

DARALUMNI

NEWSLETTER

December 2025



Hospitality Fundraising Dinner

Contents

Hospitality Dinner	2
Grandparents Day	3
Future Fridays Career Talk	4
Where Are They Now	5
Eagle People Book Club	8
Sip&Paint	8
Eagle People Quiz	9
Reunions	10
In Memoriam	15
Alumni Stories	17
Upcoming Events	18
Down Memory Lane	19
Business Directory	22

Another year has passed, bringing moments of joy, fun and, at times, challenges to Daramalan students and staff—both past and present. The Daramalan alumni family, which continues to grow, enjoyed a year full of events: from book club meetings to reunion gatherings, from alumni career talks to elegant dinners. Our graduates never cease to inspire us, and we hope they encourage future generations to aim high and, above all, be kind and good people.

As with any big family, we've also faced loss, saying goodbye to some wonderful members over the past year. Yet, the future of our school and its graduates shines bright. The growing number of multigenerational Daramalan families is proof that we're on the right path!

Please find in this newsletter updates about our community and some fun highlights that will hopefully make you reminisce about your school years.

Wishing you all a joyful Christmas season—may it bring rest, happiness and renewed energy to conquer the year ahead.

Arina Yakovtseva
Community and Alumni Officer

Hospitality Fundraising Dinner

Everyone who has ever attended our Hospitality events will agree—they're a true highlight! And on 3 September, it was yet another triumph for Daramalan Hospitality and the Daramalan Family.

Our school proudly hosted the annual Hospitality Fundraising Dinner, and what a night it was! Over 80 guests gathered to enjoy an evening of exquisite food, heartwarming performances and joyful community spirit—all in support of our Scholarship Fund.

Our talented Year 11 and 12 Hospitality students wowed everyone with a beautifully prepared menu, while the atmosphere was elevated by a string quartet, incredible Year 11 and 12 singers, lively trivia and games led by the ever-charismatic MC, **Kirsty Saunderson**.

A huge thank you to our amazing Hospitality team, dedicated support staff, generous sponsors, and of course, every guest who came to support such a worthy cause. Thanks to your generosity, we raised an incredible \$5,700—all going directly to help students facing financial hardship.



Grandparents Day

On 23 June, we celebrated Grandparents Day at Daramalan College—a cherished tradition honoring those who built our roots. It's always

a wonderful occasion for our Year 7 students to showcase their talents and take grandparents on a tour of the school.

Thank you to every grandparent who joined us—especially our incredible third-generation Daramalan families. Your legacy lights the way.



Patrick Hallam (1970), Jenny Amey, Amelia (Year 7) and Sam Amey



Donna, Charlotte (Year 7) & David Wallace (1971)



Teo (Year 7) & Danielle Morris (1982)



Future Fridays - Career Talks

This year, we launched a wonderful new initiative designed to connect current students with Daramalan Alumni - our "Future Fridays" career talk series. Held during lunchtime for students in Years 10 to 12, each session featured inspiring guest speakers from our alumni community, who generously shared insights into their professions and career journeys.

The series was a great success, not only engaging our students, but also warmly embraced by our alumni, who have been incredibly generous with their time and stories. We are truly grateful for their contributions and the valuable perspectives

they have offered!

If you also would like to share your experience and time with our students, please reach out to us at alumni@daramalan.act.edu.au



Adam Gresham (1991) - Commander at Fire & Rescue



Chloe Parkinson (2024) - Medical School Student



Dr. Cynthia Turnbull (2014) - Scientist



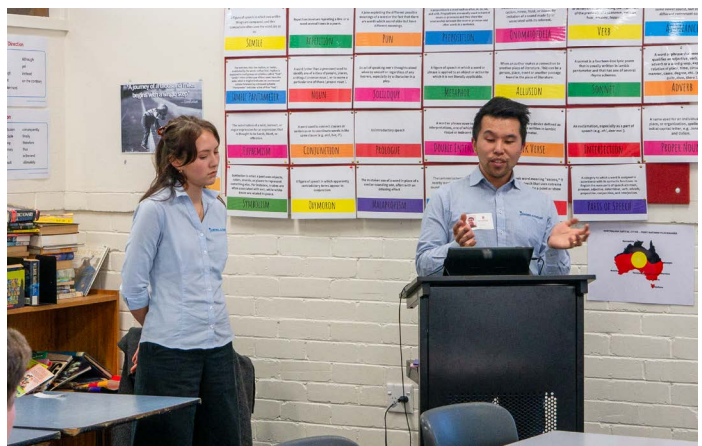
Greg Turnbull (1974) - Journalism and Politics



