

# Words & Deeds

2025 Ed.1



**ST VIRGIL'S  
COLLEGE**

*A Catholic boys school in the Edmund Rice tradition*



## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the muwinina people, the Traditional Owners and Custodians who for thousands of generations, lived and cared for the land on which our College stands today.

We acknowledge the continuing relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country that was never ceded and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

**Words & Deeds** is a magazine for the St Virgil's community.

### Editor

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All contributions to **Words & Deeds** are greatly appreciated.



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**ST VIRGIL'S**  
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## A Word from the Principal

As we move through 2025, the impact of last year's historic milestones at St Virgil's College continues to resonate across our community. The graduation of our first Year 12 cohort in 30 years marked not just the culmination of a transformative chapter in our College's history, but the beginning of an exciting new era.

The Class of 2024 set a powerful example through their academic achievements, their leadership, and the way they embraced the responsibilities of being role models in a renewed K-12 College. Their legacy has helped shape the tone of this year, with younger students continuing to benefit from the culture they helped to establish.

We were enormously proud of the 2024 academic results. Of the students aiming for an ATAR, 94% achieved that

goal. Notable standouts included College Captain Thomas Marr and Vice Captain Charles Lennon, who each achieved an ATAR of 95 or above, placing them among the top 5% of students nationally. Across the cohort, 24% of students obtained an ATAR of 90 or above, and 30% of students earned an ATAR above 80.

93% of our Year 12 students qualified for the Tasmanian Certificate of Education; while 100% of students who commenced a VET qualification with the intention of gaining a full certificate did so.

These results reflect both the diligence of our students and the dedication of our staff, who work tirelessly to nurture each learner's potential.

These outcomes also demonstrate the value of St Virgil's education, where a broad and inclusive curriculum supports each student to find his strengths, challenge himself, and grow in confidence. Whether pursuing academic, vocational, sporting or faith-based opportunities, students are encouraged to strive for excellence and contribute to something greater than themselves.

With our K-12 model now fully realised, the benefits of continuity and connection are clear. From the newest Kinders to our Senior students in the Doyle Wing and Callan Centre, there is a tangible sense of unity and shared purpose. This has been especially visible during events such as the first Whole College Liturgy of the 2025 academic year, which bring students together across year levels and campuses to strengthen relationships and celebrate community.

This edition of Words and Deeds shares stories that reflect our vibrant and values-driven culture – academic and sporting achievements, meaningful partnerships, and the everyday work of staff who walk alongside our students on their educational journey. We also hear from some of the families and Old Virgilians whose belief in the College continues to support our shared vision.

I am proud of the foundation we laid in 2024 and confident in the direction we're heading in 2025. The journey from Kindergarten to Year 12 is a long and formative one, and at St Virgil's we remain committed to ensuring it is rich in opportunity, grounded in faith, and focused on supporting students to thrive in the world beyond our gates.

Jon Franzin  
Principal

# Year 12 and Prep

Early in Term 1, the St Virgil's College community gathered at the Senior School campus for a significant and uplifting event: the first Whole College Liturgy of the 2025 academic year. With students and staff from Kindergarten through to Year 12 present, the liturgy was a powerful celebration of our faith, traditions, and connections.

The ceremony served as a moment of reflection and welcome, as well as an opportunity to acknowledge the journey each student takes through the College. A highlight of the day was the special exchange between the youngest and oldest members of the community. With quiet pride and joy, the Prep students presented the Class of 2025 with their Leavers' Jerseys – a symbolic gesture rich with meaning. More than just a rite of passage, the presentation marked the beginning of the Year 12 students' final chapter at St Virgil's and reflected the legacy they are building.

The significance of this exchange was echoed in the creation of the Legacy Piece: a clay cross embedded with the initials and thumbprints of each Year 12 student, alongside thumbprints from the Prep boys. This simple but powerful ritual serves as a visual reminder that every student leaves their mark on the College. While the cross is typically displayed at the Junior campus, its message of connection and continuity is shared across the whole community.

The 2025 Whole College Liturgy was a memorable and moving occasion; an opportunity to welcome, to celebrate, and to reflect on what it means to journey together as one College.



# SVC Rowing

Throughout Term 4 of the 2024 academic year and Term 1 of 2025, the St Virgil's College Rowing team showed unwavering dedication, seamless teamwork, and the early morning grit that transforms aspirations into reality. Under the guidance of coaches and mentors, our rowers engaged in a demanding training schedule and competed in a succession of regattas, achieving results that surpassed all expectations.

For the fifth consecutive year, SVC proudly claimed the Junior Aggregate Shield, underscoring the exceptional skill and resilience of our junior crews. Even more notably, this season saw our program reach a new milestone: for the first time in College history, we secured the Overall Aggregate Shield, a testament to the sustained growth and depth of talent across every age division.

The Senior 1st VIII at the 2025 Head of the River was an especially thrilling

race to watch, with a St Virgil's Year 11 & 12 crew competing for the first time in 30 years. The team had a great race and stormed home, narrowly missing out on second place by just 0.4 of a second.

In March, a dedicated group of twelve students represented St Virgil's College at the Australian Rowing Championships, where they competed alongside the nation's elite athletes. Their professionalism, sportsmanship, and tenacious spirit exemplified the very highest standards of our College community and earned the admiration of peers and competitors alike.

On Friday 9 May, the season concluded with the Saints Rowing Awards Night at the New Town Bay Rowing Centre, a wonderful event held in collaboration with St Mary's College.

The evening honoured the collective efforts of all rowers from both institutions, and special commendations were presented to those who demonstrated exceptional dedication and performance throughout the year. It was a fitting occasion to celebrate not only victories on the water but also the personal growth and camaraderie fostered within our rowing community.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Mr Oliver Wilson-Haffenden, Director of Rowing, whose leadership and expertise have been instrumental in guiding the program to these historic achievements.

