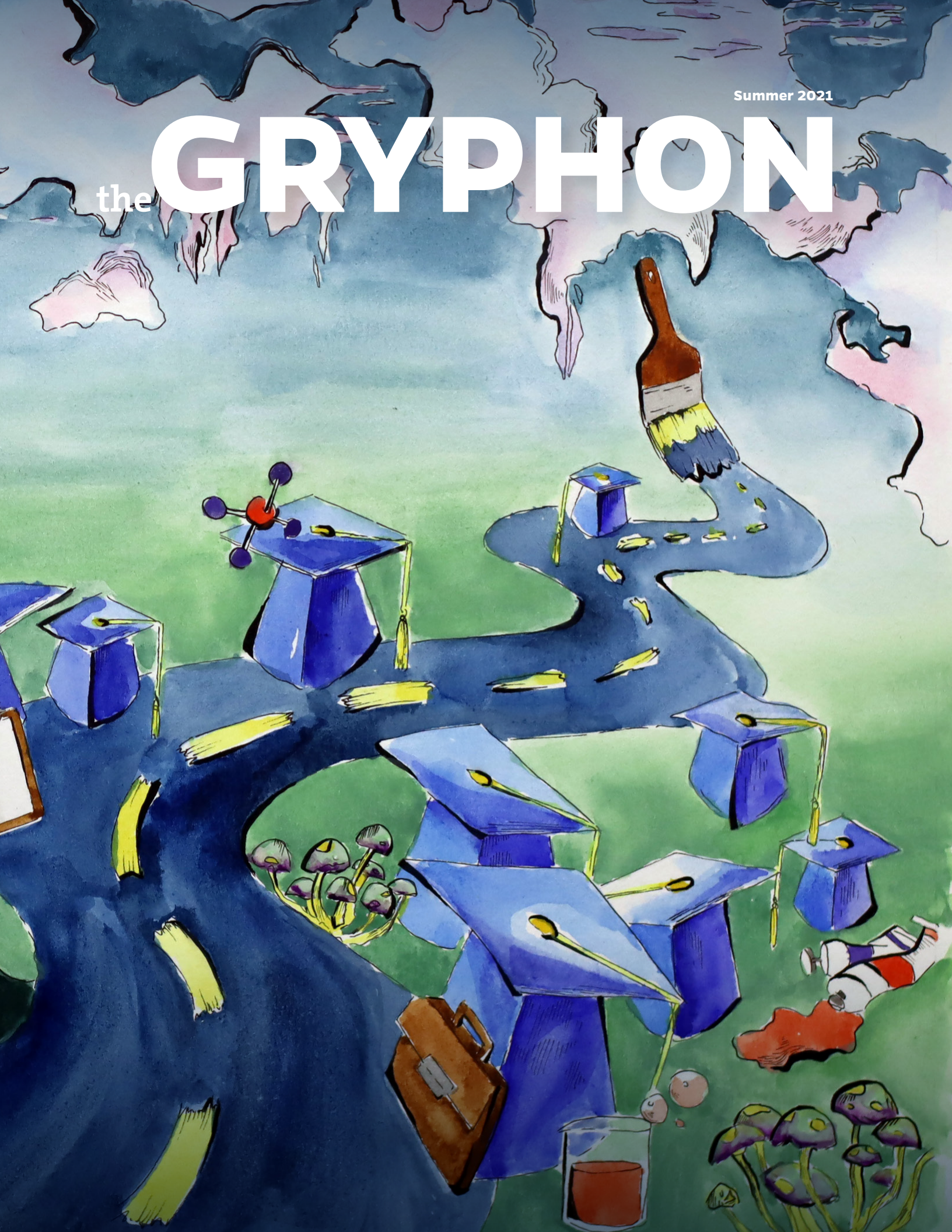


Summer 2021

# the GRYPHON







Ruochen Yuan '21



**04**

### FINAL WORD

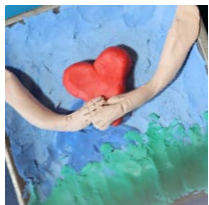
Mr. Hugh Burke reflects on twenty-one years of learning to live well, with others and for others, in a just community.



**12**

### IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, DO SOMETHING

Three students share a story about taking action, showing care, and having difficult conversations.



**06**

### EXPRESS YOURSELF

Kindergarten students learn how to teach someone's brain or touch someone's heart.



**16**

### WHAT NOW? REFLECTIONS FROM A GRADUATE

A regular contributor to the Gryphon Magazine, Tracy Yang '21 shares one last story before graduating.



## ON THE COVER

**Ruochen Yuan '21 shares her inspiration and story**

When asked if I would be interested in designing this issue's cover, I of course said yes! I was excited and decided it would be a fantastic opportunity to indulge my creative expressions while also, as a graduating student, leave something behind for the community to enjoy.

I really wanted to focus on the adventurous nature of my grad class, thus the composition resides in a place of nature. The cover of

this magazine serves as a tribute to the Meadowridge campus and the graduating class of 2021. I wanted to highlight the idea of "painting your future", a metaphor for students who are starting a new chapter of their life. I illustrated a dream-like composition that blends the land and sky, drawing attention to the foreground elements. The path decreases in size nearing the distance, bringing focus to the whimsical clouds tinted with pinks and purples. Crisply defining the clouds, the deep, cobalt blue sky serves as a contrasting colour to form a multitude of values. I utilized similar shades of dark and sky blue from our school's colour palette, adding a nice touch of cohesion to the piece. By distorting the perspectives of the graduation caps, I created subjects with personality, evoking several points of interest. The rough, rigid brushstrokes and transitions of colours are intentional, to craft a relaxed illustration and emphasize the linework surrounding stains of watercolour. Aspects like various linewidths and textured hatching were added to create dimension throughout the simple watercolour piece. Likewise, elements of our grade's interests are sprinkled throughout the environment like a subtle game of "hide-and-seek".

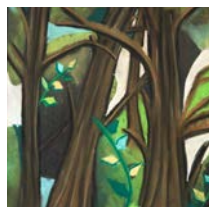
I hope that this painting sufficiently represents the personality, ambitions, and successes of our grade, where we thoughtfully paint the paths to our different journeys.



## 20

### MEET OUR GRADS

Meet eleven members of the class of 2021. Learn what brought them here and what's next.



## 26

### THE ART OF CREATIVITY

Giving students the space and the time to try, try and try again.

## AND THERE'S MORE...

**10** Notes: New and Noteworthy

**33** The Question

**14** Team Spirit

**34** People of Meadowridge

## CONNECT

Online, all the time at [meadowridge.bc.ca](https://meadowridge.bc.ca)

[f](#) [ig](#) [tw](#) /Meadowridge [in](#) /Meadowridge-school [yt](#) /MeadowridgeSchool  
[✉](mailto:communications@meadowridge.bc.ca) [communications@meadowridge.bc.ca](mailto:communications@meadowridge.bc.ca)



# Final word.

It is now time for me to say goodbye to Meadowridge and to the community; I am now retiring after about 50 years in education. For the past 21 years, I have been the Headmaster of our school. It has meant a lot to me and to my family. Two of my children are Meadowridge graduates, and Eva, my wife, has been instrumental in creating a culture of care within the school.

