



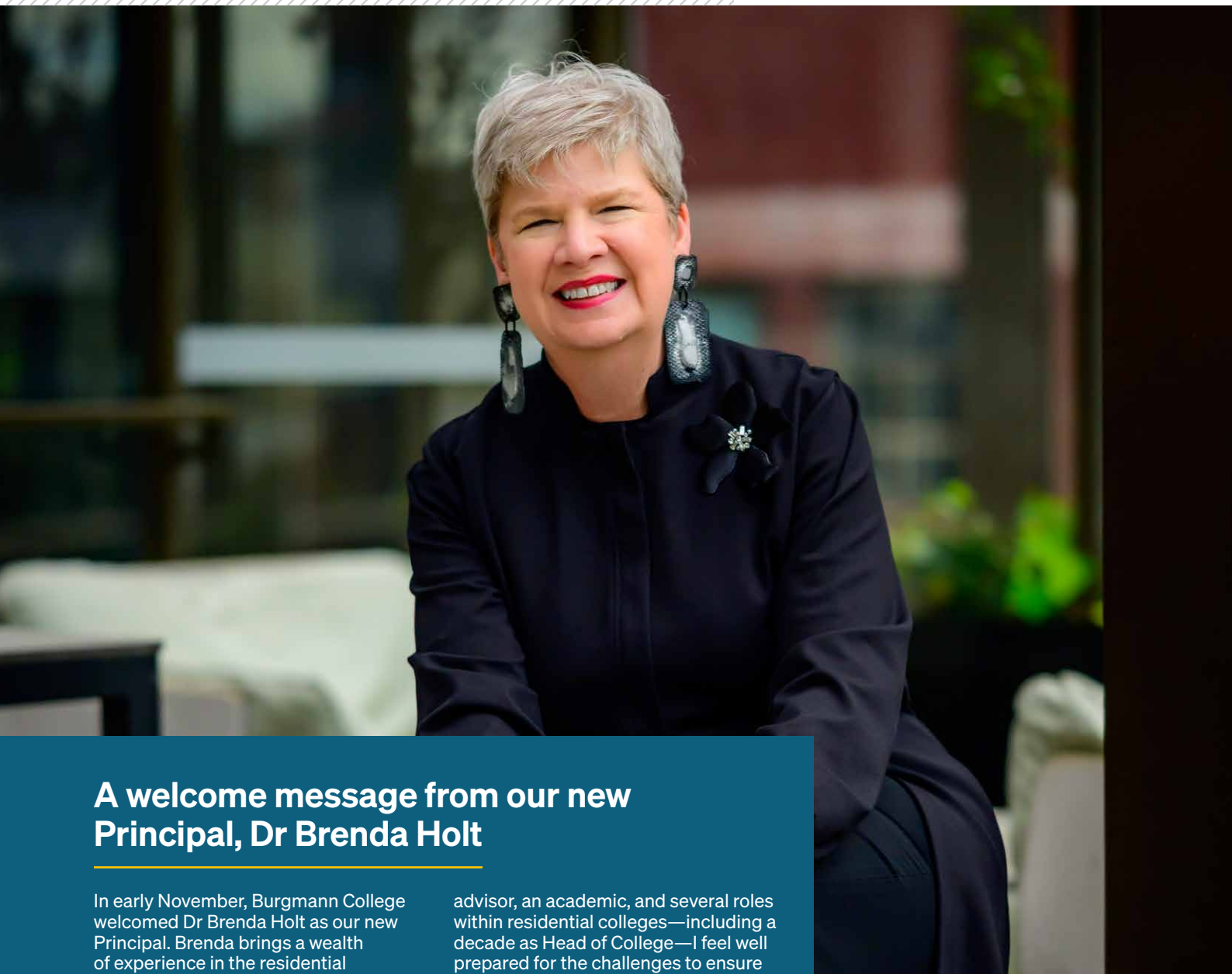
Burgmann College

Affiliated with The Australian National University

SUMMER 2025

Alumni & Friends

Newsletter



A welcome message from our new Principal, Dr Brenda Holt

In early November, Burgmann College welcomed Dr Brenda Holt as our new Principal. Brenda brings a wealth of experience in the residential college sector, with 24 years in senior leadership roles.

