Silver Anniversary Soirée
Friday 30 January 2015
What a way to start the Silver Anniversary Year!
The School will host a soirée on the first Friday of the new academic year. Refreshments and canapés will flow and the School community will have a chance to reacquaint with friends and make new ones! Parents from Pre-school to Year 12 and staff are invited to enjoy this social evening and kick off our silver anniversary celebrations in style.

Silver Anniversary Ball
Saturday 14 March 2015
Happy Silver Anniversary HVGS!
The Cameron Centre will be transformed for this gala event to celebrate 25 Years of Hunter Valley Grammar School. Plans are in motion to make this night a memorable one. Spread the word now! All past students, their families and staff are encouraged to attend, celebrating 25 years of progression and excellence in education.

Inspired 2015 - The Silver Anniversary
Friday 1 May 2015
Opening Night and Musical Concert
After the huge success of Inspired 2014, the School will expand the program in 2015 for the Hunter’s premier evening to inspire lovers of music and art alike. A concert featuring talented musicians from HVGS, including students, parents and staff, will feature alongside artworks from prestigious artists from all over the country. Prize money for the art show has doubled and winning artists will share $20,000 across broader sections of art. (The art show will continue on Saturday & Sunday, 2 & 3 May.)

Founders Day
25 Years of Excellence in Education
Friday 12 June 2015
Since our first Founders Day Celebration in 2010, the students of HVGS have embraced Founders Day and now look forward to what is becoming a great tradition! All families will be welcome to attend when the day starts with a School assembly late morning.
The Assembly will entertain with special guests and events fit for a Silver Anniversary. Students will receive a HVGS gift and then the whole School and guests will enjoy a sausage sizzle and birthday cake lunch before the return of the Little Afternoon In Silver Anniversary Edition concert!
This is the concert where the senior students entertain the School and is always a great afternoon, which embodies the early days of HVGS school life when the whole School did everything together.

Silver Anniversary Presentation Ball
Friday 18 September 2015
The Presentation Ball is a very special occasion every year and the 2015 event will be even more so. Our founders had the foresight to start this splendid tradition back in 1990 and our students have embraced it each year. All students agree that preparation for the Presentation Ball and the ball itself are a rite of passage not to be missed. Students emerge as young ladies and gentlemen, and parents and staff are so proud to witness. The 2014 and 2015 presentation students will be adorned with silver to mark the occasion.

More details and tickets for these events will be available via the HVGS website later in 2014.
The School has moved through its infant and teenage years and is now in its 25th year of operation. We have made a decision to celebrate our Silver Anniversary during 2015.

It is folklore now that HVGS was conceived by two very astute men on a cold wintery afternoon while they watched a rugby match. The Foundation Stone was laid by the then Governor-General, The Hon. William Hayden AC, on 18 July 1989. The journey since the intrigue of the early years has been exciting, challenging and terribly, terribly fruitful.

A small committee of keen and committed staff, past staff and parents has been planning a year of activities to celebrate the anniversary.

We can look forward to:

- A parent and staff soirée, planned for Friday 30 January, 2015 to open celebrations.
- A Silver Anniversary Ball planned for Saturday 14 March, 2015.
- Our Inspired event, with $20,000 in art prizes and our greatest ensembles concert to date, on Friday 1 May, 2015.
- An aerial photograph of the whole School, artistically crafted into the number 25 and including every student from P-12.
- All students will receive a commemorative polo shirt.
- Memorabilia will be available.
- The School’s 25-year history book will be launched in the latter part of the year.

The release of the 25-year history book is a particularly exciting event. The School commissioned highly regarded local author Helen Hopcroft to write the history. Some people might be familiar with the 2010 publication of 100 Women; a series of notable women’s biographies commissioned by the University of Newcastle that Helen was a chief writer for. Her publication list includes The Australian, The Sydney Morning Herald and The Griffith Review.

As you look through the pages of this edition of Success you will see the obvious growth and achievement that HVGS constantly enjoys. You will read about the Class of 2013 who have continued the tradition of high achievement upon graduation from our School. You will learn about the extensive improvements and development of our campus and the involvement and generosity of our students who are reaching out and helping others both locally and globally. You will meet new staff members, some old friends and even discover we have our very own IRONMAN.

From very humble beginnings HVGS sits comfortably alongside the very best schools in NSW and indeed across the country. We look forward to enjoying our 25th Silver Anniversary celebrations in 2015.

Mr Paul Teys
Principal
We were again very proud to be able to recognise a group of students who excelled in the Higher School Certificate at our Distinguished Achievers Ceremony in February. It is wonderful to be able to invite these students back before they begin their studies at universities in Newcastle, Sydney, Canberra and many other locations nationally, and, more and more, internationally.

There were 40 students (50%) who were recognised at this ceremony for achieving at least one Band 6/E4 (the highest result). This is now the trend at HVGS, where the highest results are not just achieved by a small group of students.

Other achievements celebrated on the day included:

> **Nic Andrews, Matthew Palmer and Corinne Shields** receiving a Premier’s Award for All-Round Excellence for achieving Band 6/E4 in 10 or more units.

> Two students were on the Top Achievers List for being placed in the top 10 students in the state for a specific subject: **Zoe DeVries**, eighth in the state for Engineering Studies, and **Elliot Peck**, ninth in the state for Music 1.

> Three Drama groups (nine students - **Grace Broadfield, Elliot Peck** and **Llewellyn Thomas; Georgia Murray, Isabella Phillips** and **Bryce Thomas; Jacqueline du Plessis, Emma Jack** and **Sebastian Riorden**) were nominated for the Board of Studies OnStage performance.

> **James Bowman’s** Music 1 performance also received a nomination by the HSC examiners for inclusion in the Board of Studies ENCORE program of outstanding performances from the Higher School Certificate Music Examinations.

> **Llewellyn Thomas’** Visual Arts Major Work was nominated for the Board of Studies ArtExpress exhibition.

> 30% of the cohort received an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) greater than 90, thus opening up a large number of university course options.