I began as Headmaster after an interview in which I was asked what I would bring to the school, which was then a struggling small school, with significant issues in education, facility, finance, and community relations. I answered that I could bring two things: Trust and gratitude.

Over the years, that sense of trust has allowed the school to grow. I trusted the Board, who have shown remarkable vision, courage, and determination in steering the school, in purchasing land, in straightening out the finances, and in engaging in governance that strengthened our school and community. They bought the additional 19 acres, built the new buildings, renovated the older building, approved the International Baccalaureate (IB) as the curriculum of the school, ensured continuous external accreditation, and set policies in every area which has led to the most comprehensive set of school policies that I know.

Trusting in teachers has also led to exceptional educational

accomplishment by our students. For the past 21 years, all of our students have qualified for post-secondary acceptance. We have been consistently well above the world average for IB test scores – the most challenging curriculum in the world. It was the teaching faculty who first wanted to investigate the IB. A few of them did, and then more joined in. Over time, the teaching faculty are the ones who led us to adopt the IB programme, and it spread from the PYP through the MYP and then the Diploma Programme. From the beginning, the teachers ensured that our children were amongst the most successful students in the world, even with a brand new curriculum. As well, they developed multiple programs in social justice, in a wide variety of clubs and activities, in athletics, and in outdoor and environmental education, including becoming the most successful school in the Province in the Duke of Edinburgh Award.

Our trust in the administration of the school has also led to outstanding achievement. Our finances are now stable, predictable, and sufficient, with enough reserves to ensure that the school can flourish. The facility has constantly been improved in facilities, in maintenance and in custodial care. The Human Resources Department has continuously moved the school to being a respectful and caring employer, leading to exemplary staff retention, a key to school improvement. Our Admissions Department has enabled the school

to grow carefully and predictably, demonstrating great care in ensuring that new students and their families will be well-served by the school. Our communications people have led the way amongst schools in providing continuous newsletters and articles, along with superb magazines and reports, while being highly sensitive to the needs of families to know what is happening in the school, and to get full, transparent and accurate information which helps their children to succeed within our school. The Advancement Department have been successful in increasing the gifts to the school each year, and by supporting multiple special events which have helped us to form a community.

The Administrative team has certainly used the trust we have in them to engage in continuous cycles of action and reflection, constantly asking how we can be even better, and constantly treating everyone in the school with respect and kindness. They have been instrumental in drawing the community together in order to make this an exemplary, kind, and challenging school.

I have great trust in our families, and the families of the school are what comprises our community. Year after year, they support our teachers and administration, collaborate with us in small and larger ways – from occasional volunteerism to committee work to the Parent Guild – all have been of critical importance in forming our school. We have families that



have been with us for 23 and 24 years, through multiple generations of graduates. At the same time, we have families that are just beginning on that journey, and I have trust that they will be as thoughtful, caring, and supportive as the past generations of families have been. It is parents who organized events, who sit on our Board, who attend committees, who communicate respectfully, and who enrol their children year after year because they share our values.

The children in the school are a constant inspiration to me. They have been polite, respectful, inclusive, diligent, thoughtful, knowledgeable, caring and reflective. They have shaped much in the school, and will continue to shape the future upon graduation. I have great faith that they can learn to live well, with others and for others. I also trust that they will work towards a more just community, locally and globally.

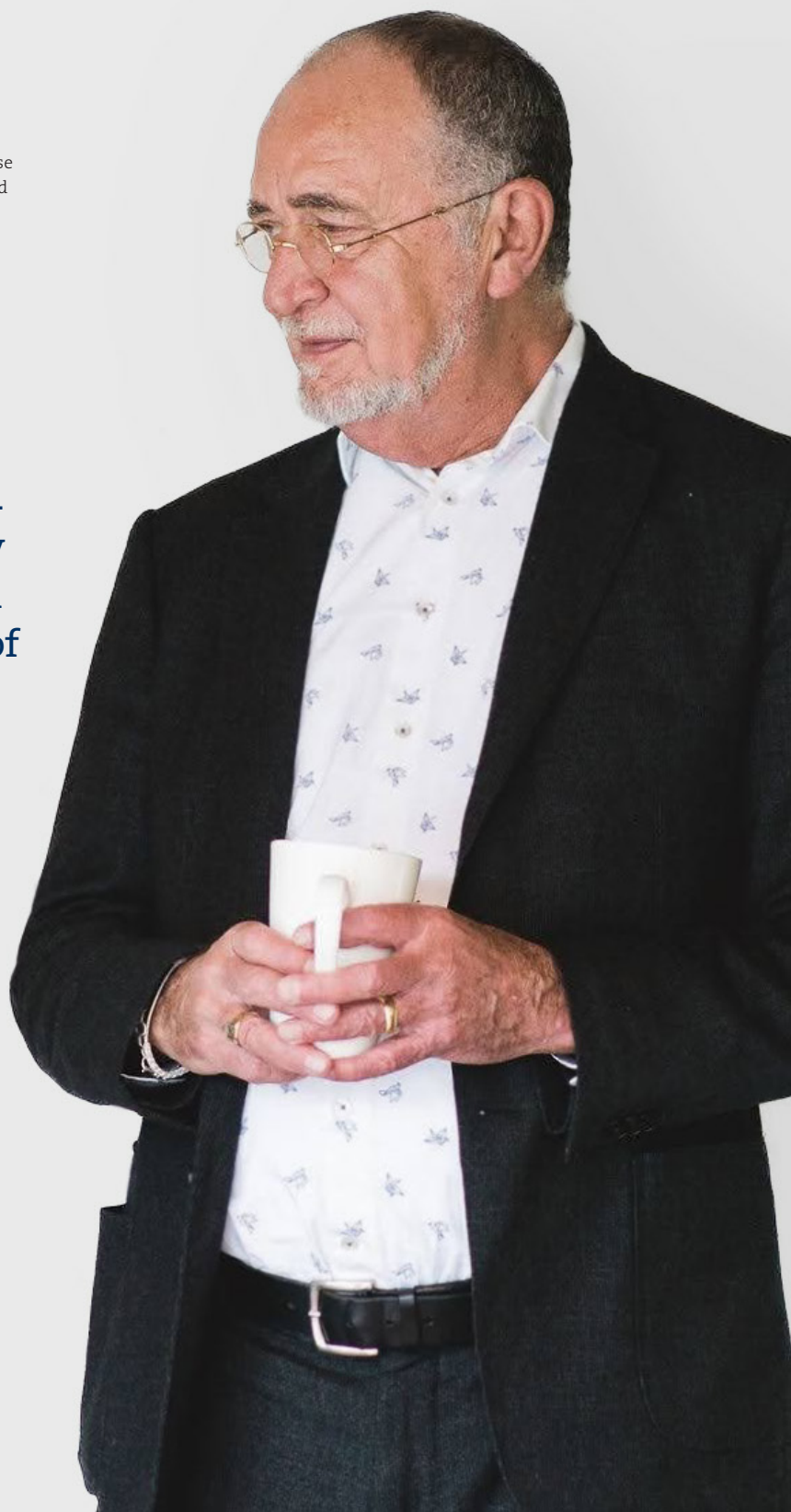
Each year, I am grateful to each of the people who really drive our school forward – families, staff, teachers, administration, and our Board. My role has been largely to thank others for the work that they have done, the care that they have shown, the vision that they share. And I am also grateful that the school is left in good hands – Mr. Banack and the administrative team, the academic team, the administrative and staff team, the families, and the Board of Governors. In leaving, I leave with the same beliefs that I had in the beginning: Trust will drive our

school forward even more, and gratitude will maintain that sense of trust, thoughtfulness, care, and kindness that has come to be the hallmark of our school.

