



Welcome to the Damascus College Commemorative Walk, a 200 metre path leading from the main entrance to the Sherry Creek, a path to explore a valley where we can gather to reflect, learn, share, grow and share our skills and knowledge in a living, breathing environment.

The walking track is a representation of Damascus College's commitment to learning, growth, and well-being, and is a testament to the school's commitment to the future.

We have been fortunate to have a track with natural and scenic views, and a path to explore the future of our school, our community, and our world.

The walking track was dedicated to the school's 50th anniversary celebration of 1963-2013 on the 1st of May, and was officially opened on Saturday 19 October 2013, by the school's principal, Damien O'Donnell.

Commemorative Walk

The Road

DAMASCUS COLLEGE

AUTUMN 2018



CONTENTS

03

From the Principal

05

Commemorative Walk

06

College Captains

08

Welcome Chris, Our new
Deputy Principal

10

Academic Assembly

12

2017 College Dux

14

2017 Awards and Achievement Evening

15

Top Class Honours

16

2018 SRC

18

Student Profile: Parisa Sharif

19

Rowing Season Review

22

2018 Swimming Carnival Photos

24

Guest Speaker Event - Grit

24

Damascus Friends of the Bush

25

2018 Next Gen Art Exhibition

28

Alumni Stories

32

Now and Then: Andrew Seeary

33

Alumni Art Project

34

Blast From the Past: Outward Bound
Alumni Art Project 2018

35

Reunions

36

Where Are They Now?

37

Births, Marriages, In Memory

39

Staff Retirements and Farewells

Front Cover Image: The Damascus College Commemorative Walk was opened on 28 October 2017 to commemorate the 50 year anniversary of Mercy education at the Mt Clear site. More information on page 7.



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

MATTHEW BYRNE

Welcome to the Autumn edition of The Road for the 2018 school year. Each new-year heralds a new phase for Damascus College. This year the College has welcomed 204 Year 7 students to make up our largest student cohort of 1074 students in the College's 23 year history. 132 Year 12 students are commencing their final year with 119 students undertaking the VCE and 13 students completing VCAL.

Each year Damascus College chooses a theme to frame our prayer, reflections and liturgies. This year we have chosen our theme from St Paul's letter to the people of Thessalonica. It is a letter of both encouragement and challenge – both elements are critical in the educative process. Our theme is;

"Never become tired of doing good"

This year we are going to work with the young people of the College to challenge and encourage them to not tire in their efforts to do good; academically, spiritually and socially.

I have enjoyed reading and listening to an educational psychologist over the summer by the name of Angela Duckworth. Angela emphasises the importance of grit or persistence and resilience in education. Learning new things is challenging. The Greek philosopher Aristotle said that the roots of education are bitter, but the fruits are sweet. I hope that the roots of a Damascus education are not bitter at all, but I do hope that from time to time they will test and unsettle in order to inspire and challenge students to reach their potential.

On the staff front we farewelled Sr Marie Davey at the conclusion of 2017. Since then Sr Marie has celebrated 50 Years of Profession as a Sister of Mercy and we congratulate Marie on this milestone.

We have welcomed Chris Grant to the role of Deputy Principal from the commencement of 2018. Chris, Rhiannon and their growing family have already immersed themselves in the Damascus community. Chris grew up in Skipton and Ballarat, so he knows greater Ballarat intimately. For the past six years he has been Deputy Principal of Mercy Regional College in Camperdown and Noorat, so he is well imbued in the spirit of Mercy. I look forward to introducing Chris at the various school events across the year.

I congratulate Annette Hallam and Jan Bibby both whom recently retired from their duties as learning support officers at Damascus. Annette and Jan have both been wonderful servants of the College assisting countless students with specific needs. We wish them both well for their exciting respective futures.

And while Annette and Jan conclude their time with us, we have welcomed several other staff;

- Ross McQuinn is a former student of the College (Class of 2007) who has returned to join the Mathematics team following 5 years at Templestowe College,
- Tim O'Sullivan joins the Mathematics and Science teams this year, Tim is an early career teacher and completed his final teaching rounds with us in 2017.
- Karen Hocking has joined the Mathematics, Science and RE teams from St Mary MacKillop College in Swan Hill and formerly of the Academy of Mary Immaculate in Fitzroy.
- Rebekah Chadwick joined the English team after 16 years at Phoenix College.
- Alan Archbold has joined us as Technology Learning Area Leader and Food Technology Teacher, Alan has had many years' experience as a teacher and school leader at Mt Clear Secondary College.
- Lynda Calistro joined us in a new role as Human Resources Manager, having a lifelong career in this space having worked the last 4 years at Catholic Education in Melbourne
- Daniel Cook has joined us as Office Manager, with his considerable management experience in various sectors including education, emergency services and more recently residential aged care.
- and finally, Nicole Hexter joins us as the Sports Coordinator, and as a member of the Health and PE team after a career of 16 years at St Patricks College with various leadership responsibilities.

continued on page 4 →

from page 3 →

Damascus College is very fortunate to have strong Governance and I thank Sr Berenice Kerr and Fr Adrian McInerney for their continued leadership of the College. 2017 Board Chair, Joseph Cahir concluded his two year appointment and has stood down from the board in 2018. Joe has been incredibly generous in his leadership and I thank him for his contribution. Michael Myers has been Deputy Chair and he moves into the Chair for 2018/19. I thank Michael for taking on this significant role.

The Sisters of Mercy have recently been through what is known as a Chapter, where they determine their leadership for the next few years. Sr Eveline Crotty has been elected as the leader of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea. I congratulate Eveline on her appointment and look forward to working with her over the coming years. Sr Liz Moloney has also been elected to the leadership team, Sr Liz is a former Ballarat East Sister of Mercy and worked in the boarding school at St Martin's, so while the Sisters lead and form us, our founding communities continue to have some influence on them!!

It is great to hear of so many former students of the College experiencing such diverse success in life and work beyond your school days. Keep an

eye out for current Year 12 student, Sam Rizzo as he represents Australia at the upcoming Commonwealth Games as a wheelchair athlete. We are very proud of Sam's endeavours!

A cohort of students are about to head off to France and Switzerland for a French language immersion and I thank Min Myers for her leadership of this opportunity. We also have our Timor Leste immersion students heading off again in June, if you see a fundraising opportunity, these students fund their own trip and all proceeds raised go to the families of Ainaro in Timor. I wish all our international travellers well! Our rowers again represented the College proudly in the Head of the Lake and for the second year in a row we were runners up in the Open Girls Division 1 – We will get there soon!! Well done to all the rowers and our incredible coaches. I congratulate the class of 2017 on their VCE and VCAL achievements and 2017 School Captain, Flynn Jamieson on becoming Dux.

2018 is filled with hope and promise for all within our college and I thank you for being part of it!





COMMEMORATIVE WALK

In late 2017, Damascus College celebrated the 50 year anniversary of Mercy education on our beautiful Mt Clear site, and to mark this special occasion, the Commemorative Walk was developed and then launched on Saturday 28 October 2017.

The Commemorative Walk is a 240 metre bush walking track that meanders through the bush located out the rear of the Damascus College campus. Along the track there are ten commemorative signs positioned, in remembrance of those who have gone before us, both living and those who have died, and form an integral part of our Damascus College story. The track leads to a sharing circle, a place for everyone to enjoy, where we can gather to reflect, learn, listen, grow and share stories and knowledge in a caring, respectful environment.

We invite our Damascus community to walk the track, read each memorial and accompanying prayer, and to gather in the sharing circle to sit for further reflection, contemplation and sharing.

This Commemorative Walk is a wonderful legacy commemorating 50 years of Mercy education on our site, as well as a beautiful memorial remembering past students and staff of Damascus and our three foundation Colleges, Sacred Heart College, St Paul's Technical College and St Martin's in the Pines.





COLLEGE CAPTAINS

ELLIE CARROLL & SEAN O'BEIRNE

ELLIE CARROLL

My name is Ellie Carroll, I am currently 17 years old and a year 12 student at Damascus College. I have lived in Ballarat for my entire life with my parents and older sister Giarn (a former Damascus student). Many of you may be familiar with my dad, Simon from the office (First Aid Officer). I've been a Damascus student for the entirety of my secondary schooling. I chose to attend Damascus after seeing the opportunities that my sister was given in the performing arts department in her junior years at the College.

Some of my favourite memories from Damascus are from backstage at school productions of *It's a Bird, It's a Plane, It's Superman*, *Final Hours*, *Grease* and *The Crucible* as well as the countless fun times in drama. I was given the opportunity to study drama a year in advance, completing units 3 and 4 in 2017. The process of creating non-naturalistic theatre with a group of creative, like-minded young people was truly incomparable and it was heart-warming to watch all of these chosen family members succeed in their VCE studies.

Now that I've finished studying drama, my favourite subject would have to be Indonesian. I find language and communication fascinating and learning a new language helps me to not only learn about a new culture and their customs but also allows me to reflect on and learn more about the English Language and Australia.

Outside of school, I have a part-time job working at Grill'd and on many school holidays you might spot me onstage at a children's pantomime in Melbourne. I love singing, dancing and drama and I have been

developing these skills outside of school since I was 4 years old. I love putting these skills into practice by participating in community theatre with BLOC and Lyric theatre. At the time of writing I am rehearsing as a member of the ensemble and understudy for Mary Magdalene in Lyric's production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*. My love for theatre is one that I would love to carry with me into my future.

I was so excited to find out that I was appointed as College Captain for 2018 and even more excited to find out that I would be sharing the role with Sean who I knew would make a terrific Captain. I am looking forward to working with Sean throughout the year to represent our school and follow in the footsteps of the many great captains we have had through our time as Damascus students.

I have really enjoyed my time at Damascus so far, especially the rapport I have developed with many students and staff within the community. My advice to parents of students approaching their high school education is to choose a school that works for the individual student and family. Although they may be going to a different school to their primary school friends and this may seem daunting, it won't take long to find people that are like minded and supportive if they are in the right learning environment for them. To incoming year 7 students, I encourage you to put yourself out there, try new things and show off your true self.

I'm very grateful to have been selected for this role and hope that Sean and I will make a great team for the remainder of our final year.

SEAN O'BEIRNE

As a Year 12 student, I am privileged to have the opportunity to be Damascus College's College Captain in 2018 and look forward to fulfilling the position with my co-captain, Ellie. My name is Sean O'Beirne, and after having attended Damascus College from Year 7, I am excited to now take on a role beyond that of being a student and represent the College in a formal capacity.

I come from a large family of eight children, of which I am the second-eldest. I have lived in the Ballarat area my entire life and attended Emmaus Catholic Primary school for the majority of my primary education before coming to Damascus in 2013. In our first year, after intensely battling it out for McAuley Year 7 SRC representative, Ellie was the one to emerge with the badge and left me free to, instead, experience and participate in a range of different extracurricular activities – an honour for which I still thank her today. Debating, music ensembles, a school production, as well as several student clubs and groups, have all been a part of my time at Damascus and have allowed me to interact with and get to know staff and students from many different areas and year levels within the school. I have learnt much here, both inside and outside the classroom, with some of my best memories of the school being simple day-to-day interactions with the fantastic people I have had the pleasure to meet over the years.

Outside of school, I occupy myself mainly with the piano – an instrument I have been playing for the past 12 years or so. Apart from my individual pursuits in examinations and competitions, this is an area in which I am

very happy to have performed with Ellie by accompanying her vocal talent at several McAuley Day assemblies, and certainly hope to do so again in 2018. I have also worked at the Forge Pizzeria in town since last year, which is (apart from obviously providing some income) another great opportunity to gain experience and mix with a different group of people in the Ballarat community. Academically, I am generally quite interested in my studies and enjoy learning both in areas within the school curriculum and beyond – I am hence excited for my final year of secondary schooling and enjoy all the subjects that I've chosen for Year 12.

In general, there are two fairly evident categories of students at this part of our education: those who have a somewhat clear idea and plan for the years following their graduation, and those who are still working it out. I so happen to belong to the latter category, but hope to narrow down the possibilities and work towards the former as we draw nearer to the next stage in our lives. For the present time however, I am happy to be attending Damascus College and to have the chance to represent it, for I believe it sets itself apart by the interest it shows in all aspects of a student's development, rather than focussing on just one. As College Captain, I hope to further develop my public speaking skills and show pride in our College, as well as to set a positive example for the College's younger students. To all those students from Year 7 to 12, be sure to put in the effort now that will make you proud of the end of your schooling, and best of luck for 2018.





WELCOME CHRIS, OUR NEW DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

In late 2017 we farewelled the much loved Sr Marie Davey, Deputy Principal at Damascus College who retired after 53 years in Catholic education. At this time, we opened a new page in Damascus history and welcomed Mr Christopher (Chris) Grant, to take on the Deputy Principal role from 2018.

Chris is originally from Beaufort and grew up on a sheep farm at Lake Goldsmith, where he later moved to Ballarat for school, and has lived in Ballarat for the last 20 years. He went to Beaufort Secondary College until Year 10 and then Ballarat Grammar in Year 11 and 12. He has one brother, a police officer and one sister, a hairdresser. Chris is married to wife Rhiannon and has four children, 11 year old Kalan, 8 year old Ella, 7 year old Aidan and 4 year old Nolan. Chris' eldest son Kalan is in Grade 6 at Lumen Christi, Delacombe this year and Chris can't wait for him to start at Damascus College next year. He is extremely proud of his four beautiful children.

"I currently live on the outskirts of Ballarat on 20 acres and run sheep. We have dogs, cats, chooks, birds and rabbits. I like to play the trumpet and saxophone, but I must admit, it's been a while" he said.

Chris is no stranger to hard work, as a young boy his first job was working on the family farm and he then embarked on work at the Mobil service station in Macarthur Street, Ballarat. As he reflects on his time as a secondary school student, he shared that it provided him with the skills, resilience, perseverance and confidence that he needed to grow as a person, educator and leader.

"I have many fantastic memories of my time at secondary school, particularly rowing in the Head of the Lake, here in Ballarat."

Chris went on to university to study a Bachelor of IT: Multimedia & the Internet, at the University of Ballarat, where he also worked as a computer helpdesk officer at the university. This role involved some tutoring of other university students in IT skills, which was to be the start of a life-long passion - teaching.

