. While she never taught me in a curriculum subject, she was a strong mentor, especially during times of hardship, and we shared many laughs.

Most Memorable Moment
I had many memorable moments while a student at the College, but my favourite would have to be the interstate Gold Coast trips for netball. Representing the College in sport alongside my friends was so rewarding, especially when we brought home a first-place trophy!

House
St Dominic's

Why I Chose to Work at St Mary's
As a player in the Netball Academy, I witnessed many Old Scholars return to the College as coaches. After graduating in 2020, I saw the opportunity to coach in the Netball Academy as a privilege to support the next generation and ensure they have the same enriching experience I once had. Now, as the Coordinator of Netball, I take pride in continuing to develop the program.

Roles at St Mary's College
I have worked at the College as a casual coach since 2021 and, as of 2025, I am the Coordinator of Netball.

Advice to My High School Self
When a teacher tells you that you would make a good teacher, believe them! Follow your passions and don't worry about your ATAR.

Key Highlights as a Staff Member
Reconnecting with past teachers and community members.



Danielle Robinson - née Rodier (Class of 2007)
College Registrar

Favourite Teacher
I was lucky enough to learn from many incredible teachers at St Mary's. Ms Sarvas, Mr Paton, and Ms Iannicelli encouraged my love of graphic design.

Most Memorable Moment
I don't think anyone can forget singing the Hymn to St Dominic in St Patrick's Church; there is still an incredible sense of nostalgia every time I hear it. Some highlights include Year 10, when my logo design was selected for official use by the Child Protection Council; in Year 12, having my designs included in the SABSSA Art Show at TAFE; and representing the College in SAPSASA Golf.

House
St Dominic's

Why I Chose to Work at St Mary's
After finishing school, I worked at one company for 11 years before marrying in 2018 and seeking a new purpose. The Registrar role felt like the perfect fit - not only because it suited my skills, but also because of the strong connection I felt as an Old Scholar, with my mum, Carmela Rodier (née Piperone, Class of 1981) also being an Old Scholar.

Roles at St Mary's College
I commenced my role as College Registrar in 2019.

Advice to My High School Self
Be involved in activities, be a part of something, spend time with the people who matter most and do what you love now, don't wait, and don't cut your hair that short.

Key Highlights as a Staff Member
A highlight has been working alongside many of my former teachers. Being part of the College again and welcoming new families has been incredibly rewarding.



Nicole Polisena - née Cremona (Class of 2013)
Year 5 Teacher and Assistant Director of Junior School

Favourite Teacher
My favourite teacher was Mrs Tridente. I have such fond memories of our Year 11/12 Italian lessons, where learning always felt fun and engaging. We'd watch Italian films, listen to music, and chat over coffee and biscotti, while practising our vocabulary in such an authentic way. One of the greatest highlights with her was travelling to Italy, where Mrs Tridente encouraged me to bring my learning to life and gave me the confidence to use my Italian in the real world.

Most Memorable Moment
I have such fond memories of our whole school community events, whether it was Sports Day, the swimming carnival, musicals, or Justice Day. I truly cherished those times when we came together to celebrate as a community and made lasting memories with my friends.

House
St Dominic's

Why I Chose to Work at St Mary's
I chose to work at St Mary's because my experience here as a student was incredibly meaningful and shaped who I am today. I wanted the opportunity to give back to the school that gave me so much and help create the same special memories for the students I now teach. I love what our school stands for - empowering young women to know they are enough and that they can achieve anything they dream of. Our community is truly special, and I feel so grateful to have experienced it both as a student and as a staff member.

Roles at St Mary's College
I started working at St Mary's College in 2019 as a Year 6 teacher. Since then, I have taught both Year 5 and 6, been the Leader of Wellbeing in the Junior School, and now hold the role of Assistant Director of Junior School.

Advice to My High School Self
Embrace every opportunity and don't be afraid to put yourself out there.