**Thank you  
for all of your  
support for me  
and my family  
over the past 21  
years. I am very  
grateful to each  
and every one of  
you.**

*Heugh Banack*

Headmaster, 2000 to 2021









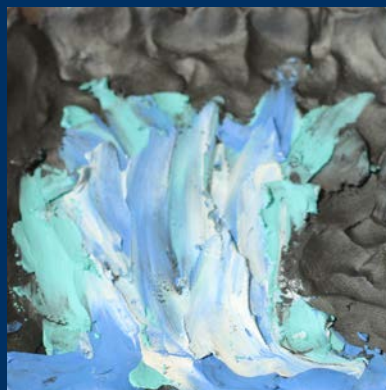


# express yourself

How can I teach someone's  
brain? Or touch someone's heart?

After exploring how we express ourselves (and finding out there are plenty of ways) Kindergarten students were eager and ready to answer these questions for themselves. Teeming with inspiration and knowledge and plenty of plasticine, students created Barbra Reid inspired art pieces to express themselves and inspire others. Before making their sculpture, each student met with their teacher to choose what their sculpture would be and what they hoped it would say. "Some students chose environmental concerns, others happiness, kindness, or beauty," Ms. Higginson and Miss Warner explain. With the aim to teach someone's brain or touch someone's heart, students then picked a symbol that would best express their idea and then explored different forms their symbols could take. This took plenty of research for the young learners, who looked up pictures online, watched art tutorials, and explored things like colours, textures and shapes. With lots of possibilities, the project had students make many decisions. Students mixed different colours, explored two- and three-dimensional forms, and played with textures and shapes. "Since this was the last unit of the year,





“They now can see how many different kinds of art there is and appreciate the work that goes into creating it,” the Kindergarten team concludes. “They now see themselves as artists.”



students had plenty of learning to draw from when creating their sculptures, from sculpting techniques, visual styles, and ways of expression,” the teaching team nods.

After lots of brainstorming, research, exploration and creation, students were ready to share their pieces with their favourite teachers, staff members, and friends. During a special, invite-only viewing, students had a chance to share their art, their process, and their inspirations with guests.

“The best part was seeing how independent and individualistic

the students were able to be. They each chose their own ideas and were able to be creative and proud of what they were doing,” Ms. Higginson and Miss Warner explain.

Students have even continued their explorations and are now trying different ways to express their same idea. Some are now trying three-dimensional art, while others are changing their symbols or shapes.

With the unit wrapped up, the classes have been spending time reflecting on their learning. With a gallery guest book to look through, students

heard from their guests about how their art made them feel or what it made them think. Students learned, and reflected, and will continue to teach people’s brains and touch their hearts.

“They now can see how many different kinds of art there are and appreciate the work that goes into creating it,” the Kindergarten team concludes. “Students now see themselves as artists.”



# sharing

Kindergarten students share their art, their process, and their inspirations.



Sometimes trees can fall over to the side after a big windstorm. I want to teach people how to be smart and stay out of the forest when there is a big windstorm. I want to keep people safe.

**AMYN**



I want to teach people that rainbows come after the rain. A rainbow can come only if the sun comes out quickly after the rain. I love rainbows because they have my favourite colours in them.

**ALESSANDRA**



I chose to make some flowers for my project because it is almost Mother's Day. I want to show my mom how much I love her. My mom loves flowers.

**MATT**



I made a wolf because I like wolves and I want people to save them. Wolves hunt in packs and are in danger and I don't want them to become extinct.

**ASHITA**



My message is to 'teach the brain' and be kind to nature. I wanted to do the ocean, to teach people to keep the whole world clean. I wanted to show the ocean clean and encourage people to throw the garbage in the garbage can.

**LUCAS**



I want to do the Earth because some people throw garbage in the water. I want to teach them to not throw garbage in the water.

**LUCINDA**



I chose to make a Ninja Lego project. They are in storybooks and movies. They are famous for being sneaky and moving slow and fast. Ninjas are from our imagination.

**BAYAN**

# notes new and noteworthy



## Living well, with others and for others

A big blue bin now offers our community a way to recycle old, outdated, unsaleable uniform items. Families can bag and bring these items by to clear up closet space and keep clothes out of our landfills. Win win!



## A day to celebrate learning

Personal, Theory of Knowledge, and Capstone Projects were on display during our first ever Celebration of Learning. With celebrations happening on the stage and showcases happening in class, it was a day full of inquiry, reflection and fun.



## Bring your gryph to work day

Hoping to brighten the spirits of our elementary school learners, Chef Kyle made a call to everyone's favourite hero – Gryph! Meadowridge's yellow-feathered mascot delivered lunch to all our classrooms (a delicious selection of soup, potatoes, and bok choy!) and brought smiles to students' faces.



## KEEPS comes to campus

Grade 4 students welcomed Kanaka Education & Environmental Partnership Society to campus for an outdoor, interactive workshop about the salmon lifecycle. Throughout the visit and during a variety of stations, the classes learned about sharing the planet and the connectedness of all things.



## Reading Link Challenge

A group of Grade 5 students (known collectively as the Six Books Team!) represented Maple Ridge during the FVRL Reading Link district challenge. The team won both their class and district competitions to earn this honour and went on to place third at districts.



## Class of 2021 Art Exhibition

The Diploma Programme Art Exhibition went virtual this year, with artists sharing their pieces, statements, and reflections in a series of one-on-one interviews. Photography, textiles, sculptures, and paintings were explored and on display.



## Donning jeans for good

Meadowridge swapped their trousers for denim during BC Children's Jeans Up Day and raised \$1,785.







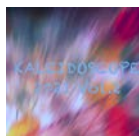
## The Burke Hall

In 2001, a Mission was adopted for Meadowridge School. "Learning to live well, with others and for others, in a just community—" this Mission has since shaped, guided and inspired all who have lived and learned here. So too has its author, Mr. Hugh Burke. It was with great honour that we announced the naming of the future great hall, the Burke Hall.



## Celebrating the Class of 2021

Following the livestreamed convocation ceremony, the Class of 2021 enjoyed a catered lunch, ice cream, photo stations and a walk down memory lane. Excitement continued the following day, with graduates and their families enjoying a family day complete with a toast, diploma presentation and lots (and lots) of photos.



## Kaleidoscope is released

Music students had their talents on display with the release of Kaleidoscope Volumes I, II and III, the first-ever releases from Mr. David Noble's new digital recording program. Behind every song (or instrumental piece) in the series is a student or group of students who have written, arranged, recorded, edited, mixed, and mastered the work.



