

I came to GGS in 1940 as a 12 year old refugee from the war in England. It was a hazardous trip—sneaking out of Liverpool at night, through an avenue of wrecks, chased for two days by a U-Boat from the Atlantic 'wolf pack' when on the leg from Iceland to Cape Town, then to Mombasa, Columbo, Perth, and Port Melbourne. Junior School was pretty hazardous, too, with heavy bullying as a 'pommie' though I achieved some popularity for story-telling after lights out. By the time I got to be a prefect at Cuthbertson, James Ralph Darling, our famous Principal, had led the way to stamping the bullying out, and I had moved from a literary path into mathematics and science, not a great strength but the correct path for following my father's career into the RAF. When the war ended without any assistance from me, my mathematics teacher, (Fr. Hurt, I believe, with a math degree from Cambridge) and Peter Westcott, my English teacher, with a great interest in philosophy, were real inspirations to go on to 'the Shop' i.e., the University of Melbourne. After a second-class honors degree in mathematics, I found the beat of a better drummer, in logic and the foundations of math, and got a first class master's degree in the combined honors school of philosophy and mathematics, and a deep love for abstract thought, i.e., philosophy.

My affection for 'Geelong,' then and now, was perhaps best illustrated by the unusual although dubious distinction of having run away from home permanently, at about the age of 15 (only slightly unusual so far), *in order to go back to school* (somewhat more unusual, I think) from which my mother was taking me, so as to send me to St Peters in Adelaide, for what I thought were bad reasons. (I dropped off the interstate train just as it left the station, which gave me all the start I needed). Ralph Darling (later to become Sir Ralph) took considerable legal risks in accepting me back, which meant I thereafter controlled my own future, and still thank him for it. Perhaps the fact that I went from aspirations to be a fighter pilot to a career as a university professor and researcher—62 years and still counting, at 86—is a direct effect and a partial repayment. Along the way I've piled up 455 publications (see michaelscriven.info) including about half a dozen books in as many disciplines, a doctorate in philosophy from Oxford (in 1956, from Magdalen College like so many other OGGs), and an honorary doctorate (in education) from Melbourne last year.

On the informal side, I rowed for the school in the Vllls, and then for Melbourne University (we won Head of the River) and the Oxford Trial Eights (invited back for the Blue Boat training over Xmas, but turned it down because I thought they didn't know what they were doing—in fact, they sank in slightly choppy water in the first five minutes of the Boat Race that year) and went home to some great parties at my birthplace, Beaulieu in Hampshire.

What have I learnt from this varied career that might be worth thinking about by future OGGs? Two things stand out in my memory. First, understand that a boarding school is the stage for a formalized game: the academic game. Now, you need to learn something from that, not just because it will be useful, maybe vital, in the rest of the Big Game, which is life, but because it might turn out to be the first chapter of *your* choice of a whole life as a teacher or researcher or caregiver—or friend or lover. Study the people you see, the friends you do and do not make, and in general how well *you* are learning from the 'backstory,' which is what actors call real life. Second, above all else, learn how to evaluate *yourself*, and hold yourself to the highest standards; but not so high they are unrealistic. That's the most important learning you'll do at school, and at a school like Geelong there will be plenty of examples—good and bad—from which you can learn, and people to get help from. I fell far short of those standards, far short of many of my classmates in reaching them; but if you don't die young you always have a chance to make up for some of the shortfall; even if you're a late starter, you can still change your will.