Jess Brady (2018) - Physiotherapist



Justin Hyland (1987), Mark Reid (1987) and Dylan Ashlin (2014)
Pacific Facilities Maintenance



Danny Chak (2010) & Georgina Bestek (2019) - Sustainability Engineering

Where Are They Now...

At the start of the year, the Pacific Facilities Maintenance crew worked exceptionally hard to remodel the Sharpe Wing, install air conditioning and rebuild the dance studios in time for the first day of term. With nearly everyone on the team being a former student, we can certainly expect their best efforts!

A big thank you to **Mark Reid** (1987), **Lachlan Carey** (2018), **Sam Hyland** (2017), **Nathan Kelley** (2017), **Brad Hyland** (2019), **Ethan O'Byrne** (2017), **Michael Carey** (1990), **Justin Hyland** (1987), **Dylan Ashlin** (2014), **Lachlan Tindale** (2019), **Stirling Doyle** (2017), **Daisy Goodwin** (2025), **Cody Grace** (2022), **Matt Clifton** (2017), **Paul McCaskill** (1981) and the Pacific Facilities Maintenance team for their outstanding work!



Congratulations to **Professor James Stellios** (1987) and **Kathryn Heuer, nee Brazel** (1983), who were both appointed as a Judges of the Federal Court of Australia.

Well done on this remarkable achievement!



Photo credit: 6 St James Hall Chambers



Photo credit - Farrar Gesini Dunn Family Lawyers

Renowned soprano **Lorina Gore (1995)** performed as Violetta in La Traviata with Opera Australia at the Sydney Opera House.



Congratulations to **Dr. Cynthia Turnbull (2014)**, who was awarded the Western Sydney University Academic Achievement Award. Dr. Turnbull is a distinguished immunologist specialising in gene and protein regulators of the immune system. Based in Canberra, this early-career researcher is dedicated to pioneering medical research with the potential to transform treatments for autoimmune diseases, infections and cancer.

Thank you for your hard work!



Photo by Western Sydney University

Daramalan College science students visited the National Press Club of Australia in September, where they had the opportunity to hear from **Dr Vanessa Pirotta (2006)**.

Dr Pirotta advocated for strengthening STEAM literacy from the ground up—empowering not only students, but also educators, parents and guardians to foster a more scientifically engaged society. It was an amazing experience.

We are excited to congratulate **Greg Blood (1974)** for receiving the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for his remarkable contributions to sports history and information. This esteemed honour acknowledges Greg's vital role in documenting and promoting Paralympic sports and athletes in Australia.



It was great to see **Kate Tominac (1992)** at the basketball tournament named in her honour – the Kate Tominac & John Stelzer Cup. This year's tournament was especially exciting as Daramalan teams competed fiercely. It was a proud moment for the College to see past and present come together on the court. Thank you, Kate, for your continued support and for being such a powerful role model for our community!

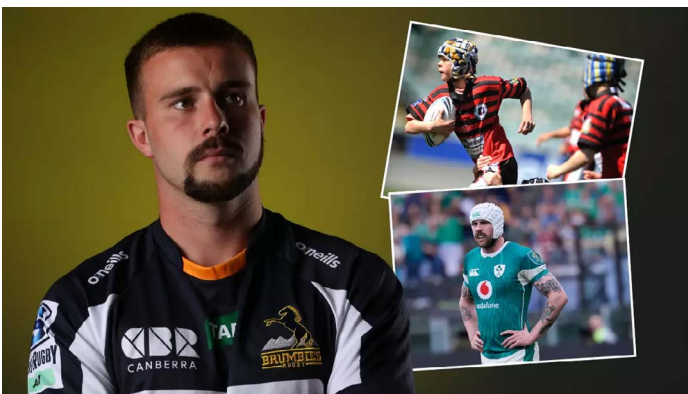


Ever dreamed of a miracle? **Tim Caesar (1993)** lived one when he was reunited with the wallet that flew out of his car window—30 years ago! The story was so incredible it made headlines on ABC News.