'I am delighted to begin my tenure at Burgmann College', said Brenda. 'With a long career in education as an English teacher, a counsellor, an academic

advisor, an academic, and several roles within residential colleges—including a decade as Head of College—I feel well prepared for the challenges to ensure that Burgmann is a leading college nationally. I look forward to sharing our vision with you and knowing you personally.'

[Read Principal Dr Brenda Holt's full welcome message to our community >](#)

▲ Principal Dr Brenda Holt.



Acknowledgement of Country

Burgmann College acknowledges the Ngambri-Kambri and Ngunnawal peoples 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



▲ Our 2026 leadership teams at ANU's Coastal Campus in Kioloa for their leadership retreat.

2026 Resident Leadership teams announced

As Burgmann steps into its 55th year, a new generation of resident leaders have stepped up with honour and pride to lead the College in 2026!

Congratulations and thank you to the incoming Burgmann Residents Association and College-appointed leaders who are ready to uphold and foster Burgmann College's culture and values, and welcome our new residents next year. Residents' direct engagement with College leadership has been a hallmark of Burgmann since its inception, and we're excited to see what they will bring to their roles.

[Meet the 2026 student leadership teams >](#)



▲ 2026 BRA President Euan Maclean.

Message from 2026 BRA President Euan Maclean

It is a pleasure to have been elected to lead the Burgmann resident community into 2026. In the 55th year of Burgmann College, it has dawned on me that this position is not merely symbolic. I have the weight of 55 years of tradition on my shoulders, and I'm getting back issues just thinking about it.

I believe the values of Burgmann have not changed drastically over those 55 years. Instead, they have slowly been tugged and pushed towards the values that guide the community today. Values such as support, inclusivity and egalitarianism go to the heart of Burgmann's strength as a college. More than that, it is the more day-to-day values, such as friendship and college spirit, that make Burgmann such a wonderful community to be part of.

[Read Euan's full message on our website >](#)

2025 Equality Prizes recognise advocates for refugees, asylum seekers and LGBTQIA+/gender equality rights



▲ Dr Graham Thom in a Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh.

Dr Graham Thom 2025 Equality Prize recipient

Alum Dr Graham Thom (1987–1989) has dedicated his career to advancing human rights for refugees across the Asia-Pacific and beyond. As Advocacy Coordinator at the Refugee Council of Australia, he brings compassion, expertise and courage to some of the world's most urgent protection challenges. We celebrate Graham as the 2025 Equality Prize recipient for his commitment to dignity, justice and hope for displaced communities.

[Read more about Dr Graham Thom's work with refugees and his experience at Burgmann >](#)

Follow Dr Graham Thom



▲ Clara Conheady.

Clara Conheady 2025 Emerging Leader Equality Prize recipient

Alum Clara Conheady (2019–2021) is a rising voice in gender equality whose research, advocacy and community initiatives are reshaping conversations in sport and beyond. In her menstrual-equity advocacy, her governance roles and her international work, Clara demonstrates a combination of clarity, heart and deeply informed intersectional awareness beyond her years. We are proud to honour Clara as the 2025 Emerging Leader Equality Prize recipient.

[Read more about Clara Conheady's work advocating for youth, LGBTQIA+, and gender equality >](#)

Follow Clara Conheady



Alumni Profiles

Friendship fosters innovation for alumni Tessa Forshaw and Meredith Caldwell

The friendship between Burgmann alumni Dr Tessa Forshaw (2008–2010) and Meredith Caldwell MBA (2006–2008) has endured beyond their time at College into their professional lives. They have both found success at prestigious companies and institutions, including teaching roles at Harvard University and collaborating at People Rocket, an innovation and systems consultancy for future-oriented business leaders. Following the launch of her book *Innovation-ish: How Anyone Can Create Breakthrough Solutions to Real Problems in the Real World*, Dr Tessa Forshaw reached out to share her exciting news with Burgmann College, and recounted how her good friend and fellow



▲ Alumni Meredith Caldwell MBA (L) and Dr Tessa Forshaw (R).

