



The Road

DAMASCUS COLLEGE

CELEBRATING *20 years* IN 2015



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DAMASCUS COLLEGE,
 ESTABLISHED BY THE AMALGAMATION OF
 SACRED HEART COLLEGE
 ST PAUL'S COLLEGE
 ST MARTIN'S IN THE PINES COLLEGE
 BLESSED AND OPENED ON 18 FEBRUARY, 1995
 BY
REV BRIAN FINNIGAN,
 VICAR GENERAL, DIOCESE OF BALLARAT
 SPONSORS
 SISTERS OF MERCY, BALLARAT EAST
 PARISHES OF THE BALLARAT REGION
 "TO LIVE BY THE LIGHT OF CHRIST"



1995

1996

1997

2000

2001





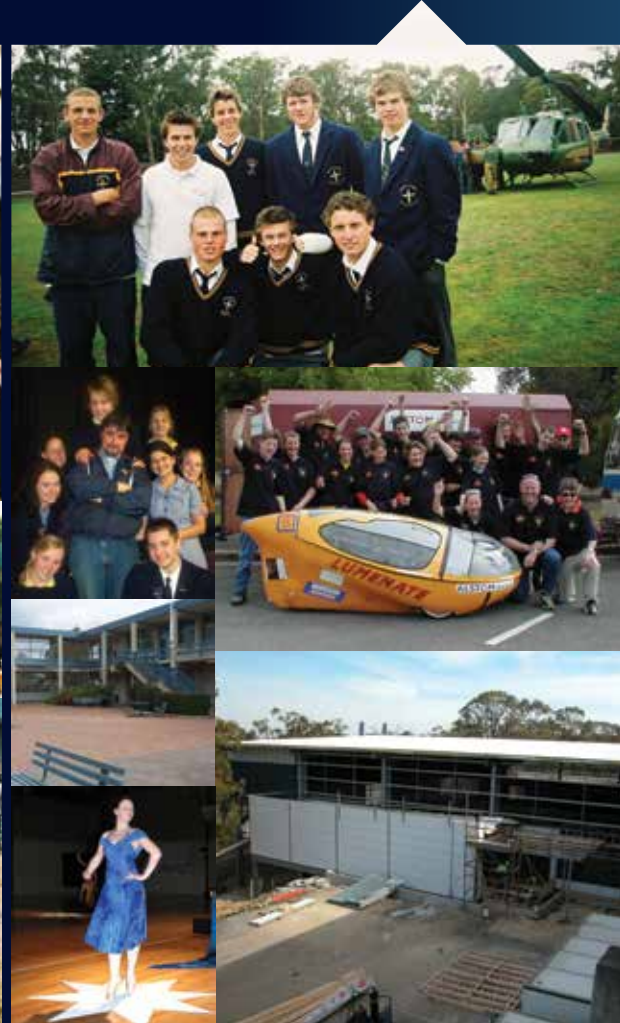
1998

1999

2002

2003

2004





2005

2006

2007

2010

2011

2012





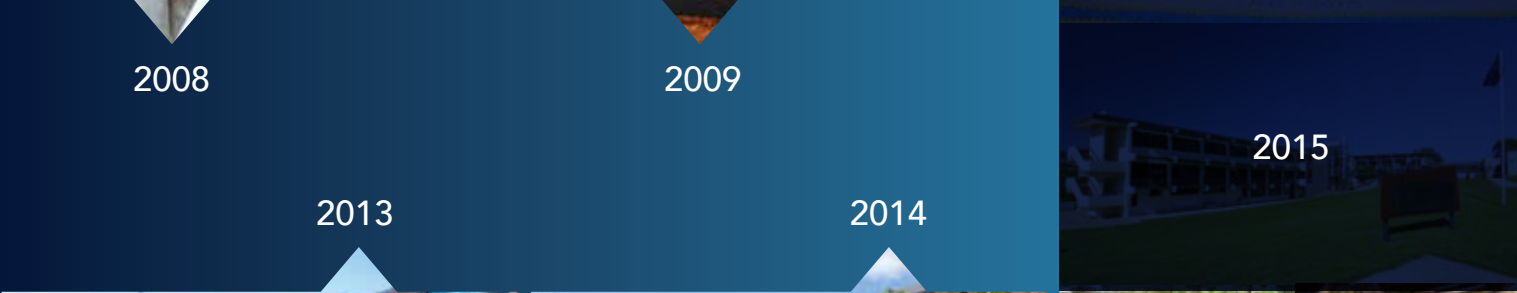
2008



2009

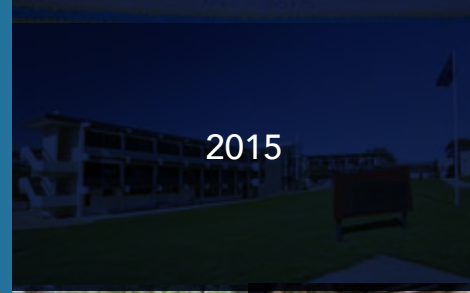


2010



2013

2014



2015





FROM THE PRINCIPAL MATTHEW BYRNE

My journey within the Damascus College community commenced in 2009 when my beautiful wife, Julie and I arrived in Ballarat. Our oldest Tom was 6, Grace about to start Prep, Xavier 2 and Ruby about ten months. I remember the day of my orientation visit to the College. It's the kind of day when you spend most of the time smiling, trying to make a good impression. At a certain point in the day, the opportunity presented for a quiet cuppa, so I headed to the staff room. In the kitchenette I went searching for a teaspoon to make my cup of tea. I didn't want to ask the obvious question so instead I tried to be clandestine in my search through the nearest drawers and the adjoining sink, even opening the dishwasher.

I vividly recall Jenny Kinghorn who has always been very welcoming of me, sweeping into the kitchen, giving a high pitched chuckle and stating – *"I guess you're looking for a teaspoon – well good luck with that – here use mine"* at which point she handed over her set of keys, attached to which was a teaspoon with a hole drilled into it! When we came together on one campus in 2011, needless to say that the inclusion of a well-equipped staff lounge facility resonated with me as an important addition to the master plan.

Even though I've been at Damascus for six years now, it really does feel like just yesterday that I was formally welcomed to the school at a whole school assembly. Again, I was trying to make a good impression but I was trying a little too hard... and I welcomed the Sisters of St Brigid to the assembly rather than our beloved Sister of Mercy. Given their reputation for compassion I am pretty sure I have been forgiven, but given their equal reputation for mischief – I haven't ever been allowed to forget it!

When I look back at the past six years I see them as being framed by the campus consolidation. I remember Term 2 of 2009 at a Board executive meeting at Victoria Street with Sister Marie, Adrian McInerney, Veronica Lawson and then Board Chair, Maureen MacPhail – and Marie saying that we've been talking about this consolidation for a long time – let's

get on and do it! On the inside I was screaming out NO, let's slow down! I had just relocated with a young family, I was learning a new culture and I felt way out of my depth in tackling a campus consolidation! But with Marie, Adrian and Veronica's support and the incredible commitment of our Board and staff team, many of whom shared an anxiety for such significant change, we embarked on this exciting next phase. Earlier this year as we worked our way through a record number of enrolment applications for 2016 I like to think that the campus consolidation has been a success!

Coming together on one campus required a major capital works program, which was supported in part by the proceeds from the sale of Victoria Street, generously gifted to us by the parishes. This allowed us to establish facilities that I believe are second to none in Ballarat. The exceptional work of our Business Manager, Paul Jans in leading our physical and financial development over this time has been extraordinary.

Each day I look around and see the many talents of our students, present and past, and I'm reminded that Damascus has been and continues to be a great place for the holistic development of young men and women. There is no point having a lamp and hiding it under a bushel and I think that we are becoming more widely known in the Ballarat community for the positive things that are happening here. Strategically, we are seeking to become a school of first choice, a school that is chosen by families above others because it provides the kind of education they are seeking for their children. It is a journey that's been well supported by our community and one which I feel is taking the College in a positive direction.

Each year Damascus chooses a theme which provides an area of focus for the College. In 2015 the theme comes from Luke Chapter 2 Verse 40 and it speaks of how the young Jesus grew in strength, wisdom and grace. As a learning community, the growth in strength and wisdom for young men and women is obvious but it is Grace that has defined the twenty years of this College. God's love given freely to all within this community and expressed explicitly in the relationships, the beauty of the setting, the gifts of the individuals, the final hours, the act of education. Those who had a vision for Damascus and the founding communities – the priests of our parishes and the Sisters of Mercy, who we say thank you to for allowing God's grace to act through them and to have the foresight to establish the founding schools and then this College.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank Sister Marie Davey for her contribution to Damascus College over the past twenty years. Marie will have touched the lives of each one of our students, and her influence as a person of Grace has been profound. Veronica told me that the word Grace and the word Mercy are both derived from the Greek word *Karis*, and that in translation, Grace and Mercy can be used interchangeably. So while our leadership team would like to take credit for the fact that we chose this year's theme to give further life to one of our founders, and that it was a deliberate and intentional act, I will put it down to the free and generous gift of God's grace acting here again.

Damascus College has been on an incredible journey over the past twenty years. During the period of amalgamation there was great uncertainty, even perhaps a fear of what was to come. Then there was a period of adjustment, a time when the school needed to forge its own identity whilst still honouring the memory and traditions of the foundation Colleges. Then came the move to one campus, another great period of adjustment and upheaval. The road has not always been smooth, but our community has shown great resilience and an absolute determination to build a College which provides a safe and inspiring environment in which our students can grow and learn. I feel a great honour to be leading Damascus as it traverses this significant milestone, and I am very proud to be playing a part in the history of this wonderful College.



FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

VIN DILLON

In 2008 I was privileged to be invited to speak at a Damascus College Strategic Planning Day involving the Staff, Board and Governors of the College. I think I was invited because of my involvement as a parent, we had four children at Damascus when it commenced in 1995, and through my contact with the College as the Central Zone Educational Consultant for the Catholic Education Office over an eleven-year period. At this gathering I challenged the College community to throw off any inferiority complex it may have, resulting from a perceived lack of resources, or through not having a long tradition (at that stage the College only had a twelve-year history), or a notion that it was not as strong academically as some other Ballarat secondary educational institutions.

Over the past seven years as a member of the College Board I have had the opportunity to observe firsthand the growth of Damascus College. Like a fine wine it has just become better with age, maturing into a bold, confident community with its own distinctive culture of which it is very proud. There have been many defining moments such as the amalgamation of the two campuses, the building of magnificent new facilities, the continuation of the excellent performing arts offerings and the establishment of the rowing program. But as the title of the Paul Kelly song goes it is *'From Little Things Big Things Grow'*.

Every day a multitude of interactions involving staff and students ensure Damascus College is endeavouring to make a reality its vision of being a dynamic Christ-centred learning community that values each member. When viewed in isolation some are relatively minor in nature but put together they build the Damascus culture. In my regular visits to the College I am always impressed by the friendly greetings I receive from the students, the commitment of staff to providing optimum learning opportunities for each and every student, the prayerful response from over one thousand young people when they gather for a whole College Mass, the manner in which students now wear the College uniform, the list could go on and on.

At a Board level there has been a growth in the understanding of the critical leadership role the Board has in developing the strategic direction of the College. A feature of the Board's operation is the six sub-committees which correspond with the five priority areas of the College's Strategic Plan, as well as a Finance sub-committee. Each of these sub-committees, which have Board, staff and parent representation, provide the Board with policy advice and respond to other issues within its strategic area. As a co-sponsored College of the Sisters of Mercy and the Catholic parishes of the Greater Ballarat area, the Board has worked to ensure the traditions and charisms of both groups continue to be clearly identifiable.

Ad multos annos Damascus College!!



A WORD FROM OUR SCHOOL CAPTAINS

MARIE-ANGELINE ECONOMOU

In my time here at Damascus I've been quite involved in the performing arts side of the school and have been lucky enough to be part of two of the famed 'Final Hours' directed by Andrew Seear. This was a big year for 'The Final Hours' as it was its twenty-fifth anniversary which tied in with the twentieth anniversary of Damascus itself. Not only is the narrative of this production a celebration of the Stations of the Cross but it is also a good opportunity to meet new people and make friends. I am really lucky to have been a part of this grand tradition.

Another special experience for me was my immersion to Timor-Leste. Damascus College has a sister school in Timor called Santa Maria and since 2011 Damascus has been sending Year 11 students over for the experience of a lifetime. While there we met and interacted with the students of Santa Maria as well as taught English. I may have gone to Timor with the intention of being a teacher, but I returned having learnt more from the Timorese. I now have a greater value for the education that I receive and I am more aware of the world around me.

BEN TAGGART

The highlights of my schooling life have been getting stuck into all the events and camps that came my way. The Year 9 camp, which was at first daunting, became one of the most memorable and satisfying experiences during my time here. Nothing brings you closer to your peers than helping each other out through a hilly and muddy bike trail or fighting over the last drop of liquid milk in fear of having to endure the powdered alternative. However this was just one of the many times I've been given a chance to form lifelong connections to my now Year 12 comrades. Experiences like the Year 12 retreat and all of the reflection days we undertook really gave us stronger bonds in our year level, and as a result we have supported each other greatly on our journey through VCE.

