



# MOUNT GAMBIER HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Writing an article for the newsletter provides an opportunity for one to stop and reflect on what has occurred over the term and what is to come. Time appears to move at an ever increasing pace and often if we do not allow ourselves the time to stop and think, we can easily get caught up in the unrelenting pace of change, and overlook the many significant achievements that as a school, and as individuals we have experienced, even in a short period of time.

It has been an exciting term 1 at Mount Gambier High School, with staff and students involved in a wide range of activities and programs: Swimming and Athletics Carnivals, Twilight Tours, Governing Council AGM and Training, Outdoor Education Camps, Arts and Science excursions, a Student Free Day where our staff reviewed our Vision and Values, discussed a Teaching and Learning Agreement to ensure consistency of expectations and also reviewed our behaviour processes. These are just a very small number of wonderful initiatives that have occurred over the previous ten weeks. Thank you to our caring and professional staff who have worked very hard throughout term 1 to ensure that students have been challenged and encouraged to do their best.

### Student Forums

I have had many discussions through year level forums with students over the term and will continue to do so as the year progresses. Students provide valuable insights as to what it is like to be a learner at Mount Gambier High School and how we can further improve our environment to ensure they are fully supported. Some of the initial student sentiments include:

- No Barriers to achieving regardless of background
- Every student's ability and talent recognised and supported through flexible programs
- Outstanding teachers delivering programs that are recognised across other schools
- A school recognised for its individual student achievements
- People see Mount Gambier High School as an innovative and caring community
- A safe school
- Toilet upgrades
- Greater opportunities for student leadership
- More seating around the school
- More shelter for students
- Consistency of expectations regarding behaviour



## Upcoming Events

**Early Dismissal**  
2.15pm Thursday 6 April  
**Good Friday**  
Friday 7 April  
**Easter Monday**  
Monday 10 April  
**End of Term Early Dismissal**  
2.15pm Friday 14 April

## Term 2

**Term 2 Starts**  
Monday 1 May  
**Year 10 Immunisations**  
Tuesday 9 May

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Government of South Australia  
Department for Education

LEARNING

BELONGING

RESPONSIBILITY

## FROM THE PRINCIPAL (continued)

- Replacing carpets in classrooms as well as painting them

This has already begun to shape our thinking in relation to where we are heading as a site.

Much work has already been achieved in setting the directions for our school for the next 12 months or more, with all staff shaping our Site Improvement Plan. Parents and students too will have the opportunity to provide input into our thinking at the beginning of term 2, as well as an overarching Strategic Plan based on student and staff feedback. Our two key focus areas are:

- Developing Reading Comprehension
- Developing Numeracy

However, if our directions are to be authentic they will need to be owned by all. Research highlights the fact that the sense of community and family contributes 80% to a child's education, with schools, regardless of their geographical location or status, contributing a maximum of only 20%. These figures have always been something we have suspected, that the sense of connectedness that our students feel in their communities is vital to their educational and vocational outcomes. It is something we need to nurture and value as a school.

Schools are becoming agencies "of" their communities as opposed to agencies "for" their communities. Community links will be essential if we are to nurture and develop the social and intellectual capital that sustains and adds vibrancy to our community and we must not lose sight of that important function. This will be an ongoing challenge for us and how we draw upon our local community networks to support students, and their families. Education is different to what we experienced. Our intent however is clear, that is, to become a school recognised for its innovative teaching practices and support programs that assist all students regardless of their background, one that reflects the values and expectations of our community.

### Late Arrivals

Lately we have noticed a number of students arriving late to school. It is extremely important that students come to school regularly and on time. Being half an hour late to school each day from year 7 equals five days absence per term. This means missing over half a year of schooling by the end of year 12. Students who are late miss the organisational part of the day and tend to spend the rest of the day trying to catch up. Furthermore, often there is unnecessary pressure placed on the teacher in order to try and catch the student up on work. This can take time away from the remainder of

the class. Students arriving late to school must have a note from their parents/caregivers outlining the reason for the lateness. I ask that parents support the school by ensuring their child arrives at school on time and prepared for lessons. We will be monitoring and following up patterns of regular lateness to determine the reasons and to establish processes to support the students in order to maximise their learning.

