



**MOUNT WAVERLEY SECONDARY COLLEGE**

# **Alumni Newsletter Term 3**

**Term 3**

**August 2025**

## **Welcome**

Welcome to this issue of the Mount Waverley Secondary College Alumni Newsletter.

In this edition, reconnect with Alumni from the Classes of 1995, 2015, and other graduating years, who returned in June for our School Reunion Tour.

We were also delighted to welcome Alumni back for the Year 10's Future Options Day earlier this month, where they generously shared their experiences and career journeys.

Relive cherished memories and browse nostalgic photographs from years past. Be sure to check out all the upcoming events.

Thank you to everyone who has shared their stories, memories, and photographs. Your contributions bring this newsletter to life, please keep them coming!

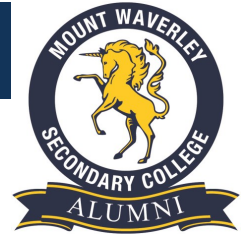
If you have news, photos, or suggestions for future editions, we would love to hear from you. Email us at: [alumni@mwsc.vic.edu.au](mailto:alumni@mwsc.vic.edu.au).

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**Community. Choice. Engagement.**





## Photos from School Tour Reunion 1995, 2005

We were delighted to welcome back 10 past students from the Classes of 1994, 1995, 2003 and 2005 for a special School Tour Reunion and morning tea in June.

The day was filled with fond memories as our alumni walked through familiar corridors and classrooms, sharing stories of their school days. Many were impressed at the transformations and upgrades that have taken place since their time here.

After the tour, everyone enjoyed morning tea and the opportunity to reconnect with past teachers. It was wonderful to hear about the journeys our alumni have embarked on since graduating, **their stories are shared on the following pages.**

We thank our Alumni for returning and look forward to welcoming many more past students in the future.



## Photos from School Tour Reunion 1995, 2005

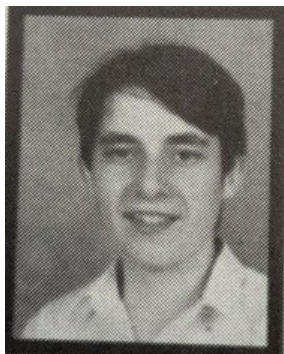




## Meet our 1995 Alumni

### Daniel Borton

After graduating from Mount Waverley Secondary College, Daniel initially began a town planning degree in 1996. Although he didn't complete the first year his journey was just beginning. He went on to study Accounting and Banking & Finance and started a career in



banking including a decade at Bendigo Bank. His role there eventually took him to Bendigo where he landed a job auditing the banks consumer leading which included travelling Australia to regional towns. Wanting to leave the world in a better place, he went back to university to study Urban Rural and Environmental Planning in Bendigo. Since making the switch Daniel has spent over 10 years with Mount Alexander Shire based in Castlemaine, rising to become Manager Planning, Building and Local Laws.



**Daniel Borton**  
**Class of 1995**

He later returned to Melbourne to be closer to family and now works as a Senior Strategic Planner at Monash City Council. This is a particularly meaningful role as it involves planning the very area he grew up in which is now undergoing major transformation.

Daniel's career has spanned a broad range of planning contexts from managing bushfire prone rural regions to overseeing change in Melbourne's outer growth areas and now middle ring suburbs. He credits his this diversity is a highlight of his professional journey along with the personal satisfaction of contributing to communities across Victoria.



### Joanna Karatzas

After graduating Joanna completed a double degree a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Business (Banking and Finance) at Monash University. She went on to complete a Diploma and Advanced Diploma in Financial Planning, becoming a CFP (Certified Financial Planner) through the Financial Planning Association.

Joanna built a successful career in financial planning, working in what has traditionally been a male dominated industry. While the path came with its challenges, it was also filled with rewarding experiences and personal growth. She is now embracing a new chapter as a stay-at-home mum and is looking ahead to her next career change with curiosity and excitement.

One standout memory from her time at Mount Waverley involves her role on the girls' soccer team. When told they couldn't play in the rain while the boys still could Joanna and her teammates boldly marched into the principal's office to plead their case. Although they weren't successful at the time, she still remembers it as a formative experience in standing up for fairness and equality.



**Joanna Karatzas**  
**Class of 1995**



## Meet our 1995 Alumni

### Lauren Baynes

After graduating in 1995, Lauren wasted no time in pursuing a career in the skies. She successfully applied to Qantas as a Flight Attendant, back in the day when there was no formal flight school, and all training was provided on the job. From the very beginning, she loved the role and the lifestyle it offered.

Lauren continues to work with Qantas to this day, primarily flying domestic routes across Australia. The furthest destinations she has flown to include Bali and New Zealand. Her passion for the aviation industry has remained strong over the decades. Outside of her career, Lauren is a proud mum to two daughters and enjoys balancing her life in the air with family on the ground.



