



Alumni & Friends Newsletter

Alex McKenzie appointed Principal of Burgmann College

On January 26, 2024, the Burgmann College Council voted unanimously for alumnus Mr Alex McKenzie to serve as the 10th Principal of Burgmann College.

Read more about Principal McKenzie here >



Yindyamarra

(Respect, take responsibility)

Welcome to Ngambri-Kamberri Country

Our community was honoured to be welcomed to Country by Ngambri-Kamberri Elder Aunty Dr Matilda House-Williams and her son Paul Girrawah House at the start of O-Week. Aunty spoke about the privilege of accessing education and living in community, and Paul welcomed us in Walgulu/Wiradyuri language, with words of respect that echo the foundational values of the College:

Yindyamarra/yindyamangidyal.

*Respect, be gentle, be polite,
be patient, give honour, take
responsibility.*

Yindyamarra wirrimbirra maradhal gu-bu, giyira gu-bu, yandhul gu-bu.

*Respect is taking responsibility for
the past, the present and the future.*

Murun-wiginya Yindyamarra murun-murru wirimbirra dhaura.

*Living a respectful way of life cares
for Country.*

**Read more about the
ceremony >**

**See more photos on our
website Gallery >**

Acknowledgement of Country

*Burgmann College acknowledges the
Ngambri and Ngunawal people as
the traditional custodians of the land
on which the College is situated. We
pay our respects to Elders past
and present, and extend
that respect to all
Aboriginal and
Torres Strait
Islander peoples.*





Key Updates

▲ *BCAA President Matthew Lobb with fellow alumni at a recent get-together in Sydney.*

BCAA President Update

The Burgmann story has always balanced continuity and change. Our active, democratic and robust culture established itself from the get-go, and many generations of residents have sustained it through the years. Haircuts, music and technology may be different across the eras, but the Burgmann spirit links us all.

Change started early for Burgmann in 2024 with the appointment of a new Principal. I am delighted to say, after an open and extensive recruitment process, College Council appointed Burgmann alumnus Alex McKenzie to the position. Alex started his professional career as a behavioural

economist, but returned to the Burgmann orbit as Dean, Deputy Principal and now Principal. He brings an intelligent and collaborative leadership style and a deep passion for the Burgmann way. We wish him every success stewarding the controlled chaos of College life...

Read more: [Matthew reconnects with old Burgmann mates, and how you can, too >](#)

Matthew Lobb

Matthew Lobb

*President, Burgmann College
Alumni Association
Burgmann Resident 1989–1991
BRA President 1991*

Ms Taryn Ahsing appointed Deputy Principal of Burgmann College

Taryn Ahsing joined Burgmann College as its Dean near the middle of last year, bringing her previous experience in community development at the University of Canberra and Yukeembruk Village to foster and advocate for the health and well-being of our residents.

Burgmann staff and residents welcomed the Board’s decision, as Taryn is a much-loved and well-respected colleague and leader.

Read more about her story and professional background on our website >

Congratulations, Deputy Principal Ahsing!

Deputy Principal Taryn Ahsing. ▶



Alumni & Friends Events

RSVP now to register for these upcoming events!

Sydney Alumni & Friends Get-Together
13 April

The Burgmann Village Turns 20
6 May

Trivia Night and Class of 2019 Reunion at Le Chat Noir
10 May

London Alumni & Friends Get-Together
5 June – *More details coming soon*

Singapore Alumni & Friends Get-Together
3 August

Back-to-Burg Weekend
7–8 September – *Save the date*

Melbourne Alumni & Friends Get-Together
11 October – *Save the date*

See our **Events page** on our website for more details and to RSVP.



▲ **2023 College Medallist Phoebe Grosser with alumnus Dr James Popple, CEO of the Law Council of Australia and 1986 BRA President.**

2024 Commencement Dinner

Phoebe Grosser was named the 2023 College Medallist during Commencement Dinner, in recognition of her impeccable GPA of 7.0 and outstanding contributions to the Burgmann College community.

Residents enjoyed a beautiful evening at the National

Arboretum, with good food, live music, and special speeches from Aunty Dr Matilda House-Williams and Nine Network's national affairs editor Andrew Probyn.