Similarly, with attendance, a secondary student for example, who misses school on average one day per fortnight, will begin their year 12 studies having missed the equivalent of a half a year of schooling. In some cases this statistic would be worse if we take into account their primary years of schooling where it could quite conceivably be the equivalent of a year of their schooling.

### Staffing Updates

We congratulate Kerran Wingard who has taken up the position of Deputy Principal for the remainder of the year whilst Suze Ricketts is on leave. We also congratulate Abbey Duncan who will replace Kerran as Special Sports Coordinator for this time.

Richard Evans has returned to New Zealand with his family after teaching at Mount Gambier High School in Tech Studies for a number of years. We are endeavouring to replace him through normal recruitment processes, however at this stage finding a replacement Tech Teacher has proven difficult. This is unfortunately a state-wide problem, but we will continue to pursue this to the best of our abilities. In the meantime, we may be placed in a position where we will have to modify some of our programs in this learning area if we are unable to appoint a teacher. Parents and students will be notified if there are any changes we need to make.

We welcome Chelsea Whitfield as our new FLO Coordinator for the remainder of the year and Ashley Perry who will be providing classroom support.

### Twilight Tours

On Wednesday 15 March we were pleased to welcome a large number of prospective 2024 year 7 families to tour the school. Twilight Tours are a wonderful opportunity for us to showcase our teaching and learning programs, our wonderful facilities and the many opportunities that our students have at Mount Gambier High School. Thank you to our staff and students who did an exceptional job with displays, presentations, leading tours and making people feel welcome. We look forward to welcoming our new families for 2024 as we begin the Year 6 Transition Program next term.



## ABORIGINAL VETERANS SOUTH AUSTRALIA

On Friday 24 March Aboriginal Veterans SA along with the Headstone Project unveiled the previously unmarked graves of the Aboriginal WWI Veterans, John George Brett of the 48th Battalion and John James Westbury of the 5th Pioneer Battalion at the Lake Terrace Cemetery.

Mr Roulstone, Vice Captains, Cooper Sneddon and Zarly Jones along with ATSI student, Lara Munro were fortunate enough to attend the service and pay their respects by laying floral tributes on behalf of Mount Gambier High School. The two men were half-brothers and siblings of William Westbury, the only known Aboriginal veteran of the Second Boer War from South Australia.



Earlier in the week our Year 9 HASS classes attended presentations in our Performing Arts Theatre by members of the Aboriginal Veterans South Australia and current servicemen and women, learning about what service looked like in past wars. The students were fortunate to meet current serving members of the Australian Defense Force and Royal Australian Air Force, who answered questions about present day service.

The highlight of the experience was analysing a range of primary sources from previous battles, including an Australian issued child's gas mask, a German matchbox protector and Turkish coffee grinder from the trenches of WWI. Students also learnt what was and currently is still included in ration packs and could observe and ask questions about a range of medals on display.

We would like to extend our thanks to the volunteers from Aboriginal Veterans SA and the Defence Force for their time, it was an honor to be a small part of their on-going work and service.

Natalie Piscioneri | HASS Coordinator





## SCHOLARSHIP SUCCESS

Mount Gambier High School would like to congratulate 2022 alumni, Hayden Crowe on recently securing two scholarships to assist with his university studies this year.

Hayden was awarded a \$2,000 Stand Like Stone Scholarship from the Mount Gambier High School sub-fund, along with a University of Adelaide Principal's Scholarship worth \$5,000. These scholarships will help with accommodation expenses at St Mark's College and study costs associated with his Bachelor of Health and Medical Sciences (Advanced) degree.