Key Highlights as a Staff Member
A key highlight for me has been attending the Cambodia Immersion Trip. It was an incredible experience that offered me a whole new perspective on the value of education and the impact it can have beyond our own community. Supporting our students as they taught English and built meaningful connections with the students in Battambang was truly inspiring.
Another highlight has been teaching in the upper primary years, where I've had the privilege of working with such a fun, curious, and energetic age group. I've also loved the chance to join them on unforgettable school camps to places like Kangaroo Island, Canberra, and Ballarat.

Women in STEM Breakfast

Inspiring the next generation of innovators at St Mary's College

As part of National Science Week, St Mary's College hosted our annual Women in STEM Breakfast, bringing together students, Old Scholars, and industry professionals.

The event was hosted by STEM Fast-Track founder Teresa Janowski and supported by 2025 STEM Coordinator, Natalia N. Two panel discussions featured women working across a range of STEM fields, including several Old Scholars, who shared their career pathways, experiences, and insights with students.

Keynote speaker and Old Scholar Crystal Forrester (Class of 2003), Deputy Program Lead at the Australian Defence Organisation, spoke about her journey in aerospace engineering and encouraged students to explore future opportunities in STEM with confidence.

Networking sessions enabled students to meet professionals, ask questions, and learn about the wide range of STEM career pathways available. The morning was supported by Food and Technology students and Grounds for Change, who provided breakfast and beverages.

"STEM is about curiosity, creativity, and courage. Don't be afraid to explore where your interests can take you." Crystal Forrester (Class of 2003) shared.

We thank the following Old Scholars who returned to support the event: Patricia Dexter (Class of 1990), Gerti Szili (Class of 1996), Anna Lam (2006), Amanda Del Rosario (Class of 2012), Cassandra Poritz (2017), Madison Byass (Class of 2018), Lili Rothall (Class of 2020), Carla Abishara and Chantal Dwarka (Class of 2024).

We also thank our industry guests from Fleet Space, Silentium Defence, Tonkin Consulting, Department of Infrastructure and Transport, SA Water, Women in Creative Technologies, Adelaide University, Flinders University, BAE Systems, Tutbob, CESA and Catalyst Games.

The College values the strong connection with our Old Scholars and their ongoing contribution to creating opportunities for current students. We look forward to welcoming more Old Scholars back for the 2026 Women in STEM Breakfast.





















Old Scholars Inspire Students
Career, Curiosity and Connection

Practical workshops and Old Scholar insights guide students toward future pathways

The 2025 Career Expo offered Middle and Senior School students a direct look at future pathways through practical, industry-based workshops. Students participated in sessions across food and hospitality, allied health, construction, engineering, interior design, psychology, beauty, and gained a solid understanding of being job-ready and the skills required in different fields.

Jordyn Fleetwood (Class of 2020) represented GPA Engineering and spoke with students about the realities of entering the engineering profession. Taite Gomez (Class of 2020), who begins a graduate program with BAE Systems in February 2026, also returned to support the Expo, offering guidance to students exploring defence and engineering pathways. Their involvement highlighted the value of Old Scholar connections and the impact of past students who return to support current learners.

The Career Expo strengthened the connection between Old Scholars and current students, showcasing the diverse pathways St Mary's graduates pursue and how students can learn from their experiences.

To be part of future Career Expos and similar initiatives, we warmly encourage you to ensure your contact information is up to date via the College website.



Learning from experience: Old Scholars and staff show Year 12 students what comes next

During 2025, Year 12 students explored life beyond school through Course Curiosity, gaining first-hand insights into various careers and pathways. Old Scholars and current staff, including Social Workers, the Marketing team, and teaching staff, shared their experiences, helping students see how classroom learning translates into real-world opportunities. The event highlighted the ongoing impact of Old Scholars who return to support and inspire the next generation.



Back row: Emma Stockman (current teacher), Madeleine Samson (current Social Worker), Angela Caiazza (Class of 2022), Amelia Scully (Class of 2024), Chantal Dwarka (Class of 2024), Makeely Jones (Class of 2024) and Zara Awramenko (Class of 2020). Front row: Cassandra Poritz (Class of 2017), Katija Zujic (Class of 2024) and Ioanna Antoniou (Class of 2024).