"In my last year of university, I decided to do teaching, so I then needed to spend a year completing four subjects in Humanities to get a second method, before I could enrol in the Graduate Diploma of Education, whilst working on the Computer Help Desk," he said.

"During my studies at university, I had one observation day at Damascus in 2003, and admit that a great deal has changed now."

Chris confesses that he loves helping people and seeing people learn and enjoy learning.

"I get great satisfaction out of seeing people succeed and knowing I had a bit to do with it. That light-bulb moment when a student really gets it, is a pretty good feeling as a teacher," he said.

Upon graduating, Chris' first teaching position was at Loreto College Ballarat, where he worked for eight years and had the opportunity to work in various roles including, Teacher, IT Technician, Head of Technology, Head of House and Daily Organiser. Chris loved studying IT and Humanities (Business) at school and university, and now teaches these two methods.



Chris with his family

After completing his Masters of Educational Leadership whilst at Loreto, he began applying for Deputy Principal positions, which saw him move to Mercy Regional College, Camperdown as the Deputy Principal, Teaching & Learning for a period of six years.

“This was my first significant leadership position at a school and I learnt so much from all my experiences there. As Mercy Regional College is a smaller school, there were many opportunities to be involved in and responsible for many areas of the College.”

Being offered the Deputy Principal position at Damascus College is my greatest achievement in my career.

“An opportunity presented itself in 2016 when Darren, the Principal of Mercy Regional College was taking Term 2 off for long service leave, to venture around Australia with his family. I then took on the role of Acting Principal and thoroughly enjoyed my time leading the College.”

With the hope of returning to Ballarat to be closer to family and to move away from the daily commute from Ballarat to Camperdown, he applied for the Deputy Principal role at Damascus College.

“I must admit I had my eye on this position a while back now, and was aware that Sr Marie was going to retire at some point. Every time I had visited Damascus throughout my teaching career, I always had a great feeling and knew I wanted to work at Damascus. I am extremely fortunate for this opportunity, and grateful for the experiences I have had throughout my career.”

Chris recently retired from football after playing over 300 club games at Beaufort Football Club, and he said that he now enjoys watching his children grow and experience the opportunities that he did growing up.

Thinking back over his career so far, Chris shares that he has worked with some fantastic people and exceptional leaders in Catholic Education. At each school he has worked, there have been some wonderful people that have offered him great support and guidance.

“As a leader you look to these people to journey with you along the way. The list is long, but these people you look up to and aspire to be like as a leader and a person.”

Since starting at Damascus, Chris has felt very welcomed, supported, respected and ‘at home’. He now looks forward to taking each opportunity that comes, and completing it to the best of his ability.

“Now it’s working with passionate and dedicated educators at Damascus, following, supporting and assisting to lead the College’s strategic directions into the future.”

“Being offered the Deputy Principal position at Damascus College is my greatest achievement in my career.”

Chris wanted to share some advice with the parents and students of Damascus College and wider Ballarat community.

“When parents are choosing a secondary college, I encourage them to walk in to Damascus College or any College for that matter, and see how it feels for you – I did.”

“A piece of advice to students is that there will be many opportunities that will present themselves to you throughout your life. Take them, embrace them and be the best you can.”



ACADEMIC ASSEMBLY

On Thursday 1 February 2018, the Damascus College community celebrated academic excellence at the annual Academic Assembly.

Senior students' academic excellence from 2017 was celebrated in front of all students, staff, Damascus College Board Directors, as well as award recipient family members.

It was a wonderful occasion where the audience was entertained by Mrs Maria Russell, Learning Area Leader of Music, Year 12 students Ruby Penhall, Jennifer Hunt and Ellie Carroll on vocals who performed 'Over the rainbow' from the Wizard of Oz.

Past student Melanie Hill (Class of 2007) was the guest speaker for the event, and she spoke of her journey since graduating secondary college. Melanie was awarded an Education Excellence Award for Midwifery in 2015 from St Vincents Private Hospital's Education Department, and in 2014 Melanie received a \$3,000 scholarship for Academic excellence, to continue her post graduate studies and become a midwife at St Vincents

Private Hospital. The audience enjoyed listening to Melanie's stories of her travels to South Sudan and Uganda in Africa, where she volunteered at a hospital assisting the locals in child-birth, as a midwife.

Melanie finished her speech with some advice for Damascus students, where she advised them to stop chasing the world's definition of success. "Success is an emotion that is experienced when you are completely fulfilled and content with where you are in life; it has nothing to do with a specific job, a specific amount of money, or quantity of material possessions. You can be the richest person in the world, but still feel unsuccessful. Instead take time to listen to peoples stories, surround yourself with people who inspire you and challenge you to be more! To bring hope where there is despair and joy where there is sadness and light where there is darkness. Don't judge a book by its cover, the world needs you and your unique story," she said.

Awards presented at the Assembly included:

2017 VCE UNIT 3 & 4, STUDY SCORE OF 40 PLUS

Name	Year	Group	Subject	Score	Teacher
Gemma Armeni	11	Arts	Equine Studies (VCE VET)	47	Tom Inverarity
Marla Gibson	11	Arts	Studio Arts	41	Anne Griffin
Ellie Carroll	11	Arts	Drama	42	Andrew Seeary
Aiden Kinder	12	Arts	Drama	41	Andrew Seeary
Natayla Munro	12	Arts	Drama	40	Andrew Seeary
Meg Jessup	12	Humanities/English	English	40	Rebecca Anderson**
Meg Jessup	12	Humanities/English	Religion and Society	40	Tony Haintz
James Lloyd	12	Humanities/English	Legal Studies	40	Greg Dow & Patricia Rowe
Matilda McKinnon	12	Humanities/English	English	40	Bill O'Loughlin
Jamison Thomas	12	Humanities/English	Legal Studies	40	Greg Dow & Patricia Rowe
Luisa Bonazzoli	11	Humanities/English	Languages: Italian	45	Alysoun Smalley
Peggy Yandell	12	Humanities/English	Languages: French	41.13	Alysoun Smalley
Madeleine Barclay	12	Maths/Science	Psychology	41	Ivanka Saric
Ellie Cushion	12	Maths/Science	Psychology	43	Ivanka Saric
Ellanor Goyne	12	Maths/Science	Psychology	42	Ivanka Saric
Alicia Mewett	12	Maths/Science	Psychology	42	Rebecca Anderson
Emily Mewett	12	Maths/Science	Psychology	42	Rebecca Anderson
Abbey Cutler	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Further Mathematics	40	Alan Lepair

2017 VCE UNIT 3 & 4, STUDY SCORE OF 40 PLUS - CONT'D

Name	Year	Group	Subject	Score	Teacher
Ellanor Goyne	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Mathematical Methods	40.43	Alan Lepair
Andrew Marriot	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Mathematical Methods	44.37	Alan Lepair
Peggy Yendell	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Mathematical Methods	40.43	Alan Lepair
Ellanor Goyne	12	Maths/Science	Physics	40	Peter Sartori
Flynn Jamieson	12	Maths/Science	Physics	41	Peter Sartori
Andrew Marriott	12	Maths/Science	Physics	45	Peter Sartori
Sean O'Beirne	11	Maths/Science	Physics	42	Peter Sartori
Flynn Jamieson	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Further Mathematics	45	Jennifer Montgomery
Flynn Jamieson	12	Maths/Science	Chemistry	42	Jennifer Montgomery
Andrew Marriott	12	Maths/Science	Chemistry	41.99	Jennifer Montgomery
Emily Mewett	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Further Mathematics	44	Jennifer Montgomery
Ellanor Goyne	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Specialist Mathematics	41.31	Caroline Nolan
Andrew Marriott	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Specialist Mathematics	44.61	Caroline Nolan
Alicia Mewett	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Further Mathematics	45	Matthew Rea
Mia White	12	Maths/Science	Maths: Further Mathematics	41	Caroline Nolan
Benjamin Rofe	12	Maths/Science	Systems Engineering	45	Jeff Simpson
Callum Wellwood-Kane	12	Maths/Science	Systems Engineering	45	Jeff Simpson
Thomas Carter	11	PE/Health	Physical Education	43	Glenn Jessup
Abbey Cartledge	12	PE/Health	Physical Education	42	Glenn Jessup
Isabella Clarke	12	PE/Health	Physical Education	41	Glenn Jessup
Brittany Webb	12	PE/Health	Physical Education	42	Glenn Jessup
Meg Jessup	12	PE/Health	Health and Human Development	45	Donnie Davidson
Mia White	12	PE/Health	Physical Education	42	Gavan Walsh

2017 VCE BACCALAUREATE

Eleonora Bonazzoli	Amelia Johnson
Abbey Cartledge	Jessica Rowse
Harry Graham	Peggy Yandell

YEAR 10/11 EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Imogen Brown	Year 10/11 Excellence Award (FedUni)
Ruby Haeusler	Year 10/11 Excellence Award (FedUni)
Hamish Pearce	Year 10 Business School Award (FedUni)

2017 VET & VCAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Gemma Armeni	VET Achievement
Riley Casey	VET Achievement
Jessica King	VET Achievement
Caitlyn Pitcher	VET Achievement
Montana Spiteri	VCAL Achievement

2017 VET & VCAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Gemma Armeni	VET Achievement
Riley Casey	VET Achievement
Jessica King	VET Achievement
Caitlyn Pitcher	VET Achievement
Montana Spiteri	VCAL Achievement

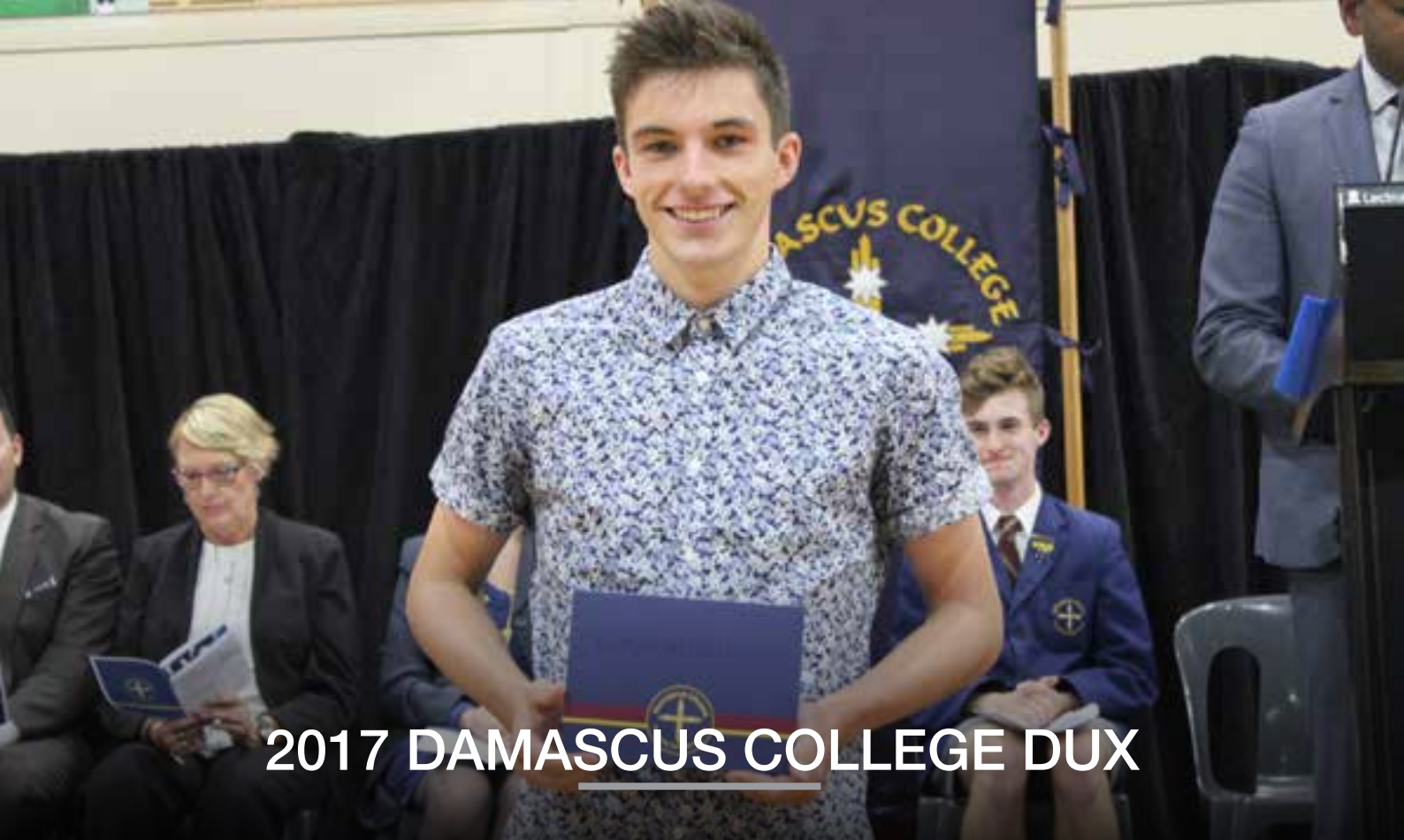
90 PLUS ATARS IN 2017

Meg Jessup	92.25
Ellanor Goyne	93.05
Emily Mewett	93.45
Andrew Marriott	93.8
Alicia Mewett	94.05
Flynn Jamieson	96.8

2017 DAMASCUS COLLEGE DUX

Flynn Jamieson	96.8
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2017 DAMASCUS COLLEGE DUX

The 2017 Damascus College Dux was Flynn Jamieson, who achieved the highest ATAR of the 2017 cohort with an ATAR of 96.80. Flynn's commitment to academic excellence was recognised at the 2016 Academic Assembly, when in Year 11 he received a perfect VCE subject score of 50 for Physical Education, and we are excited and very proud that he has continued to excel throughout Year 12 to achieve the highest level of academic excellence at Damascus in 2017. Flynn was also the 2017 College Captain, and he took on this role with maturity, flair and enthusiasm, and he is to be commended for his leadership throughout the year and for his ongoing tenacity and commitment to his studies. He has certainly set a fine example of student leadership for all to aspire to.

