

FLOWERDALE

International Womens Day Edition

Edition 1



Women of Alphington March 2020

Published for the Alphington Grammar School Community

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Celebrating International Womens Day

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**ALPHINGTON GRAMMAR SCHOOL
18 OLD HEIDELBERG ROAD
ALPHINGTON
VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA, 3078**



Issue 1 2020



From The Principal

By Dr. Vivianne Nikou



I welcome everyone to our first edition of 'Flowerdale' - a new quarterly publication, fully designed, written and edited in house by our newest member of the Marketing Department at Alphington, Ms. Claire Evans (Class of 2016).

Claire was a student at Alphington from 2014 - 2016 before undertaking a Bachelor of Media and Communication at Swinburne University of Technology. Claire has joined the staff at AGS as the Marketing, Alumni and Development Officer.

The School is of an age now that we are able to draw on our own rich history that we are creating, and engage our Alumni. We are now able to keep our community updated of new initiatives and progress taking place in our School Community.

Our first edition of Flowerdale has a theme of International Womens Day, and the importance this holds to our community, Please enjoy our celebration of the Women of Alphington.

Dr. Vivianne Nikou
PRINCIPAL

News Around The School

SCHOLARS ASSEMBLY 2020

Our Annual Scholars Assembly was held this term to acknowledge and celebrate the VCE results of the Class of 2019. Students who achieved an ATAR of 80+ and students who achieved the top ATAR for each of the subjects offered were part of our Scholars Assembly.

Students, staff and families gathered to enjoy the award ceremony and to also share in some morning tea together. The dynamic and memorable keynote address was provided by the impressive **Dr Nick Dallas. Nick, who has a PhD in Organic Chemistry from the University of Melbourne, is the Sales Director of Educational Publishing Company McGraw-Hill.**

Our Kwong Lee Dow Scholar for 2019 was announced as **Lena Papadimitriou.**

The Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program is an academic enrichment program designed to support high achieving Years 11 and 12 students. Congratulations Lena on this exciting headstart to your tertiary studies.

We were very excited to formally acknowledge our Dux of 2019, **Alexander Savvas.** Alex scored an amazing ATAR of 99.55 and is now studying Science and Engineering at Melbourne University.



2019 VCE Results



Student Spotlight



Alexander Savvas received an ATAR of 99.55, earning him the DUX of Alphington Grammar School award. Alexander is pursuing his interest in Science and Engineering at the University of Melbourne.



Having achieved an ATAR of 97.40 Maki Nemoto is studying Bachelor of Design, Master of Teaching at the University of Melbourne.



