

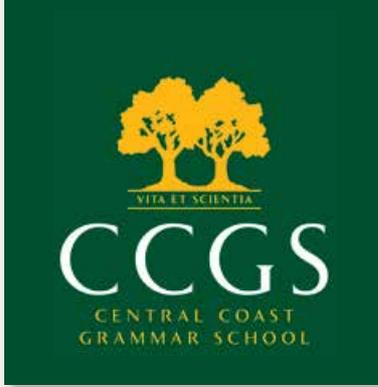
BUNDARA

A magazine of the Central Coast Grammar School Community **Issue 49** 2017



CCGS
CENTRAL COAST
GRAMMAR SCHOOL





BUNDARA

BUNDARA is the magazine of the Central Coast Grammar School Community. BUNDARA is published biannually.

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From the Board

As 2017 draws to a close, I'd like to reflect on another very successful year for Central Coast Grammar School.

It's been a big year with some big projects underway in terms of school infrastructure and capital works. The Board's Master Planning Committee is continuing its review of the school's facilities and infrastructure and we'll have more to report on what's happening in this space in due course.

There is also a lot going on 'behind the scenes' with the planning and implementation of internal systems and programs, across teaching departments and administration teams. Thank you to everyone involved. It's pleasing to see teachers and staff from across the school continually strive towards the creation of a world class learning environment for our students.

2018 will see us enter the third year in the implementation of the *Next Generation Teaching and Learning* strategic plan. Over the coming year we will continue to be purposeful in our attention to the programs which deliver enhanced learning opportunities and benefits to students and teachers. I'm excited to see the school ending the year in excellent shape with a clear vision and a strong team.

On behalf of the Board, I wish the entire school community a restful and relaxing holiday period and I hope to see many of you at the end of year events and presentations.

Ken A. Jolly, AM

Chairman of the School Board

From the Headmaster



There is a flurry of activity around the top of the school with work progressing well on the extension and refurbishment of the History, Geography and English building (B Block). It's exciting to see the changes take shape and we're looking forward to seeing the building completed in early 2018. Most importantly, we're eager to see students learning and working together in these innovative spaces which are designed to leverage and enhance next generation skills.

In 2017 we began the implementation of *Teaching for Understanding* the school's new K-12 learning framework. *Teaching for Understanding* (developed by Harvard Graduate School of Education) is an approach to the learning process that supports students to develop a deeper understanding of content. It's used by schools globally and nationally with a long history of evidence based success. I'm pleased how the

implementation is going and you can read more about it and what it means for CCGS students and teachers on page 6 of this issue.

This year we've also introduced a framework of wellbeing activities for students K-12. We know that the mental health of students affects all aspects of learning - from student engagement, academic achievement, social aspects and general happiness. Wellbeing is a core focus of the *Next Generation Teaching and Learning* strategic plan and these activities further reinforce our commitment to student and staff wellbeing. It's pleasing to see students and teachers so engaged with the activities during House Family time.

It is not often that we stand to lose four long standing teachers at the same time, but come the last day of Term 4 we will farewell the much loved teaching team of Ken and Maree Gross, English teacher Lyn Jelfs and mathematics teacher Lyn Jones as they retire from school life. On behalf of the entire school community, I wish them well and thank them all for their combined 113 years of service to the school and their dedication to the education and welfare of CCGS students.

William Low

Headmaster/Chief Executive Officer



Wellbeing for happy, healthy students

Words by **Denise McDonough**, Head of Senior College

Student wellbeing is a core focus of the *Next Generation Teaching and Learning* strategic plan and is incorporated throughout the everyday workings of the school.

Whole school programs and structures focus on social and emotional skills, resilience and leadership in a continuum from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Why teach wellbeing?

The World Health Organisation defines wellbeing as, “a state in which every individual realises his or her potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and can make a contribution to his or her community.”

Student wellbeing is an essential aspect of education in Australia. The Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA) tested over 500,000 15-year-olds across 76 countries and showed that Australian students have experienced a decline in both academic performance and school belonging and engagement. With around 25% of young Australians experiencing symptoms of mental illness, the need for a deliberate focus on wellbeing in schools is important.

