



Warrnambool COLLEGE

# ALUMNI newsletter

EDITION TWO • 2023

Hi, I'm Tim Brown and I am the Alumni program coordinator for Warrnambool College. Ourschool is again proudly working with Warrnambool College to build our Alumni community to benefit students, teachers and the school.

Please contact me if you would like to be a part of what is a very exciting program. Ourschool is a not-for-profit service helping public high schools build thriving alumni networks.



If you would like to reach out and speak to our students about your life experiences, please contact me at [Timothy.Brown2@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Timothy.Brown2@education.vic.gov.au).



## ALUMNI PRESENTATIONS

We were privileged to have both **Paris Nagorcka** and **Chelsea Darkin**, (class of 2022), speak to Year 11 and 12 students on the 20th July. They spoke about their own experience in year 12 around study habits, suggesting that given the time of the year, 100% commitment is now required. Don't procrastinate! Have a clear schedule as to how the week looks around school, part-time work and study. Also, to utilise the experience of all senior school teachers, and have them review all practice essays/exams for feedback. Now is the time students should recognise how close the final English exam is. Put the 'foot down' and work hard.

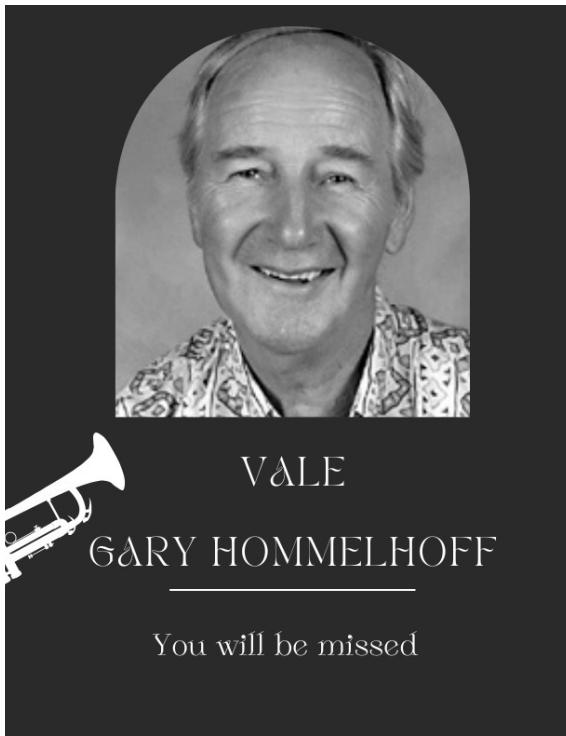
**Chelsea** is now studying medicine at Adelaide University. She spoke about her experiences leaving her family and studying interstate. She implored students who were thinking about doing the same to 'go for it'. Chelsea said not knowing anyone gave her the opportunity to meet new people which created a new 'circle of friends'. Attending University was completely different for Chelsea compared to Warrnambool College, with most classes online she said she has a large amount of free time. She loves studying away as it has given her the opportunity to pursue her chosen career. She also advised the current students to not concern themselves with what ATAR they think they need. Ensure they do the absolute best that they can, as opportunities will open up for them.

**Paris** spoke about her GAP year in 2023, and advised students that if they intend to have a GAP year to have a plan, it is not simply have a break. Paris is currently working as a trainee in the English department at Warrnambool College to give her a feel for what she may want to do moving forward. Paris felt it is imperative to still apply for places at university and if by the end of the GAP year it is not for them, it can be deferred or declined. She also spoke about scholarships and the need to ensure these are explored. You never know until you try. Essentially, a GAP year was to help plan out the following years of your life.

*Thanks so much to both Chelsea and Paris for giving their time and insights.*

## ALUMNI PRESENTATIONS

On the 24th May, 7G class was lucky enough to have Alumni Carol Altman, (1982), join our class through WebEx to speak about her experiences in journalism, and her journey since leaving Warrnambool College. The 7G students are currently undertaking a unit called 'Media Literacy' in which they think and learn about ways to consume information. Carol was an incredible source of knowledge, answering many student questions, who loved hearing about her highlights in the industry.