Amanda Lengyel | Public Relations Officer



## YEAR 8 SCIENCE EXCURSION

During week 7 the 8.1 Homegroup went on a class excursion to watch the volcano movie and have a tour around Engelbrecht Cave. The volcano movie was a great educational film about the dreamtime stories that local Aboriginal families have passed down through generations, explaining how the Mount Gambier craters and lakes were formed. Local Hydrogeologist and cave diver, Ian Lewis gave a talk about the caves in our area and also explained about how his work helps to ensure Mount Gambier's water remains clean and in good supply. He then accompanied the class to Engelbrecht Cave where they ventured down into the cave for a personal tour. All the students loved this amazing experience, especially enjoying a visit to KFC for lunch.

Georgia Stasiw | Year 8 Student



## ART CRAWL PREPARATION

Year 10 Visual Art and FLO students have begun working on their artwork for the Mount Gambier High School 2023 Art Crawl, to be held in May. As part of the Entrepreneurial Specialist School and Visual Arts program, students will plan, develop, create and exhibit their artwork, which will be for sale during the event.

Recently students visited the locations that they will be exhibiting their work at to gather information about the business and to help support their decision making for their artwork design. Students also gathered information about how to hang artworks and how to display them in these locations to support the businesses. Students visited Bricks and Mortar, Little Blue Wren, Confessions, Metro, Copenhagen, Kaboom, Treehouse Adventure Centre, Public Library, RSL and Natural Born Grillers. The students were very motivated to see the locations to decide what place would match their art style.

Rebecca Johnson | Art Teacher



## MOUNT GAMBIER HIGH SCHOOL *Uniform Donations*

We always appreciate the donation of second hand MGHS uniforms to help stock our Student Office supplies and support disadvantaged students.

## EARLY DISMISSAL *Easter & End of Term*

Please be advised that Governing Council have approved an early dismissal of 2.15pm on Thursday 6 April (Easter). All Department and City Bus services will run at the early time.

End of Term Early Dismissal  
2.15pm 14 April





# Harmony Day

As part of Harmony Day celebrations, our SRC approached a number of our staff and students to help recognise and acknowledge the various cultural backgrounds that we all come from.





## MATERIALS & SERVICES CHARGES

In establishing the fees for 2023 both the Finance Advisory Committee and Governing Council are sensitive to the fact that some families may require assistance in meeting this commitment and therefore we are once again offering an instalment plan together with a variety of payment options.

### Payment Due Dates

Final Instalment                      Friday 14 April 2023                      \$120.00

### Payment Methods

Payment of the above fees can be made using one of the following options:

- Online (BPoint) - Information on how to pay online via the school's website
- Qkr! - Information on how to download and register on the Qkr! app is available from [www.mghs.sa.edu.au](http://www.mghs.sa.edu.au).
- Direct Credit - Payments can be made to the Mount Gambier High School bank account: BSB 065-504, Account Number 10392015 (please ensure you include your family code in the payment reference).
- By Post - Cheque or credit card payment accepted by completing the details at the bottom of the invoice and posting to Brownes Road, Mount Gambier SA 5290.
- In Person - Cash, cheque or credit card payment accepted at the Student Office

Should you require alternative payment arrangements, please contact the Finance Manager or Business Manager on 8721 0200 to discuss.

### 2023 School Card Scheme

School Card offers assistance with school fees (materials and services) to eligible families. For further information, to check your eligibility or apply online, please visit the SA Gov website ([www.sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard](http://www.sa.gov.au/education/schoolcard)). Alternatively please visit the Student Office for assistance (please bring your Health Care Card with you).

Please note: A School Card Form is required to be completed for each family, each year, regardless of the previous year's status. If a form has been completed at a primary school for younger students, a form is also required to be completed at Mount Gambier High School for secondary students.

Belinda Roughana | Finance Officer

## AFL GATHER ROUND COMMUNITY FOOTY ROADSHOW

Mount Gambier High School had prestigious silverware on display recently with a visit from the AFL Gather Round Community Footy Roadshow.

