

# The Arcadian

THE MAGAZINE OF **NORTHHOLM GRAMMAR**  
EDITION 53 | SPRING 2023



# Northholm Grammar

***Challenging minds. Creating futures.***

# The Arcadian

Edition 53 | Spring 2023

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**Northholm  
Grammar**

#### Contact

79 Cobah Road  
Arcadia NSW 2159  
Phone 02 9656 2000  
Email [admin@northholm.nsw.edu.au](mailto:admin@northholm.nsw.edu.au)  
Web [www.northholm.nsw.edu.au](http://www.northholm.nsw.edu.au)

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of our founders’ vision*”



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*to highlight the realisation  
in 1983..."*

# From the Principal

**Welcome to Volume 53 of *The Arcadian*, our 40th Anniversary Special Edition. We hope you enjoy this snapshot of life at our School and the many achievements and meaningful experiences.**

Anniversaries are rich community experiences and the celebration of our 40th Anniversary is a time to reflect on the beginnings that took place and how, since our inception, changes have paved the way for success over the years. It is a time when the past, present and future of our School come together, taking vows to uplift the School to the greatest possible heights and dimensions.

In 1983, Northholm Grammar's commitment began with a vision of a dynamic, caring school that would foster the worth of the individual, encourage academic and sporting excellence and promote Christian values. It is a family-centred school which looks upon its students, parents and staff as part of a 'community' striving for a common goal.

Northholm Grammar delivers a distinctive education that offers a level of care beyond that available at larger independent schools where each child is known, respected, cared for and cared about. Our founders recognised that a fundamental element of a school's culture is defined by its vision and the values that are communicated within our community and promoted to students, staff and parents. A school's benchmark on how successfully the

vision is embedded within our context is largely determined by the impact our values have on our students.

The values of a school provide a moral compass for establishing norms and behaviours with all key stakeholders. When students achieve, we can reflect on the effectiveness of our values in action, just as when we need to deal with inappropriate behaviour or poor effort we can be appropriately guided by those values.

In 1983, the School crest brilliantly represented the 'Our School' values which include:

- Learning through scholarship represented by the open book standing for 'scholarly learning'.
- Caring for others and self represented by the rod and staff standing for pastoral care.
- Living a faithful life is represented by the compass of the cross and serves to highlight that we are an inclusive Christian community.
- Contributing to the community is represented by the School motto *Be Traist*, meaning be true to ourselves.

It is with much pride that, as we celebrate our School in its 40th year, we have remained committed to these values and ethos and they are as important today as they were in 1983.

A Northholm Grammar education has always been based on developing a rigorous learning environment, where students can acquire the attributes necessary for flourishing,

which is the ultimate aim of a quality educational experience. The context of a school matters.

And it is for this reason that I believe there are *three* distinctive qualities from the foundation of the School that has provided us with the infrastructure to succeed today and meet the challenges for tomorrow.

The first distinctive quality is *relationships*. The purpose of a Northholm education was to create an environment in which supportive and inspiring relationships between staff, pupils and parents could flourish. A focus on character has supported the development and maintenance of positive relationships within and across the School – but also depended on them. The importance of positive relationships can be seen in practice, for example, through pastoral care. Our contemporary structure as an All-Through School has encouraged positive interactions between younger and older students developing a support network in modelling good character.

The second distinctive quality is *personalisation*. Northholm Grammar supports the personalised experience of the journey for each student through reflecting our school-wide commitment to moral purpose, scholarship and high excellence in challenging, supporting and knowing every student. And through the development of student confidence, competence and leading towards autonomy and self-actualisation.

*“In 1983, Northholm Grammar’s commitment began with a vision of a dynamic, caring school that would foster the worth of the individual, encourage academic and sporting excellence and promote Christian values.”*

The third distinctive quality is *community*. Belonging to a school community is a deeply formative experience: it shapes students' character. We are a school that promotes in each student a strong sense of belonging and service to the community through our opportunities for representation, leadership and community engagement. The vision of the School is to ensure that the vast potential that our young people have to offer to our community is maximised and celebrated. We seek to work together to make young people's contributions both possible and valued, because a school is where young people can make social action — defined as practical action in the service of others to create positive change — a habit for life.

In remaining true to the foundations of the School, we continue to demonstrate in the most emphatic ways imaginable that the holistic educational experience at Northholm Grammar can be about both elevating the achievement of academic growth and excellence through learning and the development of character and service to the community. As part of the School's educational philosophy *academic intentionality with pastoral attentiveness*, we observe our students as both 'learners' and 'persons' highlighting our focus on 'scholarship' and 'character' within a Christian community.

We thank God for those who have led the School over the decades: the staff who have given so generously of themselves and continue to do so, our generations of families, and — mostly, of course — our outstanding students. The following pages of *The Arcadian* serve to highlight the realisation of our founders' vision in 1983 and the importance of remaining committed to the 'Our School' values.

**Christopher Bradbury**  
Principal



# Outstanding young men and women of character

## STUDENT LEADERSHIP

**It is only appropriate that in Northholm Grammar's 40th celebratory year, the Senior Leadership Team had a focus on building connections within the cohorts of the School and the School community.**

Our 'One School, One Culture, One Community' campaign emphasised building support networks across the different year groups of the School. This was designed to foster the creation of lifelong friendships and empower students to find a sense of belonging, connecting them to Northholm throughout their future.

As a Leadership Team, we agreed it was important to communicate the Our School values in a way that clearly highlighted what it means to be a Northholm student, now and in the future. As a result, we created *The Northholm Way* Manifesto to reflect the School's commitment to nurturing outstanding young men and women of character. It emphasises and celebrates the 'Our School' values of learning through scholarship, caring for others and self, living a faithful life and contributing to the community.

With the support of the Northholm Association (P&C) we were able to organise a guest speaker, Matt Caruana, to come and speak to Senior students at the School. Matt's presentation assisted students in understanding the support networks they have available to them and encouraged them to reach out to those who can help them in times of adversity. The feedback from his presentation was overwhelmingly positive and provided students and staff reminders about the importance of having hope and seeking help when it's needed.

Our commitment to supporting student wellbeing also inspired us to pilot the Year 12 Retreat. The Retreat, which ran over three days on the School campus, began with Legacy: *The Northholm Way*, a session with Mr Bradbury and 2021 alumna Olivia Charlton. Their discussion highlighted the importance of focusing on the process to achieve success, a message pertinent to Year 12 following Trial Examinations. The session, run by the Student Leadership Team, aimed to strengthen relationships within the Year 12 cohort as we undertook our final weeks of schooling. Sessions run by Optimum Experiences and Elevate Education rounded out the Retreat,

strengthening students' teamwork, problem solving and study skills. Achieving our goal to revitalising student motivation after the Trial Examinations and building a sense of camaraderie within the year group, the Retreat fostered a culture of support within the Year 12 cohort which we hope will be continued in future year groups.

As we near the end of our service, we would like to wish the class of 2023 all the best in their future endeavours and thank the Northholm Community for their unwavering support over the last year.

**Calum Fraser and Holly Lawton  
School Captains**



# g men acter

*“This was designed to foster the creation of lifelong friendships and empower students to find a sense of belonging, connecting them to Northholm throughout their future.”*

**Back row:** Mark Hodges – Member for Castle Hill, Isabelle Henderson, Emelie Gartner, Amelia Gartner, Olivia Knight, Sam Mules, Edward Williams and Taine Cassar.

**Front row:** Lucinda O, Sofia Attia, Sophie HJ, Kai Strickland, Mia Lawton, Matthew Coad, Noah Brown, Kirralee Bray and Principal, Christopher Bradbury.



## Looking forward to 2024

In September, we held the Leadership Investiture to welcome our 2024 School Captains, Prefect Body and House Captains.

### 2024 Leaders

#### *School Captains*

Sophie Hamilton-James  
Kai Strickland

#### *Senior Prefect (Community)*

Sofia Attia

#### *Senior Prefect (Character)*

Mia Lawton

#### *School Prefects*

Taine Cassar  
Amelia Gartner  
Emelie Gartner  
Olivia Knight

#### *Capell House Captains*

Kirralee Bray  
Matthew Coad

#### *Lincoln House Captains*

Samuel Mules  
Edward Williams

#### *Patteson House Captains*

Noah Brown  
Lucinda O'Brien

#### *Rowland House Captains*

Isabelle Henderson  
Xanthia Hughes



# Celebrating the journey

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

**Our Valedictory Service marks the celebration of the schooling experience of our Year 12 students. We gratefully acknowledge the support and generosity of the many who so readily collaborated in giving new expression to *The Northholm Way*, thereby maintaining the School as the centre of a happy and life-giving community.**

Northholm Grammar's Valedictory Services are a reflection of the respect we have of our students and the contributions they have made to the School. This special day is a milestone in their growing relationships with peers who have been their friends and companions for years and who will now be forever part of their life journey.