Congratulations are also due to every rower and coach whose hard work and determination have set a new standard for St Virgil's College rowing. We look forward to building on this remarkable season and to the many successes yet to come.

## SVC Major Awards

**Michael Dixon Trophy**  
*For the most outstanding coxswain contribution*  
Davis Walker

## Wiesse Family Trophy

*For achieving a high degree of excellence*  
Finn McManamey

## Peter Leamey Trophy

*For great resilience throughout the season*  
Henry Mollon

## Terrence Kelly Award

*To the SVC crew/squad with the best results over the season*  
U15 Quad: Hamish Godfrey, Finn McManamey, Andrew Mooney, Ryan Lamprey

## Saints Club Service Award

*For contribution to the Club community*  
Oliver Woolley

## Old Virgilian's Award

*For an individual/squad showing persistent endeavour and dedication*  
Open Eight: Tom Coad, Harry Costelloe, Llewellyn Gray, Alex Lamprey, Daniel Mulcahy, Saxon Van Anholt, Ryan Wangai, Oliver Woolley

# A Season of Dedication and Historic Success



## SVC Head of the River Cup – Championship Winners

- U13 Single: Angus Lockhart
- Quad: Oscar Halton, Angus Lockhart, Max Marsden, Jacob Lowe, and Liam Holliday
- U14 Double: Oscar Coad and Jesse Mackey
- Quad: Tom Woodward, Oliver Mackenzie, Jesse Mackey, Oscar Coad, and Davis Walker
- U15 Single: Finn McManamey
- Double: Hamish Godfrey and Finn McManamey
- Quad: Hamish Godfrey and Finn McManamey, Andrew Mooney, Ryan Lamprey, and Hudson McLeod

## SVC Coaches Awards

- U13 Rowing Excellence – Angus Lockhart
- U13 Team Spirit – George Lennon
- U14 Rowing Excellence – Oscar Coad
- U14 Team Spirit – Davis Walker
- U15 Rowing Excellence – Finn McManamey
- U15 Team Spirit – Cooper Cook
- U16 Rowing Excellence – Henry Mollon
- U16 Team Spirit – Logan Dunning
- Opens Rowing Excellence – Dan Mulcahy
- Opens Team Spirit – Harry Costelloe

# Junior School unites for Project Compassion: a journey of generosity and global awareness

For over half a century, Project Compassion, an initiative of Caritas Australia, has been inspiring Australians to take action against global poverty. Each year during Lent, communities across the country participate in this powerful campaign by fundraising to support long-term development projects that help vulnerable communities build better futures. In 2025, St Virgil's College Junior School wholeheartedly embraced the Project Compassion mission, uniting to raise both funds and awareness for an important cause.

The theme for this year's campaign was Unite Against Poverty, and our Junior School certainly rose to the challenge. The focus of our fundraising efforts was to support a primary school in Samoa that regularly struggles to access clean water. Without a reliable supply, the school is often forced to close its doors, and students are sent home. To help change this, our goal was to raise \$4,000 – enough to fund a 10,000-litre water tank that would dramatically improve daily life for the school community.

Fundraising began in earnest after the official Project Compassion launch, which several of our Year 6 student leaders attended alongside Head of Junior School Mrs Messer. Their reflections set a powerful tone for the term: that small actions, when combined, can create meaningful change.

The weeks that followed saw an incredible array of student-led initiatives. Each class from Kindergarten to Year 6 ran their own creative fundraiser, ranging from guessing games and brownie sales to a lemonade stand, a chocolate toss, and a "Wheel of Fortune." The Student Representative Council added to the excitement with a hugely successful Milkshake Day, which raised \$550 in its first run and proved so popular it returned for an encore.

A highlight of the term was Shrove Tuesday, when the playground was filled with the scent of freshly cooked

pancakes and the sound of cheerful chatter. Thanks to the generosity of families and volunteers, the day raised \$430 for Project Compassion while teaching students about the meaning behind the tradition.

The campaign culminated with our Walk for Water on 7 April, a powerful symbolic event where students carried buckets of water as they walked the perimeter of the Junior School for 20 minutes. This act mirrored the daily struggle faced by Samoan children and their families and reminded us all how vital clean water is to learning, health, and opportunity. The day also featured a House coin line competition, with Joyce House emerging victorious.

With the final contributions tallied, we are proud to share that the Junior School raised a remarkable \$4,242.70, exceeding our target and funding the full cost of a water tank for the Samoan school. This outstanding achievement reflects the compassion, teamwork and commitment of our students, staff, and families.

Thank you to everyone who supported our fundraising efforts. Through these shared experiences, our boys not only learned about the importance of empathy and global citizenship – they lived it. Together, we've made a lasting difference.





For Maria Bond and her husband Matt Pigden, choosing St Virgil's College for their three sons wasn't so much a decision as it was a continuation of something deeply rooted.

"Matt went to St Virgil's College, and I was at St Mary's College," Maria says. "We met while we were at school, then went to uni together, and we've been together ever since."

Matt graduated in the final year before St Virgil's phased out its Senior Secondary program in the early 1990s. At the time, he and his peers protested the decision with a silent march through the city – so when the College reintroduced Years 11 and 12 in 2024, it felt like a homecoming.

"Matt was thrilled," says Maria. "He said, 'Yes! The school is back!'"

That sense of pride and connection has been passed down through generations. Matt's father attended St Virgil's, as did Maria's father, who left his childhood home in North West Tasmania to board at the College when he was young. Now, the couple's three sons – Leo (Year 11), Benny (Year 8), and Eddie (Year 6) – represent a new



chapter in the family's story. Their youngest child, a daughter, completes the lively household.

