



South Creek

St Marys Senior High School Magazine



Term 2 & 3 2020



The South Creek Magazine is published to celebrate St Marys Senior High School's values of inclusiveness; life-long learning; catering for the needs of all; clear learning outcomes; staff professional learning; independent student learning; school traditions; innovation; linking our classrooms to the wider community; integrity and ongoing evaluation of our practices.

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land that makes up our school community, the Wianamatta people from Darug Country.

We also pay our respects to Elders past, present and future and extend our respects to all First Nation Peoples as well as everyone who visits our school.

We must always remember that under the concrete and asphalt, this land is, was and always will be Aboriginal Country.

Shani-Lee Bolt, Year 12 2018

Back in time ...

International Day 1994

International Day was an outstanding success in the history of St Marys Senior High. It gained recognition for the diverse cultures amongst the individuals of our school.

The day began with a school assembly, where the audience experienced the magnificent spectacle of the multi-cultural society. The crowd was wowed by the European, Aboriginal and Oriental dancing, music and costume. It presented a unified nation where difference in culture were appreciated and welcomed.

Students had the opportunity to taste international food, participate in games or just relax and soak in the atmosphere. There were Filipino, French, Spanish, Australian,

Mente Manuque – With mind and hand

Contents

Acknowledgment Of Country	2
Historical Segment.....	2
Principal's Insights.....	3
The Isolating Reality Of Having A Global Pandemic Kill Your Final Year Of High School.	4
Remote Learning Anecdotes From Our Teaching Staff.....	6
PJ Day	7
Purple Means Victory, 'Cause Love Wins	9
Creative And Performing Arts Faculty... ..	11
Drama	11
Year 12 – HSC Practical Examination	11
Year 11 – Irish Drama And Individual Projects.....	12
Visual Arts.....	13
Year 12 – Body Of Work Exhibition....	13
Year 11 – Visual Arts Exhibition	17
Music	20
Year 12 Music	20
Year 11 Music	21
Talent Development Project.....	22
SMSHS Comments On Climate Change	23
You Are Cherished, Loved And Val-You'd	26
SMSHS Heritage Day 2020.....	28
The High School Finish Line Is Here!	30

American and many other food stalls established around the school, to highlight the richness of culture in the community.

Organisation for this event was commendable, students, parents, staff and teachers all contributed to this worthwhile cause, to make it the most memorable day for fun and excitement.

Extract from *Around South Creek* July, 1994, Issue 4 held in the school archives.

Principal's Insights



Welcome to the latest issue for 2020 of our South Creek Magazine. I would like to thank the team of students supported by our Teacher Librarian Kerri-Anne Brown for their work in putting together this publication. As well as providing a look at the terms we have just had, it is hoped that this publication will form part of the history of St Marys Senior High School and will be used by generations ahead as a point of reference. St Marys High School and St Marys Senior High School are both proud of their histories and it is hoped that this publication will continue to be used as a reference point to those that follow us in the future.

I always believe each school term has its own flavour and Term Three is generally filled with celebrations following the intensity of the examination period. However, like most of this year, our normal activities have been adjusted. Whilst these adjustments provide many challenges for us all they also provide us with an opportunity to think more deeply and search for innovative ways to celebrate what is important to us all. It also provides us with the opportunity to reflect on how we do things and to place greater significance on those things that are the most important, family, friends and community.

Heritage Day was still filled with colour but unfortunately not from the colour run or from the international cuisine that makes up our multicultural community. The national costumes our students and staff wore to highlight the diversity of our school community provided a much-needed lift. Beyond the colour of Heritage Day, although not the same, this event provided us all with an opportunity to celebrate “us” together.

Congratulations and farewell to our School Captains, Souad Khan and Jed Garcia as well as our Vice Captains, Chloe Appleby and Mikael Falculan who have done an amazing job this year in a very uncertain environment. The School Captain elections for 2021 have been moved back a few weeks to allow more time for Year 11 to get to know each other prior to the elections.

Congratulations to Year 12 for finishing their formal lessons in preparation for the Higher School Certificate examinations. Although a disrupted year, you have in general demonstrated your flexibility, determination and courage. Many of you have already been rewarded with offers from different universities who acknowledge your intelligence, skills and tenacity. We all wish you the best for your final exams and hope that you enjoy the celebrations that follow.

I hope you enjoy this edition of South Creek. I am proud of the efforts of all our students and the staff at St Marys Senior High School and invite you to enjoy this edition of South Creek for 2020.

Sally Smithard
Principal

The Isolating Reality of Having A Global Pandemic Kill Your Final Year of High School.

As the first few weeks of term passed and the daily news started to sound more like a George Orwell novel than reality, we realised that our senior year was not going to be the slightest bit normal. Days began to blend into weeks, the hashtag '#stayhome' grew in popularity, and we started to pay serious attention to every word that our politicians spoke. Once we got the call to move to remote learning, we knew that this was seriously going to mess us up. Our routines were completely disrupted and everything we once knew was entirely upended. Only one thing we knew for certain: that the COVID-19 pandemic would hit us hard and both the year and ourselves would never be the same.

