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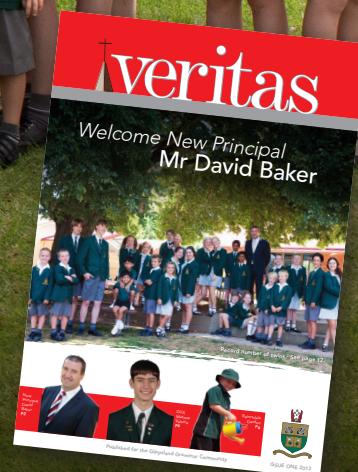


ISSUE ONE, 2020



Farewell Principal Baker

AS PRINCIPAL DAVID BAKER SAYS GOODBYE TO GIPPSLAND GRAMMAR, HE RE-CREATED A PHOTO FROM 2013 WITH ALL THE TWINS ENROLLED AT THE SCHOOL



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Cover image: Picture by Geoff Parrington
Inset: the 2013 edition of *Veritas*.

Buy school photos:

To purchase photos from many Gippsland Grammar events, please email school photographer Lisa Baker on lisa.baker@gippslandgs.vic.edu.au or visit lbphotos.com.au to view the online albums.

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From The Principal ~ ~ ~ ~ ~



DURING the past seven years I have come to know what it means to belong to a community, in a manner that I have not known before.

In 2013, my family and I moved into the unknown: a new school, a new area and a regional experience that was completely unfamiliar. To say that we were anxious would be an understatement. What we discovered was a wonderful, supportive, committed and positive community which was both welcoming and hospitable. Both of my daughters quickly found their place in the School and both will

graduate from Gippsland Grammar as proud and connected Old Scholars. My wife Jane was also quickly embraced by the Gippsland Grammar and the broader community getting involved in various sporting organisations and also began teaching at the School. I felt immediately accepted by the School Community, my colleagues and, similarly, I have been fortunate to engage with many people outside of the School and have enjoyed positive relationships with great people across Gippsland.

Coming to Gippsland Grammar has opened my

eyes to the wonderful benefits that come from living and working in regional Australia such as being able to walk down the street and know that you will chat with many and to know you will be working and living with down-to-earth country people, who are sensible, supportive and friendly. While I have many great memories of my time in Gippsland and have made many great friends, to belong and feel connected has been the greatest joy I have experienced.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all members of our Community for their support, their tolerance when things don't go well, their humour, their respect and, ultimately, their acceptance. It has been an absolute pleasure to watch our School grow during the past seven years, both in numbers but also in size and stature. It is a very proud school that punches above its weight in many areas and arenas. I have gained great

Twinning

joy and pride from watching our students perform, compete, debate, play and row, which they always do so with a sense of pride and also sportsmanship. They consider their opponents and usually act in a hospitable and respectful manner. To stand in the yard and have students come up and chat, tell me about their weekends, their successes, their triumphs, their struggles and their challenges has been a highlight of my time at the School and a testament to the culture of the School and families our students come from. Ultimately the Gippsland Grammar community produces people of good character who go out into the world and take their place as leaders in society.

I wish the School and its Community well for the future and I know it will continue to shine as a School of opportunity and excellence and continue to serve the greater Gippsland region.

Veritas Liberabit Vos

In 2013 during Principal David Baker's first year at the School, there was a record number of 14 sets of twins enrolled, who all posed with Mr Baker for the cover of his first edition of *Veritas*. As Mr Baker prepares to say goodbye to Gippsland Grammar, he took the opportunity to re-create the photo with the 14 sets of twins enrolled in 2020, which includes six sets of twins who were featured in the original photo.