“Children’s learning is influenced by a range of factors,” says Tracy Mitchell, School Psychologist. “How well they do at school can be

affected by their social/emotional skills such as their confidence, self-management of their behaviour, organisation, problem-solving and belonging. Explicit focus on wellbeing is important to improve academic learning and enhance students overall motivation to achieve.”

When mental health, resilience and optimism are taught at school, more pro-social and responsible behaviour is evident. This fosters a positive emotional climate for learning which is shown to enhance student engagement and academic outcomes.

Wellbeing at CCGS

Central Coast Grammar School delivers a multi-dimensional approach to wellbeing at age-appropriate levels throughout the school. Our focus on wellbeing cultivates qualities that makes students more effective learners. These include perseverance, the ability to bounce back from failure and a growth mindset. Students grow these characteristics through practice which is developed throughout their learning journey at the school.

New wellbeing framework

During 2017, Jodi Clements (Senior Learning Support Teacher and Acacia House Coordinator) and Sam Marker (Junior School Learning



Right: Older students and younger students enjoy wellbeing activities in Miss Grant's House Family

Support Teacher) have been instrumental in introducing a framework of wellbeing activities which are delivered during weekly K-12 House Family sessions through a variety of practical learning experiences. Topics are explored within an open 'mixed-age' environment enabling a strong single message and common language to permeate all students and all ages.

These interconnecting themes include:

CONNECT	getting to know you, sense of belonging, getting along
SUCCEED	goal setting, persistence, confidence
THRIVE	mind, body, spirit
RESILIENCE	emotional awareness, optimism, empathy

Incorporating a structured framework of wellbeing activities into House Family time has been hugely successful.

"House Family members are wholly engaging in the activities which are fun, inclusive and provide great opportunities for leadership within the group," said Jodi Clements. "With a greater focus on wellbeing literacy, students K-12 are developing the vocabulary, knowledge and skills they can use now and in the future to maintain or improve wellbeing of self and others."





An introduction to Teaching for Understanding

Words by *Damon Cooper, Director of Teaching & Learning*

In 2016 Central Coast Grammar School began the implementation of Harvard University's *Teaching for Understanding Framework* across all learning areas to support the goal of next generation teaching and learning articulated in our strategic plan.

What is Teaching for Understanding?

The *Teaching for Understanding Framework* was developed by Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. It is a systematic research-based approach which is a simple, flexible and powerful way of re-structuring learning to focus on understanding. The framework supports students move from 'knowing and doing' to 'understanding and applying'.

Understanding is more than skills and knowledge: it is the ability to grasp the principles behind ideas and to apply them in new contexts. In our rapidly changing world, it is this ability to understand and apply that matters, not how much we know. From understanding we can build knowledge.

The framework ensures that the purpose of learning - why we're learning and why it matters - is clearly articulated in every subject, every unit and every lesson right across the school. When students question, 'Why am I

learning this?' teachers have meaningful answers, demonstrated through relevant learning activities. This means that teachers and students are working together towards a common learning goal that guarantees every activity has purpose and student achievement is focused and monitored precisely.

The framework helps teachers consider the curriculum and identify topics, concepts and skills that are important to understand; develop understanding goals that help students focus on the critical aspects of those topics; engage students in challenging learning experiences that demonstrate their understanding; and develop effective assessment practices that deepen student understanding.

Why this unified approach to teaching and learning?

It is essential that students are able to transfer knowledge across the boundaries of subject disciplines. Similarly, they must be able to connect their learning to the real world and to understand the threads that link ideas and processes together.

Our students face a future where many traditional industries will merge and blend, where processes will evolve beyond what we know and where knowledge is readily accessible if we understand where to look and how to use it.