Being the School Captain during the 20th anniversary year of Damascus College, I feel is a great privilege. The 20 year anniversary dinner really enlightened me about the heritage of the College, from the old buildings that have been transformed into classrooms to mysterious stories about an apparently elusive teaspoon. I take great pride in leading the school in this year of celebration and continuing, as it has for 20 years, to live by the light of Christ.



20 YEARS AT DAMASCUS

The following staff members have worked at Damascus College from 1995 to 2015:

Brendan Bawden	Tony Haintz	Ivanka Saric
David Boadle	Loretta Kaval	Peter Sartori
Sallie Burke-Muller	Jo-Anne Kennedy	Andrew Seear
Marie Davey	Greg Macallister	Catriona Sexton
Donnie Davidson	Mark McLean	Karen Simpkin
Greg Dow	Nancy Meiklejohn	Jeff Simpson
Carmen Duxson	Yvette Nesire-McNeil	Bronwyn Strachan
Wayne Forster	Tony Purcell	Neale Thompson
Peter Gay	Gerard Macklin	Gavan Walsh
Anne Griffin	Trish Rowe	Sharen Wolfe

BOARD MEMBERS

1995 - 2015

John Anderson	Ann Lacey
Neal Arthurson	Kevin Lenehan
Peter Appledore	Denise Lyons
Paulene Barton	Brendan Maher
Bernard Bradbury	Fr Kevin Maloney
Brett Bryant	Sr Margaret Mahoney
Joe Cahir	John McDonald
Stephen Carey	Sr Kate McGrath
Marnie Cooper	Sue McNamara
Wayne Cooper	Maureen MacPhail
Jane Collins	Peter Morris
Jon Crawley	Nathan Mullane
Helen Daly	Paul Murnane
Marion de Sousa	Rebecca Munro
Vin Dillon	Lucy O'Beirne
Sr Elizabeth Dowling	Fr Michael O'Toole
Anne Eskdale	Fr Gerry Prunty
Virginia Fenelon	Fr Barry Ryan
Sr Trish Fitzsimmons	Martin Ryan
Max Fletcher	Bill Slatter
Annette Foley	Margaret Stewart
Sr Rose Maree Glennen	Wayne Strong
Maree Harris	Fr Greg Tate
Kay Hevey	Martin Westbrooke
Graham Hills	Donna Wilkinson
Tom Hogan	Ian Wilmot
Geoff Howard	Kathy Wood
John Jamieson	Brian Wright
Trevor Jeffreys	Sue Yorston

BOARD CHAIRS

1995 - 2015

1995 - 1996	John Jamieson
1996 - 1997	Ian Wilmot
1997 - 2001	John Anderson
2002 - 2003	Virginia Fenelon
2004 - 2007	Helen Daly
2008 - 2011	Maureen MacPhail
2011	Martin Ryan
2012	Maureen MacPhail
2012 - 2013	Joe Cahir
2013 - 2015	Vin Dillon

GOVERNORS

1995 - 2015

1995 - 1996	Fr Paul Mercovich
1995	Sr Lis Teggelove
1995	Sr Rita Hayes
1996 - 2015	Fr Adrian McInerney
1996 - 2004	Sr Therese Power
2005 - 2011	Sr Veronica Lawson
2013 - 2015	Sr Berenice Kerr

HONOUR BOARD

	COLLEGE DUX	COLLEGIAN OF THE YEAR	SRC PRESIDENTS	SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR
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1995

Katie Whitecross

Corrina Dichiera

Katie Whitecross

Seona Murnane

1996

Cara Waters

Louise Tuddenham

Cara Waters

Rebecca Maher

1997

Anna Purcell

Rebecca Munro

Rebecca Munro

Jaye Cahir

1998

Susan Hayes

Susan Hayes

Georgina Cooper

Claire Morris

1999

Lauren Bourke

Carli Symons

John Corrigan

Adam Stevens

2000

Christopher Morrison

Luke Cooper

Christopher Lorensini

Lauren Atkinson

2001

Marrissa McCaw

Giles Handreck

Jacqueline Vanderkley

Courtney Weybury

2002

Tomas MacPhail

Lauren Kinnane

Lauren Kinnane

Toby Boyle

2003

Toni Mcgee

Benjamin Kaiser

Riki Cooper

Dominic McNeil

2004

Aaron Lewis

Chelsea Maher

Charleen Conroy

Chelsea Maher and
Johanna Dash

2005

Aleece MacPhail

Nicole Dunbar

Nicole Dunbar

Timothy Kennedy

2006

Sarah Bugden

Clare Cooper

John Dooley

Clare Cooper

2007

Kimberly Schultz

Marianne Cashin

Amy Macallister

Aislinn Prendergast

2008

Imogen Herperger

Joshua Carey

Joshua Carey

Esse Cahir

2009

Benjamin Noble

Charlee Kitchin

Lucas Brennan

Andrew Robertson

2010

Monica Massiha

Clancy Purdie

Clancy Purdie

Bianca Woods

2011

Benjamin Lembo

Samuel Hardefeldt

Samuel Hardefeldt

Scott Hives

2012

Anna Farrelly-Rosch

Anna Haintz

Anna Farrelly-Rosch

Molly Mathews

2013

Stephanie McKenzie

Elle-Louise Smith

Rory Hudson

Lucas Cooper

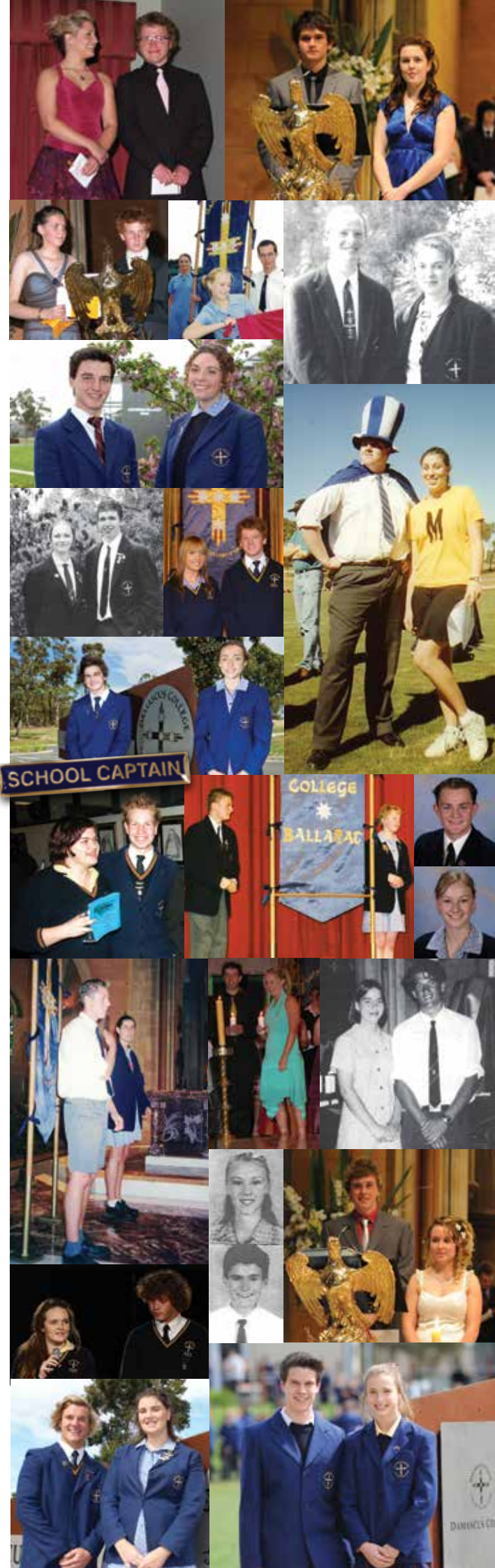
2014

Georgia Schreenan

Demcee Davies

Katie Barnett

Anthony Kearle



SCHOOL CAPTAINS

- 1995 Corrina Dichiera and Brett Madigan
- 1996 Louise Tuddenham and Shaun McKeegan
- 1997 Felicity Morris and Nathan Mullane
- 1998 Irene McDonald and Luke Williams
- 1999 Marcia Ryan and Steven Martin
- 2000 Gerardine Dillon and Christopher Morrison
- 2001 Shannyn Bennett and Scott Lorensini
- 2002 Alison Stary and Grant Wyatt
- 2003 Caitlin Stonehouse and Damian Foster
- 2004 Chelsea Maher and Shane Zammit
- 2005 Amanda Kinnane and Luke Butler
- 2006 Angela Leeding and Joshua Shuttleworth
- 2007 Marianne Cashin and Benjamin Knight
- 2008 Chelsea Ryan and Jordan Roughead
- 2009 Kaitlyn Cooper and Matthew Willis
- 2010 Maddison Edwards and Hayden Harvey
- 2011 Maddison Newman and Ashley Pryor
- 2012 Anna Haintz and Peter Camilleri
- 2013 Elle-Louise Smith and Jordan Holloway
- 2014 Demcee Davies and Jack Cuttler
- 2015 Marie-Angeline Economou and Ben Taggart

HOUSE CARNIVAL WINNERS

ATHLETICS SPORTS WINNERS

SWIMMING SPORTS WINNERS

LAP OF THE LAKE WINNERS

1998	Victoria Street - Rice, Mt Clear - O'Collins		
1999	Victoria Street - O'Collins, Mt Clear - McAuley	Rice	
2000	Not run due to bad weather	O'Collins	
2001	McAuley	McAuley	
2002	McAuley	McAuley	
2003	O'Collins	Xavier	
2004	O'Collins	O'Collins	
2005	Rice	Rice	
2006	O'Collins	O'Collins	Rice
2007	O'Collins	O'Collins	
2008	O'Collins	O'Collins	Rice
2009	Xavier	McAuley	O'Collins
2010	Xavier	Xavier	O'Collins
2011	Xavier	O'Collins	O'Collins
2012	O'Collins	O'Collins	O'Collins
2013	Rice	O'Collins	O'Collins
2014	O'Collins	McAuley	McAuley
2015	O'Collins	O'Collins	O'Collins



RON MATTHEWS SHIELD WINNERS

The Ron Matthews Shield was created in memory of Ron Matthews, a long serving teacher at Sacred Heart and Damascus College, who passed away in 2001. The shield is awarded at the end of each year to the House that has accumulated the most points through various competitions throughout the year.

- 2003 - McAuley
- 2004 - O'Collins
- 2005 - O'Collins
- 2006 - O'Collins
- 2007 - O'Collins
- 2008 - O'Collins

- 2009 - McAuley
- 2010 - Xavier
- 2011 - O'Collins
- 2012 - O'Collins
- 2013 - Rice
- 2014 - O'Collins

CELEBRATING THE 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF DAMASCUS COLLEGE



Damascus College opened for business at the commencement of the school year in 1995, having formed from the amalgamation of Sacred Heart College, St Paul's College and St Martin's in the Pines. A number of special events have taken place over the course of 2015 to celebrate the 20 year milestone of Damascus, commencing with a whole-school celebration day on Thursday 19th March 2015, which unfolded as follows:

20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION DAY – THURSDAY 19TH MARCH 2015

9:00 Whole School Photo on the lawn in front of the Catherine McAuley Wing

MSP Photography was engaged to take a photo of the whole school, a copy of which was placed in the time capsule later in the day. The photo was also framed and now hangs in the Mercy Administration Wing.

11:30 Opening School Mass and acknowledgement of 20 years of Damascus College

Liturgy Coordinator Adrian Newman, supported by the RE faculty, prepared the College for the Mass celebrated by Bishop Paul Bird in the John Shannon Centre. Bishop Paul reflected on the founding story of Damascus College from the Acts of the Apostles Chapter 9, The Road to Damascus and linked it to our College theme for 2015, *Growing in Strength, Wisdom and Grace*, which is taken from Luke's Gospel (2:40). Our prayerful petition named our commitment clearly.

The Damascus College community is called by the wisdom and grace of God to the work of education. May we be committed to education that is challenging and inspires each person to reach their potential. God of light, hear us.

Response: God of light, hear our prayer.

12:30 Teacher Advisor Groups contributed to the Time Capsule while a photo story of the past 20 years of Damascus was shown

12:40 Principal Mr. Matthew Byrne addressed the assembled school

12:55 An enormous cake was wheeled into the JSC and everyone sang Happy Birthday to Damascus

Stewarts Bakery was engaged to make a very large cake – 80cm x 213cm in fact! The cake with 20 sparklers alight was moved into the JSC after Mass and ceremonially cut in front of the College by Bishop Paul Bird, Mr. Matthew Byrne, Sr. Marie Davey and the College Governors Sr. Berenice Kerr and Fr. Adrian McInerney. At close hand were all the staff who have been part of the College since 1995.

1:00 Acknowledgement was given to the four new trees that had been planted outside the John Shannon Centre to celebrate the College's 20 year anniversary

Four water gums, representing each of the College's four houses (McAuley, O'Collins, Rice and Xavier), were planted in the days leading up to the celebration day.

1:15 The cake was wheeled down to the oval and distributed to the masses



TREES PLANTED TO HONOUR THE 20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

By Paul Jans, Business Manager



Trees are an important symbol in nearly every culture, and certainly within our catholic tradition. From branches that reach to the sky and roots deep within the earth, trees dwell between two worlds, linking heaven and earth, uniting above and below.

Trees can also be regarded as both a feminine and masculine symbol, providing sustenance and shade, refuge and protection, physically strong but able to bend.

