

# The Bell

The Tuckwell  
Scholarship  
2023 Edition



Australian  
National  
University



TUCKWELL  
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

# TheBell

The annual magazine for the Tuckwell Scholarship Program



Australian  
National  
University



TUCKWELL  
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM





# Welcome to the 2023 edition of *The Bell* magazine.

Join us as we reflect on the year that was.

This publication takes its name from the Tuckwell Handbell, commissioned by Drs Graham and Louise Tuckwell AO and crafted at London's Whitechapel Bell Foundry. The chime of this bell is the first sound to hit the ears of each new Scholar as they are 'rung in' at the annual Commencement dinner. The ring of the bell is fleeting, yet significant; it signals the beginning of each new Scholar's journey at The Australian National University.

This scholarship transforms its recipients by providing opportunities to chase their passions and hone their skills, so that they may one day share them with their communities. This annual magazine seeks to capture these unique endeavours and showcase what the Scholarship makes possible for every individual. The Bell also provides updates on our ever evolving community for all Scholars, staff and alumni within the Tuckwell and broader ANU communities.

In this edition you will catch a glimpse of not only the exciting ventures of Scholars, but also the tireless passion and support of our staff that make this Program so valuable.

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# From the Editors



Left to right: Blaize Steele, Kate Snashall and Luke McNamara

We are pleased to introduce the 2023 edition of The Bell. It seems just a minute ago that us editors started our first year at the ANU, and so it was but a few split-seconds ago that we began the process of compiling and editing this edition of The Bell.

In 2024 we will be celebrating the 10th year of the Tuckwell Program, and so we are proud to add this year's articles to the growing repository of stories, memories, and achievements that is The Bell. After perusing through the cohort reflections within this edition – going back to 2018 – we can clearly see that every scholar is innately driven and determined. A bit of fire in their belly, one may say!

What is most extraordinary about the memories and achievements recorded in this edition is their diversity. There is no significant bias towards any one discipline or activity.

It reaffirms the phrase (so often uttered at Interview Weekend in particular) that there is no model of a Tuckwell Scholar. Whilst many articles within this edition follow the course of regular Tuckwell events such as the Academic Dinner and the Interview Weekend, they also traverse topics such as Singaporean self-actualisation, attitudes towards Anzacs, and reconsidering Reconciliation.

This edition of The Bell also marks a sad farewell to Ryan. His five years as Head of Scholars House have been a gift to the Program. As Head of Scholars House, Ryan truly set a wonderful tone for the year and example for all of us to emulate. Nevertheless, we look forward to many years of what Ryan so aptly terms 'presumptive friendship.'

Thank you again, Ryan.

Finally, we would like to extend our thanks to those without whom this edition would not be possible. To the Scholars' House team, especially Lois and Kim, thank you for helping keep us unruly editors in line and ensuring The Bell was produced on time. Thank you also to our beloved contributors for putting aside the time to record your thoughts for generations of Scholars past and to come. To both those who came before us and to those yet to come, we offer this edition as a snapshot of 2023.

From your editors,  
Luke, Blaize, and Kate



# From Graham and Louise Tuckwell

This year we have reached a number of important milestones, so it is important to celebrate these and to reflect on what has been achieved in the Tuckwell Scholarship program.

Commencement in February 2024 will be a gala event, celebrating “Ten Years of Tuckwell”, to which all Alumni and Scholars will be invited. Also being invited are the many people who have played an important role in developing the program and who are known to the early-year Scholars, so it will be a wonderful opportunity to catch up.

This is also an important event for our family and represents the first steps in the program very gradually being moved to our next generation, as and when they are ready. Our four children, who are of similar ages to the older Scholars, will be flying in from around the world to be there.

The Head of Scholars House is a five-year appointment which means we now must bid a sad farewell to Associate Professor Ryan Goss. It is difficult to overstate the contribution Ryan has made to the program and how much he will be missed. He started as a selection panellist with us in 2016 and since then we, along with all Scholars, staff, and others who have worked with him, have benefitted from his wisdom, kindness and intelligence. Last month, Ryan received the Chancellor’s Award for Distinguished Contribution to the University in recognition of his leadership of the Tuckwell Scholarship program. This is a huge honour, and we should all be basking in reflected glory.

Ryan will be succeeded by one of our Tuckwell Fellows, Dr Michelle Barrett, who has been appointed as the third Head of Scholars House. Michelle brings an enormous breadth of experience to the role, being a GP, a practice owner employing ten doctors, a medical officer for the Royal Flying Doctors Service and a Senior Lecturer at ANU. We very much look forward to working with her.

The rock star of our program from the outset, Distinguished Professor Brian Schmidt, who was on our inaugural selection panel before becoming Vice-Chancellor, has now stepped down from that role after eight years. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Brian for the enormous support he has given to the program and look forward to him being involved again, in whatever capacity, when he is ready. We look forward to working closely with Distinguished Professor Genevieve Bell as the new Vice-Chancellor.

The Tuckwell Scholarship program has grown to be a substantial and multifaceted organisation, where we all value the history and core values which are being built up. Based on ten years of experience, we recently updated the underlying legal structure of the program by merging the initial Trust Deed and other agreements into a single Tuckwell Scholarship Agreement which now contains a Charter and all the Program Policies. This was a huge milestone, and we are grateful to Amy McCudden (Deputy General Counsel) and Grady Venville (DVC Academic) for all their work and support on this.

As the program and body of alumni grow, so does our family. The photo of us this year is with our grandchildren Amelia and Angus, a few days after he was born.



# From the Staff



Jessica Law (2019), Lachlan Anderson (2020) and Ryan Goss at the 2023 Academic Dinner

## A/ Prof. Ryan Goss — Head of Scholars House

In the very first edition of *The Bell*, Graham and Louise Tuckwell said that the ‘success of Scholars House is crucial to us and we feel the foundations have been laid for a dynamic future’. In this publication, the tenth edition of *The Bell*, and at the end of my fifth year as Head of Scholars House, I am proud to say we find ourselves in that dynamic future.

This is an extraordinary community: a community of Scholars, alumni, staff, philanthropists, and friends across ANU and beyond. We have built that community together, learnt from each other, and grown together. It has not always been smooth sailing individually or collectively. But it has been a privilege to help lead the Tuckwell Scholarship Program over the last five years. I know I will always be grateful that the ANU asked me to take on this role for an extended period of time, and asked me to do so at this stage of my ANU career. I hope I have kept up my end of the bargain.

On coming into the role my goal was this: to empower our Scholars and staff, to imbue everything we do with trust and respect for our Scholars and staff, and to give ANU and the Tuckwells every confidence that Scholars House was thriving and succeeding in bringing to life the future that the ANU-Tuckwell vision foresaw. These last five years we have sought to take the Program from its ‘start-up’ phase to a more stable, enduring, entrenched part of the broader ANU community. There is still much work to be done, both before I finish up in early 2024 and beyond, but I’m proud of what we have accomplished together.

Indeed, on reflecting on the role of Head of Scholars House, I think the great challenge and reward of the role is in the continuous need to assess and balance the interests and priorities of ANU, our philanthropic founders, our Scholars, alumni, and staff – especially where those interests and priorities sometimes compete – and to try to discern where lay the interests and priorities of the *Tuckwell Scholarship Program*. This has been a

fascinating exercise to undertake on a weekly basis, and I will miss it.

The chance to get to know our Scholars, and to have running conversations with them over months and years, is a great privilege. It is a rare role to be able to welcome students on their first day on campus and also congratulate them on their graduation day – or to meet their parents at Commencement and then again, a few years later, at graduation. Those conversations have ranged widely from study to careers to culture and politics, with plenty of laughter, some tears, and some tough conversations too.

Our events and activities are always a highlight of the year. In 2023, my favourites included a return to Camp at Birrigai (and a puffed Head of Scholars House failing to keep up with IB runners on the morning jog), our first ever Senior Scholars Symposium at Mt Stromlo, a great Network event at Kambri, and our biggest ever Academic Dinner at the National Museum. Scholars House has also been buzzing this year with study, card games, and whiteboard-scrawling.

I am conscious, as one Alumni Scholar recently mocked me, that this article should not turn into George Washington's Farewell Address. But 'my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe'. We cannot forget that the Tuckwell Scholarship Program is the product of a visionary act of philanthropy. In that context, I will always be grateful for years of trust, support, advice, and fierce loyalty from Graham and Louise. We have certainly had our arguments (robust discussions?) over the years, but they have all ended with a grin and a shared a vision for the Program. I am also grateful for the support of quite a number of senior members of the broader ANU, first and foremost Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic Grady Venville and Vice Chancellor Brian Schmidt. Grady and Brian have been unfailingly supportive and responsive, generous with their time, and always eager to hear what our Scholars are up to. Throughout my time as Head of Scholars House, I've worked part-time to reflect my parenting responsibilities; I'll always be grateful to ANU and the Tuckwells for supporting me in this, and to my partner and family for their support.

We have had three amazing Program Directors during my time at Head of Scholars House, without whom the Program would not be what it has become. To Tim Mansfield, Andrew Swan, and Fiona Scotney, my enormous thanks. Working with Fiona and her team this year has been to witness thoughtful strategic leadership – and has been a lot of fun. In addition to Tim, Andrew, and Fiona, my thanks to our staff team members over the years, Adi, Tess, Nette, Tim, Lois, Kim, Fi, Tanya, and to our succession of generously dedicated Fellows, Chris, AJ, Anneka, Amy, Iain, Esmé, Richard, Rebecca, Michelle, and Maryna. The ANU has been fortunate to have so many academic and professional staff who are eager to make a contribution to the Tuckwell Scholarship Program – that good fortune really must not be taken for granted.

Above all, as every year, I am grateful to our Scholars and our alumni. I have learnt so much from you. I admire your energy, compassion, intelligence, and good humour. We rightly celebrate Scholars who achieve landmarks, prizes, and awards. But in hundreds of conversations over the last five years, I know that often what goes uncelebrated is your persistence and humility, your thoughtfulness, your consideration for others – even at times of personal difficulty or distress. I will miss our conversations. Keep in touch: I can't wait to see what you do next.



## **Dr. Fiona Scotney – Program Director**

### **Reflections on the departure of Head of Student House, Ryan Goss.**

Since January 2019, Associate Professor Ryan Goss has made substantial and distinguished contributions to the Tuckwell Scholarship Program as the Head of Scholars House, a unique role which reports directly to the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic) and oversees the Tuckwell Scholarship Program. Ryan was appointed to this role after having been a member of the Program's Selection Panel for several years. As his five-year tenure comes to an end, it is timely to reflect and acknowledge Ryan's contributions to the Program, the University, and the Tuckwell community which he has been instrumental in building.

Ryan's stewardship has successfully transformed the Program from a 'start-up' phase into an embedded part of the university's operations and key component of the University's ambitions to deliver an unrivalled and transformative undergraduate student experience. Ryan has spearheaded several key reforms that have produced a recognisable maturity in the Program's structure and activities. Ryan has established a number of significant recurring events for the Program, including the Senior Scholars Symposium, First Year Experience Program, Alumni Reception, and Academic Dinner. He has also maintained and developed important traditions which bookend each academic year, including Tuckwell Commencement Weekend and Graduation Pancakes with the Vice-Chancellor. These initiatives have not only made concrete and impactful contributions to the Program and ANU, but have produced a Scholarship Program that is world-class and reflective of international best practice.