**Lauren Baynes**  
(née Rees)  
Class of 1995



### Helen Lowe

After graduating in 1995, Helen went on to study a Bachelor of Physiotherapy at La Trobe University, completing the four year degree. She spent the first two years at the city campus before it relocated to Bundoora, which she recalls as quite the commute but she remained committed and successfully completed her studies.

Helen began her physiotherapy career at the Rosebud Rehabilitation Unit, where she worked for one year before marrying and moving to Warragul in Gippsland. She then joined Latrobe Regional Hospital, working there for five years while raising her young family.



**Helen Lowe**  
Class of 1995

Now a mother of two, Helen is the proud owner of her own physiotherapy clinic, Through Life Physiotherapy. What started as a small practice has since flourished she now leads a team of 15 employees. In addition to running her business, Helen also lectures in the Bachelor of Physiotherapy program at Federation University's Churchill campus, sharing her clinical experience and passion for the profession with future physiotherapists.

During her school years, Helen was a familiar face on the stage, heavily involved in school productions and famously cast as Adelaide in *Guys and Dolls*. Her love for theatre continued into adulthood through involvement in local amateur theatre, though she no longer performs, the passion for the arts remains a cherished part of her life.



## Meet our 1995 Alumni

### Penny Karahalios

After finishing school Penny pursued her passion for music by completing a Bachelor of Music at Monash University, followed by Honours and then a Master's in Musicology. She also completed a Diploma of Education, which led her into a rewarding career as a music teacher in secondary schools. Penny has remained deeply connected to music and continues to teach as a woodwind specialist.



She recently returned for a tour of the school and thoroughly enjoyed seeing how much the school has changed especially discovering the new buildings now standing where her old classroom once was.

**Penny Karahalios**  
**Class of 1994**



### Susan Welsford

After graduating Susan moved to Brunswick in search of independence and a fresh start. She quickly found work at the local McDonald's, where she progressed through their training program and rose to the role of Store Manager. Eventually, she made her way closer to home and took up a hands on role at Brumby's Bakery, where her strong work ethic and experience with early mornings (thanks to a childhood paper round) made her a natural fit for the dawn shift of bread baking.



Life threw Susan a tough challenge when, after years of feeling something wasn't quite right, she pushed for answers and was finally diagnosed with bowel cancer in 2019. Her persistence paid off, and her message to others is clear: advocate for your health and don't be afraid to question your doctors. Susan is proud to say she has now been cancer free for five years - a huge milestone worth celebrating.



**Susan Welsford**  
**(nee McFarlane)**  
**Class of 1995**

A single mother of five, with three children still at home, Susan continues to show strength, resilience, and determination in all aspects of her life.





## Meet our 1995 Alumni

### Samantha Lee Harriman

After leaving school, Samantha entered the workforce full time, starting in administration roles and progressing to supervisor positions in various manufacturing industries. She also completed computer programming courses and worked in IT interstate. She returned to Melbourne and In 2006, as a single mother, re-engaged with education, completing her VCE through TAFE and beginning a Bachelor of Nursing at La Trobe University in 2008. She was recognised for her academic excellence as a member of the Golden Key Honour Society.



**Samantha Lee Harriman  
(née Hancock)  
Class of 1995**

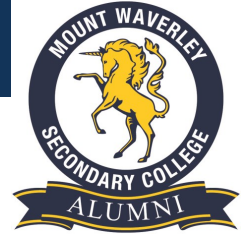
Samantha went on to work at The Alfred Hospital in the operating theatres and held several clinical and leadership roles across operating theatres, NICU, maternity, and state wide organ donation. In 2017, she completed a Graduate Diploma in IT with a focus on Project Management. She returned to The Alfred in 2021 as a Digital Health Project Manager. She continues in this role, now managing digital health projects that improve experiences for clinicians, patients, and visitors. She is also currently studying a double Masters at La Trobe University in Health Administration and Public Health.



Samantha's journey has been marked by perseverance, resilience, and lifelong learning. Despite being told she "wasn't good enough" in school, she has become the first in her family to attend university, consistently achieving top grades. She is also a proud mother of two, one of whom graduated from MWSC in 2020 during the challenges of the COVID pandemic and has since followed in her footsteps, pursuing further studies at La Trobe.

Samantha holds fond memories of Mount Waverley Secondary College, particularly of the teachers who encouraged her talents and believed in her potential. Teachers like Mr. Hamermen, who nurtured her IT skills, and her Business & Commerce teacher, who offered her support and guidance, left a lasting impact. Samantha's highlights have to include Ms Exintaris and choir, flute and all music lessons, computing, all art subjects especially with Ms O'Conner, Ms Ringer and the SEP program that taught her lots of great skills. Photography and the dark room were one of her favourite arts, metal work, textiles.