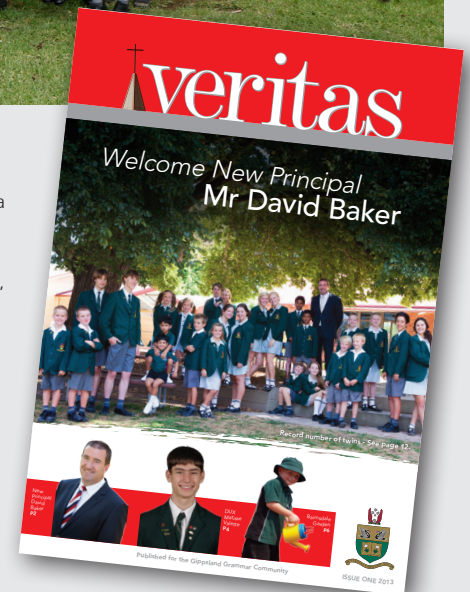


Photo top : front (l-r): Jack Sands, Ella Sands, Ashane Fernando, Taryn Grubb, Bridget Stanisich, Max Glover-Hill, Declan Glover-Hill, Jemka Bektas, Edin Bektas.

Middle: Evie McMillan-Gross, Finn McMillan-Gross, Joanna Board, Jess Board (absent), Rory McLeod, Hamish McLeod (absent), Shevan Fernando, Fergus Grubb, Tom Stanisich, Laird McRae, Burke McRae, Isobel Clyne, Olivia Clyne.

Back: Ari Wight, Chloe Wight, Mr David Baker, Rhys Harper, Phoebe Harper, Jade Halket, Ella Halket.

Photo right: (l-r) Hamish and Rory McLeod (Year 3), James and Mike Horner (Year 12), Shevan and Ashane Fernando (ELC), Jessica and Joanna Board (Year 2), Fergus and Taryn Grubb (Year 4), Lachlan and Miranda Shepherd (Year 9), Haylee and Tiana Kyle (Year 10), Elsa and Grace Bramwell (Year 11), Vidura and Sahas Wijesekara (Year 7), Zane and Imogen Williams (Year 3), Mr David Baker (Principal), Laird and Burke McRae (Year 3), Jade and Ella Halket (Year 5), Alex and Scarlett Clemens (Year 9). Absent: Harrison and Tyler Page (Year 6) of Bairndale Campus.



Seven years at Gippsland Grammar

A reflection on Mr Baker's time as Principal

Words | Zoe Curtis



Mr Baker takes a break along the ridge line of Mt Wellington during a walk around Lake Tali Karng in 2017.

THE simplest way to give a snapshot of one's time in a position of leadership is to do so by numbers. For outgoing Gippsland Grammar Principal David Baker this easily translates to seven years as Principal, more than 2300 students who have studied at the School during his reign, almost 600 assemblies and Fellowships, 60 staff meetings and, er, two wins as coach of the senior boys' football team. But Mr Baker concedes the number that means the most to him is the smallest one of all: 1km.

"Each year our Year 9 students do a walk around Lake Tali Karng," Mr Baker explains. "I've been on the camp a couple of times and you've got to lug a 20kg pack up the Valley of Destruction. To be walking with kids while you do that and seeing them struggle with it just as much as you are, it bonds you together.

"On the last day we walk about 8km from the campsite to McFarlane Saddle. (Outdoor Education teacher) Cass (Booth) goes ahead and sets up a big pot at the finish line to cook the kids a meal when they arrive. But I hang back and try to walk about 1km with each student, one-on-one, and just chat to them as we're going along. I use the time to give them some feedback about the things I've noticed they are good at and to encourage them a little bit. You talk to them about their dreams, what they want to do in life. So kids I might never have connected with at the School were able to disclose what they were really passionate about. To this day I

still catch them in the yard and talk to them about these things."

Does Mr Baker think the moment was as memorable for the students as it was for him?

"Nah, probably not," he laughs. "They probably wouldn't remember it, or didn't even know I was doing it. But that will be a defining memory for me."

The end of Term 1, 2020 marks the end of Mr Baker's seven years as Principal of Gippsland's oldest independent school as he embarks on his next challenge as Principal of Woodleigh School on the Mornington Peninsula.