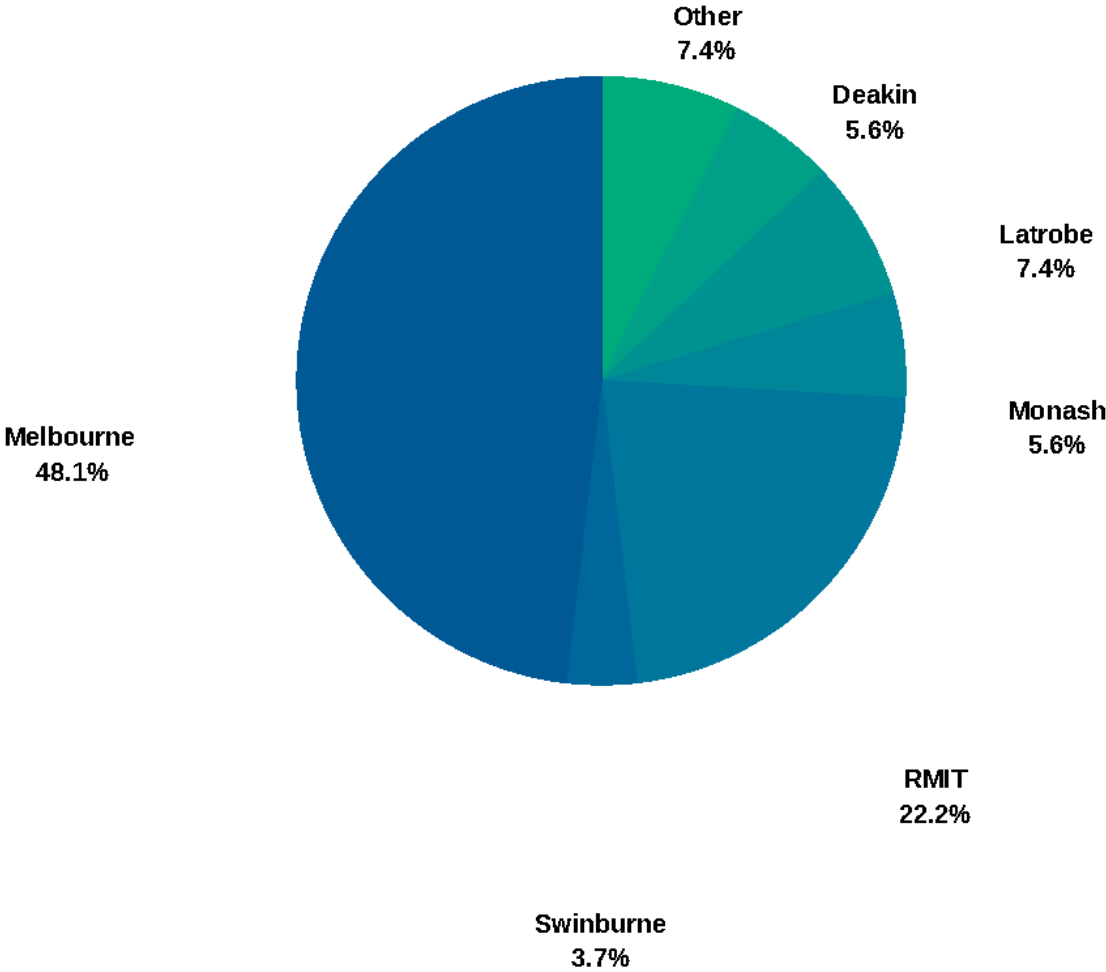
Receiving an ATAR of 93.20, Daniel Lontos is studying Bachelor of Arts at the University of Melbourne.

2019 VCE Results



University Offers

We are pleased that so many of our students received their first choice offers across a wide range of disciplines, reinforcing the strength of our students' academic achievements. Studies in the Arts, Sciences, Business and Design continue to be popular destinations.





2020 SWIMMING CARNIVALS

Aristotle House were the victors of both our Primary and Secondary Swimming Carnivals of 2020.

Primary Award Winners:

Under 9/10 Girls Champion: Esme Johnson
Under 9/10 Boys Champion: Robert Bush
Under 11 Girls Champion: Sophie Sherlock
Under 11 Boys Champion: James Arthur
Under 12/13 Girls Champion: Alexandra Ioannou
Under 12/13 Boys Champion: Will Ellwood

Primary House MVP Medals:

Aristotle: Will Griffiths
Byron: Rayyan Mashtoub
Pericles: Alexandra Tsanatelis
Socrates: Joel Paraskevas

Secondary Award Winners:

Ashleigh Tuchon Award : Emily Stevens (7, Aristotle)
Tom Pappas Award :Toby Griggs (7, Socrates)



Image 1: Galateia Kontogiannidou, Yasmin Tsotsovis, Sophia De Bolfo

Image 2: Elliot Tweedie, Ms. Deirdre Grealish, Mia Kosmas

Image 3: Sarah Roubos, Georgia Mihailidis, Kon Kogias

Image 4: Josh Halarakis, Mr. Trevor Adams, Mariana Galanopoulos



Image 1: Penelope Sholakis, Ms. Toula Terezakis, Evaline Kamboukos, Macalister Chappell Miller

Image 2: Joshua Bennell

Image 3: Chloe Norton, Tiffany Christidis and Athanasia Kerasiotis.

Image 4: Emily Stevens and Toby Griggs

STARS OF ALPHINGTON



VIOLET LORENZ
AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD

We are immensely proud to report that Violet Lorenz (Year 9, Byron) was awarded the Menzies Community Service Award in the recent Manningham Council Australia Day Awards. This is for her work with the RSL through the Australian Air League. Violet has displayed an extraordinary dedication working passionately to support the Australian Air League and RSL while juggling her school and extra-curricular commitments. She is a driven, conscientious and motivated young woman. This award is a testament to the incredible dedication she continually displays for her passions and interests.