In addition to his stewardship, Ryan has also played a crucial role in developing Scholars House as a vibrant space for community connection and learning. Ryan's dedication to student support and mentorship is profound, as are his efforts to foster intellectual curiosity and critical thinking. His influence goes beyond the classroom and ANU campus, guiding students in their post-university, postgraduate and professional journeys. His collaborative spirit and commitment to inclusivity and diversity create a positive environment, championing ANU institutional values.



His achievements are particularly noteworthy in light of the challenges associated with COVID-19. Ryan has provided calm, long-sighting leadership to convert such challenges into opportunities for the Program.

Ryan has built a high-performing team of academic and professional staff who are similarly committed to the Program and to delivering the ANU-Tuckwell vision. Under his leadership, the team has grown to meet the needs of an expanding Program, which now includes over 100 current Scholars and 120 Alumni.

Thank you Ryan for your passion, commitment, and thoughtful leadership over the last eight years. Best wishes for your future endeavours, we will be following along with interest. Below are some testaments to your time as the Head of Scholars House from across the Tuckwell community.

We cannot speak highly enough of the transformative impact Ryan has had on the Tuckwell Scholarship Program. He has led it from strength to strength and his innate leadership qualities and character make him a great mentor and role model for scholars and staff alike. What a wonderful ambassador he is for our program and ANU.

#### **Dr Graham Tuckwell AO and Dr Louise Tuckwell AO**

I was a member of the Tuckwell Program from its second year and am now an alum, and I have known Ryan both in his capacity as Head of Scholars House and as a law lecturer. Ryan has always been generous and selfless with this time, particularly in listening to feedback from Scholars and in advocating for Scholars' interests and well-being to the Tuckwell Board and the University. He has also personally mentored me and assisted me with academic and career advice. His leadership has been pivotal in transforming and consolidating the Program from what was essentially a basic start-up into a successful and thriving community of Scholars.

#### **Jonathan Tjandra (2015 Scholar)**

Ryan is committed to supporting and mentoring Tuckwell alumni through their life-journeys well after their time at ANU concludes. He has always led by example—showing scholars and alumni what it means to demonstrate the broad range of Tuckwell Scholar attributes. Ryan's dedication to the Tuckwell Scholarship Program is an exemplar of what it means for ANU to deliver a student experience equal to the world's best.

#### **Caitlyn Baljak (2017 Scholar)**

Ryan has made an immeasurable contribution to all of us Scholars through his long-term vision of fostering a genuine self-sustaining community at ANU (and beyond through our alumni) that supports its members through sharing knowledge, experiences and connections. He is generous with his time and wisdom for each person within the community, fostering individual relationships with each Scholar and allowing us to fulfil our whole potential at ANU and beyond.

#### **Elise Rawlinson (2020 Scholar)**

Ryan has guided me and my fellow Scholars through university with an unmatched generosity of spirit and a deep commitment to seeing us thrive. He always has a piece of sage advice when it's needed most; his fierce intellect and caring disposition is a unique combination that brings out the best in each of us.

#### **Henry Palmerlee (2020 Scholar)**

Ryan's work for the Tuckwell Scholarship Program has fundamentally guided its development and built its reputation. Though humble about his career, Ryan has taken the best parts of his experience, particularly as a Rhodes Scholar, and has used it to elevate and guide the development of the Tuckwell Scholarship Program. For example, the strong bonds within and between cohorts are largely due to his principle of 'presumptive friendships', a principle that has become a foundational pillar of the Program's success.

#### **Mariane Johnstone (2021 Scholar)**

Ryan's humble demeanour, willingness to serve and sound insight has translated to a scholarship community that in its infancy has won countless distinguished academic awards/scholarships, initiated charitable and volunteer organisations, won international disciplinary competitions, competed at the highest levels of sport and graduated hundreds of scholars who will continue to drive change across Australia. His wisdom is imparted while he orates at events, over a coffee, on the deck of Scholar's House or on the lawns of the School of Law. While at first it may not appear meaningful or relevant, Ryan's insight has an uncanny quality of appearing in moments of need. As such it lives vicariously in the staff, students and Tuckwell Scholars he has mentored who have a habit of going on to do great things.

#### **Guy Archibald (2022 Scholar)**



Tuckwell Commencement Dinner 2016



Commencement 2020  
(Ryan, Graham, Louise and Brian Schmidt)



2021 Academic Dinner  
(Ryan, AJ Mitchell and Andrew Swan)



2022 Networks Event  
(Ryan, Fiona Scotney and Grady Venville)



2023 Winter celebration  
(Ryan the lion)





## Dr. Maryna Bilokur Tuckwell Fellow

This year has brought a truly unique and joyful experience to my life as I stepped into the role of the Tuckwell Fellow. Working closely with the Tuckwell team has provided me with valuable insights into the behind-the-scenes efforts that contribute to the success of this unique fellowship program.

It has been truly remarkable to observe how Tuckwell Scholars seize the opportunity to explore the world, participating in international programs that provide them with a profound understanding of local cultures. Whether immersing themselves in the history of France, learning the local language, or experiencing the beauty of Europe through travel, these experiences contribute to the holistic growth of these students. This global perspective further enriches the Tuckwell community, fostering an environment where curiosity, cultural appreciation, and academic excellence intersect.

Being a part of the Tuckwell community allowed me to witness the immense dedication of Tuckwell Scholars to making a positive impact. I was continually inspired by their passion for social change, leadership, and innovation. The discussions about their post-graduation plans reveal a collective aspiration to contribute meaningfully to society. Witnessing their diverse goals, from addressing the needs of remote communities in Australia and spearheading the ANU Women in STEM Leadership Conference to venturing into international PhD programs or establishing renewable energy initiatives, fills me with optimism about the positive changes they will bring to the world. As I reflect on the year, I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of a community that not only values academic excellence but also emphasizes the importance of making a positive change on our society.



## Dr. Iain Henry Tuckwell Fellow

2023 has been a terrific year for many in the Tuckwell program. With the acute, pandemic phase of COVID behind us, Scholars have been travelling the world both on academic exchanges, and holidays between semesters. It has been exciting to chat with those on, or recently returned from, these journeys: to hear of their adventures, and to notice the expansion of their mental horizons. Suddenly, all sorts of previously unthought-of possibilities emerge: a future masters degree in the UK, interning in Singapore, or ambitious holiday plans to explore Scandinavia. Others have successfully concluded their degrees despite all the challenges experienced throughout the early 2020s, and it is especially thrilling to celebrate these successes with them.

But this has also been a challenging year for our nation, and world. Events overseas, and closer to home, illustrate problems that will likely persist for years to come. How can we improve racial equality in Australia? How can we reduce political polarisation and disunity? How can we best respond to conflicts in Europe and the Middle East, and hopefully prevent such horrors in Asia? How can we prevent further climate change, even as we deal with the short-term challenges it presents (especially in the Australian summer)? These are questions that our Tuckwell Scholars — past, present, and future — will engage with in coming years. I know, from a number of conversations throughout 2023, that many Scholars are grappling with a renewed interest and concern about the state, and trajectory, of our world. The challenges loom large, and may seem insurmountable, but I am impressed by the determination of so many Scholars to identify and strengthen their unique talents, so that they can make the most positive contribution that they can. Onwards!



## Dr. Michelle Barrett Tuckwell Fellow

April 2023 saw me join Team Tuckwell as a Fellow. It has been a revelatory time. As a GP and academic in the medical school it was lovely to discover that when talking to the Scholars my job was not to try to teach them as students, nor to try to treat them as patients, but just to listen and guide. The Scholars' perceptive and piercing questions have led to deep and wide-ranging conversations. I have delighted in hearing the Scholars' passion for their disciplines. After decades practicing and teaching only Medicine talk of Pacific Studies, History, Law, Chemistry, Maths and Politics has been fascinating, and, I had no idea there were so many cafes on campus.

I also marvel at the wonderful opportunity the Scholars have created for themselves at such a young age. The achievement of becoming a Tuckwell, and the sense of duty that they understand. They have the joy of being able to live two lives – a delightfully unruly one in their colleges and an ebulliently studious one at Scholars House.

Scholars House has also been a revelation. A very Canberra house, complete with natural light and surrounding gums. Fiona, Lois, Kim and Tanya manage to make it a welcoming home, as well as a highly efficient, innovative work place. These people, the Scholars, the place, the distinguished HOSH and my fellow Fellows have led me to conclude this is the best job I have ever had!



## A/Prof. Richard Burns Tuckwell Fellow

This year's reflection marks the end of my third year with the Tuckwell program. The past year unfolded with a significant milestone — my first 'real' camp. And it was an auspicious start for our 2023 cohort, revealing their willingness to engage, but also the exemplary leadership of our older Scholars that persisted not only during orientation and camp but throughout the entire year. Their willingness to extend a hand of friendship echoes the camaraderie that defines the Tuckwell community. The grand events, adorned in fancy attire, were undeniable highlights, but the true treasures lie in the meaningful connections forged between Scholars and staff. Engaging in one-on-one conversations with fellow Scholars and alumni unveiled the remarkable range of endeavours pursued, and affords opportunity to exchange invaluable life lessons. A vivid memory emerges of our virtual meeting with the 2024 Scholars, their eagerness to begin new chapters echoing the enthusiasm we all felt before we embarked on our own higher education journey. But, even simple pleasures, including our staff lunch, became cherished moments; sharing the spoils of war and savouring one of the VC's rare but still moderately priced pinots with colleagues illuminated the essence of Tuckwell—a community bound not only by shared goals but by the joy of collective experiences. So, as I bid farewell to our graduates, some I've known personally for three years, I celebrate the cyclical nature of life's pattern. And especially with the impending 10-year celebrations, the enduring friendship within the Tuckwell community, and the profound connections that transcend grand events, encapsulating the true essence of this transformative program. See you in 2024.

# Graduating Scholars in 2023

This year we had many Scholars graduating from their programs and from the Tuckwell Program. We would like to congratulate them and thank them for their contributions to the Scholars House community.