Remote learning was difficult, far harder than anyone had expected. You either became a control freak and planned out your life to the minute, attempting to stay on top of the work that just kept piling up. Or, you viewed online school as optional, deciding to catch up on your sleep, and your Netflix, Stan or Disney+ watch list, with no in-between. The coping mechanisms were terrible at either end but it was possibly the only activity that kept you going as Google Classroom became a bottomless pit of tasks and you could not remember what was optional or meant to be turned in yesterday. Even your emails, which would usually not see a message for days or weeks on end, were blowing up every twenty minutes. We all fell behind in at least one class (or five), trying to muster the motivation without your friends or teachers beside you. It was exhausting and 'school' lasted twice to three times as long, regardless of how many classes you attended that day.

Additionally, everything we had once enjoyed and everything we were looking forward to was cancelled or closed indefinitely. Eighteenth birthdays, the gym or organised sport you had been playing for longer than you remember, and even the restaurant around the corner which served the best Thai, Chinese or Italian was out. Only one bottle of soju or apple cider would celebrate the beginning of adulthood and you could not help but reminisce on the extravagant party plans that you once had set in place instead.

Waking up felt, at times, pointless when all there was to see were the walls of your house and the faces of people you forgot you were related to. Every family had at least one person scanning the news every half hour or even worse, sharing chain mails on Facebook which claimed that 'ginger is the cure' or something of the like. You felt like either killing your siblings or walking into their room just to annoy them because there was nothing else to do and you missed your grandparents who could only call you on the phone to say that they missed you too. Well, if you were the favourite. Basically, quarantine as a senior student was not fun, at all.

And we had already had a variety of terrible things happen to our year: the bushfires, the floods, even that day when the water at school stopped working. The year just seemed to pile on its last big surprise that would hold a mixed feeling of fear and frustration in the air indefinitely.

We watched as seniors from other countries had their final year just end without graduation or formal and while praying the same would not happen to us, were lamenting that it might. The sadness came and went as event after event was cancelled or postponed, especially school ones that we'd never experience again such as the athletics carnival. Honestly, isolation sent

so many of us (dare I say everyone) into a downward spiral and was certainly not included in our desired last year of high school.

But it did get better. Though maybe not by a lot, the improvement was apparent. The anxieties that heightened during quarantine still exist and might have grown worse as prelims and trials neared. However, we saw just how incredibly resilient we could be. Reaching out to people became more and more common. Teachers worked harder than ever to receive feedback from students on their lessons, ensuring that we could actually deal with the work that they gave and most importantly, provide as much support as possible. The hours-long facetime calls with friends became more frequent and we remembered how much we love our families, spending time with them and appreciating their steadfast presence throughout our lives. Animals were overjoyed to spend more time with their humans and all of this reminded us of the importance of connecting with our world and not just our material goals that we work so hard to achieve.

We began exercising regularly or at least tried to, where walking around our neighbourhoods and basking in the sun became a very popular pastime. Many of us picked up new hobbies and tried new activities, such as sewing, tie-dying, upcycling clothes or even the tabooed at-home hair dye jobs and DIY front fringes. For those who didn't lose their jobs, the money came rolling in with all the extra shifts, enabling a complete change in physical appearance by supporting big or small online retail stores, or trying all the food you had never dared eat before via uber eats.

Many universities, alongside ATARnotes, began offering webinars which were much easier to attend from the comfort of your home and provided significantly useful study tips and information. More and more resources became available and there was a small moment when everyone's sympathy towards HSC students provided some much-needed relief from the stress of this senior year. And after crying, reflecting and crying once more, many of us decided to seek help, calling counsellors, therapists and helplines for the first time and getting the help we knew, or maybe did not know, that we needed and deserved.

Self-isolation was not ideal. It was not amazing or fun or even slightly how most of us thought we would be spending our final year. However, the fact that it happened and we made it through and are still standing, smiling and trying our best to move forward showcases our strength and resilience against anything life can (and will) throw at us. Most importantly though, it shows that in our futures, whatever they may be, that we will continue to strive and to move forward regardless of what state the world is in. As Orwell once said, it's up to you.

Catherine Gill
Year 12 2020



Remote Learning Anecdotes From Our Teaching Staff

"Remote learning knows no boundary"

In one of my Year 11 Chemistry classes yesterday, I had a student who joined the online lesson while waiting for the train. All I could hear while explaining the allotropy of carbon including diamond, graphite and fullerene was "this train is terminating here, please do not join this train".

Tim Weston

Aside from all the wonderful online learning students were engaging in, it was also great to meet many of my student's pets, who often joined our live Zoom meetings!

Mitchell Baker

A student told me that her mother really enjoyed coming to English class.

Sarah Jefferey

I started my first Meet and my students asked to see my dogs who were milling around. I called to them and one jumped up to see who was speaking to him from the computer screen, stepped on the keypad and removed me from the meeting.