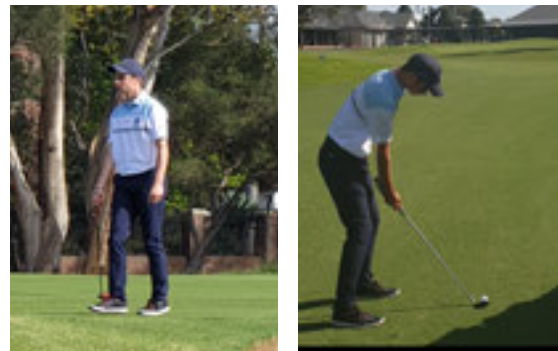
MATTHEW & JAMES ARTHUR
CHESS CHAMPIONS

Matthew Arthur (Year 8, Socrates) and James Arthur (Year 5) recently competed in the Junior Chess Championships in Queensland. The tournament consisted of 3 different competitions over 5 days. The brothers attended all three competitions with James securing a 3rd place trophy in the Puzzle Solving competitions. We are very proud of the boys who are testament to our school motto - 'aspiring to excellence' and we can't wait to see where their talent for chess will take them. Congratulations boys!



STEPHANIE FILIOPOULOS
ACCEPTANCE TO PATRICK STUDIOS

Stephanie Filiopoulos (Year 8, Byron) was recently accepted into the Elite Training Squad at Patrick Studios Australia. Entry to PSA is strictly by audition only and students are selected on the basis of their talent and their future potential. Patrick Studios is one of Australia's leading performing arts schools, training Australia's next generation of performers. The Elite squads are a part time training schedule specifically designed for young performing arts students who have dreams of developing their talent to one day working in the entertainment industry whilst also continuing their studies at School. Well done Stephanie, you truly are a #starofalphington.



GEORGE ANDRIOTIS
GOLFING SUPERSTAR!

George Andriotis (Year 9 Byron), continues to go from strength to strength on the golf course. George, who currently plays for the La Trobe Golf Club, a Division Two team, understands the dedication and motivation required to succeed at the sport, training three times per week for one and a half hours on each of these days. With a handicap of eight, George has spent years building his proficiency on the course, picking up his first set of clubs at the age of five. George plays at La Trobe Golf Course every Saturday and will be playing at a variety of golf clubs around Victoria until April 19.



PHILIPPA LETTAS: A BORN LEADER

by Claire Evans
Photo by Claire Evans

Philippa Lettas is our female School Captain for 2020.

The School year may have only just begun, but Philippa is already shaping up to be one of the most impressive Captains the School has ever seen. A shining example of girl power at Alphington, Philippa is a strong and caring, intelligent and humble Student Leader with an immensely bright future ahead of her.

Philippa has always had a desire to help people, and to help shape the world around her with kindness and positivity.

When she was a little girl, Philippa dreamed of becoming a doctor. 'I wanted to work with people and I was fascinated by this idea of saving and helping people through surgery', she says.

Now, Philippa dreams of a career in Law. She notes that it is important that as you go through your schooling life, you take note of not just your passions, but your strengths, to determine your future.

Currently completing her final year at Alphington, she notes that she is most

We speak with School Captain Philippa Lettas on leadership, multiculturalism and the future.

“It is so important for girls to have older girls that they can look up to - girls need to motivate and support each other”



Above
(L - R) Philippa accepting Academic Awards, Philippa with Premier. Daniel Andrews
Philippa presenting School Assembly.

looking forward to 'reaping the rewards' of her thirteen years of hard work, effort and determination when it comes to which Year 12's moments she is most looking forward to.

Philippa feels honoured to feature in the maiden issue of The Flowerdale, our International Womens Day issue. She is acutely informed and aware of world affairs, and if she could talk to any woman in the world past or present, it would be the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern. Philippa thinks she is an incredibly inspiring woman, who would give her valuable advice on modern day leadership.

Philippa loves being School Captain. Despite her unwavering positivity and infectious smile, she notes that there have already been some lessons along the way.

'The hardest thing I have learnt is that doing the right thing isn't always easy - but that doesn't make it any less necessary' she says, with a maturity well beyond her 17 years.

