

The Oakhill Drive



Oakhill
COLLEGE

MAY 2023

Mr Kurt Herzog - Class of 2010

Since graduating from Oakhill, I've had many different experiences. Most people in high school knew me as one of the 'Herzog twins,' and I spent a lot of time after school trying to make the Australian Swim Team.

Luckily, I was able to represent my country at the 2015 Fina World Championships and earn a Bronze Medal in the 4 x 200 Freestyle Relay. The following year, I participated in various World Cup meets before narrowly missing out on qualifying for the 2016 Olympics by 0.2 seconds. A week after that, I had the first of two surgeries I needed for my shoulder, ending my professional swimming career. During this time, I was grateful to have completed a degree in Sports Management.

I remember my Oakhill teacher, Mr Robert Munday (the best Geography teacher in the world), always telling us that it's essential to have a backup plan, and that advice proved to be valuable. Since finishing my degree, I've worked for The Australian Paralympic Committee, NSW Institute of Sport, the Australian Sports Anti-Doping Authority (now known as Sport Integrity Australia SIA), run my own Swim Clinic business, and been the Australian Brand Manager for a swimwear brand, Arena.

After my swimming career ended, I felt a strong desire to give back to my country. After hearing some negative news in the media, I was curious to learn more about remote indigenous communities. I reached out to a non-profit organisation and began volunteering in various communities. During this time, I noticed that these communities lacked access to swimming pools, learn-to-swim programs, and teachers, and that employment rates were as low as 30%. None of this made sense to me, and it weighed heavily on my mind while living in Sydney. One day, I decided to drop everything and move to a tiny town called Ujtu, which is 2.5 hours west of Alice Springs, to do something about it. Since 2019, I have been living on and off in Ujtu, where I work as a lifeguard at the local community pool, serving a population of 150 indigenous people. My initial goal was to observe and learn, as life in remote communities vastly differs from what I was used to, with its rich culture and complex issues.



Before I could create ideas for improvement, I needed to subconsciously detach from everything I thought I knew was right in our white culture and start fresh by learning about the culture, cultural law, how these kids learn, the challenges the community faced, what they enjoyed, and what they didn't. Essentially, I needed to get to know them and what they wanted. During my first few seasons there, I realised that swimming pools were much more than a place for the community to learn how to swim. In my opinion, they are an essential component that contributes to a stronger and healthier community. Aboriginal people in remote communities have some of the highest prevalence of skin, ear, and eye infections worldwide, which is not a well-known fact. Studies have shown that swimming pools can reduce these infections. Additionally, when pools are open, crime rates go down because they provide a positive and safe space for the community to come together, socialise, and be physically active on relentless 47-degree days in the desert. Pools also help teach kids how to swim in a safe environment, where they are three times less likely to drown, and also provide employment opportunities in communities.

After two years of learning, I drafted a not-for-profit label for the Indigenous Swimming Foundation that set out to provide consistent swim and survival lessons and to create a pathway for local community members to attain qualifications to work at their local swimming pool and help keep it open all summer long. During this time however the YMCA created a similar concept and got in touch, hearing about my time in community. I jumped on board as they had the immediate funding to make it work and so here I am! I now help manage the YMCA's Remote Pools Project that aims to tackle health inequality across some of Central Australia's remote communities by keeping pools open. My goal is to create consistent programming to reduce drownings, reduce skin, ear and eye infections, and provide a pathway for employment for these pools to eventually be fully community run by local indigenous staff. Who knew pools could do so much! If you want to read more about the project or donate please visit <https://www.remotepoolsproject.ymca.org.au/> You can follow on socials @remotepoolsproject.



From Our Principal

Greetings,

The prophet Micah wrote in about 700BC *"This is all God asks of you, to act justly, love tenderly (mercifully), and walk humbly with your God"*. St. Irenaeus (202AD) wrote *"The glory of God is the human person fully alive"*. Both truths seem so simple, yet so profound, and seemingly unachievable for the human condition to date.

John F Kennedy reminds us *"All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime. But let us begin"*.

At Oakhill College, we have a rich tradition of Christian and Lasallian wisdom to guide us how to live and conduct our lives so that peace and stability will reign, and the potential of creation achieved for all. When we are using our talents to the best of our ability, we are fulfilling God's plan, we are bringing to fullness the potential of creation. When we are anything less, the world is less, and opportunities are lost. We are fully who we ought to be *"when we combine in ourselves, the spiritual, a moral for living, a lively mind, cultural sensitivity, and a healthy sense of the physical"*. Archbishop Oscar Romero goes on to say *"Good education must result in young people being not only gifted and accomplished but also wise and holy. This is what we are about: We plant seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold the future promise"*.

Human flourishing has to be a central focus of education. Every gram of leadership has to be nurtured so that it can engender positive change. Talent well used grows social capital, which we rely on to make the world a better place. Leadership that moves a situation from good, to better, to best, will happen more effectively based on spiritual values and ethics. Such inspiration is not common but is essential in a borderless global world. Lasallians must be leaders of change, bearers of hope, bridging differences, touching hearts, transforming lives.

Sir Br Pat Lynch, Oakhill College Director, at a Staff Day in 2010 said *"Schools need to deliberately build enough confidence in their students, so each possesses these character dimensions: resilient personalities, audacious thinkers, imaginative dreamers, critical questioners, innovative inventors, enthusiastic experimenters, faith-filled leaders, strong-willed individuals in the face of adversity, and committed collaborators"*.

I hope you are as inspired and proud as I am to be associated with Oakhill College when reading the amazing recounts of what alumni have done and are doing as leaders of change, bearers of hope, bridging differences, touching hearts and transforming lives. Truly inspirational and humbling.

Live Jesus in our hearts.

Forever.

Br Steve Hogan fsc
College Principal





Ms Alice Hann - *Class of 2008*

My journey as a Lasallian began when I came to Oakhill College in Year 11. It was probably even earlier as my Mum, or as my Year 11s tell me, “The real Mrs Hann” taught at Oakhill, well before my time here.

When I completed Year 12 at Oakhill, I took a leap and applied for a Lasallian Volunteer Trip to a tiny community in Western Australia called Balgo. And as the locals describe it, “it’s a little bit long way”.