Name	Graduating
Angus Atkinson (2020)	Bachelor of Advanced Computing
Patrick O'Farrell (2017)	Doctor of Medicine and Surgery
Stephanie Barton (2019)	Bachelor of Laws (Hons)/Bachelor of Political Science
Sam Gollings (2020)	Bachelor of Actuarial Studies/ Bachelor of Philosophy, Politics and Economics
Nikita Nunn (2021)	Bachelor of Science (Advanced)
Ethan Farrelly (2019)	Bachelor of Engineering/Bachelor of Economics
Grace Underhill (2019)	Bachelor of Laws (Hons)/Bachelor of Arts
Stephanie Lunn (2021)	Bachelor of Science
Jonny Lang (2018)	Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Commerce
Jaxen Wells (2019)	Bachelor of Science
Cole Johnson (2019)	Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science (Psych)
Max Kirkby (2019)	Bachelor of Philosophy-Science (Hons)
Ben Harms (2020)	Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Philosophy, Politics and Economics
Wyatt Raynal (2019)	Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of International Security Studies
Tom Gilbert (2019)	Bachelor of Laws (Hons)/Bachelor of Commerce
Bridget Lunn (2020)	Bachelor of Philosophy-Science
Marissa Ellis (2020)	Bachelor of Philosophy-Science (Hons)
Riley Guyatt (2020)	Bachelor of Environment & Sustainability-Honours
Jess Law (2019)	Bachelor of Engineering/Bachelor of Science
Sebastian Tierney (2019)	Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Philosophy, Politics and Economics
Luka Mijnders (2019)	Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science
Charlie O'Neill (2019)	Bachelor of Economics/Bachelor of Science
Vanessa Divet (2018)	Bachelor of Engineering/Bachelor of Science





2023 Senior Scholar Symposium at Mount Stromlo Observatory



Graduation Pancakes at Scholar's House

# Scholar Achievements

This year our Scholars celebrated many amazing achievements in the Tuckwell community. This page reflects just a selection of those achievements.

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**Bryce Robinson (2014 Tuckwell Scholar) for being awarded a 2023 Fullbright scholarship (Postgraduate)**

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**Jonah Hansen (2016) was accepted for the award of PhD for his thesis, "Advancing Optical and Infrared Interferometry in Space."**

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**Lachlan Diemel (2017) successfully defended his thesis at the Sir William Dunn School of Pathology, Oxford University**

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**Martha Reece (2019) was recognised with the TH Laby Medal from the Australian Institute of Physics (AIP)**

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**Sam Saunders (2014 Scholar) was awarded a 2023 Ramsay Postgraduate Scholarship, a Jesus College-BCL Faculty Scholarship and a James Fairfax Oxford Australia Scholarship (Honorary)**

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**Louis Becker (2016) was accepted into the PhD program at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)**

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**Isaac Martin (2020), Rohan Torok (2010) completed the 2023 Solar Challenge from Darwin to Adelaide with the ANU Solar Racing Team**

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**Sebastian Viner (2021) competed in the 2023 Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race**

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**Mariane Johnstone (2021) and Marissa Ellis (2020) co-directed the 2023 ANU Women in STEM Leadership Conference**

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**Janeé Emms (2021) competed in the Baton Twirling Nation's Cup and World Championships in Liverpool**

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**Elizabeth Salter (2023) awarded training scholarship with ACT Academy of Sport (ACTAS) for hockey**

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**Alex Bako (2022) and Lola Archibald (2022) were named champions of ANU's Senior Mooting Competition. Both represented ANU at the Australian Law Students' Association National Championship Moot, where they were awarded Best Written Memorial.**

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**Gypsy Polacheck (2022) and Dhruv Hariharan (2022) competed in the World Universities Debating Championship in Vietnam**

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**Haydn Tang (2022) qualified for the International Collegiate Programming Contest to be held in Kazakhstan in 2024. He was also selected as the Deputy Team Leader for Australia at the International Mathematics Olympiad.**

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**Harrison Clubb (2022) competed in the 2023 EY Tax Consulting Challenge Oceania finals in Sydney**

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**Milla Papallo (2022) competed in the Australian Netball Championships playing for the Capital Darters**

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**Charlie O'Neill (2019) presented at the ARVO conference in New Orleans, discussing the use of AI in ophthalmology. He also presented a paper at ML conference in Poland.**

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**Ethan Farrelly (2019) was named president of ANU Fellowship of Christian University Students.**

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**Tom Gilbert (2019) represented ANU at Gibbs Constitutional Law Moot.**

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**Hannah Price (2020) Represented ANU in cross country skiing at the World University Winter University Games in Lake Placid, New York.**

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**Nina Gannon (2020) competed with the ANU hockey team at the Unisport Nationals on the Gold Coast.**

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Martha Reece (2019) and her TH Laby Medal



Isaac Martin (2020) and Rohan Torok (2010) at the finish line

## 2023 Scholars House Committee

Will Cassell (2023)

Nina Gannon (2020)

Narryna Nicholas (2023)

Ellie George (2019)

Gypsy Polacheck (2022)

Max Kirkby (2019)

Kyle Cavanagh (2022)

Jocelyn Abbott (2018)

Katja Curtin (2021)

Oliver Pulsford (2018)

Harry Tunks (2021)

Sahibjeet Bains (2017)

Samantha Barton (2020)

Callum Dargavel (2017)

# 2023 Reflections

Will Cassell (2023)



First year done! It's hard to believe that 2023 has already flown by. We've developed such strong connections within our cohort and across the others, had a real taste of our degrees, and gotten to know the Canberra nightlife quite well. Moving to Canberra from across Australia was a big move for everyone. We all realised this so staying in touch through social media from July last year up until the start of semester one was a great way to feel that we all had 22 other immediate friends on campus. One of the first nights in Canberra, we met up at Badger – in numbers that the 2022s on the table next to us could only dream of – and went for a “Braccas run” (Braddon McDonalds).

Later we were off to camp and the connections only got stronger from there. In the day we went did team-building exercises like the infamous crate-building competition, went for walks amongst the picturesque Canberra national park, and learnt about traditional ways of caring for the land. At night, we played “calling all my neighbours” – a game the 2022s taught us at interview weekend where one person stands in the middle and “calls” their neighbours who they have something in common with. As always, what it said in the circle, stays in the circle.

To add to all these celebrations of our first year in Canberra, at ANU, there was commencement! Our parents were invited down to meet each other and see the new, supportive community we had just joined. Hearing everyone's family stories, seeing Graham and Louise for the first time as scholars, and meeting Brian Schmidt made commencement

lunch particularly special. Finishing the day with commencement dinner made us realise how big the Tuckwell community is. We heard inspiring speeches, got ‘rung in’ and managed to drag Graham and Louise to the photo booth.

First Year Experience (FYE) was a massive defining feature of this year as we could all navigate first year with the weekly (then fortnightly in semester two) Tuesday night dinners. Sami and Bo – or Boi, as they became known – were amazing at making us immediately feel welcome, organising some hilarious activities. Some personal favourites included reverse interviews (we all spent too much time waiting for this), a spaghetti-building competition, and our end-of-semester-one firepit.

In our last FYE, we looked at a survey to find who was ‘most likely’ to do some crazy things in the future. Here are some highlights: Chi Chi won ‘most likely to win a Nobel prize’, Yuliana won ‘best style’, Chi won ‘best chef’, and Will Maxwell won ‘most likely to write a bestselling autobiography’. Funnily enough, the only question where everyone was voted for, and was the most evenly spread was ‘most likely to join a cult’.

Now that our first year is wrapping up, we're looking forward to meeting the 2024s and making sure that their experience is just as inclusive, fun, supportive, and hilarious as ours was. Here's to another great year in 2024!



# 2022 Reflections

Bo Zeng (2022) and Samantha Atherton (2022)



In our two years at ANU, we've heard that getting older means getting wiser. While we're not claiming to be sages just yet, it's fair to say that we've risen to the challenges that second year has thrown at us.

While ANU return to in-person learning and exams brought us flashbacks to year 12, having one year of uni under our belt meant that we were better equipped to tackle this change. For instance, it's safe to say that we have mastered the art of using procrastination to spark last-minute inspiration, even if it still gets the better of us sometimes: goodbye TikTok, hello Instagram Reels. Nonetheless, one thing hasn't changed: the tight-knit nature of our cohort. Beyond the magnificent formal events - from commencement to academic dinner - it is the simple activities that truly bind us together. Lunchtime picnics, wholesome badger dinners, and general shenanigans at Scholar's House have allowed us to consolidate our friendships that were already so strong following our first year.

We recall being welcomed with open arms into the Tuckwell community when we first arrived at ANU. The camaraderie from older scholars was pivotal in shaping our experience, so we wanted to recreate this for the first-year scholars. After welcoming the 2023 cohort at Tuckwell Camp, we've watched as their growth as a cohort has mirrored our own, from bonding at FYE to basically living at Scholar's House. While this enabled us to provide advice on university and adult life, connecting with the first years extended beyond simply offering guidance. It involved shared moments that brought us closer together, including spirited games of Whist as well

as rigorous debates over meaningless quadrants. We hope that the 2023s have enjoyed their first year as much as we did.

It feels like only yesterday that we were first years ourselves, wondering if we would ever live up to the achievements and contributions that older Scholars were making. However, our cohort has certainly risen to the challenge. This year, some of us have found great success in competitions on the national and international stage. Hadyn will be competing in the International Collegiate Programming Contest in Kazakhstan after placing 2nd for the South Pacific Region; Gypsy was part of the ANU team that won the National Debating Competition and will be competing at Worlds over the summer; and Harry C is the winner of the 2023 Oceania Tax Consulting Challenge and will be joining the global EY competition. We're also proud to have some serious sports superstars among us, including IB runners, national netballers, Uni Games representatives, and even a half Ironman. Additionally, many of us have been and will continue to be involved in student leadership positions, from SRs and Gen Reps to a President and CC. Finally, we can't wait to hear all the stories from scholars on exchange this year, and wish those going on exchange next year all the best.

We are so proud of our cohort's achievements. All these opportunities have been made possible by the incredible generosity of the Tuckwell Program, and we are excited to see what our cohort gets up to in the years to come. While the future always holds some level of uncertainty, one thing is for sure: the 2022 scholars are only just getting started.

# 2021 Reflections

Chris Jackson (2021) and Jack Miller (2021)



G'day from the 2021 cohort! Chris and Jack here, ready to guide you through our collective journey in 2023. It's been a bustling year, with Scholars venturing out of college for the first time, seizing new opportunities, and some even stepping out of Australia for six-month exchange stints.

In our third university year, practicalities often overshadowed academics. Deciding where to live became a hot topic. While some easily chose to remain at college, possibly in leadership roles, others were less enthused about living amidst a sea of first-years. This led to the adventure of navigating Canberra's rental market, a feat Oscar, Brian, and Jack frequently boast about conquering.

Beyond academics, our cohort has diversified into various responsibilities. From orchestrating the successful Women in STEM Conference and taking up senior roles in college to editing an on-campus magazine, developing a charity app, coaching sports, and leading the STOP campaign. Academically, some dived into research while others honed their majors and minors. Research topics undertaken varied widely among our members. These included the construction of molecular-scale cages, understanding how AI systems learn mathematical problems, studying the effect of anti-cancer drugs on platelet death, and developing a climate policy scheme prioritizing Australian industries.

Socially, our year was marked by study sessions, housewarmings, Tuckwell events, and two main gatherings: paintball and dinner. The paintball escapade, while high-spirited, showcased our questionable frontline skills, marked by friendly fire and a prodigious waste of ammunition. Should a national call to arms arise, we unanimously vote for the second-year cohort as our

replacements. Dinner, in contrast, was a more dignified event.

The excitement peaked with an inter-cohort chess tournament, led by third-year scholars. The final showdown was between Jacob Gome and Oscar Pearce, with Jacob clinching the victory for our cohort.

Many of us also journeyed abroad. Europe was a popular destination, with some using the exchange as a break, while others, like Seb Viner, competed in challenging events like the Sydney to Hobart yacht race. An amusing conspiracy theory emerged during these travels, suggesting a plot in the travel industry aimed at separating poor Jonno from his belongings.