Photo Credit ABC News-Donal Sheil

Congratulations to **Mack Hansen (2016)**, who is wearing the British and Irish Lions red now. He was selected for the Lions squad to tour Australia. Mack is only the fifth Australian ever to play for the team!

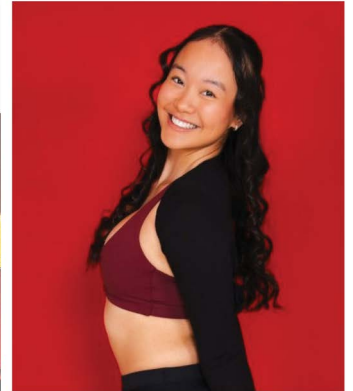
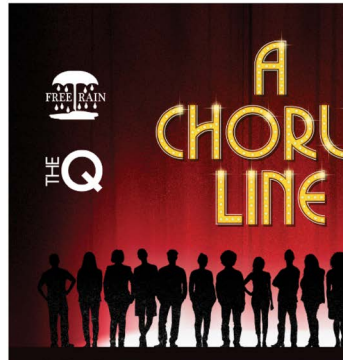


Picture by The Canberra Times

**Have news about your
schoolmates?
We'd love to hear it!**

**Email us at
alumni@daramalan.act.edu.au**

Daramalan College is proud to celebrate our former College Captain, **Ashleigh Nguyen (2024)**, on her selection as a cast member in Free-Rain Theatre Company's production of the iconic musical A Chorus Line. Well done, Ash!



We are thrilled to celebrate **Vanessa Schimizzi (2009)** on being named Social Impact Business Woman of the Year at the Canberra Women in Business Awards! Vanessa was recognised for her outstanding work with her company, Curated—a Canberra-based initiative tackling the loneliness epidemic by bringing the community together through fun, meaningful events that help people make friends, find a special someone, and give back to charity. What a brilliant concept and an incredible achievement—well done, Vanessa!



Eagle People Book Club

Our wonderful Eagle People Book Club is growing stronger every year!

Over the warmer months, our gatherings felt more like picnics as we met outdoors, enjoying good company and great stories under the sun.

This year, we continued our tradition of reading six books, offering something for every taste - from serious books like *Flowers for Algernon* to much lighter reads such as *The Thursday Murder Club* (lighter yet confusing)!

We also expanded beyond just reading. A few days before our discussion of *The Dictionary of Lost Words*, some of our members attended its stage adaptation, adding a whole new dimension to our conversation. After reading *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, we followed up with a film screening at the National Film and Sound Archive, deepening our appreciation of the story. Alas, we didn't solve any murders on Thursdays...

To make the club more inclusive, by caring for our sick and away members, we welcomed virtual

participation over Microsoft Teams (one time only, our members got healthy again!)

In short, the Book Club has become an anticipated tradition for our regulars, bringing joy, lively discussion, ginger kisses and packets of chips every two months!



Sip & Paint & Visual Arts Expo

"Oh, I'm not artistic... I can't paint," said our Sip & Paint artists. Ha! I'm not buying that - just look at the stunning pieces they created!

We had a fantastic time unleashing our creativity, making new connections, and of course, sipping on our drinks. This vibrant event brought together alumni, parents and staff in a celebration of art and community.

Thank you to all the talented members of the Daramalan family who joined the class - you made it truly special!



Eagle People

QUIZ TIME

Think you're a true Dara die-hard with crystal-clear memories of your school days? Put your knowledge to the ultimate test with our super hard quiz!

Answers are waiting for you on page 21.