In the early days, Maria says, it was simply assumed their boys would go to St Virgil's. "I didn't even consider any other schools," she reflects. "But now, having three boys at the College and talking constantly within the family about whether it's still the right place for our values, it's become a much more deliberate and purposeful decision."

## Old Virgilians, new chapters: one family's St Virgil's story

For Maria and Matt, those values – humility, determination, and truth – were deeply influenced by her father, who passed away in early 2023. They strive to ensure their sons grow up in an environment that reinforces those ideals.

"What really stands out about St Virgil's is that the teachers and staff know our boys as individuals," Maria says. "They have nicknames for them. They understand their moods, their interests, their strengths and weaknesses. The care is genuine, and it comes not just from the teachers, but from the admin and support staff right through to the leadership team. It's a community."

She has countless examples of staff going above and beyond: creating short videos to help one of her sons grasp a tricky concept, calling after hours to check in after a playground injury, and providing personalised support to help with subject choices in the Senior School.

"That kind of human-level care is what makes the difference," she says. "The boys are surrounded by excellent role models – people who motivate them to be the best version of themselves and show them what it means to live respectfully."

Beyond the classroom, Maria plays an active role in shaping the broader School community. As Co-President of the Parents & Friends Committee, alongside Louise Wright, she's passionate about building stronger connections among families.

"Our focus is on creating the same sense of community among parents that the boys experience," she explains. "That can be harder at Senior School, where there are fewer natural opportunities to meet, so we want the P&F to be a supportive, visible presence. I want parents to feel they can reach out to us, even if they don't know us personally. If they have a question or an issue they need support with, I hope they will think 'I'll just email the P&F – they seem really nice and approachable.'"

That spirit of connection means so much to Maria and Matt – and for Matt, it extends much further than his own circle of friends. "I feel a connection even beyond the people I was friends with at school," he says. "When I see St Virgil's College on a resume, or I meet someone and we start talking about schools, there's this great moment of connection when we say, 'Ohhhh, you're an old boy!'"

Some of Matt's best memories are of the bus rides out to school, and decades later, the friendships forged during those years remain strong. "Still now, my best mates are the old boys from St Virgil's," he says. "We've been groomsmen in each other's weddings. Just last month, we went to the Gather Round in South Australia together." It's the kind of enduring camaraderie he hopes his sons will also find.

"The friendship group that Matt has from his time at St Virgil's is full of emotionally intelligent men who check in on each other," Maria adds. "If my boys can find that kind of lifelong community and friendship – that would be incredible."



Mike Pigden (SVC 1962-66) and Matthew Pigden (SVC 1989-94)

## A legacy continued: Charles Lennon, 2024 Dux of St Virgil's College

When Charles Lennon was named Dux of St Virgil's College in 2024, it wasn't just a personal achievement – it was a proud moment for a family deeply woven into the fabric of the College's history. Charles, now studying for a Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science at the University of Tasmania, carries forward a legacy that stretches back decades.

Charles' grandfather, John Lennon (SVC 1955-63), was also Dux and a prefect in his final year. His maternal grandfather, Rene Sluyters (SVC 1954-62), served as the College's Development Officer for more than a decade, was a dedicated member of the Old Virgilians Association, and was awarded Honorary Life Membership in 2012. With four uncles also among the ranks of Old Virgilians, Charles' connection to St Virgil's runs deep. "I definitely have a lot of strong family connections with the College," he says. "The school has supported my family for generations."

In 2024, Charles became part of another significant chapter in the School's history: he was among the first cohort to graduate from Year 12 at Austins Ferry in more than 30 years. "It was very special," he reflects. "One of my uncles was in the cohort who just missed out when Year 12 was phased out, so it felt

meaningful to be part of bringing that full circle."

For Charles, the decision to stay at St Virgil's through to Year 12 was straightforward. "It felt like a no-brainer," he says. "I loved my time there from Year 3 to Year 10. I always felt like I could learn well there, and I had a really good group of friends." The familiar environment made a big difference. "Academically, it was perfect. I already knew the teachers and the layout, so I could get straight into the work without having to adjust to a whole new school."

Now navigating his first year of university, Charles has found the transition surprisingly smooth. "Uni is definitely different. There's more online learning and more self-direction, but I feel like the habits I developed in Years 11 and 12 have really helped. It's felt like a continuum, rather than a massive leap."

Passionate about human movement and health, Charles is pursuing a pathway toward physiotherapy. "My interests always lay in STEM subjects, and in Year 12 I really enjoyed biology and chemistry," he says. "At the moment I'm doing Exercise and Sports Science, but after that I want to specialise in Physiotherapy."

Despite achieving the highest ATAR score in his year, Charles' St Virgil's experience wasn't just about academic excellence. A strong supporter of the School's co-curricular offerings, Charles threw himself into sport in his final year. "I made it a goal to try as many new sports as I could – I played badminton and hockey for the first time, plus soccer and basketball," he says. "There were so many things on offer. Looking back, I kind of wish I'd started earlier and tried even more, like the outdoor education programs. They looked amazing."

One of the things Charles valued most at St Virgil's was the strong sense of community. "It's a very connected place," he says. "It wasn't just your mates – it was the teachers, the admin staff, the Old Virgilians that you would sometimes see on campus. Everyone's approachable. You always felt like there was someone to lean on."

This sense of belonging culminated in one of Charles' fondest memories: the Valedictory Dinner. "It was held at Wrest Point, with all the teachers, our families, and the boys. We did the War Cry at the end, and it felt like a real moment of pride, but also slightly bittersweet. It was a last hurrah, but also a celebration of everything we'd shared." Even those who hadn't



always enjoyed school, he recalls, stood up to thank their teachers and reflect on how much the experience had meant to them.