Seven scholars embarked on exchanges in September to Paris, Berlin, Manchester, and Zürich. They found the experience intellectually stimulating, surprising, and fun, cherishing the friendships formed with people from all over the globe. Often, these encounters ended with attempts to persuade their new friends to relocate to Australia.

As our third year wraps up, we can't help but look back with a mix of awe and amusement. From academic achievements to comical mishaps in paintball, it's been a rollercoaster of experiences. We've grown, learned, and made memories that'll last a lifetime. And if there's one thing we've mastered, it's the art of turning every challenge into a story worth telling – even if it's just about convincing a French exchange student that Vegemite is a culinary masterpiece. Cheers to the journey and the many more adventures to come!

# 2020 Reflections

Henry Palmerlee (2020)



As the 2020 scholars near the end of our degrees - or in some cases, start new ones as Masters or PhD students - we have still found time to take on new and exciting challenges.

One of these has been overseas exchange. As a cohort whose first few years of university were marred by the COVID-19 pandemic, we have been very keen to take advantage of re-opened borders and exchange programs to see different parts of the world. 2020 scholars have traveled to many different parts of the world (albeit with a particularly voracious appetite for Western Europe): Samantha Barton to Exeter, Bas Braham to Bologna, Mackenzie Francis-Brown to Maastricht, Nina Gannon to Manchester, and Joe Negrine to Singapore. Unsurprisingly, they all report having immensely enjoyed their experiences abroad.

Sport in its various forms has also been a staple of the 2020 scholars' program this year. Hannah Price represented Australia as part of the U23 cross country skiing team; Bridget Lunn and Chloe Woodburn ran in Inward Bound; Nina Gannon and Bridget represented ANU at UniSports in field hockey and the marathon respectively; and Marissa Ellis ran the Sydney Marathon to fundraise for ophthalmological research. Meanwhile, Isaac Martin was leading a caravan of ANU engineering students across the country as Project Lead of the ANU Solar Racing Team. Isaac's team built a car to compete in the global race from Darwin to Adelaide, and managed to drive further than any other ANU team to date.

Many other scholar pursuits don't fit neatly into a category, but ought to be preserved for posterity in The Bell. Lara Young, one of our cohort's keenest artistic minds, exhibited her photography in Melbourne; Angus Sidney managed to find time during his Honours project to also fix Nina's broken laptop; and Jasmine Pearson was the only scholar to achieve the high honour of winning a pub meat raffle (Gundagai, NSW).

We also enjoyed a great evening with the 2019 scholars at Brodburger in Kingston, thanks to the cohort catch-up budgets we are generously allocated every year. No doubt many other achievements by our cohort have flown under the radar - Louise and Graham may have overindexed for humility in our year's selection process, which has made Riley and Henry's job more difficult.

As the number of 2020 scholars in Canberra begins to dwindle, we know that the lifelong bonds we have formed at Scholars House, at Kioloa and Birrigari - and even at Badger - will remain strong no matter where in the world we end up.



# 2019 Reflections

Ellie George (2019) and Max Kirkby (2019)



As the degrees of the final few 2019 Tuckwell Scholars come to an end, it's an incredible opportunity to reflect on what has been an amazing few years. However, the reflection takes place not as one of closure but rather one of change and anticipation. Whilst the most acute and intense period of our time together has passed, the friendships formed and bonds we've made will take us to places that not even our collective imagination can think of.

As people spread out across Australia and across the globe this year, those of us remaining in Canberra sought to maintain the Tuckwell spirit. We organised several dinners this year, including at the (in)famous Brodburger (double Brods all around) and Yat Bun Tong where we ate our weight in dumplings. These dinners have always been a great opportunity to catch up with Scholars that we don't always get to see on a day-to-day basis and, despite the dwindling numbers, we're always amazed at what everyone is up to.

This year had an additional farewell layered in amongst those graduating, and this was the farewell of Ryan Goss. Ryan is, as we like to say, an honorary 2019 Scholar, having joined the program alongside us about five years ago. All of us have been helped by Ryan in some way, big or small, and we'd like to take this opportunity to express in writing our

gratitude to him for not just treating his position as a job, but one of mentorship, leadership, a friendly face and a source of sage advice.

We'd also like to thank all the Tuckwell Staff but particularly Fiona and Lois, who've been incredible in the last couple of years amidst a season of changes.

Finally, we want to express a huge amount of gratitude to the 2019 cohort. Without each other, we simply would not be where we are. Paradoxical in a way, but something that we all understand.

This is not goodbye, and nor is it good luck (none of you need luck, in whatever you're going to do), but until we meet again.



# Interview Weekend Reflection

Luke McNamara (2023)

Interview Weekend is the worst time of the year. Weather-wise, that is. Canberra's early-mid July is the saddest winter-time known to humankind in my opinion. What makes this poor weather terrible is how beautiful the ANU campus is the other 80 percent of the year – ducklings roaming, baby bunnies hopping, University Avenue blooming. It fails to showcase how great it is to live on our campus purely in terms of natural beauty. Moreover, the winter of Interview Weekend is always Canberra's "dreary grey" winter, – not even a "crisp cold" which could become "ooh maybe that is snow". Across the second weekend of July, the weather is consistently disappointing.

Nevertheless, the 50 ruddy-faced and nervous interviewees who rocked up on the 7th of July were undeterred. Their first activities were (largely) designed to smash any nervousness with a light-hearted ANU Campus Tour and a casual collegiate dinner at Wright where they got to know each other and some of us – the 25 (or so, I didn't count) current Scholars who volunteered to help run the weekend. After devouring their first Charties meal, Scholar-Hopefuls had the Selection Panel Meet and Greet, a classic pre-Interview taster which, though intended to be relaxing, can often be the opposite of such. To release nerves after the Meet and Greet, current Scholars put on ad hoc Trivia in a random room in the Canberra Accommodation Centre, witnessing typical Tuckwell brilliance as interviewees gave answers from the cerebral to the stupid on subjects such as sports, geography, foreign language music, and differentiation. The group's broad general knowledge and (where that failed) ability to be hilariously absurd was on full display.

The next day – Saturday – was D-Day. Us Scholar Volunteers arrived armed with our 'Just be yourself's, ready to encourage (and, where necessary, console). The Interview HQ this year was Scholar's House itself. Our beloved House was filled with activities to occupy non-interviewing interviewees. Board and card games, colouring in, and study spaces were all on offer. The significance of using the House was not lost on us current Scholars.

Like one dog seeing another near his favourite tree, we felt a sense of territoriality. Nevertheless, we overcame this by observing how Scholars' House has some sort of magical aura to it. A budding community quickly formed among the interviewees, one which was inclusive, supportive, and joyful – much like the present Scholars' House community. In my opinion, this supportive community helped ameliorate the interview experience.

The Tuckwell Interview is semi-mythical (not trying to stroke the Interview Panel's egos here). I think this mythos is unwarranted (see, told you no ego-stroking!). Rather, the Interview provides an opportunity to ask potential Scholars – all of whom are brilliant in their own right – interesting questions to see how they think and who they are deep down. Of course, my reflection here is mellowed by a year's hindsight and interactions with panel members in far more casual settings. Despite numerous assurances that the questions weren't designed to trick them, interviewees were still understandably nervous. In the face of this stress, it was sweet to see the final interview group applauded as they exited the House. It really drove home that sense of community and camaraderie among all 50 interviewees.

To sum up – and having passed over many of the activities that occurred on the Weekend – I think (again with hindsight) that the Interview Weekend is a truly enjoyable space for potential Scholars, especially this year. It is stressful, yes, but also so much fun. The 50 young people brought to Canberra are invariably brilliant and interesting. Lasting connections are formed, interesting questions are answered.

So, while the weather might be cold, grey, and depressing, the Weekend itself is more akin to a summer sojourn in the south of France, getting fat on croissants and cheese.

# Academic Dinner Reflection

## Blaize Steele (2023 Scholar)

The Tuckwell Academic Dinner is one of the three centrepieces of the Tuckwell calendar, and it was something I had heard about as early as the 2022 interview weekend. It was an event I had looked forward to, not only for another opportunity to wear my infamous three-piece suit, but also to wine and dine with the 2023 cohort and mingle with the older Scholars, who spend their time in Scholars House actually studying instead of participating in card games with seemingly life-or-death stakes.

The academic dinner not only provides the chance to connect with fellow Scholars, but also enables connections to form between Tuckwell Scholars and various academics from all disciplines across the University. Early in the year Scholars are instructed to begin thinking about who they may want to nominate to be their guest for the evening, anyone from their favourite course tutor to a distinguished professor in their field of interest. This posed an exciting opportunity for scholars to learn more about their academic passions, find out about future career and academic options, or to simply haggle course convenors for higher marks.

Personally, I spent months deciding upon which lecturer, tutor or researcher I would like to invite. In fact, I spent so long deciding that it was only after I had missed the deadline, and Fiona sent many follow up emails, that I chose to invite my degree convenor Dr Dean Katselas. I used this opportunity to lament about the woes of MATH1116, to beg to be allowed into the ANU Student Managed Fund, and to learn about the uses of coding in finance, a topic which we have since caught up to discuss.

Each year, the Tuckwell academic dinner is focused on a different theme, which encourages refreshing, cross-disciplinary dialogue between scholars and academics in the hopes of developing fresh perspectives for all. This year, the chosen theme was 'outreach', guiding our conversations to themes of engagement, innovation, and collaboration, both within the realm of academia

and far beyond. This theme also acted as the anchor for the three inspiring speeches, by current Tuckwell Scholar Henry Palmerlee (2020), former Tuckwell Fellow Dr AJ Mitchell, and the notable Vice Chancellor Brian Schmidt. These speeches ranged in topic, from the vast educational opportunities in regional Australia, to the subatomic research in Nuclear Physics, but they all highlighted the wide-reaching power of education and academia in all aspects of life.

This night has since proved invaluable, not only in granting us the opportunity to discuss with academics outside the classroom, but also for allowing us to reflect on our own goals, ambitions, and ideals. For many of us first years, it may have seemed as though our next few years will be filled with little but focussed university study; however, the Academic Dinner opened our eyes to not only the importance of academia, but also the many engaging opportunities we are sure to encounter over the course of our degrees.

We're incredibly grateful to the academic and Scholars who joined together for memorable conversations, but also for the Tuckwell staff who organised such an event.

I am incredibly excited for the 2024 Academic Dinner, which hopefully does not align with the IB sober period.





“I don’t mind failing,” Schmidt told the 2023 Annual Tuckwell Academic Dinner. “I’m actually okay with it as long as I work hard, try my best — then I think failing on occasions is alright.”

**That comment, delivered to a roomful of high-achieving students brimming with certainty about their mapped-out lives as professors, lawyers, scientists and philosophers, may have seemed like an odd one, but coming from a Nobel Prize winner, it was wise and inspiring.**

The life of Brian, article, ANU Reporter (December 2023)

# Tuckwells tackle Inward Bound

**Bridget Lunn (2020)**

An ultramarathon is a running race that exceeds the length of a marathon – 42.195km – typically on trails. Orienteering is a navigational sport that utilises only a map and a compass. Combine the two, and you end up with Inward Bound (IB), one of the ANU's most anticipated events of the year. But who would want to run up to 100km through the bush, mostly at night, with often no idea where you are?