Each year, we invite a recently graduated student to address the assembly and talk to us about their experiences since leaving our School. They share their experiences and explain their journey. This year we welcomed Miles Cole-Clark (Class of 2011), who reflected on his time here and then spoke of his studies and new adventures.

We wish each of our graduates the very best, and hope that they will stay connected to the School.

Mr Greg Robinson
Head of Senior Secondary School

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**Year 10 2013’s night of nights!**

After a build-up that rivalled any major awards ceremony, the Year 10 Dinner Dance came around faster than you could say “I need a dress and new shoes and I need them NOW”.

Students in the organising committee were heavily involved in all aspects of the night, and their willingness to help perfectly reflected the unique nature of our year. We thank Mrs Susan Boyd for her words of advice. Students helped with set-up and decorations, and even set the tables ready for the festivities.

Hosts Lauren Boxall and Chelsea Williams perfectly set the tone, and the night showed that all that glitters is not gold - it’s a rainbow of colours. The girls transformed into young ladies and the boys even made big efforts, with a high number of top buttons done up!

Speeches from the Secondary School Captains, Mel Wightman and Liam Taylor, were well received. We farewelled those who were leaving us and wished those who were staying good luck, and with that, the dance floor erupted and legends were made.

Mr Michael Fiddian
Head of Year
It has been another very exciting and productive year for the HVGS maintenance team.

At the Junior School campus, we oversaw construction of new classrooms, a staff room and improved bathroom facilities. The building in general sits well with the design and curves of the K-2 hall and funnels the eye towards the green oval space. As always, we took the opportunity to upgrade related facilities, such as the student bathrooms, the soccer canteen, a designated junior sports store with new easy access to the multi-purpose courts, covered walkways linking the lower half of the Junior School and the space to create an Academic Studies room.

I would like to thank the students for their understanding and great behaviour during the lengthy construction. We have had very positive comments on the project as a whole and this appreciation makes the lengthy effort in design and build very worthwhile.

The Visual Arts department had identified the need for a covered outside learning area and we were able to provide this over the summer holidays. Students now take practical lessons under a louvred Vergola, feeling connected to our green shady frontage. A rain sensor will close the louvres during inclement weather, enabling work such as sculptures and larger practical works to be protected.

The new C Block, despite some unforeseen underground issues, is progressing well. We can look forward to three new well-furnished labs plus a dry lab and a prep room as well as a new boys’ bathroom and change facilities. On the first floor we will house the English department, with five new classrooms and a staffroom.

We are currently working on developing the Meeting Place after its demise in high winds. Our intention is to provide a well-designed weather-protected area for students to meet friends, relax and enjoy recess and lunch but also act as a social hub for student meetings and lessons in a perfectly central campus location.

The School continues with its commitment towards a greener environment and we constantly invest in ways to reduce our carbon footprint. Since 2012, we have converted a high percentage of our lighting and mechanicals to new energy-efficient systems. We recycle 95 per cent of our paper and cardboard waste and we use and recycle other waste by turning them into by-products.

One of the additions I am regularly asked about is the wonderful sculpture leading to Latter Hall. I had wanted a piece there to take the attention away from the electrical distribution unit and provide some interest for the younger students. The artist, Susan Myerson, had work on display at a Newcastle gallery that was spotted by an eagle-eyed staff member. I approached her with a brief and commissioned her to make a totem pole representing School life. Susan makes weather-resistant ceramic works in all forms and is well worth checking out.

I would like to thank the HVGS maintenance team for their continued commitment, versatility and hard work and we all look forward to the challenges ahead.

Mr Simon Brookman
Facilities Manager
Leo Club Established at Hunter Valley Grammar School

We are proud to announce the charter of the world’s newest Leo Club here at HVGS. The club was officially accepted as a Leo Club at a Charter Dinner held in the foyer of the Cameron Centre on Thursday 12 June, attended by over 110 guests - Lions, Leos, parents and staff.

In 1957 in the USA, Lions International adopted the Leo Club Program as an official program of the association. The objective of the Leo Club Program is “to provide the youth of the world with an opportunity for development and contribution, individually and collectively, as responsible members of the local, national and international community.” Leo Club members around the world fulfil this objective every day. Activities and projects enhance the community and help young people develop and practise leadership, organisation and social skills. Leo Club involvement can instil a lifetime commitment to helping others. The Leo Club motto, “Leadership, Experience, Opportunity”, says it all.

Lions Clubs International (LCI) is the world’s largest community service organisation with 1.3 million members. Today, there are more than 45,000 Lions Clubs in approximately 200 countries. Regardless of the language Lions speak, religion they practise or politics they support, they all share a common dedication to helping people in need.

The Leo Club is an integral part of the Lions international network, with more than 5,700 Leo Clubs in approximately 140 nations. The international scope of LCI gives Leo and Lions Club members a unique global identity.

Our club has been launched with 33 members, including a board with seven officers. I volunteered to be the Leo Club Liaison Officer. At the Charter Dinner, representatives from Lions Clubs across the Hunter, including the District Governor, Mrs Deidre Schaeffer, East Maitland Lions Club President, Mr Andrew Roberts-Thomson, and Mr Martin Peebles, Multiple Districts Leo Chairman, were in attendance to present the students of the HVGS Leo Club with certificates of membership and lapel badges.

Following the hand-over of residual funds from the former SRC and the club’s first fundraising activity, the new club has over $4000 in cash reserves, ready to assist its chosen charities and causes.

The Leos led a blanket drive for the Samaritan’s Winter Appeal and donated 100 blankets for this cause. They have launched the Recycle for Sight campaign, collecting unwanted glasses and sunglasses that will be donated to Lions International. Over the 15 years that the Australian program has existed, they have delivered 2.5 million pairs of glasses to countries in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Indian sub-continent, East Asia, and the Far East, including China, the countries of the Pacific Rim and Southern Asia and Oceania, giving sight to millions of people.

The new club is off and running!