His advice to students in Years 9 and 10 who are weighing up their senior secondary options is thoughtful: "I'd definitely recommend staying on at St Virgil's. You don't realise how things like knowing the campus and being familiar with the teachers help you hit the ground running. They seem like little things but they're actually big

things. There's enough to think about with the workload itself in Years 11 and 12, so having less to worry about can make a big difference."

Now, with university exams approaching and a new phase of life underway, Charles remains closely connected to the friends he made at school. "We still catch up most weekends," he says. "Those friendships are lifelong."

Charles Lennon's journey through St Virgil's is a powerful example of how a strong College community can shape not only academic success but lifelong values and relationships. As he steps confidently into his future, Charles carries with him not just a proud family legacy but the spirit of a College that continues to grow through the achievements of its students: past, present, and future.

We wish him every success.



## Nurturing the scientists of tomorrow

### *Daniel Robinson - Head of Science*

Head of Science Daniel Robinson's joined St Virgil's just over three years ago when he made the move from New South Wales to Tasmania. After a decade in co-educational schools, the transition marked a significant milestone in his teaching career.

"The opportunity to take up a position at a boys' school was a really big win for me," Daniel reflects. "While I think the drive to get girls into STEM is really important, it meant there was never as much time as I wanted to focus on the educational needs of the boys."

With a deep-seated passion for astrophysics, Daniel's background is as much rooted in research as it is in teaching. His time as a Research Fellow at The Rock Regional Observatory in New South Wales honed his skills in scientific inquiry, and this data-driven approach is something he carries into the classroom. "A big part of what I do is focus on current literature about education, then apply that and substantiate the way I work with students," he explains, always striving to refine and improve his methods.

At St Virgil's, the science curriculum is structured around an inquiry-based approach, encouraging students to delve into questions, design investigations, and explore new ideas. From the early stages of guided inquiry in the junior years, students gradually build towards open inquiry projects by Year 10. One recent standout project involved a comparison of concussion rates in the AFL and AFLW, showcasing the diverse range of topics students can explore under Daniel's guidance.

Contrary to the common perception that STEM subjects are narrow and specialised, Daniel views school science as a comprehensive field that integrates literacy, numeracy, and inquiry. He emphasizes the flexibility of science education in revisiting and reinforcing core skills, particularly in the junior years, where the focus is on identifying and addressing any gaps in knowledge. As students progress into senior school, and especially now with the inclusion of Years 11 and 12 at St Virgil's, they are better equipped to build on these foundations. "That's when we see students really start to understand data, understand processes, and realise how much they are going to rely on those skills later in life," Daniel observes.

One of the most rewarding aspects of Daniel's work is observing the growth of his students over time. Beyond academic achievements, he values seeing them mature into well-rounded individuals. Through his position at St Virgil's, Daniel hopes to contribute further to closing the attainment gap between boys and girls, empowering students to envision futures where they can make significant impacts on the world, whether as climate scientists, engineers, or in other fields of their choosing.



# Guiding with heart: Katie Pugsley and the spirit of Year 6 at St Virgil's College

*Katie Pugsley - Head of Curriculum and Administration*

For Katie Pugsley, teaching is as much about preparing students for life as it is about curriculum content. In her dual role as Head of Curriculum and Administration and a Year 6 classroom teacher at St Virgil's Junior School, she's helping students navigate a formative, final year of primary school – one that is rich with opportunity, responsibility and growth.

"This is a really special year," Katie says. "It's the last time the students will do so many things – Book Week, Junior School events, leading House carnivals. They've looked forward to this moment, and we want them to make the most of it."

Now in her fourth year at St Virgil's, Katie brings a wealth of experience from both primary and secondary settings. She began her teaching career as a high school history teacher in Sydney but quickly discovered her passion for primary education. "I started in secondary but once I moved into the Junior School, I knew that's where I wanted to stay," she explains. "Primary teaching felt like the right fit."

That grounding in both ends of the school journey gives Katie unique insight into what's needed to bridge

the gap between primary and secondary education. And Year 6 is exactly where that work happens.

"A lot of what we do is about building independence," she says. "We start having those conversations with students and parents early – explaining that they need to take ownership, practise their routines, pack their bags, charge their sports equipment. Some kids take to it straight away, but others need time and repetition. That's part of the process."

The year culminates in a rite of passage for many St Virgil's boys: the Canberra trip. "It's such a great test of the skills they've been building. They manage money, look after their belongings, and travel without parents – often for the first time. It's a lovely way to finish the year."

In the classroom, Katie is passionate about making learning resonate. This year, two approaches in particular have stood out for the students.

"In Maths, we've moved away from individual iPad work to a much more collaborative approach which includes explicit instruction, mini

whiteboards, working in pairs or small groups. And they've really responded to it," she says. "They like puzzles, they like numbers, and now they're saying, 'I get it now! I didn't understand division before, but now I do.' That's such a win."

In English, the class has been reading *Once* by Morris Gleitzman, a novel set in World War II-era Poland. "The students have been so engaged," Katie says. "They're fascinated by history, by war, and many of them are into European football so they already know a lot of the geography. Parents have even been emailing to say their boys are talking about books at home for the first time. That's really powerful."

One of the most rewarding aspects of teaching Year 6 at St Virgil's, Katie says, is the dynamic she sees among the boys themselves. Having taught in both co-educational and boys' schools, she's observed a noticeable difference in how boys relate to one another in a single-sex setting.

"They're more confident here, I think, and there's a real sense of teamwork," she reflects. "They support each other when someone's struggling, and they celebrate each other's successes. You'll hear them clap when a



classmate finally understands something or see them go up and say, 'good job'. That kind of camaraderie is lovely."