The answer? Tuckwell Scholars, apparently. Many of us are “innately driven and determined”, with a hint of “willing to challenge yourself” after all. (Okay, maybe more than just a ‘hint’)

Six hours blindfolded on the bus and one wee stop later, up to seven 4-person teams from each college found themselves dumped in some part of Kosciuszko National Park with one goal: make it to the endpoint. Division 1 was, unusually, dropped at sunset - meaning participants ran through the entire night and most of the next day to complete the ~100km challenge. Division 7 was no easy task either, with ~30km to traverse up some very steep hills - as well as down the other side, which was arguably more difficult.

Congratulations are in order for all scholars who competed in Inward Bound this year!



## Tuckwell IB Results 2023

### Bruce Hall

Jacob Gome (2021) - Div 1

Blaize Steele (2023) - Div 2

Will Maxwell (2023) - Div 2

Chloe Woodburn (2020) - Div 3

Abby Kidston (2022) - Div 6

Hannah Stewart (2023) - Div 7

Haydn Tang (2022) - Div 7

### Fenner Hall

Patrick O'Connor (2021) - Div 2

### Ursula Hall

Jordan King (2022) - Div 4

### Wamburun

Kyle Cavanagh (2022) - Div 4

### Wright Hall

Bridget Lunn (2020) - Div 1

Wyatt Raynal (2019) - Div 3

Rosie Sewell (2023) - Div 4

### Yukeembruk

Alex Bako (2022) - Div 5

## Did not compete for a college:

Matt Foster (2020) - Div X



# Camp Reflection

Kate Snashall (2023 Scholar)



Participating in the annual 'crate climb' at the high ropes course

After our first jam-packed day of our Tuckwell orientation events, and our first taste of mini pretzels and Arnotts chocolate chip biscuits, 25... I mean 23 eager new scholars boarded a bus at the questionable hour of 7:45am on a Friday morning. Alongside our seemingly daunting second year counterparts, we drove off through the "suburbs" of Canberra and out to the beautiful natural parklands of Birrigai, nestled between the Tidbinbilla Range and the Namadji National Park.

Once we were off the bus, we were quickly shown to our cabins and introduced to the camp and by 10:30am we were already getting strapped into harnesses for our very first event, the infamous Tuckwell camp crate climb. A mystical activity seen on covers of past editions of the Bell and the subject of many stories of wise, older Scholars. Despite the sheer terror of being told to find a partner amongst the group of people we had only met the day before, we all quickly buddied up (with people who looked like they could stack a good crate) and were soon stacking, and

climbing, crates to incredible heights. While many of us fumbled within in the first 7 or 8 layers of crates, a new record was still set by the incredible duo of Zoe Crooke and Marianne Johnstone, two of our fantastic third year camp assistants.

Next up was a low ropes course, where Jack Dodsworth and Caitlyn Martin were introduced to my truly impressive lack of balance or coordination, and a bushwalk, a slightly slower pace activity, in which Scholars were able to chat to those they hadn't yet met.

After a whirlwind day of activities, we finally got to sit down and unwind, as we gained lifelong advice from the fellows, and older scholars, in a life skills session, in which we learnt about time management, organisation, finances, and more.

Following dinner, we learnt a whole lot more through games of both trivia and 'calling all my neighbours' in which our knowledge of older Scholars, foreign language music, and Guy Archibald's political beliefs were put to the test.

We then spent the rest of the evening nestled around various corners of the Birrigai campus indulging in deep and meaningful conversations with our newfound best friends.

On Saturday morning, some Scholars embraced the natural scenery for an early morning jog, followed by breakfast and a Q&A panel. The Q&A panel with older Scholars was informative and reassuring, covering topics ranging from life at college to managing our degrees, however I must confess, I did sleep through approximately half of this session and would've likely continued in my slumber if Shanni hadn't frantically prodded me in my sleeping bag 'til I awoke.

Finally, we were asked to write letters to our future selves, in which we each reflected on our hopes and our fears for not only the upcoming year, but also for the new chapter of our lives that we were about to embark on.

Not before long, we were back on the bus and making our way into the city of Canberra once again, we were sleep deprived, sunburnt, and more importantly, filled with memories and a sense of belonging.

# From the Bell Ringer

Kate Chipman (2022 Scholar)



Kate delivering her speech at the Bell Ringing Ceremony

When I first started to think about what I might like to say in this speech, I was at a loss. For starters, I couldn't think of many words that would adequately capture the spirit of this program, much less this community. No wonder we need twelve attributes (ranging from constant to the renowned 'refreshingly different') to describe what it means to be a Tuckwell Scholar. But perhaps the greater struggle was that this would be my cohort's first Commencement too. Despite being an occasion that I had heard a lot about, I couldn't really be sure what to expect. Of course, our own 'Bell-Ringing' took place at a postponed event last October – which was, in its own right, very special. Nonetheless, we are in the unique position of sharing our first Commencement experience with the 2023s, which is yet again very special in its own way.

As we enter our second year of life at ANU, and of Tuckwell, I can't help but reflect on our first. Arriving at Scholars' House for the first time for our 'on-campus camp' was a surreal experience. Suddenly the twenty-four other faces that we had become so familiar with over Zoom calls, Facebook posts, and even Discord introductions, had come to life. Having spent months imagining what these people would be like (and being more than slightly intimidated in my imagination), it's safe to say that nothing could have prepared me for meeting my cohort in real life. Before I knew it, I found myself chatting to Maths Olympiad legends and sporting superstars. Quick-witted debaters, and musicians with perfect pitch. A pretty brilliant bunch on paper, that's for sure. But beneath all of the many achievements that everyone brought with them to Canberra, here was a group of people. And not just any people, but a group of friends.

Of all the many 'Tuck-isms' that I've grown to know and love, I would have to say that the phrase 'presumptive friendship' is my favourite. When Ryan first used this term on our Orientation Day, I was immediately struck by how much it resonated with me, and the few introductory experiences I'd had in the program so far. Having only just met these people, I already knew that they had my back (and that I, in turn, would have theirs). Now that we're twelve months in, I can safely say that the presumptive friendship is stronger than ever.

While they may not be the people that I see during the week in my classes, or who I cook dinner with at night, it is with people in the Tuckwell community that I have had some of my most meaningful conversations. They are the people that I have consistently turned to for advice, and the people with whom I share some of my fondest memories. To give you one example, it was at a sunset turned late-night conversation at a well-known Tuckwell spot by the lake (for those in the know) that led me to change degrees. Although our Scholars' House catch-ups are becoming more sporadic as our lives inevitably get busier, I know that this will always be the case. To paraphrase the 2021 cohort, "I hope my grandchildren get to meet you all someday".

Before I moved to Canberra last year, one of my friends gifted me a little notebook. Each page has three lines, with the idea being that you list three things you are grateful for each day. "To record your time away from home", she had said. I thought I could give you just a few examples.

The 15th of March. Having Tuesday night FYE to get to see friends and have a meal organised. Friendly/caring/genuine older scholars.

The 25th of March. Studying in Scholars' House – the vibes were both productive & chill (also the snack cupboard + biscuits).

The 25th of July. My Tuckwell friends – their knowledge, generosity, and support.

The 1st of August. The opportunities available to me – chatted with Esmé, worked on some assessments.

The 25th of October. Our final FYE – reflecting on our first year at ANU and in the Tuckwell program.

And these are just a handful of the big, general ones! If I think about the interactions that I've had with other scholars on an individual level, I'd have enough to fill a whole new book. Graham and Louise (or should I say, Louise and Graham), it is your extraordinary generosity, passion for education, and collective vision that has brought this community to life. You have provided us with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I know that I speak for everyone when I say just how grateful we are. We must also thank the Selection Panel, Fellows, Program Directors, and Staff, for bringing us together and supporting us in every way possible. It is an exciting time for the scholarship, with current scholars now outnumbered by alumni for the first time. With this change, our community continues to grow and expand, guided by the fact that you're not just a Tuckwell Scholar during your time as an undergraduate at ANU. Quite the contrary, you're a Tuckwell Scholar for life.

At this point, it's customary to offer the incoming cohort of scholars a bit of advice. However, having met you all over your Interview Weekend, and bonded with you over crate-stacking at camp a couple of weeks ago, I don't think you need any. You're all wonderful people, with a lot to give to this community. You've been chosen because of who you are, and you absolutely deserve to be here. You already outnumber us 2022s at Badger catchups, so I think that you're settling in just fine. Remember that this is a different experience for everyone, and that it is totally up to you what you make of it. I'm honoured to be able to officially welcome you tonight by 'ringing you in', and I hope that you're excited for the year (and years) ahead.

So to my presumptive friends, here's to 2023! As has been said many times before, may it be refreshingly different.

# Regional Education Support Network

Henry Palmerlee (2020)

**Henry Palmerlee (2020 Scholar) spoke at the Academic Dinner about the Regional Education Support Network at Academic Dinner this year. Below is his speech:**

Good evening Vice-Chancellor, distinguished guests, Tuckwell staff and fellows, and scholars. There are plenty of familiar faces here tonight. I've had the good fortune of being taught by several of the academic guests, and the honour of calling many of the exceptional young people here my friends. For those of you whom I have not yet met, my name is Henry Palmerlee, and I'm a fourth-year Tuckwell Scholar. You may also know me as that strange man who spends too much time at Tuckwell Scholars' House, and eats well more than his fair share of the Arnott's bickies.

However, I'm not speaking tonight solely in my capacity as a student, nor as the cookie monster. I've been asked to speak about the Regional Education Support Network, or RESN, a not-for-profit organisation of which I am the CEO. RESN is a network of hundreds of volunteer university students around the country who believe in an Australia in which geography does not affect educational outcomes. We provide free, online education support services to regional, rural and remote high school students across New South Wales and Victoria. Since 2018, RESN has supported thousands of students and answered more than 10,000 of their questions. We empower these students to dream big –and to achieve those dreams. Frankly, I could speak about what we do all night, but that would be far less enjoyable for you than it would for me.

I'd like to focus instead on more a specific concept: giving back to Australia. Giving back is a prominent part of Drs Louise and Graham Tuckwell's vision for the scholarship program. Tuckwell scholars are described as being committed to giving back to Australia, a phrase which causes no end of unease for many younger scholars, myself included.



Henry delivering his speech at the 2023 Academic Dinner

Indeed, entering the program, I encountered a distinct sense of anxiety. Sounds strange, I know, for someone who had just been told that he didn't have to worry about paying bills for the next five years. I told myself that we were all there for a reason, that Louise, Graham and the selection panel believed in us, and yet the anxiety remained. It was an anxiety brought on by a goal which I knew I didn't fully understand. Giving back is a two-way street –something received, something to give back in return. How could I put my finger on what Australia had given me? How, at the tender age of 18, with my first taste of Moose Juice coursing through my veins, could I give something valuable back? I don't believe that I'm the only one in this room who has worried about not living up to that lofty Tuckwell archetype.