Robyn Herbert

We also had a bring your pet to online lesson day. One Year 11 class was full of dogs, 2 cats and a goldfish. My other Year 11 class, by contrast, brought a single kitten.

Adam Bernthaler

"I just finished watching the videos, and I just want to say I really like these video presentations! They are very informative and the fact that I can pause it to take notes is great for my learning! I'm absorbing a lot of the information, so I just wanted to tell you that I appreciate all the effort you put into our lessons so far!"

REPLY

PJ DAY

A small group of students successfully organised *PJ Day* for the Pyjama Foundation in July this year. By working with Leah, we made the day inclusive and colourful for all students. The core theme of the event was *'At night I dream!'*, which reinforces the Pyjama Foundation's installation of positive relationships into the fifty-one thousand fostered children that are estimated to be in the Australian care system. We celebrated the dedicated work that the Pyjama Foundation does to empower children with life skills that change the direction of their lives.

The event consisted of fun and interactive displays that contributed to our total charitable donation of almost four-hundred and sixty dollars. One such display was a photo wall that was decorated with gold and silver stars alongside a banner. Another display was the Dreaming Wall, where both students and teachers were able to write their dreams and future achievements on sticky notes, which were then placed on the wall. By the end of the day we had raised \$455.75!

Thank you to everyone who donated towards this amazing event, supported this wonderful foundation as well as to everyone who work tirelessly to make this day possible.

Chloe Sutcliffe
Year 12 2020





PURPLE MEANS VICTORY, 'CAUSE LOVE WINS

On Friday, August 28th 2020, St Marys Senior High School celebrated the annual **Wear It Purple Day**, organised by students who are part of PRISM at school, which is St Marys own student pride club. The campus was beautifully decorated with all the colours from the spectrum, including streams of purple and lilac throughout the whole school. Students were dressed in various shades of purple, showing solidarity to the cause and the LGBTQI community.



Throughout the course of the day, bells were playing songs significant to the LGBTQI community, beginning with the infamous Lady Gaga song, 'Born This Way'. "No Matter Gay, Straight, or Bi, Lesbian, Transgendered Life". Gaga sang through the speakers, conveying the message of support and acceptance of the LGBTQI community which was celebrated on Wear It Purple Day.

I interviewed PRISM founder, Remy Hannan, about the significance of Wear It Purple Day; she shared with me that, "Wear It Purple Day

comes from the Wear It Purple organisation, who do work with LGBTQ kids, so it's sort of an annual day at the end of August that a lot of schools and workplaces get involved in, wearing purple and donating as a sort of symbol of solidarity. So, I guess it's significance is that by participating in the Wear It Purple celebrations as a school we're embracing the values of compassion and inclusivity towards others."

As Wear It Purple Day holds such deep importance to the LGBTQI community, Remy also shared a message for the student body, "I'd just like to say thank you so much to everybody for getting involved. It's really genuinely heart-warming to see everybody wearing purple, showing their support and sharing the love. I know it was definitely sentimental to all of us who organised it. A lot of people probably don't realise how much their little actions to show solidarity can mean to LGBT students who are feeling isolated."

At the conclusion of the interview, Remy stated "I hope you guys had a good day - and enjoyed the bells, that was me - anyone is welcome to PRISM anytime, and Year 11 should get excited for next year.



PRISM and Wear It Purple are in good hands with the new leaders taking over.”

The St Marys Senior High School community is supportive of all individuals and aims to celebrate the LGBTQI community not only on Wear It Purple Day, but rather every day. Being a part of such a welcoming school community evokes a great sense of warmth.

Angelene Concepcion
Year 12 2020



Creative And Performing Arts Faculty

2020 has been a year like no other, and amidst the turmoil of it all, the amazing CAPA students of SMSHS have risen above the fray to emerge at the end of their courses with tremulous smiles and sighs of relief.

Term 3 for HSC CAPA students is a big one in any year, but this year they faced constantly changing parameters in their courses, both with assessment tasks and the practical HSC examinations themselves.

Nicole Bonfield
Head Teacher Creative and Performing Arts

DRAMA

Year 12 – HSC Practical Examination

The pinnacle of the HSC Drama course happened in Week 6, when the friendly NESA examiners visited and our students presented their Individual Performances and submitted their Individual Projects. It was exhilarating to watch; three terms of hard work culminating in talented young people performing at their peak. The examiners were impressed, too, because 5 of our 10 actors received On STAGE nominations! This means that these students will be considered for selection in the annual OnSTAGE program at the Seymour Centre in Sydney, where some of the best HSC performances and projects are showcased for a student and general public audience. Congratulations to all of our Drama students, but particularly to Elliott Cleary, Vincent D'Ermilio, Remy Hannan, Lia Matsoukas and Annika Svensson for their nominations.



OnSTAGE Nominees, L to R: Elliott Cleary, Remy Hannan, Lia Matsoukas, Annika Svensson, Vincent D'Ermilio



HSC DRAMA CLASS 2020

BACK ROW L to R: Elliott Cleary, Brandon Sharp, Lowrence Maring, Christopher Dixon, Clare Wentworth, Remy Hannan, Lia Matsoukas, Erin Lackey.