Trees also have other features which lend easily to symbolism. Many take on the appearance of death in the winter, losing their dead and dying leaves, only to sprout new growth as spring returns. This aspect also makes trees a symbol of resurrection, remembering that as we approach Easter that Jesus himself was nailed to the wood of the cross.

In our Damascus setting, trees are a significant part of our past and present. From the remaining pines of St Martin's, to the mature gums and open wooded areas of this fifty acre site, trees are a prominent part of both our history and daily experience.

In this spirit, we have planted four trees in the rejuvenated courtyard adjacent to the John Shannon Centre. These acknowledge the twenty years of the house system, with each of these trees representing one

of the four houses within the College. These are water gums, so are sympathetic to our surrounds and sit easily among the other native species in the area. And like the character of each of the four identities on which the houses are modelled, these trees sit firmly planted in the earth and reach for the heavens. In the book of Jeremiah we read *'blessed are those that trust in the Lord, they will be like trees planted by the water that sends out roots to the stream. They don't fear when heat comes, and their leaves are always green. They have no worries when drought comes and never fail to bear fruit.'*

This year has also seen the replanting of trees at the front of the College, with forty spotted gums replacing the former pines lost to age, storms and road widening over the past few years. I trust these trees will become a new symbol of the beauty and strength of this community to all those that pass through here and drive past in the coming years.

And finally, it is my hope that these trees will also serve as a reminder that in these days of increasing rush and busyness, that we take some time to contemplate, to slow down and like the pace of nature which is slow and deliberate, to understand that all good things that endure take time, need to be cared for and can't be rushed.



A TIME CAPSULE TO MARK 20 YEARS

On Tuesday 24th March 2015, Bishop Peter Connors and College Captains Marie-Angeline Economou and Ben Taggart, buried the time capsule that had been prepared on the celebration day the week prior. Each Teacher Advisor Group contributed to the time capsule by responding to the following question and placing it in the capsule: *'As a Catholic School in the Mercy tradition Damascus College Ballarat is growing in strength, wisdom and grace. Damascus College is making a difference by...'*

As well as the contribution from each TA group, the following items were placed into the capsule: a copy of the whole school photograph taken on 19th March, a copy of the 2014 School Magazine, an SD card containing photos from the past twenty years and the staff photograph from 2015. The time capsule was buried under the cherry blossom tree next to the central courtyard.

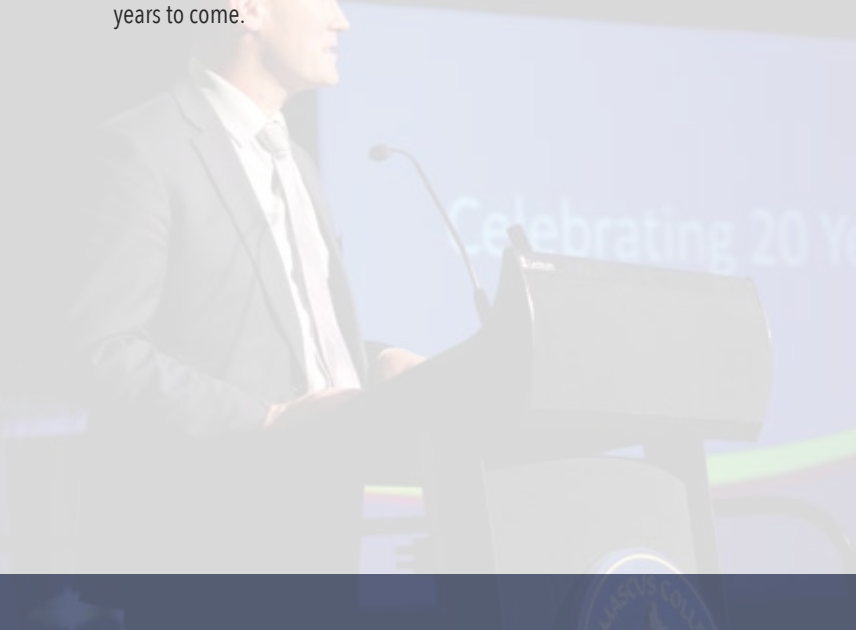
20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY DINNER

On Saturday 21st March 2015, 193 guests gathered at Damascus to celebrate the 20 year anniversary of the College. We were blessed with a glorious evening which commenced on the lawn at the front of the Catherine McAuley Wing, where people enjoyed seeing familiar faces and catching up with old friends. The smell of barbecuing canapés wafted through the air as guests sipped champagne and were entertained by the many wonderful talents of the College's music students.

When the time came, Adrian Newman gathered his kilt and bagpipes and led the crowd to the John Shannon Centre, which had been transformed into an elegant dinner venue for the evening's proceedings. As everyone took their seat, former student Bridget Davies captured the room with an operatic performance from Puccini's, *Madame Butterfly*. The Master of Ceremonies Donnie Davidson, then took to the stage and led us through a wonderful evening of reminiscing and celebration.

Principal - Matthew Byrne; Deputy Principal - Sr Marie Davey; former Deputy Principal - Tony Barrett; 2002 School Captain – Grant Wyatt and past student John Bath all reflected on the development of the College and its influence on their individual lives. Former student Brent Trotter performed musical numbers from *Fame* and *Jersey Boys* and then Bridget concluded the evening with an aria from Bizet's opera, *Carmen*.

It was a night of great entertainment, wonderful food and excellent company. It allowed us to showcase the extraordinary talents of Damascus students, past and present, and left the school community with a sense of great pride in all that has been achieved over the past 20 years, and a sense of great excitement for all that lies ahead in the years to come.











MARIE DAVEY

RSM

Marie Davey rsm commenced her teaching journey at Sacred Heart College in 1976 where she taught Geography, Social Studies and Religious Education. In the early 80s she took four years out to study Music and Theology before returning in 1983 to teach Music and RE. In the mid-1980s she became the Deputy Principal at Sacred Heart, a role that she continued until becoming the Principal in 1992. When the amalgamation occurred, she became the Deputy Principal of Damascus and the Campus Co-ordinator of Victoria Street. She was the acting Co-Principal of Damascus in 2009 and 2010 and since 2011 she has held the role of Deputy Principal of Damascus College.

It is hard to believe that we have been Damascus College for 20 years. My reflections are of the pre 1995 stage – the lead up to the formation of Damascus College from the amalgamation of St Martin's in the Pines, Sacred Heart College and St Paul's.

The decision to amalgamate was actually made in mid-1992 after John Jamieson, representing the Catholic Education Office, Fr Paul Mercovich representing St Paul's and the Parishes and Sr Elisabeth Teggelove as the Mercy Leadership representing Sacred Heart and St Martin's, met, discussed, discerned, held public meetings and conducted surveys to establish the viability of a combined college.

The result was that the Damascus Project was born.

This led to what seemed to be a long, painful process over the next two-and-a-half years.

There was a suggestion at one stage throughout the year that is was the 'Domestos' Project – I'm not sure whether this was from someone who was more familiar with the advertising for a particular cleaning product than they were with Scripture or whether they really took it as a cleanup operation! We went back to the Damascus project!

A Co-ordinating Committee was established to direct the proceedings. Sr Eileen Ann Daffy, a Sister of Mercy who came from the then Melbourne congregation, was appointed to lead this committee. She had previously been involved in the amalgamation of the two Catholic Colleges in Warrnambool and it was felt that it needed someone from outside the three schools to move the action forward.

At the coal face there was a sense that change was happening to us rather than that we were effecting that change.

While we didn't like it at the time, we probably needed someone with an objective viewpoint to get us through that year and to be ready to open in 1995.

Various committees were formed - for curriculum, uniform, promotions, finances, the list could go on... all with reps of staff and parents from the three schools.

There was some changing of the guard in leadership in the colleges in 1994 – Br John O'Halloran moved from St Paul's and Br Laurie Goodison was Principal for the final year; Sr Valda Ward moved to ACU Melbourne and John Shannon who was working with the preparatory groups throughout 1994 took up Principalship of St Martin's for the last six months, I was still Principal at Sacred Heart.

There were events organised throughout the year to bring the venture to public attention. A combined concert was held in Her Majesty's Theatre – with items from each of the schools. And then there was a big fete organised – called The Damascus A'Fair – the name worried me a bit.

There were many reasons for concern. There was concern over employment - the anxiety of possible redundancies - the exaggerated rumour at one stage that twenty people were in danger of losing their jobs. There was concern over the location of year levels and then some resentment when it was announced that Year 10 was going to Mt Clear – it was thought it would 'ruin' the senior environment. This meant apprehension amongst the staff who were moving there with the students. How would they be received?

There was apprehension also amongst the staff of the junior schools – both St Paul's and Sacred Heart - some who had not taught co-ed before, some who were more concerned about going from a smaller well-known environment to the unknown, and rubbing shoulders with many more people in the day to day running of the school.

We visited and had visitors from other schools that had been through amalgamation –Warrnambool, Geelong, Bendigo. I remember someone from one of those schools warning us about territorialism – who 'owns' the table, the chairs, the particular spots in the staffroom? Teaspoons! Rumour had it that the teaspoons had been chained to the tap in the staffroom at St Paul's because they kept disappearing. I didn't actually ever see it – but such stories did make us wonder what we were getting into!

I was reminded in this past week that the staff at St Martin's had access to a cooked lunch that was provided for the boarders – they'd now have to bring their lunch!!! I remember Bernard Bradbury telling me in 1995 that it was the first time in all his teaching career that he had had to bring his lunch - he had always been in boarding school situations where lunch had been provided!

These things, which seem small things, cause a great deal of angst when bringing different cultures together.

Decisions had to be made:

The name of the college - which did evolve then from the name that had been given to the project – Damascus College signifying the conversion of St Paul in the meeting with the Mercy of God on the road to Damascus.

The Motto – To live by the light of Christ.

The Logo – designed by Sr Anne McMillan, it evolved through the reflection on the joining of three schools, the Christian symbol of the Cross and our location at the heart of the Eureka story.

The Uniform – and you can only imagine the discussions that took place there!!!

The decision on the House structure and House names to signify the history of the college – with McAuley and Xavier from Sacred Heart/St Martin's and Rice and O'Collins from St Paul's.

Leadership of the Houses – again honouring previous experiences.

Also... Would Ballarat's conservative Catholic community support the venture? We had a strong PR committee who worked hard to spread the word – TV advertising, newspapers, Church notices, visits to primary schools.

Our first girl and boy enrolments were Bonita and Alex – great rejoicing! Even greater rejoicing when we received our 200th enrolment – this was particularly worth celebrating because there were some key people who doubted our viability at that stage. We popped open the champagne with the enrolment committee when number 200 arrived.

We organised transition days for various year levels to experience the wonders of co-ed.

This brought about some budding romances – Yvette received a request

from a past student last year for the date of the Orientation Day for the beginning Year 7s because he and his now wife had met on that day and he wanted to celebrate their 20 years! None of us knew what romantics we were producing at that time!

As the year drew to a close we grew to a mix of apprehension and excitement at the prospect of the new beginnings.

My experience cannot help but be biased to a Sacred Heart experience – we felt we were losing everything and were refugees to another land so you will have to allow me to wallow in a bit of nostalgia about the way we finished.

We were going to go out with a bang rather than a whimper...

During the year all staff received Catherine McAuley rose bushes – to remind them of their Mercy heritage;

We had House break ups;

Who could forget the staff 'Mourning Tea' with the food and dress all suitably funereal?

Our closure celebration with concert items in various parts of the building with 'Fr Richard Bayley' and his 'Sisters', Prayer in the chapel, the ceremonial procession through the building turning off lights and locking doors with the final one being the door off the tiled hall onto King St. No supper to follow - lights were off, nobody was left!

Final Mass at St Alipius - stopping the traffic with the procession across Victoria St. It was a beautiful Liturgy – I still remember Olivia Eckel and Bree Horwood singing Pie Jesu;

And then of course our final picnic to Luna Park – a great fun day for both staff and students;

Our Final Assembly and another procession - this time with our library books up Victoria St to St Paul's – it came to light when preparing this that the great method of moving the books to the library caused more work - when there was confusion about their placement on the shelves and they ended up in the reverse order!

And then not just the books but EVERYTHING had to be cleaned out.

And so we came to the end of an era... but let me finish with a thought of Thomas Merton which was true for us in 1994 and still is as we celebrate 20 years of Damascus College...

"You do not need to know precisely what is happening, or exactly where it is all going. What you need is to recognise the possibilities and challenges offered by the present moment, and to embrace them with courage, faith and hope."

- Thomas Merton

This article is based on the speech given by Sr Marie at the 20 Year Anniversary Dinner.



I count it a great honour to be asked to speak about the foundation year of Damascus College, so I hope you will not see it as a sign of disrespect that I remember very little about it.

I cannot remember our first staff meeting;

I cannot remember our first assembly;

I cannot remember my first class;

I am having trouble remembering what was here and what wasn't.

And that's just at what we were still having trouble calling the Mt Clear Campus.

I think we had a new Music room, a new Technology and Arts building and the boarding school building had been gutted and refitted with classrooms, some of which were too small and some too big and none of which had blinds.

Was the library finished? It's a blur, I can't remember.

Were the Science rooms completed? Don't know.

