



# MOUNT GAMBIER HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3 | 5 APRIL 2024

e. dl.0784.info@schools.sa.edu.au  
a. Brownes Road, Mount Gambier  
p. (08) 8721 0200  
w. mghs.sa.edu.au



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## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

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 first meeting, Outdoor Education Camps, Arts and HASS excursions and a Student Free Day where our staff worked through differentiated practice, and how to write effective learning intentions and success criteria. 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.

### Twilight Tours

On Monday 18 March we were pleased to welcome a very large number of prospective 2025 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 2025 as we begin the Year 6 Transition Program next term.

Given the large number of parents and children that were in attendance I am providing families with an additional opportunity to meet with myself and our Deputy Principal, Kerran Wingard in a smaller group setting. This will be a great opportunity to hear more about the school's direction that we are embarking on and the pathways we can offer students as they progress into Senior Years and beyond. The majority of this time however, will be dedicated to answering any questions parents/caregivers and students may have that you did not get the chance to ask at the tours.

These sessions will be occurring on:

- Wednesday 8 May, 5.30pm–6.30pm
- Thursday 9 May, 5.30pm–6.30pm

Whilst I have scheduled an hour for these, it is flexible, and I am more than willing to stay as long as is required to ensure all questions are answered. A personal invitation has been sent out to all parents who registered to attend the Twilight Tours. Invitations have also been sent to feeder primary schools for those families who were not able to attend the tours but would still like to learn more about our school.

### 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. Students who are late miss the organisational part of the day and tend to spend the rest of the day trying



## Upcoming Events

**Governing Council Meeting**  
6pm Monday 8 April  
**End of Term Early Dismissal**  
2.15pm Friday 12 April

## Term 2

**Start of Term 2**  
Monday 29 April  
**Parent/Teacher Interviews**  
3.30–7pm Tuesday 7 May  
**Year 6 Principal Sessions**  
5.30pm Wednesday 8 May  
5.30pm Thursday 9 May

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Government of South Australia  
Department for Education

LEARNING

BELONGING

RESPONSIBILITY

## From the Principal continued...

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.

### Leadership Appointments

Congratulations to the following staff who have been appointed to the following leadership positions:

B2 Senior Leader - Eng/HASS/Lote: Nikki Cook

B1 Technologies: Chris Jordan

### Student Forums

I have had many discussions 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
- Replacing carpets in classrooms as well as painting them.

We will be conducting further student forums this year to solicit student views on how they believe we have improved over the past 12 months and areas we need to further develop.

Whilst such forums are extremely valuable and will serve to value add to our site's directions, we will not be changing our unrelenting focus on improving in the following focus areas:

- 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.

## PHONE NUMBER *Update*

We have found a number of families are still trying to contact the school via our old landline number. Please note that this number is no longer current. When contacting the school via phone, please call 8721 0200.

## END OF TERM *Early Dismissal*

Students will be dismissed at 2.15pm on Friday 12 April for the end of term. Term 2 will begin on Monday 29 April. We wish all of our students and families a lovely holiday break.

## INTERSCHOOL ATHLETICS

On Wednesday 20 March our Athletics team gathered at Marist Park to compete against other local high schools in the 2024 Interschool Athletics. 63 students represented our school with a large number successful in winning more than one event on the day. We also managed to win two relays (Under 16 Boys and Open Boys).

Overall we finished 4th. Of the 124 events, our students placed in the top 3 in 46 events with the team collecting 14 first places, 14 seconds and 18 thirds. Each and everyone of the students who attended and represented our school on the day must be congratulated for their effort, commitment and attitude not only on the day, but in the lead up as well.

Abbey Duncan | Special Sports Coordinator



## RURAL YOUTH AMBASSADORS

Congratulations to Anna Anbu and Caitlin Hitchon for being selected in the South Australian Statewide Rural Youth Ambassadors program for 2024.

South Australia's Rural Youth Ambassadors (RYA) program offers year 11 students the opportunity to develop their leadership and youth agency skills, grow knowledge and provide a voice for young people from country communities.

Over the course of a year the program offers student ambassadors the opportunity to:

- collaborate and connect with other passionate and diverse country students
- attend funded in-person forums in Adelaide
- work remotely with fellow ambassadors on addressing issues important to South Australian country students and young people
- meet with senior education stakeholders such as the Chief Executive, Department for Education, the Minister for Education, Training and Skills, and the Department's Country Education Reference Group to discuss their challenges and ideas
- present at education workshops, forums and conferences.

We wish them well as they progress through this valuable program.

Kym Grant | Principal



## STUDENT OFFICE REMINDERS

Please see below a few reminders for parent/caregivers from our Student Office staff.

### Student Attendance

Please ensure that the Student Office is notified of student absences or early sign outs. Whilst it is fantastic parents/caregivers are advising teachers of this, the Student Office are required to record these absences and early sign out permissions. We appreciate those of you who are calling or notifying the school in advance, as this helps to keep the Student Office a calm and inviting space.