FRONT ROW L to R: Tara Neilsen, Vincent D'Ermilio, Annika Svensson

Year 11 – Irish Drama and Individual Projects

Year 11 Drama students presented confronting and hilarious scenes from the play 'The Beauty Queen of Leenane' for their studies in Irish Drama. For some, this was the first time they had performed for an audience, and for others it was an opportunity to further hone developing performance skills. But all students strived to achieve a personal best, and should all be proud of their presentations.

The end of the term saw the group complete their final assessment task for Preliminary Drama – an Individual Project similar to what they will be grappling with for the HSC. Our students presented works in costume design, promotion design, scriptwriting, video drama and performance. It was wonderful to see their satisfaction in their achievements after a challenging and difficult year. They should all be proud of themselves.

Nicole Bonfield
Head Teacher Creative and Performing Arts

VISUAL ARTS

The challenges of 2020 have brought considerably new methodologies for students to complete their Body of Works. Having to share the developments of their art online via digital versions of their diaries asked students to be resilient and creative in their delivery.

When it came to completing artworks in time for the HSC Visual Arts Exhibition in the MPC, students at SMSHS stepped up to curate an excellent exhibition reflecting the creative talents that students here are renowned for. This exhibition saw over 450 teachers, ancillary staff and students pass through to view the works on show well before closing time on the Friday. Nobody left disappointed and the majority of works can be viewed online by scanning the QR code below:



While viewing this website please vote for your favourite works by clicking on the link within.

Year 12 – Body of Work Exhibition

Kyle Foufas “Signed, Anon”



Morgan Iddles “Just Networking”



Emma Bonwick "Trash Meets Sea"



Tea' Donovan "Essence of Being"



Jennifer Greenaway "Close"



Zac Reeve "The Silent Cries of the educated Dead"



Tanisha Singh "Aging Architecture"



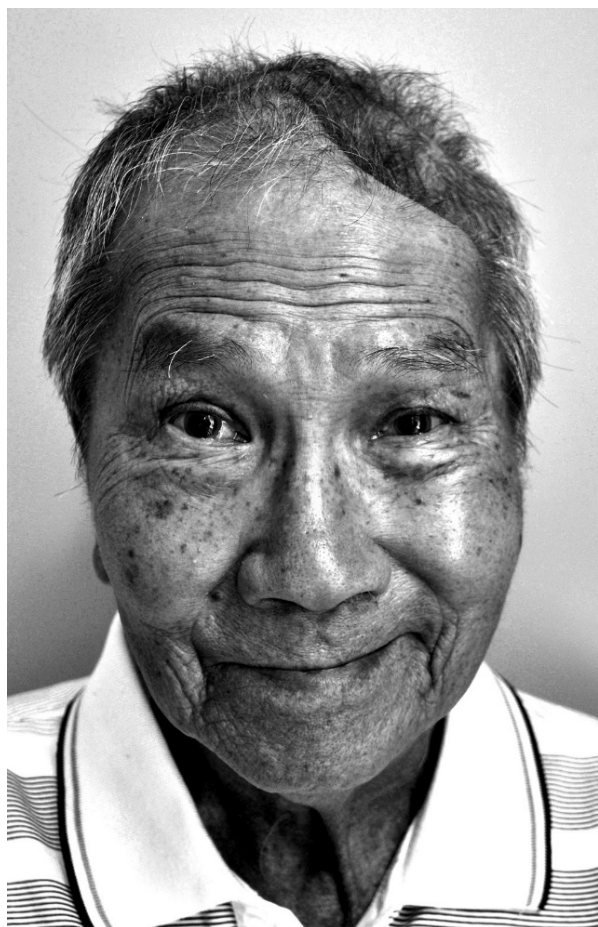
Emma Cutts "Earthborn Silhouettes"



Remy Hannan "My Beautiful Annabel Lee"



Lily Walton “Memory Line”



Micaela Camporar-Kaal



Year 11 – Visual Arts Exhibition

St Marys Senior High School, of which I am part of the art community, has recently held an installation art exhibition. Installation art is a three-dimensional genre of art that is often site-specific and designed to transform the perception of space. Throughout the course of a week students were given a chance to observe and interact with the installations as they viewed the exhibition. This exhibition showcased the creativity and abilities of the school’s Year 11 students as they created works centred around themes of their own choosing. It was an amazing opportunity to showcase school spirit as students interacted with the work and brought their friends along to have fun. These installation artworks really showcased the amazing abilities of the art students and showed the high level of effort put into their creations. We can look forward to more amazing artworks from these students.