The Year 12 student's departure from Northholm farewells the security of school and this is of course a sad but necessary part of moving on. The challenge however comes down to the road they pave for their future.

It's a long road and the people best equipped to ride the ups and downs are those with the right outlook – that thing that decides how we face the day, how we think about our work and how we approach our lives. It doesn't just colour our experiences, it makes our world.

As we reflect on the year, we think of the quality of care that has been generously delivered by our teachers to the students and their rejoicing over students who have overcome difficulties of some sort or who have something to celebrate. They have worked exceptionally hard to bring out the best in them.

Teachers have invested in our students' education, their growth and their maturity. It has been wonderful to see them grow through these powerful relationships. Many of our students (due to their commitment to learn and improve) have exceeded their personal expectations from the start of the year in truly appreciating what they can achieve.

We often get asked what the true value of a Northholm education is and what are we trying to achieve here in the growth and development of our young men and women. The work of education, as the linguistic root suggests, is to 'lead out', meaning schools need to lead or draw out of young people all their talents and aptitudes.

However, in best preparing students for the challenges of life after school, we are essentially cultivating a learning environment where students can master their greatest asset, self-confidence and manage their greatest weight, personal responsibility.

If we have students who have developed confidence and belief in themselves combined with the character formation to take responsibility for their decisions, choices and behaviour, then they have the skillset to master work, life, family, commitments and challenging situations.





Above left. Northholm students form a guard of honour to farewell the Year 12s.

Clockwise from top. Year 12 graduates with Head of Science and Head of Pattenon House Ms Smriti Mediratta. Mr Christopher Bradbury with Sienna Arena-Milne. Year 12 students make their way through the guard of honour. Declan Gunther performs on the saxophone at the Valedictory ceremony.



Confidence in oneself is the cornerstone of character. It is difficult for those who do not believe in themselves to have much faith in anyone else. Self-confidence brings confidence in others. A person who says, "I don't think I can" is basically saying to themselves "I don't think I am".

As Year 12 move into the next phase of their lives, we hope that each student continues to flourish, thrive and contribute all that each has, sharing their gifts and capabilities, for the benefit of their fellow men, women and nation. If they go out into the world with the confidence to explore opportunities, face challenges and achieve a sense of personal satisfaction and fulfilment in whatever they decide to do, then we know they will truly make a difference.

**Christopher Bradbury**  
Principal



# Sharing our learning a community experience

## PRIMARY YEARS

**Sharing Our Learning is an important event in our academic calendar as the Primary Years come together as a learning community. The role of a learning community is to connect people, set goals, enable shared learning, support distributed leadership and accelerate progress (Center on the Developing Child, Harvard, 2021).**

At Northholm, our learning community provides space and structure for students, parents and staff to align around a shared goal, to achieve success and inspire lifelong learning. In the Primary Years, we create effective platforms that are both aspirational and practical which are fundamental to our Sharing Our Learning events.

On Wednesday 29 March, families joined their Kindergarten to Year 6 children in the classrooms to enjoy a range of learning activities that students have been working towards throughout Term 1 and 2.

Kindergarten to Year 2 showcased how hands-on and practical learning experiences enhance skills and strategies across a range of Key Learning Areas. It was a hive of activity as students sorted words into trash or treasure, hosted a yarnning circle where they shared ideas, built three-dimensional structures, and played literacy and numeracy games to test their parents' skills.

Year 3 demonstrated their adept mapping skills with their parents and carers, whilst Year 4 used digital microscopes to zoom in on flowers. Years 5 and 6 hosted a myriad of activities involving both technology and written work led by the students, highlighting their inquiry skills gained through research and projects.

Throughout the year, students have demonstrated their academic attentiveness and eagerness to not only learn new skills but build upon existing knowledge. We look forward to finishing the year strongly with increased rigour, determination and thirst for learning.

**Erin Werner**  
Primary Years Curriculum Coordinator



# — rience

*“Throughout the year, students have demonstrated their academic attentiveness and eagerness to not only learn new skills but build upon existing knowledge.”*





# Prospectors and time travellers

## CAMPS

Year 5 students spent an exciting time at the Bathurst Goldfield in Term 3. After studying the social, economic and political effects of the Goldrushes on Australian history, students developed a deeper understanding of the everyday lives of prospectors and their families in the 1850s through this amazing hands-on experience.

Students developed skills such as panning for gold, setting up tents, cooking over an open fire, working with a blacksmith, building mud bricks and learning the games played by children of the time.

Year 5 loved discovering how to build wattle and daub huts and use the tools available for the kitchen, laundry and farming. Our hosts provided extensive insight into the daily lives of various people who came to Bathurst in the 1850s, such as the wealthy, the poor, people from foreign nations and the local First Nations People.



They also compared and contrasted the expectations, freedoms and choices available to males and females between then and now.

In the local courthouse, museum and cemetery, we discovered Australians from the past who had made a significant contribution to the development of Australia as a democratic nation. We listened to stories of the Dreaming to further

our understanding of the effects of the goldrushes on the First Nations Warajiri People. Songs and poems from the 19th century gave us an understanding of the values, attitudes and experiences of people from different walks of life back then.

**Corinne Smith**  
Year 5 Teacher

# Year 6 Canberra adventure

**School camps are an integral part of a student's experience at Northholm Grammar. In August this year, our Year 6 students had the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of activities whilst on their three-day Canberra camp.**

This commenced with an informative visit to Parliament House, where students developed a further understanding of how the Australian system of government works and how important the role of Parliament plays in the lives of all Australians. During their tour, students explored different sections of the building, including the Marble Foyer, the Great Hall, the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Exploring the memorials along Anzac Parade provided students with an opportunity to learn about honouring service and commemorating conflicts. Following this, students

went on to the Australian War Memorial and had a viewing of the Tomb of the Unknown Australian Soldier. This experience of the camp encouraged students to reflect and think critically about the historical and cultural significance of these memorials.

Students enjoyed exploring exhibits through an interactive trail experience at the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House. Comparing the historic Senate Chamber with the current room in the new building helped students understand the evolution of Australia's political landscape. At the National Electoral Education Centre, students experienced Australia's federal electoral system and the power of Australia's democracy. They were able to run their own election in a dedicated polling room by voting, counting the votes and declaring the election result.

Year 6 also enjoyed and participated in interactive and hands-on learning



through visits to the Royal Australian Mint, Questacon, the Australian Institute of Sport and the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

Overall, the camp offered students a diverse range of experiences that combined learning, reflection and hands-on engagement, leaving a lasting impression and wonderful memories of their final year in the Primary Years.

**Mary Falvey**  
**Year 6 Teacher and Primary Years Wellbeing Coordinator**





# Resounding triumph

## CAPA

**One of the highlights of the Music Calendar was our 17th Annual Music Showcase, held on Monday 5 June at Hornsby RSL Club. Encompassing performances of over 120 students from Years 3 to 12, it was a highly successful event for our young musicians.**

The Music Department presented a wide range of musical styles from large Ensembles including Secondary and Primary Years Choirs, Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Concert Band and Stage Band. Our many and varied small Ensembles included Guitar, Percussion, Flute, Clarinet, Brass, Saxophone and String Ensembles. The night also included performances from our Combined Years 5 and 6 Band and String Ensemble.

There were also special performances presented by two Year 12 HSC Music 1 students - Max Fletcher (voice), who sang *Beautiful City* from *Godspell*, and Declan Gunther (saxophone), who played the Second Movement from *Four Pictures from New York*. Both items performed are from the repertoire the students have been preparing for their HSC performance exam.

The Showcase provides students with the opportunity to experience first-hand the time and dedication required to perform in a professional environment. For many students, the showcase is a significant milestone in their personal growth as a performer, performing in public in front of a large crowd for the very first time. In the lead up, through their practices and rehearsals, students further develop strong team building skills and learn the importance of, and discover an appreciation of, the roles each member plays within the team.

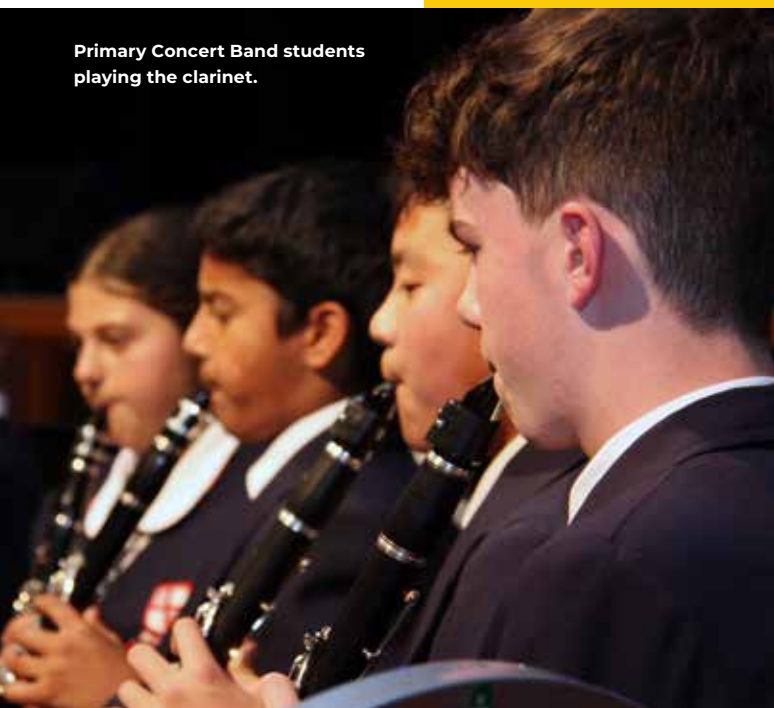
Congratulations to all students, Music teachers and staff for a spectacular night. It was wonderful to see the Showroom at Hornsby RSL Club packed with family and friends enjoying a celebration of the students' achievements.