I do know the staffroom was located temporarily in what seven years ago was the Food Technology room. I know this because when I ransacked the boxes in my garage searching unsuccessfully for a 1995 yearbook I found this little gem. It's headed:

To the Great Unwashed

And I remember I blue-tacked it to the wall just above our staff sink. It went like this:

You may have noticed – just below – a growing line of unwashed coffee mugs, often accessorised with equally unwashed teaspoons... I've been pondering their existence for a while; if you noticed me gazing into your eyes with unusual intensity over the last few days, it's because I've been trying to construct a psychological profile of your typical mug leaver. I haven't come up with much. I just can't imagine anyone here who would consistently leave their coffee mug for other people to clean, and yet... our trough runneth over! Can I ask anyone with a conscientious objection to washing their mug to come and have a chat (please, bring a coffee). Otherwise, give us a go, yer mug!

So... There you have it, a Scoop! An exposé of the tensions seething just beneath the surface at the newly launched school.

Yes, of course there were tensions! And it is the feelings I remember: excitement, hope, resolve – yes - but also fear, confusion, grumbling, a sense of loss and perhaps even a little dose of resentment here and there. I remember thinking that if we had a few more years to plan this, we might be ready, but then by late January 1995 knowing... Nah, we'll never be ready until we jump in, so go on Tony, jump! And I did.

It takes time and enormous belief and effort to create a new school. In 1995, 180 Year 10s and a similar number of Year 11s – at a senior

campus and in co-educational classes for the first time – arrived at Mt Clear. They easily outnumbered the unreconstructed St Martin's Year 12 group. For many of the staff, co-education was a novelty too, as were some of the cherished customs that the St Martin's Staff were determined to retain. Many of the pines had been lopped, and the boarders had gone, replaced by period bells and PA announcements, but they wanted students to continue to call them by their first name; and the Year 12s expected it. More so than unwashed mugs, such decisions can gather around them all the emotional baggage that comes with rapid change. Was this a signal to students, along with the absence of fences, that Mt Clear was a discipline-free zone – or, that it saw in titles – Miss and Sir - an empty formality that got in the way of building real learning partnerships between students and teachers? As 1999 School Captain Steve Martin (bless his heart) told a Mt Clear Parent Information Evening – Mt Clear students were free-range as opposed to battery hens!

This of course is the difficulty with any amalgamation;

"What do we want?"

"We want each of the amalgamating schools to bring their traditions, their practices, their values and their view of the world and out of this - at times explosive - cocktail, we will forge a new tradition, new values, practices and view of the world."

"And when do we want it?"

"NOW!"

It takes time and effort and belief. But looking back on those first few years so much was achieved; I remember when Mary Fitz-Gerald left for a principalship in Melbourne, urging us to be bold. And I think we were.

Each year the Damascus Day Mass grew more daring and creative; and that wonderful biennial alternation between School Play and The Final Hours under Andrew Seeary's inspired leadership, helped to forge a distinctive Damascan identity, the latter in particular celebrating the school environment in ways that were startling and joyous. The whole-school walkathon converging on a concert and BBQ at Pax Hill from Mt Clear and Victoria St was gloriously ambitious; and what about some of those end of year performances? I remember, with John Shannon and Bernard Bradbury, dressing up as bikies and, serenaded by mini-skirted female staff, sacrificing our tricycles and dignity in a fiery apocalypse to appease the gods of Muck Up day; a year or two later our Leader of the Pack had become Batman and in the only highlight of my very short acting career, I as Robin, rescued him from his student kidnappers on the balcony outside the staffroom. Was this the same year the Ballarat Fire Brigade turned the tables on the rampaging Year 12s, roaring up the front driveway and turning its hoses on them?

What I do know is that these performances were moving inexorably towards the creative triumph of Teenage Dirtbag, replayed each year like a Kathakali Dance, somehow capturing perfectly that warm, good-humoured and so distinctively Damascan relationship between staff and students.

Of course my imperfect memory has excluded Victoria St almost completely and I apologise for that. But again I must mention one other wonderful example of how Damascus College, through the dedication and daring of its staff, students and parents, responded to the needs of its students and created something truly distinctive and that is the Energy Breakthrough Team.

When did it start?

Again, I can't remember, but I know Mark McLean and his team are responsible for giving Damascus students an extraordinary educational experience – breathtaking in its originality – and a fitting image to end my saunter down the road to Damascus.

Thank you. It's good to be back. Happy Birthday!



GRANT WYATT

SCHOOL CAPTAIN 2002

It's been twelve years since I sat in a Damascus classroom. Today, I have a wonderful and diverse career at Mars Chocolate as the Personnel & Organisation Manager for Manufacturing.

Here are some very valuable lessons I learnt at Damascus that have now become part of my life.

Be kind to each other. Whilst I certainly would never classify myself as a bully, I cringe at some of the memories of hurtful things I said or did to other students in early high school years. I quickly realised that no one benefits from making another person feel woeful and I now understand and appreciate the impact of negativity on others.

The text books do teach you something. I am delighted to declare that I use everything I was taught at Damascus. Everything. English skills are still essential despite iPhones filling (and fuelling) the gaps. Physical Education kicks you off with some useful basics and invites you to play. Trigonometry... well I don't use that, but ultimately, every single chapter in each of those ridiculously thick and detailed books teaches you a way of thinking.

Be genuine. There is no doubt that school teaches and moulds its pupils within a network of social norms, but people soon work out that you can't please everyone. I recall in Year 8 I got my first pair of camo pants and rocked them, thinking I'd found the perfect balance of edgy and stylish, only to cop judgement and laughs on arrival. There are a host of examples that everybody will have that hurt way worse than being judged for wearing camo (I certainly do), but after some time it's worth dropping the notion of acceptance from everyone and choose to find your own flavour and be yourself. You should commit to giving those people your trust, loyalty and support. You can't please everyone, but those you can, invest in them.

Discipline is essential. In a world full of parents who would rather be friends than role models, and young people learning more excuses than information, we are at risk of losing and forgetting about the ultimate teacher, the ultimate perspective giver – discipline. My parents and the teachers at Damascus taught me discipline, a number of times, and now later in life I am grateful for it.

Hard work. Throughout my years of education at Damascus I quickly learnt that there was a direct correlation between how hard I worked and the results I achieved. There is no doubt that school teaches us that those who put in, will ultimately be rewarded. This doesn't necessarily have to be about burying your head in the books either. Those that invest time in development through hard work, be it at their local supermarket, their parent's farm, travelling, sport, whatever, will reap the dividends. Go after it, back yourself and put in the work.

No matter your perspective, school will provide rich experiences. I'm really proud to look back on the ride and appreciate everything I have taken away from Damascus College.

...and I also want to note... I still wear camo pants every chance I get.



JOHN BATH

FORMER STUDENT

My name is John Bath, I am former student of this school, and I graduated in 2007.

I came to Australia in 2006 from war torn country Sudan. I was in Ethiopia in a refugee camp for 17 years with my family. In these 17 years of my life I didn't live the normal childhood life. I was forced to be a child soldier while I was only 14 years. I never had the opportunity to live the happy childhood any child could think of.

Because of these terrifying childhood experiences, I told myself when I came to Australia there would be an opportunity for me. I will not hold myself as prisoner of the past. I am an architect of my future.

I came to this school with very basic English and I was not high school age. I was an older student in Damascus College. However, my age and my broken English did not discourage former principal Mr. Tony Duggan from allowing me to chase my dreams. Thank you Mr. Duggan for the opportunity.

Damascus College is private institution but with the vision that was started by our founding patrons. I am one of the poor children our founding patrons were thinking to help. I attended this school without paying any school fees and it was because of the vision of our founding patrons to help the poor children. This school has given me so many opportunities. I thank my tutor Sr. Luke so much. You help me to see what I could be.

I failed my year 12 examination, but I know success is not final and failure is not a fatal, it is courage to continue that counts. This school has given me a courage to continue. I have completed my Bachelor Degree in 2012 and now I am studying my Master Degree at Federation University.

Damascus College thanks for the courage!! This school has opened my eyes; Damascus has cut the cycle of being illiterate in my family. I became the first to complete Year 12. I became the first from my village to have a Bachelor degree and I will be the first in my constituency to have a Master degree.

As I can quote Pakistani school girl Malala Yousafzai "*one teacher, one child, one book, and one pen can change the world*". I am a one child, even though I will not change the world, I believe I will change my village. And if I did! That change started right here in this building.

What can I say? Thanks so much Damascus community you have changed my life.

May God bless you, and May God bless this school for more years to come.







A PROUD HISTORY OF PERFORMANCE

By Andrew Seear and Vicki Rowe, Performing Arts Coordinators

Performance has become one of the features of how we portray ourselves to the wider Ballarat community and a constant in College life through showcases, concerts, special events, and liturgies. *Children of the Dust* was our first straight play in 1995, and after this fledgling original production, plans to try something bigger emerged. The result; after a complete renovation of the Auditorium, installation of technical equipment, a year of rewrites, design, composing, building and six months of rehearsals, came *Animal Farm* in 1999, the College's first whole-school musical. The College's first major production drew together the many elements that are still successfully operating today.

With *Henry* and *Little Shop of Horrors* it was soon confirmed that a love of musical theatre was alive and well on both campuses, as we were then. In 2004, to mark the tenth anniversary of the College, the bar was raised yet again to produce our first musical performed outside the school. The production of *FAME* drew together the many elements of design, music, dance and drama. This memorable production was an opportunity to celebrate the great work we had done and continue to do by giving our students from Years 7 to 12 the chance to learn, to grow and to dream. Since then *Suessical*, *The Wiz*, *Footloose*, *Annie*, and *Superman* have proudly showcased Damascus College Performing Arts to the Ballarat community.

Damascus has an enviable reputation for Drama productions. The production of straight plays has remained a strong part of our extra-curricular endeavour. Every second year in Holy Week Damascus presents *The Final Hours*, a contemporary dramatisation of Jesus' final hours on earth. This performance which began in 1990 is now one of the College's longest running traditions. Other notable productions have included *Foreigners From Home*, *Small Poppies*, *Cosí*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Beach*, *The Diary of Anne Frank* and this year, *The 39 Steps*. These performances which have thrived over many years within the intimate surroundings of the Valda Ward Auditorium continue to challenge and delight.

We are indebted to the talented amalgam of staff, former students, community members and industry professionals who so freely give

up their time to make our students the best that they can be. We are indeed lucky to work in a school that encourages and applauds a passion for theatre and recognises its special power to create confidence, discipline and school spirit within students of all year levels.

Since our humble beginnings the College has become recognised for the quality of its Performance. There have been many years of energetic, yet tiring rehearsals, constructing and deconstructing sets, late nights of problem solving, creative exhaustion, technical foul ups, tension and anxiety, the adrenaline rush and at the end of it all, that final curtain call where we see the faces of our students light up from within, and radiate in a warm glow of self-assurance and pride.

Looking at those faces... at that moment... is enough to make it all worthwhile.

1995	Children of the Dust	2008	The Wiz
1999	Animal Farm	2009	A Midsummer Night's Dream
2001	Sunrise Sunset	2010	Footloose
2002	Little Shop of Horrors	2011	Beach
2003	Foreigners from Home	2012	Annie
2003	Henry	2013	The Diary of Anne Frank
2004	FAME	2014	Superman
2005	Small Poppies	2015	The 39 Steps
2006	Suessical		
2007	Cosí		



25 YEARS OF THE FINAL HOURS

By Andrew Seeary, Performing Arts Coordinator

Albert Einstein is widely credited with saying *"The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results"*.

For a quarter of a century it's been the same time of year, the same words, the same subject matter and the same music, yet the biennial production of *The Final Hours* has rolled on and has proudly continued to produce the same result.

This 'result' is the proclamation of our identity as a Catholic school and a continued tradition that has become a staple part of the College's history. As the 25th anniversary season came to a close this Easter one was reminded of how it has progressed from a small wooden platform in the St. Martin's in the Pines era to the complex and technically challenging theatrical event it is today.

The performance which again utilised both interior and exterior locations around the College grounds involved over thirty students

in both acting and technical roles. The play showcased not only the talents and skills of these students but the wonderful natural beauty and architecture of the Mount Clear site.

Yes the show and the result is the same but every season has brought new locations, new technology and differing audiences. The difference is also, most importantly, how each new student, from each successive generation, has interpreted those same words to witness the final hours of Jesus of Nazareth before being put to death on the cross.

As we journey from the College's twentieth anniversary I am sure that the spirit of resourcefulness and growth that this amazing production has employed since its beginnings will continue to shine.

STAFF REFLECTIONS



GAVAN WALSH

Over the past twenty years Damascus College has been 'growing in strength, wisdom and grace', Luke 2:40. This is our College theme for 2015.

Each day of the week I witness a range of activities that provide opportunities for enrichment and growth: Discussions with students in my Teacher Advisor Group (homeroom group), the sounds of students and teachers in Physical Education practical classes, the aromas wafting from the food room, readings in the library, the collections of wood and metal projects, the numerous subject excursions, primary school visits, Physics experiments in the courtyard, the SRC and House run assemblies, the many students boarding buses for after-school sport and discussions with staff at morning tea and lunchtime. These are activities amongst others that happen every day and enrich us all.

Today our rituals, prayers, reflections, retreats, our East Timor connections, our sporting and cultural pursuits take on a new and more specific meaning. They have become a significant part of our Catholic culture. The spirit of Damascus College emanates from the activities of our students, staff and parents.