Members of the Foundation HVGS Leo Club:
- Courtney Webb (President), Lewis Drayton (Vice-President),
- Laura Levick (Secretary), Grace Logvyn (Treasurer), Emily Box (Director), Maddy Boyd (Director), James Spearpoint (Director),

Mr Paul Teys
Principal
I am an IRONMAN

It is hard to comprehend what the human body is capable of. In some of us there is a desire to see how far we can push the limits, to test both mind and body and to realise an achievement that most people have difficulty grasping.

Competing in an IRONMAN event involves a 3.8km swim, 180km ride and running a marathon (42.2km). It is, to most, a ludicrous idea. It’s the ultimate challenge to test your body. Your mind must be clear and familiar with the task. For me, it is these simple elements that made the idea of competing in a 13-hour IRONMAN event a rational and reasonable conquest.

I took up triathlons seven years ago with limited swimming ability, and thought being able to cover the distances required for an IRONMAN event was beyond comprehension, to be reserved only for the fittest endurance athletes.

Each year I set a goal of competing in a longer race. In 2011, I had worked my way up to competing in a half-IRONMAN event (the 70.3 series). So I knew it was not a fluke that I finished, I did another in 2012. It was around this time that I floated the idea of a full IRONMAN. While there is a considerable difference in the race length (113km to the gruelling 226km of an IRONMAN), I thought that, with some serious training, I could do it. The goal would be just to finish!

Armed with a training plan by Dave Scott (six-time world IRONMAN champion) downloaded from the internet, and a block of long service leave, I was on the path of training to be an IRONMAN.

Initially I found the training exhausting, but my body slowly got used to the training regime and the distances grew each week. At the peak of my training I found myself covering distances of between 350km and 400km a week in a combination of cycling, swimming and running. By the time the IRONMAN race arrived I had trained the equivalent distance in kilometres of a trip from Sydney to Perth.

The IRONMAN weekend fell after the first week of Term 2. There was a great sense of expectation and excitement in Port Macquarie. The town seemed alive with 1700 athletes and their supporters. The logistics of running such an event are enormous.

Bike check-in and race briefings were held the day before and many athletes took the time to ride or run part of the course to prepare. The race started before dawn on the Sunday morning, commencing with the swim. The swim headed north from central Port Macquarie up through the canals towards Settlement Point and back to transition. Once out, we rode for two gruelling laps of a course that headed south out of Port through Lake Cathie, towards Laurieton and Dunbogan and back. In total, 180km.

By the time I had started the run, the professional IRONMEN were nearly finished! The 42km marathon consisted of four laps along the foreshore, with the finish chute on Town Green. It was very cold once the sun went down on the coldest weekend of the year so far. The course required that each lap pass by the finish. It was extremely motivating to hear finishers being announced, the music blaring and supporters cheering like they were at a rock concert!

My goal was to complete the race. My time was 13 hours and 10 seconds. I am an IRONMAN!

I could not have done this without my family’s support. IRONMAN requires huge amounts of time spent on training and someone to cheer me on all day at the race. I had that in spades.

Mr Brett Blake
Director of Administration
hvgs helping others

Positive Steps

Lyn Pritchard, Jack Machin, Sheryl Otway and 29 students walked more than 300 laps of Maitland Sportsground. They raised around $3000, which was the highest amount we have raised as a school.

The students involved were:

A highlight this year was our entry in the Miss Relay competition. Will Berry (pictured below left) was sponsored by the Year 10 group. He was ably assisted on the night by Jonathon O’Brien. The Year 12 girls supplied the outfit and make-up. Jonathon/Will was awarded second prize based on the amount of money raised.


Donating Books to Laos

As I was driving to work one day, mid-2013, I was thinking about the poverty and lack of educational resources in the schools I was hoping to visit on my trip to Northern Thailand and Laos at the end of the year.

I contacted Elaine Barker and Lyn Pritchard in the Weeks Library at HVGS to find out what happens to the unwanted/outdated library books. I was given permission by the School to sort through the large number of books in storage. Liz Thompson, Head of Junior School, suggested I also contact staff in the Junior School and request class teachers donate their old story books. Susan Walmsley and I sorted through many hundreds of books.

Principal Paul Teys suggested I contact Federal Member for Paterson Bob Baldwin and Rotary for assistance in transporting the books to Laos. Following lengthy investigations, it was determined that the Laos Government calculates a tax on any donations of goods to the country. This was making it extremely difficult to find organisations that could assist with the costs of transportation and government taxes.

I contacted Jan Burgess, a former class teacher at the HVGS Junior School, who was teaching in Vientiane. Her husband was employed by a large mining company, which agreed to transport the books and pay the Laos Government tax.

After six months of negotiations, 44 boxes of books were packed and collected by the courier on the last day of school for 2013.

Thanks to the efforts of so many, the books have arrived in Laos this year and have been donated to the Savannakhet Library, where some books will remain and others will be distributed to local libraries throughout the country. This is the same library where, in 2011, the US Ambassador to Laos presented a selection of books with information about the US culture, history and society.

I feel extremely proud that HVGS has contributed to a broader diversity of information through our books to the people of Laos. It was a wonderful collaboration by so many people to provide an amazing gift to a very humble and poverty-stricken society.

Ms Susan Huxley
Academic Support
Cooking Up A Storm at Ronald McDonald House

Year 12 students Grace Logvyn, Katie Beveridge, Mitchell McColl and myself, along with Mr Michael Fiddian, Mrs Loodia Woods and Ms Amanda Osmond, rolled up our sleeves at Ronald McDonald House, John Hunter Hospital, to prepare and serve dinner to around 30 families of seriously ill children. We had asked the School community for help in providing the food and were overwhelmed by the generosity!

Thank you to all those who donated food and a special thank you to Mrs Sheryl Otway, who donated blankets to the house that were made by the knitting club at HVGS. Very generous cash donations were made too.

We would like to acknowledge the generosity, in no particular order, of the Barry family, Starkey family, Hendriks family, Trescott family, Julie Randell, the Van Camp family, Clarke family, Daines family, Williams family, Kearns family, Burke family, Bottrell family and the Taylor family.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable night and the families gave plenty of positive feedback. There was also a substantial amount of food left over for the families to enjoy the next day.

Thank you so very much to everybody from HVGS who helped make this night possible and such a success, either through time, money, food or gift donations.