After a 10 hour drive up the corrugated Tanami track, we arrived in a tiny little community. The community surrounds a red dirt AFL field and is situated on Kukatja, Walmatjarri, and Warlpiri Land.

On a normal day, the population would be around 400 people. In saying that, there’s rarely a normal day.

Balgo Community has one shop, a school, a clinic and a church.



Here the De La Salle Brothers serve the community by providing education for the beautiful kids at Luurnpa Catholic School.

In the short two week trip, I absolutely fell in love with the children, the elders and the beautiful surroundings. I went on to do two more volunteer trips after this, and on my 2015 visit, something changed within me. I wanted to strive for better. I wanted to use my passion for teaching and children somewhere it was truly needed.

2016 came around, and I’d been given the opportunity of a lifetime. To teach in Balgo at Luurnpa Catholic School. But it was way more than that.

I lived with and learned from the Kukatja People, where the culture and language were still so rich and where the land was untouched.

I experienced cultural ceremonies and women’s initiation, Saturday night Masses with the elders and hunting trips for goanna, bush turkey, snakes or frogs. Things that so many people would never experience in their lifetime.

Most afternoons we’d sit at the lookout to watch the sun go down and on Sundays, we’d chase wild brumbies on our dirt bikes.

I lived out there for close to three years. I became part of the community. I learned enough of the language to know when the kids were teasing each other (or me). And most importantly, I felt at home.

Among the incredible highs, living in one of the most remote communities in Australia came with many challenges. One of these challenges was the irregular attendance of the children in school. The children fought through a lot of hardship every day, to show up to school and strive for excellence.

I’ll use my little friend Delilah as an example. When I arrived to teach there, Delilah was completely disinterested in school and ran away back to her home every day. Fast forward to my last few weeks there, and I was waving goodbye to her as she got on a tiny plane to head off to boarding school in Perth. I saw a photo of Delilah the other day at her Graduation Ceremony, having completed Year 12. Proud is an understatement.

Some of the children make it to boarding school, but very few complete high school.

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When the only proper high school is 2,000 kms away from your family and culture, when you're learning in your second and third language and you're sitting in a classroom learning the 'katiya' or the white way, it is a very difficult task.

We forget how fortunate we are to be put on a clean school uniform every morning, come to school on a full stomach, and go home every night to a warm bed. We forget how privileged we are, to come to such an amazing College with teachers who truly care and so many opportunities for us all.

For the children of Balgo, some of these basic things were a privilege.

I wouldn't have had the opportunity if it weren't for being Lasallian or coming to Oakhill. Something so small as a two week trip turned into an incredible connection with such a special place that I've been a part of for over 10 years now.

When my time living there came to an end, the elders told me that the Luurnpa (the magical kingfisher) would be watching over me, and that he would bring me back one day.

This year I was so lucky to have landed the opportunity to come back and teach at Oakhill College. I aim to keep giving back to the Lasallian community in every way I can.

I noticed a banner the other day here at the College, that sums up my journey in a few words. That is "Enter to Learn, Leave to Serve".

During Lent, we are called to reflect deeply on our journey so far and on our path ahead. This is a time for us to look within, look up, and strive for excellence. Our challenge is to find a way to give back.

There is something so special about being Lasallian and having somewhere to call home in different parts of the country and world.

I remind my students, to treasure your time here knowing how truly privileged you are and leave to serve those who aren't as lucky.

Class of 2022 HSC RESULTS

The College is very proud of the Class of 2022. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the students of the Class of 2022 for their outstanding collective efforts that have resulted in this achievement.

We have witnessed the largest number of All-Rounders (7), Top Placements in the State (6), and Distinguished Achievers (126) since records have been kept in 2002.

Furthermore, we would like to recognise Liam Milton-White, who has been awarded the title of Dux of the College for 2022, achieving an impressive ATAR of 99.8. Zachary Semaganda and Hannah Cook were named Proxime Accessit, with ATAR's 99.7 and 99.6, respectively.

Lastly, we express our gratitude to our hardworking staff for their unwavering commitment, expertise, encouragement, and mentorship.



Year 7 2026 and Year 11 2025 Enrolments

Enrolments for Year 7, 2026 for boys and Year 11, 2025 for girls are now open, and we highly recommend completing an Expression of Interest form to avoid disappointment. You can find the online form on our website: www.oakhill.nsw.edu.au.



Oakhill College
P&F
ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

P&F Welcome Event

The P&F annual Welcome Event was an excellent opportunity to welcome new parents and reconnect with existing ones and alumni at the College. The Welcome Event took place on Saturday 18th March, and once again, it was a great success making over \$8,000 profit. Despite the heat, we had over 320 attendees, and it was a full house with lots of competition, laughter, fun, and music.



Save the Date:

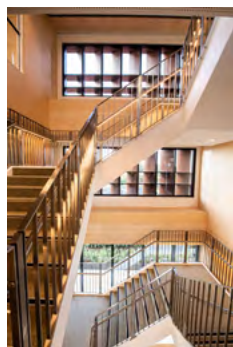
- ★ P&F Gala Day on Saturday 22nd July. We hope you can join us for sport, stalls, ride, entertainment and more.
- ★ P&F Golf Day on Friday 18th August.

The Oakhill College Parents and Friends Association is excited to announce that the major Gala Day Raffle prize is an incredible 2023 Hyundai i30 Hatch PD V4 2.0i GDi 6-speed. This automatic car comes with a 5-year manufacturer's warranty, has premium plates, 12 months registration, CTP green slip and stamp duty – valued at \$28,990.

Tickets via: <https://www.trybooking.com/CHHXK> and are only \$10.

The raffle will be drawn at 2:50pm (time may vary as stipulated in our terms and conditions).





Oakhill's **MASTER PLAN UPDATE**



Opening of the state-of-the-art Innovation Hub.

Equipped with cutting-edge technology, the Innovation Hub will transform the way students learn, with advanced TAS (hybrid timber, fabrication, robotics, computer, graphics), Science and laboratory spaces. Despite the challenges presented by COVID and wet weather, the Innovation Hub is a testament to the hard work and vision of the College Board and Senior Leadership Team. It is a passive build that harmoniously integrates with the environment, has the highest sustainability rating, and reduces our carbon footprint. The use of timber provides natural heating and cooling, blending seamlessly into the landscape, and the feature curtain wall boasts advanced technology for clarity.