## Park here!

Six families nabbed a reserved spot for next school year during an online auction. These highest bidders can now enjoy the convenience of a reserved spot, and – with all funds raised going towards the Audacity Campaign.



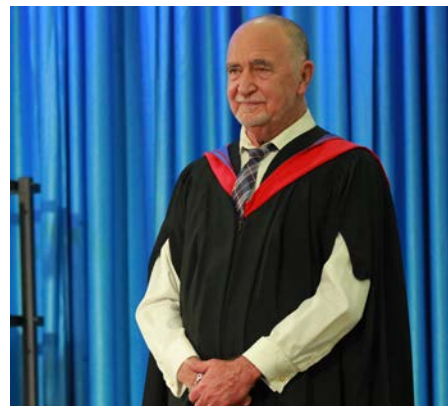
## Grade 5 students share their learning

Students explored a range of inquiries, including vegetarianism, cyberspace, animal extinction and electric cars during the Grade 5 Exhibition. To share their learning, students recorded a series of videos and released their projects for all to learn from and enjoy.



## Spirit Days

Three spirit days, three times the fun. Students enjoyed games, challenges and delicious BBQ lunches during our three spirit days.



## A community farewell (for now)

Our community celebrated Mr. Hugh Burke during an online assembly on the last day of school. Teachers, parents, alumni, students and staff all had a chance to say "thank you" to our longest-serving Headmaster.



## Indigenous Peoples Day

Student leaders helped prepare and present a variety of performances and presentations during our Indigenous Peoples Day Assembly. Students shared and heard stories, enjoyed performances, and learned all about the First Peoples Principles of Learning.

## Have something new and noteworthy you would like to share?

Share your update at [communications@meadowridge.bc.ca](mailto:communications@meadowridge.bc.ca)

# IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, DO SOMETHING

## The story of three Grade 8 students who are making big social change

As February neared, Aasha noticed something odd, something *missing* around the halls of her new school. It was almost Black History Month, but no posters were put up nor billboards adorned that would let anyone know. With all the police brutality and racial injustices happening in the news, it felt especially important to change this and spread awareness in some way.

When Aasha brought this up with her friends Abigail and Aneet, they both agreed and wanted to take action just the same. Though a billboard wasn't their original idea, it seemed a good place to start. A billboard, they figured, would at least get the conversation going. As middle school students themselves, the group knew exactly where their classmates spent the most time walking by and hanging out. One billboard – more than any of the rest – got the most traffic, and Aneet was able to secure this most coveted spot through her position on Junior Council. Now with a message, a plan, and a place to share it, the group got to work.

The bulletin board proved especially powerful. "We chose to include newspaper clippings and pictures ranging from the 1940s to now," explains Aneet, "this was to show that – really – things haven't changed very much in the past 80 years." They also posted every single name of the people affected

by the recent acts of prejudicial violence. Again and again, they watched students stop, read the list, and marvel, *why so many?* Raising awareness about greater, global instances was important, but the group wanted to also raise awareness about the local, more intimate acts committed every day. All three members admit to having experienced racism, awful things like being talked down to and called names. "We all know the struggles even if we haven't experienced them firsthand," nods Abigail.

From their efforts, the trio was next awarded some assembly time, time that they used to have honest conversations with their peers on a larger scale and show documentary snippets and videos. "We're teenagers too, so we know how our peers think and act," Aasha explains of the approach. During a series of assemblies, the group also taught their peers ways to act should they be victims or witnesses to racism. "We wanted to get people to see the effects of their words or actions, to have them feel how it feels," explains Abigail. Through scenarios and stories, the group taught their peers small ways to make a big difference. "We're not even trying to change offenders' minds – their minds are made up! – we're trying to change the minds of the bystanders," nods Aasha, "that's where the learning opportunity is."

Focused on awareness and education, the trio now has now set their sights on developing an advisory curriculum for next year. They first offered up a list of topics and have now started working on planning and mapping out the learning. "We're continuing to add things," Aasha nods. Their endless research has sparked many new ideas and points, but one in particular stands out from the rest: the right information is out there for whoever wants to learn. "Look for firsthand accounts," encourage Abigail, "look for black professors, find advocates, look up museums and other credible social and online accounts." The group is also focused on celebrating and sharing all the enrichment African American culture adds to our lives. "We are so lucky, and should be honoured, and yet most don't know that our music and dance and so much else has been influenced by black culture," nods Aneet.

As busy students themselves, Aasha, Abigail, and Aneet admit it's a big undertaking, but an important one worth all the planning, writing, action and time. "Our Mission is learning to live well, with others and for others, in a just community," Aasha explains, "but that's not always the case." And that's what keeps them motivated: the will to create positive, meaningful change. There's always room for that.



From left to right:  
Aneet, Aasha, and Abigail

# ING

“

You really do not have to do much to be an ally but you also cannot just say you are an ally without first educating yourself then others.

ABIGAIL

”

“

Being a good bystander isn't just about how you show that you're a bystander, it starts with developing that mentality where you don't classify people as a race but as humans.

ANEET

”

“

Maybe it might have been socially acceptable for people to be racist 60 years ago but today in this day in age when we have the internet, we have the world at our fingertips and can choose to educate ourselves. We don't have an excuse anymore.

AASHA

”









# MEADOWRIDGE SCHOOL SPIRIT

## Final House Point Tally

At Meadowridge, you'll catch the most excitement (and friendly competition) during our annual Spirit Day events. Students in Whonnock, Kanaka, Alouette and Fraser join together and spend the day contending as one: house cheers, sports, and games all count towards their respective House's total. To keep students spirited but safe, we hosted three Spirit Days this spring to follow COVID safety protocols. After a year of house point opportunities like the pumpkin carving contest, cross country run, leadership retreats, and Spirit Days, our House Cup Champion was announced: Kanaka!

**1155**  
**KANAKA**  
HOUSE

**1064**  
**ALOUETTE**  
HOUSE

**785**  
**FRASER**  
HOUSE

**678**  
**WHONNOCK**  
HOUSE







POST-SECONDARY

# What now? Reflections from a graduate.

BY TRACY YANG '21

Now that I have graduated, I find myself heading off on the same, unknown adventure that I was on seven years ago when I joined Meadowridge School. These moments are parallel yet incomparable, as back then, I wasn't sure what to expect. I believe the difference I feel stems from my growth over my time at the school. At Meadowridge, I have been able to explore, learn, take risks, and make mistakes in a supportive environment. Now, I'm ready for what is next.





During my time at Meadowridge, I extended myself over a wide range of activities and wandered wherever my interests led me. Between joining the badminton team, participating in numerous clubs, and auditioning for drama productions, I have been pleasantly surprised by how much fun these extracurriculars could be time and time again. That one split second when the mind decides to either engage or reject an activity is crucial; and, personally, my regrets usually came from not trying something I could have had fun with or learned from. Contributing to the Meadowridge community through service is also a highlight that I have enjoyed. Besides organizing events through different leadership positions, volunteering for sports games is also something that I would definitely recommend. Not only will you be able to watch games from an advantageous position, the experience may also come with free food which is highly appreciated!