Read about Commencement 2024, including the full list of Academic Award recipients >

See photos from the event on our website Gallery >



▲ **2023 Outstanding Alumni Award winner Heather Webb (2007-2009).**

Know an outstanding Burgmann alum? Nominate them for our 2024 Alumni Awards

Burgmann Alumni Awards recognise, encourage and celebrate alumni excellence across a broad range of criteria, for endeavours both inside and outside the College community, and at different levels of accomplishment and life stages.

We have several categories for nomination, and we invite you to nominate Burgmann alums whom you feel deserve recognition for their endeavours and continued Burgmann spirit.

You can find the nomination form and category details on our website, and please note the deadline to submit a nomination for the Alumni Awards is June 30, 2024.

Read more about the Alumni Awards and submit your nomination here >



spicyweb

New website for Burgmann College

Thanks to the digital marketing team at Spicy Web and Burgmann College's Administration Officer (Operations) Tanya Socorro, Burgmann College has a new website! We encourage you to check out the new features and returning favourites at burgmann.anu.edu.au

Celebrate the Village's 20th birthday with us

Twenty years ago, Burgmann's Postgraduate Village was established to further the College's values of inclusivity and egalitarianism.

To celebrate the Village's 20th birthday, we invite our community to join us on May 6, 2024 at Burgmann College.

Learn more about the event and how to RSVP, and read a special article from Dr Lewis Rushbrook, who was instrumental in the formation of the Village during his time as Principal at Burgmann College, on our website.



▲ **The Burgmann Postgraduate Village.**

“ Looking back, conceiving, planning and realising the Village vision was a highlight for me of my 16 years associated with Burgmann. ”

- Former Principal Dr Lewis Rushbrook

Read the article by Dr Lewis Rushbrook >

Register to attend the Village's 20th Anniversary >

Alumni Profile

Fate and curiosity led young alum Lachlan Deimel to pioneering research in vaccines

It was a course requirement handed down by his school, Good Shepherd Lutheran College in Noosaville, that redirected Burgmann alumnus Lachlan Deimel's (2017) career trajectory—a course he admits he was reluctant to take, as he was certain he was destined to become a mathematician.

But fate had other plans, which ultimately led Lachlan to the John Curtin School of Medical Research—and Burgmann College.

Read more about Lachlan's unlikely journey from maths to molecular immunology, his search for vaccines against pathogens like measles, smallpox, and HIV-1, and the



▲ *Burgmann alumnus Lachlan Deimel.*

friendships he still fosters to stay connected to the College.

Finish reading Lachlan's story on our website >

Alumni & Friends in the News

Peter Garrett AM featured on ABC's Australian Story

Burgmann alumnus, frontman of Midnight Oil, activist, and former politician Peter Garrett

AM (1971–1973) was interviewed by Leigh Sales of ABC's *Australian Story* about 'love, loss, and living large.'

Stream the full interview with a free ABC iView account >



Burgmann-born band 78 Saab coming to Canberra during reunion tour

After a 10-year hiatus, Burgmann alumnus Ben Nash (1992–1994) is reuniting his band, 78 Saab, for a tour celebrating the 20th anniversary of their album *Crossed Lines*.

“ We started jamming in our rooms and learning tunes in '93, culminating in an end-of-year revue performance at Burgmann College of REM's One I Love—first time we'd ever hit the stage,

recalled Ben in a post on 78 Saab's Instagram page (@78saab). **”**

Find out more about 78 Saab's *Crossed Lines* reunion tour, including ticket information for their April 19 performance at Canberra's Live at the Polo >



▲ *Fiona Simson.*

Fiona Simson appointed member of Climate Change Authority

Fiona Simson, Burgmann alumna (1984–1985) and the first female President of the National Farmers Federation, was appointed in March as a member of the Albanese government's Climate Change Authority.

Read more about her appointment from the website of The Hon Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy >

Campus News



▲ **Top: Mr Mat Stasak, Residential Fellow.**
Bottom: Professor Brett Davies, Visiting Fellow.

Meet Burgmann's new Visiting and Residential Fellows

Mr Mat Stasak

Mat Stasak is a Residential Fellow who graduated in 2019 from The University of Notre Dame Australia with a Bachelor of Commerce, majoring in Economics and Accounting. He works as an Adviser to the Minister for Resources and Northern Australia. Mat is ready to support Burgmann residents who hold an interest in politics and current global affairs, or to host a guided tour through Parliament House.