### Last Minute Student Collections

There has been an influx of parent/caregiver requests to organise students leaving school within a 10 minute time frame. Whilst we can understand late notice in emergency situations, please be aware that last minute requests to have students removed from class for early collection is not always possible. Please be mindful when organising early collection of your child to advise the Student Office at the beginning of the day via phone, SMS or email.

### COVID Reporting

COVID-19 cases are still required to be reported to the department. If your child tests positive to COVID-19 please advise the school at your earliest convenience. Students are required to remain at home for a period of five days following a positive COVID-19 test.

### Qkr!

The Qkr! app is available on both Apple and Android devices to pay for school fees, gain access to excursion paperwork and order from our canteen. Canteen orders can be made through Qkr! up to seven days in advance.

This app is a convenient way for parent/caregivers to make school payments without the need to send cash with your child to school. Please contact the Student Office if you have any questions or issues with Qkr!

## LOST AND FOUND *Student Office*

There have been many lost items returned to the Student Office throughout the term. If your child has a lost item, please ask them to check in with the Student Office. All items that have not been claimed at the end of each term will be donated.

## EASTER ACTIVITIES



## STUDENTS CATER FOR SAPSASA

The Stage 1 and 2 Food and Hospitality students have been busy over the last two weeks preparing, packaging and labelling a variety of food products to be sold at our annual hosting of SAPSASA Athletics on Friday 22 March.

The task required students to identify a range of products that could be sold in either the pop up canteen on the oval or be sold to Mount Gambier High School staff on the day. They had to cost all food products, investigate how they needed to be labelled - as per Food Safety Standards and then work out which type of sustainable packaging could be used. The Stage 1 students also operated a coffee shop on the day selling coffees, tea and a variety of milkshakes.

The event was an excellent fundraiser for HPE and enabled students to participate in a real-life activity. We were very proud of their products and how well they were organised. Food items included Vietnamese Bahn Mi rolls, Spaghetti Bolognaise, Mini Pizzas, Sausage Rolls as well as Cake Pops, slices and biscuits. Well done to the HPE staff and student team for making this event such a success.

Jan Longbottom | HPE Coordinator



## VET NEWS

Our year 10 students were privileged to engage in an enlightening Forestry forum, that delved into various facets of the forestry industry including:

- Exploration of pathway opportunities spanning all four sectors, encompassing both tertiary and vocational education.
- Examination of the evolving landscape of technology within the industry, notably the rise of automation and advancements in process control.
- Insight into the diverse array of trades within forestry, extending beyond conventional mill trades to encompass vocational pathways in horticulture and biology.

The forum featured a panel of esteemed professionals representing different sectors, sharing valuable information on their respective roles, skills, qualifications, and annual income, underscoring the viability of forestry as a promising career option:

- Grace Tse - Graduate Forester at TPPL
- Stephen Bartholomew - Production Manager at Borg
- Adrian Flowers - General Manager at Tabeel Trading
- Jocelyn Patzel - HR Graduate at One Forty One
- Lachie McGregor - Project Mechanical Engineer at Timberlink

Many students have already expressed interest in pursuing forestry as a potential work experience opportunity.

Thank you to Josh Praolini, Workforce Development Manager for Green Triangle Forest Industries Hub, Tania Plunkett, Industry Engagement | Student Pathways and Careers, and all the presenters for their invaluable contributions to the forum.

Eluisa Crispino | Vocational Pathways Coordinator



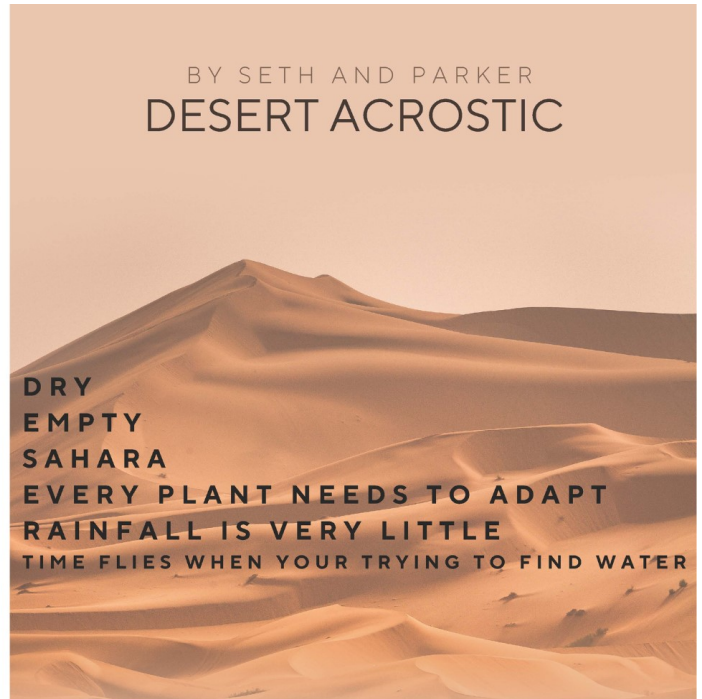
## GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ACROSS THE TERM

As part of their Global Perspectives studies this term the year 8 students have been learning about landscapes and landforms. They have learned about global landscapes, where these occur and how various landforms are made within them.