## Meet our 2005 Alumni

### Mel Klamt

After graduating from Mount Waverley Secondary College, Mel completed a Bachelor of Science (Honours) and PhD at Monash University, researching the impacts of land use and climate on the platypus. Her work has been published in scientific journals, and she developed a lasting interest in aquatic macroinvertebrates during her research.



Mel began teaching swimming in Year 12 and is now Assistant Head Coach at MLC Aquatic, coaching national level athletes. She has also coached the Australian Deaf Swimming Team at international competitions.

She also works for Melbourne Water, educating schools and communities about aquatic ecosystems – perfectly combining her passions for science and swimming.



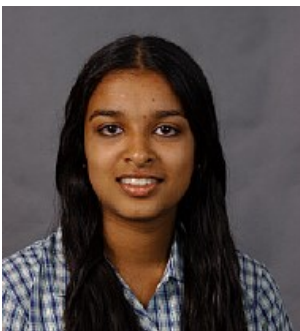
**Mel Klamt**  
**Class of 2005**

At school, Mel was active in sport and leadership, a Year 12 Prefect, and recipient of the College Contributor Award in her final year. You might best remember her as always smelling like chlorine from early morning swimming training sessions! Fun fact: Young Mel once dreamed of being a policewoman.



### Isuru Samaraweera

After graduating in 2005, Isuru went on to study a Bachelor of Economics and Finance at RMIT University, completing the three year degree. She began her career in the financial services sector, working for IOOF, a superannuation and investment management company. Isuru is currently employed as a Customer Experience Associate, where she focuses on coaching and training customer service representatives, a role that combines her financial knowledge with a passion for developing others.



Although she and Gayan Samaraweera weren't on each other's radar during high school, fate had other plans. They reconnected at university, fell in love, and are now happily married with two sons.



**Isuru Samaraweera**  
**(née Fernando)**  
**Class of 2005**





## Meet our 2005 Alumni

### Sarah Green

After graduating from Mount Waverley in 2005, Sarah went on to study a Bachelor of Biomedical Science at Deakin University, a campus she was already familiar with following the temporary relocation there during the 2003 school fire. After completing her degree, she took a gap year to travel and then worked in pathology for several years before realising her passion lay elsewhere.

Sarah made a career shift and returned to Deakin University, this time on the staff side, joining Student Services. Over the past seven years, she has held various roles in the department and feels fortunate to work in a job she truly loves.

A personal highlight has been her relationship with fellow MWSC alumni Richard Green, a high school friend she began dating during her first year of university. After 10 years together, they married in 2016 and are now proud parents of five year old twin boys.

Sarah fondly remembers the spirited Year 12 house swimming and athletics days in particularly dressing up in over the top ridiculous colourful outfits and cheering on Fraser house. Sarah credits Mount Waverley Secondary College with shaping her life in more ways than one.



**Sarah Green  
(née Douglas)  
Class of 2005**



### Richard Green

After graduating from Mount Waverley Secondary College in 2005, Richard Green completed a Bachelor of Science at the University of Melbourne. He then took a well earned gap year, travelling through Europe and the USA, before returning to Australia to begin a successful career in sales.

Richard is currently a National Account Manager at Techtronic Industries, leading the markets in power tools and equipment. His journey so far has been filled with personal and professional milestones, from studying and travelling to buying a home, getting married, and becoming a parent. He looks forward to the many exciting chapters still ahead.

**Richard Green  
Class of 2005**

A vivid memory from Richard's school days is waking up to the news that Mount Waverley Secondary College had burned down just days before the start of Year 10. He remembers how much effort went into keeping the school community connected and rebuilding the campus, an experience that left a lasting impression about resilience and the strength of community.





## Alumni giving back

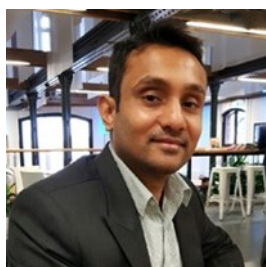
We are grateful to our alumni who generously give their time to return for events like Year 10 Future Options day, sharing their career journeys, lessons learned, and industry insights. Their willingness to engage with current students not only inspires and motivates but also shows the power of staying connected to the Mount Waverley community.

### Mayuraj Chandrakaran

After graduating from Mount Waverley Secondary College in 2003, Mayuraj ("Raj") Chandrakaran pursued a Bachelor of Environmental Engineering at Monash University, completing his four-year degree and stepping into a career that has now spanned over 15 years. Beginning as an Environmental Engineer, Raj has worked on a diverse range of projects across the residential, commercial, government, and industrial sectors. Raj completed his MBA from Deakin University in 2019.



**Mayuraj  
Chandrakaran  
Class of 2003**



Today, he is the Engineering Design Lead at Taylors Development Strategists, a highly regarded development consultancy known for managing complex projects from concept through to completion.