Above. Stage Band performing at the Music Showcase.  
Below. Concert Band at the Music Showcase.



*"It was wonderful to see the Showroom at Hornsby RSL Club packed with family and friends enjoying a celebration of the student's achievements."*

Primary Concert Band students playing the clarinet.



Concert Band performing at the Australian School Band and Orchestra Festival.

## Australian School Band and Orchestra Festival

**Northholm had an exceptional day in July at the Australian School Band and Orchestra Festival at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) Kensington.**

It was a rewarding experience for young musicians to perform in different environments and the Clancy Auditorium at UNSW provided a superb performance space for our students to showcase their talents.

Both the Concert Band and Symphonic Wind Ensemble gave their best performances. We were especially grateful to Brianna Simpson, Eric Hope and Dean Mansell for lending their support by performing with both bands.

Concert Band received a Silver Award and received second place in the Graham Lloyd event. The Symphonic Wind Ensemble received a Silver Award and was placed equal second in the David Stanhope event.

This is a great achievement considering the breadth of the competition, with school bands competing from all over Greater Sydney and country New South Wales.

Congratulations to all our musicians for your exceptional efforts and to Dr Luis Madrid, our conductor, for his outstanding Ensemble direction. A special thank you to all parents for your support.

**David Stratton**  
Coordinator of Co-Curricular Music



Northholm Grammar's Secondary  
Aerobics Team.



# Northholm strikes again

## SPORT

**Northholm Grammar built on Semester 1 success with outstanding results in Aerobics, Equestrian and Athletic sports events.**

The Hills Zone Sports Association (HZSA) Cross Country saw Northholm excel in both Primary and Secondary events, with the School winning Best Performed in Primary for 2023 and named runners-up in Secondary.

Noteworthy Age Champions included Morgan Dagg U9 Boys, Tyler Watkin U11 Boys and Sylvia Dagg in U12 Girls. Special congratulations to E Dagg, who won third place in U10 Girls and Ashleigh Mansell for achieving second place in U11 Girls.

At the CIS event, Morgan Dagg ran a fabulous race and finished first, going on to New South Wales Primary Schools Sports Association (NSWPSSA) to finish fourth individually and second with his CIS team to gain the silver medal.



Cross Country Champion  
Morgan Dagg.



*“With a successful State Championship campaign in Term 2, Northholm Aerobics celebrated both teams qualifying for the National Championships in Adelaide in August.”*



**Northholm Grammar's Primary Aerobics Team.**

In the Secondary HZSA category, Christopher Whiteley placed second in the U13 Boys and Katie Bowrey took first place in U14 Girls. Both qualified to compete in Association of Independent Co-Educational Schools (AICES). Due to our strong U13 Northholm boys, Christopher Whiteley, Sebastian Harmuth, Jacob Kohut and Olly Liddle also qualified as part of the teams event to run at AICES.

Congratulations to Taine Cassar, Jake Le Leivre, Advik Prasai and Isabel He for also representing HZSA at AICES in the individual event and doing Northholm proud.

The Northholm Athletics Carnival was another stand out event, with Rowland House claiming victory in the 2023 carnival, giving Rowland House all three carnival wins for the year. School records were broken by Morgan Dagg in 1500m and 800m, Tyler Watkin in 1500m and Sylvia Dagg in 1500m and 800m. Our Northholm athletes will make up a large team to compete at the HZSA Athletics Carnival, held at Sydney Olympic Park.

With a successful State Championship campaign in Term 2, Northholm Aerobics celebrated both teams qualifying for the National Championships in Adelaide in August. Our Northholm Primary team consisting of Ashleigh Mansell, Hayley Challoub, Rose Harrington, Sylvia Dagg, Abigael Imad, Jasmine O'Riordan, Grace Ward and E Dagg, won Gold at the State titles and then won the Silver medal at the National Championships. Congratulations to Bianca Irwin, who won the Silver medal in Junior Auditions, Kirralee Bray who won the Bronze medal in Senior Auditions and Xanthia Hughes for placing 5th at the National level. The Secondary Aerobics team finished 7th in the country with their highest point score for the year. Congratulations to our National Champions, Sarah Walker and Tyler Old, coaches and ex-students of Northholm, for competing in the Open Age division for 2023.

# SCHOLARSHIP



The Northholm Equestrians represented our School at a variety of interschool and state events this year. Our 30 riders, ranging in age from Kindergarten to Year 11, created a supportive environment for all involved in the Equestrian program. For the second year in a row, a Northholm Grammar student was awarded Grand Champion Exhibit at the Arndell Interschool event held in August. Last year Jessica Callus was presented with this prestigious award and this year it was awarded to Lucinda O'Brien (Year 10), on her horse Milfield Quepid. From Dressage to Working Show Horse categories, our team are diverse in skills and share a positive approach to every competition.





Senior Girls Netball HZSA winners.

## HZSA success

**Northholm entered teams in the Hills Zone Sports Association (HZSA) competition in Semester 1 and 2 this year. Congratulations to the following winning teams for HZSA Semester 1:**

- Year 5 and 6 Northholm Girls - Touch Football
- Senior Girls - Netball
- Junior Boys Basketball
- Intermediate Boys Basketball.

Well done to our Runner Up teams: Year 5 and 6 Boys Football, Junior Girls Netball and Junior Girls Futsal who all put in a courageous effort in their finals.

**Jamie Stimson**  
**Head of Sport and Coaching**



Northholm's Year 5 and 6 Girls Touch Football winners.

# Fostering curiosity

## STEM

**STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) constitutes a dynamic quartet of disciplines that, when united in educational frameworks, revolutionise learning. This innovative method not only deepens comprehension in individual subjects but also sparks students' curiosity in interconnected fields, enhancing critical analysis and problem solving skills essential for thriving in the 21st century.**

Northholm Grammar demonstrates an unwavering commitment to cultivating an enriching learning environment that nurtures STEM exploration. The School's dedication to instilling curiosity and passion is evident in its engaging, inquiry-based STEM curriculum, empowering students with tools to tackle real-world challenges and equipping them for future studies and careers within STEM industries.

This year, a pioneering co-curricular STEM Program has been introduced at Northholm in collaboration with Macquarie University. This initiative, conducted during Semester 1, delves into Artificial Intelligence, focusing on coding and refining Face/Object Recognition accuracy by accounting for standard deviations introduced by facial expressions, compared to neutral face data.

The spectrum of STEM engagement at Northholm spans from classroom activities to a diverse array of co-curricular endeavours. For instance, during Term 2, Year 8 students engaged in the 'Inquisitive Minds' incursion at the Lincoln Centre. Collaborating in pairs, they explored logic and mathematical challenges, showcasing both skills and enthusiasm for learning. This event underscored the notion that learning can be engaging and rewarding.





Evident dedication to nurturing young mathematicians was also observed during the Mathematics competition, with outstanding talents from Years 7 to 10 showcasing their capabilities. Northholm eagerly awaits acknowledging high achievers, celebrating their dedication and mastery in the field.

The Science and Engineering Challenge at Sydney Olympic Park on 23 March provided an exhilarating experience for Year 9 and 10 students. Students engaged and immersed themselves in hands-on experiences and activities such as Future Power, Stringways, Turbine and more. Collaborating within teams, they honed their problem solving skills and highlighted the tangible applications of STEM in real-world contexts.

Northholm's enthusiasm for STEM education was further apparent during National Science Week in Term 3, Week 5. The week commenced with a paper plane challenge that united Primary and Secondary students in an enjoyable and educational endeavour.

Year 9 students constructed a wave machine, tangibly demonstrating scientific principles. The Collaboration with Fizzics Education enabled students from Kindergarten to Year 10 to explore science through captivating experiments, revealing the wonders of scientific phenomena. Additionally, Year 8 students engaged in an experiment exploring the complexities of blood – a testament to STEM's multifaceted nature and its capacity to captivate young minds through diverse experiences.