Beyond the classroom, it's the St Virgil's community that has left a lasting impression on Katie. Whether she is coordinating duty rosters as part of her administrative role, leading staff professional learning, or coaching a junior soccer team, she's struck by the level of engagement and

care that defines the school. "The sense of partnership here is really strong," she says. "Parents/carers are involved and invested. Even when you move through different year levels, families stay connected. You'll bump into parents you've taught before and have a chat – it's a vibrant place to be."

Although Tasmania once felt quiet and cold, compared to Sydney, Katie

says it now feels like home. With mountain biking, dog walking, and nature never far from reach, and a school community where her passion for teaching is reflected in the students, staff and families around her, there's nowhere else she'd rather be.

"At the end of the day, it's the relationships in the community that make the job," she says. "And here, those relationships really matter."



# The Old Virgilian

## OVA Committee

### President

David Mazengarb (SVC 1971-79)

### Vice President

Paul Boutchard (SVC 1967-75; Staff 1983-85, 1987-91)

### Treasurer

John Halys (SVC 1973-81)

### Chaplain

Fr Michael Delaney (1963-68)

### Committee

Corey Bygraves (SVC 1984-89)

Neil Gibson (SVC 1997-2000)

Alan Robertson (SVC 1954-60)

Chris Wright (SVC 1966-73)

Bruce Woods (SVC 1955-60; Staff 2011 - )

## Website

[www.oldvirgilians.org.au](http://www.oldvirgilians.org.au)

The OVA website provides Old Virgilians with greater options to stay connected and support the College and OVA.

Feedback is welcome and all contributions to The Old Virgilian greatly appreciated.

## In the News

An extensive list of news stories from old boys across the world can be found in OVAtions - the monthly e-newsletter for Old Virgilians.

To subscribe or to access past editions, please visit the OVA website: [www.oldvirgilians.org.au](http://www.oldvirgilians.org.au).



“ The committee has already taken steps to find a suitable system that will be broad enough for future requirements of membership and alumni...”

## President's Message

Since my last report, the Annual General Meeting of OVA has been held and Office Bearers for the upcoming year have been appointed.

Of note Graeme Rainbow has completed a lengthy term on the Committee – more recently as the Secretary. Graeme's contribution has been enormous over many years, and on behalf of all OVA members and particularly the committee, we thank him for his many contributions to St Virgil's College and the OVA.

I am pleased to advise that Paul Boutchard has accepted the Vice President role and John Halys the Treasurer role. Alan Robertson is to continue to work with the OVA Heritage Roll as the Chair of that sub-committee. Corey Bygraves, Chris Wright, Bruce Woods, and Neil Gibson have all continued in office.

### Development of Alumni Database and OVA membership

The current work of the committee is to consolidate records of school alumni and Old Virgilian members collectively and in conjunction with the College. The committee has already taken steps to find a suitable system that will be broad enough for future requirements of membership and alumni communication. We are hopeful that we will have a system in place soon and which will facilitate improved communications.

The committee will be looking to receive details of all alumni and would appreciate the input of Old Virgilian's to identify any gaps in the alumni register once established.

### Community Engagement and Development Officer

The OVA is seeking to appoint a Community Engagement and Development Officer to collaborate with members and the community alongside the College in advancing the contributions of Old Virgilians to the College community. This is an important role in connecting the College with the OVA community and enabling greater involvement with the activities of the College community.

### Upcoming Events

Another reminder is that the OVA Golf Day has been confirmed as Friday 7 November 2025. Please record this in your diaries.

The Annual Dinner will once again be in October 2025 and we are hoping to have a Melbourne, and a Sydney cocktail function in October/November of this year – pending member interest. Please contact me if there are members in Melbourne and Sydney that would be happy to assist in convening such member gatherings.

# Service and Achievement

## Graeme Rainbow honoured for community service

Graeme Rainbow (SVC 1959-68)

Congratulations to Graeme Rainbow who was recently named the 2025 Senior Citizen of the Year by the City of Clarence, in recognition of his 25-year contribution to the rehabilitation and care of the Bellerive Bluff foreshore. A dedicated member of the Bellerive Bluff Land & Coast Care Group Inc., Graeme has served as secretary and working bee/projects coordinator for much of that time.

The award was presented as part of National Volunteers Week, which celebrates the efforts of community volunteers across Australia. Now aged 80, Graeme is beginning to wind back his commitments, stepping down from his Coastcare and OVA committee roles.

He also recently retired from his long-standing position as St Virgil's archivist and OVATIONS coordinator, drawing to a close an extraordinary 43-year association with the College as a staff member. Graeme's contributions have left a lasting legacy both at St Virgil's and within the broader community.



Left to right: Graeme Rainbow and Mayor of Clarence, Brendan Blomeley

## Major General Jeremy King leads ANZAC Day commemorations

Jeremy King (SVC 1983-88)

Major General Jeremy King (SVC 1983-88) returned to Hobart in April to lead the city's ANZAC Day commemorations as the Australian Defence Force's senior reviewing officer. His presence was front-page news in The Mercury, which highlighted his connection to Tasmania and to St Virgil's College, where he completed his secondary education.



Currently serving as Head of the Joint Aviation Systems Division, Major General King has enjoyed a distinguished military career. Speaking at the event, he reflected on the personal significance of ANZAC Day.

"As a military member, it is hard not to underscore the importance of the day and what it means in terms of more than 102,000 who have died in service," he said. "There are people you serve with who are no longer with us, and so the opportunity to remember them is important to me."

Jeremy describes himself as a proud Tasmanian and a lifelong advocate for service.