Old Scholars Returning to Share Experience

Grace Hensel (Class of 2013) Guides Students on Workplace Rights

Grace, now a lawyer with The Working Women's Centre SA Inc, visited St Mary's in 2025 to speak with students about their workplace rights. She emphasised that understanding your rights is important not just in casual work, but in preparing for future career opportunities. Grace's visit highlighted her ongoing connection to the College and her commitment to supporting current students.

"Learning about our rights has made me feel more confident for any job I might pursue in the future," one student shared.



Rachel Van Brussel (Class of 2014) Shares Her Fashion Journey

At the Senior School Assembly marking the end of Term 1, Rachel, an Australian fashion designer, stylist, performer, and founder of the *VAN BRUSSEL* label and fashion store in Adelaide, returned to St Mary's to speak with students. Rachel shared her pathway from student to professional, describing the development of her made-to-measure pieces and the evolution of her label, which combines tailored streetwear with utilitarian design. She also spoke about sustainable practice and the ongoing work involved in building and managing a brand.

Rachel's presentation offered students insight into creative industry pathways, the value of persistence, and the various forms a career in fashion can take. Her visit strengthened the connection between current students and Old Scholars while highlighting the post-school, diverse opportunities available.



Old Scholar Achievements

Study and career beyond the Franklin Street gates

Turning Experience into Impact
Sophie Edwards (Class of 2005)

From personal challenge to public advocacy, Sophie shares her story with courage, humour and a commitment to making a difference.



These days, I have turned my lived experience with bowel cancer into my career - who knew cancer could be such a conversation starter? I absolutely love to talk (honestly, give me a microphone, and I can go for hours!), and now I share my story as a keynote speaker at workplaces, charity events, and community gatherings. My speeches are an honest mix of the raw and the real, the surprising positives, and the powerful lessons that came from one of the toughest chapters of my life.

"From once feeling nervous ordering drive-through coffee to now speaking in front of thousands, it has been quite the ride!"

I also co-host a podcast with one of my best friends, where we dive into all things cancer, healthcare, and everything in between. We chat with incredible guests, share a few laughs, and do our best to spread a little kindness (and the occasional bit of oversharing) along the way.

In 2023, I travelled to Canberra to speak with politicians at Parliament House about bowel cancer awareness - and I am proud to have played a role in helping lower the national screening age for bowel cancer kits to 45. There is still more work to do, but the wheels are in motion.

More recently, I was honoured to be named Westfield Marion's Local Hero, which came with a $24,000 donation to the Jodi Lee Foundation, an organisation very close to my heart.

And because I clearly don't like sitting still, I am also thinking about writing a book... emphasis on thinking! It might take me five years, but I will get there eventually.

Pharmacy, Research and Wellbeing
Maria Cooper (Class of 2010)



From St Mary's science labs to supporting early-career pharmacists, Maria combines curiosity, passion and mentorship to make a difference in health and education.

Since my time at St Mary's, I have been working as a community pharmacist and researcher with a focus on wellbeing and supporting young health professionals. I completed my Bachelor of Pharmacy in 2014 at the University of South Australia, followed by a Master of Clinical Pharmacy at the University of Queensland in 2021. From 2022 to November 2025, I undertook a PhD in pharmacy and mental health, exploring ways to support the mental wellbeing of early-career Australian pharmacists. During my doctoral studies, I also had the opportunity to mentor and tutor undergraduate pharmacy students at the University of South Australia, which was an experience that reinforced my passion for education and supporting the next generation.

Reflecting on my time at St Mary's, I began my journey in Reception in 1998. As a student, I was a bit of a nerd and loved learning, particularly science and maths. Yet I also enjoyed a broad range of interests outside of academics, including many years in the primary and secondary dance teams, and performing in the Studio Orchestra and Chamber group as the College's first oboist. The foundations St Mary's provided, encouraging curiosity, diverse pursuits and striving for excellence, continue to guide me in my professional and personal life.

"Learning in an environment that affirmed girls are capable of achieving anything they put their minds to has stayed with me throughout my career."