Practical tools in the classroom

The *Teaching for Understanding Framework* is a strategic approach to teaching and learning. However, in the classroom practical tools are still required to bridge overarching understanding goals to learning and assessment. Good thinking leads to good learning so visible thinking practices are being

introduced. The introduction of ‘thinking routines’ (practical and simple strategies and key questions that deepen students’ thinking) build metacognitive skills and get students in the habit of observing, analysing and questioning. Thinking routines help teachers clearly identify what students know and understand.

It is our intent to equip our students for this world: to instil in them the understandings they need to build the knowledge and skill they will require to lead rewarding lives.

Understanding and application are essential to effective learning and academic performance. The framework provides the school, our students and our teachers with a consistent approach and common language for learning.

How we are implementing it?

Over 2017, teachers have been working in collaborative teams to implement *Teaching for Understanding* right across the school. A conference led by our teachers shared their learning and experiences about the framework to other teachers. This approach to collegial learning – learning from the growing expertise amongst our own staff – will continue to be a focus of continuing professional development.

Thirty staff have also completed the *Teaching for Understanding* online course through the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Each semester a new cohort of teachers will work in teams to undertake the course and develop their understanding of the framework.



Serious Science



A new CCGS Science Expo opened a world of possibility for Junior School and Senior School students to engage in scientific discovery and participate in some fun experimentation too! The Expo was open to all Year 7 and 8 classes and an additional twelve Junior School classes came through the science labs over the two days of the exhibition.

Innovation, exploration and the future of human potential all lie in the genius of science. The modern world faces unprecedented challenges and opportunities which can only be fully realised through the ongoing study and application of science.

CCGS students will graduate and move into jobs that don't yet exist or haven't even begun to be imagined and they will depend upon the scientific skills they learn at school (such as problem-solving, communicating, inferring and predicting) to make a difference and find their place in a changing world.

"It's crucial that students come to value science and see that the future lies in scientific discovery," said Ross Farrelly, CCGS Science Teacher. "It's our job to make students excited about future possibilities so what better

way than a Science Expo to showcase the work older students are doing and excite younger students to engage with the sciences through fun workshops and experiments."

"Each year our Year 8 students create some outstanding science projects which often only the teacher gets to see," said Ross. "We wanted to show off their work to the broader school community and creatively share scientific concepts with younger students who will also be completing projects like these in the future."

In addition to the Year 8 projects, Year 6 students participated in workshops with Year 10 science students and enjoyed some fun experiments with science teachers which involved freezing various objects in liquid nitrogen and visualising sound waves via a Rubens Tube.



See for yourself.

Scan this code with your smartphone to watch a video:



"A highlight of the Expo was the evening event which had over 100 parents and grandparents visit the school to view projects, watch scientific demonstrations and use the telescopes to view Saturn and Jupiter. An inspirational talk about the importance of science by guest speaker Dr Emma Beckett from the University of Newcastle, was a fantastic way to wrap up the Expo," said Ross.

"We've had such positive feedback from everyone who was involved. It was a wonderful way to shine a light on science, our students work, and provide insight into all the opportunities available to students to make an impact on the world," said Ross.



Saying goodbye to Ken and Maree

Ken and Maree Gross are a dynamic teaching duo and have lived and breathed Central Coast Grammar School over their combined 60 years of teaching here. Ken is a foundation teacher and was one of the very first appointed to the school in 1985. Maree followed in 1990 and has been nurturing and guiding our very youngest students ever since.

Ken and Maree are swapping early starts for sleep-ins and structured timetables for spontaneous adventures, when they both retire together at the end of 2017. While they won't physically be here at the school each day, we know they'll never be far away. They shared their memories of the past and their aspirations for the future.



ON TEACHING

What made you decide to become a teacher?

Ken: I was a trainee accountant of three years when I met Maree. Her myriad of young nieces and nephews was a new experience for me and the babysitting duties made me reassess my direction in life. Teaching seemed the logical choice.

Maree: I wanted to do something with my life that made a difference. I came from a big family and I was one of seven children. I had many nieces and nephews and I wanted to work with children and help them learn.

You've been teaching a long time - what's changed the most?