Madison Boyd
School Captain

On Wednesday 3 June, Year 6 students were fortunate enough to have two guest speakers come and talk with us. To support our current unit of inquiry, “The actions and contributions of admirable people impact on our lives”, we invited two very admirable ladies to share their knowledge and accolades; Fran Bodkin and Gabi Hollows.

Fran Bodkin, author of Encyclopaedia Botanica and D’harawal: Dreaming Stories, among others, shared stories of her childhood, her education in the outdoors and how she survived a very significant time in Australia’s past. Fran was described by the Year 6 cohort as being passionate, inspirational, humble, modest and knowledgeable.

Gabi Hollows, wife of the late Fred Hollows, also joined us, along with her daughter Anna. Gabi spoke to the students about her own struggles with sight as a child, the time that she met Fred, her own journey as an ophthalmologist and also the wonderful work that is being done worldwide by the Fred Hollows Foundation. Fred’s legacy was to restore the sight of people around the world and he worked with eye doctors and patients in developing countries to cure avoidable blindness. Gabi, along with the Fred Hollows Foundation, continue his legacy today.

The students were extremely grateful for the time and knowledge shared by these two very inspirational figures. We are lucky to have shared in their journey and we hope that the students in Year 6 have been influenced by their admirable qualities.

Mrs Rachael Hutchen
Head of Stage Three

Image below courtesy of Stuart Scott, The Maitland Mercury

Pictured below L-R: Mrs Loodia Woods, Mitchell McColl, Madison Boyd, Grace Logvyn, Katie Beveridge and Mr Michael Fiddian.

Year 6 Students Meet Gabi Hollows
inspired 2014

A Cultural Experience For Music and Art Enthusiasts Alike

Winner Open Section - A
Linda Joyce ‘Outback Still Life’
Winner Painting Section
Gordon Rintoul ‘Summer Sailing’
Winner Drawing Section - A
Kate Wilkins ‘Danny’
Winner Ceramic Section
Danielle McManus ‘Balancing Act’
Winner Sculpture Section
Sue Stewart ‘Momento Mori’
Winner Photographic Section
Liam Robinson ‘Passing Time’
Winner Youth Section
Raven Sandow ‘Aldo The Apache’
Youth Encouragement Awards
Kayla Ellam ‘Rainbow Lorikeet’
Carmody Nicol ‘Tree Museum’
Highly Commended Open Section
Vlase Nikoleski, Lydia Miller
Highly Commended Drawing Section
Yvette Hugill, Michelle Heibel
Highly Commended Painting Section
Jill Cairns, Lee Tuesner 1107, H Fish
Highly Commended Sculpture
Marie Hine
Highly Commended Photography
A J Shepherd

The general comment heard at Inspired 2014 was “I will definitely be coming back next year” and “I will be telling other artists this event is worth planning for”. This is wonderful news for the future of the event as the word is spreading around the artistic community, both near and far, of the excellent opportunities provided by Hunter Valley Grammar School for exhibiting artists and as an opportunity for developing artists to make their mark.

Entries came from all over NSW and interstate. There was even an overseas inquiry. We were overjoyed with the number of recognised artists who chose to enter their work this year. Some of these artists lecture at Newcastle University and TAFE. Their talent and expertise in their chosen fields was visible to all and a great inspiration to the students who saw the exhibition. Work of a high standard was a keen topic in the classroom as students discussed what they had seen and questioned how works were made.

Our elective Visual Arts students are encouraged to participate to learn what it takes to be an exhibiting artist. A number of students sold their works, which is a wonderful affirmation of their talents.

Guest judges Nicole Jelicich and Sophie Miller were impressed with the standard of work presented and found it challenging to choose the winners.

In 2015, we are expanding the prize categories, enticing more artists and offering a greater diversity of works on show. There will be a prize pool of $20,000.

I encourage all past students to take up the challenge to enter their work, as I know there are many who have pursued a career in the visual arts.

On opening night, over 400 guests enjoyed the musical concert performed by talented students and staff of HVGS.

Inspired was a great success this year and I hope to see the future exhibitions become a renowned event in the art world’s calendar.

Miss Sue Richardson
Head of Visual Arts and Inspired Curator
Growing in the Garden

“Proximity to, views of and daily exposure to natural settings increases children’s ability to focus and enhances cognitive abilities.” (N. Wells, 2000)

In consultation with the youngest students at Hunter Valley Grammar School, we have spent time planning, designing and building more natural elements into our outdoor learning environment. Working cooperatively in these areas, children are engaged in many opportunities to extend their learning. The importance of extended, uninterrupted play cannot be overstated. It is when children participate in this type of play in a safe, secure and challenging environment that learning occurs.

Wonderful discoveries have been made in the new Preschool gardens and we have observed the children actively construct and extend their knowledge as they interact with the world around them. Watermelons that have been growing in the vegetable patch have been measured and recorded on growth charts using informal measurements. We have witnessed and recorded the life cycle of caterpillars as they have taken up residence in the potted plants under the verandah, predicting how long it would take them to emerge from their cocoons and wondering if they would be moths or butterflies.

The children extended their literacy skills and emergent writing as they made signs to indicate the types of seeds they had sown in pots. Other signs were made to ensure that flowers were only picked from the new ‘picking garden’ they had planted, while the other flowers were left for the bees. We have discussed our senses and particularly focused on our sense of smell as we have picked mint, basil, lemon grass and parsley from our gardens and crushed the leaves between our fingers. Finding spider webs in the gardens has inspired beautiful art works with intricate and detailed patterns.

Natural learning environments encourage healthy emotional development in young children, and they offer many other benefits: “The way people feel in pleasing natural environments improves recall of information, problem solving and creativity.” (R. White & V. Stoecklin)

Mrs Lynelle White
Director of Preschool
special guests

Welcome to our Grandparents and Special Friends

On Friday 6 June, the Junior School welcomed close to 400 of our favourite people. Wonderful grandparents and special friends travelled from far and wide - from the city and interstate, often combining a special extended family visit. The morning was foggy and cool and at times a little wet, which made the long journey through our campus up to the Cameron Centre even more challenging for some. Thank you to our friendly maintenance team, who were on hand with their buggies to assist.