While Mr Baker is excited about what lies ahead, it's clear he's also melancholy about leaving the community where he and wife Jane and their two children - Caitlin (Class of 2017) and current Year 12 student, Amy - made their home and where he has made lifelong friends.

Under his watch, Gippsland Grammar has grown to a School of more than 1000 students with waitlists for enrolment in many year levels. The Garnsey Campus now boasts the Laurie Payne Sports Centre, the St Anne's Campus now features the Kukun Kalak building for the Years 3 and 4 students and ELC students at the Bairnsdale Campus now enjoy playing in Caitlyn's Garden, a tribute to Old Scholar Caitlyn Fisher who was tragically killed in an equestrian accident in 2016. In the rowing shed

there's even a coxed quad scull boat named after the Baker family as a tribute to Mr Baker's hands-on interest in the School's Rowing program and Jane Baker's significant contribution to the McColl Club.

But Mr Baker's legacy extends well beyond these physical additions. In 2016 Mr Baker completed a course at Harvard University in the US, which he says helped him understand the importance of extending a learning program beyond the academic to also develop students who are critical thinkers and problem solvers. "That tied in everything we did at the School and it drove our last Strategic Plan," Mr Baker said. "Academic Care has been my biggest achievement. It's about the academic program and the pastoral program working side by side with the wellbeing of the students

integrated into everything we do."

It's perhaps fitting that while Mr Baker has always encouraged students to step outside their comfort zones, some of his standout memories from his time at Gippsland Grammar are from when he was forced to do just that himself. Such as the two occasions when he's played guitar at end of year assemblies ("It was terrifying") and, most notably, in 2015 when he stood in front of a traditional dancing gospel choir in Rwanda and performed a solo in front of 500 Sunday parishioners.

"It was a train crash," he laughs. "And of course, when the choir is singing they're all dancing with this beautiful natural movement and I'm like Travis Cloke on *Dancing with the Stars*. But I loved it, it was so much fun."

"David has had a significant impact on me as an educator and as a friend. Right from his first day, David encouraged and supported me to take the 'next step' in my leadership progression and he has been my mentor, leadership coach and, at times, the person who has had to have challenging conversations with me. He has done all of this with compassion and respect."

Jie Van Berkel

Head of St Anne's Campus

"The Bairnsdale community acknowledge David's personal commitment to our campus and are most grateful for his generous presence at our fellowships and special events. As Head of Campus at Bairnsdale I have been blessed with his leadership, his support and his friendship."

Virginia Evans

Head of Bairnsdale Campus



Mr Baker with student Irving Mosquito (Class of 2019).



Mr Baker plays guitar at an end of year assembly.

Another extension of Mr Baker's comfort zone occurred in 2017 when he and Reverend Rich Lanham visited Halls Creek in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia to connect with the families of Gippsland Grammar students Irving Mosquito (Class of 2019) and current Year 12 student Junior Bradshaw.

"That was life changing because I had never been to an Aboriginal community before," Mr Baker reflects. "And to see the challenges they face but also to see some of the things that are good as well, was incredibly memorable.

"Both of our kids (at School) who come from that community are thriving. Irv (via his guardian Sharne Beesley) wrote me a beautiful letter last year telling me how coming here changed his life."

While there have been countless instances of success and happiness that have made their mark, Mr Baker said his time here has equally been marked by times of tragedy.

"I'll never forget the three kids who died: Griffin (Vollemaere), Jake (Adams) and Caitlyn (Fischer)," Mr Baker said. "It was gut wrenching. And still is."

As Mr Baker prepares for his final fellowships and assemblies, one theme that shines through in his reflections is the connection Mr Baker has formed with both the staff and students.

"The teachers and support staff at Gippsland Grammar are among the best I have worked with," he said. "They are professional, dedicated, first-class at their work and good fun to work with. I greatly appreciate the professional relationships I have developed and the opportunities I've had to work alongside great people.