Oakhill College's focus from the beginning was to create innovative spaces that inspire and connect students. The building's opening was a star-studded event with dignitaries such as Her Excellency Margaret Beazley AC KC, the Governor of NSW, in attendance. Her Excellency highlighted the De La Salle Brothers' significant contribution to education worldwide and the importance of the holistic education that Oakhill College provides.

The day started with a smoking ceremony and blessing of the building before dignitaries addressed the attendees, followed by a tour of the Innovation Hub. We are grateful for the collaboration and support of our partners, including FDC, MostynCopper, BVN, Urbis, Viridi, and DCWC, for creating this remarkable space.

The Innovation Hub will provide modern facilities including:

- 9 General Purpose Learning Areas (Science)
- 6 Wet Laboratories
- 1 Super Laboratory
- 1 Experiments Laboratory
- 2 Preparation Laboratories
- 1 Staff Room
- 2 Computing / Media Rooms
- 4 Workshops
- 2 Materials Workshops
- 2 Makerspace Workshops
- 2 Machinery Rooms
- 1 Amphitheatre

Oakhill College's Master Plan is ongoing with the next two stages the Canteen and The Commons already in progress. The construction of the Canteen, has been thoughtfully designed and easily accessible to all students on campus. Covering an area of 120m², the Canteen will provide a modern and comfortable space for students, complete with an outdoor cafe area and seating, and is due for completion by September 2023. To experience our incredible fly through experience, visit: <https://youtu.be/xinLCtq75eM>.



The Commons will serve as the administrative hub of the College, housing Pastoral and Curriculum services. This contemporary, three-level project features versatile design elements that can be adapted to the ever-evolving work environment, including offices and collaborative meeting rooms on Levels 1 and 2. On Level 3, a dynamic function space will be able to accommodate large groups of approximately 300 people.

The Commons will also feature an air bridge linking to the Adrian Building for easy access in addition to disability access to the Adrian Building. The extension of Oakhill Drive will run between the Canteen and The Commons, improving pedestrian flow. Additionally, The Commons will provide an outdoor area with tiered seating that can accommodate more than 300 people, which will be perfect for extended drama, performances, and/or Cohort and House meetings.

Oakhill College's Master Plan is not only about designing buildings, but a design intent, with respect to the site, its history and legacy, sustainability and connectivity. The College Master Plan provides for innovative learning spaces that inspire; building connectivity for both teacher and student, and also student and space.

To stay informed, visit our website:

<https://www.oakhill.nsw.edu.au/about/master-plan>



Giving to Oakhill College

Leave a Legacy for Future Generations



Financial support is essential to the continued success of Oakhill College. We encourage all members of the Oakhill College community to support the Building Fund through annual gifts and contributions. All donations to the Oakhill College Building Fund are tax-deductible. By working together, we can all make a difference here at the College in providing the best possible facilities and resources for teaching and learning; for both today's students and the next generation. You can make a tax-deductible gift to the Oakhill College Building Fund by visiting <http://www.schooleasypay.com.au/oakhill/> and select Voluntary Building Fund Donation, or if you would like to discuss a particular contribution, please contact Br Steve Hogan fsc (Principal). When making your donation, please enter the Record ID as your year of graduation or the year of your youngest child's graduation. If you are a current parent, please use your Family ID from your College Fees Statement. You will automatically be sent a receipt in acknowledgement of your generous donation at the end of the current financial year. For more information, please contact Mrs Elke Forrest, Business Manager on 9634 0801 or email eforrest@oakhill.nsw.edu.au. This is an opportunity to live out our Lasallian tradition – "Enter to Learn. Leave to Serve".



COLLEGE NEWS



The Defence Careers Breakfast was a great success, featuring two accomplished and inspiring speakers.

Mr Kevin Chenney, (Class of 1994) who is the Defence Export Control Senior Consultant and Expert responsible for training, auditing and consulting in his specialist field. Kevin began a career in the Royal Australian Navy as a Maritime Warfare Officer, specialising in Navigation. Kevin travelled throughout the Middle East, South-West Pacific, South-East Asia, and around Australia during his career. Upon departing the Navy after 12 years, Kevin's subsequent roles have included training and technical solutions roles bringing to the fore his passion for helping people, and his training and consultancy services. Bombardier Ian Watson, an Army Combat and Security Officer, also shared his extensive experience, opportunities, travel experiences and satisfying career that he has had over the past 20+ years in the defence forces.

Together, they provided valuable insights into the various and extensive roles and career paths available within and outside combat and across different military branches. They discussed the pros and cons of a career in the defence forces, the distinctions between them, entry requirements, application opportunities, the required skillset, and transferrable skills learned that can benefit individuals during and after their service. The speakers also highlighted to the enthusiastic audience the extensive support network available to those in the military, and emphasised the demand for ex-defence personnel in the workforce.

International Women's Day

Oakhill was honoured to have Ms Yvonne Keane (AM) as Guest Speaker for International Women's Day.

Yvonne is a highly esteemed and transformational leader and advocate within the not-for-profit sector, renowned for her ability to turn the impossible into a reality. Her unwavering commitment to innovative and responsive solutions drives her relentless pursuit of social equity for the most vulnerable in our society. Yvonne has founded numerous sector-leading service organisations that provide life-changing support for those in need.

Yvonne's personal experiences as a child of domestic violence and a mother of two children with disabilities ground her work with The Sanctuary and Reimagine Australia. She strives to ensure that every vulnerable person has access to the resources necessary to lead safe lives and reach their full potential. Yvonne served as a Councillor and Deputy Mayor on the Hills Shire Council from 2012 to 2017, eventually being elected as Mayor in 2016.

In recognition of her achievements, Yvonne has received several prestigious accolades, including the 2012 NSW Woman of the Year (Community Hero), 2016 NSW Local Government Woman of the Year, and 2019 Third Sector Influencer of the Year awards. Yvonne's dedication to her work was further acknowledged when she was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) on Australia Day 2021.