Northholm's dedication to fostering curiosity, inquiry and excellence in STEM education is vividly portrayed through its diverse range of activities. By amalgamating these four disciplines, the School enriches traditional subjects while nurturing a generation prepared to navigate an increasingly intricate, technology-driven world.

**Smriti Mediratta**  
**Head of Science and**  
**Head of Pattenon House**



# Preparation for life

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

**This year in the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education program, there have been two co-curricular programs running parallel to the Stage 5 curriculum. For Year 9, the theme has been 'What's your problem?', with a focus around developing enterprising behaviour and skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, risk taking and teamwork. The Year 10 program placed an emphasis on 'Learn, Live, and Thrive': better equipping students with the mindset and skills they require to navigate an uncertain environment beyond school.**

Year 9 students began their program in March with three sessions on one day, the first being with Dominic from MoneyVest who provided practical advice around making money, financial goal setting and budgeting. The second, facilitated by Head of Student Futures, Suzy Wilson, delivered practical information on job application and interview skills. The final session was a presentation from the not-for-profit, Ecstra Foundation, facilitating a workshop on making money.

Generation Entrepreneur visited the School again, looking to inspire our Year 9 cohort to the level achieved last year, when Team Safety Shadow took out the national title of Entrepreneurial School of the Year. They presented their Start Up 101 program; a practical workshop on identifying problems, creating solutions and applying it to a business environment. In small teams, students attended workshops and hustle sessions. In the Accelerate 101 program, their second session with Generation Entrepreneur, groups needed to adjust their production and



finance projections and 'pitch' their idea to a panel of judges, with the three top ranked teams making the national final at UNSW in November.

In November, students will build on the skills developed throughout the year to participate in the Northholm Apprentice Program (NAP) where they will research, workshop and create strategies to solve a social problem of their choosing.

For Year 10 Students, April marked the official start of their involvement in the program over two days of presentations and workshops. Sessions on the first day encapsulated financial literacy and being 'Ready for Work'. Firstly, Dominic from MoneyVest provided practical advice around significant financial decisions, realigning financial goals and practical aspects of buying a car. The second session involved educational gameplay called *Playconomics*. In this new initiative by the University of New South Wales, students complete economic scenarios to accumulate points over a period of three months (in their own time) in a bid to win (real) prizes – an incentivised economic response. The final session was facilitated by Head of Student Futures, Suzy Wilson and delivered comprehensive career aptitude testing, as well as a practical workshop on job applications and interview skills.

On the second day, Northholm were lucky enough to host a couple

of leading presenters in their fields. Craig Wilkins from Project Toolbox presented to the group on the concept of project management and, more importantly, the elements of management required to bring a group of people together and turn them into a high performing team. This workshop was complemented later in the year when a dozen students were selected to undertake a mini-MBA program that covered the elements of good and bad management, scheduling and sequencing projects, risk mitigation and creating transferable resources. Later that day, the CEO of the Australian School of Entrepreneurship, Jahin Tanvir, presented two sessions to the group on Leadership and Conflict Resolution.

In Semester 2, the cohort will have the opportunity to gain three useful qualifications: First Aid, Cardiopulmonary resuscitation and basic emergency life support. They will also undertake more skills building through a Road Safety program and the Career Innovators program.

We thank the industry professionals for providing real, relevant and relatable content for our young people, the Year 9 and 10 students for their active engagement in the initiative and Mr Bradbury and the rest of the Northholm staff for their encouragement.

**Joshua Toth**  
Entrepreneurship Teacher



# Northholm Grammar

# Celebrating 40 years

**On 2 February 1983, at 8.25am, the bell rung for the very first day of classes at Northholm Grammar School. Ten teachers and 125 students, from Year 6 to Year 11, began the day with a short Chapel Service led by the Deputy Headmaster, the Reverend John Bootle.**

That day was the culmination of years of work by the founding parents, School Council and the establishing staff – a passionate community who craved a high-quality, educational experience for their children.

Northholm Grammar School was founded under a vision of a small, caring school which would foster the worth of the individual, encourage academic excellence and promote Christian values. The name was a reflection of our remarkable environment: our Founding Headmaster, Mr Ronald Chambers, suggested the School's name include the word "Holm" (a type of oak and a

symbol of prosperity, strength, stability and comfort) and Founding Chairman, His Honour Dr John Lincoln AM, proposed to include "North" to suggest Sydney's Northern Hills and Hornsby Shires which the School would serve.

It was to be a family-centred school which looked upon its students, parents and staff as part of a welcoming community striving for a common goal. For 40 years, we have remained true to our original charter to provide a comprehensive education for students of all abilities and interests irrespective of faith, culture or family background.

In celebrating our 40th Anniversary in 2023, we have reflected across the year, at various events and occasions, on how far we have come. Staff, students and families have strived to build an impressive reputation of academic, pastoral and co-curricular achievement at Northholm Grammar. As we have grown, we have maintained our commitment to deliver a distinctive

education that offers a level of care beyond that available at larger independent schools. Northholm is a place where each child is known, respected, cared for and cared about as an individual.

To current and past students, staff, parents, Council members and other members of our extended community, we thank everyone who has contributed to the last four decades of life at our School. We have been proud to celebrate this milestone with you throughout the year.



# From the archives

## My impression of Foundation Day

**The date is 9 July 1983. I'm in my navy blue blazer, tie and long sleeved and collared shirt. As the family approaches the School in the car, we see the first signs of this important occasion. I hopped out of the car with mum, who had a tray of food for the guests.**

Slowly the car park fills and many bright and colourful characters wander around the School. A design of part two of the School is on a board in front of the amenities block. The students talk excitedly of the prospect of a new gymnasium and what the School will be like in the future years and if they'll ever see it.

The tennis courts are just finished and a few mats and vaulting horse are laid out on display. The teachers hustle us into the classrooms for roll call. The teachers look, well, different and old fashioned in their graduation garments. The students in the classroom look tense and nervous but excited.

We line up at the door and walk out to the gigantic marquee. We progress in class by class and are seated at the left side of the dais. Mumbling and quiet chatter fills the marquee and finally the big moment arrives.

The Governor pulls up in his Rolls Royce with a police escort. Six bars of *God Save the Queen* are played and we stand as His Excellency, Sir James Rowland and Lady Rowland enter. Doctor Capell, Mr Chambers and members of the Council also enter.

Alderman Lennon introduces and welcomes everyone. Hymns are sung, speeches heard and Mr Chambers is presented with all the volumes of the Oxford Dictionary.

Then comes the moment we had waited for all this time. His Excellency pulls a cord on the plaque which rests on a stand. His Excellency officially opens the school. Sir James walks outside as we sing the last hymn.

When this finishes we all walk outside and gather around a giant cake. We await Lady Rowland and the official party and, after some wait, Lady Rowland cuts the cake and then enters the Headmaster's house. Everyone tucks into afternoon tea.

The bell is hung up in the tree and the students have their eyes on it. Suddenly the bell rings and we all race over to the driveway. His Excellency then walks through our guard of honour, stopping to shake a few hands and Lady Rowland is presented with a bouquet. Finally, they step into their Rolls Royce. It is all over.

Slowly the people who had made it such a great occasion disappear, the car park empties and only the tables and giant marquee remain.

It was truly a day to remember.

**Rodney Lees  
Year 7 (1983)**





Opposite. Founding Headmaster, Mr Ron Chambers, with Lady Rowland.  
 Above, clockwise from top. Students during the Foundation Day  
 celebrations in 1983. Sir James Rowland, Governor of New South Wales,  
 the marquee set up out the front of Northholm Grammar. students lining  
 up to meet the Governor of New South Wales.

# Northholm through



**1983**  
 Northholm Grammar School opens, with Sir John Rowland and Lady Rowland joining Headmaster Ron Chambers for the first Foundation Day.



**1982**  
 Building is underway for a new School in Arcadia.



**1986**  
 Students attend Carols in the newly built The Stables.



**2005**  
 Construction commences on the Lennon Centre.



**2012**  
 The Northholm student leaders' slogan is "Together as one."

**2003**  
 Alumni celebrate the 20th Anniversary at the Crystal Ball.



**2007**  
 Students Ashlee Behn, Mieka Hynek and Kim Wood host a fundraiser for Pink Ribbon Day.



# the years

**1991**

His Excellency, the Governor of New South Wales, Admiral Sinclair and his wife visit to open the new Art Block and renovated Science Block.



**1995**

The School farewells Mr Christopher Welsh, Headmaster from 1985-1995.



**1992**

The Secondary Production of *The Importance of Being Earnest*.



**2019**

Northholm welcomes new Principal, Mr Christopher Bradbury.



**2015**

Northholm expands to become a truly Kindergarten to Year 12 School with the inclusion of Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2.



**2023**

Northholm celebrates 40 Years.