1. *What song was sung at Daramalan events prior to Eagle People?*
2. *What was the name/theme of the first Rock Eisteddfod entry in 1992?*
3. *Who was Daramalan College Headmaster in 1975?*
4. *What musical was performed in 1992?*
5. *What year did the fire in Fulton Wing happen?*
6. *What foreign language was taught at Daramalan in the past that is no longer in the curriculum?*
7. *To which countries did the Food & Textile tour go in 2013?*
8. *In 2003, two new Houses were added to the Daramalan House system. Name one of the new Houses.*
9. *Which Daramalan House is named after a Rover-driving, rugby-coaching, cycling-enthusiast Daramalan legend?*
10. *School captains Miles Foran and Alanna Phillips coined which famous phrase in 2003?*
11. *What was the original purpose of Sharpe building?*
12. *What item was acquired from Lyneham High in 1997?*
13. *How many Shakespeare plays have been produced at Daramalan in total?*

14. Famous Faces: Can you name them?

A



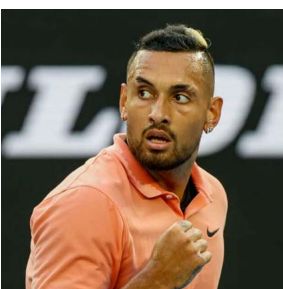
C



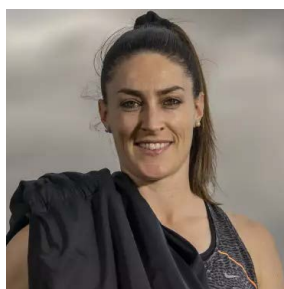
E



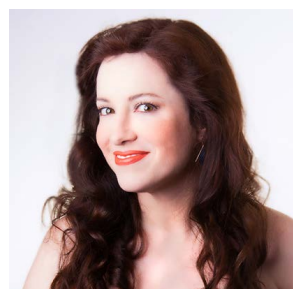
B



D



F



Reunions

Class of 1975 - 50 Year Anniversary

On Saturday, 18 October this year, the 1975 classes from Daramalan College and Catholic Girls High School (CGHS) held our 50 year class reunion at the Ainslie Football Club. Seventy two former students made up of 39 Daramalan boys, 27 CGHS girls, and 6 partners, attended, whilst many others couldn't attend due to other commitments. 1975 was the first of a few experimental years of co-education at Daramalan where the 6th Form CGHS girls would attend certain classes at Daramalan.

The genesis of forming our organising committee to plan the 50th reunion began in May 2024. **Myles Parker**, who had been the driving force behind all our previous reunions, was joined this time by **Greg Rees**, myself (**Anthony Taylor**), and **John Barrett**. Later, we combined efforts with alumnae from Catholic Girls High School.

As many of us hadn't seen each other for a long time, a series of events were planned from Friday to Sunday. A "Meet and Greet" at the Kingston Hotel on Friday night, a lake "Walk and Talk" on Saturday morning, school tours around midday on Saturday before the main event at the Ainslie Football Club on Saturday night, a Sunday Mass, and a farewell brunch. In true Dara tradition, the Kingston Hotel and Ainslie Football Club nights proved by far to be the most popular.

We created a playlist of 70 odd songs from 1969-1975 that played in the background over the night. Two slideshows were produced. The first to honour our classmates who have passed away both when we were at school and since we left. In all, 28 Daramalan classmates and 12 from CGHS have passed away. The second slideshow was a collection of images from school, past reunions, and other things, that ran on repeat over the course of the night.

It was a sensational night thoroughly enjoyed by everyone with plenty of noise, great music, pictures taken, and **John Barrett's** speech. We also

appreciate Daramalan's and particularly **Arina's** support in helping us put the reunion together. Notable attendees on the night were **Andrew Webster**, the 1975 School Captain, **John Barrett** and **Mick Flynn**, the 1975 School Vice-Captains, and **Dr Frank Brennan AM**. In addition, we had old classmates travel from New Zealand, Western Australia, Queensland, Victoria and various parts of NSW.

In the end, after room hire, food and other expenses, we achieved a surplus of \$250 which was split into \$125 donations to the Daramalan Scholarship Fund, and the Merici College Parents and Friends Association.

Anthony Taylor (1969-1975), John Barrett (1968-1975), Greg Rees (1968-1975)



Anthony Taylor and John Barrett



Tour of the school with Bernard Kane



Class of 1975 - Daramalan College and CGHS

Reunions

Class of 1985

On Saturday 25 October, sixty former students gathered at The Duxton to commemorate the 40th anniversary of their Daramalan graduation. It was highly rewarding to reconnect with longstanding peers, many of whom had travelled nationwide to participate. These reunions represent significant milestones, marking professional beginnings, the formation of enduring partnerships, the transition to parenthood (and grand parenthood), and other key life events.