Grandmothers, grandfathers, nans, pops and friends enjoyed freshly baked scones with jam and cream among other goodies before taking a seat to enjoy students from Kindergarten to Year 6 perform in a special assembly. The students sang old favourites, which delighted the audience, and they shared their favourite stories about their grandparents.

Thanks go to Mrs Hutchen for collating the photos emailed to the School and making a perfect display for the big screens. This year, guests were treated to jellybeans and the Grandparents Newsletter.

After the assembly, our guests joined the students in the Junior School to observe School work, classrooms and the playground.

Grandparents and Special Friends Day is such a wonderful day for students, staff and our visitors. We thank all of our guests for making the effort to come and share the day at Hunter Valley Grammar School with their grandchild or special friend.

We look forward to seeing everyone again next year!

Mrs Susan Boyd
Communications Manager
I grew up in France, in the countryside of Normandy, not far from the Mont Saint-Michel and the famous beaches of WWII. After completing my French Baccalaureate specialising in Art History, I moved to the city of Rennes in Brittany to study Art History and Archaeology at university.

At the end of my second year, I decided to take a gap year to consider what direction I wanted my education to take and to explore other parts of the world. I decided to start with a three-month trip to India, however, after a week on the road, I realised that a single gap year was not going to suffice.

Following a second trip to India, I decided to take my chances in Australia since I was already half-way there! After a year of travelling and working in NSW, Victoria and Tasmania, I went on to explore South-East Asia and completed a course in teaching English as a second language (ESL) in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Working as an ESL teacher in Vietnam inspired me to continue my tertiary education, and I completed the final year of my Bachelor degree in Educational Science with the University of Paris VIII.

In 2010, my husband and I returned to Australia. We spent a year in Sydney before eventually settling in Newcastle. Having grown up in the countryside near the sea, I love living in such a relaxed yet dynamic community. It was also the perfect opportunity for me to return to university.

I completed a Master of Teaching Primary with the University of Newcastle in November 2013. I feel very fortunate to be joining the Hunter Valley Grammar School community and it is very rewarding to be able to combine what I have learned in my tertiary studies with my native language.

The staff have been most welcoming and I am grateful to be working in such a supportive environment. I believe I must be in the right place because when I was 10 years old, my teacher asked us to write down what we wanted to do when we grew up, and I wrote that I wanted to be a French teacher in Australia!

Mrs Fanny Vacher
Junior School Language Teacher

I grew up in Toowoomba, Queensland, the youngest of three daughters. My parents gave each of us the opportunity to learn the piano. I began at the age of four, and my love of music grew from there. I completed my Associate Diploma of Music (AMusA) for piano in Year 11 and my Bachelor of Music (with Distinction), majoring in piano performance, at the University of Southern Queensland in 2010. I began learning the trombone in my first year of high school and loved being part of musical ensembles. It was a break from the heavy piano repertoire. This was also where I met my husband, James, who was the impressive saxophone player in the school band.

I have been a member of a number of University of Southern Queensland ensembles, including the USQ Big Band, Better Than One duo, USQ Concert Band and Piano Ticklers ensemble. I have been fortunate enough to perform with artists such as Rhonda Burchmore, Kate Ceberano and James and John Morrison, and I have been an orchestra member for a number of shows and musicals. I will always remember playing piano on stage in costume for Houdini: The Man from Beyond. It was so nice to be able to dress up and not just wear the standard black!

Upon finishing my Bachelor degree, James and I moved to Dubbo on our first big adventure together for music teaching positions at the Macquarie Conservatorium of Music. This was a huge learning curve for me, as I was required to teach many different students from a wide range of backgrounds. I even had to learn some instruments myself in order to teach them! We met some wonderful people in Dubbo, and I am grateful for the experiences gained there.

James and I have since moved to the Hunter Region and, approaching our third year of marriage, are loving life. I feel so fortunate to have become a member of the music mafia family at Hunter Valley Grammar School and cannot wait to see what the future brings.

Mrs Shannon Laundon
Music Teacher
First stop in Hanoi, after checking into the Santa Barbara Hotel, was a visit to the bank to change Aussie dollars into Vietnamese dong. We all felt like millionaires, as one Australian dollar is equivalent to 20,000 Vietnamese dong.

Visiting the unique Friendship Village in Hanoi was a wonderful experience. The village was built by an American soldier and a Vietnamese war veteran to house and provide for war survivors and victims of Agent Orange. Today, it is a non-government organisation for disabled students and the descendants of those affected by Agent Orange. We were fortunate enough to experience an authentic Vietnamese cooking lesson in Hanoi and sample the spring rolls and barbecued pork shoulder we cooked.

From Hanoi we caught the overnight train to Sapa. The trains didn’t look safe at all, having been battered and bruised over the years. The cabins were tiny for four people and multiple bags. We had to close and lock our door for safety. As such, we devised a security code with the teachers. If we heard the words “anything from the trolley?” we knew it was one of the teachers and we could open our door to let them in. By morning, many students were very ill and I was surprised that only a few of us were not sick.

Our one-hour climb to Sapa, 1500 metres above sea level, was via three mini buses that had the job of transporting students, teachers and bags. On arrival, a small group of us (the survivors) made our way to Dragon Mountain. I have never seen a more astonishing sight. It was decorated with flowers and fictional characters and the garden beds were laid out into words and symbols. Near the top of the mountain we watched a theatrical performance. People danced and sang on stage and represented the various ethnic tribes and groups of the Sapa region. We also tried cross-bow target practice, which was pretty cool.

The site of our building project was high in the mountains above Sapa. Timber and building materials were all that greeted us at the construction zone where we were to build a brand-new house. The building site was surrounded by hundreds of rice paddies. I did ponder the consequences of heavy downpours a couple of times.