# Anniversary Ball

Northholm Grammar celebrated a significant milestone in May, with our 40th Anniversary Ball. We welcomed current and past parents, alumni, members of staff and special guests. Mrs Jenny Plüss and the Reverend Christopher Welsh, spoke about the early days of the School and the vision of our founders. Principal Mr Christopher Bradbury addressed our guests, focussing on Northholm 'yesterday, today and tomorrow'. It was a fabulous evening of reminiscing and a real celebration of the history and achievements of our School.





# Foundation Day 2023

**On Monday 17 July, Northholm Grammar remembered its foundations at the 2023 Foundation Day Service led by The Venerable Dr Grant Bell.**

The Service opened with a photo display highlighting the development of the School since its days as a horse stud prior to its opening on 2 February 1983.

In attendance at the Service were Mr Richard Lennon (Foundation member of School Council), Mr Tony Parle (Chairman of School Council), Northholm alumni who are parents of current Northholm students and parents of Acorn students (Year 12 students who entered Northholm in Year 3, the earliest possible entry point).

Guest speaker, Mr Benjamin Hogarth (Northholm Graduate 1998), who currently works as Senior Creative Producer at Fox Sports, addressed the School about his time at Northholm as well as his experiences after leaving School and the impact that a Northholm education had on his life choices.

Other highlights of the Service included the Student Address by Senior Prefect, Sienna Arena-Milne, who reflected on her six years at Northholm and Declan Gunther, one of Northholm's exceptional Music students, who played one of his HSC saxophone pieces - the Second Movement of *Four Pictures from New York* by Roberto Mollinelli.

The Acorn students who were presented with their lapel pins were Jasper Allen, Caitlin Bastian, Jack Donaldson, Declan Gunther, Gabriella Imad, Mason Lowe and Jackson Roberts.

Later in the day, as part of the 40 year celebrations, students were treated to a lunch, generously funded by the Northholm Association.

**Jenny Plüss  
Head of Operations**



**Clockwise from top. Guest speaker Mr Benjamin Hogarth with Northholm Captains Holly Lawton and Calum Fraser. The Student Address, presented by Sienna Arena-Milne. The Northholm Grammar Combined Choirs. Principal Christopher Bradbury addresses the audience.**

# Secondary Years achievements

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS



Sienna Arena-Milne (Year 12)

**In July, Sienna Arena-Milne (Year 12) was awarded the prestigious Youth Community Service Award from the New South Wales Branch of the Order of Australia Association.**

The Award recognises NSW senior students who have shown commendable service to their communities. Sienna was selected for this Award for her demonstrated contribution and leadership in community service, including leading fundraising initiatives at Northholm in support of Camp Quality last year.

Sienna was presented the Award in September by Her Excellency, The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC, Governor of NSW at Government House. Congratulations on your selfless service Sienna; this is an outstanding achievement.



Gemma Oaklands (Year 11)

**Year 11 student Gemma Oaklands was recently selected as a recipient of the Premier's Anzac Memorial Scholarship, granted by the Director of the NSW Office for Veteran's Affairs.**

Open to Year 10 and 11 History students in New South Wales, awardees of the Scholarship are given the opportunity to undertake a study tour to significant historical sites to learn more about and commemorate Australian servicemen and servicewomen.

Gemma will travel with other recipients to Darwin and Singapore as part of this unique, hands-on experience. She hopes the trip will deepen her understanding of Australian history and expand on her knowledge of Australia's role in global peace and conflict. Gemma's selection as a scholar reflects her contribution to Northholm Grammar as well as the community. Well done Gemma on this accomplishment.



Sophie Hamilton-James (Year 11)

**Sophie Hamilton-James (Year 11) recently had the opportunity to develop her leadership, communication and entrepreneurship skills at the 2023 Youth Leadership and Business Summit, held at the Collaroy Convention Centre.**

Sophie was selected and sponsored by Bendigo Bank to attend the five-day summit which was presented by the Magic Moments Foundation.

Alongside other students from Australia, Vietnam and the United States of America, Sophie gained a greater appreciation for the importance of communication, empathy and encouragement while growing her own self-confidence. In one of the camp challenges, Sophie worked in a small team to create a business pitch; her team won the challenge and were awarded scholarships for the graduate program next year. We congratulate Sophie for receiving the scholarship to attend this significant opportunity.

# The Wonderful World of Dissocia

## CAPA

**Audiences were taken through a colourful, wonderful, wild ride when Northholm Grammar Years 9 to 11 students performed five performances of the Anthony Neilson play, *The Wonderful World of Dissocia* in May this year.**

*The Wonderful World of Dissocia* follows the journey of Lisa, who embarks on a fantastical journey through two contrasting worlds as she attempts to find her lost sense of time and self, exploring themes of mental health, identity and reality along the way.

The play is in two contrasting acts; one is vibrant and joyful, with a vivid recreation of Lisa's dream-like imaginary life – a hysterical comedy of the weird and wacky. The other is dark and unsettling – a black-and-white presentation of the hospital ward where the protagonist, Lisa, receives treatment.

Portraying these opposite worlds attempts to give the audience a notion of how the condition affects the sufferer, and those associated with the sufferer, and offers an alternative view of conventional treatments.

Sumi Sen (Year 11) played the protagonist Lisa and was exceptionally well supported by a stellar cast including Matt Eggers (Year 11) and Sam Mules (Year 11) as the Insecurity Guards, Ed Williams (Year 11) as The Scapegoat, Kirralee Bray (Year 10) as Jane - the victim surrogate, and Lucinda O'Brien (Year 10) as Britney, the proprietor of the 'lost' Lost Property Cafe, as well as a strong cast of supporting roles of wonderfully charismatic and fantastical characters. Alicja Wysocka (Year 9), as both The Oathtaker and Biffer, added

wonderful comic timing, impressive spoken and sung vocal range and alternate language styles.

Students from Years 9 to 11 were engaged in rigorous rehearsals from late February, including boot camp rehearsals in the April school holidays, to produce what was a beautiful, nuanced, intelligent and enlightening piece of work taking our audiences on a whirlwind experience of joy, laughter, confusion, sadness and hope.

It was inspiring to see the theatrical craftsmanship of our Senior Drama students both off the stage and behind the scenes working collaboratively on creating a mature and thought-provoking piece of theatre. We are very much looking forward to how this recent production will be built upon in 2024.

**Andrea van den Bol**  
Deputy Principal

*"...a beautiful, nuanced, intelligent and enlightening piece of work taking our audiences on a whirlwind experience of joy, laughter, confusion, sadness and hope."*





# Confidence in public speaking

## HUMANITIES

**The Primary Years Public Speaking Competition has quickly become a highlight of the Northholm Grammar Semester 1 calendar. This year, the standard of speeches continued to increase as we saw all students from Kindergarten to Year 6 take part to deliver a broad range of exceptionally engaging and entertaining speeches.**

Across Term 1, students delivered speeches in their classroom to progress to their respective Stage Semi-Final. Those speeches focused on the cornerstone ideal of the Primary Years in 2023, which is a Growth Mindset. The Public Speaking Final, which took place at the beginning of Term 2,

required students to deliver a speech on the topic “The greatest gift in the world is...”

It was lovely to see Primary Years staff and parents commenting on the overall high quality of speech and presentation techniques they saw throughout the competition. Speaking in public is cause for trepidation in many young students, however it was amazing to see students beating their fears and speaking confidently when delivering their speeches in front of the audience. This was a direct result from the positive encouragement and support students received from their parents, teachers and friends, coupled with

their dedication and commitment to practice.

A huge congratulations to all our students, especially our semi-finalists and our finalists who were selected to take part in the final stages of the competition. In the end, we saw some very deserving winners in Miranda Li (Kindy/Stage One), Elodie Davies (Stage Two) and Ally Park (Stage Three).

**Matthew Garret**  
**Primary Years Co-curricular Coordinator and Year 6 Teacher**

# Legacy Junior Speaking Award

**This year, Northholm Grammar had two Year 8 students — Hrishi Koduru and Hannak Kok — competing in the 2023 Legacy Junior Public Speaking Award.**

Established in 1995, the Award encourages the use of effective spoken English and gives Secondary Years students the opportunity to improve their confidence and develop speech-writing and public speaking skills. Students present both a prepared

and impromptu speech, with judging based on “the matter, manner and method the contestants employ in presenting their speeches.”

Congratulations to Hannah Kok, who made it through to the North Sydney Regional Final against students from Pymble Ladies College, Hornsby Girls’ High School, Wenona School, SHORE, Monte Sant’ Angelo Mercy College, Marsden High, Asquith Girls’ High School and St Luke’s Grammar.

Unfortunately Hannah did not progress to the next stage, where regional winners compete in the state semi-finals in September.