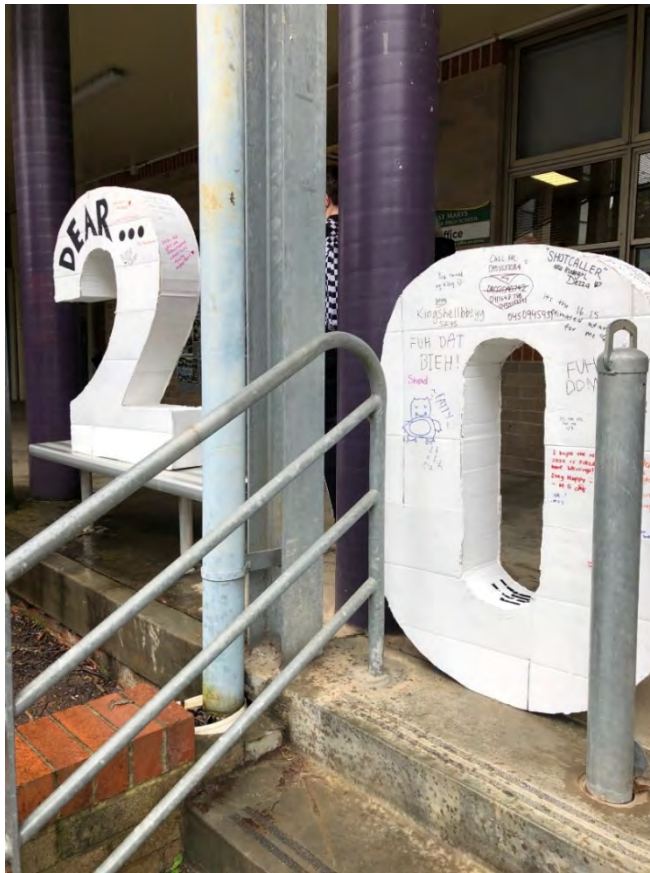
Rachel Elias
Year 11 2020

Follow the QR Code to access the Year 11 Visual Arts 2020 Installations Catalogue.



"Open Letter 2020"

Jake Zakostelsky, Levi Wynbergen Titoko, Georgina Loucataris & Milli Sargeant



"In My Hair" - Jessica Salanga

"Nostalgia" - Stephanie Campos, Mara Board



Mente Manuque – With mind and hand

"After the Storm"

Nirvana Shankar, Ella Munnings, Chrystal Gervacio & Kaavya Udaya Kumar



"Years Flying By"

Lily Petrovski, Alecksandra Favor,
Jay Mishra & Alyssa Villamoya



"Commercialised"

Ross Anciete, Moira Escudro & Marnie Crespo

Music

2020 has been an interesting year in the area of music. We have seen a small number of lunch concerts in Term 1 and 2 and only one event at the start of the year. As well as this, our students were able to get involved in the Valentine's Day and Academic Assembly performances.



Photo: Return to lunch concerts 2020

Year 12 Music

Students from Year 12 2020 have now completed their Practical Examinations. Students worked hard to put together their programs and delivered these to a high standard. Congratulations to all students who adapted with the ever-changing restrictions and rules around performance, especially our singers who had changes less than 48 hours before their examinations commenced.

In a normal Term Two, our students from Year 12 present part of their Higher School Certificate program for an audience but due to audience restrictions we moved to a digital format. A number of students volunteered their time to perform and film in the MPC. This meant these students filmed at least one piece for the showcase as well as acting as the audience for their peers.

Year 12 completed their final two weeks of term by preparing their special presentation for Graduation 2020. This year, like with most things in music, has meant we needed to approach and prepare in a very different way. A huge thank you to the students who took on this project as their own, supporting their peers through hours of additional work. The final product will be premiered later in Term 4 at Graduation.

Year 11 Music

Students from Year 11 Music prepared and presented a number of items for their Soiree event. Due to COVID restrictions this became a filmed event, which was then sent to parents to enjoy. The students adapted quickly to this new situation and presented a range of music from Mozart to Queen.



Photo: Year 11 Soiree 2020

Students pictured (Left to right): Sebastien Belleza, Mikhaila Ladines, Kryzhynn Guevara, Mycaz Medrano, CJ Rosa, Gavriel Gutierrez. On drums: Vincent Silang.

In Concert – Secondary Choral Festival brings together over 1600 students from NSW Public Schools to perform together. *In Concert* is a dazzling choral and instrumental music showcase featuring Australia's premier Public Schools Music Ensembles and the Combined Secondary Schools Choir at the beautiful Sydney Town Hall.

Year 11 and some Year 12 students attended the first combined rehearsal for *In Concert 2020* earlier this year. This required the students to learn a range of repertoire from classical choral music through to the latest from Australian artist Lior. Although *In Concert* has now been cancelled for 2020, we hope it will return in 2021, in some form, to get our students singing again.