## Simon Kelleher steps into key AFL leadership role

Simon Kelleher (SVC 1994-97)



Simon Kelleher (SVC 1994-97) has been appointed to a new executive position at the AFL: General Manager – Club Finance, Performance and Growth. The move follows 6.5 successful years at Geelong Football Club, where Simon served as Chief

Operating Officer and was praised as a key leader during pivotal moments, including the club's COVID response and development of its AFLW and gender equity programs.

In his new AFL role, Simon will oversee the league's financial relationships with clubs, helping ensure both on-field competitiveness and off-field sustainability.

A Chartered Accountant and member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Simon's career has spanned Carlton Football Club, the Victorian Racing Club, and Crown Resorts.

At St Virgil's, Simon was a standout student-athlete – captain of athletics in his final year, winner of the Bill Wilding Trophy, and a Tassie Devils U/18 representative while still in Year 10.

## Anthony (Tony) Coen OAM honoured for railway and musical service

Anthony Coen (SVC 1960-66)

Tony Coen (SVC 1960s) was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the 2024 King's Birthday Honours for his outstanding contributions to railway preservation and pipe band music.

A lifelong steam enthusiast, Tony's passion began in childhood, growing up in Bellerive, fascinated by the steam ferry crossing the Derwent. He went on to work with the Tasmanian Government Railways and has since dedicated decades to preserving Tasmania's rail heritage.

Tony is President of the Tasmanian Association of Tourist Railways, a founding member of the Derwent Valley Railway, and a long-time volunteer with the Don River Railway. He is a vocal advocate for light rail in Hobart, believing it will be essential for the city's future growth.

Tony was also recognised for his service to music as a member of the Tasmania Police and City of Hobart pipe bands, and as Vice-Chair of the Tasmanian Branch of Pipe Bands Australia.



## Top STEM honour for marine scientist and communicator

Ben Arthur (SVC 1999-02)

Dr Ben Arthur (SVC 1999-2002) was named Tasmanian STEM Communicator of the Year at the 9th Annual Tasmanian STEM Awards, recognised for his outstanding work in engaging the public with science.

A marine ecologist and Engagement Programs Officer for CSIRO's Marine National Facility, Ben has spent over 15 years in the field, including leading research programs in Antarctica and Macquarie Island. He completed his PhD in animal movement ecology at the University of Tasmania and has worked with several international Antarctic programs.

Ben currently coordinates outreach activities aboard RV Investigator, Australia's blue-water research vessel,

helping Australians understand the role of marine science in daily life. His work has taken him around the continent and into classrooms, museums and festivals – most recently at the World Science Festival in Toowoomba.

The STEM award recognises not only his scientific expertise, but his passion for making science accessible and inspiring to the next generation.



## Paul County celebrates South Hobart in latest publication

Paul County (SVC 1971-79)



Paul County (SVC 1971-79) was recently profiled in a Tas Weekend feature in The Mercury, highlighting his latest work Discovering Soho – A Celebration of the South Hobart Community. Written and photographed by Paul, the book showcases the people and places that define the vibrant suburb.

Paul's creative journey began after years of overseas adventures, including working in London and Spain, teaching English in Bangkok, and farming in Israel. Returning to Tasmania, he pursued his passion for photography at the University of Tasmania before completing a teaching degree.

His first role at Guilford Young College drew on both his photography and hospitality background. Paul has since published 17 books, including the bestselling Tasmania's Table, the state's first full-colour food and travel book, which sold over 10,000 copies.

Now 62, Paul continues to teach part-time at St Aloysius College while pursuing his love of storytelling through words and images.

## Old schoolmates behind Melbourne Cup hopeful

Richard Sadek (SVC 1963-70) & Michael Crossin (SVC 1963-69)

Old Virgilians Richard Sadek (SVC 1963-70) and Michael Crossin (SVC 1963-69) have shared a lifelong friendship that recently took them to the spotlight of Australian racing.

The pair, mates since age seven and once Glenorchy schoolboys, were featured in The Mercury for breeding Melbourne Cup 2024 starter The Map.

Their shared love of horses began near the Elwick racecourse, and as adults they've co-owned 11 racehorses. The Map, a six-year-old mare they bred in Tasmania and sold three years ago for \$35,000, has since gone on to win

over \$865,000 in prize money. Richard retains a share in the horse, while Michael opted out – “too many other horses,” he says.

Although The Map didn't place in the big race, the story of two old mates from St Virgil's backing a Cup contender caught widespread attention, complete with a feature and a cartoon tribute in The Mercury's racing wrap-up.



## Shane Donnelly honoured for parliamentary service

Shane Donnelly (SVC 1976-81)



Shane Donnelly (SVC 1976-81) was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the 2025 Australia Day Honours for his distinguished service to the Tasmanian Parliament.

After completing a BA at UTAS, Shane began working at Parliament House in 1998. Over 25 years, he rose through the ranks to become Clerk of the

House of Assembly (2015-2022), a role central to upholding parliamentary process, tradition and integrity. His career was marked by calm leadership, meticulous knowledge of standing orders, and unwavering fairness to all parties.

Praised by MPs across the political spectrum, Shane was described as a “defender of democracy” and “an island of calm in a sea of madness”. His Companion to the Standing Orders remains a significant legacy.

Shane retired in 2023. His family has a long SVC tradition, including his father Don (SVC 1938-46) and three brothers.

## Welcome aboard: John Halys joins OVA Committee

John Halys (SVC 1973-81)

John Halys (SVC 1973-81) has joined the OVA Committee as Treasurer following his retirement in 2023 from a distinguished career in accounting. A chance encounter at the College – while helping his son Dominic prepare for Year 12 – led to a conversation with former teacher Graeme Rainbow, and a timely invitation to step into the role.