What has Australia given us, and what should we give back to Australia? My work at RESN has hinted to me that the answer to both questions is the same. That answer is a fair go. We Australians pride ourselves on our sunburnt country, on our land with bounty more than sufficient for all to have their fill. Australian culture is built on the premise that we all deserve a fair go at life purely by virtue of our shared humanity. I believe it is a truly marvellous concept. Australia inoculates us with the idea that the good life is there, waiting, if we would only reach out and take it.



That is also why I believe that the ongoing failure of the fair go is so staggeringly cruel. We have seen, time and time again, governments' inability to solve core inequality in our society. I'll focus on the metropolitan-regional education gap, but you can take your pick from as many such gaps as there are people in this room. Despite our love of the fair go, in many ways life in Australia is deeply unfair.

Our education system is one such example. If there is one thing in this world that every public policy expert agrees on, it is that education is a good thing. Education is one of the best possible indicators of future health outcomes, income, civic participation – the list goes on. And yet, look at Australia. We have one of the highest GDPs per capita in the world – fifth, if you exclude micronations, oil states, and tax havens. Between 2018 and 2029, the federal government has committed to spending 319 billion dollars on education. But in this land of plenty, regional students are on average 8 months behind in their learning progress. They graduate high school at half the rate of their metropolitan peers. In the 2022 NAPLAN, metropolitan students performed in the top band at more than twice the rates of regional students. And all this despite decades of government spending, plans and frameworks. Somehow, I don't think a 320th billion would close the divide.

Socialist historian Howard Zinn wrote that we have been convinced to believe in saviours. I quote: "We have been convinced that the supreme act of citizenship is to choose among saviours, by going into a voting booth every four years to choose between two white and well-off Anglo-Saxon males of inoffensive personality and orthodox opinions." Reality shows that we cannot rely on saviours to hand us the fair go that is every Australian's birthright. I'm reminded of a year 10 student named Jared, whom I met in Morisset, New South Wales. Jared dreamed of studying astrophysics at university. Jared's school also didn't have a science teacher qualified to teach physics. I often wonder how many potential university students, professors, Nobel laureates, have had their dreams cut off at the roots by the geographic lottery. If \$319 billion can't get Jared a physics teacher, I think it's fair to say that this problem is bigger than government.

Governments must partner with grassroots, people-driven movements, because we have seen time and again that it is these movements – people who roll up their sleeves to improve the world around them – that develop the most innovative solutions to difficult policy problems. In RESN's case, that initially meant a simple Google form, but that soon evolved into a custom web platform where students can ask a coursework question anytime, anywhere, and receive an answer from a tutor within 24 hours. A team of volunteers on a shoestring budget has fundamentally changed students' lives, like Nicola from Port Macquarie. With RESN's help, Nicola went from being worried about graduating high school at all, to coming top of her class and studying undergraduate medicine at UNSW. Thorny issues are solved by working smarter, by creating new solutions to old problems.

Despite the height of the soapbox I'm currently standing on, I wouldn't describe myself as an activist, or a campaigner. I don't have some irreplaceable, magic skill that I'm benevolently giving to the world. I've dedicated so much time to RESN simply because I believe fervently, unshakeably, that I can give back to Australia some small part of that which it has given to me: a fair go. And that brings me back to what I'm hoping to do in this speech: to speak to scholars who felt the same sense of anxiety that I did. Scholars who don't know where to start on the monolithic edict of thou shalt give back. I put to you that nothing changes meaningfully without people giving their effort to community-driven solutions; without people giving up positions of relational privilege; without people giving back. You don't need to be a policy expert. You don't need a boatload of money, or connections in all the right places. All you need to give back to Australia is an unwavering belief in that most Australian of concepts: that we each deserve a fair go.

Thank you and enjoy your evening.



For more information about RESN visit:  
[www.resn.org.au](http://www.resn.org.au)

# One hundred (well, just one) years (\*year) of (relative) solitude

Joe Negrine (2020)

Not once did I set foot in Scholars House this year.

It was not out of indifference for the Tuckwell Program. Nor was it out of fear of Kirkby's residual foot odour — that indelible, olfactory Sun Room legacy.

It was out of apprehension. Specifically, the apprehension that, after three years of university, I was hardly closer to visualising a post-graduation path.

Seeing it as a circuit breaker, I moved to Singapore. Some travellers boast that you can 'do' Singapore in three days. Having spent eleven months here, I find remarks like these to be rather confused.

How does one exactly 'do' a country? Sure, you could eat a chicken rice, visit Gardens by the Bay, and drink a Singapore Sling at the Long Bar in three days. You could even save time by avoiding this last one — advice I would give to any student unwilling to sell a kidney.

In any case, I did not come to Singapore to travel. I came to Singapore for work... and a bit of play (or, at least, proximity to it). Above all, it was in Singapore that I sought to understand how to fuse the two.

In Canberra, it's easy to fall into a stream of doing. The very structure that you build (courses, extra-curriculars, relationships) begins to bound your worldview. Before you know it, your autonomy feels piecemeal at best. Many of your choices become prefigured by the choices of your previous selves, selves you may no longer identify with, who themselves were nudged, *cornered*, by the infinite regress of others' decisions.

What to do with all this introspection? How simple things would have been if Maslow forgot self-actualization! Had Plato never left the cave!

Out I went, wishing to dissolve the walls that were subconsciously built around myself. The journey was surprising (for I had never seen someone

paddle a boat with their feet or use their phone at the urinal) and beset with challenges (try suppressing your emotions when a monk 'crop dusts' you during a 10-day silent meditation retreat). While I had thought I would thrive being alone, there were periods of great loneliness. Eating alone was the norm. At one stage, a typical day involved not conversing until the evening. And when strangers seemingly ignored my gaze, I began to question whether I — this corporeal, ever-changing blob — truly existed.

These moments, terrible as they may sound, cannot — *should not* — be removed from the totality of this year. Never has my heart felt so heavy, nor so light. Never have I felt so agentic. It was a year of the most intense self-interrogation to date, which is to say (and I am indebted to Ryan Goss for reminding me) it was a year well spent.

*Be yourself. Know yourself.*

Important as the Tuckwellian and Delphic maxims are, we should treat them with caution. They may lead us to satisfice, making choices that eclipse a deeper inquiry into what we really want. At a time in our lives when we are so free to challenge our beliefs and unlearn certain mindsets, why resign to fixity? We should never wish to stop in the pursuit of *becoming* ourselves, *knowing* ourselves.

Within a month, I will be back in Australia. Within a few more, I will be back in the Big House. Maybe I found what I was looking for in Singapore. Maybe I realised that I was asking the wrong questions. Whatever it may be, I am deeply grateful for the Tuckwell community's support this year. From calls with scholars and staff to the program's flexibility in permitting me to defer my studies, I knew I was never *really* alone.

Time for reflecting is a privilege. A whole year is a luxury.

Thank you for stewarding this becoming process.

# Econ1100

Rosie Sewell (2023)

Sleep deprived from many late Thursday nights, Jaison, Blaize, and I (Rosie) made the treacherous journey to a lecture theatre at 11am on a Friday morning. If it had been any other lecture we wouldn't have been there, but no this was ECON 1100 - macroeconomic honours. What made this course 'not like other courses'? Each week a guest lecturer was invited to share their experience or work in the field of economics. We were lucky to hear from Bob Gregory, Jennifer Gordon, Brian Schmidt, Meredith Edwards, and Bruce Chapman ... to name a few. Not all speakers were economists \*cough cough Brian Schmidt\*, but all had invaluable insights into how economics interacted with their disciplines. It's safe to say that economics is everywhere - watch out lawyers and scientists!!

Although I loved each lecture and would spend every Friday afternoon (not joking) recounting the cool things I learnt to my semi-interested friends (thanks Margot and Will C), my favourite lecture was delivered by Bruce Chapman on HECS debt. Here I learnt, from the creator of HECS himself, why University is not free, and more importantly, why in Australia it should never be free: (inequality would actually increase if we made it free as (a) 50% of first year students would be cut by second year; those who can study hard (often without jobs) and can pay for extra tuition would succeed (similar to France), (b) streaming for universities would occur in high school (such is the case in Singapore). Hearing that 'University should not be free' is a disheartening thing to learn, but such is the nature of economics. After vast mathematical and empirical modelling, economists have to deliver the truth, and often the truth is not what we want to hear. So even though it pains me to see my HECS growing year upon year, especially as a student in the highest course bracket, I know it is better than the opportunity cost of greater inequality.

Throughout this course, the theory taught previously in Micro 1 and in conjunction with Macro 1 is given a reality check. From the guest lecturers we are given exposure to the real world complexities of economics that transcend the classroom. Consider the initial simplicity of the childcare industry; where parents send their young children to daycare. One would imagine a simple pricing scheme where the cost of service is simply the labour costs and overhead expenses to mind the children. However, through

Dr Jenny Gordon's in depth analysis of Australia's childcare industry, she uncovers the greater drivers to produce the current unaffordable childcare prices. The indirect benefits of childcare are substantial such as the primary caretaker, statistically the mother, returning productively to the economy. By reintegrating into the workforce this helps raise the return on education investment and not only boosts household incomes but also promotes gender equality and economic empowerment. Moreover, this rise in human capital functions to increase aggregate supply and produce sustained economic growth. Lastly, as women are the main source of labour for care industries, such reintegration will significantly assist anticipated workforce shortages. As such, the childcare industry holds more market power than expected as they are able to integrate the added benefits to both the individual and society of its services, a very interesting case study.

For those considering taking this class, the value lies in the work. Each week after class there are two homework tasks. The first being the KLIQE (Knowledge, Link, Industry, Questions, Engagement) note sheets where you are taught a more critical way to take notes and engage with the content you are learning. The second task is the weekly reflective essays. Yes these will be frustrating at first, as the goal is to reflect on your own personal knowledge and findings rather than writing a polished scholastic article. The value is within the depth of your reflection and how honest you are with the process. By utilising both the KLIQE and weekly reflective essays, you will develop exemplary analytical and critical thinking skills that will significantly improve your ability to decipher complex information, produce more meaningful analysis in your writing and lastly be able to engage in contemporary and interesting economic concepts facing Australia in the present.

This academic journey has broadened our perspective on the pivotal role of economics in public policy featuring lectures from influential figures in policy-making such as Emeritus Professor Bruce Chapman and Emeritus Professor Meredith Edwards, along with insights from climate change leader Deputy Secretary Jo Evans. Overall, ECON1100 has been a truly eye opening experience which we recommend to all.

# Tuckwell Networks event

Keynote address from Dr. Michelle Barrett, Tuckwell Fellow.



## Put your hand up; get on a plane; fly!

Good evening scholars - the great thing about being asked to speak tonight is that I do not have to teach you anything!

My brief is to talk to you about my life and career, about mentors, and about opportunities. I am a GP and a lecturer in clinical skills at the medical school.

My education started in Papua New Guinea, included various states of Australia but mostly Darwin, and Adelaide. I went to Flinders University and had electives in Katherine, Fiji, Canada and the UK. I met my husband during my 6th year elective. We thought we might come to Canberra for a year, as my brother was here. That was in 1992.