The significant events that have helped shape the school and that I immediately recall over the last twenty years include:

- The 1995 opening school mass at the Regent Multiplex
- The 1995 success of the Damascus College Athletics team in the Ballarat Inter-School competition (CHISSA)
- Portable classrooms in the entrance to the old school while new buildings were erected
- Removal of the pine trees at the front of the school
- To see former students now teaching at Damascus College
- The host of well attended past student reunions that I and teacher Andrew Robertson endeavour to attend. Yvette Nesire-McNeil's vision for connecting@damascus has created the possibility of keeping in touch
- Establishment of school rowing - after fifteen years six rowing crews represented Damascus College
- The healthy Inter-House rivalry every year in Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country running
- The closure of the Victoria Street campus
- The many students representing the school in Inter-School Sport on most days of the week
- The building projects that have helped make the school
- The Year 11 Retreats (Faith and Physical Challenge)
- The 2009 inaugural Sports Dinner to celebrate the opening of the Damascus College Hall of Fame. This included students from all three schools who have experienced success at various levels in a range of sports and activities. This was created and organised by Yvette Nesire-McNeil who also extended this recognition to students in all walks of life offering inspiration to current and future students
- Seeing past students taking on life challenges and endeavouring to make a success in life
- The twenty year celebration dinner organised by Corrina Dichiera
- The lead taken by the Sisters of Mercy in assisting and supporting the oppressed
- The fine qualities of leadership and the spirit of leadership shown by Sr. Valda Ward, John Shannon, Sr. Marie Davey, Tony Duggan, Tony Barrett and Matthew Byrne

I know that over the last twenty years the College has prepared students for real independence after school. I would also like to think that not long ago students set their sights on a job for life, a solid position that would carry them through the big milestones of adulthood, marriage, mortgage and kids. However today is quite different, our students will have numerous jobs and as many as five careers. Young people through their interaction with technology and the media have become powerful creators in the workforce. Through technology young people have become global, digital, mobile and visual, with the opportunities ahead of them promising their futures will continue to challenge and excite. The downside is that their attachment to technology has taken away that 'free-range play' I remember as a child and student.

While these activities and facilities help make the school, it is the relationships that inspire teaching and learning. Over the last twenty years the Damascus community has created a place we all can own, a school we can all be proud of. I am confident in our next phase that Damascus College will continue to inspire and to 'grow in strength, wisdom and grace'.



SALLIE BURKE-MULLER

Damascus College has played an enormously important part in my life over the past twenty years. The amalgamation of Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's back in 1995 was certainly a challenging year for everyone. But I do believe that we now totally identify as Damascus College, and those formative years of three schools coming together are part of our history.

Highlights for me over the twenty years would be the celebration of Damascus Day masses - lanterns in the Regent Multiplex, giant puppets; getting flooded out of Year 9 camp in Anglesea; the warm fuzzies of Year 12 Retreats; the sunshine and blizzards of numerous Ski Trips; watching Damascus take out its first rowing win at the Head of the Lake and hearing past students be guest speakers at the Awards and Achievements nights. I've also danced at the Eiffel Tower with our students, lost 18 students in Paris (and found them) and visited some of the poorest yet happiest people ever in their homes in Timor-Leste. But nothing beats watching the eyes light up on a student who finally 'gets it', or memories like Chris Cvirn standing up in a Year 10 Maths classes telling his classmates to be quiet because he actually needed to know 'this stuff' for his School Based Apprenticeship. Chris went on to win a number of apprenticeship awards!

Next year I commence a new role at Catholic College Bendigo as the Deputy Principal of Administration and Wellbeing, after spending twenty years at Damascus and eight years at Sacred Heart, the first school in my teaching career. As my time at Damascus comes to an end, I leave with a wonderfully rich tapestry of memories. Memories of an educational home for myself and the approximately 2500 students I have taught over the past 20 years. Together we have grown, smiled, laughed and argued. But primarily we have learned. I hope that I have instilled in them a strong belief that they are worthy and that they can achieve anything with effort and commitment.

I have worked with some of the staff for over 28 years. They are my colleagues and my friends and the memories of the many many wonderful times we have shared together are mine forever. Damascus College has a proud twenty year history and will only continue to evolve and flourish into the future. Whilst I will not witness this on a daily basis a piece of my heart will always be at Damascus. Besides, I will never let my membership of the Staff Tattsлото lapse, and surely we will win one day, so I'll be back!



HALL OF FAME

The Hall of Fame was first established in 2009 to honour the many great sports people who have attended Damascus College, St Paul's, Sacred Heart and St Martin's in the Pines.

As part of the College's twenty year celebrations, the Hall of Fame was remodelled at the start of this year and a new honour board was also created to acknowledge those students who have been named as Sportsperson of the Year, a tradition that commenced in 1995.

The Hall of Fame is located adjacent to the John Shannon Centre, the College's gymnasium.



FROM A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE...

By Amanda Western

The passionate and volatile days of our high school years stay with us forever. Complex memories of deep friendships, even deeper hurts, crazy antics, teachers both brilliant and boring, blackboards and heavy backpacks seem much stronger than memories from other stages of life. I wonder what memories our children will have of these precious years when they are our age?

We hear too many stories of pressure and stress pervading our current culture. Teenager anxiety is high and the media machine, both public and social, runs 24/7 increasing the tempo of life and of consequences. It is therefore important to provide our young people with a school environment which doesn't further increase stress, but takes an active approach to provide sanctuary in the physical, emotional and spiritual realms. When we were exploring options for the secondary education of our three sons, it was this aspect of the school environment and culture that drew us to Damascus College.

The students, teachers and staff at Damascus have their own fifty-acre sanctuary amongst the gum trees complete with views across Mount Helen and Mount Clear as a soothing backdrop. The grounds, buildings and facilities provide a wonderful environment for everyone to develop and grow. From our experience, the school culture focuses on helping each child discover his/her own interests and future pathways. There are many options available for the students and parents or guardians to explore, to unlock the full potential of each young person. There doesn't appear to be a race to be the brightest, fastest or best at anything; there is recognition that everyone has strengths and weaknesses, that everyone has their own unique purpose and pathway and that everyone has value and is valued.

We are two-and-a-half years into our journey with Damascus College and our sons, Jonathan (Year 9) and Patrick (Year 7) are thriving in the environment. The boys are quite different in nature, but both have discovered interests to fully engage them as they move through their adolescent years. They are both involved in the Energy Breakthrough Team and Jonathan has participated in the 2013 and 2014 Maryborough EBT Challenge and is keenly preparing with his teammates and teachers, Mark McLean and Justin Brennan, for the 2015 event. This really is a highlight of the year for our whole family. Their father Jon helps the team out behind the scenes over the three day event, Jonathan is a racer and Patrick is starting off this year in the pit crew. I go along with the younger children and cheer from the side lines! The EBT program has provided the boys with a great opportunity to develop skills in communication, team building, engineering, racing and fitness. I cannot commend the program highly enough, nor the efforts of the teachers, team members and the many parents involved. Likewise, the school drama club and production provide enormous opportunities for the young people involved.

Jon and I believe Damascus College provides our boys with a school environment and culture that supports their journey through these formative years. We believe they are in the process of building positive memories of their time at high school. Being valued, nurtured and given opportunity to explore and develop their own uniqueness will set them up well for the next stage of their lives and beyond.



FROM STUDENT TO PARENT - 20 YEARS ON!

By Melissa Alcock nee Guppy (1995)

I was in Year 12 when Sacred Heart, St Martin's and St Paul's came together to form Damascus College in 1995. Over the years there have been many changes at the school, with the most significant being the growth of the Mt Clear campus to accommodate students

from Years 7 to 12. The school needed to upgrade some of the older buildings and also to build new ones. One of the main buildings that has recently been renovated is the multi-storey building near the oval, now called the Catherine McAuley Wing. This building provides a new and modern learning environment with open plan classrooms for the Year 7 and 8 students. The dorms which housed the St Martin's boarders is now called the Sacred Heart Wing, and comprises Year 11 and 12 classrooms as well as the Year 12 common room. The use of technology at the school has also changed, with the Year 7 and 8 students now having their own Surface Pro tablet, meaning they don't have to carry as many books to each class. This also allows each student to have access to technology for all aspects of their learning.

Damascus is as much a part of my life today as it was back then, as I now have a daughter in Year 8 at the college. The spirit of the school is still very much the same with the mission, vision and values inspiring each student to reach their full potential within their learning environment. It is great to see some familiar faces like Sr Marie Davey, Brendan Bawden, Sallie Burke-Muller, Tony Haintz, Donnie Davidson, Jo-Anne Kennedy and many others around the school. Sports days are still as active today with Lap of the Lake happening each year, along with the Swimming Carnival and the Athletics Day.

Being a parent of the Damascus community has so far been a very rewarding experience, as I get to watch my daughter grow into a positive member of the college. I am pleased that I had the opportunity to choose this school for my daughter and I look forward to what the school will bring to us for the future.



NEXT GEN 2015 VCE ART & DESIGN

The Next Gen 2015 - VCE Art & Design awards and exhibition was held earlier this year at the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery. This exhibition showcases the work of students who completed their VCE studies in Art, Studio Arts, Design and Technology, Visual Communication and Design, and Media in 2014. Once again, the works of a number of Damascus students were selected for this professionally curated exhibition. Our talented participants from the class of 2014 included Jasmine Beaumont, Jason Blood, Sarah Collinson, Georgia Day, Jessica Gladman, Stephanie Goldsmith, Krista Hodges, Brittany Martin, Sarah-Jo Seear and Tiana Zerafa.

On the opening night of the exhibition it was announced that Jason Blood's photograph 'Soul' had won the award for best photo-based artwork. Jason says of his work: 'The image reflects on the theme of secrets, which viewers can interpret in their own way. The model, compressed in a deep pitch blackness to create tension, has a cold, ghost-like feeling leaving the viewer feeling isolation, loneliness and emotional.'

SCHOLARSHIP BRINGS SIMON'S DREAM ONE STEP CLOSER

Year 10 student Simon Dale has wanted to be an Air Force pilot since he was 5 years old. He vividly remembers the day that Beau Pitcher, a pilot from his home town of Ballan, flew an F/A-18 hornet over his primary school and gave a presentation to the students about being in the Air Force. A few years later Simon watched him fly again at the Avalon Airshow and by this stage, he knew he was hooked.

Simon is now well on the way to realising his dream of joining the likes of Beau Pitcher in the RAAF, commencing a VETiS course in Aviation at the start of 2015 as part of his secondary studies. Simon is also in his third year of Air Cadets at the Ranger Barracks in Ballarat.

Simon's ambition to become an Air Force pilot led him to apply for an Air Force Flying Scholarship earlier this year, and in more recent times Simon was notified that he was one of only three students in Victoria to have been awarded the scholarship. Simon now has the unique opportunity of gaining 30 hours of flying experience in a CT4 at the Point Cook RAAF base. These hours will count towards a recreational pilot licence and are valued at around \$3,500.

This scholarship is a dream come true for Simon, who has aspirations to head to the Australian Defence Force Academy to become a fighter pilot when he finishes Year 12.



RESTORATION OF OUR ICONIC STATUE ST MARTIN DE PORRES

The Statue of St Martin de Porres, which stands within the atrium of the St Martin's Resource Centre at Damascus, was sculpted in 1967 by Ernesto Murgo, a well-known sculptor whose works can be found in private collections all over the world, including the Vatican. The statue of St Martin is a significant piece of artwork which is iconic to the history of Damascus College and St Martin's in the Pines. The statue was commissioned by the Sisters of Mercy in 1967, the same year that St Martin's in the Pines opened. It sits in a prominent location within the College and has been a constant presence throughout the history of the school. As the statue is located within an open air atrium, it has been eroded by weather over the years and had been in need of restoration for some time.

In 2011 a generous donation made by Maurine Phelan, one of the members of the inaugural St Martin's group, instigated a Statue Restoration Fund which grew over the past five years. The vision to restore the statue was an ambitious one, but with the very generous assistance of the Institute of Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea announced in March 2015, the restoration project was able to proceed. We would like to thank the many donors who contributed to this fund and we're pleased to say that the initial fundraising target of \$38,000 was surpassed, and that in the end over \$46,000 was raised to restore our beloved St Martin.

Damascus then engaged a Melbourne based sculpture foundry, Coates and Wood, to restore the statue of St Martin, with artisan Mal Wood completing the works. The foundry was chosen because it specialises in moulding and casting bronze and aluminium works for Australian and International artists.

While the original statue of St Martin de Porres was cast in fibreglass and coated with powdered bronze, time and weather had taken its toll. The statue had started to become brittle from forty years of weathering, with fibres from the fibreglass exposed on many parts of the statue, and corrosion within the steel substructure.

Initial work on the original statue was to repair the cracks, holes and worn down areas where the fibreglass was worn through weathering. This was required to repair the structure to its original form so that the recasting would not contain the imperfections. A small change to square off the base of the statue was made to enable the sculpture to be placed on a level surface.

The statue was then cast in bronze in sections, using the lost-wax process, where a wax positive is made and then encased in a refractory mould before being burnt-out (lost). The molten metal is then poured into this heat resistant mould and the cast complete. The cast sections were then welded together to complete a reproduction of the original piece, with the mould and the original statue then broken to prevent replication.

Finally, the bronze was detailed with copper through a patination process to give the statue a similar colouring of the aged original work.