At the 2018 Academic Assembly, Flynn was recognised as the 2017 College Dux and was invited to address the student population, below is his speech:

FLYNN JAMIESON – 2017 DAMASCUS COLLEGE DUX SPEECH AT ACADEMIC ASSEMBLY IN FEBRUARY 2018:

Good afternoon staff, students, distinguished guests, parents, and Damascus college alumni. My name is Flynn Jamieson and today I am going to talk a bit about how my life has changed since becoming dux, some strategies used and how you can get dux too.

I was once in your position sitting in those chairs listening to past students come in and speak which is why I am going to try to be a bit different. I understand that listening to me talk about my life isn't exactly what gets you out of bed in the morning, so I will briefly skim over that then focus on the interesting things, you.

I graduated from Damascus last year with an ATAR of 96.8. My subjects were Mainstream English, Maths Methods, Further Maths, Chemistry, Physics and PE, so yes I am a bit of a nerd. I have been offered a place studying a Bachelor of Physiotherapy at ACU in Ballarat and plan to commence that later this month. And that's really all you need to know about me.

The thing about me is that I'm really not that special and definitely not any different than you, I just discovered ways of learning and strategies that

worked for me. So for the duration of this speech I am going to give you my top tips for successful scores. Some of these areas may only apply for certain year levels but I will try my best to make it applicable for you.

“On the inside believe that you can do anything, go into the test knowing you will ace it, not fail it.”

First tip, get started early. For the younger students this means start getting into studying habits now as that will help you significantly later. Year 12s this means start focusing early it can be very hard to catch up once you get behind in VCE.

Don't just ignore things you struggle at, work at improving them. I learned this the hard way. I was very poor at English during my younger years, especially spelling and I just ignored it as something that I couldn't fix, as a result I now have a huge amount of words I can't use because I can't spell them.

Seek out help. This is one of the most important things I can say to you. You have a huge network of people that can help you. For me I had a very intelligent older brother who just happened to do exactly the same subjects as me so I always asked him when I needed help. I also had an aunty that was an English teacher who I asked for help many times throughout year 12. There's also a bunch of people here who get paid to teach you so you might as well ask them. Especially don't forget about your parents, while my mum couldn't help me too much with VCE physics and methods she is a Kinesiologist and could therefore help with PE and also my stress and focus.

Contrary to what some may say, school is not everything. Get yourself a hobby, something you enjoy that can take your mind off school. Something to look forward to in tough weeks. This applies to all year levels especially Year 11 and 12. For me this was sport.

Learn a skill outside of school, something that uses different parts of the brain. In Year 8 I taught myself guitar and now I'm learning how to ride a unicycle so it really doesn't matter what it is. Instruments and languages are very good for the brain.

Get involved in extra activities like the SRC because I can assure you telling someone about the event you have helped run at school is so much more interesting than. "How's being Dux", "yeah good" followed by 2 minutes of awkward silence.

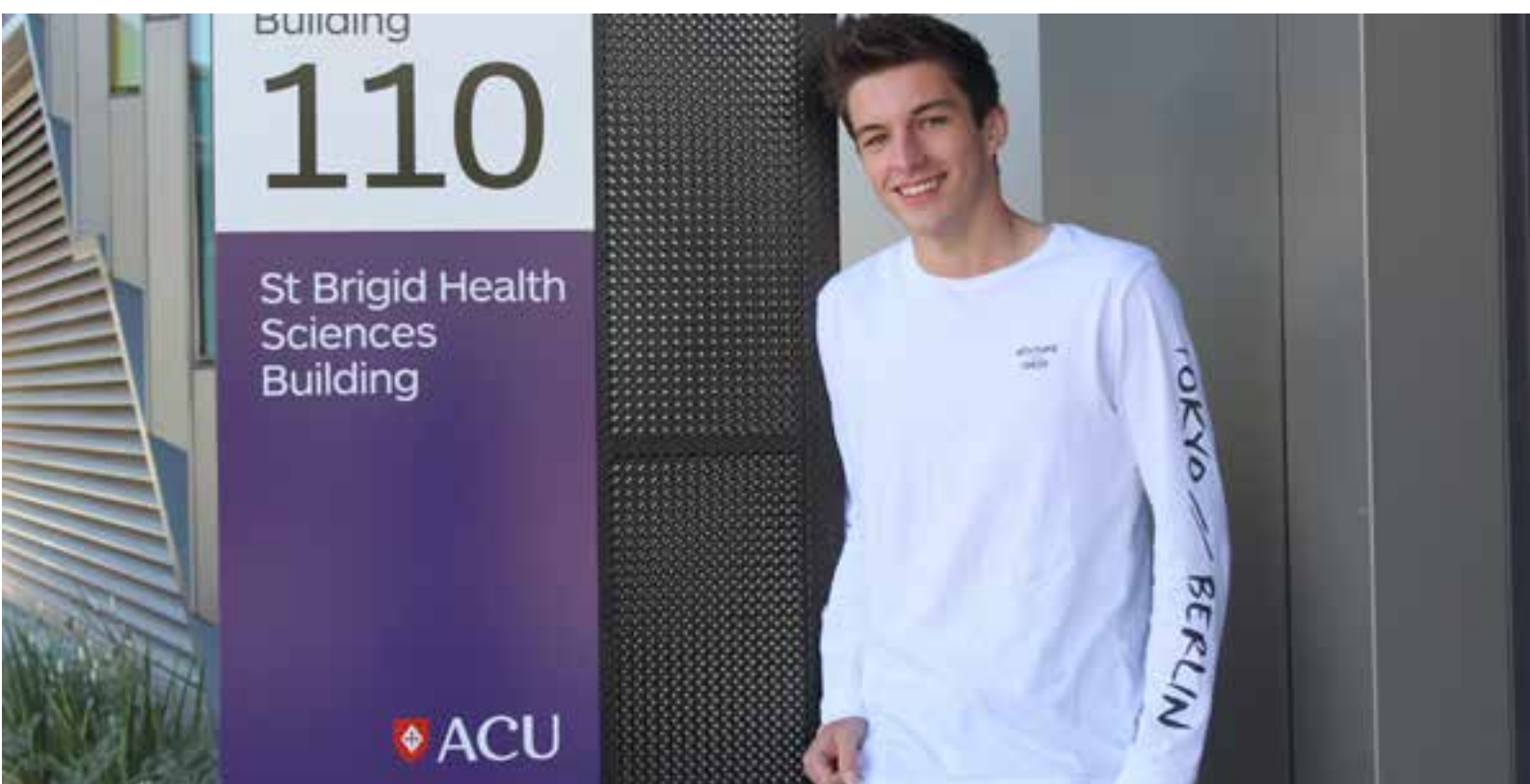
Finally, robots. Who would have thought we would need to worry about machines taking jobs. The thing with robots is that they are essentially big boxes, so they can quite literally only think inside the box. And one thing they can't program is passion. And Passion breeds greatness. Do you think Albert Einstein discovered his theory of special relativity because he got scaled up by doing Science? Do you think Ed Sheeran writes music because he gets told to? No they do it because they are passionate about it. And you will always achieve more doing something you are

passionate about. So pick subjects you love, think outside the box, be curious and dare to be different from what everyone else is picking. That is how you experience success in your life and ensure robots don't take your jobs.

Be internally arrogant, that is, on the inside believe that you can do anything, go into the test knowing you will ace it not fail it, and be confident in yourself. I would always go into a test knowing I could get almost everything right. Just make sure you don't make it too evident on the outside because then people won't like you.

As I finish I would just like to say thank-you to all my teachers that I had over my 6 years at Damascus, it wasn't just my year 12 teachers that contributed to my score it was all of you. My friends and family for all your support and for putting up with me and my terrible puns. And all the people who have been involved in giving me opportunities at this school outside of the academic area.

Thankyou, Flynn Jamieson



Since graduating, Flynn has moved on to commence university in February 2018 and we caught up with him to see how he was going.

AN UPDATE FROM FLYNN.....

"I have chosen to undertake the Bachelor of Physiotherapy at ACU because it combines my passion of sports with my interest in science. It gives me an opportunity to use my gifts and abilities to help those who are struggling. Physiotherapists are constantly developing themselves physically and mentally and are required to continue to do so for the duration of their career. I enjoy learning new skills and look forward to constantly improving and enhancing my abilities. Physiotherapy requires a mix of practical work and theoretical work, which really appeals to me as I enjoy doing things rather than sitting in an office.

Becoming a physiotherapist will also help me become more aware of my own health and that of my family and friends. The somewhat flexible work hours of a physiotherapist also appeals to me as it means I will be able to continue doing the volunteering and hobbies that I do now, allowing me to help others not only in my job but outside of it as well. I have chosen to undertake my course at ACU because they offer a world class physiotherapy course with some of the best facilities in Australia. They are also a smaller university which means I will be able to form closer

bonds with my fellow students and teachers. They are a friendly university which I believe will offer me the best opportunities to develop as a person and make friends.

In the future I hope to move into private practice physiotherapy with the hope of potentially owning my own practice sometime in the future. I also plan to continue adding new skills such as sports kinesiology and hydrotherapy through personal development to allow me to provide the best care for my clients. Eventually I would like to specialise as a sports physiotherapist conducting research to try to find better ways to combat and treat injuries.

My first week at university has been a steep learning curve into the ins and outs of tertiary education. Originally it was pretty daunting, a whole bunch of new people, new buildings, new staff, new subjects (ones that don't involve much maths or physics) but most of all, a new way of learning, one of independence, self-responsibility and a whole bunch of memorisation. This new style has taken a bit of time to get used to and I am still working on it. One of the things I have been enjoying however is the free food! There is lots of free food at university. I have also met a lot of new people and already learned so much.

Although it has taken me a bit by surprise, I look forward to what is to come in the future with my course."



2017 AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT EVENING

The annual Awards and Achievement evening was held on Friday 24 November 2017 at the Wendouree Centre for Performing Arts. This event recognises students throughout 2017 who have achieved academic excellence, general endeavour, sporting endeavour and age group champions.

In keeping with tradition the College invited a past student, Danielle Donegan (Class of 1997) to speak about her life and experiences since leaving Damascus College. Danielle spoke about being a part of the transition group who started school at Sacred Heart and joined the St Pauls boys to make Damascus College.

Danielle spoke of the various roles she has held throughout her career, and she is currently a Senior Executive in the Australian Public Service where she works for the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. She provides advice to the Prime Minister and the Minister for Indigenous Affairs on a range of issues, including social policy issues that matter and make a real difference in peoples lives.

Danielle reflected on her time at Damascus, where she loved learning about the political system and how decisions were made. She loved learning about the way different governments treated people and now knows that being a part of the system means that you can make a difference.

Danielle studied Science at university, but could not find a job upon graduation, so went back to study a Business degree and finally committed to a career in social policy. She has two Masters degrees and it has taken 20 years, but she is finally studying in the area where she is working and will continue to work in – Public Policy.

She shared some advice to Damascus students by saying that they are not alone if they have no idea what they want to do as a career. “You can get to great heights by going with the flow, but there comes a point where you have to take control of your future and make decisions that will get you what you want. The trick is to say yes to lots of things, stay in places for long enough to get an experience, but not so long that you outgrow your welcome, and then eventually, think about where you want to be and make sure you get there!

And for the kids still making decisions about future school subjects – choose a language! I didn’t think I would have the opportunity to go overseas as a kid – but I did and year 9 French and Indonesian can get you far in many countries! And choose something you love – there’s heaps of time for the things you have to do, I’ll never regret doing year 12 drama,” she said.

The audience was treated to various performances throughout the night including a piano solo by year 11 student Sean O’Beirne, the Damascus College Combined Music Ensembles performed ‘I have a dream’ Mamma Mia Medley, Year 9 students Alexandra Finch and Jai Hillas performed their award winning Royal South Street drama performance ‘Who’s on First?’ and a video of ‘Learnings from the 2017 Indonesian Immersion Trip’ was shown, accompanied by a traditional Indonesian dance by Year 9 students studying Indonesian, called ‘Tarian Tradisional,’ where students also wore traditional costumes purchased whilst in Indonesia.

‘SPECIAL AWARDS’ WERE AWARDED AND THE RECIPIENTS ARE LISTED BELOW:

Pierre de Coubertin Award: Harry Graham

Sports Person of the Year Award: Ashlee Smith

Junior Debating Award sponsored by Geoff Howard:
Tara Gannon

Senior Debating Award sponsored by Geoff Howard:
James Lloyd

Junior Social Justice Award: Hannah Foster

Senior Social Justice Award: Ruby Hateley

Junior Performing Arts Award: Jack Davidson

Senior Performing Arts Award: Jack Lorensini

Junior Leadership Award: Timothy Collins

Senior Leadership Award: Emma Sheritt

Jo Reilly Award: Amber Kennett

Damascus College Scholarship for the Arts: Jennifer Hunt

Damascus College Scholarship for Sport: Samuel Rizzo

Damascus College Scholarship for Academic Study:
Ruby Haeusler

Dorothy Irene-Ellis Thomas Scholarship:
Ryan Jans & Matilda McKinnon

Sisters of Mercy Dorothy Griffin Scholarship:
Tabitha Byron & Thomas Wilkinson

Catherine King Community Shield:
David Neate, Damascus Sustainability Coordinator

Senior Art Acquisition: Phoebe Bentley

Junior Art Acquisition: Sofie Sawka

The evening was an affirmation of Damascus College students who have been given significant skills and talents and who have been required to make the most of their blessings. Congratulations to all award recipients on their contribution to the College and on their hard work and commitment to their education throughout 2017.

TOP CLASS HONOURS

Congratulations to past students Aiden Kinder, Natalya Munro (Class of 2017) and current College Captain Ellie Carroll who received the honour of auditioning for a place in the Top Class Concert held in March 2018.

The event, organised through the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority, showcases the outstanding efforts of top Performing Arts students across the State. The students performed their seven minute drama solo, which became the basis for their external practical exam for the subject in Term 4. These dedicated students have worked hard over the holidays to be ready for the audition process.

Performing Arts Coordinator, Andrew Seear said that he was proud of his students, who were the only VCE Drama graduates to be invited to an audition for Top Class from Ballarat this year.

"We had nine drama students, and three of the nine were invited to audition, which is the best of the best, the cream of the state," he said.

Natalya and Ellie's characters were based on a dog from the film 'Best in Show' and Aiden performed as the Fortune Teller, an adventure hunting character.