**Ana Maria Campos**  
**Head of Humanities, Debating and Public Speaking Coordinator**

# Primary Years debating

## HUMANITIES

**With tremendous success, the Primary Years Debating Team progressed into the quarter finals of the Head of Independent Co-Educational Schools (HICES) Debating Competition, making this season the most successful for Northholm Grammar's Primary Years students in recent years. The success can be attributed to the team's unwavering commitment and dedication to additional meetings in the lead-up to debates and their work behind the scenes to collaboratively craft their speeches.**

The calibre of the teams participating was incredibly high with many adjudicators praising participating teams for their sophisticated arguments and rebuttals that were well beyond their years. Students gained valuable feedback from adjudicators and were effective in implementing changes into their next debates, which ultimately gained them further victories.

The Primary Years Debating Team worked tirelessly to brainstorm ideas, collaborate with their team to write their speeches and deliver strong and persuasive arguments about topics such as: 'The length of the school day should be reflected by the age of the student' and 'Community Sport should be compulsory'. Their enthusiasm when brainstorming arguments for both affirmative and negative sides was the highlight of the process and the peak of collaboration amongst the team.

This year's team should be extremely proud of their efforts. Congratulations to the following students for their integral role during the highly successful debating

season this year: Rocco Banovic, Vaishnavi Bijjoula, Alyssa Cepak, Sylvia Dagg, Hayley Ghalloub, Ashleigh Mansell and Ally Park.

We have now begun preparations to upskill and prepare Year 5 students in preparation for the 2024 debating season.

**Erin Werner**  
Primary Years Curriculum  
Coordinator

*"This year's team should be extremely proud of their efforts."*



Left to right. Ashleigh Mansell, Sylvia Dagg, Ally Park and Vaishnavi Bijjoula.

# Senior team success

## HUMANITIES

**“In order to think through things clearly, we need other opinions and viewpoints in order to navigate into the nuance. We need civil debate to present opposing viewpoints and point out our blind spots.” – Eric Overby, *Legacy***

In preparation for the HICES Debating Competition, Northholm’s Senior Debating teams dedicated time to learning what *not* to do: use logical fallacies, challenge their opponents rather than the argument, read from their notes and make assumptions. With training sessions held at lunchtime, twice a week, the teams honed their techniques. They learnt important skills such as defining their audience, committing to a team stance, incorporating research, anticipating their opponents’ arguments, asking and answering questions directly and delivering their debate in the right tone.

Northholm had three teams in the Secondary categories at the HICES Competition (in order of speakers):

- Middle Team (Year 8) – Tiana Attia, Myra Goyal, Hannak Kok and Zahra Waqas
- Senior Team (Year 9 and 10) – Anisha Anandh, Xanthia Hughes, Alice Hynes, Saisha Suri and Emma Chisholm
- Opens Team (Year 11) – Sofia Attia, Kalan Lee, Sophie Hamilton-James and Daniel Reay.

Competing against other New South Wales schools, all three teams reached the Preliminary Rounds. Northholm’s Senior Team were successful in defeating Newcastle Grammar School on the challenging topic, ‘That prohibitions should be placed on building homes in areas likely to endure extreme weather events’, Students were

on the negative side of the debate. They go on to compete in the upcoming Quarter Finals against St Luke’s Grammar, Manly.

**Ana Maria Campos**  
Head of Humanities and Debating  
Coordinator



**From top to bottom. Open Debating Team. Middle Team; Ms Ana Campos with the Senior Debating Team.**

# Close competition in the courtroom

## HUMANITIES

**The Law Society of New South Wales has been running the Mock Trial Competition since 1981 with students in Years 10 and 11 from 134 schools across the state competing. This year's Northholm team included: Chloe Fader (Year 11), Sophie Hamilton-James (Year 11), Florence Kim (Year 11), Anisha Anandh (Year 10), Isabelle Henderson (Year 10), Xanthia Hughes (Year 10) and Daniel White (Year 10).**

The program aims to introduce students to the NSW judicial system, by providing them practical experience into the running of a court case in a true-to-life adversarial setting and valuable advocacy, debating and problem solving skills. The team began in the best possible way with a close fought win against Bega High School (courtesy of the magic of Zoom) with just three points separating the sides. Round Two saw the team up against Oran Park Anglican College. While the margin was a little larger in favour of the Northholm team, it seemed in the balance right up until deliberation. In the last round trial against St. Andrew's Cathedral School, the team performed strongly across all aspects, but the opposition were of high quality. When the magistrate announced the result, there was a collective cheer as it was confirmed the side had made it to the Round of 64 with a third win from three trials.

Our next opponent was Hunter Valley Grammar School, and while a road trip to the valley would have been lovely at that time of the year, a Zoom trial from Room 24 would have to do. The team remained optimistic throughout the trial, receiving positive feedback from the

magistrate throughout. We also won the objection count on the day with a ratio of two to one. The team knew it was a hard case to prove but thought the actual judgement would go our way – we were wrong and the 2023 campaign came to a close. A big thank you to Jared Webster for his time and knowledge in supporting our Mock Trial team throughout the year. With a relatively young team this year experiencing some high-quality trials, the group should be well-primed for the 2024 Mock Trial season.

**Joshua Toth**  
**Entrepreneurship Teacher**



**Left to right. Year 11 Mock Trial students Florence Kim, Sophie Hamilton-James, Chloe Fader and Anisha Anandh.**



# Show Teams grow in popularity

## AGRICULTURE/TAS

**The 2023 Sydney Royal Easter Show saw a marked increase in student participation on the efforts of 2022. Once again, both cattle and poultry were strongly exhibited.**

The Cattle Show Team's preparation for the 2023 Sydney Royal Easter Show commenced in early Term 4, 2022 with the arrival of three Galloway Steers (named Steve, Shack and Scott) from Minto Galloway stud in Yass and a Limousin Steer (named Richard) from the Sylvestrine Monastery in Arcadia. Stock were trained and prepared by members of the Cattle Show Team, while being fed and managed by students in Year 10 as part of their Agricultural Technology studies into cattle production.



We had a rise of entries in the Poultry exhibits from 2022, with students entering 15 birds into a wide range of sections at this year's show. All 26 students in the Year 9 Agricultural Technology course commenced their year assessing the (now mature) Vorwerk, Barnevelder, Ancona and Light Sussex chicks hatched in late 2022 by the previous Year 9 cohort. Birds were compared against breed standards, as well as criteria students had deemed important when selecting stock such as temperament and structure of the bird. Additionally, nine of these students also focussed academic efforts in order to prepare themselves and their chosen birds for the Poultry Showmanship element of the show.

The week of the show was a wonderful event, with increased numbers of students involved in both the cattle and poultry competitions. The Cattle Show Team students showed great improvement from last year, ably exhibiting their four head of cattle in the main aisle of the Murchison Pavilion and prominently in the public eye for the eight days that stock were on the grounds. The Sydney Royal Easter Show attracts the best stock and handlers in the state and country and, commendably, both our cattle and students were solid contenders in all aspects of the competitions despite not placing. Credit must go to the students who attended, and those

studying Agriculture, for the effort they had made to ensure 2023 was success for themselves, their school and the livestock provided to them.

Birds exhibited by Year 9 were once again very successful, receiving 21 highly regarded placings from 15 entries, including multiple First, Second and Third placings, along with Best in Show and Champion of Breed placings. Students participating in the Poultry Showmanship competition spoke exceptionally well against tough competition from a large cohort of entrants, seeing Zali Fletcher place sixth and Sophie Eastwood eighth in a tough class of young poultry judges.

My sincere thanks to the breeders who supported us with cattle this year, Year 9 and 10 Agricultural Technology students, Ms Melanie Oxley, Mr Warren Burge, Mr Murray Macpherson and Mr Chris Bradbury for their unrelenting support of these students and Northholm Agriculture.

**Ian Fawbert**  
**Head of Agriculture and TAS**



# Commemorating our Anzacs

## HUMANITIES

**On Monday 26 April, Northholm Grammar honoured and acknowledged the service of all veterans who have fought in wars, conflicts and peace keeping operations at our Anzac Service.**

Led by Year 11 students Sofia Attia and Mia Lawton, the Service provided the School with the opportunity to reflect on the experiences of our men and women who served for our county, and those who continue to sacrifice their lives. This year in particular, we came together to recognise the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

We were incredibly fortunate to have Major Keith Lawton speak to us about the ANZAC spirit and how it represents endurance, courage and mateship and how we can apply these to our own lives, by never giving up, being brave and putting the needs of others before ourselves. Major Lawton also delivered an inspiring presentation on the Vietnam War and the Battle of Long Tan.

A special congratulations to Gemma Oaklands in Year 11 who was selected as one of the four Secondary Schools' Hills Anzac Ambassadors. Gemma played a key role in the Anzac Day commemorations, which focused on Vietnam veterans to mark the 50th anniversary of the end of Australia's participation in the conflict. Gemma's pursuit of excellence was apparent in the quality of the speech she delivered at the Dawn Service where she addressed the gathering of five thousand people who attended the ceremony.

Gemma is also congratulated on being chosen as a recipient of the Premier's Anzac Memorial

Scholarship for 2023. Her application and work demonstrated a deep interest in Australian history and her positive contribution to the Northholm community.