We carried between 200 and 250 Besser Blocks, weighing around 5kg each, between building sites at different ends of the mountain. This was hard work, especially when some of us had to do the round trip more than eight times. We shovelled sand into bags for concrete mixing and transported them to the first building site up the hill. After a few trips in small groups, we devised a more effective system. We rallied everyone together and formed a conga line, passing the sand up and down the hill like a machine at a mine. Great team work!

“Well, why should I be surprised?” was the first thing I said to myself when I saw our bed for the next few days. It was a very thin mattress on a wooden floor placed inside a mosquito net with only one blanket. Sleeping arrangements were not as confronting as the toilets. These were built over a little pond and you had to squat in front of it before squatting over the angled hole in the floor that led into the pond. With all this unfamiliar food and physical activity I realised that adopting the squat position was inevitable! Even worse, the pond had fish and they liked to munch on whatever you cared to deposit into their pond! I will never forget the time the chef asked who would like fish for dinner.

Our second day in the village was more serious, digging trenches for concrete foundations using very basic tools. The village builders were funny characters. They spoke no English so we had to play charades with them until they understood what we were asking. Then they would act it out to us to give us the answer. I had no clue how the builders kept on going all day without food or water. They simply smoked and worked.

It was amazing to see two houses standing and I was impressed at the standard we had all achieved. What an experience, living like one of the villagers for a few days. Reflecting on the pain and poverty that they must feel every day makes me feel closer to them. I felt like part of their family.

From Lào Cai we caught the overnight train back to Hanoi. On the way to Lào Cai we went to see the Chinese border. China looked so very different to Vietnam as we viewed it across the river.

Our final days in Vietnam were spent visiting Hanoi again and Ha Long Bay. Ha Long Bay is spectacular with small rocky islands that seem to go on forever and appear to float on the water. While there, we visited a cave on one of the many islands and, once again, we were greeted by breathtaking beauty.

My trip to Vietnam was an unforgettable experience, which I can highly recommend.

Brayden Duignan-Tey
Year 11
Announcing a New International Service Program

Jabulani School in Zimbabwe

In 2015, HVGS will embark on its first tour (of many we hope) to the Jabulani School, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. The tour is planned for June/July 2015 and will include time spent at the Jabulani School. We would like to make a difference by providing some items for the very poorly resourced (by our standards) School. Jabulani lacks basic facilities like running water for toilets, secure and weather-proof classrooms, recreational and sport facilities/equipment, covered areas for shade and to eat their lunch and basic learning resources like reading books and technology. Future plans include building a covered outdoor learning area for the School. We plan that each HVGS student will take gifts from our School like reading and mathematics books, sports equipment, clothing and so on.

As part of the service program, the participating students will raise funds to pay school fees for particular students. These students will then meet their peers when we visit the School. While the fees are very substantial for the Jabulani families - they are very modest by our standards, equivalent to what many pay for a club sport registration and team fees. A small gift from our students will produce life-changing consequences for the Jabulani students.

The tour will take in the sights and attractions of the beautiful Victoria Falls region of Zimbabwe. The final few days will be spent in spectacular Cape Town with Table Mountain and Cape Point.

Jabulani School takes some 150 children of primary and junior school age, about the same number in the Secondary School and is in desperate need of a new classroom.

For more details please contact Mrs Carla Killen at HVGS.

Mrs Carla Killen
Co-ordinator of Jabulani Tour
On April 7, 24 students along with Mr Beath, Mrs Green and Mr Jolliffe left for a three-week tour of Europe.

First stop was London, visiting Hampton Court to explore the grand palace and gardens in the refreshingly sunny British spring. Many students took the Hampton Court maze challenge in the gardens while others watched some older gentlemen battle it out on one of the few remaining Royal (or Real) Tennis courts in the UK.

London’s bright weather continued for a few days as the touring group took to the sights. Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, 10 Downing Street, Hyde Park and Buckingham Palace were among the highlights.

On our second day in Italy, we had time to explore the grounds a little further after breakfast in the sun and play with the farmhouse dogs. Mid-morning we were all bundled into the kitchen to learn about rustic Italian farmhouse food prepared from scratch, from the rolled and cut tagliatelle pasta and the tomato vegetable sauce to the warm bread into which we stuffed delicious silky prosciutto.

A half-hour trip up the road brought us to the amazing elevated village of Orvieto, where the incredible Orvieto Cathedral proudly stands. We enjoyed a quick shopping fix and guilty devouring of pizza and gelato, followed by tours of the caves buried beneath the volcanic outcrop and the cathedral.

When in Rome, the touring party got straight to the heart of the city with a walking tour of the Spanish Steps and the Trevi Fountain. The Pantheon, Piazza Navona and Italy’s best espresso at Sant’Eustachio café were other highlights.

The group spent the following day in the Vatican City. First stop was an ancient Roman necropolis that opened to the public in February followed by Michelangelo’s masterpieces. We then walked through the Vatican Museum, followed by St Peter’s Basilica.

Our first stop the next morning was the Roman Forum. We viewed the remains of the mausoleum of Julius Caesar and the palace of the emperors. From there, we walked to the Colosseum, where we learned all about the arena and the blood sports of ancient Rome.

At the catacombs of Saint Domitilla we walked through only a fraction of the 17km of tunnels, seeing Christian tombs and artworks that dated to the first century BC.

The next morning we hit the road south to the Bay of Naples, where we learned the art of gelato making with Mario Gargiulo of the renowned David Gelateria of Sorrento.

Next day we visited Herculaneum and then headed for the top of Mount Vesuvius. The coach carried us most of the way, although there was a steep climb on foot for the last part. It was cold and windy, but the view was amazing. Our final site for the day was Pompeii, the most famous archaeological site in the world.
A rare sleep-in the next morning was followed by a 20-minute fast ferry to Capri. The water was smooth and flat, which meant that we were very lucky to be able to visit the blue grotto. The opening to the grotto is very small, meaning that we had to board dinghies from a larger boat and then duck right down just to get in. The grotto itself was eerily stunning and although our stay inside was brief, I’m sure that we will all remember it forever.

It was a quick flight to Athens and we enjoyed the warm sunshine in Delphi. We then took a tour of the Altar of Apollo and the ruins of Delphi, climbing more than 800 steps to reach the fortress of Palamidi overlooking the town Nafplio.