SPORTS NEWS



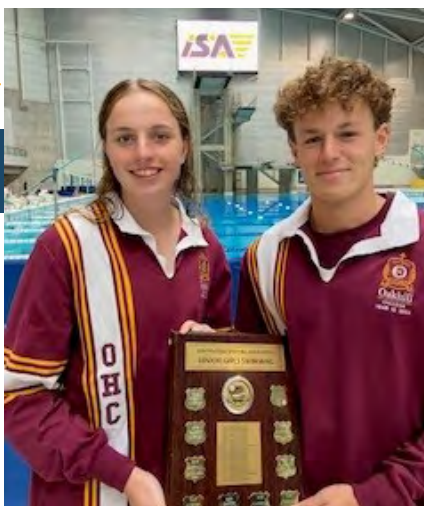
Junior Boys Relay

Congratulations to the Oakhill Junior Boys Relay Team – Sebastian Vilorio, Alex Eason and Zacary Green (Year 8) – for their outstanding performances at the recent NSW All Schools Triathlon. The team came in 2nd place overall in NSW, and 1st place overall for Combined Independent Schools.



Isaac Beacroft (Year 11) has broken yet another Australian record, this time in the U18 5000m race walk. This incredible achievement comes after he broke the U16 3000m race walk record last December, which had stood for almost 27 years. Isaac's new record is all the more impressive given that he only started competing in the 5000m distance recently, and had only had a four-week block of training due to injury.

In addition to his remarkable achievements on the track, Isaac is also pursuing AFL at the Greater Western Sydney AFL Academy.



ISA Swimming Championship Carnival

Oakhill College participated in the ISA Swimming Championship Carnival recently held at Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre. Despite the tough competition against other independent schools, Oakhill College was crowned Intermediate Champions. Furthermore, the Oakhill College girls secured their position as Senior Girls Champions for the third consecutive year.

While we were just pipped at the post by St Augustine's, who won the senior relay, we are extremely proud of our students' remarkable performances. We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to our Swim Team and Coaches, who competed with fierce determination and spirit.

Seniors Rugby Tour

Senior boys have recently returned from their New Zealand Rugby Tour. The boys had an action-packed time training and playing rugby across the land of the long white cloud, as well as taking in some spectacular sights.



Some highlights were an incredible training session led by some of the best coaches in NZ, including Whitney Hansen – daughter of renowned All Blacks Coach, Steve Hansen. Also All Blacks Richie Mo'unga, Sevu Reece, and Sam Whitlock made a special visit to share stories, answer questions, and take photos with the boys, both truly unforgettable experiences.

Throughout the trip, the boys played numerous games and participated in many training and recovery sessions, making the most of every opportunity to improve their skills and teamwork. The luge and Skyline Gondola were highlights in Queenstown, as were the scooters in Christchurch.

The tour training sessions and games were valuable opportunities for the boys to gain insights into techniques and skills that are sure to take their game to the next level.

Sports Lunch

Oakhill College invites you to our highly anticipated, annual Sports Lunch on Friday 16th June. The Guest Speakers will be rugby legends Mr Matt Dunning and Mr Phil Waugh! They'll be sharing their stories, tips, and insights. We've also lined up, some fabulous entertainers – Tahir and Rob Shehadie, and our MC Host for the day will Mr Tim Gilbert, so with this fabulous line up of stars, you don't want to miss out. Tickets via: www.trybooking.com/CGTRB





URBAN CHALLENGE

Year 11 recently embarked on the Urban Challenge, which is an amazing-race challenge where students solve riddles, complete fun activities, and explore Sydney CBD landmarks. With real-world experiences and roles in teams, students made decisions together that shaped the adventure, all while having fun. They even dressed up with themes to fully immerse in the day! As always students were guided by staff and alumni whose sense of adventure, fun and of course some healthy competitiveness ensured the day was an unforgettable experiential learning experience.



Oakhill Agriculture Show Team ROYAL EASTER SHOW

The Oakhill College Agriculture Show Team had an incredible week at the 2023 Royal Easter Show.

This year, Oakhill College had the largest number of steers for the past few years, and the students, staff and alumni (including Mr Jack Mayhew (Class of 2019), Mr Andrew Scarsbrook (Class of 2019), Mr Conor Daly (Class of 2020) led by Ms Stellina Trestrail, Mrs Heather Muirhead and Mr John Lawton worked tirelessly to ensure they were competition-ready. The Speckle Park breed was this year's feature breed, and we were lucky enough to have a Speckle Park steer entered.

It was a huge show with up to 30 entries in each category, making the following results all the more impressive including Harrison Mayhew, who is the State Champion for Poultry Showmanship:



- ★ **2nd Place** Speckle Park Infused Steer
- ★ **Reserve Champion** Speckle Park Infused Steer
- ★ **3rd Place** Junior Parader – Luca Compton
- ★ **4th Place** School Parader – Alex Compton
- ★ **1st Place** Lightweight Softfeather Hen
- ★ **Champion** Lightweight Softfeather Hen
- ★ **1st Place** Poultry Showmanship – Harrison Mayhew
- ★ **Champion** Poultry Showmanship – Harrison Mayhew
- ★ **Bronze Medal** – Lightweight Purebred Carcase

It was an unforgettable week for the Show Team, and we were thrilled to have so many Oakhill alumni involved and visit our display.





PINK STUMPS DAY

Pink Stumps Day was a tremendous success, and we owe it all to our incredible community, who showed their support through car washes, raffles, cupcake sales, and generous donations.

The College exceeded our fundraising goal and will be donating over \$4,500 to the McGrath Foundation Breast Cancer Nurses. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all who contributed to this event's triumph, and we remain committed to supporting those affected by breast cancer.



Open Day 2023

What an incredible turnout we had for our Open Day! Thousands of people came to experience the warmth, spirit and hospitality of Oakhill College.

A huge thank you goes to all our helpers who made the day such a success - our dedicated staff, amazing students, supportive alumni, helpful P&F, and fantastic parent helpers including Roadwork Solutions who greatly assisted with navigating onsite parking.