Students enjoyed the audition process immensely and the chance to perform their solo again to an engaged audience.

Congratulations to Aiden, Natalya and Ellie - what a wonderful accomplishment, and we wish you well on your journey after Damascus.





2018 SRC

My name is Marla Gibson, and in 2018, not only am I a proud house leader (Go McAuley!) and member of the Student Representative Council (SRC), but I will also be the president of the SRC. This year marks my sixth year at Damascus College and I am certainly excited to kick off the year by aiding in the planning of many of Damascus' fantastic events such as our bake sales, and Damascus Day.

For me, being the SRC president is a huge role which I am excited and motivated to take on. I believe that having good leadership skills is important for this role; to have the ability to listen to people's ideas and take advice from my peers. I also hope to be an approachable leader, who is easy to talk to and is regarded as a reliable and organised person.

Throughout 2018, I hope to achieve a sense of Damascus pride among the students, and particularly my fellow leaders, so that we may all be proud to go to Damascus and be part of the community that we are. Through the many exciting events that we have planned for this year, I also hope to increase our school's involvement in school activities.

This year I am looking forward to helping the SRC in our endeavours, and taking on my own personal year 12 with everything I've got, to ensure that my final year at Damascus is unforgettable.

Marla Gibson
2018 SRC President

2018 SRC POSITIONS

COLLEGE CAPTAINS

Ellie Carroll
Sean O'Beirne

McAULEY

House Captains

Castley Webb
Zoe Smith
Hannah Cashmore
Marla Gibson
(President)

Year 11 SRC

Finn Clonan

Year 9 SRC

Erica Webb

Year 7 SRC

Elarin Johnson

Year 10 SRC

Jude Skewes-Clinton

Year 8 SRC

Megan O'Beirne

O'COLLINS

House Captains

Jack Toohey
Matt Harris
Ellie Henderson
Alannah Vella

Year 11 SRC

Asher Kuhn

Year 9 SRC

Eliza Lamb

Year 7 SRC

Nicholas Fletcher

Year 10 SRC

Erynn Vella

Year 8 SRC

Abbey Smith

RICE

House Captains

Oscar Thomas
Chloe Keating
Wren Dreger
Ethan Palonek

Year 11 SRC

Daiy Jessup
(Treasurer)

Year 9 SRC

Olivia Stevens

Year 7 SRC

Leah Stevens

Year 10 SRC

Ally Finch

Year 8 SRC

Adut Manyiel

XAVIER

House Captains

Charlie Gibson
Gemma Welsh
Phoenix Neil
Cait Forbes
(Secretary)

Year 11 SRC

Nicola Robson
(Vice President)

Year 9 SRC

Erica Webb

Year 7 SRC

Elarin Johnson

Year 10 SRC

Jude Skewes-Clinton

Year 8 SRC

Megan O'Beirne



SRC Members missing
from group photo
on p.16:

Elijah White
Eliza Lamb
Ellie Carroll



STUDENT PROFILE: PARISA SHARIF

My name is Parisa Sharif; I am 17 years old and I am a Year 12 student at Damascus College.

I am originally from Tehran, Iran and my family immigrated to Australia on 26th July 2013. I have a large family, including grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, but most of them are in Iran. I live with my father, mother and sister who is studying Year 7 at Damascus College as well.

Parisa said that before moving to Ballarat, and upon arrival to Australia she briefly lived in Brisbane and Adelaide, but has now settled and has lived in Ballarat for 3 years.

"Immigration chose Ballarat for us. Even though I didn't want to move here, I preferred Brisbane for the beautiful nature that it has, we had to move. Now I'm so glad and feel very lucky to be here and especially to be able to study at Damascus College," she said.

Parisa's parents brought her family to Australia so that they could have a better future. Education and safety were their primary concerns.

"The main reason I chose Damascus as a school was that I had heard a lot about Damascus from many friends and that it has a strong focus on study and education."

Parisa's favourite subjects are Biology and Chemistry, as she loves everything about science.

"I think science is the most amazing thing ever. It's very hard to study science in a different language for me because I'm still learning English, but I'm working hard on learning it because the language of science sounds so interesting."

Parisa is connected with the local Ballarat community, where she volunteered at the Centre for Multicultural Youth (CMY) for two years, where she was part of the leadership group organising events in Ballarat to get people together from different cultures.

"This was such a good experience especially for me because I was new to Ballarat and I got to meet so many amazing people with similar background stories to mine."

Parisa loves playing basketball and going to the gym, and has a red belt in Taekwondo. She started this sport when she was in Iran and continued when she came to Australia, until having a break from this a few months ago to concentrate on her Year 12 studies.

"Taekwondo builds self-confidence and makes me happy. I'm looking forward to returning to this after I finish my school studies and hope to compete in the Olympics one day."

"I love listening to music, it is my life. As Friedrich Nietzsche said, "Without music life would be a mistake" and this is how I feel. I have very broad taste in music and listen to songs from different countries," she said.

Parisa has enjoyed her time here at Damascus, as she started in Year 10 upon arriving to Ballarat.

"I love everything about Damascus College – the amazing teachers who support me and spend so much time helping me to understand the subjects, particularly when I'm struggling with the language. Damascus provides so many opportunities to help you to get in to the career you want, which is amazing."

"The main reason I chose Damascus as a school was that I had heard a lot about Damascus from many friends and that it has a strong focus on study and education."

"The thing I like most about Australia is the freedom I have living here. The freedom with my education, living in society and being able to choose to do things that make me happy."

After secondary school, Parisa hopes to go on to university to study to become a dentist.

"I have always wanted to be a dentist since I was eight years old, and I still do. I always enjoyed making others happy by helping them as much as I could. Dentistry helps to take someone else's pain away and this is why I think it is one of the most amazing careers in the world. I'd like to travel around the world and have a successful life. I do dearly miss Iran and I am hoping to be able to go back to my beautiful country one day for a visit."

As a piece of advice, Parisa encourages all students at Damascus College to make use of all the amazing opportunities that are given to you, and to work as hard as you can throughout high school to reach your dream, to be successful and to live your best life.

"I'd like to use this opportunity to say a huge THANK YOU, to everyone for helping me to get here. To my beautiful family, for bringing me to Australia to have a better future and to reach my dream. To everyone who is supporting me now with my goals and generously offering me their time and friendship – thank you."

Parish Sharif, Year 12 student



ROWING SEASON REVIEW

Now into our fifth season, the Damascus College Rowing program started the 2017/18 season with some new faces joining our coaching group, an excellent retention of students from last season and a healthy intake of eager juniors to the program. This year we welcomed Robert Davis and Grant McKechnie to our boys coaching group, who are both parents of students within our rowing program and we also welcomed Matthew Ashley, Riley Norman and Ryan Vanderlinden to our girls coaching group. Returning coaches included Michael Bennett, Narelle Burnside, Georgia Edwards, Dean Kittelty, John Marshall, Tahnya Robson, Riley Taylor and Simon O'Brien.

The season started with an improved land training program which had a dedicated focus on improving our students' strength and conditioning for the repetitive nature of the rowing stroke. A special thanks goes to Ballarat Sports Exercise and Rehabilitation Centre for providing our program with a specialised sports exercise program, additional exercise equipment as well as their volunteered support and supervision of our senior students. Combined with a structured ergo program, our students entered the on-water phase of Term 4 with great enthusiasm and relief to be out on the water!

Our juniors had their first taste of racing in mid Term 4 at the RV Juniors Regatta in Geelong, where we came away with 5 silvers and 3 golds.

Seeking some new opportunities for our more experienced rowers, we decided to reward our hardworking intermediate girls' squad and our seniors with the opportunity to participate in some long distance events on the Yarra River, being the Melbourne Head Regatta (3.5km) and the Head of the Yarra (8.6km). While our inter girls impressed with their efforts racing in an eight at the Melbourne Head against an incredibly competitive field of strong Melbourne rowing schools, our senior girls unfortunately missed out on a spot in Head of the Yarra and our boys had the misfortune of snapping their boat's fin when they launched their boat on the banks of the Yarra.

Bad weather hampered our next few scheduled regattas, and we hastily scrambled to enter the Kardinia International College Regatta

which is traditionally a sculling only regatta, but due to the lack of racing opportunities offered by Rowing Victoria in the lead up to Christmas, it was expanded to include sweep oar events which we jumped at the chance to get our students racing. It was at this event in mid-December, where our senior girls and inter boys had their first race of the season, with our inter boys coming away with a hard fought win! Our inter girls raced their fours and came away with a bronze and a silver, and our senior girls achieved a fourth in Division 2 and a bronze in Division 1.

Before we knew it, our December and January rowing camps were upon us which offered an excellent opportunity for all students to refine their boat skills and improve their boat fitness. At these camps, our coaching group were able to pull together all of their data and observations of the students over the past 2 terms worth of training, and selections of permanent crew combinations were starting to take shape.

During the summer holidays, we participated in the Ballarat and Barwon Regattas, followed by the Wendouree Ballarat JG King Homes Regatta where our students and parents group were instrumental in the smooth running of this fantastic event, providing support in boat holding, preparing umpire lunches, timing races and marshalling. Notable performances included silvers in the Mens A Grade Four and Mens B Grade Four (Ethan Handley, Ethan Blackmore, Rhys Davis, Mackenzie Yandell, Caspian Linayao), Schoolboy Year 9 Boys Division 1 (Will McKechnie, Lachlan Reynolds, Thomas McKay, Riley McCarthy, Kalle Govan), Schoolgirl Open Division 1 Single Scull (Wren Dreger) and Female U19 Coxed Four (Gemma Smith, Millie Hockey, Erin Gore, Charlotte Ashley, Maddie Lamb).

The following week, our seniors travelled to Nagambie but our performances were hampered by equipment failures and illnesses, although our senior girls Division 1 crew came away with a bronze in the Female Under 21 Coxed Four.

Next up was the Head of the Schoolboys regatta on our home ground, where our boys really showed their strengthened performance and came

continued on page 20 →



from page 19 →

away with bronze for our Year 10 Division 1 and our Year 9 Division 1 crews, and silver for our Year 9 Division 1 crew. All crews raced exceptionally well. While the boys were competing on Lake Wendouree, our girls were battling it out on the Barwon River at the Firkbank Regatta which was an enormous regatta, as all schoolgirls crews enter in this regatta to prepare for the upcoming Head of the Schoolgirls regatta. Our girls had a solid hit out, with four A final appearances, two B final appearances and one each of C and D finals.

Head of the Lake was full of colour, excitement and fanfare that we have come to expect from such a great local event and we easily had the best spit crew on the day! With challenging conditions throughout the day, our crews performed with courage and commitment. This year we had 15 crews entered and notable highlights included a win in the Boys Year 9 Division 1 and 2nd place in the Senior Girls Division 1 which was the upset race of the season with the favoured Loreto Ballarat finishing 3rd and Ballarat Grammar taking the win. Well done to all crews for representing our College so proudly.

The following weekend saw another major milestone for our program; where all of our crews were participating at the Victorian State Championships. Our Senior Girls Division 1 crew backed up their Head of the Lake performance with a bronze in the Under 21 Coxed Four, and our junior boys and senior boys combined their squads to cap off their seasons by racing in eights, which was a delight to watch! Our Year 10 Girls Division 2 crew (Evie Sargisson, Marli Dockerill, Azure Norman, Paris Murrell, Ellie Dickson) clocked a blinding heat in what was the fastest qualifying time of 3:37, and came a gallant 3rd in the A Final. For the girls, we had three A Final appearances, four B Final appearances and two C Final appearances which offer promising expectations as the girls continue to improve their boat moving skills in the lead up to their major end of season regatta.

We entered 11 crews into this year's Head of the Schoolgirls regatta, which is the largest regatta in the southern hemisphere. The regatta was hampered by tough weather conditions which included high temperatures on Saturday and gale force winds on Sunday, which ultimately forced the regatta committee to call off all Finals from being conducted. Our crews performed exceptionally well, with extra pressure added by racing on a reduced 4 lane course making it an even tougher challenge to qualify into A finals. We had 2 crews qualify into A finals (Year 9 Division 3 crew - Kirra Ward, Erica Webb, Charlotte Grimes, Phoebe Shaw, Morgan McCann, Ryan Vanderlinden (coach) and Year 9 Division 4 crew (Hannah Magee, Tara Gannon, Millie Wood, Sophie Brokenshire, Tahyna Robson (coach) but were unable to race their final due to the poor conditions. Wren Dreger (coached by Narelle Burnside) flew our sculling flag proudly, qualifying herself into the B Final of the Schoolgirl Open Division 1 Single Scull event. Wren is to be applauded for her

incredible achievement to conclude her season with a spot in the top 8 of schoolgirl sculling in Victoria. We had six crews qualify into the B finals, two crews in the C finals and one crew in the D final. Well done to all girls!

I would like to thank our coaches for their unwavering commitment in coaching and mentoring our students this year. Your tenacity, passion and dedication to our students and our rowing program is invaluable and it's been a pleasure working with you all. Dean Kittelty for keeping our tinnies fuelled and running, as well as helping to tow boats and repair breakages, and to John Marshall for helping us to maintain our fleet of boats. A special mention to Narelle Edwards and Yasmin Lloyd and their husbands, Ian Edwards and Rohan Lloyd, for their leadership of our parents group and thank you to all parents and supporters who volunteered their time in helping our rowing program throughout the season. A special thank you to Joyce Antonio for the hundreds and hundreds of yummy muffins which she bakes each year for our students to enjoy! It would be remiss of me to neglect a special mention to our friends within the broader rowing community who have graciously extended their assistance to help the smooth running of our growing program; St Patricks College, Ballarat City Rowing Club, Phoenix College, Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak, Loreto Ballarat and Ballarat Grammar. And finally, a big thank you to our Captains Of Boats – Jake Currie and Millie Hockey - for their fantastic leadership and support of our students and also to our students, in particular our Year 12 students who leave our rowing program this year – Wren Dreger, Jonte Lloyd, Phoenix Neil, Maddie Lamb, Erin Gore, Millie Hockey, Macquenzie Amos, Castley Webb, Noah Arber, Jake Currie and Liam Penn. I hope you all take special memories, lifelong friendships and valuable life skills learned from your experiences within our rowing program into your next exciting phase of your lives.