Maree: The sheer amount of technological change. When I started teaching, we still had chalk! Now we have Smartboards, iPads, computers and more and it's all highly integrated into learning which is fantastic. Teaching is always changing and it's what keeps it exciting.

ON CCGS

What's your standout memory of your time at CCGS?

Ken: There's so many but the very early days are full of memories I will always treasure! Of course there's my beloved Grevillea too. I have

enjoyed owning numerous red cars and red articles of clothing over the last 30 odd years. I'm proud to say I've survived over 30 House Celebration Days!

Maree: There's a few - the camaraderie of my colleagues, the students, parents and families I've shared the journey with and the opportunity to go on three netball sports tours was super exciting.

What will you miss the most?

Ken: It's a blessing to wander into senior roll call classes handing out House birthday cards and to be involved in Kindergarten welcome days with new Kindy students. But I'll miss the interaction each morning the most. There's not many occupations where you can welcome and chat with an 18 year old then a 5 year old in the next breath. It has kept me young!

Maree: I'll miss the hugs and the daily cards I get from the students telling me that they love me which makes my day.

Are you planning on staying connected with the school? If so in what way?

Ken: CCGS is in my DNA. The kids may see me popping up on camps or carnivals (if I'm allowed!). These occasions were many of my fondest memories especially because I had a "captive audience" for my jokes.





ON KEN AND MAREE

What's next in store for you both?

Maree: There will be lots of travel and catching up with friends across the world that we met whilst on exchange. Our son is moving to America next year so we'll be visiting him. Ken and I plan to walk some of the National Parks in west USA together before staying with him on the east coast of USA.

We will also have a wedding to plan next year as my daughter just got engaged and will be getting married in 2018. I'm sure there will be lots of trips in our little red car too!

Personally, I would also like to learn another language. I started learning Italian a few years ago but couldn't find the time to continue with it. So I hope to take this up again so I can speak the language when I travel to Italy in the future.

Final remarks?

Maree: I have loved teaching at CCGS. It has been a wonderful environment to work in every day. The kids are fantastic and caring and the parents are very supportive. I'll miss CCGS very much.

Ken: If the School ever has the position of a meet and greet person at the top stairs, let me know - I might just apply!

Watch a video about this year's Foundation Day. Scan this QR code with your smartphone



Hair today - gone tomorrow!

There's a been a few hair raising experiences of late for students and teachers at Central Coast Grammar School - but it's all for a good cause!

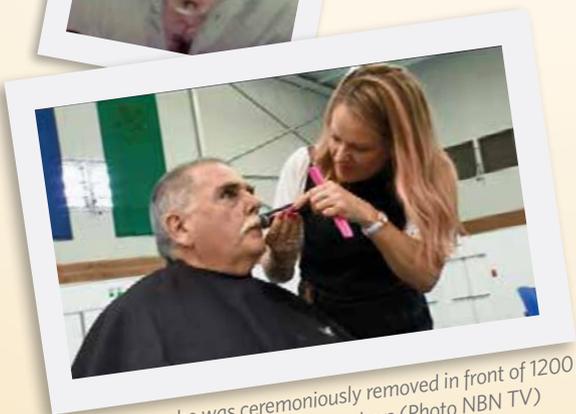
Tarni takes a close shave

Cheered on by supportive classmates, Tarni Dilger (Year 5) is rocking a new hairdo after taking the bold and brave move to shave her head for The World's Greatest Shave.

While the first glimpse in the mirror was met with slight shock, Tarni was proud to have put herself out there and raise money for charity. "Over the past month, I've raised over \$1,200," said Tarni. "The money I raise will go towards helping Aussie families facing blood cancer get the emotional and practical support they need."



Scan this QR code with your smartphone to help Tarni raise funds



Rick's moustache was ceremoniously removed in front of 1200 excited CCGS students and teachers (Photo NBN TV)

No more mo!



November is usually the time when smooth upper lips become a little more hairy in support of Movember, but mathematics teacher Rick Bowman has taken the reverse approach. In support of men's health, Rick decided to send his 47 year old moustache off to greener pastures and allow his top lip to welcome sunlight after decades of darkness.