Footloose the Musical 2023

Oakhill College is proud to announce that the Musical for 2023 is Footloose the Musical. We are very excited to bring this sizzling sensation to Oakhill. Footloose the Musical is dancing its way to Oakhill in June 2023. Tickets are on sale Monday 29th May via Trybooking: www.trybooking.com/CIKTA

Year 8 Visual Arts students had an incredible Cultural Immersion Day that aligned with coursework, exploring Aboriginal Art, land, country, and Dreamtime stories. We were fortunate to have award-winning artist Mr Blak Douglas, winner of the 2022 Archibald Prize, as our Guest Speaker on Monday 20th March, who shared his experiences, cultural heritage, and art-making practice.





Mission @ Oakhill College

Oakhill College students wore their jerseys to raise money and support the Lasallian Brother's in Turkey and Syria who are providing crucial humanitarian assistance to those affected by the devastating earthquakes.



Can you identify the people in this photo?

A prize will be awarded to the person who is first to name the students in the photo correctly. Send entries to drive@oakhill.nsw.edu.au

(NB: College staff are ineligible to enter this competition)



Duke of Edinburgh (DOE)

Oakhill College students and staff completed six tough days for their Adventurous Journey component of DOE Award.

The expedition started at Guthega and staff and students conquered Mt Kosciuszko, camping along the Snowy River and beside alpine huts. Mother Nature didn't hold back, throwing all types of weather their way, including snow and 60km/h winds overnight just 3km short of the peak! But they persisted and agreed the views from the summit were worth it. After exploring the Mt Kosciuszko area for two days, they then took on the Schlink Hut trail for four more days.

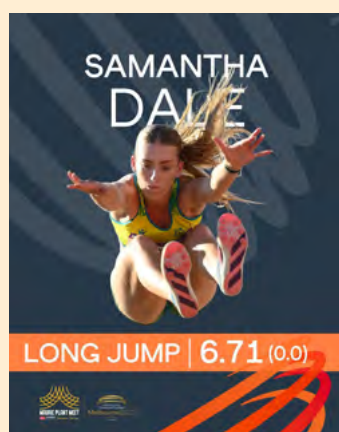




Immersion Trips to Fiji and Cambodia

Oakhill College is delighted that overseas immersion trips have returned. After a pause caused by COVID, it is wonderful to offer mission opportunities for our students in Fiji and Cambodia. Students live out one of our core values by working and assisting those in villages who are less fortunate than us.





Miss Samantha Dale -

Class of 2019

Samantha continues to dazzle with a new long jump record recently of 6.71 metres.

Miss Anna Snow - Class of 2019

At the time I walked down the drive, I had no clear direction for my future, but knew that I wanted to pursue a career in medicine, social services, or perhaps even become a firefighter.

However, my desire to do something selfless, inspired by the values of De La Salle, led me to start my own business. In August 2021, I launched The Cats Crystals Australia, with the vision of selling crystals to support foster kittens. Throughout the process, I conducted extensive research on ethical and sustainable practices in the crystal industry, using skills I acquired at Oakhill.

To ensure that my crystals were sourced sustainably and ethically, I established partnerships with independent crystal miners, and sourced only the highest quality crystals. Thanks to the support of the community, The Cats Crystals Australia, has become one of the largest crystal sellers in the Hawkesbury and Hills area, and we have worked with several charities to foster and rehome dozens of kittens.

Through The Cats Crystals Australia, we have raised over \$12,000 for foster kittens and cats, providing them with medical care, food, toys, and more. I am incredibly proud of the business I have created, and truly believe that my experiences at Oakhill helped me achieve this success.

To learn more you can visit www.TheCatsCrystalsAus.com. I am excited to see where this path takes me, and I am grateful for the support of the Oakhill community.



Strictly Ballroom 2018



Mr Julian Chan - Class of 2018

After walking down the drive, I obtained my Bachelor of Dance from the Academy of Music and Performing Arts (AMPA) in April 2022. Since then I have been consistently securing contracts to perform throughout New South Wales and other locations.

I have had the opportunity to showcase my talent at the Sydney Opera House in May through "ENCOUNTER Sydney," performed in "BlackLux: Perspectives in Timelapse" at the Fringe Festival in September, and toured a kids show "At the Beach" around Newcastle in October.

Currently, I am in Miami rehearsing to perform as a Dancer/Vocalist aboard the Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines' Voyager of the Seas for the next six months, cruising throughout Central America.



Miss Sally Faerhmann - Class of 2019

Sally who was also the Girls Sport Captain, recently participated in the Deaf Rugby 7's World Cup in Argentina. Besides being a talented athlete, Sally has coached many Oakhill sports teams, including the Girls 1sts Basketball team, showcasing her leadership skills.

Having been selected for the Australian Women's Deaf Rugby 7s Team last year, Sally has eagerly anticipated the tour.



Mr Caleb Lehmann, Mr Jack Charlwood, and Mr Jarod Pandazopoulos - Class of 2020

Meeting each other at Oakhill College sparked our shared passion for music. In the same music class, we instantly clicked and developed a close friendship that has continued since graduating in 2020. Despite having no prior performance experience, Oakhill provided us with opportunities to gain confidence in a live setting, such as the Battle of the Bands events. These experiences encouraged us to start recording our own original music, including the song 'Crystals Blown'. We even recorded early versions of the song during lunch breaks in the music rooms. With the recent addition of a bassist, we had everything we needed to continue pursuing our dreams.

Thanks to the support of our music teachers, we received valuable feedback and were able to grow as musicians. Oakhill College played a significant role in shaping us, not only as musicians but also as people.

We are excited to announce that our first single, 'Crystals Blown', has just been released, and we have plans to release our first EP together soon. If you would like to hear some of our music, you can find us on Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/artist/6ht0kRZK2Jh7Gy1tmW7BWe?si=6EwBHcAVThe2tgBWMH347A>

Gold Thumb Members: Caleb Lehmann (Class of 2020 - Vocals, Rhythm Guitar), Jack Charlwood (Class of 2020 - Lead Guitar), Zaki Razi (Bassist), Jarod Pandazopoulos (Class of 2020 - Music Producer).