Academically, the rigor of the Diploma Programme definitely exceeded expectations, but it also allowed space for improvements and provided a training ground

for persistence. It takes courage to believe in oneself after doing poorly in an exam or an assignment. It then takes more guts to reflect and face what was done wrong to improve for the next round. The last two years at Meadowridge have taught me the necessity of these qualities and allowed me to practice them through failure (which is unavoidable). With the guidance from teachers and support from peers, I genuinely enjoyed meeting challenges and improving to overcome them as time passed.

The part that dominates my memories, as I recall my years at Meadowridge, are the many moments I shared with staff and students. The staff members have always created a caring atmosphere, from the brief greetings in the hallways, the concerned questions when someone seems troubled, or the

extra time spent to help us succeed. As for the students, their deep bonds can be shown through the

amount of effort they are willing to put in to spend more time together. Many of my peers from the graduating class drove for hours in the morning to participate in one more Spirit Day while not

required to do so. Although during our last two years, COVID-19 created unprecedented situations that caused uncertainty and stress, it arguably brought everyone closer together as we navigated through it together. Class of 2021's high school days have come to an end. In retrospect, many busy days following one another may seem endless, but nearing graduation, the fleeting time feels impossible to grasp. To that end, one suggestion I would give is to treasure the time left and make the most out of each moment at Meadowridge.

During my time at Meadowridge, I extended myself over a wide range of activities and wandered wherever my interests led me.



#### About Tracy Yang '21

As a student, Tracy enjoyed badminton, basketball and writing for the Gryphon Magazine. When not in class, on the court or on stage, she also participated in the BC Youth Parliament, volunteered with charitable organizations, played piano (at the ARCT Level!) and enjoyed all kinds of pop music. Come fall, Tracy will be studying Social Sciences at the University of Toronto.



# The Class of 2021 is graduating from one of the most rigorous academic programs in the world, and they become graduates during one of the most challenging times.

Throughout the past two years, and throughout their journey with us at Meadowridge, they have exhibited grace, courage, intelligence, and kindness. They are all going on to prestigious schools nationally and internationally, to join academic programs in a variety of disciplines, and, most importantly, to make a positive impact in our world. We are proud of what they have achieved, and despite knowing change is the only certainty, we are confident that these young people are prepared not only to meet the future, but also to create it.

Learn more at [meadowridge.bc.ca/meetourgrads](https://meadowridge.bc.ca/meetourgrads)





# Class of 2021

## University Offers

from academic institutions around the world

### CANADA

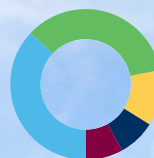
Brock University  
Capilano University  
Carleton University  
Dalhousie University  
Douglas College  
Emily Carr University of Art + Design  
Huron University College  
King's University College  
Kwantlen Polytechnic University  
Langara College  
LaSalle College Vancouver  
McGill University  
McMaster University  
Mount Allison University  
OCAD University  
Queen's University  
Ryerson University  
Simon Fraser University  
Thompson Rivers University  
Trent University  
University of Alberta  
The University of British Columbia  
University of Calgary  
University of the Fraser Valley  
University of King's College  
University of Northern British Columbia  
University of Ottawa  
University of Toronto  
University of Victoria  
University of Waterloo  
University of Windsor  
Vancouver Island University  
Western University  
Wilfred Laurier University  
York University

### UNITED STATES

Boston University  
California College of the Arts  
DePauw University  
Emerson College  
Johns Hopkins University  
Maryland Institute College of Art  
The New School  
Pratt Institute  
Queen's University of Charlotte  
Ringling College of Art and Design  
Savannah College of Art and Design  
School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
School of Visual Arts  
St. John's College  
University of California, Berkeley  
University of California, Davis  
University of California, Irvine  
University of California, Los Angeles  
University of California, San Diego  
University of California, Santa Barbara  
University of California, Santa Cruz

### INTERNATIONAL

Northwestern University in Qatar (Qatar)  
St. George's University (Grenada)  
University of Central Lancashire  
(United Kingdom)  
University of the Arts London  
(United Kingdom)  
Yonsei University (South Korea)



### AREA OF STUDY

- Science 37%
- Arts & Social Sciences 35%
- Applied Science 12%
- Commerce 8%
- Fine Arts 8%



### DESTINATION OF STUDY

- Eastern Canada 59%
- British Columbia 25%
- International 16%









# “MEET OUR GRADS”

Eleven graduates share their stories, reflect, and share their hopes for the coming year





## Maisie Liu '21

**School & Program** University of Waterloo, Urban Planning

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Grade 8

**Born in** Winnipeg, Manitoba



## Thiago Amin '21

**School & Program** University of British Columbia, Political Science, Math & Education

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Grade 11

**Born in** Joinville, Santa Catarina, Brazil



## Ruochen Yuan '21

**School & Program** Parson School of Design, Fashion Design

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Grade 1

**Born in** Xi'an, Shaanxi, China



## Hunter Meyer '21

**School & Program** Queens University of Charlotte, BSc. Sports Medicine

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Junior Kindergarten

**Born in** Maple Ridge, BC



## Leo Cai '21

**School & Program** University of Toronto, Department of Materials Science & Engineering

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Grade 9

**Born in** Beijing, China



## Pawel Pater '21

**School & Program** St. George's University, Medical Degree Program

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Junior Kindergarten

**Born in** Lower Hutt, New Zealand



## Merdeka Miles '21

**School & Program** Western University, School for Advanced Studies in the Arts & Humanities

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Grade 2

**Born in** Victoria, BC



## Oliver Gao '21

**School & Program** Johns Hopkins University, International Relations

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Grade 8

**Born in** Rochester, New York, USA



## Charlotte Lau '21

**School & Program** Ryerson University, Early Childhood Studies

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Grade 1

**Born in** Vancouver, BC



## Eric Xue '21

**School & Program** University of Toronto, Computer Science

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Grade 5

**Born in** Fuzhou, China



## Keissa Tam '21

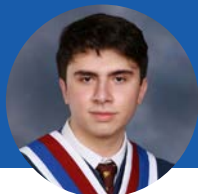
**School & Program** UBC or Western University, Kinesiology

**Meadowridge Student Since**  
Grade 5

**Born in** Moosejaw, Saskatchewan



“



I attended a local public school when I first arrived to Canada,

but we were soon told we would have to pay because of my international status. That was stressful because we couldn't afford it. We were trying to figure something out when, during a visit with a family friend, we heard about Meadowridge. I sent in my transcripts to apply for a scholarship and found out I had been accepted one week before classes were about to start. I got all my uniform items and everything else in a rush – it was super last minute!

THIAGO  
AMIN

“

After living in Shanghai for a while, my mom wanted me to come back to Canada to continue my high school education. The IB Programme was important for my family. When I first arrived at Meadowridge, it was a very welcoming school. I was actually really intimidated, but

the people here are so welcoming and I made a lot of friends

and adapted pretty quickly despite the change in culture.

MAISIE  
LIU



“

OLIVER  
GAO

We looked at other private schools in the area, but Meadowridge stood out as the most unique.

We loved the campus and the fact that it offered the IB Programme. But honestly, my first visit here I remember thinking *this is straight-up wilderness*. It wasn't until we pulled up to the school and saw the campus that I saw how big and established the school was. I still remember the tour and the ambassadors who showed us around. I remember how polite they were and even elegant. You could tell they cared and weren't just half-heartedly answering our questions.