Sharon Waters
Rowing Co-ordinator





Senior Girls

Macquenzie Amos
Nicola Robson
Wren Dreger
Millie Hockey
Erin Gore
Gemma Smith
Charlotte Ashley
Maddie Lamb
Macy Ludeman
Maddy Edwards
Jonte Lloyd
Phoenix Neil
Letisha Guy

Coaches: Simon O'Brien and Narelle Burnside

Senior Boys

Rhys Davis
Ethan Blackmore
Ethan Handley
Caspian Linayao
Jake Currie
Matt Watson

Senior Boys - Cont'd

Liam Penn
Noah Arber
Cass Webb

Coach: Grant McKechnie

Junior Girls

Jessica Blackmore
Sophie Brokenshire
Sarah Buck
Sarah Burke
Katrina Caldwell
Grace Charry
Sophie Cleeman

Esther Dunlop
Mikayla Dwyer
Hannah Foster
Alanah Fandrich
Tara Gannon
Courtney Gass
Charlotte Grimes
Molly Hudson
Mia Lavery
Morgan McCann
Hannah Magee
Olivia Reyntjes

Junior Girls - Cont'd

Phoebe Shaw
Madison Smith
Leila Thurling
Meg Wallace
Kirra Ward
Erica Webb
Zoe Wilson
Millie Wood

Coaches: Georgia Edwards, John Marshall, Ryan Vanderlinden, Tahnya Robson, Riley Norman

Junior Boys

Patrick Clarke
Ben Cornish
John Grimaldo
Angus Shillito
William McKechnie
Lachlan Reynolds
Tom McKay
Riley McCarthy
Kalle Govan
Anthony Blazek-Pollard
Will Norwood

Coaches: Michael Bennett and Robert Davis

Inter Boys

Bailey Wilson
Doug Thibault
James Mavity
Julian Hockey
Jude Skewes-Clinton

Coach: Riley Taylor

Inter Girls

Eliza Robertson
Hannah Vanderlinden
Georgia Dalziel
Julian Hockey
Rebecca Grandi
Bonnie Jelencic
Evie Sargisson
Azure Norman
Marli Dockerill
Paris Murrell
Ellie Dickson
Sarah Matheson
Kaiah McCahon
Steph Fitzgerald
Bella Vallance
Matilda Lloyd

Coaches: Dean Kittelty and Matthew Ashley



2018 SWIMMING CARNIVAL







GUEST SPEAKER EVENT - GRIT

This year's annual Guest Speaker was Luke McKenna, educator, author and founder of Unleashing Personal Potential.

On Wednesday 14 and 15 March Luke spoke to the whole student population, staff and parent community on the topic 'Thriving with Grit.'

Students learnt how to thrive with grit, in particular they completed the top process of evidence based goal setting, they learnt to FOCUS (follow one course until successful), created a healthy habit loop (cue, routine, reward) and investigated famous failures (stories of JK Rowling, Einstein, Disney etc).

At the staff and parent session, through research and real-life examples, Luke shared some essential keys to building resilient young people, as

well as explained some key ideas for helping all of us stick with things that matter. This included mastery through deliberate practice; setting targets; forming health habits; overcoming obstacles; and seeking continuous improvement, learning and growth, with grit.

Parents were equipped with some tools and strategies for implementing in their own homes, in order to help their children thrive. It was a highly engaging, thought provoking, relevant, practical and fun session.

We thank Luke, Peter and Hogan of Unleashing Personal Potential for the time they spent with our Damascus community and we trust students, staff and parents benefited from each presentation.

DAMASCUS FRIENDS OF THE BUSH

On Monday 3 March 2018 almost 40 guests including Sisters of Mercy, Mercy Affiliates, Damascus College Alumni and community members attended the Murnong Trail walk.

The event was organised by Mercy Associates Ursula Diamond-Keith and Helen Smith with the support of Damascus staff members David Neate and Korina Hegert.

The afternoon offered attendees the opportunity to enjoy the beautiful natural bushland setting of Damascus College. Attendees could choose to stroll along the Commemorative Walk and the Murnong Trail, an excursion led by Ursula and David, or remain indoors and attend a very informative lecture given by Helen.

The groups came together to enjoy a delicious afternoon tea in the College Board room overlooking the grounds with some indigenous flavours and foods to be sampled.

The event concluded with a school tour with a special visit to the St Martin's Resource Centre to see the restored iconic statue of St Martin De Porres.

The Damascus College Friends of the Bush group will have opportunities throughout the year to assist the College with its various sustainability activities especially as they relate to maintaining and caring for the Commemorative Walk and Murnong Trail areas of the campus. If you are interested in learning more or joining the Damascus Friends of the Bush group please contact Korina Hegert at the College.



2018 NEXT GEN ART EXHIBITION

The 'VCE Next Generation 2018' art and design awards exhibition opened to a packed audience in February 2018, at the Art Gallery of Ballarat. This exhibition showcased the work of students who completed their 2017 Year 12 VCE studies in Art, Studio Arts, Design and Technology, Visual Communication and Design and Media. The students were from Government, Catholic and Independent schools mainly from the Ballarat and Grampians region.

Congratulations to the numerous Damascus College Visual Arts students whose work was selected for this professionally curated exhibition. Our talented participants from the class from 2017 include Hamish O'Brien,

Kiara Dalem, Oscar Thomas, Abby Buckland-Shelton, Ethan Palonek, Courtney Stedman, Freya Maude, Matilda McKinnon, Ella Young and Erin O'Beirne.

A special congratulations to Studio Art Photography student Oscar Thomas for winning the Thornton Richards encouragement award. He received \$100 for his efforts. We are also extremely proud that Courtney Stedman's work was chosen for the exhibition invitation and website poster.

Generations-
Ella Young



Nature's Colour Wheel
- Abbey Buckland-Shelton



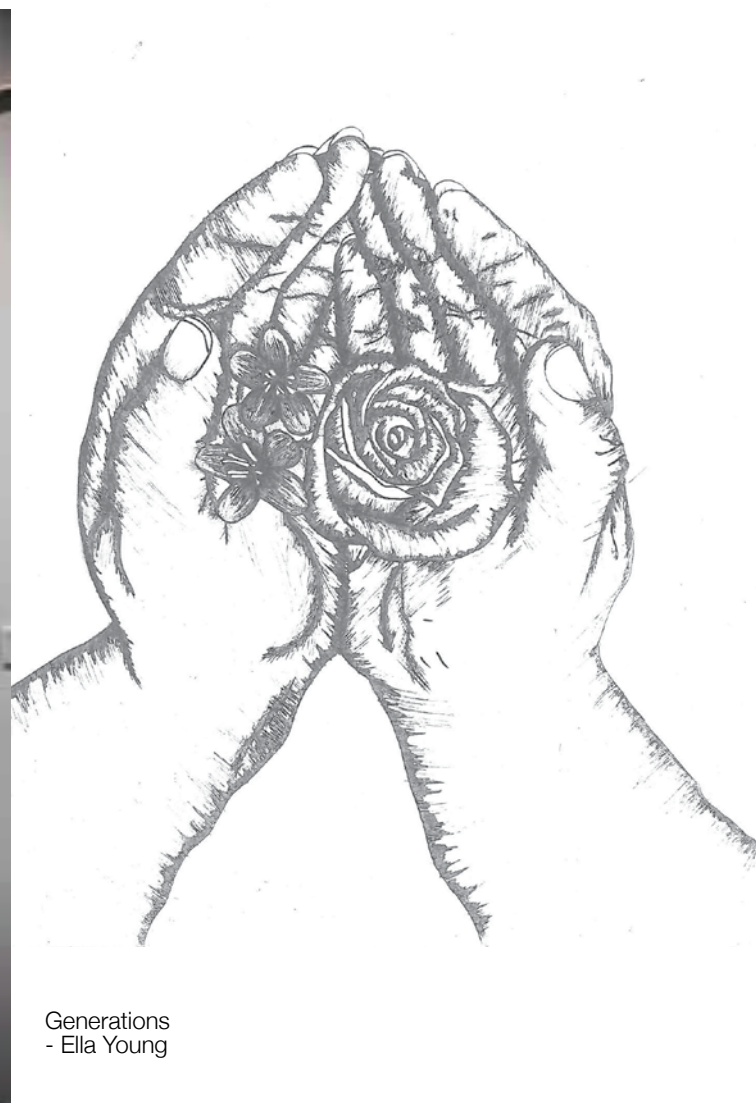
Quantum Paradox
- Hamish O'Brien



The soundtrack of life
- Matilda McKinnon



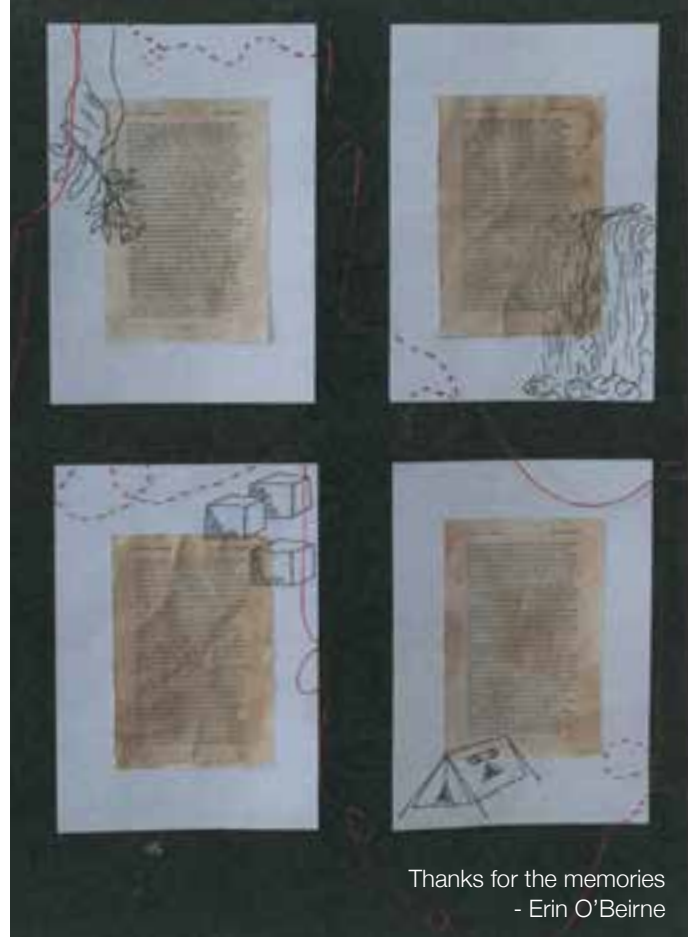
The Epiphany and through
the Dragons eyes
- Freya Maude



Generations
- Ella Young



Roots at Tender Depth
- Courtney Stedman



Thanks for the memories
- Erin O'Beirne



Pan-scape
- Ethan Polonek



Reclaim
- Oscar Thomas



Generations
- Ella Young



Then: Damian during his Damascus days



Now: Damian with wife Cathy and son Finley

ALUMNI STORY

DAMASCUS, CLOSE TO HOME

I was born and raised in Buninyong. Literally born at the family home in Buninyong! I have two brothers, Brett and Simon (also Damascus Alumni), am engaged to my wonderful partner Cathy and am a very proud dad to my first child, Finley.

I graduated from Damascus in 2003 and was a proud member of O'Collins. I would say that these were the golden years of the green team as we dominated most sporting events. Current house leaders may disagree with me.

I didn't have a favourite teacher during my time as a student at Damascus, it was an equal tie between David Santamaria and Julian Petrie. David took me under his wing and helped me develop my technical music interests – giving me chances to learn and apply practically what I have learned. Julian taught me RE but gave me a lot of life lessons and wisdom that I still carry to this day.

I have a few favourite memories of being a student at the College. The early HPV team (now EBT) in the old shed at the junior campus. My daily pilgrimage to see Judy at the canteen. My off campus visits for VET Music. Enjoying the courtyard during recess with my friends in summer. The near daily jam sessions in the music rooms! Wow - those instruments copped a work out. Some are even still here!! Another stand out moment was playing in the band for the little shop of horrors production. That was an absolute blast!

I am currently employed as the Network Administrator at Damascus College. The advantage of my current role here at Damascus is that I know everyone, where everything is and working so close to home – I don't need much else. There are zero disadvantages.

During my later years, I was very lucky to have a great set of friends around me at the College as coming from primary school – I didn't have a lot of friends at school and the first few years were hard. But as time passed and I settled into Damascus – the friends I made are still very good friends to this day. I often see other alumni out and about in Ballarat and abroad and it's great to see what they have been doing. My close friends have been through just about everything with me and I've been super lucky to be able to still have them in my life now.

The things that I enjoyed the most at Damascus was the environment that I was able to really grow up in. I can hands up say I was not the best student and not known for my academia, but I did make up for this in other ways and the staff and students really gave me support and the audience to let these assets shine. A certain theatre sports ad-lib revolving around coconut under garments went down in theatre sports legend.

My career tips to students would be: Just begin. Get started doing anything you can. Play around and learn in your spare time. Develop your skills and knowledge with what is online, as there is more courses and guides on just about anything online now then there was back in the day. Don't go looking for the perfect job. Get experience and time 'on the tools'. This counts a lot more when looking for employment and also when I was looking to employ someone. Going to university is one pathway but that cannot match practical experience when it comes down to getting work done. Also look for industry specific certifications as a starter rather than just TAFE or University qualifications – these can be a much better pathway to the far more enjoyable and specialised jobs in any industry.

I'm looking forward to expanding my knowledge and playing with newer technology in the networking and cloud landscapes, as well as expanding my knowledge in other areas outside of IT. Specifically automotive but also how IT and Auto worlds are now very much intertwined. I am also looking forward to being a working dad of a child who will grow up immersed with so many opportunities and cool toys – and watching him grow with them.

Since graduating from Damascus I am most proud of, well equal first here between, my fiancé Cathy, my son Finley, and my cat. They are the light of my life. I couldn't be more excited everyday coming home to see them all.