We also honoured the memory of classmates who are no longer with us, acknowledging them through our conversations, laughter and reflection.

Expressions of gratitude are extended to the reunion organisers—**Kelly Boyton (née Mitchell)**, **Tom Leahey** and **Caroline Whitelum (née Moten)** - to all attendees from near and far, and to Arina and the Daramalan Alumni for their invaluable support.



Reunions

Class of 1995 & 2005

Some people find the Christmas season jolly, but at Daramalan, we love the Reunion Season most! With the classes of 1995 and 2005 gathering at Dara's much-loved club, The RUC, we were right in the midst of it.

Two more fantastic evenings of catching up and enjoying great company made this season truly special.

Visit our website to see more photos: <https://alumni.daramalan.com.au/past-reunions>



Class of 1995 30 Year Reunion



Class of 1995 30 Year Reunion



Class of 2005 20 Year Reunion

Reunions

Class of 2015 & 2024

Younger year groups were fewer in number, yet they had a great time catching up on the news and having fun together.



Class of 2015 10 Year Reunion



Class of 2024 1-Year Reunion

Reunions 2026

2026 is just around the corner, and we're already gearing up for the next Reunion Season—because, as the saying goes, “It wasn’t raining when Noah built the ark.”

We're looking for passionate and enthusiastic Alumni to help us create a truly special event. Whether you have great ideas, know of a unique venue, or simply want to spread the word among

your classmates, we'd love to hear from you!

Reach out to us at alumni@daramalan.act.edu.au and be part of making your reunions not just memorable, but truly EPIC.

At Dara, we do everything we can to make these events amazing—but they become extraordinary when our former students get involved.

1976

1986

1996

2006

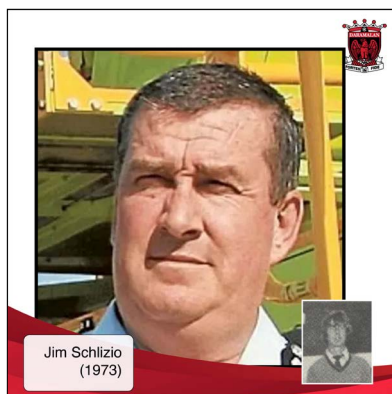
2016

REUNION CONVENORS WANTED!



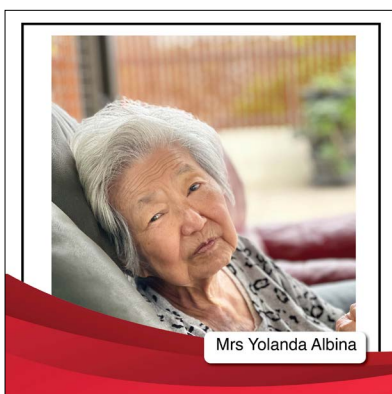
In Memoriam

Unfortunately, several well-loved former Daramalan students and staff members passed away this year. We extend our sincere condolences to their families and friends.



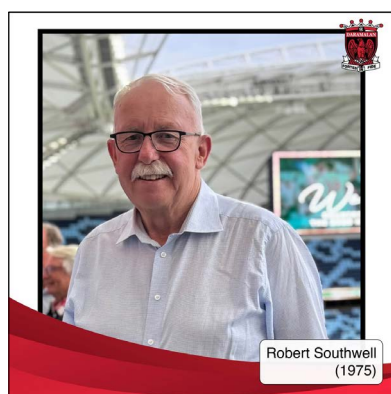
Jim Schlizio

We are deeply saddened by the passing of Jim Schlizio, a proud 1973 (Form 4) graduate of Daramalan College and a dedicated Firefighter Superintendent. Jim's unwavering commitment to his community and his courageous service will be remembered by all who knew him. His family, friends and colleagues will miss him dearly, but his legacy of strength and kindness will live on. Rest peacefully.