'Standing up for things can be difficult, but, especially as women, it is hugely important that

we ensure our voices are heard and that we involve ourselves in all we can'. She is very proud to be a student of Alphington - where she notes that the huge importance we place on valuing diversity and multiculturalism means that everyone gets a fair-go, regardless of gender, culture or religion. 'It really is special - because everybody knows everyone. There is this familiarity with others due to our small size - which creates an amazing support network for students.'

Philippa is passionate about inspiring other students to step out of their comfort zones. This, she thinks, is where the true magic begins to happen when it comes to shaping who you are. 'If you don't step out of that comfort zone, there's just no place for growth' she says, 'what you're comfortable with is not always what's best for you'.

She compares the pursuit of excellence to playing a sport, and advancing through its different levels.

'You will start basketball in the worst team, and that's okay. The hard part is advancing to a better team,

'Alphington is about so much more than just the course content or the results or the grades... they are helping us to grow as individuals and navigate our way through the at times challenging childhood and teenage years'



Above

(L - R) Philippa carrying the Australian Flag at School Assembly, Philippa with her co-captain Casper Wang.

and feeling out of your depth. You need to keep at it, embrace this feeling, and focus on the rewards you will reap when your efforts pay off.

Philippa has always had a strong work ethic and drive. What inspires this? 'What I do now will impact not just my future, but the future of those around me, and what I do now is shaping who I want to be'.

She says the days when it is hard to get out of bed, or the days when a commitment seems all too much, it is this she remembers to help her pull through.

Leadership, so far, has helped her develop her public speaking skills, made her more comfortable presenting in front of people, and given her an immense purpose and responsibility that she values and takes very seriously.

She is passionate about the value of positive role models and the huge impact they can have on our lives.

She credits both female mentors in older years and a group of teachers for providing her with a unique school experience where the day-to-day is about 'so much more than just the course content or the results but 'helping us to grow as individuals and navigate our way through the at times challenging childhood and teenage years'.

Philippa devotes countless hours of her time to mentor younger students with everything from debating competitions, music recitals and does a great deal of charity work.

Philippa particularly would like to thank Dr. Nikou, Mr. Evans and Ms. Todaro, who she references as the teachers who have had the biggest impact on her during her time at Alphington.

"If you don't step out of that comfort zone, there's just no place for growth"



LAUREN BRAZZALE

HUMBLE HERO

by Claire Evans

Photos by Lauren Brazzale & AFL Photos

Lauren Brazzale grew up in a world where pursuing her passion of playing professional AFL football was simply not possible. Now, at the age of 26, she is playing for Carlton Football Club's AFLW's team to sell-out stadiums.

Lauren, who also teaches sport here at Alphington, picked up a Football for the first time at the age of 3, and began playing AFL Auskick as soon as she could - age 5. She remembers fondly watching her older brothers play the game she now is lucky enough to call her profession. 'I have three older brothers... and I just wanted to do anything that they did!' she remembers.

'I had to beg my Dad to let me play football... after I reached the age limit for Auskick, they let me play at the Eltham Junior Football Club with all the boys, I was the only girl in the whole league!'

When Lauren turned 12, she was not allowed to play with Eltham anymore. 'There was just no other pathway...' she said sadly... 'So I went and played soccer for about ten years, and I didn't start playing footy again until I went to uni' Lauren did not start taking football seriously, she says, until 2016. The following year at the inception of AFLW, she was drafted. 'It all happened very quickly!' she laughs.

WAFL Player Lauren Brazzale on Womens Sport, Finding Balance and Equality.

“I am so humbled to be a part of the first generation of female AFL players who are paving the way for the future of AFLW.”



Lauren, who has been playing as a defender/midfielder for Carlton since the inception of AFLW in 2017, is very happy with how far the league has come in such a short time. 'I think women's sport is getting more media coverage than ever before' she notes happily, 'but we don't get anywhere near equal coverage to the boys yet' she adds.

Also unequal, she notes, is the pay disparity between male and female AFL players, and the complications this carries for work/life balance. 'Balancing work, life and football is the hardest part for me about being an athlete' she says. The nature of the salary for AFLW players at this early stage in our history means that all women playing AFL are part-time athletes, also working day jobs when they are not playing footy. 'The boys sometimes don't realise how lucky they are to be able to do this full-time without working as well'.