While this work was occurring, within the atrium the maintenance team was busy arranging a new base, refinishing the tiled surface and timber work and incorporating features with both water and light to highlight the statue.

After many months of work, the statue finally returned to Damascus in July. A few weeks later on Thursday 30th July 2015, the 'great unveiling' occurred. This involved a live webcast, watched by the whole school, of the SRC removing screens that had been covering the windows of the atrium, to reveal the restored statue of St Martin. Later that afternoon a gathering was held in the St Martin's Resource Centre, attended by many Sisters of Mercy, donors, staff and other special guests. There was a great sense of celebration and joy as we welcomed back our iconic statue of St Martin de Porres.

The following is a reflection written by Sister Veronica Lawson:

The statue of St. Martin de Porres that had pride of place in the former St. Martin's in the Pines and now graces the Damascus College Resource Centre was inspired by the life of the 16th Century Peruvian Dominican monk who, like St. Francis of Assisi, was at home with all earth's creatures. The Sisters of Mercy were acutely conscious of the natural beauty that was to be the site of the new senior secondary campus of Sacred Heart College and considered Martin to be a fitting patron and protector. They had prayed for the canonisation of Martin in the 1950s and made their own the prayer to St. Martin, "In the name of the Most Holy Trinity, in the name of Jesus Christ the Son of God, in the name of Mary Queen of Heaven, in the name of Joseph Patron of the Universal Church, St. Martin de Porres help us, for the honour and glory of God and the salvation of all [creation]. Amen."

In 1963, the young Italian artist Ernesto Murgo had just completed his Art studies at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and established the Centro Italiano D'Arte in Carlton. The Sisters commissioned him to sculpt a statue of Martin for what was to be the heart of the new campus scheduled to open in May 1967. It was intended to capture the imagination while embodying the College motto, "In Altum Oculos Tollite" (Raise your eyes aloft). The fibre glass interior of the statue was overlaid in bronze and came with a warning that the bronze overlay had a limited life-span. At that time, there were no funds to cast our Martin in bronze.

The timing of Martin's return in all his bronze splendour could not have been more fortuitous. He returns to raise our eyes aloft and to remind us of the need to share his concern for all the creatures of the earth community at the very time that Pope Francis draws our attention to earth's distress. Martin's return coincides with the release of the very first images of the dwarf planet Pluto, testament to the wonders of the universe. With Martin and all those who form part of our heritage, we raise our eyes aloft in praise and gratitude, even as we keep our gaze firmly fixed on the whole earth community and respond to its cry for mercy and compassion.



THE 39 STEPS

By Andrew Seear, Director & Designer

With the success of *The Diary of Anne Frank* two years earlier, it seemed timely to try something totally different this year, and while emotive drama has always been a strong point in our production of straight plays, we had never attempted an all-stops-out comedy.

This year's production of *The 39 Steps* was an incredibly fast-paced romp through an early Hitchcock movie, one of the first action films of its time. A pastiche, affectionate and very funny transposition of a film to the stage complete with train chases, plane crashes, shadowy murders, beautiful spies, trilled heavies, dastardly villains with fingers missing and some good old-fashioned romance while also, all along, referencing some iconic moments in the history of cinema.

Much of the joy in the show was in seeing these moments recreated through the comic physicality and vocal talents of our student performers, along with some wildly inventive stagecraft.

The 39 Steps had never been done in Ballarat before and by its nature was a difficult show to produce. The sheer thought of staging a play that has been one of the longest running plays on Broadway, and do it within a secondary school setting, where over 50 characters were played by 13 students ranging from 13-18 years of age, in a script that tries to reproduce an entire action film on stage, could have been viewed as a prospect for insanity.

The show was, however, a great success and very characteristic of the work that we do here, and in the end was the perfect vehicle for a Damascus production. The challenge was to create a lot from very little and with minimal stagecraft to tell a big story. The script had the right ingredients such as puppetry, set design, lighting, and a musical underscore, elements that were perfectly suited to the strengths that we have developed in our productions over the years.

Our intention as we started the journey in rehearsals was to give the audience a good time watching a great film re-enacted live on stage without special effects or computer generation, and to use the gifts we have always had, namely the pizzazz of good acting, inventive staging, and a healthy dose of imagination.

Thanks to a wonderful cast, crew and production team the result was well and truly achieved!



MAGIC MOMENTS YOUTH LEADERSHIP AND BUSINESS SUMMIT

By Tayla Munro and Mitchell Clark (Year 11)



Mitch and I were very shocked when we received a phone call to say that we'd been selected out of all the Year 11 students at Damascus to be recipients of a scholarship to attend the Magic Moments Youth Leadership and Business Summit, in Sydney! We accepted the offer with a sense of not knowing what was to come, the same way we were feeling when we walked into the summit on the first day. However we quickly became part of our new family, and the supporting, exhilarating atmosphere at the summit became second nature. I know that's one thing we both miss deeply. With 6am starts and 12am finishes, they were long days, but full of learning. We took part in team building activities, and listened to different speakers talking on the topics of goals, leadership, investment, health and love. Mitch and I gained new skills, shed some tears and became inspired to do the best that we can! We discovered we have greatness within us, and it is an experience we will share forever and we thoroughly recommend to others.

We would like to thank the Buninyong and District Community Bank who sponsored us both to attend the summit and who made this whole experience possible.



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A MEDICAL STUDENT

By Ashley Firth, Year 12

On Friday the 10th of July, I, along with five other bright, prospective medical students from Damascus: Sarah Carlson (Yr 12), Lily Veale (Yr 11), Brooke Hutchinson (Yr 11), Sydney Whytcross (Yr 11) and Bonita Brugger (Yr 11), was given the opportunity to spend a day at the University of Notre Dame in Sydney, discovering what it would be like to study medicine.

All six of us were part of a scholarship program known as the *Rural and Aboriginal Student's Advocacy Program*, which gives rural and indigenous students from all over Australia the opportunity to explore the Darlinghurst campus of Notre Dame, as well as interacting with current medical students and participating in various activities representing what is taught in first year medicine.

As a group, we met other rural students from around Australia, attended lectures by professors from the University, and participated in three interactive workshop activities run by the second-year medical students at Notre Dame. These activities included; suturing a model wound, practicing CPR on a dummy, inserting a tube in the throat of a dummy, practicing hospital hygiene (correct hand cleaning) and being able to put a plaster cast on a friend. These activities were very fun and informative.

For me, this program was extremely beneficial as it allowed me to gain first-hand experience in my field of interest, and also to build relationships with a prestigious University. I'd like to thank Marion Thomas, the head of the *Rural and Aboriginal Student's Advocacy Program*, for providing this valuable opportunity, as well as Corrina Dichiera for supporting us Damascus students the whole way.



SUPPORTING OUR FRIENDS & NEIGHBOURS IN TIMOR-LESTE

Over the past ten years, Damascus has been building and nurturing a relationship with the people of Timor-Leste and in particular with the people of Ainaro, a small town located 115km from the capital Dili.

The district of Ainaro, to which the town of Ainaro belongs, shares a special relationship with the Ballarat community more broadly. In July 2005 the Ballarat City Council formally established the Ballarat Friends of Ainaro Community Committee (BFACC), providing funding and support to further develop the friendship with the Ainaro District which had commenced in a less formal way in 1999. It was through BFACC's Sister School Program that Damascus established a sister school relationship with Santa Maria College in Ainaro in 2005.

In the early years of this relationship, direct communication with Santa Maria was made difficult by the lack of infrastructure in Timor-Leste. Damascus sent letters and donations of educational items from time to time during this period, but it was not until 2010 that the first Damascus staff member had an opportunity to visit Ainaro.

Tony Haintz, Assistant Principal of Catholic School Culture at Damascus (then Religious Education Coordinator), travelled with St Joseph's College Echuca on their first immersion experience to Timor-Leste in 2010. This visit took Tony to the town of Aileu, not far from Ainaro, where Sr Maryanne Dwyer, a Sister of Mercy from Ballarat and former Damascus staff member, was living. Tony then travelled onto Ainaro to establish a personal connection with the community of Santa Maria College. Upon his return to Australia, Tony led the formation of the Damascus College Timor-Leste Immersion Program for Year 11 students.

In line with the College's Christian values and teachings, the immersion program sets out to provide an experience to students which will allow them to consider the principles of human dignity, community and the common good, rights and responsibilities, options for the poor and vulnerable, solidarity and the promotion of peace. The immersion experience is now an integral part of the College's social justice program.

The first group of Year 11 students to participate in the College's immersion program travelled to Ainaro in June 2011. Since then, immersion groups have continued this tradition each year, with the 2015 cohort of fourteen students and four staff members returning to Australia in early July.

Each year the immersion group is tasked with raising awareness of the struggles faced by the people of Timor-Leste, as well as raising funds which are donated to various organisations during their travels. The 2015 immersion group raised over \$20,000 in the nine months leading up to their departure, which was donated to schools, hospitals and other non-government organisations in need of funds.

The Timor-Leste immersion experience has a powerful impact on the students and staff who take part. Four students from the early immersion groups have returned to Ainaro as volunteers during their gap year, and several students from the 2015 immersion group are already making plans to follow in their footsteps.

The relationship that has developed over time between Damascus and the people of Timor-Leste has also allowed Damascus staff to explore the opportunity of volunteering abroad. Damascus teacher Casey Baxter with her husband Anthony spent three months in the small town of Remexio earlier this year, teaching English in the local school, Sao Jose (Saint Joseph's). So touched were they by this experience that they have commenced a crowd funding campaign to raise money for computers at the school, to assist students reach their goal of continuing on to university. For more information about this fundraiser, go to: www.chuffed.org/project/remexio

Planning is already underway for the sixth group of Damascus students to visit Ainaro in June 2016.



BRENDAN WINS SPIRIT OF ANZAC PRIZE

Staff member Brendan Bawden was one of only two teachers from around Victoria selected to attend the ANZAC day ceremony in Gallipoli this year as part of the Premier's Spirit of ANZAC Prize. After submitting a written application Brendan was then interviewed along with eleven other finalists, before being selected to accompany a group of twelve students on a sixteen day trip to Lemnos, Gallipoli and the Western Front in April 2015. Brendan shares with us below the experience of his journey:

The itinerary for our tour included the island of Lemnos, site of the Australian Hospitals 60km off the coast of Gallipoli. Two full days touring the sites, memorials and battlefields of Gallipoli. Then onto Belgium and France to see the battlefields of the Western Front, including, Flanders, The Menin Gate: the "Last Post Ceremony" that has taken place there every night at 6.00pm since 1928 except during WW2 when it was shifted to England. We laid a wreath and sang the Australian National Anthem. A very touching moment for other Australians in the crowd to see our group do this in our uniforms with the Akubra hats on. We finished the tour by visiting The Somme, Villers Bretonneux and the surrounding cemeteries and memorials.

Personally, it was a very emotional journey. To watch the students learning so much from their firsthand experiences and to question the decisions made to send our young men into battle for ground they had really no realistic chance of taking. Their insights and thoughts were very mature. I was able to take many photographs that I will be using in my teaching to enhance lessons and to give my students more than just a textbook experience of WW1. It will have a lasting impact on me, as you realise that each statistic you hear of deaths and wounded in battles that there is a lost son, brother, uncle, father and a grieving family back home in Australia that struggled with the impact the war had on them for decades after the fighting ceased.

Each student was asked to 'Adopt a Digger', to research their family life and war record. We then went to each of the cemeteries where their digger lay. The students then read a commemoration for their digger which was not easy for all of them to get through as they had become quite close to the person they had chosen. The Last Post would be played and one of our veterans would recite the ode. After the tour a number of students said they would adjust their original competition entry because of what they had experienced and seen over the two week trip.



Two students from Damascus were also selected as regional finalists for the Premier's Spirit of ANZAC Prize, Giarn Carroll and Brooke Hutchinson. Although our two Year 11 students were not among the winning group of twelve, all regional finalists travelled to Canberra in July this year to visit the War Memorial.



STUDENTS EXCELLING IN SPORT

ASHLEA BYLSMA – YEAR 12

Ashlea was crowned the Ballarat Young Sportsperson of the Year by the Ballarat Sportsmen's Club in 2015 for her outstanding achievements in Athletics. Ashlea has won gold medals in the Victorian All Schools Championships (Under 17), Victorian Country Championships (Under 18) and the Victorian Junior Track and Field Championships (Under 17) over the last 12 months. Ashlea also holds eight records in the Damascus College athletics competition in the 100m, 200m, 400m, 800m, high jump, long jump, triple jump and hurdles.



TATE GRIFFIN – YEAR 12

Tate travelled to Taiwan in May 2015 to represent Australia in the Under 21 Futsal team. He played a series of matches, including games against the Taiwan and Thailand international teams, beating Thailand 7-1. Tate also captained the Under 18 Victorian team who took out the national title this year.

RHYS CASLEY – YEAR 12

Rhys travelled to Brazil in November 2014 to represent Australia in the Under 16 boys Futsal team. The team played in a tournament known as the Torneio Internacional Frei Hilario, where they finished as undefeated champions. This is the first time an Australian team has won this event.



EMMA SHERRITT – YEAR 10

Emma competed at the Australian Gymnastics Championships in May at the Hisense Arena in Melbourne, representing Victoria. Emma gained a bronze medal on the beam and finished in the top ten overall. Emma also received a scholarship from the Ballarat Sports Foundation in 2015.