Prof Brett Davies

Professor Brett Davies is a Visiting Fellow who brings with him a breadth of experience across multiple fields, including

academia, law, entrepreneurship, book publishing, education advancement, and advocacy for the homeless and disadvantaged.

He is a Senator and Adjunct Professor at The University of Western Australia and a Barrister of the High Court of Australia. He's also the author of *Australian Estate Planning* and co-author of *Self Managed Superannuation Fund Guide*.

Brett welcomes the opportunity to connect with residents or alumni about law, economics, English literature, superannuation, and hot-button tax topics, and encourages residents to approach him about internship opportunities in Australia and the UK.

That's College Life



Giving to Burgmann

Remembering Harriet Nixon

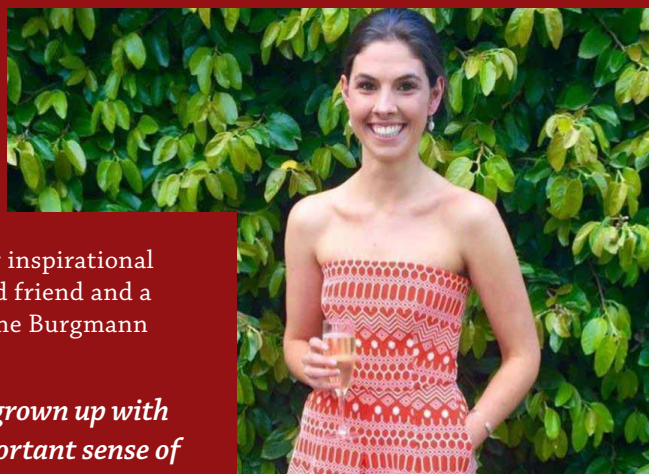
Burgmann College is honoured to announce our 2024 Annual Appeal to establish **The Harriet Nixon Scholarship**; an endowed scholarship—inspired by Harriet Nixon—for residents from rural, regional, or remote Australia who otherwise would not have a financial opportunity to attend Burgmann College and study at the ANU.

Burgmann alumna Harriet Nixon (resident 2015–2016) was an extraordinary young woman. Harriet had been working alongside other Burgmann residents and friends at a music festival when she lost her life in tragic circumstances. We are honoured to share Harriet's story, in loving remembrance,

and to highlight her inspirational legacy as a treasured friend and a valued member of the Burgmann College community.

“ *I have grown up with an important sense of community service, where giving to others establishes a stronger community. I would like to continue giving to people and communities through university and I feel that Burgmann has an environment where this goal can be achieved.* **”**

- Harriet Nixon,
2014 Burgmann College application



▲ Alumna Harriet Nixon at the 2016 Burgmann College Valette.

Establishing a scholarship in Harriet's name is a truly fitting tribute to her legacy of generosity and support. To have known Harriet was to be graced with her warmth, kindness, and the unmistakable presence she brought into every room.

Read more: Remembering Harriet Nixon >



▲ (L-R) Bruce McNamara, Ailsa Cross, Dr John C Mitchell OAM, Amelia Zraftis, and Council Chair Greg Mills in the recently-renovated kitchen.

A gift to inspire others

Alumnus Dr John C Mitchell OAM (1975–1978) visited Burgmann last Spring and toured the fully-renovated Mortlock Corridor and Flat 2—renovations made possible by his generous \$200,000 gift to fund the College's much-needed room refurbishment and accessibility upgrades.

John hopes his gift will inspire other alumni to support the College's efforts to renovate student accommodations to meet modern aesthetics and safety requirements.

'I've put the washing on the line, so to speak—I'm issuing the challenge,' says John.

Alumnus Ian Darling AO (1981–1983) says John's challenge was the inspiration behind his decision to donate \$150,000 to Burgmann College to establish The Ian Darling Scholarship.

“ *I was so impressed with John's leadership gift to Burgmann. When he issued the challenge for others to donate too, not only did I respect John's actions and sentiments enormously, but I thought to myself, "If not now, when?"* **”**

'It felt great donating to Burgmann after all these years, and especially rewarding knowing that it had been inspired by my old friend John Mitchell.'