"My moustache has been with me since my first year at university in 1970," said Rick. "Now it's gone I feel like a new man!"

Helped along by fellow mathematics teacher Kingsley Hunt, computer teacher Robbie Barnard, ICT staff member Dave Nichol and English teacher Josh Owen, the 'Grammar Growers' cruised past their \$2,000 target for the Movember Foundation.

"Men are facing a health crisis that isn't being talked about," said Rick. "I'm proud to get involved in a great cause, have a bit of fun and raise money and awareness to support men's health and wellbeing."

Introducing your Head Prefects



Jake Vernon-Elliott and Indigo Neville have stepped into the Head Boy and Head Girl leadership positions for 2017/2018. Get to know Jake and Indigo a bit more and read about their goals for the coming year.

What's your passion in life?

INDI: One of my biggest passions is finding ways to resolve some of the inequalities in the world. After school I hope to complete a degree in communications and start affecting change in 3rd world countries permanently. There's an Oxfam article that states, "In 2015, just 62 individuals had the same wealth as 3.6 billion people – the bottom half of humanity." This boggles my mind and inspires me to make some sort of a difference.

JAKE: Like Indi, I also have a passion for helping people, whether it be house building in Cambodia or helping my peers with study for an upcoming exam. No matter how big or small, I find helping others very rewarding. Hopefully one day in the future, I'll be able to work in paediatrics and assist sick children recover back to health.

What's your favourite subject at school?

JAKE: My heart undoubtedly lies in E Block with the Maths Department. There is something fascinating (particularly in Year 11 and 12) about mathematics and how it extends to practical applications in the real world such as in science or engineering.

INDI: I enjoy Extension English because it is so unlike my other classes. It helps me to think outside the box and question my perceptions of the world. Thinking creatively isn't something that always comes naturally to me, and it's a skill that I don't utilise as much in my other subjects, so this subject is such a good outlet to express and unpack different ideas.

What qualities define a leader?

JAKE: Great leaders have a passion and a drive to make a positive, influential change and have that gut instinct and ambition to advocate and incite a positive difference in the community. A forward-thinking mindset, passion for making a change and the motivation to do so is something we should all strive for.

INDI: Sometimes the most impactful leaders are those who lead in subtle ways and do what they know is right and in alignment with their core values and intuition, not what they believe will get them noticed by others.

What unique qualities will you bring to the role?

JAKE: As a team, I think that Indi and I have a strong set of goals, ambitions and qualities that we both bring. I like to think that I'm fun, approachable but organised.

Discussed over many hot chocolates and milkshakes, Indi and I both want to make the CCGS day-to-day experience as enjoyable as possible for students and teachers. We want to make school a fun and engaging place to be. I think that this goal will be reflected in a lot of the activities and initiatives that are currently in the works.

How do you overcome challenges or problems?

INDI: My mum often tells me how life is a series of mountains and reminds me how you just have to climb each mountain as you approach it, one step at a time. Thinking about this helps me feel less overwhelmed. If everything is going wrong I know that I'll eventually reach the top of each 'mountain'. I have a favourite quote - "today is a good day for a good day" which I think is a great way to look on the bright side in stressful times.

Read Jake and Indigo's full interview on our website.

Scan this code with your smartphone.



Ethan makes a splash

Ethan Moore (Year 12) has been named in the Australian National Water Polo Squad and while most people are still sound asleep on a Monday morning, he's on his way to the NSW Institute of Sport in Sydney for training.

"I wake up at 3am, three times a week and head down to Sydney for training and then return to the Coast to start the school day," said Ethan. "On top of that, I also do three swim sessions, a couple of gym sessions and for a bit of fun, I play in a local winter water polo competition on Wednesday nights."

In April 2018, Ethan will head off to the Australian Institute of Sport for a training camp which will hopefully see him make the team and travel to Europe and the Born 99' World Championships.