SAM RIZZO – YEAR 9

Sam headed off to Sydney in March this year to represent Victoria at the Junior National Athletics Championships. He placed first against the other wheelchair competitors in the 100m and second in the 200m. Overall Sam placed fourth in the 100m AWD (athletes with a disability) event, which included runners as well as wheelchair competitors.



A TASTE OF INDONESIAN LIFE

NINA KERR, YEAR 12

Over the summer holidays I spent six weeks on exchange in Indonesia. I travelled with eight other students from around Victoria who are studying VCE Indonesian and the exchange was organised by the Australian Indonesian Association Victoria. During the six weeks I lived with the Rasyid family in the centre of Bandung and learnt hands-on the way of life in West Java. Bandung is a bustling city surrounded by beautiful mountains and located about a three hour drive from the country's capital Jakarta, although the traffic can be so thick some weekends it can take up to 7hrs! I experienced Indonesian school, religion, transport and of course food.

I went to school there for a couple of weeks and then their school holidays began. My typical school morning would be up nice and early at 5am, a fresh cold mandi (Indonesian version of a shower) some breakfast always served with rice, and my grandma insisting I have seconds in case I go hungry, then off to school for a 6.45am start! The school day finished at 3pm so I quickly took up the cultural practice of having a nap in the afternoon. This extra time at school allows the students to learn on average fifteen subjects; six is enough for me. My school was the green school in Bandung so they promoted a lot of recycling, environmental awareness and even had their own hydroponics garden run by students. Everyone at the school was really welcoming and it was easy to make friends even though they spoke so fast most of the time I wasn't sure what was going on.

This friendly and kind nature was common among every Indonesian I met. Whether it was asking for some directions or buying food from a street stall, people were always up for a chat and wanting to help out. These opportunities were great for me to practice some of my basic conversation skills and got my confidence up in just having a go at speaking the language.

However one of my favorite things about the culture was the food. Nearly every single food I tried was extremely delicious and also extremely cheap. I learnt that each different area in Indonesia has a slightly different culture and therefore different variations on food. Rice is the staple in Indonesia and if your meal doesn't contain rice it's just considered a snack, this was okay though because they're masters of cooking rice. Also there were brilliant street stalls on nearly every corner which specialised in just one food so I never went hungry.

By the end of my trip I felt like I could really appreciate and understand the culture of this small part of the world and I felt especially privileged to have experienced family life over there. I'm certain this trip has helped me with my VCE Indonesian this year, as has going back to Indonesia in June on the school trip.

SOPHIE ANSTIS, YEAR 12

During the summer holidays I was lucky enough to travel to Bali, Indonesia. This was not for a wild party holiday but rather to further learn about Indonesian language, customs, rituals, family life and of course food. I stayed with a wonderful host family for four days in a small village in Denpasar, Bali's capital. My host family was very generous; taking me to meet other family members, allowing me to see inside their sacred family temples, feeding me traditional Indonesian and Balinese food and taking me to see the typical tourist sights of Bali. My favourite food was ayam sate, or satay chicken. It had all the Indonesian spices, and easily topped any KFC wings you will ever have. I was also taken to the school where my host mother teaches. At their school they must learn and excel in seventeen different subjects, while here we are only learning six!

My host family encouraged me to speak Indonesian more and more with them and we could communicate fairly well in a combination of Indonesian and English. I enjoyed watching television with them in their outdoor living room, watching their revered President Joko Widodo make passionate speeches about abolishing corruption in the Indonesian police force. The Australian drug smugglers Myuran Sukumaran and Andrew Chan were confirmed with their imminent death sentence, too, which made news there. However, this was the extent of the violence I was exposed to in Indonesia. On the roads, however erratic the driving styles were, there was no road rage and I saw no motor accidents. The Balinese were peaceful and humble people, with the majority of them affiliating with the Hindu religion. I got a real taste of the Indonesian lifestyle.

My favourite experience from my stay of eleven days was seeing a traditional clap-dance at a temple located on the edge of a cliff in Uluwatu. The dancers were captivating with their minute movements of the eyes, toes, and fingers. The stories enacted through their dance were entertaining and the costumes were absolutely gorgeous in the traditional Balinese colours of red and gold with long flowing sarongs. Another key event was only paying 70c for a taxi ride when I was in Kuta, because the taxi driver was just thrilled to the back teeth that I spoke Bahasa Indonesia. People would tend to get a little overexcited though and would start speaking very, very quickly, which resulted in me saying "pelan-pelan!" or in English; "slower!"

Regardless, I feel as though my Indonesian skills have improved massively. Not only my speaking abilities, but my listening and reading as well. Hopefully this will assist me in my year twelve studies of Indonesian.

Thank you Bu Silvy Wantania, Ben Wantania, Jane McKendrick and past student Sarah Collinson for being wonderful and obliging travel companions.



ALUMNI ART PROJECT

As a way of engaging with our alumni and celebrating their many artistic talents, the College has commenced a new tradition of commissioning a past student or staff member to explore the theme 'To live by the light of Christ' through their chosen medium. Kim Anderson (1997) kindly agreed to be our inaugural artist and she was commissioned to produce a piece in late 2014. Her beautiful work now hangs in the visitor reception area of the College where it will remain until the end of the year. At the commencement of 2016, we will display our second piece of commissioned work for the duration of the year. We warmly invite the Damascus community to drop into the school to view the artwork when they're next in the area.

ARTIST STATEMENT

TO LIVE BY THE LIGHT OF CHRIST (2015)
Ink and charcoal on paper
Artist - Kim Anderson (Graduated 1997)

'To live by the light of Christ'... what exactly does that mean? After ruminating on this for a long time, I decided to strip it back to its barest elements - to take a humanistic point of view, rather than an overtly religious one.

The image is deliberately kept very simple, but I hope that it invites contemplation and in time reveals a greater complexity of meaning. This could be a gesture of openness, of welcome and acceptance, or of letting go. Of joy, or perhaps despair. An embrace, or a sacrifice. Abandonment, or freedom. A lone cry of anguish to the heavens, or a moment of silent prayer. Each person will bring their own interpretation to it, and this may change each time they revisit it.

Regardless of race or religion, whether you believe in Christ or not, there is a shared human desire amongst most of us to strive to be a better person. To treat others as we would have them treat us. To be fair, just and moral, to love and be loved, and to improve ourselves and the lives of those around us. To be the best people we can be in this world in whatever it is that we do - that is what 'living by the light of Christ' means to me.

By Kim Anderson, 2015



SIAN SHOWS THE WORLD SHE'S A REAL CLASS ACT

By Sian Daykin (2014)

For many students the gratification for their tireless hours of often grueling study during their final year at high school is a number on a screen and a congratulatory letter from VCAA. Whether you've aimed for biomedicine or a double law degree, your 'fate' lies in a number which often seems just out of reach. However, for a performing arts student, in my case a VCE drama student, my result and gratification lay in seven minutes in front of three complete strangers.

For the best part of Term 3, Year 12 drama students across Victoria are starting a painful journey in creating a solo performance examination piece. With strict guidelines and specific terminology that needs to be included, while all the time transforming place and character with only your body, costume and a hand held prop, the VCE drama solo examination is intimidating even to the most experienced.

After weeks of sleepless nights researching ancient methods of theatre, countless breakdowns and times when I truly believed that I didn't have what it took to feel confident in myself to complete this examination, the big day was just around the corner. I remember feeling very calm, almost too calm while preparing myself with fellow students in the dressing room which had become a second home for me. As I lathered myself with makeup and pulled my hair into an impossibly tight bun to play the character of 'Eboshi' from the film 'Princess Mononoke', I stepped onto the auditorium stage and felt an overwhelming wave of pride. In front of me I saw not uniformed students, tables, chairs and drink bottles on the floor but individuals costumed from head to toe in aprons and capes and even bicycle lycra. When I looked at their smiling faces, I knew that they felt this same pride too.

Unlike other exams where you choose an answer and regurgitate information, we were about to lay out our minds, voices and bodies in a seven minute performance for the speculation of three VCAA examiners. Being graded on something that you have created from your own imagination showcased through your physical being gives such a wonderful feeling of accomplishment. Whether we received a D or an A+ we knew that on that day we were proud to perform not from our textbooks but from our hearts.

This humble examination turned into a whirlwind of experience for me. After receiving a perfect score in each of the 10 criterion gaining myself a highly coveted A+, I was asked to audition my piece for Top Class Drama as part of the VCE Season of Excellence. The VCE Season of Excellence comprises a number of concerts and galleries celebrating the work of the most outstanding VCE students from around the State for subjects such as dance, drama, art, media, music, design technology and so forth. After performing among twenty-seven other drama students across concerts held at the Playhouse Theatre within the Arts Centre of Melbourne, I received an email invitation asking me to perform at the renowned Top Acts concert.

Top Acts is a compilation of the 'best-of-the-best' from the series of Top Class concerts including performances and presentations from drama, theatre studies, music performance (solo and group), music composition (solo and group), dance and media students. My involvement in Top Acts meant that I was now seen as one of the top three VCE drama solos in the state, what an accomplishment! After performing my own work in front of over one thousand people on the Recital Centre stage I could not have been more proud of that little Year 12 student ready to give up and pack it all in. Although I am so proud of my grade, the gratification for all my hard work and all the struggles I had to overcome to be doing what I am today is knowing that I had the courage to put my own thoughts and ideas in front of three strangers in a tiny examination space, something that I believe takes the utmost amount of self-esteem and bravery.

I am now juggling a part-time acting course through the Victorian College of the Arts and part-time work assisting at my dance school. I have been doing regional tours with Drama Victoria, assisting VCE drama assessors in educational workshops with current VCE drama students where I get to present my 2014 drama solo and be bombarded in a question and answer session on tips and tricks for how to create a successful solo. I would like to wish the 2015 Year 12 drama students the utmost amount of success for their own journey in this daunting task and to pass on my many thanks to my own drama teacher Andrew Seary. I know I would not be where I am today without his assistance and guidance every step of the way.



THE OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME AT OXFORD

By Samantha Brown (2006)

In September 2014 I moved to the UK to undertake a Masters in Archaeological Science at the University of Oxford. To be honest this was not something I had ever expected to do. After finishing my Bachelors degree at the University of Melbourne I applied to Oxford on the advice of my tutors. The application went in and I happily waited for my rejection letter. Finding out I was accepted was probably one of the most exciting moments of my life. What followed was months of preparation, fundraising and periodic panics about what I had gotten myself into.

Six months later I arrived in Oxford. There is no official campus for the University, rather its buildings are located all over the town. Walking from my new home to the supermarket meant passing museums, university colleges, lecture halls and the homes of people local to Oxfordshire. The first few days were spent exploring, buying formal robes (which you wear surprisingly often at Oxford) and figuring out where my department was.

The University of Oxford is just as amazing as you'd expect. The buildings are beautiful, the professors are world class and there are so many amazing opportunities for students studying here. The Masters is a crash course in everything science related used by archaeologists. Over three terms I took classes in Material Science, Bioarchaeology and Chronology. We learnt everything from radiocarbon dating, to how to measure the nitrogen content in bone collagen, to the composition of metals through time. The variety of work being conducted at the University was staggering and all available to us if we wished to pursue anything further.

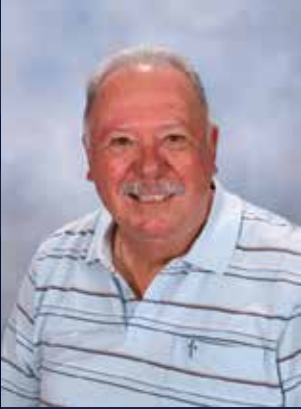
The most exciting aspect of this whole experience has been working on my dissertation. I have been lucky enough to join PalaeoChron, a research team here in Oxford working on the transition between the Middle and Upper Palaeolithic. Specifically, I am studying a site in Russia known as Denisova Cave and am investigating ways of identify the bones of ancient humans and their ancestors amongst the thousands of unidentifiable bones which are located at the site every year. The site is hundreds of thousands of years old and still has so much to tell us about the ancient past, and I am incredibly privileged to be part of this work. The results of my project are still being finalised but I am incredibly excited about them.

There are still a few months before I return to Australia. It's both an exciting thing to be coming home so soon and a little sad at the same time. I have enjoyed my time here and am incredibly proud of the work I have done. As the saying goes, no one achieves anything alone, and this is particularly true in my case. I am incredibly grateful to the entire community of Damascus College and the support they have showed me. I would especially like to thank the Sisters of Mercy, Maureen Myers and Yvette Nesire-McNeil for all of their help, guidance and support.

STAFF RETIREMENTS

IN 2014

LOUI BRESSAN



Loui commenced at St Paul's College in 1976 and transitioned to employment at Damascus College in 1995. He tells the story that he began here on a six week replacement position that has continued for 38 years!

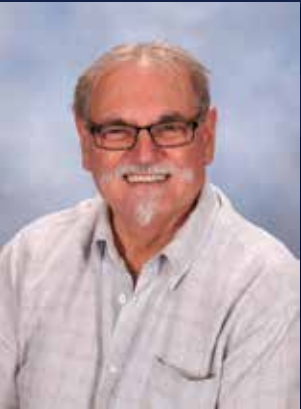
Loui has been a wonderful servant of Damascus College and a great supporter of both staff and students within the Visual Arts and Technology learning areas. He has held a number of leadership positions in timetabling and school organisation, and seen enormous changes in technology throughout his career.