Burgmann alum Meredith Caldwell was a co-teacher of the principles of *Innovation-ish* for many years. Of course, we had to hear their story!

We're honoured to share the achievements and friendship of these dynamic business leaders and proud Burgmann alumni in a joint Alumni Profile.

[Read their full interviews >](#)

“ Stay open to the people around you. Some of the friendships you make at Burgmann will shape your life in ways you can't yet imagine. ”

– Dr Tessa Forshaw

Alum Phillip Bartlett explores the Macquarie Collector Chest's mysterious bottom drawer

From the quiet depths of the State Library of New South Wales, a centuries-old artefact has captured the imagination of Burgmann alum Phillip Bartlett (1972–1974).

Phillip, one of the Library's 2025 Summer Fellows, is exploring the enigmatic 'bottom drawer' of the Macquarie Collector's Chest, a colonial curio cabinet whose contents tell a more complex story than its austere exterior suggests.

Presented as a gift to former New South Wales Governor Lachlan Macquarie around 1818 by Captain James Wallis of the 46th Regiment and Commandant of the Newcastle penal settlement, the unassuming Macquarie Collector's Chest opens like a theatre set piece to reveal a fantastic display, showcasing stunning paintings and objects that would have fascinated colonial viewers.

The lid of the chest features a collection of brightly hued native Australian fish. Upon opening, the chest's top layer reveals 12 painted panels that depict native birds, landscapes, and the Newcastle settlement. Convict painter Joseph Lycett is believed to have been the artist.

The top drawers of the chest contain collections of native Australian flora and fauna, including bugs and seashells arranged in ornate patterns, colourful birds that have been carefully preserved, and seaweed and algae specimens tucked away in concealed side drawers.

But it's the lowest drawer that captured Phillip's interest and is the focus of his Fellowship with the State Library of New South Wales, where he's developing his project, 'A Possible Narrative of the Macquarie Chest's Bottom Drawer'.

[Read about Phillip's Fellowship and fascinating research into the bottom drawer of the Macquarie Collector's Chest >](#)

[W]hen I saw what was in the bottom drawer, like anyone who has seen something from their family or their past in some shape or form, the connection was very strong, so that's why I targeted it.

– Phillip Bartlett ”



▲ Macquarie Collector's Chest. Image source: State Library of New South Wales (CC BY-SA 3.0 AU). [Source link](#).



▲ Phillip Bartlett at Back-to-Burg 2022, celebrating the College's 50th anniversary.

Campus News

Best wishes to our 2025 Valete cohort

Valete is a special opportunity to honour our departing residents and wish them success as they embark on their new adventures.

College Dean Monte Nathan gave the farewell address, encouraging residents to keep their Burgmann friendships as they step into this next chapter of their lives.

'For my message to this departing cohort, I borrowed from that of author Amy Chan:

"Choose your company wisely. Be relentless with surrounding yourself with those who bring out the best in you. Your direction in life depends on it. And while you're at it, have the courage to be a good friend to those who choose you."

▼ The annual Whole of College photo on Burgmann's Front Lawn.



▲ The cast and crew of A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Burg Play 2025 – A Midsummer Night's Dream

This year's Burg Play was A Midsummer Night's Dream. Residents performed Shakespeare's comedic classic on Burgmann's Back Lawn to sold-out crowds for all three performances!

A special thank you to Directors Eliza Ward and Tess McClintock, Producer Eloise Rudge, and production assistance from Arts Representatives Euan Maclean and Lily Elias.



▲ Deputy Principal Taryn Stasakova has prepared Burgmann merchandise for our community's soon-to-be youngest resident.

Celebrating the 2025 College Award recipients

Every year at Valete, we recognise residents who have gone above and beyond to participate in College life, making the culture of Burgmann and our communal experience brighter and better for all.

College Dean Monte Nathan announced the following recipients of the 2025 College Awards.



2025 BRA Vice President
Eloise Rudge was awarded The Brett Ringland Award for Outstanding Contribution to BRA.



Gabrielle Rose was awarded The Glen Downey Award for Outstanding Contribution to College.



Thomas Henchcliffe was awarded The John Dauth Award for First Year Contribution to College.



Claudia Zybenko was awarded The Principal's Award for Overall Excellence.