"My big goal is the Olympics. That's been the dream since the beginning," said Ethan. "Before water polo, I wanted to go to the Olympics as a swimmer but quickly converted to water polo once I realised I could swim and use a ball at the same time! Being so close to my dream now, makes me want it more. I've been training with past Olympians and hearing their stories is my inspiration to make it to that level."



Scan this QR code with your smartphone to read more about Ethan's success in water polo.



Australian Interschool Equestrian Championships

The Australian Interschool Championships held at Toowoomba attracts more than 2,000 school based competitors Australia wide. This year seven of our CCGS equestrian riders were selected to represent NSW at the event. It was a long, hot and dusty four days but an extremely enjoyable experience with some great results and personal bests for the team.

Congratulations to our riders on their impressive results and to **Shilo Harvey** who was Joint Captain of the Show Hunter Team for NSW.

- **Charlie Welsh** (Year 5) Primary Show Hunter, ranked 7th overall
- **Ella Bourke** (Year 6) Primary Working Hunter Champion; Primary Combined training 60cm Reserve Champion; Team NSW Combined Training Champion; Primary Novice Dressage, ranked 4th overall
- **Kaitlin Martin** (Year 7) 8th and 9th placing in Secondary Medium Dressage
- **Lilly Mitchell** (Year 8) 7th overall in Secondary Combined Training 60cm
- **Anna Roper** (Year 9) Eventing 95cm Champion: Team NSW Eventing Champion
- **Sophie Walker** (Year 9) 4th overall in Preliminary Dressage; Secondary Show Hunter Champion; Overall Show Hunter Champion
- **Shilo Harvey** (Year 10) 3rd overall in Secondary Show Hunter; 6th overall in Medium Dressage.



Training together Our Equestrian team spent a day learning from professional coaches and each other at the recent CCGS Training Day held at Wyong Pony Club. The focus of the day was team building, having fun and learning from friends, rather than competition. Riders trained in small groups throughout the day, which allowed them to work with people they wouldn't usually have opportunity to.

Junior HICES team takes out prize

A strong Junior School team were crowned Division One Champions at the 2017 Heads of Independent Co-educational Schools (HICES) Athletics Carnival.

Strong performances in the relay and in individual events throughout the day by the whole team lead to an unbeatable lead. Congratulations to Barney Irvine-Rundle who set a new record in the 13 year old boys 100m event.



Junior School athletes represent CCGS at State

Five Junior School students stepped up to represent CCGS at the athletics NSW Primary School's Sport Association (NSW PSSA) Championships:

- Ava Simos finished 14th in the girls 100m and 7th in the 200m
- Serena George finished 22nd in the girls 200m
- Marcus Pullinen finished 17th in the boys Shot Put
- Barney Irvine-Rundle finished 18th in the 13 year old boys
- Abbie Smith finished 7th in girls Discus, 16th in Multi Class 200m and 16th in girls Long Jump



Farewell to Lyn Jelfs

It's a fond farewell to Lyn Jelfs who retires from teaching after 28 years at CCGS. Starting in 1989 Lyn has taught English, Commerce, Business Studies and Legal Studies.

With an interest in welfare, she became Acacia Senior House Coordinator in 2008 and is well known for her colourful yellow dress-ups at carnivals and events. She was also a passionate basketball coach and convenor for many years.

Lyn's next adventure will take her to the other side of desk as she heads back to university after having completed her Graduate Diploma in Law. She's also looking forward to spending some time with her grandchildren.

Best of luck on your next adventure Lyn!



Farewell to Lyn Jones

After 15 years nurturing the minds of young CCGS mathematicians, Lyn Jones will be swapping the Central Coast for south east Hobart as she heads into retirement at the end of 2017.

"It's been a dream of ours to move to Tasmania. This move has been 5 years in the making and with plans for a new house coming to fruition, it's wonderful that our dream is finally becoming a reality," said Lyn.

Moving to another state is a big deal, but Lyn is ready for a change of pace not living to a school bell or timetable.

"There's so many things I'll miss about CCGS. The school community are like family and they've been right beside me through the years," said Lyn. "I'm going to miss the fantastic students and of course the lifelong friends I've made in the school community. The camaraderie we share, the team work and the friendships are so important to me."