She feels very lucky to be part of the community here at Alphington Grammar, where she says the School has been 'absolutely fantastic, and hugely understanding'

of her unique circumstances. 'I feel sorry for girls who work places that aren't understanding and make it really hard. They have to use up all their sick leave during the season. My work and football luckily aren't too contradictory for me, and I love both, so I'm lucky'.

Intelligent, funny and immensely talented, Lauren is thrilled and very humbled to be part of the 'first generation' of AFLW players. She loves the fact that she is helping to create a world for young girls where they can pursue football if they would like to, and where they have role models to look up to.

'My favourite thing to see is when we have an open training session and a dad has bought his daughter down to see you because she just loves footy... so I think that stigma is slowly going'. The stigma around women playing traditionally male dominated sports, she says, never worried her too much at all personally, 'I had three older brothers so our house was footy mad and my parents never told me I couldn't play footy. They knew I loved it, they wanted to help me make it happen'.

The female role models in her own life who she looked up to growing up included her Mother and surfing legend Layne Beachley, who won the World Cup Championship 7 times. Layne was one of the first female surfers, and it was after Layne's success that pay for female and male surfers became equal, something which inspires Lauren very much.

She admires her Mum for raising three boys and also her, as she was 'just as hard as the boys' to raise. 'My mum's weekends were spent washing all our football uniforms and also my basketball uniform!' she laughs, 'My parents used to spend most of Saturday at the Football Ground. My game would be at 8:30 and my brothers at 12:30...her weekends were spent driving us to sport and spending time watching us play. I owe it all to her'.

Her advice to young girls who may be dreaming of a career in the AFL? 'Never give up - keep going. Now the pathways are there, and even if you don't think you're good enough, keep working at it. There's always a way'.

ALUMNI NEWS



Pallavi Daniel
Class of 2015

Pallavi Daniel is currently working as a Content Coordinator at RMIT, where she herself attended university and completed a degree in Creative Writing. Pallavi has known she has wanted to be a writer since she was a little girl, and used to 'staple paper scraps together' to make her own little books. Now, after discovering her love of copywriting during her tertiary studies, she works as a Copywriter and coordinates the marketing content of RMIT. The hardest lesson she has learned so far? 'Not everyone may agree with or understand the path you've chosen. A lot of people didn't think I'd get a fulfilling job after studying Creative Writing, because it's a unique course. Instead of letting it get you down, you should use it as motivation, work hard and prove people wrong in the best way possible'.

Yuqing Mercury Yi is currently working as an Associate for Grant Thornton Australia Limited in the Corporate Finance department.

She studied Finance at both Melbourne University and the University of Sydney, and was also the Dux of 2014. As a little girl, she longed to be a successful woman who excelled in whichever field she chose when she grew up. Her favourite thing about Alphington Grammar was the way it embraces diversity, and she is passionate about gender equality, in all aspects. When it comes to women that inspire Mercury, it is 'hard to pick just one',

but she names Jane Austen and Queen Elizabeth II among her favourites, as well as Margaret Hamilton, who wrote out by hand the mathematical sequence that enabled the

Apollo mission. Mercury notes that 'It is necessary to get inspiration from women in history, but we do need to remember that we are the women who can make differences

RIGHT NOW'



Mercury Yi
Class of 2014

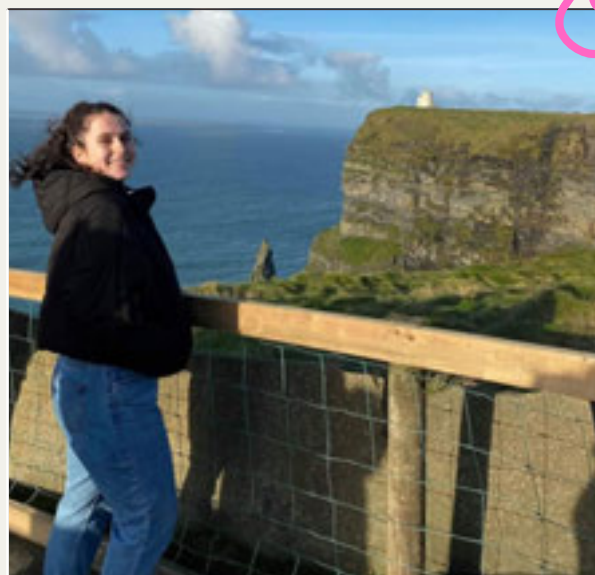


Keerthi Pirapaharan
Class of 2016

Keerthi Pirapaharan is currently studying a Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery at James Cook University in Townsville, Qld.