"I have always been grateful for the supportive, honest and kind leadership he has shown to me over the past seven years. This has always been a fine School, batting above our weight in the education world and under David's leadership Gippsland Grammar has grown and developed our reputation and most importantly the whole educational experience for the students who have been his focus and also greatest achievement."

Jan Henry

*Deputy Principal
Head of Garnesey Campus*



David Baker at a school in Rwanda in 2015.

"From a discussion about the state of the lawns through to developing a better understanding of Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle, it has been an absolute pleasure. In particular, we have an amazing Executive team at our School who lead with diligence, passion and an overarching desire to always place students and student learning at the centre of everything we do. As leaders, they challenge each other, support each other and bring an enormous amount of expertise to the table.

"I often hear the phrase that Gippsland Grammar bats above its weight. It

does this because of the amazing people who work at our School."

"As for the students, wow, all our families should be proud of the character of the kids coming through our School," he said. "They are good kids. They are down to earth, they are balanced. And they are really genuine and if someone isn't, they get called out by the others. If I go and stand in the quadrangle, five students will come and talk to me without me prompting them to. And that is different to other schools. The kids here are really friendly. Really good."

And Mr Baker's final message to the Gippsland Grammar Community?

I'd really like to thank our Community for their support," he said. "Our parents and our families are amazing and I've always felt overwhelmingly supported by all of them.

"Even though I'm leaving the School, I don't feel like I'm walking away from the Community. We will keep our holiday house on the Ninety Mile Beach, we have family here and now we also have lots of friends here."



Caitlyn's brother Kristofer Fischer, Caitlyn's parents Mark Fischer and Ailsa Carr, Principal David Baker and Bairnsdale Head of Campus Virginia Evans.

"In 2016 we experienced every parent's worst nightmare when our daughter Caitlyn died in an accident. At that time David provided us with the most incredible support and helped us feel part of a School Community that cared for our family and wanted to be part of remembering Caitlyn. We believe David's new school has not only recruited a strong academic leader but one who knows the importance of an inclusive School Community and how to lead with compassion. We wish David all the best in his new venture and genuinely thank him for all he has done for us, Caitlyn and our family."

Ailsa Carr and Mark Fischer

Parents of Old Scholar Caitlyn Fischer
(Class of 2015)

Swimming - ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Age champions at the Garnsey Swimming Carnival: back (l-r) Shauna Anderson, Hannah Shephard, Katie Kerby, Connor McAuliffe, Arki Vardi and Will McKinnon. Front : Hamish Anderson, Cohen Frith, Grace Ng, Scarlet Tavaski, Jasmine McAuliffe and Teddy Ripper.



Garnsey House winners Sam Dunnett and Ruby Luckie. (Blue House Cranswick Dargo)



St Anne's Swimming Carnival u-10 freestyle relay winners: Aurora Talbot, Ellie Brown, Lucy Dray and Ava Schuback.



Bairnsdale's House Swimming Carnival u-10 freestyle winners: Heidi McInnes, Mrs Fiona Carr, Chelsea Rawlings, Tess Newstead, Mrs Virginia Evans, Taylor Dennett and Lacey Scott.

Leadership - ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ ~



Garnsey Prefects, School Captains and Vice Captains: Front (l-r) Captains Sam Dunnett and Ellen O'Brien, vice captains Emma Murphy and Lachlan Rose Middle: Ella Johnson, James Lancaster, Aiden Lowe, Jarrod Ingle, Hannah Husodo Back: Ebony Lee, Lachlan Hicks, Tilly Gunther, Genevieve Piercy with Principal David Baker.



St Anne's Campus Captains Jonah Brown and Gracie Millington.



St Anne's House Leaders: (l-r) Olivia Covino, Hayden Hughes, Hayley Lamb, Molly Dettbarn, Gus Rich, Jessica Carroll, Anna Tayler, Ewan Logan.