To a year 7 student starting at Damascus today I would say "your first year at Damascus will fly by. So will the following 5 years. Don't be in such a rush to grow up and enjoy your time and the opportunities you have. If you have a good heart and treat people kindly – your school life will develop and evolve into an incredible experience over time. Also – Learn!! Dive into every topic head first and emerge yourself in knowledge. Anyone can google anything these days and tell you what a search result says – very few understand and can practically apply that knowledge or skill to the real world. You will be surprised how much Science, Maths, English and Technology learning that interest you will develop later on in life. Keep a thirst for learning by always learning something new!"

Damian Foster (Class of 2003)

Past student and current staff member



Then: Jason with his 1961 VW Beetle



Now: Jason with wife Terresa and daughters Claire and Tess

ALUMNI STORY

REFLECTION ON 1988 AT ST MARTIN'S

It's been 30 years since the first coeducational group completed year 12 at St Martin's. It was a landmark year for the school, and for me personally.

The late 1980s was the dawn of a new era. A spate of revolutions ended the Cold War. Computers were becoming popular, but the artefacts of a teenager's life were mostly analogue. CDs were prohibitively expensive, so we listened to music on cassettes and vinyl records. Telephone calls were made on landlines, because mobile phones cost \$4,000 and were the size of brief cases. Brief cases were a thing in the 1980s.

Video games were played in arcades, unless you had an Atari 2600 or perhaps a Commodore computer. The Internet wouldn't be widely used until the mid-1990s. We were the last generation of high school students to use encyclopedias and to handwrite our assignments.

I drove to school in my yellow 1961 VW Beetle. These days as I ferry my children to school along Geelong Road, I hear faint echoes of Hunters and Collector's Human Frailty album. With a faulty car radio (the least of the VW's many short comings) I wedged a huge ghetto blaster into the back seat, with the Hunna's tape stuck in it for months on end. As I hollered, "You don't make me feel, like I'm a woman any more", little was I aware of the deep influence that the women of St Martins – Mercy Sisters, staff and my peers, would have.

I'd like to think that the boys made a positive contribution to life at St Martin's, but it would be disingenuous not to point out that many of our female colleagues and possibly most of the staff disagreed – especially at first. I can vividly remember a girl yelling – "You've ruined this school!"

St Paul's was ill-equipped to prepare us to be academics. If you were at all bookish, you left at the end of year 10 and headed to St Patrick's. That's what I did, but I found that the culture there was unpalatable. My parents noticed, and Br. Frank Hennessy invited me back to St Paul's. I joke that Loreto was the only Catholic high school I didn't attend because I couldn't find a uniform that fit.

Thanks in no small part to the departure of many of the brainy kids who stuck it out at St Pat's, I was awarded dux of the school in 1987. Come year 12 and I barely passed, joining the first ever group of VCE recipients. The lack of academic rigor instilled at St Paul's was one aspect, but the other factor was I was busy learning how to navigate a coeducational environment.

As the only male English Literature student, I recall a fervent discussion about the misogyny in Thomas Hardy's book Tess of the D'Urbervilles. I've been a proponent of smashing the patriarchy ever since. Arguably

the single best thing I learned at St Martin's was feminism. It held me in good stead as I studied to be a teacher, taught inmates in Pentridge prison, worked with some dubious State Government Ministers, and was the only male in a team of twenty women in a London-based fashion company's training department. I lived in the UK for seven years and was able to travel widely, visiting almost 80 countries and all seven continents.

I thank the inspiring women of St Martin's for setting me on a path that's led to the point where people seldom shout, "You've ruined this place!" these days. As the father of two inquisitive, witty and adorable daughters, Tess and Claire, and husband to their brilliant mother Terresa, I fundamentally believe that I'm a better man for having attended an all-girls school.

St Martin's friend Rachel Nickson generously lent me her black Fender Stratocaster, which inspired a lifetime of playing and collecting guitars, including of course a 1950s black Strat. I regularly torment audiences with my solo acoustic gigs, and I sporadically perform with my punk rockabilly band, Gonna Ball, which I formed with some St Paul/St Martin's friends back in the early 1990s.

For all I didn't learn in physics and maths classes, I learned immeasurably about love, heartbreak, empathy, kindness, respect, and the joy that comes from the company of good friends. Many of my classmates remain dear to me and I am really looking forward to reconnecting with friends of old at our reunion in April.

I work for myself these days helping clients with learning and development projects. Trading my Atari for a Commodore Amiga back in the '80s paid off, because a lot of my work is in the eLearning domain. At the minute I'm developing a graduate program for engineers and I'm rewriting a management qualification for the construction industry – perhaps those physics and woodworking classes will come in handy after all?

My advice to current students, is to reiterate the wisdom imparted on my first day in year 12 – your grades don't define you and they won't be recorded on your headstone. My VCE results were abysmal, but I've graduated from university three times, enjoyed an international, award-winning career, and I pinch myself every day at how blessed my life is.

The final lesson St Martin's and life has taught me – the journey is best shared with others, and that includes the twists and turns. Be kind to others, be kind to yourself, and enjoy the road ahead.

Jason Fletcher (Class of 1988)



Then: Chiara during year 8 in 2012



Now: Chiara in Venice, 2017

ALUMNI STORY

FROM PERFORMING TO DIRECTING

When I first came to Damascus College in 2012 as a naïve Year 8 student, I never anticipated that the College would come to direct me as much as it did to discovering and nurturing my passions in Performing Arts. Barely a term into my new schooling experience and with limited performing and theatre experience, I found myself taking on the opportunity to audition for the school musical for that year, Annie, and landing a lead role. Little did I know, that the little black stage on which I performed was going to become a recurring constant in my life for the next 5 years while a student, and then beyond.

“Little did I know, that the little black stage on which I performed was going to become a recurring constant in my life for the next 5 years while a student, and then beyond.”

Since graduating from Damascus in 2016, I have spent a lot of time trying to decide exactly what it is that I want to go on and study. I took some time during my gap year to travel and visited Italy, but still to this day unsure, the one thing I know for a fact is that the world of Performing Arts will remain a huge part of my life in whichever way it can. Damascus, and in particular the Performing Arts department, has always been a very welcoming and opportunistic environment for me to explore my interests and passions. Having artistically assisted Andrew Seeary last year, with the productions of the Final Hours and Year 12 solos, I suspected there would be a similar learning experience available for me this year to help out Maria Russell with the school musical.

I was excited to jump on board to help with the direction of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, and curious to experience the process of producing the Damascus school musical from the opposing end of the auditorium to which I was used to.

During my schooling, despite my previous singing and musical experience, my main focus within the realm of Performing Arts became Drama. My main strength became acting and character work, which was then the knowledge that I brought to the table when providing feedback for last year's productions of the Final Hours and the Year 12 solos. On the other hand, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat in its essence, is an entirely sung musical, and therefore requires a great deal of focus on learning the sung content, before any blocking or character work occurs. I have really enjoyed, in these first few weeks of rehearsals, retuning to my singing and musical knowledge. Having not been actively working on these skills since the last school musical I participated in (Grease -2016), it has been an exciting and challenging practice to rediscover my passion for the singing aspect of performance as well.

I could not be more grateful to Damascus and the extensive opportunities it has offered me, both during my schooling and afterwards, especially when it comes to my passion for Performing Arts. I sincerely hope that the little black stage in the Valda Ward Auditorium remains a cornerstone in my life, and I look forward to witnessing the many expressions of talent and greatness it will undoubtedly present in the years to come.

Chiara Angeli (Class of 2016)



Then: Milan in 2011



Now: Milan in 2017

ALUMNI STORY

A CONVERSATION WITH MILAN

Milan Saunders (Class of 2011) is a past student of Damascus College. He began as a Year 7 student at the Victoria Street Campus and graduated in Year 12 at the Mt Clear Campus. Milan is working hard at pursuing a career in the arts, a passion that he found and was nurtured here at Damascus.

Are you from Ballarat?

Technically, yes. Born in Carlton; raised in Ballarat and lived here all my life bar that.

What did you do after graduating secondary school?

Studied Digital Multimedia at Fed Uni from 2012-2015. Took a gap year in 2016. Then studied Sound Production at Oxygen College, Geelong earlier this year.

What achievements have you had since finishing secondary school?

Certificate III in Digital Multimedia, Certificate IV in Sound Production. Won the 2017 Dulcie Stone Writer's Competition. Voice acted in two visual novel video games; **Sallos** in *Rite of Passing* and **Red** in *Scarlet Dream* (the former being a paid gig).

Thinking back, how'd your time at Damascus help you in life now?

I'd say it helped me learn to not judge anything prematurely or by first impressions alone, because everything in life is more than it appears.

Do you have siblings? A big family? Married? Kids?

One younger sister, Chelsea (*Class of 2013*).

Who was your favourite teacher at school?

Andrew Seeary and Anne Griffin. You'd never meet anyone friendlier.

What are your favourite memories of school?

Avoiding stepping on/walking on the "gay hump/gay ramp" at the Vic Street campus. Alex Scicluna (*Class of 2011*) engraving my class's bag tags in Year 7 Metalwork. Year 12 Drama ensembles and solos. Beach ~ A Theatrical Fantasia and The Final Hours 2011.

What was your favourite subject at secondary school?

Anything to do with the arts, really.

What are your hobbies?

Voice acting, playing guitar, playing video games, watching anime, drawing and occasionally, writing.

What did you enjoy most about being at this school?

The environment.

Can you offer any career tips to students?

Never say no to an opportunity that comes your way unless you 100% have to. Even if you don't like what comes of it, you never know where it can lead.

What're you now looking forward to in your life/career?

I'd like to move to the U.S. to pursue voice acting professionally.

What are you most proud of since graduating secondary school?

The aforementioned voice acting work & writing award.

What's a piece of advice you'd give a parent when choosing a secondary college?

Think tactically, what has the biggest benefit for all parties involved.

What's a piece of advice you'd give a student starting Year 7 at Damascus?

Don't be intimidated by the size of the campus, do things at your own pace and wear your heart on your sleeve.

Milan Saunders (Class of 2011)

NOW AND THEN

ANDREW SEEARY

Over the years Andrew Seeary has had many roles with Damascus College; student, parent and teacher. He began his relationship with Damascus College when he was a student at foundation school, St Paul's Technical College.

After graduation in year 10 Andrew set out on an adventure in education, gaining much from courses at the School of Mines Ballarat (SMB) and Ballarat College of Advanced Education (BCAE) now Federation University. With visual arts courses under his belt, Andrew found himself enjoying life as "a cartoonist by trade" but he was still captivated by the dramatic arts and the allure of the stage.

In the 1980's he was teaching improve 'Theatre Sports' and loving it when he was challenged with the question "Why aren't you teaching full time?"

In answer, Andrew gained his teaching credentials at Aquinas College, now Australian Catholic University and began looking for work as a drama teacher. He was hired by Principal Sr Valda Ward and commenced employment with Damascus College in 1990 at St Martin's in the Pines. He taught a number of subjects including Art, Visual Communications, RE and Drama.

28 years later Andrew continues to teach and lead Drama at Damascus College.

For almost 3 decades Andrew has ensured, with his hard work and dedication that Damascus has earned a reputation for outstanding productions. He has students who have achieved amazing results in their chosen fields thanks to his teaching and mentoring. His skill, professionalism, knowledge and passion are an inspiration to his fellow educators as well as the young people he teaches.

Then: Andrew in 1994



Then: Andrew in 2004



Now: Andrew in 2018



2018 ALUMNI ART PROJECT

SEONA MURNANE – ARTIST STATEMENT

‘To live by the light of Christ’, for me, is to live by one’s own values and beliefs and to give more than one should take. My family provided me with strong values. I was raised in a Catholic family, attended Catholic schools for 13 years and for one year of University when completing my Diploma of Education. I see myself as culturally Catholic.

The teachings of Christ have certainly influenced me, especially in regard to acceptance of all people, the need to build community and live as one community, to share and to stop and reflect. It’s about being.

This artwork has allowed me to stop, reflect and be present.

There is a hill that I always look for when on the train travelling between Ballarat and Melbourne; it reminds me of a Fred Williams landscape. It is located near Millbrook. This artwork began with me wanting to paint the

landscape of the hill, its curves and the trees sprouting from the earth. The painting also includes a map of the roads I took to find the hill by car, this reflects the journeys we are all on, and how we all can ‘Live by the light of Christ’ or can be spiritual, as we navigate our way through life.

I have intertwined other farming landscapes; ones that I regularly visit now or did when growing up, such as Goornong and Lockington in North Central Victoria and Caramut in the Western District. I am able to reflect more when out in the country, there is space and time. I also respect the challenge landscapes bring and how farmers have worked the land to provide food for their families and for all communities.

Viewers are invited to reflect and be in front of this painting and interpret the landscape for yourself.

Every year Damascus College commissions a past student or staff member to create their own artist interpretation of the College motto ‘To live by the light of Christ.’

The 2018 artist commissioned is Seona Murnane, Class of 1995. Seona created a painting using oil, acrylic, graphite and oil stick on canvas. Each artist is asked to develop an artist statement describing the motivation behind the piece.

This artwork is positioned in the visitor reception of Damascus College for all to view.

2019 ALUMNI ART PROJECT

Expressions of interest are now invited for the 2019 Alumni Art Project. The Alumni Art Project seeks to engage Damascus College Alumni (including past students or staff from Sacred Heart College, St Paul’s College and St Martin’s in the Pines) in the life and community of Damascus College through producing a piece of art that explores the school’s motto ‘To Live By the Light of Christ’.

Launched in 2014, the College has engaged the services of an alumni each year to create a piece of artwork to be displayed in the Visitor Reception area of the College for a 12 month period. At the end of the initial 12 month period, the College will retain the artwork for display or storage in another location within the College.

Damascus College will pay a fee to the artist who has been commissioned to undertake the work.

The artist is chosen from a selection of nominations, by the College Leadership Team. If you would like to be considered for this project please send an email or letter, including samples of your work (pictures of) to:

Korina Hegert
Alumni & Development Officer
1412 Geelong Road
Mt Clear VIC 3350
k.hegert@damascus.vic.edu.au

Deadline for your 2019 Alumni Art Project submission of interest is Friday 27 July, 2018.

The artist will be chosen and notified in September with the art piece and artists statement to be delivered to the College by mid January 2019.



BLAST FROM THE PAST: OUTWARD BOUND

Today's students of Damascus College will have little knowledge of what the Year 10s of previous generations went through each year during that daunting rite of passage – Outward Bound.