Recently, an exciting chapter in my life was submitting my PhD thesis and awaiting my oral defence examination. It is a transformative and exciting time, with new opportunities opening. Before diving into the next phase, I am looking forward to my first trip to Asia, a holiday to Vietnam that I cannot wait to experience!

From St Mary's to Capitol Hill
Hillary Thursby (Class of 2019)

A passion for justice, public service and global policy takes Hillary from the classroom to Washington D.C., shaping a career grounded in advocacy and community impact.



Since graduating from St Mary's College in 2019, I have completed a Bachelor of Laws at Flinders University and a Bachelor of Arts (History) at the University of Adelaide. During my studies, I travelled to the United Kingdom to study International Relations and undertook a legislative internship in the United States House of Representatives.

While at university, I worked as a Judge's Associate in the South Australian Employment Tribunal and as a Law Clerk. I now work in the Civil Litigation Team at the Crown Solicitor's Office.

At St Mary's, I was involved in music and the Justice Program, experiences that shaped my interest in advocacy, politics, law, and public service. My academic research has focused on how climate change influences multilateral cooperation in national security, immigration, and economic policy, and on how recent US immigration raids reflect ongoing challenges in immigration reform. I carry this focus on complex policy and community issues into my legal work.

In 2025, I undertook a legislative internship on Capitol Hill in Congressman Jim Costa's office, representing California's 21st Congressional District. The district has a large immigrant population and plays a significant role in the United States' agricultural workforce.

Working with the Legislative Director and Senior Legislative Assistant on the Foreign Affairs portfolio, I conducted research, analysed executive orders, prepared bill summaries and recommendations, and engaged with constituents. I attended briefings on issues including the January Israel-Hamas ceasefire, AI development, USAID, sanctuary jurisdictions, and EU-US relations.

A key achievement was leading a co-sponsor project to secure permanent funding for a federal healthcare program that guarantees access to care for millions of children. Following my research and proposal, Congressman Costa co-sponsored the bill. My paper on immigration policy reform also contributed to his co-sponsorship of legislation to protect sanctuary jurisdictions.

My time in Washington strengthened my understanding of policy reform in a rapidly changing global context and reinforced the importance of adaptability, critical thinking, and collaboration.

As a student representative and later College Captain, my involvement in the St Mary's Justice Program deepened my awareness of local and global challenges and strengthened my commitment to service. Organising fundraisers and advocacy initiatives taught me the value of practical action grounded in community.

St Mary's College fostered a strong sense of responsibility to others. It shaped my approach to leadership - to listen carefully, create opportunities for others, and work towards meaningful change.

Dancing Towards My Dreams
Sofia Maur (Class of 2024)

Turning a lifelong passion into a professional pathway, Sofia is training to become an elite performer while embracing every challenge along the way.



St Mary's College opened my eyes to the many pathways available to young women and encouraged me to explore my creativity in ways that shaped who I am today. Dance has been my passion since I was two years old, and to pursue it as a career still feels surreal. My training spans more than ten different styles, each demanding every muscle in my body, along with the recovery and discipline needed to stay at my physical best.

After graduating in 2024, I moved to Sydney to begin full-time training at the prestigious Brent Street. I deferred a double degree in Criminology and Psychology at Flinders University to give myself the chance to chase my dream of performing professionally, a decision that made my inner child incredibly proud. Dancing 35 hours a week has its challenges, but doing what I love every day is something I will never take for granted.

2025 was huge. I auditioned for Brent Street in April 2024, during Year 12, never imagining that one choice would change my entire life. When my acceptance arrived, I was over the moon with excitement. Moving to a big city at 18, working six days a week to afford rent and balancing full-time training was a shock, but also the most exciting chapter of my life.



One of the most positive experiences that shaped me came from the support I received at St Mary's. When my teachers heard about my career goals, even though they were not a traditional pathway, they offered encouragement, guidance and some of the best advice I still carry with me today. On the harder days, I remind myself of their words and the belief they had in me.

"St Mary's helped me discover my pathway and gave me the confidence to pursue my passion wholeheartedly. I am proud to be doing exactly what I love and showing myself that big dreams can become reality."