Bairnsdale Year 6 class and Campus leaders: standing (l-r) Sorrel Fraser, teacher Mr Todd Cook, Joshua Newstead, Joel Rawlings, Adam Thayer, Delara Golestanpour, Xander Borisenko, Hudson Ray-Daminato, Alby Fry, Paul Ng, Chidi Otuonye, Pearl Miguel, Jacob Veldhuizen, Isla Dullard, Saxon Buckley, Head of Bairnsdale Campus Mrs Virginia Evans. Seated Ashleigh Corpe, Emily Allouet, Asha Jankowiak, Eadie Heath, Charlotte Klingner.

2019 VCE Results ~ ~ ~ ~ ~



In what has become an annual Gippsland Grammar tradition, the class of 2019 gathers in the quadrangle as the final bell rings on their final day of school.

Gippsland Grammar was thrilled to celebrate another outstanding year of VCE results with its class of 2019 among some of Victoria's highest achieving Year 12 students.

An amazing 20 per cent of the School's Year 12 students achieved an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) above 90, which placed them in the top 10 per cent of students in the State. And 43 per cent of students achieved an ATAR above 80 per cent, placing them in the top 20 per cent.

Gippsland Grammar's Dux for 2019 was Ben Harms with an ATAR of 99.55 and Year 11 student Hannah Husodo also achieved a perfect study score of 50 for Biology.

Students joining Ben Harms as the School's highest VCE achievers were Tom Finlay (Sale) with an ATAR of 98.4; Maya Pigot (Sale) with an ATAR

of 98.15; Cameron Mekken (Orbost) with an ATAR of 97.65, Kali Irvine-Nagle (Devon North) with an ATAR of 96.2; Will Johnson (Sale) with an ATAR of 95.1; Grace Mackie (Lakes Entrance) with an ATAR of 95.1 and Max Luckie (Traralgon) with an ATAR of 95.05.

Principal David Baker said the entire School Community was thrilled to be celebrating the VCE success of its students.

"We've had yet another year of outstanding results," Mr Baker said. "This represents a great result for all of our students and also for our wonderful teachers who work tirelessly with our students across all year levels. A Gippsland Grammar education is so much more than an ATAR and, for me, the true reflection of success is clearly demonstrated

within the character of all of our students."

Mr Baker made particular note of the 11 students from the cohort who secured apprenticeships through the School's VCAL program. "We are incredibly proud that the VCAL program helped so many of our students find their way into their chosen profession," Mr Baker said.

Gippsland Grammar's 2019 Year 12 cohort included 88 students from across Gippsland, the Latrobe Valley and far East Gippsland. The cohort also included five students from Ivanhoe Grammar Shanghai and of the 88 students, 24 were boarders at the School's Blackwood House.

Community Connections

Vale

Gippsland Grammar has learnt of the following deaths in our community. We extend our sympathy to their family and friends.

- **Lauren Anderson** (Class of 1993)

- **Mildred (Millie) Laphorne** (1942)

- **Evelyn Hill** (nee Reynolds)
(Class of 1956)

- **Carol Henham** (nee Hulley)

- **Ruth Macalister** (nee Glover)

- **Joan Pierce**. Joan was a member of the Gippsland Grammar Foundation and was married to Ted Pierce. The couple were instrumental in the establishment of the Gippsland Grammar boy's school in the 1960s.

- **Dorothy (Jean) Farmer**, nee Gourley. Jean lived in Trafalgar and attended St Anne's as a boarder from 1946-1951. Jean left St Anne's in Grade 8 when her family relocated to Williamstown.

Keep in Touch

We love keeping in touch with our Old Scholars but to do so we need your updated contact details. If you have recently moved, or changed your email address or have not received any mail or email correspondence from us in a while, please email our Development Co-ordinator sarah.guinness@gippslandgs.vic.edu.au with your details.



Bairnsdale Foundation students Hayley Maxwell and Koah Rankin are all smiles as they check the progress of their sunflowers.