Mrs Yolanda Albina

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of Yolanda Albina. Mrs Albina was a dedicated Language teacher at Daramalan College from the 1970s until the 2000s. Unfortunately, she passed away on 5 December 2024 at the age of 87, after a long battle with dementia. Yolanda formed lasting friendships and connections with many colleagues and students from the school and she always thought fondly of her Daramalan days.



Robert Southwell

The Daramalan College community is deeply saddened by the passing of Robert Southwell, a graduate of the class of 1975.

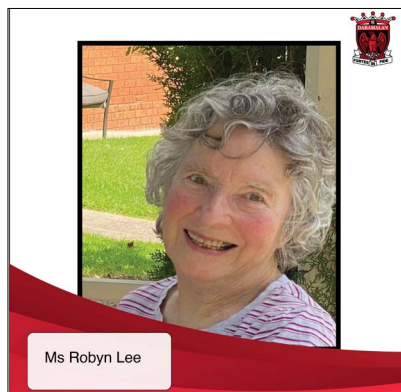
There are many Daramalan families that will forever be associated with the history of the College, and the Southwells must surely rank up there. Rob had been ill for some six months and passed away peacefully. He had a long career furthering the interests of rural Australia, including through work in machinery sales and rural real estate.

Rob will always be remembered for his pioneering passion, love for rural Australia, great sense of humour, and strong love of rugby.

Rob is survived by his wife, Helen and their children, John, Stuart and Emily, and predeceased by his daughter, Felicity (2006).

May he rest in peace.

In Memoriam



Robyn Lee

Daramalan College is deeply saddened to hear of the passing of former staff member Robyn Lee. Many students will fondly remember Robyn from her time in the Senior Library.

"Robyn had a lot of joyful stories about her years at Daramalan and some very funny stories about staff song and dance performances at school events. I know that Robyn had enduring Daramalan friendships until the end."-Delise Oldfield.



Michael Hayes

Michael Hayes (1969) sadly lost his battle with cancer on 24 November 2025. He is survived by his wife, Denise; his daughters, Kylie and Nicole; and his grandchildren, Zara and Axel. Michael enjoyed a long and successful career in the rag trade before transitioning to selling and supplying products to the construction industry. He maintained many close friendships with fellow ex-students from his Dara days.



Fr Michael Fallon MSC

It is with great sorrow that we share the passing of Fr. Michael Fallon, a respected member of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and former educator at Daramalan College. His legacy will be remembered by those who had the privilege of learning from him. May he rest in eternal peace.



Gemma Boucher, nee Beard

It is with a heavy heart that we share the sad news of the passing of Gemma Boucher, nee Beard (2002).

Gemma was a beautiful soul who brought love and laughter into the lives of everyone she met. She attended Daramalan College from 1997 to 2002, where she formed lifelong friendships and created treasured memories.

As a devoted wife to Simon and a loving mother to Chloe, Gemma's greatest joy was her family. Throughout her illness, she faced every challenge with remarkable strength, never losing her kindness or her infectious spirit. She will be deeply missed but forever remembered.

Alumni Stories

We are always proud of the accomplishments of Daramalan alumni—big or small. Discover Corey's and Emili's achievements and learn about the role Daramalan College played in their lives.



Corey Goodberg (2018)

After talking to Corey Goodberg (2018) for half an hour, I quickly learned why he left a lasting impression on Daramalan staff and his classmates. Discover the inspiring journey of Corey, a former Daramalan College scholarship recipient, Arts and Culture Captain, devoted Lawson man, and soon-to-be father of two.

Read full story here: <https://alumni.daramalan.com.au/story/corey-facilities-manager/>



Emili T. (2018)

Emili, a Registered Nurse and Paramedic, attended Daramalan College from 2013 to 2018. Now she is sharing her story and reflecting on the role Daramalan College played in her life.

Read full story here: <https://alumni.daramalan.com.au/story/emili-2/>

Scholarship Fund

The Daramalan College Scholarship Fund provides vital support to parents of current students whose family's current financial circumstances would otherwise prevent the student from attending the College. A scholarship helps ensure students can continue their education by covering part or all of their tuition fees and providing essential resources, such as a laptop, to support their learning.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

[DONATE](#)



2026 Upcoming Events

Each year, Daramalan College, in partnership with the Community and Engagement Committee, hosts a variety of initiatives and social events that bring

our community together while supporting the Scholarship Fund. We also warmly invite alumni, parents and friends of Daramalan to join us at school art exhibitions, drama performances and sporting events—your presence makes these occasions even more special.