## HOW DID YOU FIRST FIND YOURSELF AT MEADOWRIDGE?

“

I started in elementary school. I joined another IB private school but when that school shut down, I moved to public school. I was stuck in a class with lower abilities and started to hate school, even though it was something I used to love. So my parents found Meadowridge, figuring I would be challenged.

When I came, it was a great experience.

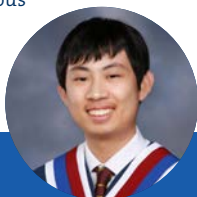
MERDEKA  
MILES



“

LEO  
CAI

I actually asked my parents if I could find a school here [...] my parents and I talked about this and they agreed we could make it work. We picked Meadowridge because of the IB Programme. We liked that it was challenging and more widely known. When I first joined, I remember being nervous because the other students looked so formal in their uniforms. Like, what am I doing here? But it got better, of course.



“

My parents were considering lots of schools when we moved to Canada, but we chose Meadowridge because they visited and enjoyed speaking with Mr. Burke.

PAWEL  
PATER





“

Starting school – I love school a lot! – so I’m very excited to see what university is like.

I’m excited to meet new people. I’m also excited to be at Western. When I was choosing a university, I needed to find an institution with a good reputation that has also made an impact on global advancement and technology. I was very happy with Western’s history in cancer research and its input into the global research community. A lot of schools that I was interested in were on the east coast, but I love the idea of extreme weather. Also, if there’s a study abroad program, I’m doing it! I love traveling and want to go to all corners of the world. I’m taking every opportunity.

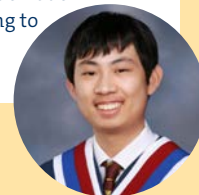


MERDEKA  
MILES

“

I’m excited for some freedom. It’s scary, but it’s also a step everyone needs to take.

It just means that if you mess up, you pay the consequences. If you don’t do laundry, you won’t have a shirt to wear. If you don’t do groceries, you won’t have anything to eat! That’s scary but exciting.



LEO  
CAI

“

I’m looking forward to meeting new friends.

There’s an ACG club at the University of Toronto, which I’ve already joined online to meet some new friends.

I look forward to seeing them on campus. I’m a bit nervous as well, but certainly not afraid. I believe things will work themselves out. I look forward to being in Toronto, which is a bit more of a city with more to check out than Maple Ridge.



ERIC  
XUE

“

Making new friends. I’ve lived at Meadowridge for so long – 12 years now! It’ll be hard for me to reach out and make new friends, but I’m looking forward to it.

I also can’t wait to have a big, huge studio to share with all my classmates. A lot of the projects at Parsons are open-ended, so you can express yourself however you want. As for projects? I’d be very excited to do something like create a pattern or textile. Like weaving! You know people who weave different patterns? I’d love to try that in university.



RUOCHEN  
YUAN

# WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO IN THE YEAR AHEAD?



“The support. Everyone here really supported me, and I know it won't be the same in university.

The small groups and the teachers here helped form my study habits and shaped my ATL (Approaches to Learning) skills. Meadowridge has great teachers. I'll also miss Spirit Days, which are always lots of fun and a good break from school. I will miss my family and all my friends from school and lacrosse. I've been playing with the same lacrosse team my entire life, and we're all going away to different schools.

HUNTER MEYER



The people and just the general environment when you walk into the school. Academic-wise, it is stressful but it's a stress that everyone is going through. You know you can find any teacher or classmate to lend an ear.

“Teachers don't help just because they have to – they genuinely care.

The International Baccalaureate is hard, and our teachers try to balance it out with ways to destress. My classmates and I even host destress events before exams. We hosted a get-together on the backfield. It was sunny, music was playing, and we enjoyed snacks and played some card games.

KEISSA TAM



“I'll miss my friends at Meadowridge. I'll also miss the vibe of the school.

It is so welcoming and inviting and I have fun every day at school. Honestly, I'll miss lunchtimes, which are a time where my friends and I can sit down at a table, take a break from the day, and have a noisy buzz of things happening in the background. I will also miss my dog a lot.

RUOCHEN YUAN



## WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST AS YOU MOVE ONTO THE NEXT CHAPTER?

“My friends. I'll miss my teachers too, but not all the reflections!

Mrs. Rajeev goes out of her way for us. If we're learning a new concept, she'll plan a lab to help us learn. She really keeps it interesting, and it never feels repetitive. Chemistry labs were also challenging but rewarding, and Biology was always great. I also enjoyed my Internal Assessments (IA).

PAWEL PATER



CHARLOTTE LAU



There are so many things. Definitely the teachers. I know everyone says that I'm very bubbly or always say "hi" when I walk by them, but when I'm having a bad day it's my teachers who cheer me up. They've all seen me grow up, and they know me so well. I'll miss the check-ins, the "are you okay?" or even "how was your day?"

“Most of all, I'll miss my friends. At Meadowridge, we're all so close but I know that my friends will always be there for me. Oh, and my mom. My mom is my best friend and my number one fan.



# the art of creativity







## A lesson in patience, setting and time

Mrs. Rhonda Laurie's classroom is a lively and much-used space.

Minutes into our conversation with the art teacher, a student appears in the doorway. Mrs. Laurie spots them, stops midsentence, and waves them in. "Come in!" she smiles. Moments later, another two show up. Students are comfortable here, and it's easy to spot why. There's art on the walls, paint splatter on the desks and supplies on every shelf. Tucked in the corner, an art rack holds rows and rows of art. It's inspiring and playful, the kind of space students can settle into, explore, take risks and get a little messy. "Art is an adventure," Mrs. Laurie smiles, "an exploration." For the veteran art teacher, teaching art is about the process, not the product, and is a culmination of many experiences and opportunities. Getting students to embrace this mindset is a recipe of patience, setting, and time.

Hoping to encourage this process-over-product mindset, Mrs. Laurie planned a new unit for her Grade 10 art class, an activity that would give students this setting and time and promote patience and learning.





For fifteen classes, Mrs. Laurie brought her Grade 10 art students straight to the forest, told them to find a spot, and gave just one instruction: capture the essence of the place. Every day, students explored different mediums and tried new techniques. “Charcoal, water-soluble graphite, watercolour, conté, different paper textures...” Mrs. Laurie rattles off, “the kids tried it all.” The aim was to get students to create and not overthink art. And it worked. The more students went into the forest, the more they drew and painted and sketched and honed their skills. They grew more comfortable and loosened up. Knowing that they wouldn’t be asked (or even allowed) to make revisions in these early pieces, students had no fears or temptations to be perfect.

During these many visits to the forest, students also developed a deep sense of place. “We live in a world with so many modern conveniences that we forget our connections with nature,” Mrs. Laurie explains, “I wanted students to



rediscover nature and develop a new connection with the land.”

During their many sessions, students developed that deep sense of place, knowing not only the differences between the trees and the shrubs and the bark and the mulch but also, importantly, how to capture these differences in their art. Over time, students grew more comfortable, took more risks, and learned. “I’ve never seen it happen so fast,” Mrs. Laurie nods.