**Sandra Thomsett  
History Teacher**

*'They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, We will remember them. Lest we forget.'*



**Top. Northholm Grammar commemorates ANZAC Day. Above. Left to right. Sofia Attia, Holly Lawton, Mr Christopher Bradbury, Major Keith Lawton, Calum Fraser, Gemma Oaklands and Mia Lawton.**



# Action-packed Year 8 Camp

## CAMPS

**In April this year, Northholm Grammar's Year 8 students adventured down to the south coast to explore the natural wonder that is Jervis Bay for their three-day camp.**

Over the three days, students spent their time enjoying the crystal-clear ocean on the white sand of Booderee National Park. They nurtured existing friendships and formed new bonds with their peers, ventured outside their comfort zones, supported one another through team-building activities and developed life skills and memories to last a lifetime.

Setting off at the same time the sun was rising meant the Year 8 students arrived at the Booderee in time for an early lunch where they were welcomed by the Optimum Experiences Team. The crew from Optimum led and guided the students through a range of exhilarating experiences over the course of the camp, their knowledge and expertise evident in every activity.

After splitting into 'tribes', students were straight into activities. From learning how to mountain bike the uphill terrain of Bristol Point and Green Patch, battling wild winds and strong currents when sea kayaking, or exploring the underwater world snorkelling at Hyams Beach, students were kept on their toes and participated with enthusiasm.

The highlight of the camp, collectively agreed on by the students, was surfing at Caves Beach. Donned in wetsuits with their longboards, students practised in the smaller waves close to shore and then tried their hand at riding the bigger waves when their confidence grew. As darkness fell upon the campsite, students put their cooking skills to



the test on the Trangia stoves to make hearty dinners that would keep them fuelled for night walks along the beach, where they learnt about constellations.

Students were commended on their positive attitudes, their adventurous spirits and the leadership skills they displayed throughout the three days. A special thank you to Ms Kate Brown, Ms Serena Zha, Mr Chris Steel and Mr Martin Plüss who provided care, support and encouragement to the Year 8 cohort during what was a wonderful camp experience.

**Laura Romeo**  
**Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator and**  
**PDHPE Teacher**



# Unveiling Sydney's hidden treasures

## CAMP

**An unforgettable experience unfolded for Year 9 students as they embarked on their exhilarating three-day Urban Challenge Camp.**

The Urban Challenge Camp is always a wonderful experience that combines leadership, teamwork and exciting new experiences for the Year 9 cohort. Over the course of the three action-packed days, these young minds were split into teams, each with their own unique theme and were given the opportunity to step into a wide range of different roles, direct themselves through the city and compete in *Amazing Race*-style games and activities.

The adventure began with students being well and truly thrown into the deep end, navigating themselves through Sydney's CBD, Darling Harbour and The Rocks. Their first night concluded with a unique twist as the students set foot on Cockatoo Island, a hidden gem of abandoned buildings and old convict worksites that remains veiled to many Sydneysiders. In an abandoned warehouse, they immersed themselves in a joyful silent disco that allowed them to let go in this clandestine locale.

Beyond the exhilarating challenges, the camp also had an educational dimension. A seminar at the Big Issue shed light on the complex issue of homelessness. During the seminar, students engaged in thought-provoking discussions, gaining insights into the struggles faced by homeless individuals and the efforts taken to address these challenges. This experience imparted valuable life lessons, fostering empathy and social awareness among the students.

Culinary exploration was yet another highlight of the camp. With a menu



comprising a range of unfamiliar and enticing dishes, as well as the occasional McDonald's ice cream, students were encouraged to step out of their comfort zones and try new food. This not only broadened their gastronomic horizons but also provided a tangible opportunity for personal growth and open-mindedness.

By the end of the three days, students returned home tired and worn out, with new experiences and memories to last a while.

**Lorna Brettell**  
**Humanities Teacher**





# Outside the comfort zone

## CAMPS

**This year, Northholm Grammar Year 9 and 10 PASS students participated in a PASS incursion Outdoor Experience Camp led by Optimum Experience. The goal of this day was to provide our students with a hands-on experience of learning in the outdoors, working collectively as a team and expanding their comfort zones so the students can grow both individually and as a class.**

Students were divided into classes and assigned leaders from Optimum. From here they participated in the following workshops: Leadership in the Outdoors – ‘Save the World’, Mountain Biking and Maintenance, and Bush Discovery and Knots lessons. During each session, students focussed on developing the fundamentals of teamwork in an environment that was both physically and mentally challenging. Activities were concluded with a debrief with their Optimum leader where students were encouraged to share their thoughts on the success and challenges of each activity. These moments encouraged students to reflect on their processes for problem solving and explore new avenues to refine their teamwork skills.

Students were fortunate to learn about First Nations culture and identity, as well as uses for the range of plants and animals within the land where our School sits. Bob, who is part of the Gaghungal Murring team, led our students on a hike through our wonderful bushland and educated our students on First Nations artifacts, Bush Tucker and had a cultural yarn with them. It was an incredible opportunity to learn more about our land and ancestral stories from Bob.

It was a wonderful incursion and opportunity for our students to develop their leadership skills, learn the value of teamwork and, hopefully, encourage them to continue to expand and challenge themselves.

**Shane Lockhart**  
**Head of Rowland House**



# Italy

## A classical tour

### EXCURSIONS

**In the Easter holidays, 21 students from Years 8 to 11 travelled on a Classical Tour of Italy. We began with the 24-hour flight to Rome and with no time to rest, our adventure started as soon as we stepped off the plane: we were off to the Trevi fountain and the Spanish Steps. The beauty of Rome was breathtaking.**

On the second day, we toured the Vatican, enjoying the magnificent fresco artworks on the ceiling and stunning sculptures. Next, we went to the Colosseum and the Roman Forum, learning about Rome's history and taking in the splendour of Roman architecture.

Leaving the city of Rome, the next day we headed to Naples, one of the most densely populated cities in Europe. The chaotic nature of the city was definitely a shock, yet I came to love the place after finding amazing pizza for just three euros. We then made our way to Caserta which would be our base for the following four nights.

The next morning, we boarded a ferry to the island of Capri. What a picturesque place! We journeyed up the hill into the town with Mr Bradbury leading the charge at record pace. While here, we had the chance to brave the freezing water. Mrs Plüss was the first one in and the last one out. We then caught another boat to Sorrento which was again, absolutely beautiful. We explored the shops and enjoyed a lovely dinner before returning for a much-needed sleep.

On day five, we hopped on the bus and began the journey up Mount Vesuvius, looking out the window in awe at the snow. We were a little less amazed when we were unable





to continue and we had to walk back down the windy road we had just come up in the rain, hail, snow and freezing cold. While we didn't make it to the top of the mountain, it is an experience none of us will forget. After a warm shower we were off to Pompeii; the history lying in the ruins was extraordinary.

The following day we visited Paestum to explore the Greek temples and then went on to the Amalfi Coast, a charming collection of towns that were stunning.

On day seven we drove to Siena, with a bonus stop in the town of Orvieto. Siena, one of my favourite places from the trip, was full of beautiful churches and amazing food to eat, especially the truffle pasta.

After the night in a lovely hotel just outside the walls of Siena, we explored the town of Lucca with some of us driving around in a sightseeing bike. Then we went to Pisa and took the iconic photo, with varying degrees of success.

Day nine took us on a guided tour of Florence, followed by time to explore the amazing shops on offer. We then went to San Gimignano, a medieval town where we tasted some award-winning gelato and explored all the place had to offer.

Our final day was spent in the city of Verona. Like Florence, this place had amazing shops and was a beautiful town. Spending the night just outside Milan, we enjoyed our last night together before leaving for the airport at 4.30 in the morning for the long trip back.

The trip to Italy was amazing – not just because of the fact we were in Italy but because of the people we were with, the friendships we made, the freedom and independence we

had to explore the places we visited and enjoy meals wherever we chose. Without the amazing leadership of Mr Bradbury, Mrs Plüss and Mr Plüss the trip would not have been possible. Thank you for giving up your holidays to take 21 of us across the world on an unforgettable trip.

**Sophie Hamilton-James (Year 11)**





# Future possibilities

## STUDENT FUTURES

**As students enter their senior Secondary Years, they come to a pivotal point where they start making decisions about what careers or further study opportunities they want to pursue after high school. To support our students at this crucial juncture, Northholm Grammar developed the Creating Futures evening for Year 10, 11 and 12 students and their parents and carers.**

Held in May this year, students and their families were offered an all-access pass to interact with industry leaders from diverse sectors and higher education representatives, providing students with the opportunity to discover a wide array of industries and professions they may have never before considered, gain real-world insight and guidance into potential work and study paths and gain experience in networking with professionals.