Inspired by teachers like Brother “Snowy” O'Donnell, John pursued accounting after school, working first at Humes Ltd and then joining the public practice of Old Virgilians Peter Tracy (SVS 1947-52) and Chris Jones OAM (SVS 1953-56). He later co-founded Hové & Halys and partnered with Emma Sells in Halys & Sells.

John and wife Karina have two sons, Samuel (SVC 2014-23) and Dominic (Class of 2025). Now with more time on his hands, John is eager to give back to the College community. “It's now time to give back and go forward,” he says.



# Sporting Honours

## Record-breaking swim for Old Virgilian at Ironman World Championship

Sam Askey-Doran (SVC 2016–19)



Sam Askey-Doran (SVC 2016–19) delivered a stunning performance at the 2024 Ironman World Championship in Hawaii, competing in one of the world's toughest endurance races. The event, known for its gruelling format – a 3.86 km swim, 180.2 km bike ride, and 42.2 km run – attracts elite competitors from around the globe. Racing in the 18-24 age category, Sam placed 17th out of 61 athletes in his division, finishing the course in a remarkable 9 hours and 29 minutes.

But it was his swim leg that made headlines: Sam clocked the fastest swim time ever recorded in Kona – 45 minutes and 43 seconds – breaking the previous course record by 45 seconds. Speaking to ABC Hobart after the event, Sam said he was “crying happy tears” when he learned of the achievement. A two-time Trans Derwent Swim champion, Sam trains with Hobart Aquatic and continues to inspire with his dedication and talent in the water.

## High seas and high honours for Paul McCartney

Paul McCartney (SVC 1973-77)

The summer of 2024-25 will go down as one to remember for Hobart eye surgeon and seasoned sailor Paul McCartney (SVC 1973-77). While skippering Porco Rosso in the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, Paul was at the centre of a dramatic overnight rescue after crew member Luke Wadkins was swept overboard in rough seas. Thanks to calm teamwork and AIS technology, Wadkins was located and retrieved safely after drifting more than 4 km – an hour-long ordeal in darkness and heavy swell.



Despite damage forcing the yacht to retire, Paul rebounded just weeks later at the SB20 World Championships in Singapore, claiming silver alongside crew Will Sargent and Eddie Reid. Remarkably, Paul has been helming the SB20 for just two years.

Adding to the accolades, Porco Rosso also secured the 2025 SB20 Australian Title. Paul, inducted into the Old Virgilians Heritage Roll in 2013, continues to embody resilience, leadership and excellence – on and off the water.

## OVA Golf Day tees up another success

A spirited field of 104 golfers – 42 of them proud Old Virgilians – turned out for the 63rd OVA Golf Day, enjoying fine weather (despite a few complaints about the wind) and great camaraderie on the course. The event, held at the Royal Hobart Golf Club, raised a fantastic \$2,981 this year, bringing the seven-year fundraising total to \$23,997. The OVA Committee will decide on how best to allocate these funds at its next meeting.

Congratulations to Michael Harvey, who claimed top honours in the Old Virgilians' Division with 37 points, just ahead of Noel Plachta and Rod Cornelius on 36. Neil Sculthorpe took the Guests Division with 38 points, while Julianne Drewitt led the Ladies Division with 34.

Thanks go to major sponsor Raine & Horne Hobart, with additional support from Tilford: Your Hobart Ford Dealer, Graham Family Funeral Directors, Royal Hobart Golf Club, and Drummond Golf.

We are also grateful to Peppermint Bay Cruises, Pennicott Wilderness Cruises, Par Avion, and Airport Undercover Parking who donated raffle prizes and helped make the day another memorable OVA success.



## Old Virgilians behind Hurricanes' historic win

What a season for Tasmanian cricket, and what a moment for the St Virgil's community!

The Hobart Hurricanes claimed their first-ever Big Bash League title in February 2025, and Old Virgilians played starring roles in the triumph.

Caleb Jewell (SVC 2009-13) delivered a string of standout performances, including a Man of the Match win and a crucial 76 runs from 49 balls to help secure top spot and home finals. This was followed by a solid 40 in the Qualifying Final and a key partnership with Mitch Owen in the Grand Final.

Riley Meredith, son of late Old Virgilian Dale Meredith and nephew of Ross and Dennis, earned Man of the Match honours in the Qualifying Final.

Hurricanes Captain Nathan Ellis, a former teacher assistant at St Virgil's, led with determination and heart. Also celebrating the victory: Dominic Baker (SVC 1983-88), Cricket Tasmania CEO, and former OVA President Zac Piesse, now Media and PR Manager for Cricket Tasmania – both proud Old Virgilians cheering from behind the scenes.

Congratulations to all involved, we hope this is the first title of many for the Hurricanes.



# Remembering Old Virgilians

## David Goldsmith (SVC 1943-50)



David Goldsmith passed away on 5 November 2024, aged 90. The youngest of three brothers, David was part of a proud St Virgil's legacy that included his brother Murray and Geoffrey, as well as his cousins Rupert, Brian and Bob Nettlefold cousins.

A gifted athlete, David excelled in cricket, football, and athletics. After leaving St Virgil's, he went on to play amateur football at the highest level, making

three Tasmanian teams and earning All Australian honours in 1958.

David trained in the Navy from 1953 to 1956, with postings on HMAS Australia and HMAS Melbourne, before settling into a distinguished career with AMP. He was widely respected in the industry, creating hundreds of millions in insurance and capital-guaranteed assets.

A man of community spirit, David was a founding member of Lindsfarne Apex and later a leader in the Kingborough Lions Club, organising the 1976 National Lions Convention in Hobart. His decades of service left a lasting impact.

David is fondly remembered.