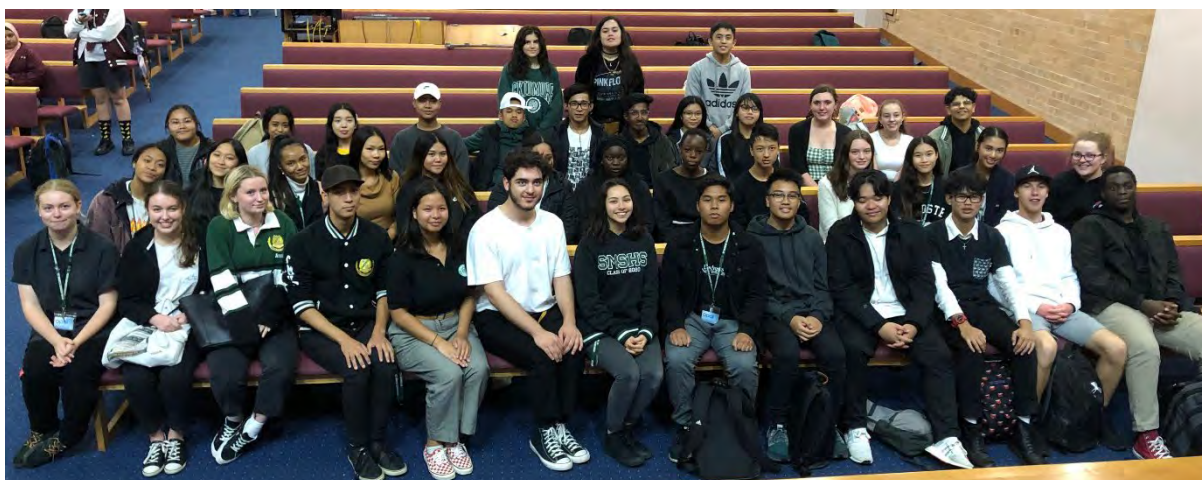


Photo: In Concert Rehearsal One 2020

Students from Year 11 Music have been preparing for their Evening of Musical Theatre presentation. Sadly, due to COVID-19 restrictions, this showcase was postponed and then ultimately cancelled due to the ever-changing nature of the virus. In an exciting turn of events the students were able to present one number, socially distant and on film, in the Multi-Purpose Centre under full stage lights to give them a sense of what the showcase would have been like. (See photo below)



Photo: I See Stars – Line 5 music

Front Row: Mycaz Medrano, Bella Sadler, Mikhaila Ladines

2nd Row: Jenaya Jacka, Guedy Athum, Jasmin Seko, Geneva Valencia

3rd Row: CJ Rosa, Anthony Manoukian, Brad Wade, Joel Cooke, James Swarbrick

4th Row: Gavriel Gutierrez, Vincent Silang, Sebastien Belleza, Ellen Margetts

5th Row: Heath Knight, Hatif Haydari, Isabella Antakley, Ashley Pineda, Kryzjhyynn Guevara

Talent Development Project

Kryzjhyynn Guevara has been successful in moving through a number of stages within the Talent Development Project as a singer/songwriter. This has been a huge effort on her part, and we are keen to see how she progresses through the remainder of the program.

A little bit about the TDP:

“Every year up to 80 public school students from around New South Wales are selected to take part in this unique program. Throughout a year of monthly master class workshops, conducted by industry experts, this number is reduced until only those deemed ready to begin a career in show business remain.”

For more information visit: <https://www.talentdevelopmentproject.org.au>

SMSHS Comments On Climate Change

For a long time, our generation has felt powerless in stopping the effects of climate change. In 2019, activist Greta Thunberg's revolutionary speech at the UN Climate Action Summit awoke and inspired many young people to bring the issue to world leaders through global protests.

My passion for climate justice was activated at the beginning of 2019. St Marys Senior High School boasted a number of clubs and other extracurricular opportunities, and I was drawn to the Environmental Awareness Club. Prior to my discovery of this club, my knowledge on environmental issues mainly stemmed from geography classes and I had some knowledge of the environmental damage to ecosystems, but no clue of the extent of damage that climate change threatened.

All through 2019, I was a regular attendee at the Environmental Awareness Club. We covered a variety of topics that encouraged me to conduct further research and educate myself, and with the Year Twelve students graduating, I found myself adopting the role of club leader. I shifted the name of the club to Environmental Club, hoping to prioritise both education and action and since then we have covered a variety of topics, including the treatment of marine mammals kept in captivity, World Oceans Day, and the negative impacts of elephant riding. Many topics have been directly linked to climate change - the devastating impacts of the NSW drought and fires, climate refugees in Bangladesh, and the destructive fires within the Amazon Rainforest. Climate change is a widespread humanitarian issue and it is my aim to make others realise that we do not have time for prolonged discussion - we must take action.

As leader of the Environmental Club, I was given the opportunity to advocate to my fellow peers, however, my leadership also proved to me that words without action are fruitless. Our world leaders hold the responsibility to reverse the impacts of climate change before it is too late, and we must continue to remind them of the need for a drastic shift to renewable energy. Deforestation and the burning of fossil fuels have destroyed the climate to such an extent, that an entire generation is in fear of not having a future to look forward to.

