

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

TAYLA GANE

CLASS OF 2012



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

I attended Lowanna College from 2007-2012 and completed my VCE.

What are your memories of Lowanna College?

I have quite a lot of fond memories from my time at Lowanna, especially during the latter years of VCE. The highlights for me were always the many opportunities to perform with the Music Department. I took part in all the annual school musicals, Soul Band, music ensemble and the Kool Skools recording project where I had an original song nominated for an award. The school provided some really great opportunities for exposure and experience that have really

paid off in my years since graduating.

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

Looking back, I'm very thankful that I had the opportunities to explore and express myself as a student at Lowanna. I was always supported in following my interests, but often encouraged to try things out of my comfort zone by the teachers who knew me really well. Over the years, I participated in a lot of different activities and it allowed me to collaborate with so many people from all across the school, which provided a really great foundation for life after high school. While I've travelled and met some incredible and

inspiring people in the 13 years since finishing high school, I'm fortunate enough to also have lifelong friends that I met during my time at Lowanna.

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

I had a really positive experience with the majority of my teachers, but the standouts for me have always been my former music teachers, Mr. Licciardello and Mr. Williams. About 4 years after graduating, I'd just finished performing as the lead role in a musical, when I walked out to the foyer and saw Mr. Williams standing by the stage door. I couldn't help getting a bit emotional as he congratulated me on my performance. It took me right back to my last ever musical performance in Year 12 as Mr. Williams pulled me aside after the show and thanked me for everything I'd put into my performances over the years (yes, I cried then too).

It's one of those moments that's always stuck with me, having a teacher recognise something I really felt passionate about and was proud of.

Aside from music, I'd always loved reading and creative writing, so I took both VCE Literature and English during Year 10, 11 and 12. For the most part, I was taught by Mrs. Ryan and she introduced our class to a lot of incredible films, which has probably had the biggest impact on my interests and recent career highlights. Mrs. Ryan's love of cinema greatly influenced my taste in film and I was introduced to some of my favourite movies that I still love to this day - watching 'Dead Poets Society' still feels as life changing as the first time I watched it in Mrs. Ryan's class.

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

After graduating, I took some time off studying to work and travel. I spent a few years working as a children's entertainer/character performer, gigging as a freelance musician and performing in local theatre on the side. From there, I began studying acting and moved to Melbourne, where I later took up a 12 month traineeship in Production with Red Stitch Actors Theatre. After having the incredible opportunity to work alongside some of Melbourne (and Australia's) best established and up-and-coming talent, I wanted to continue this type

of collaborative work and started working in casting for TV commercials. After the pandemic, I was fortunate enough to join the team at Roadshow Films and was part of some blockbuster theatrical releases like 'The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes' - I told you that Mrs. Ryan helped influence my career path!

Last year, I decided to pack up my life in Melbourne and move with my partner to Edinburgh, Scotland. After taking a short career-break to enjoy Euro-summer, I had the opportunity to work for the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo during their 2024 season and experience one of Scotland's most iconic events. Right now, I'm continuing my work in events and am lucky enough to travel to some of the most incredible historic locations for my job - Edinburgh Castle, Linlithgow Palace, Stirling Castle, the list goes on... It's not everyday you get to say that your office for the day is the birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots.



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

In 2017, I won a GAT Award for Lead Female in a Musical as Jo March in 'Little Women'. That was a really affirming moment because I'd put a lot of heart into that role and saw so much of myself in Jo, wanting to travel the world and work in a creative field. Moving from a regional area to Melbourne was a big step in that journey, it opened up all of the great career opportunities I've had in my 20s and I can tell you that Lowanna alumni can absolutely hold their own in the big city. Having moved overseas is something I'm really proud of and grateful to have had the privilege to achieve - a lot of people have recently told me they would love to do something like that, and the best part is YOU CAN! I've also crossed paths with other Lowanna alumni here in Scotland if you can believe it.



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

High school is the perfect time to try new experiences and opportunities, you don't have to have it all worked out by the time you graduate. I know it can be hard to figure out the path you want to take, especially during Year 12 when it feels like you need to decide what you're going to do for the rest of your life. If you'd asked me when I was in VCE what job I wanted, I can now tell you that I never would've known some of the jobs I've had even existed.

The world is so big and there's so much out there; while this can feel overwhelming, my best advice is to just say yes to the new opportunities because you'll never know where they might lead. The more you try, the better you'll get to know yourself and figure out what works for you and what doesn't. It's okay to get it wrong, it's okay to take your time to find your way in life, and it's okay to be "unfinished" or start again. High school is going to feel like such a big part of your life (and it will be), but you've also got so much more to look forward to and many more exciting chapters ahead!