Special Celebrations

Celebrating the milestones and special moments of St Mary's Old Scholars

They Said Yes!



Cara Forster (Class of 2013)
Cara and her partner, João Paulo Gonçalves are preparing for a special celebration. The couple plans to be married in 2026 in João's hometown of Mogi Guaçu, Brazil. The ceremony will be held in the local church, with João's father, a deacon, officiating. Both families will come together for the joyous occasion, with Cara's family flying over to join the celebration.

"We are so excited to be getting married surrounded by both our families, it will be a moment to remember forever!"



Georgia Magiafoglou (Class of 2018)
Georgia experienced one of life's most unforgettable moments on 13 April 2025. What began as a casual lunch with her partner, Jacob Mercorella, quickly turned into a surprise engagement. The couple are now looking forward to the next chapter, planning their wedding in April 2028.

"I feel incredibly lucky to be spending the rest of my life with my partner!"

Wedding Bells
Old Scholar Marriages

Francesca Kellie - née Covino (Class of 2018)

Francesca married her partner, David Kellie, on 1 March 2025, after being together since 2017. The couple celebrated their wedding surrounded by family, with Francesca joined in her bridal party by her three sisters, all fellow Old Scholars: Nathalia Covino (Class of 2014), Alysia Covino (Class of 2016), and Annaliese Covino (Class of 2023).

“It was a magical day celebrating with family, filled with love, laughter, and memories we will cherish forever.”

Images: 1, 2

Cassandra Mamone (Class of 2001)

Cassandra married her partner, Charlie Chau, on 19 August 2025, celebrating three years together. The couple marked the occasion with a breathtaking wedding in Tuscany, Italy, where Cassandra was joined in her bridal party by fellow Old Scholar Angela Adzic (née Valente, Class of 2003).

“Our wedding in Tuscany, Italy, was truly magical. Our nieces and nephews surprised us with a beautiful reading from Disney love stories, which brought everyone to tears. The day started with lounging by the pool and ended with a joyful singalong to *That’s Amore*, the perfect finish to a perfect celebration.”

Image: 3

Hannah Harris - née Boettcher (Class of 2010)

Hannah married her partner, Steve Harris, on 12 April 2025, celebrating three and a half years together. The couple were married in the Barossa, close to where they live, marking the occasion with a celebration surrounded by meaningful moments.

“We got married in a big barn in the Barossa, not far from where we live. It was a day filled with special memories that we will cherish forever.”

Image: 4

Jorden De Pinto - née Petrilli (Class of 2016)

Jorden married her partner, James De Pinto, on 29 March 2025, celebrating five years together. The couple shared their special day with family and friends, with Jorden joined in her bridal party by fellow Old Scholars Tayla Petrilli (Class of 2016) and Emily Storti (Class of 2016).

“It was such an incredible day celebrating with our family and friends. It was amazing to have so many different people in the room who have shared so many milestones with us - school friends, uni friends, work friends, family friends, and family. We celebrated at the Monastery Church with our reception at the Krystal Function Centre. We were so lucky to have teacher Ms Stubberfield and former teacher Ms Rogers singing and playing at our ceremony.”

Image: 5

Nicole Polisena - née Cremona (Class of 2013)

Nicole married her partner, Dean Polisena, on 4 October 2025, celebrating five years together. The couple shared their special day with close family and friends, with Nicole joined in her bridal party by fellow Old Scholar Nicole Santucci (Class of 2013), Maid of Honour.

“Our wedding was a beautiful celebration of love shared with our closest family and friends. True to teacher tradition, we timed it perfectly for the school holidays! We followed the big day with an unforgettable honeymoon in Singapore and Thailand.”

Images: 6, 7

Mary Boere - née Stevens (Class of 2012)

Mary married her partner, Michael Boere, on 14 February 2025, marking seven years together. The couple celebrated their wedding on Valentine’s Day, with Mary joined in her bridal party by fellow Old Scholars Jasmine Simpson (Class of 2012), Maid of Honour, and Ellie Meich (Class of 2012), Bridesmaid.