The event began with an uplifting keynote by Helen Hamilton-James, a Northholm parent and Deloitte Partner, who powerfully illustrated the work landscape awaiting our students. This set the stage for an engaging panel discussion featuring esteemed professionals, Northholm parents, Professor Taryn Jones and Craig Wilkins, and alumna Sarah Wilcock. They each shared reflections on achieving personal satisfaction and professional success, life and work integration and the desirable skills in today's job market. This guidance is instrumental in helping students understand the necessary qualifications, skills and steps they need to take to achieve success in their desired careers.

We take immense pride in our close-knit and connected Northholm community of parents, staff, alumni and the local community who contribute significantly to the ongoing success of

our students' development.

We would like to thank the attendees, especially our keynote speaker, Helen Hamilton-James and our distinguished panellists which include Professor Taryn Jones (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Macquarie University), Craig Wilkins (Portfolio Manager, Project Toolbox) and Sarah Wilcock (National Marketing Manager, Nutrien Ag Solutions).

Our Creating Futures evening is an important catalyst for inspiration and exploration, igniting the flames of ambition and driving our students forward toward a future full of promise and opportunity. Together, as a community, we are paving the way for their success, one step at a time.

**Suzy Hughes**  
Head of Student Futures

**NORTHHOLM ASSOCIATION**

# Building community

**The Northholm Association orchestrates events across the year that foster community and shared experiences. This year's Mother's Day High Tea and Father's Day Breakfast exemplified this commitment.**

The Lincoln Centre came alive this Mother's Day, as children celebrated alongside their Mums and Grandmas on Thursday 11 May. The sit-down breakfast, attended by 274 people, aimed to create cherished memories with our students and their mother figures within our School community. The event featured a revamped menu with fresh scones, pikelets, homemade granola, banana bread and more.

The Father's Day Breakfast was held on Friday 1 September 2023 and was the largest to date with over 320 attendees, in the COLA near the canteen. The menu included hearty bacon, eggs and sausages, along with freshly brewed coffee made by students. A professional photographer

was present to capture the happy moments and our door prizes and giant outdoor lawn games added excitement to the event.

The Mother's Day and Father's Day events are a testament to the Northholm Association's, and our volunteers' dedication to fostering a strong sense of community at Northholm. We look forward to welcoming more families to our future events and continuing to build an inclusive, supportive community.

**Rebecca Foster**  
**Northholm Association President**



# Subjects in the spot



## Laura Romeo

Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator and PDHPE Teacher

### Encouraging Adventure

**As the Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator and PDHPE Teacher at Northholm, I am deeply committed to fostering a holistic education for students. My journey began with an undergraduate degree in Sport and Exercise Science/Business Administration, followed by a Master of Teaching (Secondary) at the Australian Catholic University. Prior to my teaching role at Northholm, I was a Sports Coach at Northholm for two years.**

Drawn to the role of Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator, I am passionate about cultivating a well-rounded student experience. The Program's blend of physical activity, skills development and community service aligns with my pedagogical beliefs. The opportunity to encourage students to challenge themselves physically, learn new skills and contribute to their surroundings also fascinates me. The Program operates in what I call the 'trifecta' of physical activity, skills and service, which is culminated in an outdoor Adventurous Journey. This is what really drew me to the Program; the ability to support students as they challenge their physical abilities, learn new skills and contribute to the community and environment around them.

What excites me most is guiding students through the demanding yet rewarding Program, witnessing their growth and planning engaging Adventurous Journeys. I enjoy the synergy between PDHPE and Outdoor Education, as well as the flexibility the Duke of Edinburgh Program offers students in tailoring their experiences. I think something that most people don't know about the

Duke of Edinburgh offering is the amount of choice that is available to students within the Program. They have the opportunity to choose their skill, their physical activity and their service within the community. The options available to students mean that they can tailor their awards to suit their individual preferences, skills and interests, which creates valuable and engaging learning opportunities.

My fondest memory involves a Year 12 student completing her Gold Award, she was the first student to finish her Award in my time as the Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator. Whilst I wasn't there to see her whole journey, supporting her and her commitment to the Award as she neared the end was a very special experience. Another special experience I am looking forward to, is coordinating and taking the 2023 Gold and Silver Award participants on their Adventurous Journey along the Hawkesbury River in the September holidays – it is going to be a very exciting opportunity.

Northholm's educational philosophy, emphasising respect, integrity, compassion and service, resonates with my approach to the Program. It inspires me to challenge participants and foster their confidence and resilience, encouraging them to move beyond their comfort zone to learn and try new things. My dedication to holistic education and student growth is driven by Northholm's philosophy and the joy of seeing students thrive both academically and personally.

In my free time, I love to keep active by going out for a walk with friends or doing a workout at the gym. I also enjoy beach swims, reading and attending NRL games and the occasional brunch.

*“What excites me most is guiding students through the demanding yet rewarding Program, witnessing their growth and planning engaging Adventurous Journeys.”*



# light

## Matthew Garrett

Primary Years Co-curricular Coordinator and Year 6 Teacher

### Celebrating the wins

**Education is something I am deeply passionate about; I've always loved learning. Before becoming a teacher, I worked in training and mentorship roles in the corporate sector while, at the same time, volunteering for youth organisations like Rock Solid and Youth for Christ as a counsellor and youth mental health course facilitator. Then one day it just clicked and I made the transition to teaching. I achieved a Bachelor of Education (Primary) with a Specialisation of Middle Schooling from Griffith University.**

I have now been teaching for over 13 years with Years 4 to 6 being my focus. This expertise has allowed me to grow and develop as an educator and best facilitate a quality teaching and learning environment for my students. But what remains the same is the feeling of seeing my students succeed. Hands down, what excites me most about this job is seeing them meet or smash their learning or personal goals. No matter the size of the win, it's their win and seeing them claim it is the best.

At Northholm, our philosophy is very much centred on challenging students by learning through scholarship and developing their cultural, creative and social emotional capacities. So, in this regard, the School's philosophy very much aligns with my own. I set high expectations with my students and encourage them to always give their best and do so with a positive attitude, whilst learning how to handle setbacks and develop resilience. It was this, and the people, that drew me to Northholm: I could tell immediately that teachers at Northholm truly care about their students and helping them to achieve

their best. From Kindergarten to Year 12, all the teachers I've met shared, and continue to share, an innately high level of commitment to providing their students with the best education possible. I believe this level of support continues to set Northholm apart.

I remember distinctly reading the names of my 2019 Year 6 students as they graduated and got handed their certificates. It was the end of my first year at Northholm and the end of their Primary Years journey. I see many of them around campus today and we still chat and connect, which is one of the biggest benefits of being on a Kindergarten through to Year 12 campus. I am very proud of the young men and women they are becoming. As I am back on Year 6 this year, that memory makes me excited in anticipation of experiencing the moment again, reading out the names of our current class at the end of 2023 as members of our graduating Primary Years class.

As we come into this last part of the year, I'm also excited for the return of summer. My son is only seven months old, so my wife and I can't wait to share his first proper summer exploring some beaches, and I'm looking forward to finding more time to read and cook.



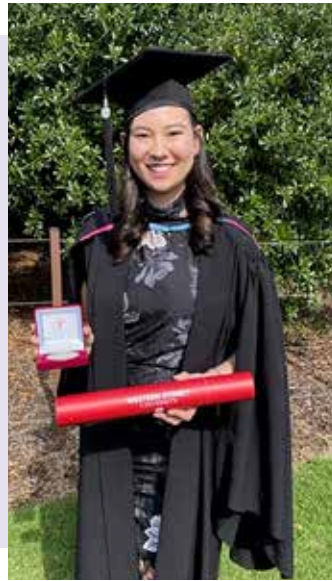
*"I am very proud of the young men and women they are becoming."*

# Excellence beyond Northholm

## ALUMNI

### Ashley Wong

**Congratulations to Ashley Wong, from the Northholm Class of 2018, who graduated in April this year with a Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) with first class honours from Western Sydney University, achieving a University Medal for academic achievement.**



### Carina Sirolli

**Congratulations to Carina Sirolli, from the Northholm Class of 2017, who graduated this year from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Arts/Advanced Studies (Media, Communications and Marketing) as a Dalyell Scholar with High Distinction.**



# Reunions

## ALUMNI

**We invite all alumni and staff of the relevant year to join us in celebrating Northholm at the following upcoming reunion:**

**15 Year Reunion (Year 12 Class of 2008)**

**Saturday 4 November, 1.00pm – 5.00pm  
Walumil Lawns Baragaroo Reserve  
BYO picnic gear, drinks and snack  
Please RSVP to Mieka Hutchinson (Hyne) at  
[northholm08@gmail.com](mailto:northholm08@gmail.com)**





*“Anniversaries are rich community experiences and the celebration of our 40th Anniversary is a time to reflect...”*



# Northholm Grammar

79 Cobah Road  
Arcadia NSW 2159

[admin@northholm.nsw.edu.au](mailto:admin@northholm.nsw.edu.au)  
[www.northholm.nsw.edu.au](http://www.northholm.nsw.edu.au)