For those unfamiliar with the experience, Year 10 students were thrown right into the deep end with a ten day outdoor camping experience like no other. Students spent each day walking, climbing, rafting and abseiling and each night sleeping under a thin sheet of plastic. Meals consisted of what they could carry and cook themselves, often generously seasoned with dust and bugs.

Many students reported hating the camp, but curiously could not stop talking about it afterwards. Even years later it is often one of the most discussed topics at reunions and get-togethers. Many friendships were born in the bush, with the shared experience bringing together students who may otherwise have spent their entire school life walking past each other in the corridor.

On return there were always many highlights with which to taunt the year 9s – the daunting day-long hike to the Fortress, the hike back carrying all, yes ALL, of your waste and rubbish from the top (think about it!), carrying everything you need for ten days in the bush on your back and let's not forget having to dig your own toilet every time (hands up, who wants to carry the toilet shovel in their pack for ten days?)

Each year on returning – stinking and exhausted – from the bush, students were asked for their opinion on the experience. The following are a great representation of the general feelings expressed:-

"We made it!"

"I never want to see Ryvitas with tuna and cheese again"

"I have never been so dirty, smelly and disgusting in all my life, and I have to tell you I absolutely loved it!"

And finally, overheard from one mum to another on meeting the returned travelers off the bus "Oh my God – the smell".

If you speak to any survivor of the 10 day Outward Bound experience they are bound to point out that our current Damascus College Year 9 students have it easy – only 5 days out in the bush, it's Club Med really!

Natasha Adams

Damascus College Archivist

HINTS FOR THE SURVIVAL OF OUTWARD BOUND (Recommended reading for Year 9 Students)

1. **It is surprising how much further a meal will go with a few handfuls of dirt.**
2. **If possums come near you pretend to be asleep and they'll go away.**
3. **Don't believe a word the instructor says on the topic of distance and you won't be disappointed.**
4. **If you're asked to carry a well tied, squishy garbage bag turn immediately and run.**
5. **Throwing all the ingredients in the pot at once won't necessarily result in a tasty and hearty meal.**
6. **Don't go looking for giant rock spiders - they'll find you soon enough.**
7. **While it is foolish to bring a torch with you at meal times it is insane to eat during daylight.**
8. **Water snakes can't puncture rubber rafts but don't dare dangle your feet in the water.**
9. **Drinking water with "floaties" in it not only quenches your thirst but satisfies your hunger as well.**
10. **There is absolutely no connection between the time you rise on the last day and the time the buses arrive to take you home - so relax and have a well earned sleep.**

Above: Survival guide, written by Outward Bound Survivor

REUNIONS

CLASS OF 1967 - 50 YEAR REUNION

On Saturday, 28 October, 2017 many of us came together to celebrate.

We were the inaugural class at St Martin's in the Pines, the class of '67. Perhaps best described as 'The Pioneers' or maybe even, 'The Pine...eers!'

We began attending, the newly built school, at Mt Clear, in term two 1967, a move from the well-established Sacred Heart College, in Ballarat East. From the confined spaces of Sacred Heart, to the wide open and bush land spaces at St Martin's, our education journey continued. A school, with the bones of it just completed. In the new school setting, the tradition of Mercy education, continued, with the nuns and Miss Cecilia Bowman, the first lay teacher at the school.

The boarders slept, almost camping style, in two classrooms, as the dormitory block had yet to be built. The Matriculating (Year 12) day scholars made the daily commute, by bus, as did the boarders and day scholars in Leaving (Year 11).

These memories and many others formed the basis, of our celebration of 50 years, since the beginnings of St Martin's and our part in that.

Our celebration began at Damascus, formerly St Martin's in the Pines, when members of the inaugural class joined more than 500 past students, staff and families to celebrate the 50 Year anniversary of Mercy education. The formal ceremonies acknowledged the contribution of Mercy education, which was so strongly begun, with our class, in 1967. Suitable recognition was also paid to Sr Marie Davey, on her retirement.

The afternoon also provided an opportunity for us to reconnect with classmates and former teachers, many of whom, we had not been in contact with, since 1967. Also seeing the facilities, the grounds and buildings resulted in many conversations beginning with, "Remember when....."



The very steep steps, for photos taken in 1967, did not look quite so steep when we came together, for a group photo. It was a fitting end to the afternoon's festivities.

The 50 Year Reunion Dinner, at Oscars, continued our celebrations. It was also one of re-acquaintance, reminiscing, laughter, chat and recollections. Even, if we did not remember everyone, the common bond of attending Sacred Heart and then St Martin's made for shared experiences. A selection of photos, the school blazer and the hat ribbon added to the memories. During our celebration of times past, a moment of reflection, to acknowledge those who are no longer with us, also occurred.

Catherine Mitchell nee Gargan (Class of 1967)

2018 CLASS REUNIONS

Reunions scheduled for 2018 are:

Class of 1968	Saturday 21 April, 2pm
Class of 1978	Saturday 28 April, 2pm
Class of 1988	Saturday 21 April, 4pm
Class of 1998	Friday 20 April, 6.30pm
Class of 2008	Friday 27 April, 6.30pm

Each reunion begins with a Welcome Reception held at the College. There is no charge to guests to attend the reception which includes: drinks and nibbles, school tour and a group photo. It is our aim to have as many of your exit year group as possible attend and participate in your reunion event. This includes those students who may have left at other times but identify best with this year group.

Damascus College will be hosting a St Paul's Technical College All Years Reunion. All past students and staff of St Paul's Technical College are invited to attend. The event will include a BBQ and a Basketball Game.

St Paul's Technical College All Year Groups Reunion Saturday 20 October, 12pm

This reunion is an opportunity to reconnect and reminisce with other past students and staff, enjoy a BBQ (and a drink or two) as well as enjoy the game.

2018 Retired Staff Lunch Dates

Retired staff of Damascus College and the former schools Sacred Heart College, St Martin's in the Pines and St Paul's Technical College are invited to attend the Damascus College retired staff Network events.

Lunch is planned for the following dates in 2018:

Wednesday 14 March

Wednesday 9 May

Wednesday 25 July

Wednesday 12 September

Wednesday 14 November



Bianca Litchfield (Right) at the State Rowing Championships



Fiona Anderson

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Donald Howard (Class of 1975) has retired from his position with IBM to the Gold Coast with his wife Claire. They look forward to many visits (with warning) from the grandchildren.

Simon Clene (Class of 1984) is relocating with his family to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. He will continue his work as a marketing consultant. They are excited to learn more about the culture and look forward to living in such a historical place.

Ellaine Simmonds (Class of 1984) completed her first marathon, the Melbourne Run for the Cure, Cancer fundraiser.

Traci Reynolds nee Childers (Class of 1989) and her husband Gavin returned to Ballarat after living abroad (mainly Europe) since the mid 90's. They are excited to reconnect with past friends and family.

Andrew Ball (Class of 1993) is living in Sydney. After a successful career with ANZ he has returned to school to gain his degree in Social Welfare.

Audrey Michaels nee Burge (Class of 1994) has been awarded a grant by the South Australian government to conduct research related to the environment. She will travel extensively throughout the state as she works on this task for the next 18 months.

Fiona Anderson nee Leith (Class of 1994) is traveling to Barcelona Spain later this year to fulfil her life-long ambition of visiting the Sagrada Familia. Fiona has been planning this trip for almost three years.

Lucy Marquand nee Ryan (Class of 2008) is teaching at St Columbus School in North Ballarat.

Samantha Harrison (Class of 2012) is living in Darwin, NT with her son Crystian. She is currently in her 3rd year of study for her Bachelor of Primary Education.

Early last year **David Santamaria** (staff at St Paul's 1988-1995, Damascus 1995-2015) was diagnosed with end-stage kidney failure and would need either a transplant, or go on dialysis. His wife Maureen ended up being a compatible donor and they underwent the transplant surgery in mid-February. It has just been a short time since the surgery and their recovery has exceeded all expectations. They are already back home and David's health has seen dramatic improvements.

Bianca Litchfield (Class of 2015) earned a silver medal at the Victorian State Rowing Championships held in Ballarat.

Congratulations to **Courtney Stedman** (Class of 2017) for winning the people's choice award at the Art Gallery of Ballarat's Next Gen Exhibition.



Donald Howard (Right) with brother, Shawn



Audrey Michaels



The wedding of Lucy Ryan
and Hamish Marquand



BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND IN MEMORY

BIRTHS

Sally Pearce nee Peach (Class of 2003) and husband Dayne welcomed Cooper into the world on 29/9/2017. Cooper is a well-loved brother to Annabelle.

Current staff member **Laura Kimm** and her husband Jason were blessed with the arrival of son Hugh Leonard Kimm. Hugh was born on 23 December, 2017 just in time to unwrap the presents for him under the tree.

MARRIAGES

Lucy Ryan (Class of 2008) married Hamish Marquand at St Patrick's College Chapel on 16 December 2017 presided over by Reverend Kevin Lenehan. Lucy was walked down the aisle by her father Martin Ryan (current staff member). Included in the wedding party were Lucy's brothers and past students Sam (Class of 2005) and Paddy (Class of 2013). Bridesmaids were class mates from Damascus Essie Cahir (Class of 2008), Johanna Wright (Class of 2008), Genna Miller nee Petrie (Class of 2008), Alice Marquand (Class of 2008), and Elle Stenzyl-Bryce (Class of 2008).

IN MEMORY

Jim Speechly sadly passed away in 2017. Jim was one of the maintenance men here at the Mt Clear campus beginning at St Martin's and when it then became Damascus College. Jim's connection to the school included the attendance of his grandchildren, Alanna (Class of 2009), Kayne (Class of 2011) & Jake (Class of 2012) Le Guier.

Former teacher at Sacred Heart College **Monica Mary Morgan** nee Tehan died peacefully at Nazareth House, Ballarat, in the presence of family on 30 December, 2017. Monica was the loved and loving wife of Ron (dec). She was the dearly loved Mum of Loretta and Roland, Damien and Kathy, Mary-Rose and James; loving Nana of Kallista and Guille, Lucinda, Jessamy and Nicholas; Gareth and Julie, Sean, and Rowena; Georgina, Alexandra and Fergus; loved great nana of Violeta and Lupe.

Staff member **William (Bill) O'Loughlin** died very suddenly on 7 November 2017 at his home in Ballarat. Bill was the dearly loved son of Gerard & Nell (dec), much loved brother and brother-in-law of Therese, Terry & Catherine, Anthony & Pamela, Michael & Clare, Barbara, Margaret & David. Fondly loved uncle of Peita, Megan, Georgina, Julian, Damon, Laura, Bridget, Patrick, Emily, Colleen, Brendan, Dominic, Ellis, Moya, Annie and Cait. Great uncle of Noah, Roy, Cora, Harper, Nina and Gabriel. A tribute to Bill is featured on p38.

Past student **Jack "Jackie Boy" Brownlee**, beloved son of Janine and David, younger brother to Mitch was tragically killed on 22 March, 2018 at just 21 years of age. Jack sustained horrific injuries when a trench that he was working in collapsed killing his co-worker instantly. Jack was airlifted to the Royal Melbourne Hospital, but died later that night despite receiving excellent care. Jack attended Damascus College from 2009 to 2013 and was a member of McAuley House.



Hugh Leonard Kimm



Cooper (Left) and
Annabelle Pearce



Jack
Brownlee

A TRIBUTE TO BILL

Bill O'Loughlin was a teacher and friend to so many within the Damascus College community. In the words of one of the students of Damascus, Mr O'Loughlin was a young soul at heart and we deeply miss waiting for him to make his way into class or the staffroom with a smile on his face and with that familiar bounce in his step!

My reflection is only a glimpse of what Bill or Mr O'Loughlin was to the staff and students of our College. The tributes that have poured in for Bill from his former colleagues, principals and friends speak of the high regard in which he was held right across Catholic education.

Bill O'Loughlin joined the Damascus team in 2012. In Catholic education he had previously taught at Geoghan College, now Penola College and at CRC Sydenham. We were strongly drawn to Bill's application because of his experience as a senior English teacher. Bill's experience proved to be a great benefit to our College. He quickly entrenched himself within the team of English teachers. He was widely read and had strong views on the text types that should be taught and the importance of building up the writing skills of the young people in every classroom.

He was a passionate teacher of English and literature. Bill was a very good thinker, he was broadly read and maintained a deep knowledge of current affairs. He loved his music, even if his personal tastes did not appeal to all – he was happy to share with those who were interested.

Bill was proud of his work and from time to time he would bring to me a task he had developed or a piece of student writing that he was really pleased with. When Bill set a task, he would sit down and write a response to it himself – to ensure the appropriateness of the task, but also to provide a model or example of what was expected. He was great at making the work accessible to students. And as many of the young men and women of our College could attest he had a remarkable work ethic and high standards of personal presentation for himself and he expected that of others. Many young people were required to resubmit pieces of work because they had not tabbed the appropriate margin on the left hand side of the page or they had not put their name on the top right hand corner of each page. For those not in the education game, you may not be aware of the competitive nature of our work at times. Bill's senior English colleagues have reflected on how when cross marking senior pieces of work, Bill would always advocate strongly as to the attributes of his student's piece of work over students from other teachers' classes! Bill was heavily invested in the achievements of his students.

As a colleague, Bill endeared himself to the Damascus staff. He was the Head of the English Department for several years and over this time supported his colleagues extensively by creating opportunities to plan and assess collaboratively. He challenged and supported them always in the interests of the students.