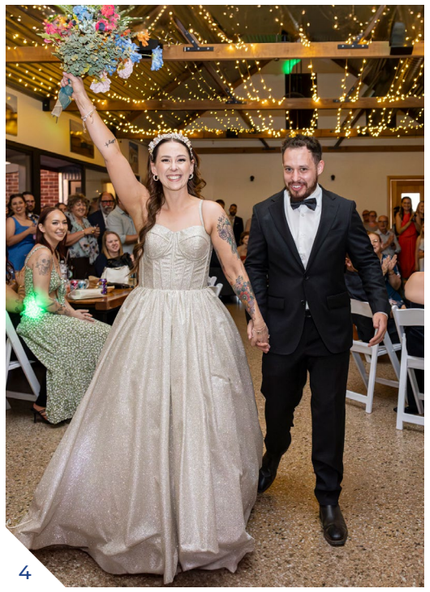
“Marrying on Valentine’s Day makes a celebration feel even more romantic, filling the whole day with extra meaning and love”.

Images: 8, 9


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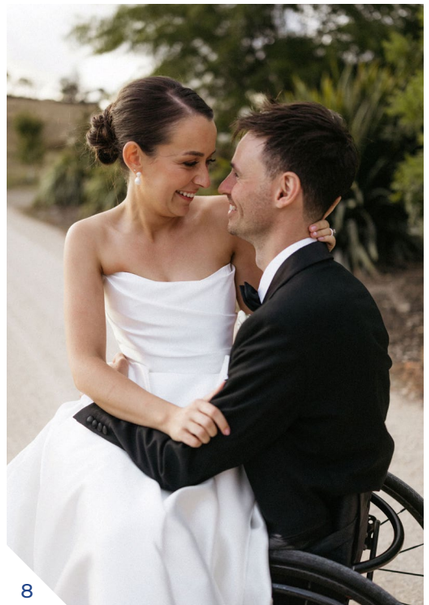

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Welcome Little Ones



Laura Saville (Class of 2016)

Laura's life has taken on a beautiful new rhythm as she embraces motherhood. Over the past six months, she has joyfully navigated this new chapter with her daughter, Sybil, born on 12 June 2025. Laura shares that she "absolutely loves being a mum to my wee girl," and this season has been filled with precious moments, learning, and deep gratitude. We congratulate Laura and Aaron on the arrival of Sybil and warmly celebrate this special milestone.



Victoria Wiseman – née Ridgwell (Class of 2012)

Victoria and Dominic welcomed their beautiful son, Benedict Sawyer, on 30 September 2025. Little Benny has already brought immense joy to their lives, and as the first grandchild on both sides, he is delightfully spoiled! Victoria shares that he "has lit up our lives every day since," and this new chapter has been filled with treasured family moments. We congratulate Victoria and Dominic on the arrival of their precious son and celebrate this special milestone.



Tayla Sarunic - née Petrilli (Class of 2016)

Tayla and Tazz welcomed their beautiful daughter, Mila, on 3 December 2025. Tayla shares that bringing Mila into the world has been "the most magical experience," and the family is soaking up every precious cuddle. They are especially looking forward to celebrating their first Christmas together as a family of three. We warmly congratulate Tayla and Tazz on the arrival of their little girl and celebrate this joyful milestone.

Reunions and Gatherings

Welcoming the Class of 2024 as Old Scholars

St Mary's College is proud to welcome the Class of 2024 as Old Scholars. After completing their final year with resilience and enthusiasm, these graduates now join a vibrant community of past students who continue to carry the values of St Mary's into the world.

The Class of 2024 has begun their post-school journeys by stepping into a wide range of pathways, from university study and apprenticeships to employment, travel, and community service. Their achievements reflect the diverse strengths and passions nurtured throughout their time at St Mary's.

In November, the Class of 2024 returned to the Veritas Centre to collect their Yearbooks and reconnect with classmates and staff. The delight and energy in the room were unmistakable, as students caught up on life after graduation and shared stories from their first year beyond school. Many expressed how meaningful it felt to return to a place that shaped so much of who they are today.