Keerthi is working towards a career in women's health in impoverished areas, and her ultimate goal is to 'empower women through health education'. Keerthi, a self-professed perfectionist, now strongly believes that 'school exams and ATARS do not define your potential or intelligence'. After being hit hard by stress and anxiety in Year 12, Keerthi did not receive the marks to go to Medical School straight away, but she didn't give up. 'I took my chances, moved interstate, completed a year of biomedical science and studied hard'. She urges students to 'dream big, be open minded to opportunities, and don't be discouraged by failure' because 'more often than not, you'll end up surprising yourself with your capabilities when you put your best foot forward'

Rikki Aravanis is currently studying a Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Law at La Trobe University. Rikki recently returned from studying abroad at the University of Reading in Britain, and she labels the experience 'without a doubt the best thing I have ever done'. Rikki admits that at first the idea of studying overseas and travelling alone was an 'intimidating thought' but she implores Alphington students to study abroad whenever the opportunity presents itself... 'It broadened my ideas to meet people from all over the world... and it gave me a stronger ability to develop my own opinions with global and social issues'. Rikki names Cynthia Nixon as a woman who inspires her, and she particularly values her stance on the pressures and standards women face from society, which Rikki believes is a pressing issue. Rikki stays motivated by being 'genuinely interested and passionate' in what she is doing, and reminding herself that she is able to choose what she gets to do, so she knows that to excel she will need to put in a lot of hard work, but it will be worth it.