Mr Thomas Whiffen - Class of 2020

Congratulations to Thomas, for earning a spot with SFC Opara, a team in the Czech Football League. Thomas has been playing and training overseas since walking down the drive.



Mrs Nicole Fletcher, nee Masters - Class of 1978

Nicole moved to the USA in 1986. In 1990, she met her future husband while Christmas carolling at church. The couple tied the knot in 1992 and resided in Santa Monica, California, for seven years. During this time, their daughter, Olivia, was born in 1997. They later moved to New Hampshire in 1999, where their son, Scott, was born the following year.

For over two decades, Nicole worked in labour and delivery before transitioning to work as a school nurse, where she has been for the last nine years. During the winter months, the family enjoys skiing, while scuba diving is their preferred activity during the summer.

Nicole and her family took a trip back home to Sydney, where they had a great time visiting with family and friends, diving in the Great Barrier Reef, and meeting koalas.



Mr Lachlan Dooley - Class of 2018

Lachlan participated in a 12-month program with the Australian Army in a gap year after graduating. His love for it saw him then complete the 18-week infantry training at Singleton. Lachlan has now signed on for six years with the Army and is doing a trade in telecommunications with the Army Signals Corp in Melbourne.

Please keep your details up to date

Communication between the College and generations of families, past and present is important to the Oakhill College community.

You can update your current details by visiting our website or www.oakhill.nsw.edu.au/alumni-change-of-details-form.

To continue to grow our network, please pass this on to alumni that you are in contact with.

REUNIONS

2023 Reunion Planning

The following year groups are due for a College Reunion in 2023:

- ★ 1963 – 60 Year Reunion
- ★ 1973 – 50 Year Reunion. Mr Rod Cunich is organising
- ★ 1983 – 40 Year Reunion – Organiser required
- ★ 1993 – 30 Year Reunion – Organiser required
- ★ 2003 – 20 Year Reunion. Mr Nick Limbrey and Mr Nick Trip are organising.
- ★ 2013 – 10 Year Reunion – Organiser required

Alumni from these cohorts who would like to be the reunion organiser, please email us at drive@oakhill.nsw.edu.au to nominate yourself. You may then choose a venue, date and time for the reunion. Oakhill will gladly assist as the liaison between the cohort and the reunion coordinator and facilitate in communicating and advertising the event.

Class of 1973 Upcoming 50 Year Reunion

The **Class of 1973** is invited to the upcoming Reunion:

Time: 11.30am to 3.30pm

Date: Friday 17th November

Venue: Oatlands House – a wonderful building set in beautiful grounds

Link: <https://navarravenues.com.au/venues/oatlands-house/>

Cost: \$135/head for a *sit down gourmet three course meal inclusive of unlimited drinks.*

Partners welcome.

Further details, RSVPs or if you need financial assistance to attend please contact Rod on 0438 136 118 or rod@cunich.com.au to discuss in the strictest confidence.

Optional associated events:

- Night Out – drinks and a pub meal the night before our lunch on the evening of Thursday 16th November. Details to be confirmed.
- *Tour of Oakhill College* by Archivist on the morning prior to the lunch. For early birds an 8.00am Mass in the College Chapel. Details to be confirmed.

LET'S
GET
SOCIAL!

Stay connected via Oakhill College's social media pages:



Class of 1968 Reunion

The Oakhill College - Class of 1968 reunion was held at Greenmount Beach Surf Club on Sunday 20th November 2022 and a marvellous time was had by all!



50 Year Reunion – Class of 1972

On Saturday 19th November 2022, the Class of 1972 held their 50-year reunion, which had a wonderful turnout with special guests Mr Terry Farrell, Brother Ambrose, Brother Dave Zande, and Mr Allen Taylor in attendance. The 1972 College Captain, Mr Conrad Staff, delivered a speech that highlighted the uniqueness of their class and the values instilled in them by Oakhill:

The Class of 1972 was unique, according to what a number of persons associated with Oakhill have told me over the years. We were committed to learning and studying hard. We also embraced the spirit of Oakhill involving ourselves in cadets and sport. I think there are approximately 10 here who were in the cadets, and a similar number who played in the First XV.

He also spoke about the significant changes in education during the early 1970s and shared a quote from Terry Farrell's speech: *"The way to meet the future is not to sit down and draw up a blueprint that may be out of date by the time it is published. The way to meet the future is to have an attitude of openness, a readiness to respond to the needs of the time. But we must be willing to let the many things go. Often, you need to empty your hands before you can take hold of something new ..."*

Conrad also highlighted the De La Salle commitment to social justice and how their cohort departed as understated young men, embracing a sense of fairness and treating people with respect and dignity.

Overall, the reunion was filled with fond memories and great fun for all who attended.



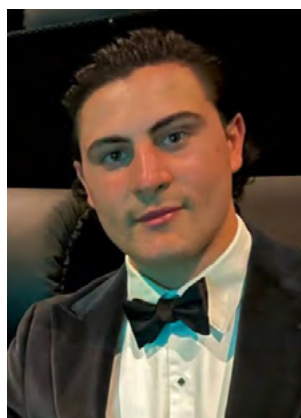


Class of 2002 ★ 20-YEAR REUNION



2022 would not have been complete without the Class of 2002 20 Year Reunion, held in December 2022 at The Glasshouse at The Fiddler. A fun night of catching up and reminiscing about the good ol' days was had by all. It was especially great to see a few faces who weren't able to attend the 10 year reunion and hadn't been seen since Year 12. The Class of 2002 is looking forward to meeting again sooner for a 25th year event.





Mr Raymond Azizi - Class of 2018

Since I walked down the drive of Oakhill College, I have achieved a great deal. As the preeminent ISA Athletics Sports Captain, I acquired an unwavering appreciation for the virtues of teamwork, leadership, and tenacity. Subsequently, I commenced on a successful tenure as a project manager for a top-tier construction company spanning

three years. I then transitioned into the dynamic domain of finance as a stockbroker for Admiral Markets. Currently, I work fulltime as a stockbroker for the prestigious Blueberry Markets, catering to high net-worth global clients, while concurrently pursuing a double degree in finance at Macquarie University.