Read more about this year's recipients, including the recipient of the Callum Fryer College Spirit Award >

A new Burg baby is on the way

'So excited to share with everyone that Mat [Stasak] and I are having a baby! [We're] very excited to be welcoming the youngest Burgmann resident next year!' Deputy Principal Taryn Stasakova shared this happy news with our residents in early October. This will be Taryn and Mat's first child, and our community is looking forward to welcoming this new addition to Burgmann.

Burgmann places 2nd overall at Inward Bound 2025

By Lia Ladbrook,
2025 IB Head Coach

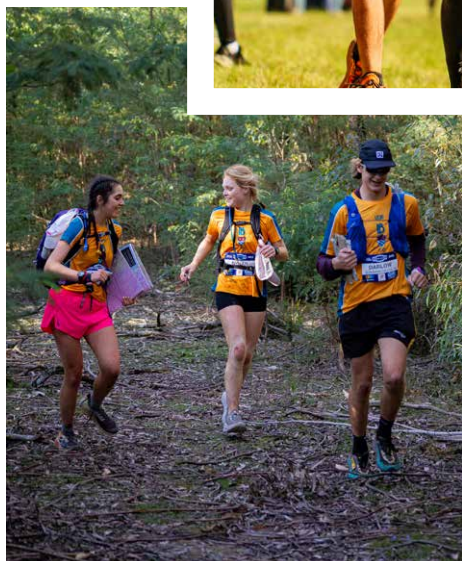
Each year, groups of runners from in and around the ANU are blindfolded, put on buses and dropped in the middle of the bush. Using only a compass and map, they are challenged to navigate distances ranging from 40 to 100km. This is Inward Bound, and the 2025 season delivered massive results for Burgmann College.

Read Lia's full report on IB 2025 and see more photos >

Top (L-R):
Oliver Payne,
Maddie Teychenne,
Fergus Grave, and
Lia Ladbrook.

Left (L-R):
Claudia Zybenko,
Milly Dynan, and
Will Darlow.

Right (L-R):
Lily Axford,
Hugh Calder,
Mac Finlayson, and
Ben Campbell.



Memories of Burgmann

Kelvyn Dunn shares iconic photos of 1980s Burgmann

When alum Kelvyn Dunn (1983–1985) submitted his **Class Note** for our 2025 Winter newsletter, he dug deep into his photo archives to share these classic photos during his time at Burgmann with his trusty 1962 EK Holden in the Barassi carpark, with Black Mountain and the Telstra Tower behind him. Fashion and car models might have changed, but Burgmann remains an icon through the generations.

Thank you, Kelvyn, for sharing these fabulous retro photos!



Do you have photos from your time at Burgmann, or memories and life updates you're happy to share? We invite you to submit a Class Note through our **Update Your Details form >**

▲ Kelvyn Dunn with his EK 1962 Holden in the Barassi carpark, July 1985.



▲ Claudia Zybenko, 2025 Assistant IB Coach and recipient of the 2025 Principal's Award for Overall Excellence, reaches the IB Endpoint.

Giving to Burgmann

Anonymous donor gifts \$10,000 to the Burgmann College Endowment Fund

Fund gifts recipients of Principal's Award for Overall Excellence with named door plaques

In support of the Name My Door project, our new fundraising initiative, an anonymous donor has generously donated \$10,000 to the Burgmann College Endowment Fund to install name plaques on the doors of residents who receive the Principal's Award for Overall Excellence each year.

The endowment is effective immediately, and the first beneficiary will be resident Claudia Zybenko, the 2025 recipient of the Award.

I am very appreciative and honoured to be the first beneficiary of this special endowment.

– Claudia Zybenko

We extend our heartfelt gratitude towards this incredible anonymous donor for establishing an indelible physical connection to College for recipients of the Principal's Award for Overall Excellence; a connection which will be cherished and celebrated in perpetuity.

Read more about 2025 Principal's Award for Overall Excellence recipient Claudia Zybenko >

It's here: Read our 2024 Impact of Giving Report

We invite you to read our new long-format Impact of Giving Report which honours the stories of our valued supporters and the extraordinary impact their generosity created at Burgmann College in 2024.