Community

Spring Fair

The sun was shining, the snags were sizzling and the rides were spinning at this year's Spring Fair.

There was something for everyone and with the new rides, yummy food and sunny skies; families and friends flocked in numbers to partake in the fun.

Congratulations to the Spring Fair Committee headed by Jo-Anna Heenan and the many volunteers who helped out on the day and in the lead up to the fair.



See for yourself!
Scan this QR code with your
smartphone to watch a video
from the fair.



Congratulations to CCGS parent Michelle Beringer and her family who won the final PAC car raffle this year.

Michelle has purchased four tickets every year for each member of the family and this year, luck was on their side!

"We were volunteering at Spring Fair all morning but we had to leave just before the raffle was drawn," said Michelle. "I received the call on the car speaker and we were so excited – we couldn't believe our luck. The winning ticket was my son's ticket and it took some explaining to him the car didn't belong to him!"

Thanks to Central Coast Motor Group for their generous donation of five cars over the past five years. Congratulations to all our PAC car raffle winners over that time.



Past Students

Alumni Profile: Catherine McMaster

Catherine McMaster (2009) is an accomplished writer living in London. Read more about her life as a freelance journalist and her reflections of her time at CCGS.

Where has life taken you since leaving CCGS?

After I left CCGS, I took a gap year. I was adamant that I didn't want to transition from one institution to another, and consequently I became an au pair and an English school teacher in the north of Italy.

I arrived in Italy with no knowledge of the language, no contacts (bar the family I worked for) and no real understanding of the complexities of the culture. By the end, I could speak the language and dance the rumba. I made some life-long Italian friends and came away with some very, very happy memories.

I began my Media and Communications degree course at Sydney University immediately upon my return. That experience led to an internship as a cultural news reporter for the Madurai Messenger in Madurai, India.

I was fortunate to receive a part-scholarship to live at the Women's College, and fully embraced this opportunity. I resumed my passion for hockey and softball. Ironically, some of the girls I had played against as a CCGS student, were now part of the college team. The 'Barker' girls were no longer my most formidable opponents but became some of my dearest friends.

After university, I was awarded a scholarship to study a MA in Multimedia Journalism at the University of Westminster in London.

I decided to remain in London after graduating and I freelanced at The Telegraph before transitioning into a more permanent position as Editor at two London fashion houses. Based in a studio in North London, I am still part of this enterprise. Ever the curious and enthusiastic writer, however, I continue to write for Harper's Bazaar, Vice, News.com.au, The Australian, The Telegraph UK and The Times UK.



Who do you write for? What do you enjoy writing about?

I am a fashion editor and freelance journalist. As a freelancer, I write for various publications. Consequently, as a fashion editor, I write for fashion brands. This can include 'how-to' style stories, the history of fashion and a critique of the fashion week shows.

One of my favourite pieces of work that I have published is my personal feature for The Australian. It's my work in its rawest and purest form, namely, because it details my own experiences and struggles. As a writer, there is something so utterly satisfying about being able to write from such a personal perspective. Achieving publication for this piece was a professional highlight.

Favourite memory of CCGS?

My last few years of school were exceptionally special, not least because they were coming to an end. The pressure mounts and yet I had teachers who were extremely supportive and caring. When I think of all the extra hours of time spent on feedback during the lead up to the HSC, I will forever be grateful for such dedication and commitment.

Catherine has had some amazing experiences. Scan this QR code with your smartphone to read her full interview online.



Jersey's through the generations

Old boys, Lee Bailey (1989), Tony Ryan (1997), Levi McFadden (1998), Matt Cranney (2002) and Matt Johnston (2007) relived their CCGS basketball days when they gave team basketball shirts to the Firsts plus a few tips for the season.



See for yourself!

Scan this code with your smartphone to watch a video about the passing on of the Firsts basketball jerseys.



Katie Stokes (1998)

Past student Katie Stokes is a successful writer but lately she's been 'Playing in Puddles'. Her new one-stop website is helping Central Coast families connect with local businesses.