My greatest successes to date have been achieving a successful career as a stockbroker and fostering global relations as well as attaining early acceptance and partial scholarship to Macquarie University to pursue a double degree in finance. These milestones have given me a sense of accomplishment and validation that my hard work and determination have indeed paid off. It has also motivated me to continue pushing myself and striving for excellence in my personal and professional life.

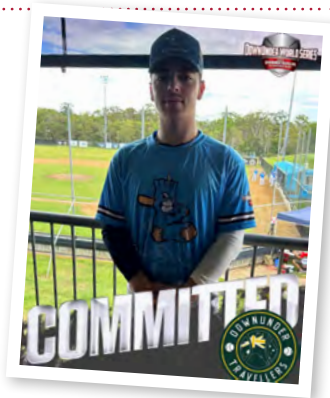
In the next few years, I hope to achieve even more. My short-term goals include completing my double degree at Macquarie University, gaining additional experience and growing within the finance industry and engaging in new challenges that will help me grow both personally and professionally. I plan to continue travelling to further explore different cultures, which will broaden my perspective and enable me to make more informed decisions.

What drives me in my current position is the satisfaction of helping my clients make informed decisions about their investments. I believe that my work plays an essential role in helping people achieve their financial goals, which is a significant responsibility that I take very seriously. Additionally, the finance industry is ever-evolving, and I enjoy staying on top of the latest trends and developments, which keeps me motivated and engaged.

I am proud of what I have accomplished since leaving Oakhill College, and I am excited about what the future holds. I would not have been able to do so without the instilled values and teachings gained through my time at the college. I will continue to work hard and pursue my goals with passion, dedication, and a relentless commitment to excellence.

Mr Alex Ranieri - Class of 2020

Congratulations to Alex Sydney Blue Sox's/Down Under World Series player who has agreed to terms with a Junior College in Texas USA.



Mr Reece Winston - Class of 2022

Reece has won the coveted International College of Management Sydney Scholarship. The selection process is highly competitive and involves a written application and two rounds of panel interviews with senior college executives and sponsor partners. Recipients are chosen based on outstanding academic or extra-curricular achievements, ability to overcome adversity, strong acumen, and significant contributions to the community.



Mr Jackson Brown - Class of 2020

Jackson is a passionate American Football (Gridiron) player and continues his passion by playing for two different teams in two separate states. He is a part of the U20s and Open Mens teams for Sydney University in the NSW Gridiron League, as well as the Open Mens team for the ACT Centurions Gridiron Club. Notably, Jackson is currently a State Champion in both NSW and the ACT.



Mr Cameron Streeter - Class of 2017

Recently I have started working in my dream job as a full time Primary School Teacher, teaching Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4) at St Monica's Primary School in North Parramatta.

After being a Lasallian Volunteer for two years at a Lasallian school and being involved with The Breakfast Club in Papua New Guinea, this made me realise I wanted to become a teacher. After I returned to Australia, I studied a Primary Education Degree at Australian Catholic University, and I was offered the position after one of my practicals, commencing in January 2023.

I am absolutely loving it and believe it is one of the most rewarding jobs in the world!





Ms Dana Griffin - Class of 2017

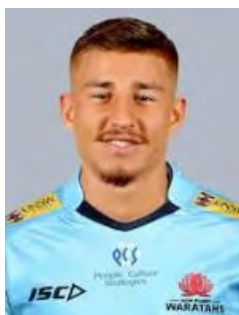
Since 2019, I have been working full time for the NSW Police Force. However, in 2021, I decided to explore secondary employment options and pursue my interest in designing winter clothing, particularly hoodies. With no business background, I began by purchasing a drawing book and pencils and started sketching hoodies that I would wear.

After brainstorming business names for months, I finally settled on Enhanced Apparel. My business was registered, and I found a manufacturer in China who shared my vision and helped me bring my designs to life. Despite many months of sampling and perfecting my collection, I launched my first line of unisex streetwear in August 2022. To my surprise, I received around 50 orders within the first couple of hours, which was a great start for my business.

However, the journey of entrepreneurship has not been easy, and I have faced several hurdles, such as broken label machines, damaged packing, and lost products during transit. I am still learning and managing my business while working a 12-hour day, spending hours in the evening working on my brand.

Despite the challenges, I am proud of how far we have come in such a short time. Our goal for 2023 is to continue growing and evolving while showing the heart behind our brand. Although the journey is not always smooth, I am happy to share my story with others who are considering starting a business or pursuing an unattainable goal.

The learning never stops, and I am grateful for the support of my friends, family, and other small businesses along the way.



Mr Harrison Goddard - Class of 2015

Harrison is part of the NSW Waratahs and he delivers the Acknowledgement of Country prior to Waratahs game. You can view it here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRff9kyCZ6I>



Mr Jordan-Lee Bacon - Class of 2020

Jordan-Lee was selected to represent Australia in the Oceania 7s Rugby Challenger Series in Brisbane in late 2022, and certainly did himself proud. From this competition, he was then selected to play in Dubai for the Rugby World 7s.

Mr Harrison Lamond - Class of 2017



After graduating from Oakhill, I realised that the conventional path of going to university was not for me. Despite getting good marks in the HSC and being accepted into a Bachelor of Business Leadership and Commerce program at Macquarie University, I decided to follow my lifelong passion for property.

Joining the real estate industry felt like a natural decision for me, as from a young age it had always excited and motivated me. Two years later, after working full-time in several roles within the industry and earning a Class 1 Real Estate License, I made the daring decision to quit my job and start my own company at the age of 19. Together with my business partner, Nicolette, we identified a strong opportunity in the property industry for a Sydney-wide, personalised service that focused exclusively on property management, and thus, Evoak Property Management was born.

Starting a real estate business at a young age presented many challenges. Initially, I had few resources and struggled to be taken seriously by potential clients and industry peers. Although my ambition was respected, my experience and ability were often questioned. However, I refused to give up on my dream. My passion for the work provided me with the motivation to keep pushing forward. On the bright side, I was young, had few responsibilities, minimal expenses, and little to lose. Through hard work, determination, and persistence, Evoak has now been in business for almost four years, and we have built a rent roll to be proud of. Gradually, the business developed a name for itself, and so did I. Today, Evoak manages a multi million dollar portfolio of properties, spanning from Bondi to the Blue Mountains and from the Central Coast to Wollongong.