Our community provided uplifting support to the College in 2024, making numerous special projects possible and creating a new scholarship for students from rural Australia. The support of our community makes a lasting difference in the lives of current and future Burgmann residents, and we are deeply grateful for each and every contribution. Thank you!

Read stories of positive impact from your generosity in 2024 >



Make your indelible mark within Burgmann's walls

For every room at Burgmann, there is an intergenerational line of residents whose experience and memories of Burgmann are forever linked by a shared room number.

Through a new project that both celebrates and captures Burgmann's community through the decades while supporting the College's future, you're invited to make your shared history visible, putting your own name on your door at Burgmann,

with a gift ensuring many more generations of students can unlock the same doorway to possibility, community and transformation.

For a gift of \$585, your name and years of residency will be engraved on a brass plaque and join the names of fellow alumni on your door.

Your gift will go to the Principal's Priorities Fund, supporting resident programs, pastoral care and improving communal spaces.



Visit our Name My Door page for more information >

View the Homer, Barassi, and Village leaderboard: Who has added their name to their door? >



R.M. Williams' OUTBACK celebrates precious contributions to the Harriet Nixon Scholarship

R.M. Williams' *OUTBACK*, a bimonthly magazine featuring the people, places and issues of rural, regional, and remote Australia, featured Burgmann College's **Harriet Nixon Scholarship** in its latest issue.

OUTBACK writer Mark Muller recounts the story of the scholarship's inspiration and journey towards becoming a financial support for Burgmann residents from rural, regional and remote Australia. We're honoured that *OUTBACK* is celebrating our Burgmann community's precious contributions and collective efforts to support and encourage our residents from all backgrounds and walks of life.

[Read the article on OUTBACK's website >](#)

◀ [Alum Harriet Nixon \(2015–2016\).](#)

Artist and alum Julian Twigg donates painting to Burgmann College

After a successful art residency at Burgmann College completed over two stays earlier this year, artist and alum Julian Twigg (1984–1986) generously donated his painting of the College's front entrance, titled *Winter, 2025*, to Burgmann.

'I thoroughly enjoyed my residency at Burgmann College in 2025', said Julian. 'The opportunity gave me time to explore Canberra and create a body of artwork, and the College generously provided me with board, lodging, and a studio space to paint in, culminating in an art exhibition [during Back-to-Burg 2025].

“ *Giftng a painting shows my appreciation of everything that was done for me whilst I was Artist in Residence at Burgmann College. The painting was a culmination of all my art residency work.* ”

– Julian Twigg

The College directed proceeds from his exhibition to the Harriet Nixon Scholarship.

'Donating a percentage of sales from the residency exhibition to the Harriet Nixon Scholarship was also a fulfilling way of giving back to the College, and helping those less fortunate than myself to be able to attend College and University.'

With gratitude to members of Council and staff who donated, the College was also able to purchase Julian's painting of the Village for our art collection.

[Read more >](#)

Top: *Winter, 2025*. Oil on board. 83 X 76. Julian Twigg. ▶

Bottom: *Burgmann Village 2025*. Oil on board. 42 X 33. Julian Twigg.



Thanking our supporters

2025 was a remarkable year of support and giving from you, our wonderful Burgmann community. Your generous giving enables Burgmann College to offer opportunity, support, and encouragement to residents for generations to come. We remain forever grateful for your investment in Burgmann's future, and we thank you for everything you helped us accomplish in 2025.

[See our 2025 Donor Honour Roll >](#)

Thank you



Donor Profile

Len Goodman AO leaves lasting legacy for future residents through generous bequest

The positive impact of Len Goodman AO and Joyce Goodman OAM's involvement with Burgmann College cannot be overstated. From 1998 to 2012, Len served as College Council Chair, and Joyce utilised her decades of volunteer experience towards enhancing residential culture.

Though Len passed away in 2024, his generous spirit lives on through the bequest left to Burgmann College in his Will.

'Len and his beloved wife Joyce's enthusiasm for Burgmann didn't stop when he retired', said Council and Board Chair Greg Mills.

'Len and Joyce's generous bequest to the endowment of our Scholarships and Bursaries Program will help remove financial barriers for future students, enabling them to experience the supportive Burgmann residential experience alongside their tertiary studies.'