After these many days of exploration, students headed into the forest to create their final pieces. By now, they knew the forest, had developed their techniques and were ready to capture the essence of it all one last time. Mrs.

Laurie joined her classes, usually setting up by a group nearby. She didn’t hover but instead made herself available for any questions or conversations. Students would wander over whenever they needed some advice, while the rest of the class continued in a busy, happy hum.

With students at last provided the time to practice and make mistakes, the results were everything Mrs. Laurie had hoped for. Using light, colours, textures, values, composition and blocking in their final pieces, students were now able to interpret everything they saw, smelled, heard and sensed. “None of which could have been understood and used if compelled or pushed,” Mrs. Laurie concludes.





See student projects >>  
and reflections

“We live in a world with so many modern conveniences that we forget our connections with nature,’ Mrs. Laurie explains, “I wanted students to rediscover nature and develop a new connection with the land.”





# student reflections

Over the past month and a half Mrs. Laurie's class has been working on landscapes drawn from life in the North Forest. The students used chalk pastels to capture an area in the forest. Here are a few examples of their process, projects and reflections.

I realized how spending an extended period of time observing a place familiarizes you with the spirit of it in ways you could never get from a photo. I spent most of this unit drawing one specific tree, and all my sketches eventually became my notes which I used to draw my final piece.

In my first sketches I found myself "trying to draw a forest" instead of drawing the shapes, textures, colors, and values I saw in the forest.

At first, I was confused about how to make the branches realistic, how to show my perspective, how to draw the bark of the tree, and show that the light is shining through the leaves, instead of just the sky. But as I moved through the project, I learned more ways to draw. In the last 2 classes, I added light areas that look like sunshine, and I added dark colors to the trees to make them 3D.

You never truthfully realize all that we have until you're out there quite literally looking at nature for hours. The growth in skill I have experienced by drawing landscapes outside is why I believe my overall piece turned out very well.

Since we went out so many times, there was never any pressure for me to make something perfect. This allowed me to try out a variety of techniques and colours without stressing, as I would be able to start over next class. Working from life instead of pictures was also a new experience, and I think I learnt a lot more about using exaggerated colours because the colours I saw weren't distorted by a picture.

As we practiced working from outside observation, I could clearly see my growth in skills and improvements in my artworks. When I first started working outside, I came across with many difficulties like emphasizing parts in the painting and the use of colour. However, as I practiced more outside and worked from observation, I had more experience and became stronger in this field of art.

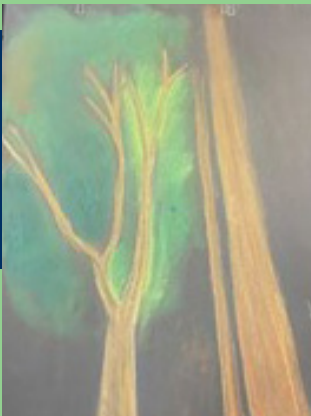




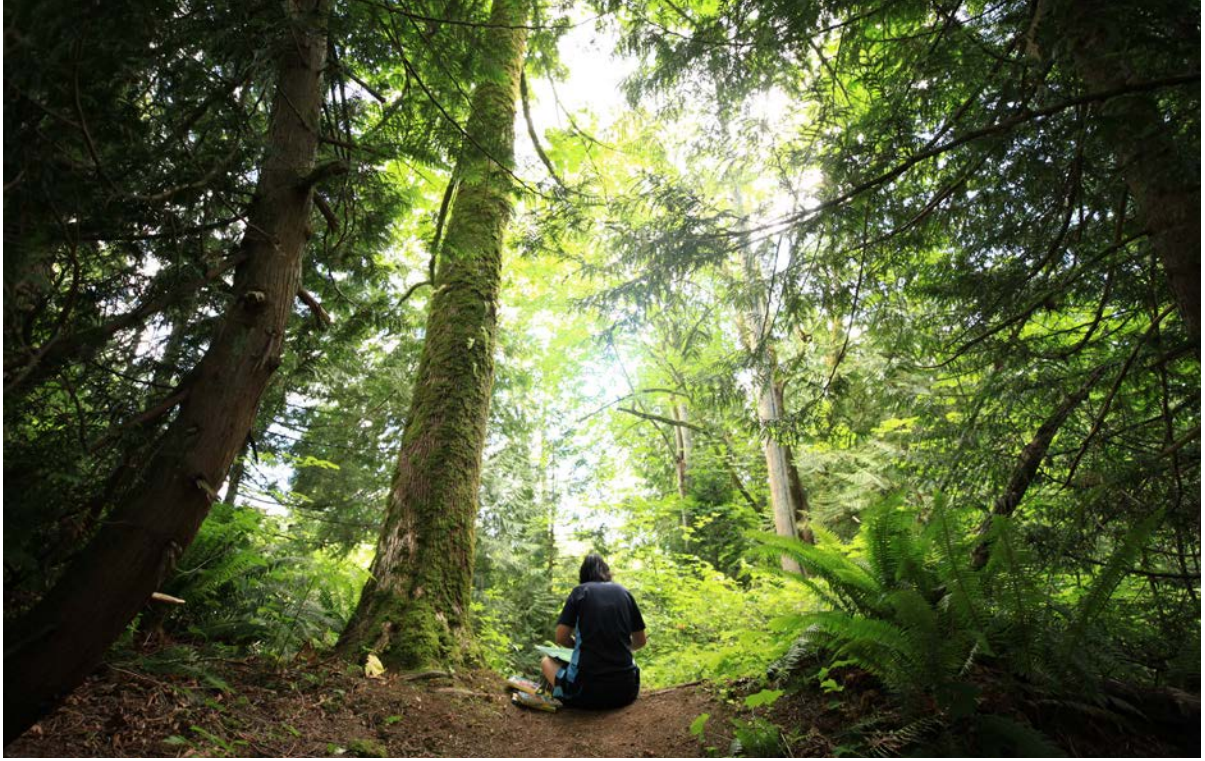
THE PROCESS



THE PROCESS







THE PROCESS



THE PROCESS







# What is a weird or interesting fact about your hometown?



**BRIANNA JUST,**  
*Post-Secondary Counsellor*

I grew up in Muskoka, Ontario, a rural district 200 km north of Toronto. It is also known as “cottage country” or “lake country” because the area is comprised of more than 1600 lakes. If you throw a stone in any direction, you are pretty sure to hit water. This has made it the perfect summer home for Torontonians dating back to the 1800s. While the area has been known for its seasonal residents, including Tom Thompson and other members of the Groups of Seven, Tom Hanks, and Kate Hudson, its most famous summer resident is Santa Clause. Located at the 45th parallel – halfway between the equator and the North Pole – Muskoka is also where you can find Santa’s Village, Mr. and Mrs. Clause’s summer home.



**PHOEBE ZHANG,**  
*Manager of Philanthropy*

My hometown is Yunnan Province in China, which borders the Tibet Autonomous Region China in the northwest and shares a border of 4,060 kilometres with Myanmar in the west, Laos in the south, and Vietnam in the southeast. Yunnan is one of the most ethnically diverse provinces in China, with ethnic minorities accounting for about 34 percent of its total population, including myself. Some ethnical groups are actually the same as Thai people, Bamar people, and Kachin people (live in Myanmar)!