5 FEB	EAGLE PEOPLE BOOK CLUB (upcoming meeting)
18-24 APR	DARAMALAN THEATRE COMPANY "RHINOCEROS" by Eugene Ionesco
MAY	MOTHER'S DAY SPECIAL EVENT TBD
MAY	TRIVIA! Alumni, Staff, Parents & Friends
NOV	"DARA DOZEN" Wine Sale
OCT NOV	REUNION SEASON

Dara Rugby Upcoming Events

14 March – Three-way trial v **Barker College** and **St Gregory's**, alongside **Marist College Canberra**

21 March – Three-way trial v **St Augustine's College** and **Marist College Canberra**

27 March – (TBC) – Trial v **Chevalier College** at **Daramalan College** during lunchtime.

Teams: 1st XV

28th and 29th March – Junior teams will be playing in the Monaro Junior 7's

Season start date: Saturday, 2 May 2026

Huge Announcement – New Online Home on Clubland

The Daramalan Rugby Club will be centralising its online presence via Clubland. This will allow our community to:

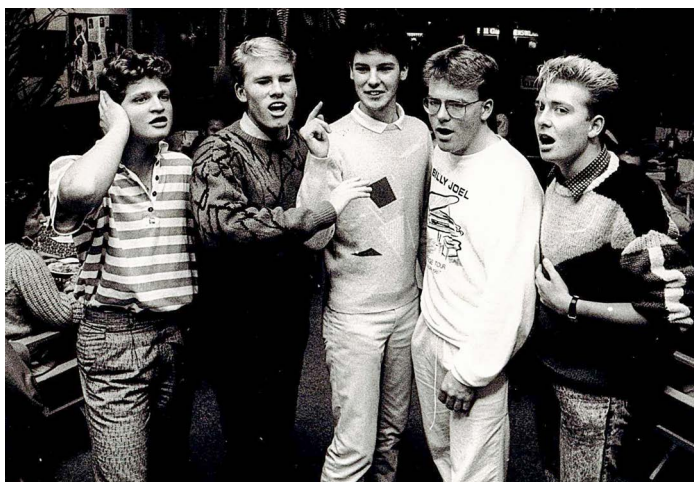
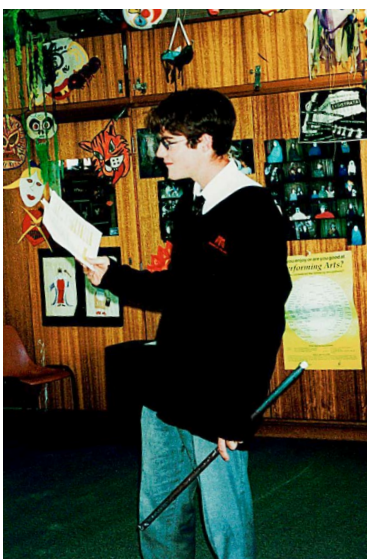
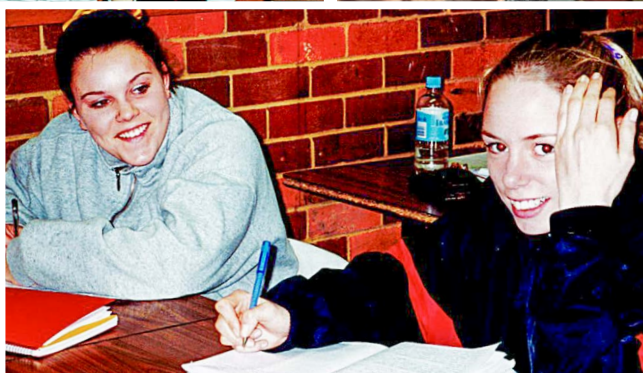
- View upcoming events
- Access important information
- Celebrate our sponsors
- Explore historical information and honour boards
- Enjoy "all things rugby" from the club's inception to now

Become a Daramalan Rugby Sponsor

Would you like to become a Daramalan Rugby sponsor? Please contact **Ben McGee** at ben.mcgee@daramalan.act.edu.au for details on how you can support the next generation of Daramalan players and tap into this amazing community.