Where has life taken you since leaving school?

Following school I studied Media at Sydney University and was lucky enough to spend a few years working overseas and writing travel articles for magazines before settling in Sydney as sub-editor of Australian Gourmet Traveller magazine. My husband and I have two beautiful little boys aged 3½ and 18 months.

Why did you launch Playing in Puddles?

I moved back to the Central Coast 18 months ago, and I found it difficult to find information on the services and facilities available to families. Where were the toddler-friendly playgrounds? Who ran the best music class? What kid-friendly events were on this weekend? Which barista made the perfect babychino (i.e. coffee for mummy)? I asked my friends and they, too, were asking the same questions, and so Playing in Puddles was born.

What is Playing in Puddles?

Playing in Puddles brings together the best of the Central Coast for kids in a digital space so mums, dads, grandparents and carers can discover all that the Central Coast has to offer their families. We do the hard work for families and keep them updated on what's going on at the popular hotspots, plus we share the small, secret and new businesses that cater to families on the coast.

Playing in Puddles is all about supporting local families and local businesses and helping to link the two together.

What did you enjoy most about your school days at CCGS?

There are so many wonderful memories: Winning the ISA Open basketball comp; being a troll in The Hobbit school production; the many wonderful friends I made (who I still see today), but the thing that stands out the most is the staff. I remember the enthusiasm and

encouragement of my teachers. I did lots of practice essays in the lead-up to the HSC, and my teachers marked every single one of them. I hope my children are lucky enough to have such dedicated and supportive teachers when they start at CCGS down the track.

As a future parent I'm looking forward to the being part of the CCGS community. My parents had an incredible support network at Grammar, and they made many lifelong friends. I still feel that sense of community when I visit the school now, and I look forward to being involved one day as a parent - to help at the spring fair, to do bench at Saturday sport, to be involved in activities such as Trivia nights.



www.playinginpuddles.com.au

Isobel Bowditch (2014)



Beauty is big business, so there has never been a better time to be a budding beauty entrepreneur. Isobel Bowditch has her eyes (and lashes!) firmly fixed on carving out a successful career in this lucrative billion dollar industry.

What's your business goal in the beauty industry?

I would love to have a range of successful businesses, starting off with beauty and lashes. It would be great to establish a franchise of my business model and travel the world to learn about the latest products, techniques and trends.

I have been working at Lady Lash Australia where I have been involved in administration and management as well as training as an eyelash-extension technician. This has opened doors I never expected, and I absolutely can see a future for myself as a beauty entrepreneur and businesswoman. In fact, in July this year, I qualified for and competed in the finals of the Sunshine Pro Series at the Brisbane Hair and Beauty Expo, which excitingly was the first ever live lash competition in Australia!

What was your journey after graduating from CCGS?

I understand that you can't plan every aspect of life and backup plans are helpful, so I'm also studying a Bachelor of Arts at the University of Sydney. It's such a broad degree that develops many skills which can be applied in many different areas. I'm also doing a double major in Psychology and English as part of my course.

While my degree and job are very different, I have learned so much from both and now feel as though I have a whole range of skills and options for my future.

It's an exciting time to be young and towards the end of a university degree because all of a sudden there are so many dreams all within reach.

What have you enjoyed about your University experience?

I've had fun representing Sydney University in basketball at the Australian University Games - twice! University basketball has given me the opportunity to travel to Queensland and Perth as well as Wagga Wagga and Wollongong for the Eastern Games. It's a great social experience and the team topped it off with first placing at all four competitions.

Being involved in University sport is fantastic fun and a great way to meet new people and make friends at Uni.

What was your favourite subject at school and did you have an influential teacher?

I had so many fantastic teachers at CCGS but I'm so thankful for Miss Ho who taught me from Year 7 all the way up to Senior College and inspired my love of history.

After completing 4-unit English during my HSC, and now a major at University, I would be lying if I said my favourite subject wasn't English!

I love creative writing and hope to publish children's novels one day.

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