## Fr Phil McCormack (SVC 1957-61)



Fr Phil McCormack passed away on 15 March 2025, aged 82. Born in Kimberley, Tasmania, he moved to Hobart as a teenager to attend St Virgil's College, where he was a prefect in his final year. He entered the seminary in 1963 and was ordained in 1971 by Archbishop Sir Guilford Young.

Over more than five decades of service to the Archdiocese of Hobart, Fr Phil ministered to communities across Tasmania – including in Hobart, Devonport, Launceston, Queenstown, and Circular Head. Known for his warmth, humour, and humility, he was deeply respected and much loved.

In retirement, Fr Phil settled in Devonport before moving to Fairway Rise in 2022 due to health issues. A proud Sydney Swans supporter, he was rarely seen without his cap and delighted in footy banter – his prized signed jumper from Tony Lockett a symbol of his passions and community ties.

Fr Phil gave his life in service. May he rest in peace.

## Paul Sean Kelly (SVC 2001-08)



Paul Kelly passed away peacefully on 23 February 2025, aged 30, surrounded by family.

Diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease in 2015, Paul faced the illness with extraordinary courage and lived well beyond expectations. Though physically incapacitated, he continued to communicate

through eye-tracking technology, using it to write, work, and inspire.

A qualified journalist, Paul became campaign manager for his father, Old Virgilian John Kelly, during a successful Hobart City Council election. He played a pivotal role, running strategy and social media, and championing the contributions of people with disability to public life.

Paul served on the Tasmanian MND Board and Safe Water Hobart, and recently published *Through My Eyes*, a powerful collection of poetry about life with MND.

Paul will be remembered for his wisdom, resilience, and generous spirit. As his father said, "The truth is we didn't carry him – he carried us."

Vale, Paul. Your legacy lives on.

## John Bernard O'Loughlin (SVC 1946-55)



John O'Loughlin passed away on 27 November 2024, aged 85. Raised in West Hobart, he was part of a devoted Cathedral parish family and served as an altar server in his youth.

After early schooling at St Joseph's, John attended St Virgil's, where he was a strong student and gifted

athlete – holding records in the 440 and 880 yards with his trademark front-running style.

Awarded a scholarship to study agriculture, John built a distinguished career in horticulture and later earned a second degree in economics. He shared his expertise through his work in Tasmania's fruit export industry and as a lecturer at the University of Tasmania.

John was known for his meticulous gardens, well-kept aviaries, and great passion for fishing. A quiet achiever with deep knowledge and a generous spirit, he made a lasting contribution to his field and community.

We give thanks for John's life and influence, and also acknowledge his brother, Fr Peter, who was the main celebrant of John's Mass of Christian Burial.

## Vale

Your prayers are requested for the following recently deceased Old Virgilians.

**ALEXANDER, David Patrick**  
SVC 1961–64  
18.12.1947 – 08.03.2025

**COONEY, Peter Michael**  
SVC 1954–58  
03.09.1941 – 19.09.2024

**CRANE, Stephen John**  
SVC 1973–77  
02.09.1960 – 01.04.2025

**DONOGHUE, Barry Tasman**  
SVC 1942–50  
01.01.1935 – 23.05.2025

**FREEMAN, John Francis**  
SVC 1954–59  
25.01.1943 – 06.05.2025

**GATES, Andrew Geoffrey**  
SVC 1965–68  
11.04.1953 – 15.05.2025

**GOLDSMITH, David Reginald**  
SVC 1943–50  
05.10.1934 – 05.11.2024

**HASSETT, Anthony (Tony)**  
SVC 1956–60  
05.08.1944 – 20.11.2024

**KALINIECKI, Peter Antoni**  
SVC 1964–72  
06.05.1954 – 18.04.2025

**KELLY, Paul Sean**  
SVC 2001–08  
05.05.1992 – 23.02.2025

**KESSON, David Andrew**  
SVC 1976–79  
18.12.1962 – 05.10.2024

**LARK, Linden Lawrence**  
SVC 1961–68  
15.03.1953 – 21.01.2025

**LENNARD, Christopher John (Chris)**  
SVC 1976–84  
03.10.1966 – 13.11.2024

**McCORMACK, Father Philip**  
SVC 1957–61  
25.02.1943 – 16.03.2025

**MORGAN, Paul Francis**  
SVC 1951–61  
23.04.1943 – 21.01.2025

**MORSE, Michael James**  
SVC 1954–57  
28.07.1940 – 17.11.2024

**O'LOUGHLIN, John Bernard**  
SVC 1946–55  
02.01.1939 – 27.11.2024

**ROACH, Daniel (Danny)**  
SVC 1951–59  
22.04.1942 – 24.04.2025

**SPAULDING, Geoffrey Alvin (Geoff)**  
SVC 1956–60  
05.10.1944 – 06.02.2025

**VICKERS, Paul 'Pop'**  
SVC 1956–64  
03.11.1944 – 08.03.2025

If you are aware of any recently deceased members of the St Virgil's College community please contact the OVA website at <https://www.oldvirgilians.org.au/contact-us>



# ST VIRGIL'S COLLEGE

*A Catholic boys school in the Edmund Rice tradition*

## Senior School - Year 7 to 12

195 Main Road  
Austins Ferry Tas 7011  
(03) 6249 6555  
[adminsvc@stvirgils.tas.edu.au](mailto:adminsvc@stvirgils.tas.edu.au)

## Junior School - Kindergarten to Year 6

102 Patrick Street  
Hobart Tas 7000  
(03) 6234 2440  
[jsadmin@stvirgils.tas.edu.au](mailto:jsadmin@stvirgils.tas.edu.au)

[www.stvirgils.tas.edu.au](http://www.stvirgils.tas.edu.au)

## Old Virgilians Association

[www.oldvirgilians.org.au](http://www.oldvirgilians.org.au)