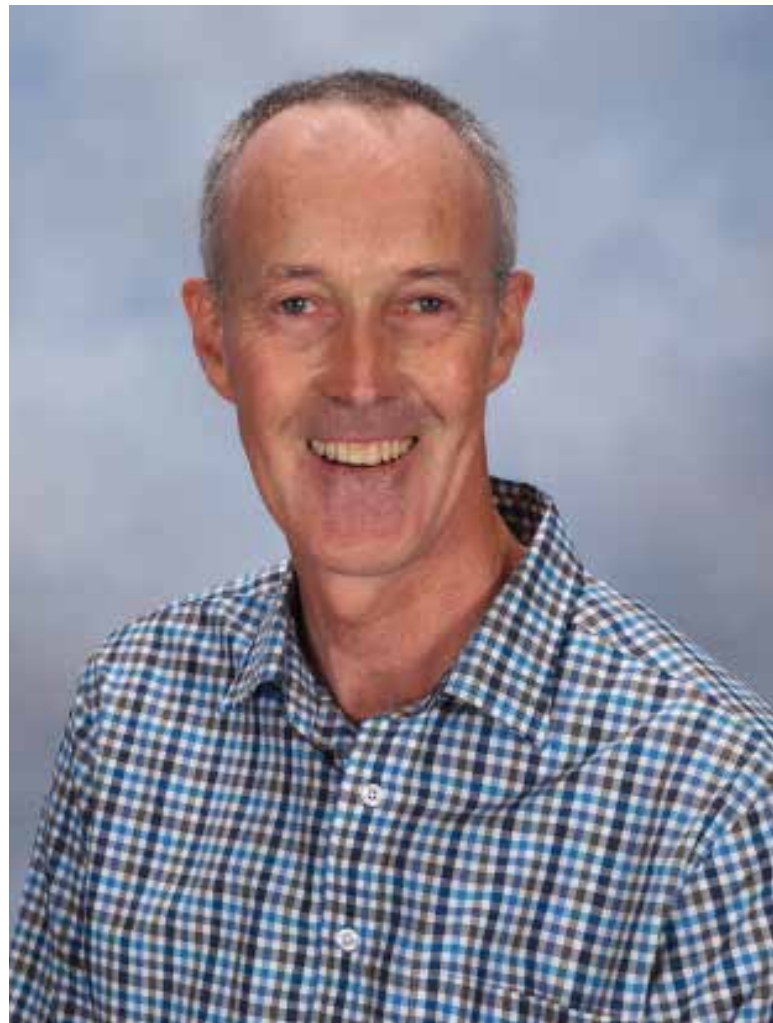
Bill served as the local union nominee for a number of years. He was a great union representative, he understood the importance of industrial instruments and the complexities of the work place and I am sure this was as a result of his father having been a principal for many years. Bill ensured that he remained abreast of developments and I could always talk with him regarding how he understood industrial matters.

Many staff sought Bill out for support and this was reflective of his genuine and caring nature and his capacity to give honest advice. Bill was a friend to so many of his colleagues, and he is sorely missed.

Teaching is a privileged vocation where we get to touch the hearts, minds and souls of the next generation. Bill approached his role as a teacher as a vocation and I believe his gifts were best shared in Catholic education where he chose predominately to work.

Some of the insights of Mr O'Loughlin's Damascus pastoral group Xavier 12 and of some of the students that he taught. There was a reflective space set up at the College and many of the students, colleagues and family have written tributes there. These thoughts have been echoed on social media. Overwhelmingly they have spoken of Bill's genuine affection for his daily engagement with teenagers. He was always positive when he greeted them, he was renowned for his jokes even though they could be considered a bit "cringe" in the vernacular. Xavier 12 laughed with him as to how he danced like a praying mantis and there have been some wonderful imitations of this. They joked with him about his green sweater and his affection for it. Teachers are prone to an ongoing critique as to their sense of style and Bill laughed with his classes regarding this. He brought fun, empathy and high expectations to his work and this endeared him to all who he encountered.

Matthew Byrne
Principal



STAFF RETIREMENTS

Mollie Cleary commenced at Damascus College in 1996, but was in Catholic education before then, until her retirement at the end of 2017. Mollie has taught thousands of students, now adults around Ballarat and many of them will attribute their textiles and sewing skills to Mollie. She has made her mark in the Ballarat community, and with husband John they have guided their children through their education at St Pauls/Sacred Heart and St Martin's in the Pines with grace. Mollie will be remembered as a gentle, kind and thoughtful person, and she was always easy to get along with. Mollie has a strong background in textiles and taught hundreds of students how to sew, which is a skill for life. In retirement, Mollie can now sit back and relax whilst she enjoys her cooking, sewing, singing, travelling, and spending time with the family. Good luck Mollie and thanks for all that you have contributed throughout your 21 years at Damascus College.



Sr Marie Davey has been in Catholic education for 53 years and recently retired at the end of 2017. Throughout her career Sr Marie made a significant contribution to Mercy Education at Sacred Heart College, St Martin's in the Pines and then Damascus College, a commitment that reaches across 41 years. Sr Marie resigned as Deputy Principal at Damascus College last year, and a wonderful celebration was held on Friday 1 December 2017 attended by more than 500 guests, to mark this very special occasion. Sr Marie is an extraordinary person, one who will be remembered for lots of things, including her nurturing care and compassion for students and staff. She always had time for everyone and her door was always open. Her caring, honest, helpful and wicked sense of humour will be missed at Damascus - we thank Sr Marie for all that she is and all that she has been to the Damascus community, and of course to the wider Ballarat community, and we wish her all the best upon her retirement. May she now have some time to slow down, relax, travel and to spend some time at home in her beloved garden. Some parting words from Sr Marie:

"Don't stop until you are proud. And I am and so I can!"



Donnie Davidson commenced teaching Food Technology at St Martins in the Pines in 1985 and went on to also teach Textiles and Health and Human Development at Sacred Heart and Damascus College. Donnie retired at the end of 2017 and one of her finest achievements was redesigning the new Food Tech rooms at St Martin's. Donnie has had such a positive impact on all students that she has taught, and she can always name students by their name several years after teaching them. Donnie has always been one of the first teachers to attend past student reunions and to give school tours to these groups. She loves to find out what the students are up to now. Donnie has always been a dedicated teacher who knew her subjects thoroughly and was always wanting to improve her own understandings but also to try different teaching techniques. As a result the students in her classes attained wonderful results. Donnie will now enjoy her well earned retirement, where there will of course be travel with her husband George but there will also be many quilts made, grand children to love and maybe even some gardening! We wish Donnie all the best in her retirement.



Jenny Kinghorn retired at the end of 2017, after 27 years working at Sacred Heart College and Damascus College. One of Jenny's strengths has been how she developed a positive relationship with her co-workers and students. She always made herself available for a quick chat or to discuss learning strategies with colleagues. Jenny will be remembered for planning the staff soiree and we will miss her stories of Phil and the girls.

She always worked her students hard as she expected the best from them to achieve their goals and she was willing to give up some of her time to help students achieve, especially during VCE. This dedication was recognised when Brooke Hutchinson received a study score of 50 for Food Technology in 2016, and as Jenny said it was a great way to finish her Unit 3 & 4 teaching. We wish Jenny the best of luck for the future, especially her travels overseas and spending time with the grandchildren teaching them how to cook and play music.



continued on page 40 →



Catriona Sexton



Bronwyn Strachan

from page 39 →

Catriona Sexton concluded her service after 36 years of Mathematics teaching at Sacred Heart and Damascus College. Catriona has been a wonderful Mathematics teacher, leader and supportive Colleague across those decades. She has always displayed a great passion for her craft and for improved student outcomes within mathematics. Countless students and colleagues have benefitted from Catriona's wealth of knowledge in the area of mathematics pedagogy and we wish her well in this next stage of life.

Bronwyn Strachan took 12 months leave in 2017 and over that time decided to finish ongoing work. Bronwyn is leaving Damascus to pursue her artistic goals following 30 years at Sacred Heart and then Damascus as an Art, Graphics and Visual Communication teacher. Bronwyn has brought a sense of fun and commitment to her work across those three decades and has been appreciated by students and colleagues alike. We wish Bronwyn the best of luck.



Jan Bibby



Annette Hallam



Matthew Rea

STAFF FAREWELLS

Jan Bibby had a wonderful and rewarding career as a Learning Support Officer at Damascus College over the past 14 years, where she worked at both the Victoria St campus and then at the Mount Clear campus. She was an advocate for all students but her passion was for students requiring additional support in years 7 & 8. Jan took on a nurturing and supportive role with the students she was aware of their strengths and challenges. The rapport that she built with students was very much evident long after they had moved onto higher years within the College. We wish Jan the best of luck and note that she will be missed in the staffroom.

Annette Hallam has been a member of the learning support team at the College for the past 15 years. Annette's resignation concludes an extended era for the Whittle/Hallam family on the staff of the College. Annette is the daughter of St Paul's and Damascus Technology teacher John Whittle. Annette has brought a genuine sense of fun and energy to her work with the young people of the College requiring additional help, and we wish her well as she moves onto the next chapter of her working life.

Matthew Rea left Damascus at the end of 2017 after 6 years at Damascus College. His contribution as the Sports Coordinator has been outstanding. Among Matt's many achievements are the growth in the College rates of participation in sport and the introduction and building up of the rowing program to where it is today! Matt Rea and his wife Stacey and four young children have moved to Katanning in WA to work with indigenous students through the Clontarf Academy. We look forward to following Matt's progress and learning from his experiences over the years to come and we wish him and the family blessings for this next exciting adventure.

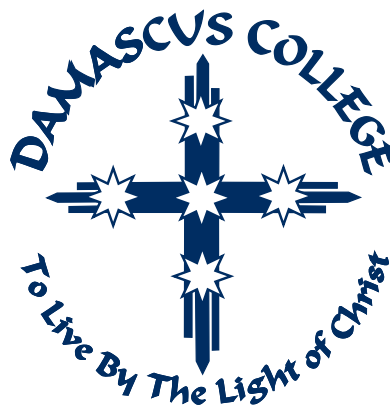
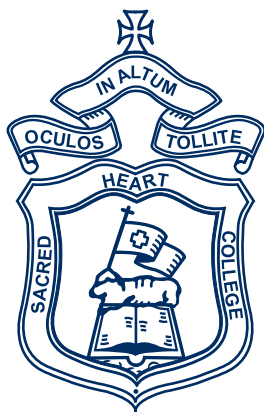
Colin Schroeder and **Brian Verlaan** spent 12 months on teacher exchange at Damascus, visiting us from Canada where Colin taught Science, Maths, RE and Brian taught Science and PE. Many students and staff commented on how generous they were with their time whilst at Damascus, their flexibility and dedication was admirable, and most importantly both Colin and Brian were able to build great relationships with all students and staff that they worked with. We thank them both for their contribution to Damascus throughout 2017 and wish them well with life back in Canada.



Colin Schroeder

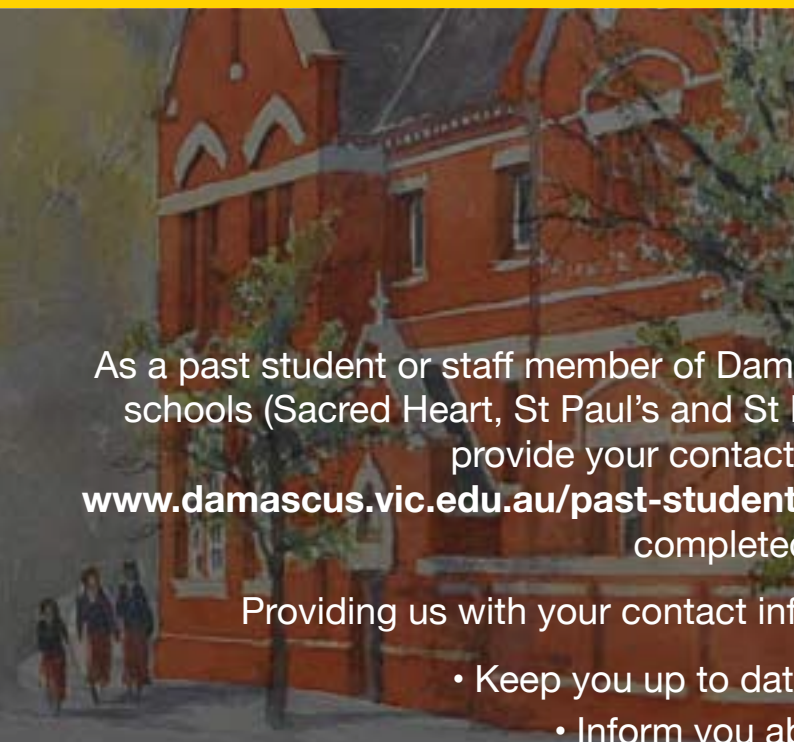


Brian Verlaan



connecting@Damascus

Keeping you CONNECTED with past students and staff of Damascus College and its foundation colleges, Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's in the Pines.




As a past student or staff member of Damascus College, or any of the foundation schools (Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's in the Pines), we invite you to provide your contact details by visiting **www.damascus.vic.edu.au/past-students-keeping-in-touch** and submitting the completed form.

Providing us with your contact information ensures that we can:

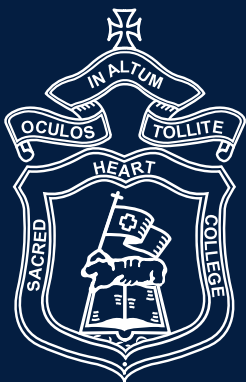
- Keep you up to date with Alumni news
- Inform you about reunions
- Deliver "The Road" publication to you



Another great way to stay in contact is on Facebook. Join the Damascus College Alumni Group.



If you are a member of another cohort and interested in holding a reunion in 2018 please contact Korina Hegert, the Alumni Officer at the College so that she can assist **connecting@damascus.vic.edu.au** or **(03) 5337 2222**.



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Keeping you CONNECTED with past students and staff of Damascus College and its foundation colleges, Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's in the Pines.

Past students and staff of **St Paul's Technical College** are invited to the

2018 All Years Reunion, BBQ & Basketball Game

Noon **Sat 20 October**
at Damascus College

Get your tickets now
<https://www.trybooking.com/UTAB>



Don't miss out on your **2018 Class Reunion!**

50 Year	Class of 1968	Saturday 21 April 2pm
40 Year	Class of 1978	Saturday 28 April 2pm
30 Year	Class of 1988	Saturday 21 April 4pm
20 Year	Class of 1998	Friday 20 April 6.30pm
10 Year	Class of 2008	Friday 27 April 6.30pm

Full details can be found on your years Facebook Group Page, join via

Facebook Group - Damascus College Alumni

or at www.damascus.vic.edu.au and select **Past Students Reunions & Events**

Enquiries please email connecting@damascus.vic.edu.au



DAMASCUS COLLEGE

ACN 609066775

1412 Geelong Road, Mt Clear Victoria 3350
p 03 5337 2222 e info@damascus.vic.edu.au
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