Now, the most interesting thing about my career recently, is that I have become a member of the royal flying doctors service. So, I thought some stories relating to flying and travelling might be interesting, combined with some ideas about putting your hand up, to ask for, or to give, help.

10 weeks into my first year as a doctor I was on a plane going home to Darwin to see my parents. The flight path was Canberra – Brisbane – Darwin. Soon after take-off from Brisbane, I was sleeping. Over the PA came an announcement: “Is there a doctor on board?” Being so junior I went back to sleep. Next I heard: “is there a doctor or a nurse or anyone with any medical training on board?!!!!”

I gingerly put my hand up. There was a middle-aged man having central chest pain radiating down his left arm. You do not need to have a medical degree to know this equals a heart attack. There was no medical equipment on board, no medication. The crewmember asked me what we should do. I said, “turn the plane around”. Sure enough, we went back to Brisbane and an ambulance met my patient on the tarmac.

31 years later, this is still the greatest power I have ever yielded – I turned around a 747...

That was in the days when there was still first class on domestic airlines. I was upgraded and seated next to a middle-aged lawyer. I was quite terrified that I might have done something wrong and that I could be sued. So I asked his advice. He assured me that it would be all right – I would be covered by the ‘good Samaritan clause’.

I drank whiskey and he drank bloody mary’s all the way to Darwin.

Having reassured me for 4 hours, as we got off the plane he said to me – “look you’ll be ok but if it’s not here is my card” – I carried that card with me for a decade, for I was definitely going to call him if I needed him! That’s what this networking event is all about – you keeping people’s names and numbers in your pockets!



About 10 years ago, I had another airline incident. Having just returned from a trip to Turkey the man at immigration was looking at my passport and paperwork stating where I had been and what my occupation was. In a very laconic Australian way he said “doctor eh?...Do ya know that someone has collapsed over there?”

Yes, I replied but I was told the patient was being attended to.

“yeah...he said...I reckon she needs some help.”

A young doctor was performing CPR on another middle-aged man who had had a heart attack. Unlike the situation decades earlier, there was all sorts of kit in the emergency bag at Sydney airport, including a defibrillator. The defibrillator however was cactus as the junior doctor had chucked all the cords everywhere in her panic. I joined her doing CPR. I was looking at all the kit and thinking, far out I am going to have to intubate this man – a clinical skill I had not had much experience in and certainly not practiced in the decades I had been a GP.

Somehow, I found out that my young colleague had just finished a term in anaesthetics – tubing people all day every day. So I said “put the tube in the man!” And she said “oh...ok” and promptly did it! This young doctor knew all sorts of things, she was far more competent at the task at hand than I but she needed to put her hand up, and ask for help, she needed some guidance, some help making decisions. I delivered the guidance, she saved the patient.

Another travelling story I have is from when I was a student. I was 21. It was in Madrid that I found out I had failed anatomy. In my hand is the textbook where, at the back, I have written ‘bored bored bored bored’ – no wonder I failed. It looked like I was going to have to cut my trip short and go home to sit the supp. I rang my father crying – magically expecting him to be able to fix it.

He told me I had to sort it out myself! That was an unhappy reality check.

So then, I rang the year 3 co-ordinator and because of the time difference, I had had to wait until 2 in the morning, there I was still crying and slotting 100s of coins into the pay phone. He said, “well Michelle I

have just had dinner with one of the academics from London, if you can get yourself to Charing Cross Hospital on such and such a date you can sit the supp there.”

On the appointed day, having taken a week out of travelling to study at the home of a family friend I walked into Charing Cross Hospital with about 300 other students and sat my exam – which had been faxed – and they sat theirs...then I went to Harrods, and then I went to Amsterdam. That was a good example of putting up my hand to ask for help – mountains were moved for me just because I asked, and was very lucky.

At university, like you, I had won a scholarship. It was not remotely as prestigious as yours but at the time it felt like a king’s ransom. I joined the Australian Army, they supported me through the last few years of my study on the proviso I would work as a regimental medical officer for the years they supported me plus one. A ‘ROSO’ (Return of Service Obligation). This took me to the very far away land of Rwanda – a small land locked country in central Africa. There had been an intense civil war...in fact a good attempt at genocide between two tribes. The United Nations intervened – late – and asked Australia to deploy a medical unit to care for the UN soldiers. Again, I gingerly put my hand up to go.

On arrival to the capital, Kigali, my friend Lindsay and I were exploring the bombed out hospital – there was no electricity, no running water, no ceilings... we came across a make shift operating room where an Italian surgeon from a non-government aid organisation was amputating a man’s leg. He had been the only doctor in town for over a month – everyone else had been killed or had fled. There were IV lines hanging from poles where the patients had ripped them out to run. There was blood on the walls and unspeakable things shoved into toilets. My new Italian friend Gino said – ok you do the next amputation – my most stark example of ‘see one, do one, teach one’. The patient was the same age as me, 26, her leg had been hacked half off with a machete, it was gangrenous and had to be amputated. So I did it.

Another lighter Rwanda story was the time the UN sent a helicopter to pick me up to come to assess a

company of Ghanaian soldiers who were all sick with some unknown fever and were covered in spots. In the helicopter, I was quietly freaking out that I had no idea what terrible infectious disease they might all have. It was 1994; at least 50% of the patients we dealt with in Africa had AIDS, there had been rumours about Ebola, I had no idea what I might be faced with. However, my good friend Dave was a dentist with our deployment. He happened to see the patients first and he met me at the chopper and said "I reckon they've got Chicken Pox."

Now as a junior doctor from downtown Canberra I had not seen much chicken pox – because it is an illness managed in the community, and a vaccine was being rolled out. The last time I had seen chicken pox was when I'd had it as a 7 year old. But Dave, the dentist, was one of 6 children, he'd seen a fair bit of chicken pox in his family, so I went with his diagnosis. That was what I relayed over the radio to the UN Force Commander...goodness knows what they actually had; but they didn't die.

Of course not all the patients live, and the sad stories are ones I will leave till another day.

Fast forward 30 years and I am on my first flight with the RFDS. Literally out the back of Bourke. The pilot let me sit in the cockpit. As we landed he said:

" Now,

...Barb is going to be cranky

...OK...why?

Because they didn't let her know we were coming in time and she will be cranky that she has not had enough time to do the roo run.

Roo run?

Run up and down the runway to shoo off the roos.

Ok. (Fortunately today there were no roos.)

As predicted Barb was cranky and she and the pilot start talking about having to shoot the roos if

there were any on the runway. This did not seem unreasonable.

"...so shoot the roos"...I said... "do we have any guns?"

"Yeah yeah we've got guns"

"...in that truck?"

"No"

"In the plane?"

"No no that's not allowed...I've got guns, but at home, says Barb, but I wouldn't use them to shoot roos. I don't hurt animals."

"Right"

On the way into the one dirt track town Barb gives me the low down on the patients I will see, she has them all lined up and they have come from hundreds of kilometres away. We pass the pub with no beer because the kitchen burned down 3 years ago and "the mongrel won't open up again out of spite", then we pass 2 women with babies in prams who she proclaims as the "worst mothers in Australia." Ok. Together Barb and I ran the clinic, one of the old ladies brought home made sausage rolls from her station especially for the flying doctor. We broke for lunch and Barb tells me how she wishes she lived in Scotland. Now my husband is from Scotland so I have seen a fair bit of it – and it is nothing like what I'm looking at from the window of this dusty outback clinic...and I am still wondering about the guns she keeps.

Then she goes on to tell me she couldn't visit Scotland because of her animals. She has 40 cats and 40 geese...and I later find out when it seems like it is getting a bit hot she leaves the back door open for the snakes, so they can come in for a rest. She is not using the guns for the roos or the snakes...what does she use them for? I don't know....

My last intercontinental story also traverses the decades of my career. It is my best story of resilience.

Back in Rwanda one of the most inspiring patients was a that of a British soldier who had stepped on a mine. They were building a bridge. He was only 21. I was 26 and was in charge of the resus. Which means having control of the head – the airway and breathing. You talk to the patient. I had my hands on his chest. There was oxygen and drips and chaos reigning around him.

“I suppose that’s the end of my football career” he says to me..well, I suppose so I quietly admitted.. And I suppose that’s the end of my girlfriend too’...well I hope not

...but..my grandfather lost his leg in the second world war and he’s alright – this all as he is being prepped for an amputation. Well good... I said..marvelling at his bravery.

In a strange arrangement of time and place some years later I was reading a magazine in Edinburgh. And in it was the story of a man who had just run the London marathon –with one leg. It was my boy. I have been telling that story for many many years.

Even more spookily last year that patient heard me telling the story in an Anzac commemoration pod cast and got in touch. He spends his time these days with his family and organises treks across the UK and Europe for veterans. That’s resilience.

I will end with a silly story from Broken Hill. I went to the pub after a long clinic day. This was the pub that starred in the movie Pricilla Queen of the Dessert. It is a must see sort of place. Another middle-aged woman was standing behind me waiting in line. The bar man – looking very trendy with his hair in a ponytail but wearing a blue singlet, started to get me a drink and mid pour leaned down, opened the cupboard door and yelled “Kevin get out here you useless idiot!” Then slammed it.

He kept on serving the bar as I imagined some poor golem like soul locked in the cupboard; again the he raged into door under bar “get the bloody hell out here!!!!” A woman standing behind me asked nervously “is this all part of the show?” It wasn’t.

Kevin eventually appeared, a bedraggled youth, who had clearly been hiding out in the cellar that was in fact connected to the cupboard under the old pub bar...and started doing his job.

I will finish by thanking you for listening to my stories this evening.

I urge you to come up out of the cellar.

I urge you to put you hand up to volunteer.

To ask questions and to ask for help.

And

To get on a plane and fly....

In 2024 we will welcome Dr. Michelle Barrett as the new Head of Scholars House. Michelle, alongside her role at the Tuckwell Scholarship Program, is a GP, Senior Lecturer and the ANU School of Medicine and Psychology.



# The future of reconciliation

Will Cassell (2023)



Will (second from left) with his parents at Commencement.

On the evening of Saturday 14 October, I spent a few hours talking to other volunteers from the ‘yes’ campaign at a local surf life saving club as we came to terms with a result few of us had wanted to accept was coming. Australia had voted ‘no’ to recognising First Nations Australians in the constitution by establishing a Voice to Parliament. Though this result was not unexpected, I began to realise how pivotal that moment was. I heard stories from people who had spent their whole lives wondering when Australia was going to confront this uncomfortable part of our national identity. Many knew that, at this trajectory, they were more likely than not to never see reconciliation achieved in their lifetime. As young people, it seems that the burden of yet another national problem was going to be passed down to us.

On that night, many Indigenous advocates expressed, for perhaps the first time publicly, a complete absence of hope.

Professor Marcia Langton declared that “national reconciliation is dead” and that it would take at least two generations before Australians would embrace another invitation from our first peoples.

Some still had hope. Hope that this great reconciliation project had not come to its end but that an important realisation was just beginning. Through the debate around the Voice, Australians would come to terms with the stark differences in basic outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. While I admire this yearning for hope in a time of seeming indirection, I fear that as a country we are yet to start that process when apathy and misinformation dominate the political zeitgeist.