As I continue to expand my business and explore new opportunities, I am thrilled about the future and the potential for even greater achievements. I hope that my story inspires other young entrepreneurs to pursue their passions and dreams, regardless of the challenges they may encounter along the way.



ALUMNI NEWS



Oakhill Alumni vs First Football Teams

Oakhill College alumni played exciting friendly matches against our 1st XI Football teams (girls and boys), creating fond memories for students and alumni. The games allowed current players to learn from their predecessors, while alumni showcased their passion for the sport and visited Oakhill. The games both held in March were played with great skill and sportsmanship. Oakhill College students won both games, 3-2 (girls) and 4-3 (boys). We look forward to more alumni vs student friendly games in the future!



Parramatta Eels Champions

Four Oakhill alumni – Mr Dom and Mr Raf De Stradis (Class of 2021), Mr Pat Spence and Mr Reilly Canning (Class of 2022) – played in the Parramatta Eels SG Ball Grand Final and emerged as 2023 Champions! Also coached by a past parent Steve O'Dea, dad of Jim (Class of 2017).





LUKE'S STORY



Difficult is an understatement in knowing where to begin recalling such a tragic story.

It is with an extremely heavy heart that I share with you that on the 15th August 2020, whilst playing his usual Saturday Football (Soccer) match, my youngest brother Luke Gardoni (21 years old) experienced a cardiac arrest. He was revived and taken to Westmead Hospital NSW, where he remained in a critical condition in ICU. After five very long and emotionally exhausting days, Luke passed away on Thursday 20th August 2020, with his family by his side. The tragic loss of a much-adored son of Andrew and Michelle and loving brother of Aaron and myself, Alicia, has come as a complete shock to our family. With no prior family history and currently no clear medical reason as to why Luke suffered a cardiac arrest it has, and continues to be, exceptionally hard to comprehend why this happened and that Luke is no longer physically with us.

Luke had just celebrated his 21st birthday on the 10th August 2020 with his family and was looking forward to celebrating with his mates on the very day of this tragedy. He was studying a Bachelor of Professional Accounting at Macquarie University and worked casually at a coffee factory. Luke loved the Italian culture including the language and food, Football, his beautiful girlfriend Saba, and cherished his family and friends. Luke was passionate about life and his generous and selfless nature touched the lives of many.

The Luke Gardoni Trophy

Castle Hill United Football Club hosted the annual *The Luke Gardoni Trophy* alongside Kenthurst District Football Club. Celebrated in honour of Mr Luke Gardoni (Class of 2017), who sadly lost his life to Unexplained Cardiac Death (UCD) during his Premier League game in 2020. The Premier League players host this round annually to raise awareness and funds for ENDUCD, this year raising a very generous \$3K+ to go towards research. With a final score of nil all, the trophy was shared.

Mr Connor O'Reilly (Class of 2022) returned to Oakhill in early May. Connor was the recipient of the University of Technology Sydney, Bachelor of Accounting Scholarship which commenced in 2023. He generously shared his experiences, and top tips and advice to students on how to secure this highly sought after scholarship.



Mr Andrew Scarsbrook - Class of 2017

Following up from being Reserve Champion Senior Judge in 2022, Mr Andrew Scarsbrook (Class of 2017) has been awarded the Champion Senior Judge and Grand Champion at the 2023 Hawkesbury Show.



BIRTHS



Ms Cara Manton (Class of 2013) and **Mr Ben Fegan** (Class of 2012) welcomed their newborn, Charlie, on Friday 25th November 2022. Charlie's older sister, Daisy, is taking her new role as a big sister seriously, showering her baby brother with plenty of cuddles and care. Congratulations to the new parents on their bundle of joy!



WEDDINGS



Congratulations to **Mr Marcell Lyu** (Class of 2008) who tied the knot with Ms Joann Chac in Hawaii in October 2022. The happy couple is pictured alongside Marcell's brother, Mr Timothy Lyu (Class of 2010).

Congratulations to **Mr Matthew and Mrs Rebecca Steward** (nee Smith Class of 2009) who were married on Saturday 27th November 2022. Following their stunning beach wedding, the newlyweds hosted a Reception at the Long Reef Golf Club and the happy couple honeymooned in beautiful New Caledonia.



Congratulations to **Mr Liam and Mrs Vanessa Casey** (nee Hawkins) who got married in De La Salle Chapel on Saturday 4th March 2023. They both attended Oakhill (Class of 2014) then went to the same university and began dating in 2015. Liam and Vanessa were in the same friendship group, many of those friends from Oakhill were guests at their wedding, including those who were in their bridal party.



Group photo, Oakhill alumni: left is Mr Matthew Dunbar, next to him, Mr Joshua Nagle. Far right is Ms Olivia Dunn and next to her Ms Diksha Nagle (nee Menderatta) (all Class of 2014).

VALES

We pray for those members of the Oakhill community who have passed away and may they rest in peace:

Vale **Mr Michael McGill** (Class of 1985), who passed away on Thursday 16th February 2023. Brother to Mr David McGill (Class of 1986).

Vale **Mr Dermot O'Sullivan** (Class of 1981) who passed away unexpectedly. He is survived by his wife Mrs Elizabeth O'Sullivan (Class of 1981), their two children Elyse and Brendan, and their grandson Luca. Dermot and Elizabeth met at Oakhill College and married in 1988. They spent their lives in the Hills District, and Dermot was highly involved in the local community. Dermot's remarkable community service was recognised with a Mayoral Minute of silence was observed at the Hills Shire Council Meeting in February 2023.



Vale **Mr Tim Caraco** (aged 29) who died on 2nd December 2018 as a result of a motorbike accident. Son of Mr Alex Caraco (Class of 1980). Tim lived a full life with many successes and was a talented videographer and photographer after working with some internationally renowned brands and labels.



Contributions to *The Oakhill Drive* publication are welcome. Please let us know what has been happening in your life since you last "walked down the drive". Email your article (200-250 words) and photo to drive@oakhill.nsw.edu.au