Yunnan is situated in a mountainous area, with high elevations in the northwest and low elevations in the southeast. In the west, the altitude can vary from the mountain peaks to river valleys by as much as 9,800 ft, which makes it rich in natural resources and has the largest diversity of plant life in China. By the way, we grow the best coffee beans and tobacco in China!



**ROY ZHAO '19,**  
*Photographer*

Growing up in the deep alleys of a city with 5,000 years of history, my hometown Beijing has never failed to fascinate me with her stories from the river of time. Since it’s our tale-telling time, let me present a mystical fact about it.

At the end of the 1300s, the emperor of China decided to rebuild Beijing as the new capital. However, at that time, Beijing suffered from seasonal floods every year. To tackle this problem, the emperor sent two of his best advisors, who were conveniently two of his best Fengshui masters, to design the city’s new layout. Soon after, the advisors found the problem: an evil dragon is living under the city. To suppress the dragon, they designed the city to resemble an ancient god with eight arms– Nezha. They surrounded Beijing with a defensive wall, but left precisely nine doors to be the head, arms, and legs of Nezha, with the now-famous Forbidden City being his belly. As a closing remark, Beijing hasn’t suffered from floods ever since!



**TERRY DONALDSON,**  
*Director of Teaching and Learning*

I grew up in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, a small prairie city with notable and interesting history. First of all, as I was growing up and watching comedy shows on television, a trip to Moose Jaw was often the consolation prize for the loser of a contest. For Moose Jawians, this was a sad and sensitive topic of discussion. Secondly, during the 70s, Moose Jaw city council passed a bylaw enforcing walking on the right side of the sidewalk despite the fact that there were few pedestrians on the streets. Lastly, Moose Jaw is home to Mac the Moose, a large cement structure resembling a moose from a far distance. When a city in Norway claimed that their shiny aluminum moose was the biggest in the world, the friendly city flew the mayor to Norway for a cross-Atlantic detente. The solution was that Moose Jaw engineers built a platform to install under Mac, so that it was the tallest moose by several centimetres. What a relief, the friendly citizens of Moose Jaw can now rest easy.



What is a weird or interesting fact about your hometown?  
Share your answer at

[communications@meadowridge.bc.ca](mailto:communications@meadowridge.bc.ca)





# People of Meadowridge

## Belle Bojanowski

**Where you'll find her...** Helping out in the library and organizing the archives. **Here since...** 1996 as a parent and 2009 as librarian and archivist.

### What does your day as a Librarian and Archivist look like?

Nowadays, I spend lots of time sanitizing and shelving books! But in a normal year, I tend to be behind the scenes cataloguing and preparing library resources; Lots of hands-on work like laminating and stickering the book spines. I enjoy working with my hands. When students pop by the circulation desk, I'll help check books out or provide recommendations for reading or research. When I have the time, I try to tackle a few tasks in the archives. There's lots to sift through!

### What got you into archiving?

Well, I was asked to for one! But I suppose they first asked me because I've been here for so long. Both my children went to Meadowridge School – my son started in 1996, my daughter in 1998 – and I've helped out in a variety of ways. I started working at the school in about 2009 in the Uniform Shop. Back then, it was in the old house. After a few years, I moved over to the library. I have my Masters of Library Science, so that was the natural move. It was then that they asked me to take on archiving. When I started, there was about four big boxes full of picture albums to go through. I have been picking away at that, slowly getting things organized.

### What are the best parts of your job?

The best part of my job is the variety of tasks that I get to do, and the teamwork we have developed to run the library. I do enjoy cataloguing and resource preparation, as well as helping the students to find and borrow books. I enjoy the archives, too. Looking at old photographs is great, but can be daunting. Every photograph you find comes with a decision: keep it or throw it away. I love research – that's why I chose my master's program – so I enjoy digging through the past. It's also fun to find pictures of my own kids in some of the photos. My son and daughter seem to have been quite camera shy, so there aren't many pictures of them, apart from theatre photos. I did find one of my son recently. It was at the overnight aquarium trip – his back was turned, as usual, but I recognized the tie dye shirt.

### Do you have a favourite artifact?

Oh, there are plenty of pictures I really love. One of my favourites is a photo of some PYP teachers dressed up at Halloween. They were the seven dwarves, and Ms. Dobie is Snow White. It's cute, colourful, and funny. I also like the pen and ink drawing of the school by Sharp, 2009, and the aerial photos of the school, which show all the changes the campus has undergone and how much we've grown.

### What's the oddest, most obscure thing we have in the archives?

We have boxes and boxes of gifts from the TOEI school [Meadowridge's friendship school in Japan]. Tons of plastic toys, flags and banners, pictures and masks. All kinds of stuff. There's at least four boxes of it!

### Why do you think it's important to preserve history?

We're still a relatively young school, but we already have alumni and teachers and staff members who want to look back, remember and reflect. Our school has already grown and changed so much, so remembering what was is important.



## Looking from the past to the future, what are you looking forward to in Meadowridge's next 35 Years?

The new facilities that they've designed and the spaces they will build – especially the library and archives.

## What would surprise us about you?

I am handy with power tools. I have an older house that requires a lot of maintenance and repair. Next, I would like to get proficient with my electric chainsaw and do a little backyard logging.

## One person you would like to sit down with, living or deceased?

Meryl Streep. She seems to be a really nice person, and I would be interested to know how she prepares for a role; what her process is. I admire her ability with accents. She's had an interesting life, it seems, and I'd like to sit down with her and just have a chat.

## Favourite Meadowridge memory?

The theatre performances. I was known as the costume lady for quite a while! Both my children were heavily involved in theatre productions, so I made lots of costumes over fifteen years. It all started with the school's production of *Oliver* in 2000. I spent a lot of time searching through Value Village to find costumes and things with a vintage vibe. I think my favourite costume I made was for the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. I made a rather beautiful costume, something Elizabethan. I lent the school my daughter's gown, and made another one in a different colour for another actor.

“One of my favourite artifacts is a photo of some PYP teachers dressed up at Halloween. They were the seven dwarves, and Ms. Dobie is Snow White. It's cute, colourful, and funny.”

## Spring or fall?

Fall. I was raised in Ontario, and the leaves are fantastic there. I like the cooler breezes and the fall leaves. The Meadowridge campus is beautiful in the fall.

## Favourite meal?

Scallops and linguini, which I prepare for myself. For delicious scallops, be sure to pat them dry, grill them on a cast-iron frying pan and use butter!

## Best way to spend the day?

I quite enjoy going to Granville Market. We used to even take the boat there. I would head down and enjoy a falafel and then browse the art galleries and craft shops. I bought a tiny ceramic bowl from a shop there that I love – it was expensive, but also so unique. I love it.







**MEADOWRIDGE**  
SCHOOL

**Learning to live well, with others and for others, in a just community.**

MEADOWRIDGE SCHOOL is located on the South West Coast of Canada in beautiful Maple Ridge, British Columbia  
12224 240th Street Maple Ridge, BC V4R 1N1 [communications@meadowridge.bc.ca](mailto:communications@meadowridge.bc.ca) 604.467.4444