Following the devastating bushfires, students all across NSW protested for increased action from policymakers and politicians - on a state, local and federal level. In 2019, on the 29th November, the Global Climate Strike took place and hundreds of thousands of individuals all over the world unified for the cause of climate justice. Fridays for Future continues to demonstrate vigilance for the cause with Global Digital Strikes, allowing individuals to raise their voice and express their solidarity for the movement.

We discovered that protesting brings change, and we will not stop until we are sure that our futures are bright.

Areeba Ahmed
Year 12 2020

“Adults keep saying: “We owe it to the young people to give them hope.” But I don’t want your hope. I don’t want you to be hopeful. I want you to panic. I want you to feel the fear I feel every day. I want you to act. I want you to act as you would in a crisis. I want you to act as if the house is on fire, because it is.”

This powerful quote is derived from Greta Thunberg’s speech delivered at the World Economic Forum in Davos, which is very familiar and influential to many of us after gaining massive traction online. Thunberg, a 17-year-old climate activist, began the climate strike movement after individually protesting in front of the Swedish parliament, holding a sign that read ‘School Strike for Climate.’ This seemingly insignificant event has since inspired the youth of today from all corners of the globe to gain a sense of collective awareness and responsibility in order to protect and save our deteriorating climate. I stumbled upon this very compelling speech whilst scrolling through social media, and ever since then, my passion for activism has grown. Choosing to adopt a plant-based diet and being outspoken about the environmental issues that arise from participating and using certain products or activities, Greta Thunberg’s words forced me to expand my perspective beyond the impacts of my personal choices. Social and political change must be enforced, and our politicians must do better.

I participated in my first ‘School Strike for Climate’ protest on the 15th of March 2019 in Sydney. Accompanied by one of my best friends, as well as being surrounded by a plethora of students still dressed in their uniform, holding witty and educational signs really made me realise the impact that the climate crisis has on young people such as myself. This was no joke. I mingled and spoke to strangers about their participation in the strike, and many expressed the disapproval they received from their parents in regard to skipping school. However, the same people all shared the similar belief that their activism is more vital and time sensitive than attending school. It was by no means an act of rebellion, but a true act of compassion and humanity that this generation cooperatively holds.

The common complaint I hear is regarding people assuming that all these kids are participating solely to miss school and skip classes. That is not the case at all. Because if action is taken to maintain and/or preserve the health of our earth by our leaders and adults, your kids would not have to sacrifice their time and education to fight for a future that they fear would not exist.

Mary-Crystal Chung
Year 12 2020

The beginning of 2020 went up in flames and with that our hope that today's government would declare a climate emergency. As teenagers it shouldn't be our responsibility to be the voice for the future of the planet, that we all call home. However, the burden lies with us; this has given many a newfound anxiety as their future could be extinguished and as "children" we will be left vulnerable to the aftermath that is yet to fully show its ugly head. This has inspired and empowered millions, many who are still in school.

The deterioration of our country's economy and environment has become increasingly more visible as the circumstances have revealed to many Australians the effects that the dirty gas industry has had on our dying land. Last year's heat wave was the hottest on record as the highest temperature that was reported was 50.7 degrees Celsius. It is predicted that it is only going to become worse as time goes on unless something is done to stop it.

On the 25th of September many people came together to take action in order to help save not only the environment but also our economy as millions of taxpayers' money has been pledged to be given and used by the companies that have put dirty gas into the air as well as destroying sacred Indigenous Land. There were over 600 actions that took place on this day, many run and organised by school students.

I was one of the organisers for the Penrith Climate Change Rally while finishing off my final year here at St Marys Senior High School. It was an incredible experience that will hopefully have a long-lasting impact on the Council. Our demands were as followed:

No public funds for gas and other damaging fossil fuel projects. Instead, recovery funds should be spent on:

- Resourcing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led solutions that guarantee land rights and care for country.
- The creation of jobs that fast-track solutions to the climate crisis and help communities recover.
- Projects that transition our economy and communities to 100% renewable energy by 2030, through expanded public ownership.

These demands are to help ensure a healthier, safer and long-lasting future not only for the current generation but the generations that are yet to come.

Chloe Sutcliffe
Year 12 2020

YOU ARE CHERISHED, LOVED AND VAL-YOU'D



The beauty of St Marys Senior High School is the warm and welcoming ambience of the student body and school community. On July 1st 2020, Fatfish and YFC launched the annual VALYOU day of celebration and captured the vibrancy of the student body. This day had been carefully planned and crafted by the members of both the Fatfish Family and YFC groups and finally came into fruition!

Individuality, self-care and unity are encouraged and celebrated here at St Marys Senior High School. Some members of the Fatfish Family and YFC shared some thoughts on VALYOU day:

Micah Fernandez stated, *“VALYOU Day aimed to provide the greater school community with hope, joy and love. As part of the Fatfish team, cooperating with the YFC team was an absolute joy. With over \$770 dollars raised for the charity BeyondBlue, we were astounded and appreciative of the support and love the St Marys Community shared and contributed, not only on that day, but always. It was a day that really portrays the spirit of the school. We’re really proud of how ValYou day went this year despite everything going on in the world”*

YFC team member Lexi Barcelon shared affirmations for the student body, *“Know that you are truly loved and valued! Whatever adversity you may be going through, we’re praying for you and we hope everything will get better.”* Christelle Salimbangon also expressed, *“Nobody is perfect, but there is value in all the little things you do and your imperfections which bring colour to the world.”*

The St Marys Senior High School community aims to share and create an atmosphere of positivity and care, VALYOU day being a celebration of these values.