Reunions

2020 Reunions

This year Gippsland Grammar will host reunions for Old Scholars from seven cohorts. If you associate with one of the below year levels, please mark your diaries and spread the word among your fellow Old Scholars for a night of reminiscing and reconnecting. For more information on any of these reunions, contact Gippsland Grammar Development Co-Ordinator Sarah Guinness at sarah.guinness@gippslandgs.vic.edu.au

Winter Reunion

The planned May Reunion in Hawthorn has been postponed. New date TBC.

Class of 2015 / 5 Years

Date and venue to be confirmed. Please email sarah.guinness@gippslandgs.vic.edu.au if you would like to organise this reunion.

Class of 2010 / 10 Years

Saturday November 7 from 4pm at the Chapel of St Anne at Garnsey Campus followed by a function at the Criterion Hotel, Sale.

Class of 2000 / 20 Years

Saturday October 24 from 4pm at the Chapel of St Anne at Garnsey Campus followed by a function at the Criterion Hotel, Sale.

Class of 1990 / 30 Years

Saturday October 17 from 4pm at the Chapel of St Anne at Garnsey Campus followed by a function at the Criterion Hotel, Sale.

Class of 1980 / 40 Years

Saturday October 10 from 4pm at the Chapel of St Anne at Garnsey Campus followed by a function at the Criterion Hotel, Sale.

Class of 1970 / 50 Years

Monday October 19 from noon at the Criterion Hotel, Sale. This reunion lunch is for students of both St Anne's and Gippsland Grammar School.

Rowing ~ ~ ~ ~ ~



At February's Victorian State Championship at Ballarat, the under-19 Women's Coxed Quad Scull silver medallists Elana Krcevinac, Rhianne Grimbale, Sarah Beyer, Amy Baker and Malia Wheal.

One of the highlights of our year is always our annual Rowing Camp in Johnsonville, unfortunately this year the camp was unable to happen due to the bushfires, however we were able to run an alternative training week in Sale, utilising the Rowing Sheds and the Boarding House. What ensued was a great pulling together of families, the School and the Rowing Program, which really showed the spirit and their values. Thanks to all our parents who helped at

Camp and Regattas, and also to our Old Scholars: Jess Thompson, Harry Broad, Will Lamb, Ailish McGrath and James Thompson who gave up their time to coach, travel to regattas and help out.

Since then we have been on the road to Geelong, Nagambie and Ballarat, winning many medals along the way and some state titles too. Notable performances include: an unbeaten regatta season so far for Billy Osborne

in the under-17 double scull; a State Title for our Year 10 Boys Matthew Thompson, Jonty Condron, Cameron Rule, Billy Osborne and Camden Beyer; a silver medal in the under-17 Double Scull for Jonty Condron and Cameron Rule; a silver medal in the Year 10 Single Scull at the State Championships for Katie Waller; a silver medal at the State Championships for our under-19 Male and Female Quad Sculls of Lachy Rose, Tom Phelan, Tom Condron, Alex Coleman, Miya Hancock, Sarah Beyer, Amy Baker, Elana Krcevinac, Rhianne Grimbale and Malia Wheal and bronze medals for our under-21 Double Sculls of Lachy Rose and Tom Phelan and Rebecca Strauss and Ella Johnson.

The Rowing Program is sad to say farewell to David Baker at the end of this term but, given his close involvement with rowing over the time he has been at the School, with both daughters Caitlin and Amy going through the program and wife Jane being a past president of McColl Club, perhaps it is fitting that David is departing just as the Rowing Program finishes for the year. Throughout David's time at The School the Rowing Program has gone from strength to strength, with rowers representing Australia, winning medals at the National Championships, and winning many Victorian State Titles. More importantly David's compassion, leadership and vision for the School has transferred into the Rowing Program and helped to produce some wonderful Old Scholars and human beings. We wish him well at Woodleigh.