Our next stop was the most well preserved working ancient Greek theatre at Epidaurus, built alongside the Sanctuary of Asklepios. Both are World Heritage sites. Students were encouraged to test the acoustics of the theatre by reciting a few lines on the orchestra floor. In the afternoon we visited the Bronze Age citadel of Mycenae - supposedly the stronghold of Agamemnon from Trojan War fame.

In Athens we visited the remnants of the temple of Olympian Zeus and a personal favourite of Mr Beath: the Athenian Acropolis. Understanding that we were walking in the same places as such notable Athenians as Themistocles, Pericles and Socrates was a very humbling experience.

Visits to the Greek National Archaeological Museum, the 2004 Olympic stadium and the 1896 Olympic stadium, the birthplace of the modern Olympics, were to follow.

We then focused on Anzac Day Commemorations in Athens where we attended two services and placed a wreath on the grave of our Adopt A Digger Alf Carpenter’s best mate, Charlie Jewell, who didn’t make it home from Greece in WWII.

Alf turned 97 years old just before Anzac Day. One of the representatives from the travel agency who organised our tour took Alf out to lunch to celebrate. She contacted us while we were in Greece to remark: “I can’t tell you how much your students have struck a chord with Alf. He is incredibly chuffed by their interest in his service days and very proud of their upholding of the Anzac spirit and legend. He is a little overwhelmed to learn that the students will be presenting a talk about him and his battalion at the Anzac Day Service in Athens. He is also bursting with pride and a little teary at the thought of it.”

The final afternoon was spent packing and shopping. We may have lost one piece of luggage (located within 24 hours!), two passports (located within 15 minutes!) and one hat, but we gained a few kilos (thanks to the pizza, gelato and shopping) and a wealth of cherished memories from the sights and experiences of the 2014 Europe Tour. Special thanks to Mr Beath, Mrs White and Mrs Green for their significant investment in time and effort towards the planning, promotion and preparation required to ensure students enjoyed such a rich, varied and memorable European tour.

Mr Nick Jolliffe
Head of English Faculty
global connections

Brayden Secures Centenary ANZAC Tour Spot

Year 11 student Brayden Duignan-Teys is one of 20 high school students from rural NSW selected to make a pilgrimage to Gallipoli in April 2015. Each student passed through a rigorous selection process, and Brayden will now represent our School, our Hunter community and our country in Gallipoli as part of the 2015 Anzac Centenary Tour.

Brayden is a direct descendant of two Gallipoli veterans, and he presented a high-quality historical research project featuring his two great-grandfathers, who were veterans of the First World War. This formed part of the selection process together with several nerve-wracking interviews in front of panels.

Before embarking on the research project, Brayden had been unaware that both of his great-grandfathers had served in World War One. Discovering that he was a direct descendant of two World War One veterans who fought for our freedom has created an enormous sense of pride for Brayden. Standing on the beaches of Gallipoli on 25 April 2015 will be a moment that he will never forget.

The three-week trip includes several days in Venice, where Brayden will board the MSC Lirica for a two-week cruise through Istanbul and to the Port of Çanakkale.

While in the Dardanelles, Brayden will visit Anzac Cove, North Beach, Lone Pine and Shrapnel Valley to name but a few of the destinations on the itinerary. On 26 April, Brayden will attend the Gallipoli 100th Anniversary Ball, a black-tie event.

All students are fund-raising for the tour and for RSL charities across the Hunter Region.

Full details of the Gallipoli 2015 Centenary Tour, including the itinerary, can be found at: www.gallipoli2015tour.wordpress.com.


Brayden Duignan-Teys adds School tie and badge to time capsule at Newcastle Museum

As part of Brayden’s involvement in the Hunter Region Gallipoli Tour, he attended Newcastle Museum on Saturday 3 May to participate in Tony Robinson’s ‘Tour of Duty’ filming event, which will be aired as part of a series in 2015. Tony is researching how Australia reacted to World War One. The Gallipoli students provided memorabilia, which will be placed in a time capsule to be opened in 2064.

Brayden took along his Gallipoli research project as well as a HVGS tie and badge, which will be added to the capsule. It is very exciting to know that in 50 years’ time HVGS will be remembered at this event. It was a significant day for Newcastle and our Hunter Region Gallipoli students and as such, HVGS, with Brayden involved as our representative. The students were interviewed and Brayden was personally interviewed, with footage hoped to be included in the TV series next year.

Celebration of the Senses

Showcasing Senior Students’ creative talent

Friday 7 November 2014

Join us for Celebration of the Senses 2014

This stunning evening begins with an ART SHOW and canapés followed by DINNER that is styled, prepared, cooked and served by our hospitality students, ending with a fabulous CONCERT featuring HVGS music and drama students.

The event showcases our senior students’ creative talent and is a wonderful collaboration of their hard work, not to be missed.

Tickets will be on sale via the HVGS website from 1 August 2014.

Christmas in July

Fundraising Dinner

Hunter Schools’ Gallipoli 2015 Centenary Tour

Brayden Duignan-Teys is Hunter Valley Grammar School’s representative on the Tour.

Date Friday 25 July 2014

Time 6.30pm - 10.00pm

Where The Cameron Centre Foyer, HVGS

Guest Speaker Dr Brendan Nelson, Director of the Australian War Memorial

Entertainment Features outstanding local musicians, Shannon and James Laundon. Brayden Duignan-Teys will share his presentation which earned him a place on the Tour.

Cost $45 per head - includes a 3 course Christmas dinner, soft drinks, tea, coffee and entertainment. Alcoholic drinks will be available to purchase from the bar throughout the night.

RSVP Wednesday 16 July by booking your tickets online at http://www.trybooking.com/FAQX

For further information contact Susan Boyd on 4931 0717.

All proceeds from the evening are directed to the Tour Fundraising efforts.
We have solid numbers for our U12s, U14s, U16s and 1st XV - very different from our humble beginnings in 1992.