Angelene Concepcion
Year 12 2020



[Left to right: Lawrence Maring, Jeveshni Sen, Juan Valiamannil, Christelle Salimbangon, Alfred Paje, Joshua Romero, Mikael Falculan, Trisha Marie Cunanan, Alyssa Bergonia]

Taken from @FatfishFamily on Instagram



Taken from @yfcsmshs

Members of both Fatfish Family and YFC

SMSHS Heritage Day 2020



Mente Manuque – With mind and hand



The High School Finish Line Is Here!

We embarked on this journey at the very start of 2019 and what a completely insane journey it's been. A journey full of both tears and laughter.

As we walked through the gates on our very first Tuesday morning at St Marys Senior High, we had many expectations of how we wanted to live out our final years, ready for a fresh start. Little did we know that these two years would forever define how we would recall our high school years and the impact it will have on us for the rest of our lives. If any of you are like me, all I wanted through the majority of Year 11, was to fit in, to thrive and not be looked at differently. I was wrong. We were wrong. We quickly realised that we needed to find our unique voice and place, one we would be proud of. A voice which many of us had found and a voice that may still be forming.

To my fellow Year 12 students, we may not have had the final year we hoped for, but we did make friendships and memories to last. Perhaps like me, you came into St Marys with a clear vision of what you wanted, but we were faced with challenges and obstacles that we could have never perceived. Over the last two years, friendships were formed and broken but most of all, we learnt. Although that claim may come under scrutiny, it doesn't need to only refer to academic learning. Reflect. Reflect upon the past two years, every failure and every success, we learnt after we failed an assessment, to make sure we succeeded in the next. We learnt more about ourselves this year than we may ever learn.

To my fellow Year 12 students, we made it. Those sleepless nights because we left our assignments to the last minute, the assemblies and free periods, they are almost gone. It was a time we felt would take generations to come, yet, here we are, it has finally come. As you walk through the school on your final days, remember the spot where you and your friends would always hang out, the Library and LC where we would stressfully print our assignments, the CAF where so many of us would gather and your classrooms, the ones you never really wanted to be in but they will soon feel like a distant memory.

Thank your teachers, your fellow students, and yourself. It has definitely been an insanely challenging year, so give others and yourself some credit. You may not have received the marks you really wanted or worked as hard as you anticipated, but you made it through.

To my fellow Year 12 students, thank you for the memories and experiences. These are two years I will never forget. Take your time and don't rush, whatever is ahead on your journey.

Now... release the breath you've held in for so long, it's time for a new endeavour.

Yustina El-Rab
Year 12 2020



Our Staff Teams

Principal:	Sally Smithard
School Leadership Team:	
- Deputy Principal (Year 12)	Danielle Ervine
- Deputy Principal (Year 11)	Leah Havord
- English	Julie Robinson
- Mathematics	Simone Pett
- Science	Lidija Radovancevic
- Commercial Studies	Salochna Reddy
- HSIE (Rel)	Rebecca Langham
- CAPA	Nicole Bonfield
- Computing	Matthew Topp
- LOTE	Luigi Serra
- TAS/PDHPE	Rebecca Powell
- Secondary Studies	Liz Hemmings
- Learning and Wellbeing	Melissa Jacka
- First Australians	Leah Havord
- Sport and Recreation	Joanne Brines
- Business Manager (Acting)	Rebecca Zinghini
- School Administrative Manager (Rel)	Kim Everett
Student Advisers:	
- Year 12, Surnames A-G	Mitchell Baker
- Year 12, Surnames H-O	Lyn Tuckwell
- Year 12, Surnames P-Z	Jesse Vassallo
- Year 11, Surnames A-G	Nicola Preston
- Year 11, Surnames H-O	Luigi Serra
- Year 11, Surnames P-Z	Tim Weston
Student Support Officer:	Caitlin Lambourne
Learning Support:	Carmel Harriden Dianne Pyne Nicole Leong Carly McPherson Ashlee Pleffer
Careers Adviser:	Lyn Tuckwell

Contact us



St Marys Senior High School
Kalang Avenue
St Marys NSW 2760



02 9623 8333



stmaryssen-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au



St Marys Senior High School Official Site -
Facebook



St Marys Senior High School -
Skoolbag App

South Creek Production Team

Kerri-Anne Brown – Teacher Librarian
Angelene Concepcion
Yustina El-Rab
Catherine Gill
Chloe Sutcliffe

Thank you to all the staff
and students who
contributed articles for this
edition of the
South Creek Magazine.