In groups, students created dioramas showcasing their understandings. Using their literacy and poetry skills they have also created different examples of poetry about landscapes, including acrostics, haikus and limericks.

In week 8 students were also fortunate enough to undertake a field report excursion to the Naracoorte Caves to observe the karst landscape. The group participated in a walking tour of the Alexandra Cave to observe some of the formations including straws, stalactites and stalagmites, pillars and columns. They also learnt about how caves are dated and formed, what fossils have been found in the caves and how this area gained its World Heritage listing. Students then challenged themselves through an introduction to Adventure Caving in the Stick-Tomato Cave or the Blackberry Cave, crawling and squeezing through challenges such as the keyhole and horseshoe.

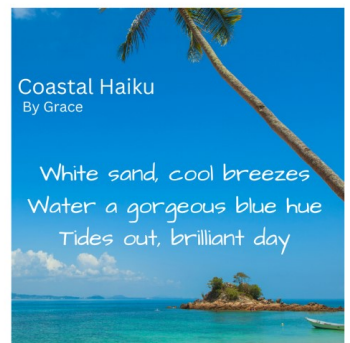
Laurent Bope, Carla Mottillo, Natalie Piscioneri and Isabelle Sneath | Global Perspective Teachers



By Jenna

Calm waves  
Orange sky lights up the ocean.  
Australia has very popular costal landscapes  
Soft sand on your feet.  
Tropical fish brighten up the cold ocean.  
Animals spread the ocean.  
Lots of people enjoying the warm sun and  
the refreshing water.

*Coastal Acrostic*





Specific Learning  
Difficulties SA



## FREE Parent Workshop

Understanding reading difficulties - Why some children struggle and how to help

- Develop an understanding of reading difficulties, including dyslexia
- Develop a practical understanding of the associated characteristics and difficulties
- Explore ways to support your child

This 2 hour workshop is a great first step to gaining a better understanding of reading difficulties and practical strategies that can help your child.

**Monday 8 of April 2024, 5:30pm - 7:30pm**



**Mount Gambier Library**



**BOOK ONLINE at:**  
[speldsa.org.au/regional-parent-workshops](https://speldsa.org.au/regional-parent-workshops)

Thank you to the Department for Education for supporting this initiative.

**"The camp was amazing. Everyone will enjoy this camp, no matter what."**



## ANGLICARESA

Star Bear Program  
82 Gilbert St  
Adelaide SA 5000  
Phone 8131 3400  
starbear@anglicaresa.com.au  
www.anglicaresa.com.au



21-0106 / 3.8.2022

**ANGLICARESA**

## Star Bear

A grief-support program for children



**Together we change lives.**

### Our Star Bear Program

Established in 1999 and operated by the AnglicareSA team since 2002, our Star Bear program looks to increase children's understanding of death and the grieving process.

We believe that it's okay to cry, but it's also okay to have fun and laugh.

And that's why our program of loss and grief support is all about you, sharing your experiences with other children in similar situations – and listening to theirs – in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment.

As one young person told us:

**"I knew I wasn't the only one that lost a parent, but I hadn't met anyone else who had, not before camp."**

### Loss and grief support

Our Star Bear program provides a range of services and activities for both children and their parents, among them:

#### Grief camps

We offer a selection of free weekend camps for children, young people and their families grieving the death of a parent, sibling or other significant person.

The camps are led by qualified and experienced grief counsellors and supported by trained volunteer mentors.

Before each camp, we host a get-together to give participants a chance to meet and get to know a little about each other.

Camp participants can access short term counselling prior to and following the camp.

We offer two camps:

- the children's camp provides grief support to those aged from six to 13 years
- the family camp caters for families with children and young people aged from four to 17 years and who have lost a close family member.

### How to register

To find out more about our Star Bear program and camps, please call our team on 8131 3400.

You can also reach us via email at [starbear@anglicaresa.com.au](mailto:starbear@anglicaresa.com.au) or by visiting our [www.anglicaresa.com.au](http://www.anglicaresa.com.au) website.



# THE AMAZING RACE MOUNT GAMBIER

**RACE DAY** | **FRIDAY 19 APRIL**

**RACE TIME** | **1.00PM - 3.00PM**

**START LINE** | **VANSITTART PARK**

**FINISH LINE** | **FREW PARK**

**RACE INFORMATION & REGISTRATION FORM  
BY SCANNING QR CODE BELOW**

## **PIT STOPS, CLUES & CHALLENGES**

**PRIZES FOR FASTEST TEAM IN AGE GROUP &**

**HEADSPACE SPIRIT AWARD**

**REGISTER AS AN INDIVIDUAL TO BE PLACED IN A TEAM**

**OR REGISTER A TEAM OF UP TO 4.**



**FREE EVENT  
FOR 12-25  
YEAR OLDS**