We were delighted to welcome Raj back to Mount Waverley for this year's Year 10 Future Options day. Alongside his team, Raj engaged students with real-world insights, sharing practical advice and industry experiences to help guide their career decision-making.

Raj's journey from student to industry leader delivered a powerful message to our Year 10s and in a wonderful full-circle moment, Taylors Development Strategists also hosted Year 10 students for work experience this year, further strengthening the connection between our school and the industry.



## Alumni giving back

We are grateful to our alumni who generously give their time to return to the college.

### Connor Templeton

Since graduating from Mount Waverley in 2024, Connor Templeton has been pursuing a dual Diploma of Sport / Diploma of Leadership and Management with the Richmond Institute.



Reflecting on his time at school, Connor's fondest memories are of having fun with friends during recess and lunch.

It was wonderful to have Connor back for this year's Year 10 Future Options day. Connor shared his experiences in the course so far, offering practical advice and insights into the sport industry to help guide students in making confident decisions about their own futures.



**Connor Templeton**  
Class of 2024



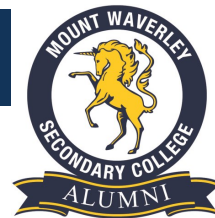
### Helena Ly-Lu

We sincerely thank Helena for once again taking the time to speak with our students, this time with our Year 10 students at the 2025 Future Options day. Her insights and expertise offer invaluable guidance as our students begin exploring their future career paths. AG Coombs also joined us with a table in the hall alongside other institutions and kindly hosted Year 10 students for work experience earlier this year.



**Helena Ly-Lu**  
Class of 2018





## Meet our 2024 Alumni



### Ethan De Los Santos

Ethan recently returned to the school to collect his VCE Baccalaureate certificate. Since graduating, Ethan has commenced a double degree in Engineering and Commerce at Monash University a five year degree that reflects both his strong academic foundation and his interest in combining technical and business skills. Ethan still makes time to catch up with a close group of former classmates for weekly lunches, keeping those school friendships going strong.

It was great to see him and we wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

**Ethan De Los Santos**  
**Class of 2024**

## What are your best memories of Mount Waverley Secondary College?

"My classmates and the atmosphere of the school"

**Amit Kate**  
**Class of 2020**

"Great memories of my high school years. Friends are my best memories. Still close to many of them today"

**Nash Rees**  
**Class of 1992**

"Footy and cricket at recess and lunch"

**David James**  
**Class of 1997**

"Good friends, great teachers, school camp, watching the lunar landing on the television in Room 18 - no lessons & being allowed to go home and watch it if preferred"

**Lea Norris**  
**Class of 1973**

"The friends that I made and the sports I played"

**Bruce MacLean**  
**Class of 1981**

"Despite the prac writing that comes with experiments, my best memories at Mount would be conducting experiments in the laboratory with my friends during Science class!"

**Maggie Yung**  
**Class of 2022**

## Photos fresh from the Archives



School Life **1993**



College Captains **2018**



Year 10 School Life **1991**

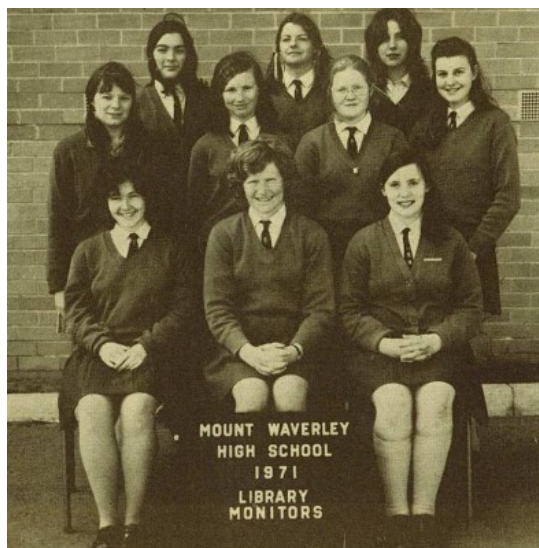


Graduation Celebration Day **2023**

## Photos fresh from the Archives



VCE Activities **2012**



Library Monitor **1971**



Media Studies  
**2010**



The Green Team **2015**



Junior School Library **2007**



School Captains **2013**



School Life **1968**



## Stay connected

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Facebook



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## Leave your details

Click the button below to register your details and keep in touch.

**REGISTER NOW**

CLICK HERE

## I wonder what they're doing now?

What are all the former students of Mount Waverley Secondary College doing nowadays? We still want to maintain recognition of your achievements big or small. Take advantage of our alumni network to connect with other alumni.

So how about it - to all of you ex-students out there - let's hear from you.

*Victoria Tortopidis*

Alumni Coordinator

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