

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

ELYSE ROWLINGS

CLASS OF 2007



When did you attend Lowanna College, and what year level did you complete?

I attended Lowanna from 2002 and graduated Year 12 in 2007.

What are your memories of Lowanna College?

I'm lucky enough to still be really close with some of my friends from high school, and I love that we can still reminisce about some of our shared memories all these years later. I'm pretty sentimental and have kept silly drawings my friends gave me or embarrassing photos we took in Year 10 Photography when we thought we were models, and it's the memories of the small, otherwise forgettable moments that I enjoy looking back on. Some of the bigger highlights were turning the front of the Senior School building into a beach for Muck-Up Week and the activities that were part of the University camp.

How do you think your experiences at Lowanna College helped you become the person you are today?

I think my time as a student at Lowanna helped me appreciate the value of education. I was offered a range of subjects as a student, and through working with teachers who were enthusiastic about their subjects, I grew to see the importance of learning something new even if it was outside of my areas of interest. I'm someone who still enjoys learning and I always embrace any opportunity to learn something new. As a teacher, I hope to be someone who can encourage students to learn skills that they can take with them into their future beyond Lowanna.

Was there anyone at Lowanna College who had a positive impact and upon reflection, influenced you to follow the path you have chosen?

This is slightly embarrassing considering I now work with him, but Michael Lakeman was so supportive and helped guide me to success in Year 12. He always was and is still willing to give up his time for his students, and I remember going to his office begging for (or sometimes demanding) his help with Maths because he was the only one who could explain the tricky concepts in a way that I could understand. Michael helped me choose my subjects for Year 12 and he still reminds me that his guidance was what positively influenced my ATAR (a truth I'm not willing to admit to his face!).

I had Ann-Mary Ryan for both English and Literature in Year 12 and her genuine passion for her subjects was infectious and I think this is what led me to study Literature subjects at university. Ann-Mary had this magical way of bringing texts to life and I hope to one day be half the English teacher that she was.



those fields at that stage of my life. I enrolled in the Graduate Diploma of Education as I thought that an extra year of university studies to become a qualified secondary teacher would give me another career option and buy me some time before I had to enter the working world. I really enjoyed my placements and loved working with the students, so I ended up coming back to Lowanna and secured a job teaching Maths and Science. I've been at Lowanna for nearly 12 years now and I am currently the PLT Leader for Years 8, 9 and 12 English.

What are your greatest accomplishments (awards, achievements, defining moments, travel, family etc.)?

I think there can sometimes feel like there is a lot of pressure to reach certain goals and milestones for your life to be considered successful. Some days I feel like my greatest accomplishment has been my ability to get up and keep going even when things have been particularly tough. Life hasn't always been easy, and there's been moments where I've definitely felt defeated by circumstance, but I've been able to move forward even when I didn't think I could. Being a teacher is an achievement that I'm proud of because it's a job that requires people to give so much of themselves to other people. I love seeing students grow as learners and people and find it to be equally as rewarding as it is challenging.

On a more personal note, one accomplishment is surviving completely renovating a house with my partner - I don't think we'll be applying for The Block anytime soon! I've also been fortunate enough to travel overseas multiple times and learnt so much from my experiences meeting new people and seeing new places.

What advice would you like to give to current Lowanna College students?

Work hard! I was pleasantly surprised by my results, and I still sometimes look back and wonder what I could have achieved if I had just worked that little bit harder. The students I've seen who achieved the best results for their VCE are those who were willing to put in effort from Year 7 and went above and beyond throughout every stage of their high school journey. Don't just aim for "good enough" because you're only limiting your own potential.

I'm stealing this next bit of advice from Emma Carey's book 'The Girl Who Fell From the Sky' - "If you can, you must". We often put things off until tomorrow because we're too tired or too busy, but if an opportunity presents itself, grab it with both hands because tomorrow isn't guaranteed and most opportunities don't last forever. There are so many things I look back on as some of the best experiences of my life, and some of these are things that I almost didn't do. If you have the desire or the opportunity to do anything, big or small, do it while you can.

So many of my interactions with teachers at Lowanna were positive and I think this is what led me to become a teacher. It's a tough job, and I'm so grateful for all the time, patience, and support offered to me by my teachers.

Tell us about your journey after leaving Lowanna College, and where are you now?

After leaving Lowanna, I studied a double degree in Arts (Journalism) and Science at Monash University. I enjoyed Biology and Literature in VCE and thought this degree would allow me to pursue my interests in these areas whilst I figured out what career path I ultimately wanted to go down. Whilst I really enjoyed the subjects I studied at university, I didn't feel particularly passionate about pursuing a career in either of