Rikki Aravanis
Class of 2017



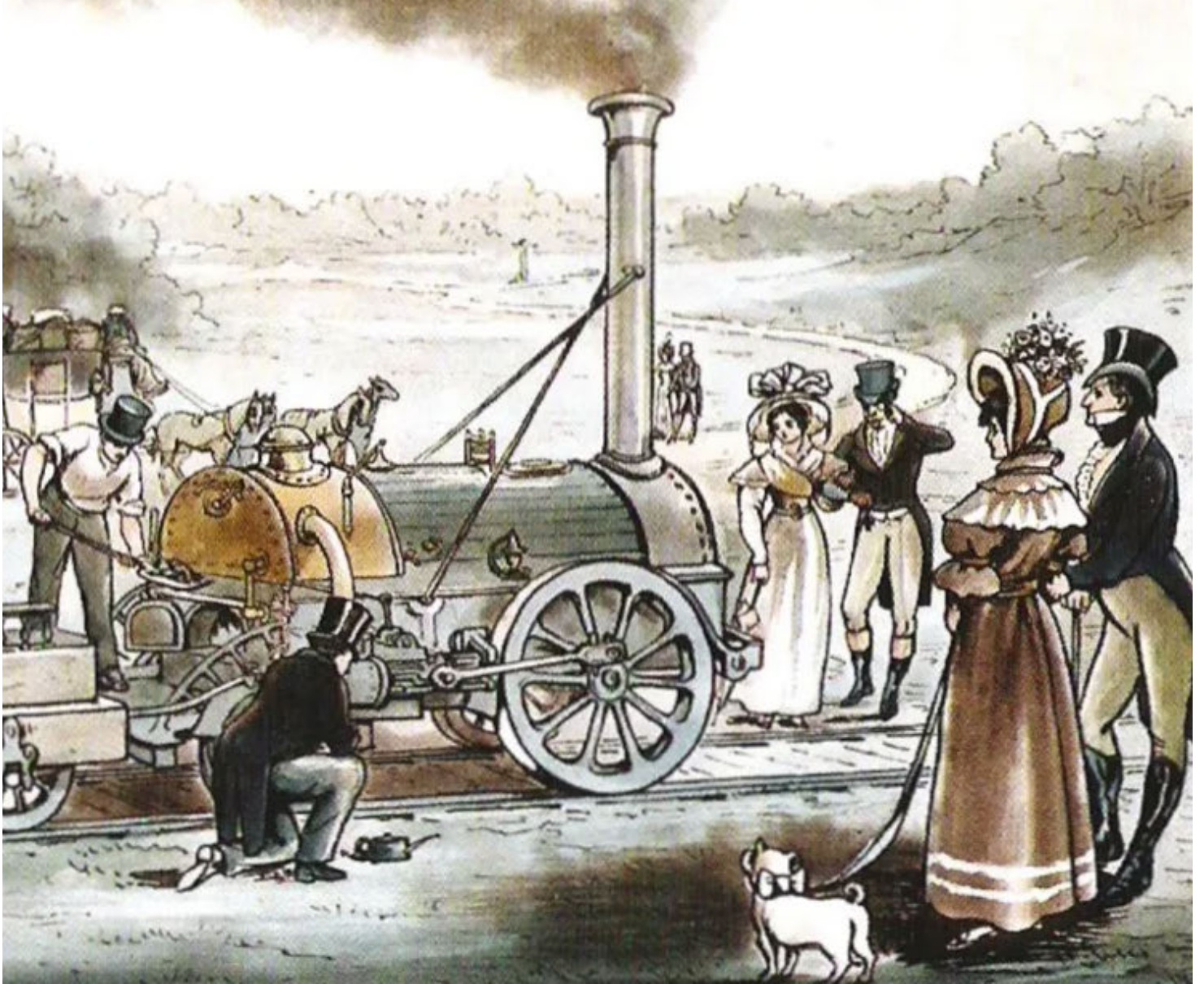
Anno Varghese
Class of 2010

Anno Varghese is currently working as a Senior Associate for the Queensland Government Banking Centre within Institutional Banking & Markets at the Commonwealth Bank. She studied a Bachelor of Business (Economics and Finance) at RMIT and also studied abroad at the University of Cologne in Köln Germany. Anno is passionate about the benefits of studying abroad, saying it's an 'absolute must' for students. 'It gave me the opportunity to step out of my comfort zone and see the world with a curious mind' she said of the experience. If she could speak with any woman in the world, living or dead, Anno would choose *Shemara Wikramanayake*, the CEO and Managing Director of the Macquarie Group, who came from humble beginnings in Sri Lanka and rose to become one of the most influential CEO's in Australia. Anno, who does a great deal of community and charity work, notes that her motivation for her work with *Soup Vans* and *CleanUp Australia* is the opportunity to 'give back'. 'I try to focus my energy to charity and empowerment in any capacity and would highly recommend it to others'.

Acacia Karabatsos is currently completing a Bachelor of Science (Environmental Science) at the University of Melbourne. Acacia is working towards a career preserving and protecting our environment for generations to come, a career which is fundamentally essential to the future of our civilisation, and she takes this responsibility very seriously. If she were Prime Minister, her first act would be to place a complete ban on Styrofoam and plastic bags but also devote more funding to finding sustainable alternatives to plastic. Her favourite Alphington memory is her final Speech Night where the Class of 2016 exited the Andrianakos Centre together wearing their gowns and caps to 'We're All In This Together' from High School Musical. Throughout her journey both at Alphington and now her tertiary journey, Acacia notes that there is one main lesson she has learned.. 'There is no way to know whether the decisions we make are the right ones. Every decision will have positive and negative effects, most of which are impossible to predict, so a perfect choice doesn't exist and there's no point in torturing yourself trying to make one. You just have to do your best with what information you have at the time and be prepared for the consequences.'



Acacia Karabatsos
Class of 2016



Online Safety in the Digital Age

**IN AN E-SMART WORLD,
GIRLS SHOULD BE
DRIVING THE TRAIN**

**By Tracey Nicholson
Assistant Principal
Head of Primary**

Photo by

As topical issues stand, 'Social Media' and 'Negative Impact' are frequent headline companions and the alarm bells ring loudly with every newly published newspaper article, current affairs story or parenting blog.