Read why renovating this part of the College was near and dear to John, and his memories of light-hearted College mischief >

'You don't have to have a great estate to make a difference'

As a late-stage postgraduate student in Art History, Lara says that her estate is 'pretty modest', but she knew leaving a bequest to Burgmann College in her Will was important to her, to support future visual arts projects and Burgmann residents who are creating extraordinary works in the ANU School of Art and Design.

After being accepted into the PhD program in the Centre for Art History and Art Theory at the ANU, Lara took up her Residential Fellowship at Burgmann College in January 2019.

She quickly became woven into the fabric of the Burgmann community, wholeheartedly embracing the College's vision of shared learning experiences and giving back.

Her drive and creative spark led her to launch several initiatives both for Burgmann residents and the wider ANU community, which have earned her awards and accolades.

“ I am in awe of the arts and cultural talents of this community. ”

But it was watching a friend struggle to wrap up the affairs of a recently-deceased family member that caused Lara to reconsider her Will. How could she ensure her affairs were in order should she pass unexpectedly, and how could she create for herself an opportunity to establish a legacy?

Read Lara's inspiring story on our website >

Residential Fellow Lara Nicholls with her dog Ziggy. ▶



Donor Honour Roll

Everything Burgmann College does is enhanced by the incredible generosity of our staff, alumni, parents, friends and volunteers who invest in Burgmann every year.

Thank you.

See our 2024 Donor Honour Roll >

Gathered Here - Free Online Wills

Writing a Will is one of the most important things you can do for your loved ones, and an amazing way to support the causes you care about, without feeling any financial impact during your lifetime.

The College has partnered with Gathered Here, Australia's most trusted online Will provider, to offer free online Wills to the Burgmann College community.

You can now write and update your Will for free, no strings attached.

To learn more about pledging a gift to Burgmann College in your Will, you can contact the Advancement Office at giving@burgmann.anu.edu.au, or **6125 2254**.

If you decide to leave a gift to us, your legacy will continue beyond your lifetime, and you'll be helping to sustain the thriving Burgmann College community into the future.

Write your free Will here

The St Beryl Society

In 2022, Burgmann created the St Beryl Society to bestow special recognition on those who choose to support the College by making a bequest. We could not think of a more fitting way to honour such amazing support of the

College's mission than through Burgmann's beloved patron saint—synonymous with the creative and visionary spirit of our community through every generation.

Learn more about the St Beryl Society >



Get Involved

BCAA Committee 2024 Meeting Dates

The Burgmann College Alumni Association meets regularly throughout the year. Please email alumni@burgmann.anu.edu.au if you would like to join our 6:30 pm meetings on any of the following dates in 2024:

1 May - Zoom

AGM 7 September
5:30 pm at Back-to-Burg Weekend

18 September - Zoom

6 November - Zoom



Justin Ji (2018-2022),
former Village resident
and RA.



Send us your memories of living in the Village

In anticipation of **our May 6 event celebrating the Village's 20th Anniversary**, we invite all current and former Village residents and friends to submit their memories of the Village!

We hope to compile your submissions into a meaningful tribute of the Village's influence

and impact on the culture and character of Burgmann College over its 20-year history.

We welcome stories, photographs, videos, artwork, and other memorabilia you might keep. We look forward to receiving your memories via alumni@burgmann.anu.edu.au!



◀ Andrew 'Howlin' Wind' Richardson.

Class Notes

Where are they now? Latest news from alumni around the globe

Andrew ('Andy') 'Howlin' Wind' Richardson (1971-1973) is a foundation resident of the College, and said his cohort felt they were 'pioneers' of the ANU, as Burgmann College was still under construction when they moved in.

Andy shared a memory of the magical night he and some other residents convinced British comedy superstars Peter Cooke and Dudley Moore to perform a special show in the Burgmann dining room.

'We knew they were performing in Canberra, so we met them at the Canberra Airport, and invited them for dinner at Burgmann to meet all their fans. It was a night I'll never forget. Pure class in the Burgmann dining room—comedy skits, jazz, blues, Dud's songs, plus Elvis [song covers]. Dudley was a master piano player, and they were a breath-taking comedy duo. Then it was back to "The Conversation Pit" for more jokes, stories, drinks and smokes until the wee hours.'

Share your own update to be included in the next issue of this newsletter using the **Update Your Details form on our website** >

Read more Class Notes >