A new initiative for HVGS Rugby in 2014 is an U16 Development Tour to New Zealand. A team of U15 and U16 boys will tour the North Island in October to test their skills and resolve against teams from schools where rugby is a religion.

We have also been invited to take part in the IRB 7s tournament in Dubai in December. In fact, since an intrepid group of 16 U15-U18 boys pioneered a three-match tour of Fiji in 1992, players from the school have toured South Africa, Canada, the USA, islands of the South West Pacific, Dubai, the Netherlands, England, Wales and Ireland.

The School continues to foster rugby in the region. HVGS has hosted ARU coaching courses and provides a training facility for local representative sides. The School runs competitions for a range of age divisions. The Hawthorne Shield is conducted for 1st XVs, and in 2014 there has been a record number of entries. The U14s and U16s play in the Alumni and McKendry shields respectively and the U12s will this year be playing in the Digby Rayward Shield. As well, the School plays in competitions conducted by the NSW and Australian Rugby Unions.

HVGS teams have enjoyed recent success in both the long and short forms of the game. In the Hunter Region 7s, the 1st XV made the semi-finals, the U16s won their competition and the U14s also made the play-offs. Our U12s achieved beyond expectations and made the regional final. The U16s performed well in the Buchan Shield and the 1st XV played strongly in the Waratah Cup.

In 2013 a new tradition was started with Central Coast Grammar. We now play an annual fixture across a number of age groups. This gives our rugby program a benchmark as to where we would rank against School teams that play regular rugby competitions.

HVGS has played host to international teams from Tonga and Samoa in the past few years. Our 1st XV have also played against touring sides from England, Wales and Canada.

The School, in its short history, has also provided a pathway for schoolboy representative rugby. Our players have represented the Hunter Region, NSW Country Schools, AICES, NSW Schools and Australian Schools. A number of our Junior School players have represented the Combined Independent Primary Schools at the State titles and have gone on to represent NSW Primary Schools.

For the first time in 2013, a player from the School was selected in the National Indigenous side. Lachlan Falconer-Adams played in the Australian Championships and won the Rod Macqueen Shield. HVGS players are frequently selected in ARU Junior Gold squads, Newcastle and Hunter Wildfires teams and NSW Country Juniors.

Teachers from the school have held team management positions with Hunter Region teams, AICES, NSW Country, NSW Schools and Australian Schools. Many of our alumni have played first grade in the local competition, first grade in Sydney, represented Hunter and the NSW Country Cockatoos. They have played rugby in Canada, South America, New Zealand, France and Andorra.

Over the past few years there have been major upgrades to the rugby field. New goal posts have been installed to replace the ones brought from Lorn Park 20 plus years ago. The field has had drainage installed, which allows the ground to dry very quickly after even heavy rain and be fit for play. HVGS now has advertising hoarding at local rugby grounds.

Finally, the rugby program is on a solid foundation for future success. The successes of the past and present have secured the School’s pride of place as one of the premier rugby schools in the region and our reputation is recognised across the state and by the higher echelons of Australian Schools Rugby.

Mr John Guy
Teacher in Charge of HVGS Rugby and Manager NSW 1st XV
Sevens Heaven

Year 11 and 12 2013 students Daniel Killalea, Huon Croucher, Jack Arthur, Grant Bailey, Jonathon Hope, James Bowman, Carter Redman, Tim Farmer, Henry Harman, Adon Murray, Joshua Carson, Ryan Gael and Charlie Fielder along with staff Mr Hawgood and Mr Morgan travelled to Dubai in Term 4 last year to compete in the Emirates Dubai Rugby Sevens tournament.

The group arrived two days before the start of the tournament, allowing students to take in some highlights of Dubai, including the Jumeirah Beach and Market, the Burj Khalifa, the Atlantis Aquaventure Waterpark and a sand dune safari in the desert. Students and coaches were also given a rare opportunity to interact with the Australian Mens Sevens team in a private training session.

On the first day of play, the boys came up against some strong competition. They were victorious in their first match against Moscow Region, 34-17, and finished the day with a 24-7 loss to South African powerhouse Mantella Blitz Bulle. Mantella later lost the Cup final to France 7 Development.

On the second day, the team finished third in its pool, losing 17-0 to Brussels 7 Development. The next day, the boys secured a 26-12 victory over local schoolboy side Dubai Scorpions to earn a place in the Plate Final against Llandovery College. Unfortunately, the boys were unable to match the discipline of Llandovery, who worked tirelessly to secure an impressive 40-17 win. HVGS finished fifth overall, a highly respectable result given the rugby pedigree of their competitors.

The boys wrapped up the tour with a trip to Abu Dhabi, where they visited the Grand Mosque and Ferrari World.

The students, staff and parents would like to thank the major sponsors of the tour, Bakker Homes, Hope Estate and the George Tavern, Green Hills.

Cross Country Carnival

Junior School Cross Country WATAGAN
Secondary School Cross Country BARRINGTON
Swimming and Athletics Carnivals

School Carnivals are an opportunity for students, parents and staff to bask in the HVGS house spirit. Participation is paramount at these activities with seas of red, blue, green and gold almost outshining the athletic talent. Combine these elements with sunshine, big smiles, war cries and novelty mascots and it’s easy to see why HVGS swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals are such an enjoyable day for everyone involved.
GET YOUR TEAM AND REGISTER NOW...

Our 9th Annual Golf Day is proudly sponsored by Gabes Cleaning Service www.gabes.com.au and will be held at CYPRESS LAKES RESORT HUNTER VALLEY

FRIDAY 17 OCTOBER 2014

This year the funds raised from our Golf Day will go to the HVGS Jabulani School service tour for 2015. You can read about this worthwhile HVGS initiative to the Zimbabwean school on page 15 of this magazine.

The Golf Day is always extremely popular with players and sponsors alike so we suggest registering early to ensure your involvement.

PLEASE CONTACT Susan Boyd, Communications Manager P 4931 0717 E boyds@hvgs.nsw.edu.au to register.

There are FOUR ways you might like to support the event:

1. By sponsoring a hole
2. By entering your team of 4 players
3. A donation either by cash or product to enhance our prize pool
4. On course product promotion