As they move forward, we hope each Old Scholar remains connected to the College and continues to feel part of the St Mary's family. Reunions, College events, and Old Scholar programs provide wonderful opportunities to stay involved, strengthen friendships, and celebrate future milestones together.

We look forward to following the journeys of the Class of 2024 and witnessing the incredible impact they will make in their chosen fields and communities.

Congratulations to our Class of 2024 Old Scholars. We are proud to welcome you into this lifelong network of women who support and inspire one another, and into a community that will always be here for you.



Classes of 1985, 1995, 2005 and 2015

St Mary's College recently welcomed Old Scholars from the Classes of 1985, 1995, 2005 and 2015 to the Veritas Centre for this year's reunion. Several graduates travelled from interstate to attend.

Guests met in the Veritas Centre before joining a tour of the College to see the changes that have evolved on campus. Groups shared memories and stories from their school days, creating moments of connection across the different year groups.

The reunion highlighted the ongoing links between Old Scholars and the College. St Mary's continues to offer a supportive and welcoming community, providing opportunities for graduates to maintain connections, engage with classmates, and stay involved in the wider College network.

Old Scholar and saxophonist Emily Dennis (Class of 2021) performed with the St Mary's College Small Jazz Band during the event.

St Mary's College thanks all who attended and looks forward to welcoming more Old Scholars to future reunions and gatherings.





















2026 Save the Dates

Reunions

Class of 2025 Yearbook Collection and Pizza Night
Monday 30 March

Old Scholar High Tea Dominican Week
Thursday 6 August

Reunion for 1976, 1986, 1996, 2006, 2016
Friday 13 November

Community Events

Sounds of City Schools
Wednesday 11 March

Community Cooking Classes
Monday 11 May, Monday 27 July, Monday 23 November

Women in STEM Breakfast
Friday 21 August

Cabaret Night
Friday 4 September

Junior School Musical
Thursday 26 November to Saturday 28 November

Principal's Tours

Term 1
Wednesday 4 March

Term 2
Wednesday 20 May

Term 3
Wednesday 19 August

Term 4
Wednesday 28 October

Come and Try Days

Term 1
Friday 27 March (Netball)

Term 2
Thursday 4 June

Term 3
Thursday 3 September

Term 4
Thurs 12 November

Stay Informed: Visit the St Mary's College website for updates on events and Old Scholar stories.

From the Archives







Costumes, Community and Celebration at St Mary's College

While Book Week, as we know it, is a much-loved modern tradition, the spirit behind it is anything but new. The St Mary's College community has long embraced the joy of dressing up, celebrating stories and coming together in shared moments of creativity.

The earliest found image of St Mary's students in costume dates to 1915, capturing students participating in the annual St Patrick's Day Parade along Grote Street (pictured centre left). Though not a Book Week event, the photograph offers a fascinating glimpse into the past, revealing that even over a century ago, St Mary's students delighted in dressing up and celebrating as a community. It is a powerful reminder that imagination and participation have always been part of the College's culture.

In later decades, Book Week celebrations emerged primarily within the Junior School, where young students brought beloved literary characters to life. These early experiences helped nurture a love of reading and creativity, values that generations of Old Scholars will fondly remember.

Today, Book Week has evolved into a whole-College celebration, with students from Reception to Year 12, as well as staff, enthusiastically participating. Seeing the community united in costume reflects the enduring sense of belonging that defines St Mary's College.

From the St Patrick's Day Parade in 1915 to today's colourful Book Week celebrations, one thing remains unchanged: St Mary's has always been a place where stories are shared, creativity is encouraged, and community is celebrated. For Old Scholars, these moments echo memories of laughter, imagination and connection - timeless threads that continue to link past and present at St Mary's College.

ST MARY'S COLLEGE

EST. 1869

Do you have something exciting to share?

Whether it is a work milestone, personal achievement, elite sporting success, or a recent engagement, wedding, or new arrival, we would love to hear from you! Please send your photos and a brief story that may feature in the upcoming editions: **advancement@stmarys.sa.edu.au**