Brad Humphrey, SANFL Head of Game Development and Heath Sims, SANFL Game Development Coordinator for the South East placed the four trophies (Men's and Women's 2023 AFL and SANFL Premiership Cups) on white pedestals for display in our gym. Students from our Netball and Football programs were able to take a close look at the trophies and even hold them up for a photo.

Amanda Lengyel | Public Relations



## STAGE 2 OUTDOOR EDUCATION SNORKELING CAMPS

The two Stage 2 Outdoor Education Classes attended their snorkeling camp back in March. Students camped at 8-Mile Creek campsite and snorkeled at Posties Beach. They made the most of the opportunity enjoying viewing various wildlife in this environment as they explored the reef and ecosystem. Venturing to Ewen's ponds the groups snorkeled through the three ponds and channels to experience the ecosystem of the wetlands environment. It was great to see how some students overcome their fear of the water/snorkeling to be able to enjoy this experience.

A tour through the Port MacDonnell area allowed the students to view the constructive and destructive process that occur on the coastal environment before visiting Cape Northumberland and the old lighthouse to enjoy the sunset in this natural environment.

Unfortunately, due to an algae bloom, students were unable to snorkel at Piccaninnie ponds, however the students still enjoyed the ecosystems walk through the wetlands and beach walk where they experienced the natural springs. They participated in a beach clean up walk and were surprised to see how much litter was scattered over only a small section of the beach.

Despite poor weather the students still enjoyed comparing the Little Blue Lake to the other snorkeling sites and compared the water temperature and water clarity to the previous environments. On returning the 8-mile creek the students enjoyed a walk to bird viewing platform and discovery of the native birds at this ecosystem. Some students engaged in another beach clean-up walk to compare the impact of humans on this more popular fishing environment to the Piccanninie Ponds.

The final snorkel for this camp was a night snorkel at Ewen's ponds. All the students were excited to participate in this experience despite the poor weather, they enjoyed slipping into the ponds as the sun was setting and exploring the ponds in the dark, which heightened their experience.

On the third and final day of camp the students packed up their camp site, completed a clean-up around the camp site and then walked from Woolwash to Port MacDonnell before enjoying brunch and returning to school. It was awesome to see how the students showed leadership and initiative during this camp which is preparing them towards their self-reliant camp later in the year.

A close encounter and stand off with a Tiger Snake, which wouldn't let Mrs Wingard's class walk through the path, also made for an interesting trip.

Jacinta Clark and Connor Wingard | Outdoor Education Teachers





## SENIOR ART CAMP

Last week students from Stage 2 Drama, Digicom, Design and Visual Art travelled to Adelaide for various activities. To begin the trip students went to the SACE Art Show to see previous students' works, wandering the gallery and gathering inspiration for their next artwork or design, whilst seeing the high standard of folios and presentation methods. They also had the chance to vote on their favourite artwork which was tough to decide!

Exploring the city gave students the experience to see a range of different street art leading into our second activity, a visit to the Morphett Street Graffiti Wall, where it is legal to spray paint. The students enjoyed gathering real life experience and knowledge about street art, whilst spray painting inspirational quotes and artworks to support their visual study task. Day one's final activity was visiting the Art Gallery of South Australia to experience an Andy Warhol workshop. They actively listened to an expert talk about Andy Warhol and his impact on the art world, then created their own "Warhol" inspired artwork, carving a facial feature on easy carve line to create a stamp to be printed on silver paper.

Day one begun with an interactive AR (augmented reality) exhibit in the Botanic Gardens called 'Seeing the Invisible'. Students located various spots around the Botanic Gardens where you could scan the ground on your phone to reveal AR interactive artworks. Lastly students visited MOD to see 'Flex', an exhibit on robotic controlled limbs, as well as a range of interactive exhibits showing how research and art can be combined. The group enjoyed seeing how our minds can be tricked into feeling and seeing what planets and earth look like in various forms, AI's interpretation of us in artwork and an exhibit on ethics. The camp was a valuable experience with the students soaking in everything they saw, inspiring them to create!

Rebecca Johnson | Visual Art Teacher







# INTERSCHOOL ATHLETICS