If we are to believe everything we read and hear, social media will do everything from irreparably damaging mental health to bringing down global economies. The conclusion for many people is that social media is evil and to be avoided at all costs.

Society felt the same about the steam train.

Cultural anthropologist Genevieve Bell once explained that extreme, fearful reactions to new technology are age old. Critics of early steam-spewing locomotives, for example, thought that women's bodies were not designed to go at 50 miles an hour'.

They were worried that "(female passengers') uterus would fly out of [their] bodies as they were accelerated to that speed"—which, for the record, they did and will not. Others suspected that any human body might simply melt at high speeds.



In fact, as history shows, steam travel became an integral part of society and once the real (not imagined) dangers were conquered, marvellous opportunities were widely accessed. Did the public need to be taught how to use the new technology? Yes.

Did they need to learn to overcome their reservations and manage the good with the bad? Yes. Did they still need to be careful? Yes.

Social Media is the Steam Engine of the 21st Century...but it is much, much faster! How then can we best prepare girls to not just be the passengers, but the train drivers?

Provide Education (be taught about the 'product' and how to use it safely), Develop Resilience (manage the good with the bad) and Learn from Experience (be careful!),

Education in and around Social Media needs to be age appropriate, targeted and engaging. It should be relevant, up to date and seek to educate families as well as students. Developing Resilience and Learning from Experience are closely linked.

In Social Media, the problems occur with the way we feel about what we see, do, read and write and how we manage our emotions around these things, so Emotional Resilience is key.

Families and schools can work on developing resilience in children from a very young age. Here are four characteristics to help develop emotional resilience in young people:

1. Competence:

It's easy to assume that "competence" simply refers to a child's mastery of school materials, but in reality, there are many other ways children can build up their feelings of competence. The key is to give them opportunities to master specific skills or strengths at their stage of development. The sense of achievement they feel from successfully completing a challenge will convince them that they have the ability to meet new, harder challenges or setbacks.

2. Confidence:

Feeling confident is incredibly important to helping children develop a sense of resilience. When children feel confident, they are more likely to take on new tasks, expand their social circle, take risks—and try again if that risk doesn't pan out. When they fail at a task, confident children are more likely to fault their tactic than to believe that a task is beyond their capabilities.



3. Connectedness:

Our sense of resilience is affected by the strength of our social connections. Resilient children often feel a strong bond with friends, siblings, parents and other family members, as well as teachers and other people in caregiver roles. They feel protected and believe that they can count on their network to be there for them if needed. You can help your child develop resilience by being there for them when they face setbacks. Often children feel discouraged when they're not immediately good at something—such as riding a bike. Keep encouraging them to try again, recognize their progress and tell them about a time when you experienced a similar setback

4. Coping: A child may appear confident, but only until something doesn't go according to plan—then they fall apart. A truly resilient child is one who is able to manage their emotions when they face adversity (so they can keep working towards their goal). Resilient children start by facing their feelings about the situation and contain any disappointment, frustration or anger. Then they start thinking about the challenge not as a dead end, but as a stumbling block they can overcome.

The common denominator in all of these areas is the need for young people to be supported all through this. We know Social Media is going to present some challenges, so why would we just leave our children to 'go it alone' and hope for the best? Be with them as they explore safely online; talk to them when they encounter the unknown; encourage them when they face challenges; equip them with knowledge and the tools to deal with different situations; help them bounce back when things don't go as planned. Just like the steam train, the internet will take your child to wonderful places. Make sure you drive the train with them until they are old enough, experienced enough and prepared enough to be in control.

“You will face many defeats in your life, but never let yourself be defeated.”
- Maya Angelou
(American poet and Civil Rights Activist)

GRAMMARIAN COMMUNITY NOTICES



Attention Alphington Alumni:

ENGAGEMENTS, WEDDINGS, BIRTHS AND VALE NOTICES ARE WELCOME FOR PUBLICATION IN FUTURE ADDITIONS.

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU! WE WANT TO CELEBRATE THESE MILESTONES WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY TO FOSTER AND GROW OUR ALUMNI RELATIONS.

PLEASE SEND NOTICES AND PHOTOGRAPHS TO THE EDITOR CLAIRE EVANS:

CEV@AGS.VIC.EDU.AU