## VALE GARY HOMMELHOFF

*On 8th July one of the giants of Warrnambool College died peacefully at his home in Port Fairy – the great Gary Hommelhoff. Gary worked at Warrnambool College for many years, as our concert band conductor, brass instrumental teacher and pretty much coordinated anything that had anything to do with the extremely successful band programs at Warrnambool High School and then Warrnambool College. The great success of our current band program was very much established and developed by the incredibly hard work that Gary put in over many, many years.*

*It is some time since Gary worked at Warrnambool College, but many of us have a very deep connection to Gary as either colleagues or students. From a personal perspective, secondary school was a tricky world to navigate as a nerdy opinionated teenager who didn't always know when to stay quiet. The concert band program provided me with my tribe, my sense of belonging and my place of comfort over the five years that I was in it and it was Gary that was at the fore of it all, pushing us to be as great as we could be with the limited resources available. The band camps, trips to Melbourne to perform at Monash Uni (and win against incredibly well resourced bands across Victoria) and the rehearsals in the tiny portable up in North Tech remain very fond memories for me. And this is despite Gary constantly kicking me out of band practice early for talking too much – Gary's patience would only spread so far!*

*I'm saddened to know that Gary is no longer with us, but oh so joyful that I got to journey with him during my formative years and for the music he created in this great school of ours.*

Dave Clift - Principal



## TALL POPPIES

On June 16th, we continued our proud tradition of recognising outstanding Warrnambool College alumni who have achieved at the highest level in their post-academic research, business, or sporting fields, or who have reached national recognition in their chosen field at our 2023 Tall Poppies Awards. During the day our inductees took part in a Q&A with our Year 11 cohort, before heading to the awards night, where we inducted nine alumni into Warrnambool College's Tall Poppies for 2023. We were truly honoured to be able to acknowledge those achievements with their family and friends, as well as the wider school community.

Our keynote speaker was Warrnambool College alumni, and previous Tall Poppy inductee, **Kynan Barker** – ABC TV Writer and Producer. Kynan reflected on each of the Tall Poppies being inducted. He spoke about how such talented individuals can contribute to the wider society and what it means to have been inducted a few years ago.

Each of the Tall Poppies spoke about their own journeys in life. How they developed themselves academically and also in a personal sense, and how that helped them achieve the successes they enjoy today. It was fantastic to hear their experiences, and what it means to them to be inducted as a Tall Poppy. Each Inductee described how important Warrnambool High School/Warrnambool College was to them and how it assisted them in their individual journeys post-school. It truly meant a lot to them, and how the support they were given at school helped in so many ways. We are so proud of them all and are blessed to have been a small part of their journeys in life.

## Our 2023 Tall Poppies

**Rev. Dr. Kylie Crabbe** – Senior Research Fellow Director of Graduate Research Programs | Institute for Religion and Critical Inquiry

**Tim Hodges** – Executive Producer for Fox Footy's AFL 360. Senior Producer for Fox Cricket's BBL coverage and is a part of ABC Friday night footy team.

**Dr Rachael McMillan** – Dr Rachael McMillan is a lecturer, anatomist, researcher, and physiotherapist, who practices clinically in Geelong and with Football Australia.

**Jake Nicolson** – Executive Chef - Ghanem Group - leading and mentoring a brigade of over 80 chefs across 8 different restaurants.

**Brigid O'Connell** – Teacher/Tutor in journalism at Deakin University. Tutor and facilitator of Country Press Australia's three-year Community Journalism Program.

**Murray Turland** – Pilot. Recently joined US airline industry, (SkyWest Airlines).

**Peter Worland** – Now retired. Was Executive Director Uniting NSW/ACT.

**Miranda Menaspa (nee Wallis)** – General Manager of Performance Support at the Australia Institute of Sport.

**Natalie Wood** – Essendon's AFLW senior coach.

Please visit our facebook page: [facebook.com/WboolCollAlumni/](https://facebook.com/WboolCollAlumni/) for a short video of the evening.





**Are you on LinkedIn?**

Make sure you update your education section to include Warrnambool College

Education

 **Warrnambool College**  
Year 12 & VCE certificate  
2011- 2016

[linkedin.com/school/warrnambool-college](https://www.linkedin.com/school/warrnambool-college)

For other ways to become a part of our growing Warrnambool College alumni team contact Tim at: [Timothy.Brown2@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:Timothy.Brown2@education.vic.gov.au)

 Like our Warrnambool College alumni page. Join via the Warrnambool College Website: [www.wbllcoll.vic.edu.au/about/alumni](http://www.wbllcoll.vic.edu.au/about/alumni)

I hope that you enjoyed this edition of the alumni newsletter. Thanks for taking the time to have a read!



I would love to hear from you as to what you might like to see in the next newsletter. Please feel free to contact me on my email address below.

Also, if you know of anyone else who would like to be a part of the Warrnambool College alumni network, please feel free to pass my details on. Thanks!

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