Down Memory Lane



School Year in Pictures

Cross Country Carnival



Charity Walk



Rugby Finals



Science Show



Languages Quiz



Athletics Carnival



Fr Bob Irwin



Quiz Answers

1. On Eagles Wings by Frank Anderson MSC
2. The American Civil War
3. Fr. James Littleton
4. Joseph and his Technicolour Dreamcoat.
5. 2003
6. Indonesian
7. Vietnam and Cambodia
8. Lyons and Cuthbert
9. Merrick House (Br Dave Merrick)
10. "It's not uncool to love your school"
11. To house the Daramalan Primary School

12. The Goat

13. 8 with two being performed twice:

Romeo and Juliet (2000), A Midsummer Night's Dream (2006), Twelfth Night (2008), King Lear (2010), The Tempest (2012), The Taming of the Shrew (2014), Hamlet (2017), A Midsummer Night's Dream (2021), Troilus and Cressida (2023), Romeo and Juliet 2025)

14. A – Ivan Soldo
 B – Nick Kyrgios
 C – Mark Nicholls
 D – Lauren Boden
 E – Adam Hyde
 F – Lorina Gore

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!



COMMUNITY BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Do you have a business you'd like to showcase to the Daramalan College Community, which includes over 1,000 current families and more than 5,000 alumni?

Join our Daramalan College Community Business Directory!

For just \$130 per year, your business will be featured in this valuable resource—and every dollar raised goes directly to the Scholarship Fund.

Interested? Email us at alumni@daramalan.act.edu.au.

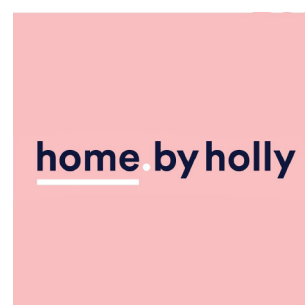
With your support, the Directory will continue to grow and become an even more powerful tool for the entire Daramalan family.

Company	Contact	Website
ACT Cabs	Hamza	www.actcabs.com.au
All IT Solutions	Anthony Cataldo	https://allit.au/
AllClass Carpet & Upholstery Care	Peter Nassar	www.allclasscarpetcare.com.au
Australian National Character Check	Hamza	www.australiannationalcharactercheck.com.au
CBR Recruitment	Adam Kowalski	www.cbrrecruitment.com.au
Corver and Co Chartered Accountants	Trevor Corver	www.corverandco.com.au
Eat Cookies	Lisa Jansen	www.eatcookies.com.au
Element Building Projects	Dennis and Aldona Stravopodis	www.elementbuildingprojects.com.au
Ginger Books	Phillip van Zomeren	www.gingerbooks.com.au
Griffin Legal	Claire Carton	www.griffinlegal.com.au
Holly Komorowski – home.byholly	Holly Komorowski	www.homebyholly.com.au
Leader Security	Troy Cassell	www.leadersecurity.com.au
Pacific Facilities Maintenance	Justin Hyland	www.pacificfm.com.au
Pinnacle Driving School	Lisa Murphy	www.Pinnacledrivingschool.com.au
Q1 Dental Care	Dr Susan Leonera-Salazar	www.q1dentalcare.com.au
Ray White Canberra		www.raywhitecanberra.com.au
Ray White Rural Canberra-Yass	Simon or George Southwell	www.raywhiteruralyasscanberra.com.au
Red Shed	Monique Gassan	www.redshed.org.au
Riteway Cleaning Services	Alan	www.ritewaycleaningcanberra.com.au
Sentinel Security & Technology Group	Ellena	www.sstg.com.au
The Athlete's Foot	Ashleigh Hogan	www.theathletesfoot.com.au
The Corner Market	Katherine Olmos	
The Energy People	Alex Morrison	www.energypeople.com.au

COMMUNITY BUSINESS DIRECTORY



HEATING
COOLING
HOT WATER
SOLAR



RED SHED



griffinlegal.



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with us today!

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Email: contactus@q1dentalcare.com.au
Website: www.q1dentalcare.com.au