76% of Australians still feel that they do not have a better understanding of First Nations history after the referendum, according to a Guardian Essential poll. I would ask what the point of a debate is, apart from getting a result, if the public is not informed about it. For an issue as important as the lives of First Nations Australians, who have been excluded from the social, economic, and political cohesion of the country for generations, an education is the least non-Indigenous people can subscribe to. Our generation may be the first that are accustomed to the standard practices of acknowledging country and learning about Indigenous history and culture.

We are but one generation of many in this country. One of many whose entire knowledge about Indigenous Australians, if predicated on their education at school, is restricted to glossed-over paragraphs about colonial interactions and the great ‘civilising project’. So it’s logical that generations who sang ‘God Save the Queen’ at assembly 40 years ago also did not know about the suffering of dispossession, black bird slavery, and deliberate killings planned out by the pre-federation, colonial state.

Empathy comes from understanding and in this, Australia is sorely lacking a grasp of it.

Being sent to a few polling booths throughout the day, you can pick up on the 'vibe' of how people will vote. Of course, many people don't like to give it away, so a false sense of confidence came over many volunteers as we discovered several booths on the northern beaches without any 'no' volunteers whatsoever. Most people would at least ask about your day, maybe even have a quick chat, or let you pat their dog.

But as the day crept on into the afternoon and I started to hear about the abuse and death threats that many volunteers, including myself, had copped, a wave of dread came over me. This was happening everywhere.

Of course, these antisocial people are a minority, but they were the most vocal. They were the ones news cameras would turn to because good ratings is good money. Perhaps what we didn't realise was what this meant for the debate at large. Misinformation and disinformation easily spread into the national conversation. That special rights and privileges would be established if we had a Voice. The legal community says otherwise.

I am not naïve enough to think that we can eliminate the number of racist people in this country, but I am hopeful enough that we can demonstrate the sheer bigotry of their views and have a conversation solely on well-established facts.

It is not partisan to call for truth. It is not being a sore loser to say we could have more respect. It is dedication to the health of democracy to say

that the way we conduct national conversations sometimes matters more than having those conversations in the first place.

While it is true that the majority of Australians want better outcomes for Indigenous Australians, the absence of an informed, and respectful debate has meant that yes, we are divided.

We can expect nothing less, until there is a generational realisation that those of us with privilege have a responsibility to start those uncomfortable conversations.

We mustn't hide behind the guise of complacency. To do that, is to give up completely and agree that reconciliation is, indeed, far from being achieved.



Yes Campaign logo used for the 2023 Voice Referendum

# A long and wet race home

## Adventures from the 2023 Sydney to Hobart

Sebastian Viner (2021)

Some have said that the Sydney to Hobart race can be better described as three races—a race to get the boat ready and on the start line, the race to Storm Bay, and then the final race up the Derwent River.

By the time we reached the start line on the 26th of December, we had certainly experienced all that that first race could throw at us—having made over a dozen trips up our 22.2 meter mast, completely replaced the HF radio unit, and brought the engine back to life from two different but critical faults in just the past fortnight. But having made it to the line, we were all ecstatic, if a little nervous, in drinking up the energy of the start line. Crew shirts on, sea sickness medication taken, we were buzzing.

Weather models, which typically firm up a bout 3 days in advance, had been particularly unstable, with none in agreement about conditions in the latter half of the week. As a slower 47.7 foot boat, Enigma was expecting to still be out when these weather patterns formed—our navigation would have to be adaptable.

As we emerged from Sydney Heads, we made a choice to “go deep”—continue heading east, with the hopes of dodging the thunderstorms brewing down the New South Wales coast.

This was undoubtedly the best navigational decision we made during the race, as we caught great wind skirting the edges of several thunderstorms and leading our division on handicap. I was, however, already soaked through, having neglected to tape up my neck seal before heading forwards to change our headsail. This wetness would unfortunately prove a theme for the rest of the race.

The following day, whilst most of the fleet headed back in to shore, seeking better wind and currents, we stayed deep. Beyond some tiny sails on the horizon

on day two, we did not see another vessel the rest of the race. The currents we were seeking, from a week old current prediction, were missing, and we ended up sailing into an adverse current for nearly 30 hours. At one point, we had 7.5 knots of boat speed through the water, but just 1 knot of speed over ground. During this time, we also started to notice that everything was damp—there’s nothing quite as grim as going to bed damp and waking up damper.

By the time we entered Bass Straight, about 48 hours into the race, the variable winds had already shredded two of our headsails. Just a couple of hours later, the wind dropped completely, leaving our largest headsail to chafe against the rigging. When we eventually pulled that sail down, sighting rapidly approaching storms, it too was in need of repair.

That storm, with ever growing waves, carried us for another 36 hours, with winds reaching 40 knots (74 km/hr), and waves of over 7m. Having set our smallest headsail on the first night of this wind, my role as a foredeckie was converted to mainsail trimmer, and I spent my watches happily tethered to the cockpit. It was, however, not very dry, as waves were breaking over the deck and flooding the cockpit every fifteen or so minutes. One of these waves must have been stronger than the rest, as at some point during the storm, we lost our Starlink dish, and with it all access to detailed forecasts.

It was as we tacked back into shore, that we realised our problems with water had gotten worse. Usually, when a boat tacks and heels onto the other side, the water in the bilge just sloshes over. When we tacked, the bilges were so full that water was running over the top of the floorboards. Luckily, this tack was taking us back into more settled waters off Tasmania. Indeed, for a normally dry boat, we now had two foot of water in our bilge.



As the seas settled, we realised that both automatic bilge pumps had failed, and that the manual pump had been getting clogged. Worse still, as we worked to empty the bilges, we found not one but three electrical fires quietly smouldering. Luckily, none had truly caught, and dawn broke to reveal the gorgeous Tasmanian scenery (land! At last!).

A becalmed lunch in the sunshine off Maria Island gave us time to (try) to dry some items out, before the wind picked up and we rapidly cleared everything to set sail. In a moment that would make the foredeck union (FU) proud, the 4 foredeckies, plus a former foredeckie on the helm, managed to set a sail, strike two sails, and hoist a crewmate up the mast faster than the remaining 7 crew could clear the deck.

This last leg saw some amazing wildlife—a seal, so many albatrosses, dolphins, two sunfish, and some amazing bioluminescence come nightfall. The absolute highlight was being treated to a dolphin swimming through bioluminescence as we rounded the cliffs on Tasman peninsula—not the New Year celebration we were hoping for, but one to remember.

As we turned to head up into Hobart, the weather threatened to pull a true Derwent, the wind dying as we entered our third and final race.

However, after a nerve-wrecking time dangling on the end of the spinnaker pole trying to rig a secondary line, then a change of plans to hoist our first spinnaker of the race, the wind filled in enough for a steady cruise into Hobart.

Crossing the line at 8:51:36 am on the 1st of January, a whopping 5 days 19 hours after we started, we were the 82nd boat across the line. Of 103 starters, just 85 crossed the finish line, with six boats retiring on the first night. Thus, despite our slow time, the cheers of our friends and family on the dock were enough to make us feel like we had won the trophy.



The Crew prior to launching



The start



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# Reflections On Anzac: The Study Tour Experience

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Anzackery (n.) *the use and promotion of the Anzac legend, especially in ways seen to be excessive or misguided.*

Between June and July of this year, I found myself on the ANU annual study tour of 'The Anzac Battlefields and Beyond'. We travelled to Gallipoli, London, Paris and the Western Front over seventeen days. As we retraced the history of the First World War, many a thought-provoking question was raised. How can we reconcile a place's natural beauty with the horrible events of its past? In what ways has a hundred-year-old history been mobilised for contemporary political purposes? Why didn't I know anything about the Turkish side of the conflict? What sort of injury was a blighty? The list goes on.

Interestingly, I had been hesitant to tell people that I was travelling to these WWI sites. Was this really a pilgrimage trip? I found the boundary between commemorative respect and critiquing Australia's "Anzackery" difficult to navigate. I certainly didn't want to become a proponent of the Anzac myth. Thankfully though, the trip was free from the harmful jingoist rhetoric that has become all too common over the past few decades. We didn't romanticise the narrative of bravery and mateship, nor did we position the conflict as the 'birth' of the nation (a common line that is, quite frankly, untrue). Instead, we considered big questions about human nature, and debated about how we should best remember the events of 1914 to 1918. These are just a few of my thoughts.

We spent about five days exploring the Gallipoli peninsula. The landscape was what stood out to me the most.

It felt surreal to be amongst the ridges and cliffs that I knew only from Peter Weir's 'Gallipoli' and George Lambert's 'The Landing' (a brief aside: if you hold up an image of Lambert's painting from the right spot near Ari Burnu, its resemblance to the real thing is uncanny). We did several walks (from Shell Green to Plugge's Plateau, along Rhododendron Ridge...), often in the early hours of the morning or as the sun was setting at night. The waters were a pristine crystalline blue (one afternoon we snorkelled over the wreck of a boat that was sunk during the War). It was strikingly beautiful.

As we walked through the trench lines (still intact), we asked ourselves the question: how did anyone think that this campaign was a good idea? The idea that the Allies could have captured Constantinople seems positively ludicrous when you consider the rugged terrain.

C.E.W. Bean, Australia's official war historian, envisaged the entire peninsula as an Anzac memorial. Indeed, shortly after the conclusion of the conflict, Bean wrote that the area should become 'one vast memorial complex, every ridge, gully and outpost harnessed in a dramatic gesture of remembrance'. The 21 Commonwealth cemeteries that are scattered across Gallipoli are a permanent reminder of this (the area was actually ceded to the Commonwealth under the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923). But beyond the physical structures, the land itself continues to reveal remnants of the past.

Relics from the war are everywhere if you look closely enough. We uncovered a British button, many old bits of tin, and a sturdy-looking rum bottle (engraved with the words 'never runs dry').

Visiting the Western Front was an entirely different experience. Unlike the intimacy of Gallipoli, this was mass carnage (on an enormous, mechanised scale). Row after row of headstones lie at these cemeteries, from Tyne Cot to the German Langemark.

We analysed many memorial structures, but a few stood out to me. Thiepval, with its 'deranged arches' (a subversion of the triumphal arch) ... the Canadian Memorial at Vimy Ridge and its allegorical representation of a nation's grief...the 'Shot at Dawn' Memorial at Poperinge (where I learnt about wartime executions for the first time – 346 British and Commonwealth soldiers were executed for cowardice during the First World War). These locations challenged the narrative of victory that is presented elsewhere on the Western Front, and powerfully so.

The Western Front is also home to many WWI museums, which we compared and contrasted. This proved to be quite an interesting exercise. The 'In Flanders Fields' Museum in Ieper presents both a local and global history, emphasising the civilian experience as much as the tales from the front line. It prides itself on being a 'peace museum', which is particularly clear in the use of spoken testimony in its displays. If you're interested in learning more about the Museum, a quick google of the 'Assembly' project provides a wonderful example of its work. We also visited the 'Historial' in Péronne (in the Somme). The Historial aims to capture all sides of the conflict. Perhaps its most interesting feature is the use of dug out 'fosses' to exhibit the uniforms, artefacts, and weaponry of the War (their grave-like symbolism is key).







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