We are honoured to share the following story of Len and Joyce's lives of service and the transformative impact they have had on Burgmann College.

[Read the Donor Profile of Len Goodman AO and Joyce Goodman OAM >](#)



▲ Len Goodman AO and Joyce Goodman OAM at the 2023 Inaugural St Beryl Society event.

Get Involved

BCAA Committee 2026 Meeting Dates

The Burgmann College Association (BCAA) meets regularly throughout the year. Please email alumni@burgmann.anu.edu.au to join any of our Wednesday meetings at 6.30 PM (Eastern):

4 March (Zoom)

8 April (Zoom)

19 September | Electoral AGM
(5.30 PM on Saturday during Back-to-Burg Weekend.
In-person or via Zoom)

4 November (Zoom)



Are you or someone you know on our Lost Lists?

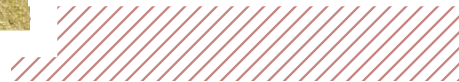
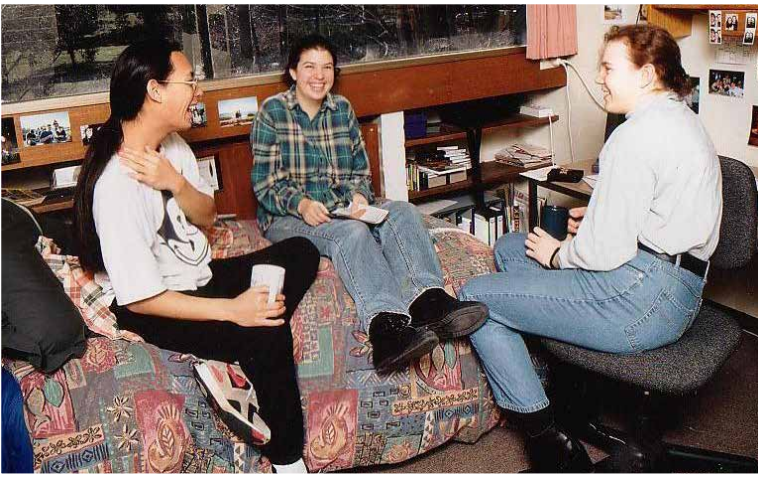
Are you sure?

Through the decades and technological changes, some of our beloved Burgies have been 'lost' to us, and we're keen to reconnect.

Our Lost Lists are the Burgies whose contact details are not current, and you or someone you know might be a Lost Burgie!

Please take a moment to browse through the Lost List for your years at College. Your help to keep our Burgmann community connected is invaluable. Thank you for exploring our Lost Lists!

[Review the Lost Lists here >](#)



Class Notes

Calling for more Class Notes from Burgies across generations!

Burgmann alumni, young and old: We want to hear from you!

We're growing our Class Notes on our website, and some decades feature very few Class Notes from our alumni. We'd love to share where life has taken you since leaving Burgmann!

Use the **Update Your Details** form to send in your life updates and a recent photo, and any photos from your time at Burgmann.

Explore Class Notes from your cohort on our website >

Update Your Details with us now to share a Class Note. We can't wait to hear from you!

Philippa Venning (1993–1996)

Philippa Venning (1993–1996) was a C.A.S. Hawker Scholar from 1993–1996 and graduated with First Class Honours in Law and Arts from ANU. Her career has spanned corporate law with Allens in Sydney and Singapore, and international development with DFAT, AusAID, NGOs, United Nations Development Program and World Bank. She served in Indonesia and Solomon Islands and as Australia's Deputy Head of Mission in Timor-Leste. Today, she

serves as Vice President of Program Quality and Strategy at Abt Global Australia and as a Director on the Board of ChildFund Australia, continuing her commitment to development, governance and children's rights across the Asia Pacific region. She has a Masters in Law from Melbourne University and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Read more Class Notes on our website >



▲ Philippa Venning.



Wishing you and your loved ones a safe and joyous festive season. With best wishes from Burgmann College.

◀ Artwork by Mark Arnott (1989–1991) A Ring Tail Possum Christmas
@markarnottsart