Loui has been a classroom teacher, Year 9 Coordinator, Arts Coordinator, SRC Coordinator, Sports Master, Timetabler and Daily Organiser and has most importantly held the prime responsibility for staff footy tipping.

Loui has been a dedicated staff member, fair to students and staff alike. His common sense approach to his work and his ability to converse with all sectors of the community equally were the hallmarks of his dealings within the daily busyness of life at school. Loui gave of his time most generously, working over summer holidays to ensure the yearly timetable was ready for the commencement of each year.

Loui's sense of humour was greatly appreciated by his colleagues. He shared his skills and knowledge generously. He hopes to continue his artistic pursuits in retirement and is looking forward to continuing his extended relationship with the College in his artistic and technical capacity over the coming years.

JOHN CAIRNES



Last year we also farewelled John Cairnes who has had a long and dedicated career with our College. He began at St Paul's College in 1970. That was way back when John Gorton was Prime Minister of Australia and Pope Paul VI visited Australia! John did have a 12 month metropolitan placement and happily returned to St Paul's in 1990.

John has taught generations of students Maths and Religious Education and a number of other trade subjects over a 44 year period. Amongst John's many contributions he has been a House Leader, Sports Coach and OH&S advocate. He supported college liturgies and has kept up with his relationship and support of Brother Frank Hennessey in East Timor.

John's love of Basketball was a large part of his life and work. He nurtured many of our students to maximise their skills and opportunities for competition at the highest level. John coached and managed Damascus College teams at national competitions.

John has been well respected by students and staff, an inclusive staff member in the amalgamation process and always ready to ensure that OH&S issues were dealt with expediently. John served on consultative and union committees as we transitioned from campus to campus. John was a most supportive and encouraging House Leader offering practical and pastoral support in his straightforward and common sense style. His dry wit and clear perceptions added to the discussions around the morning tea table. We will miss his honest approach to the daily routines of school life.

Both John and Loui have been wonderful servants of our community and on behalf of the Damascus College we congratulate them on their service, thank them for their contribution and wish that they may continue "To live by the light of Christ" as they have for the past decades, in their retirement.

MARRIAGES

Diamond Wedding Anniversary. Carmel and Geoffrey Hayes celebrated 60 years of wedding bliss on November 27, 2014.

Geoffrey was the first dux of St Paul's College in 1948 and the first past pupil to be married in 1954. Carmel (nee Murphy) attended Sacred Heart College from 1947-1949.

Christopher Geljon (1999) married Kate Mackie on November 15, 2014 at Bellinzona, Hepburn Springs. Steve Martin (1999) was also part of the wedding party.

Rebecca Howlett (2006), whose name is now spelt in the traditional Rebekah married Michael Hyde in September of last year. They are living in Beaufort.

Tristan Wilson (2004) and Amy Crawley (2006) were engaged in October 2014.

Holly Barwick (2011) married **Anthony Wines (2009)** at York St Church of Christ on February 7, 2015. They were attended by Nathan Wines (2005), Justin Gray (2009) and Laura Barwick (2012).

BIRTHS

Kate Harris (1995) and her partner Hop Nguyen welcomed their first child Georgette Jean Harris Nguyen on June 30, 2014.

Kelly Hawkrige nee McMahon (1995) and her husband Michael welcomed Billy Flynn Hawkrige on June 25, 2015, a little brother for Harrison and Ava.

Julia Moloney nee Taffe (1995) and her husband Michael welcomed Henry Michelangelo Moloney on July 15, 2015, a little brother for Peggy and Eleanor.

Monique Rose nee Kelp (1996) and Stuart Rose welcomed their daughter Caitlin Rose in July 2014, a little sister for Aidan.

Jacqueline Luscombe nee Vanderkley (2001) and her husband Grant welcomed Flynn Archie Luscombe on August 3, 2015, a little brother for Oliver.

Dominic McNeil (2003) and his wife Elizabeth welcomed their first child Eva Grace on June 29, 2015.

Miriam Neate (2005) and her husband Michael welcomed with love their son Yohann Henry Reger born on March 2, 2015 at the Flinders Medical Centre, Adelaide. Yohann is the first grandchild for Ngaire and David Neate (staff member).

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Jan Mullaly nee Favaloro (1965) Jan attended SHC which was the only campus 50 years ago. Her peers processed to Mt Clear and said the Rosary whilst dropping miraculous medals and praying for funds to pay for the new school. Jan has kindly donated to our archives uniform items from her time at the college.

Margaret Benington nee Moloney (1970) is now retired after a long career in banking and management accounting. Margaret lives with her husband Gary in Dunsborough WA and has one daughter who was educated at a Mercy school, Santa Maria College in Attadale, Perth and who now works as a Pharmacist in the mining community of Newman WA. Since retiring Margaret spends much of her time travelling throughout Australia.

We welcome back to Ballarat **Eliza Molloy (1995)** who has returned from her work in the Philippines. She is now ready to take a new challenge to raise funds for Anglicare's foster programs.

Anna Martin (2001) is a Melbourne lawyer and former Vice-President of Reprieve Australia. She is currently writing her Master's thesis on female perpetrators of human trafficking. Anna is living in Italy studying for a Masters of International Criminal Law at the United Nations and Turin University. This is indeed an exciting opportunity!

Grant Shillito (2002) works with Ballarat Ferndale Confectionery as the company's Business Manager, part of his work includes checking their products for quality control. March Edition of the Ballarat Enterprise.

Toby Boyle (2002) now works as AFL Goldfields Operations Manager. Riddell District FNL.

Dominic McNeil (2003) was conferred with a Doctor of Philosophy from Federation University at the May Graduations. Dominic lectures in Skill Acquisition and Sports Psychology at the University of New England in Armidale. His thesis examined imagery performance and training for reactive tasks. Dominic and his wife Elizabeth have welcomed the birth of their first child Eva Grace in June 2015.

Ronny Kareni (2004) has recently graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Humanities and Social Sciences) from Federation University. Ronny came to Ballarat in 2003 as part of a program for six West Papuan students. The vision was for the young students to study in Ballarat to learn about democracy and Western values, so they could one day take the skills and knowledge back to West Papua. The Sisters of Mercy provided assistance during their time in Ballarat. Ronny now lives in Melbourne with his wife Sixta and their four month old daughter Zarah Jane. He is now looking to do his Master's degree and return to West Papua, when the country is ready for independence.

Aleece MacPhail (2005) is in her final year as a medical student and researcher in public health. She has completed a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science and is completing her Masters in Public Health.

Ella Dumaresq (2006) is setting up a dance and movement business, Movement Meds, in the CBD of Melbourne.

Catherine Koopmans (2008) completed her Bachelor of Education (Primary) at ACU in Ballarat in 2014. Catherine enjoyed many experiences at ACU including going to World Youth Day in Madrid in 2011. Catherine was also employed by the University as a Student Ambassador and Academic Skills Tutor. Since graduating Catherine has moved up to Sydney and is now employed fulltime as the Student Recruitment Officer at the ACU Sydney Campus promoting the University and engaging with prospective students. Catherine's brother **Jans Koopmans (2004)** is now a secondary teacher in Mildura teaching Psychology & English.

Chelsea Ryan (2008) is taking a new opportunity overseas to be a tour manager in Europe with the company Contiki.

Jordan Roughead (2008) has been promoted to vice captain this year at the Western Bulldogs Football Club. Jordan visited Ballarat with the club when it hosted Melbourne at Ballarat's Eureka Stadium in March. Jordan has joined the Ballarat Courier's football writing team with a fortnightly column.

Katelyn Bugden (2011) was a 2015 finalist for Ballarat's most prestigious individual sports award for women. Katelyn is the Australian 18-29 black belt taekwondo champion and is participating in Australian Open and national team selection for world championships in Mexico.

Shelby Sherritt (2013) is currently studying international relations at Latrobe University, as well as volunteering for the United Nations Association of Australia.

Congratulations to **Tess Flood (2013)** who was recognised with an Ambulance Victoria commendation for applying CPR and then a defibrillator to save a customer at her workplace. Her quick and calm actions helped to get his heart back into a normal rhythm.

Mitch Quiddington (2013) participated in the Formula Vee Association of Victoria state series.

Demi Tangey (2014) was awarded a \$2000 scholarship from Federation University at the Mt Helen campus. Demi is studying exercise science this year and this scholarship is a fine achievement.

The production of *Miss Saigon* at Her Majesty's Theatre from May 7 – 17 featured many Damascus College community members; Brendan Bawden (current teacher) was onstage with past students Lucas Cooper (2013), Zac Kazepis (2014), and Bradley Martin (2014). Petea Stark (2014) was working backstage on the set crew. Daniel Gay and Matthew Gay (2015) were working in props with their Mum Liz and Brad's mum Leanne Martin. Nicole Burness (current teacher) was working on the set crew as was Sallie Burke-Muller (current teacher). Vicki Rowe (current teacher) was Assistant to the Director and the Musical Director. Vicki's daughter Adeline was in the dance chorus.

Congratulations to our past student visual artists; **Kim Anderson (1997)**, **Ash Lieb (2000)**, **Ronnie McKeegan (1995)** and **Peter Thomas (1992)** who featured in "*Alumination*" at the Ballarat Art Gallery. This exhibition celebrated the works of graduates of the

University of Ballarat, now Federation University Australia, who have continued with their artistic practices.

For those of you who knew **Michael Kennedy** (teacher from SHC), you might be interested to know that a new CD of his songs has been released and is available through the following website: www.michaelkennedy.com.au

Michael Cooper, past staff member at Damascus College has been assistant Daily Organiser/Timetabler at his current school as well as being Director of Performing Arts. He also takes up the role of Acting Deputy Principal during the last terms of this year.

FEDERATION UNIVERSITY 2015 GRADUATIONS

Dominic McNeil (2003) Doctor of Philosophy: Examining imagery performance and training for reactive tasks

Ronny Kareni (2004) Bachelor of Arts (Humanities and Social Sciences)

Stephanie Burzacott (2010) Bachelor of Arts (International Studies)

Christopher Harry (2009) Bachelor of Education (Physical Education)

Sam Hardefeldt (2011) Bachelor of Exercise and Sport Science

Stevi Thomas (2011) Bachelor of Visual Arts (Graphic Design/Multimedia)

Chantelle Ridge-Burns (2010) Bachelor of Nursing

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY 2015 GRADUATIONS

Esse Cahir (2008) Bachelor of Education (Primary)

Catherine Koopmans (2008) Bachelor of Education (Primary)

Olivia Kent (2010) Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood and Primary)

Jaime Skrobalak (2010) Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood and Primary)

Larissa Cuttler (2010) Bachelor of Education (Primary)

Jordyn Dargaville (2010) Bachelor of Education (Primary)

IN MEMORY



LEANNE MILLS

8 DECEMBER 1952 – 2 MARCH 2015

Friends, family and colleagues gathered at St Peters and St Paul's Church in Geelong on Tuesday 10th March to celebrate the life and work of former Damascus College teacher Leanne Mills.

When Leanne arrived at Damascus College she brought a passion for education and a deep passion for the witness of her Catholic faith.

Leanne was a friendly, hardworking colleague who gave tremendous support and encouragement to students and staff alike. She especially provided great support and was a mentor to new teachers as they settled into our community. Leanne generously shared her experience, knowledge and resources with colleagues and was instrumental in developing both policy and course outlines over many years at the college. Her diligent preparation and planning ensured her classroom teaching was always relevant and challenging for her students. Even after retirement Leanne continued to work with our young people and the guidance Leanne gave to our Sudanese students was priceless.

Leanne's work on curriculum development in Religious Education was creative and expansive in vision - a gift to the students she encountered. She wrote an innovative cross curriculum unit for Science and Religious Education, bringing together the best of these two disciplines.

Leanne was an inspiration in her role as the Liturgy Coordinator, preparing many extraordinary Masses in the then new John Shannon Centre. Leanne also offered special opportunities for staff members to have prayer and evening Mass in the Chapel at Victoria Street.

Leanne's energy was legendary and her many gifts were shared generously in her time at Damascus College as well as in the Ballarat Catholic community.

Damascus College offers our deepest sympathy to Rebekah (2000), Matthew (2005) and their families and condolences to all whose lives have been affected by an extraordinary woman of faith.



SUSAN JENNIFER NOLEN

9 OCTOBER 1956 - 6 JANUARY 2015

Susan Jennifer Nolen (Susie) was a student at Sacred Heart College in 1972 for a short time before she returned to Manangatang to complete Year 10. She was then a student at St Martin's in the Pines in 1973 and 1974. The graduating year of 1974 achieved excellent results and with a number of her fellow students Susie embarked on a career in law.

Susie's prestigious career included many achievements. She was the first female Assistant Victorian Government Solicitor, was recognised as the Law Institute Victoria Government Lawyer of 2007 and was a renowned role model for women in law.

Her daughter Elsher, son Riley, former husband Leigh (Basil) and partner Danny, mourn her death as do her siblings Michael, Helen, Patrick and Ronald.

We give thanks for a life of generous service to family and community.

May she rest in the peace of our God of Mercy and Enduring Love.

The following Obituary is re-printed with permission from the Law Institute Journal of Victoria.

Sue Nolen studied law at Monash University and her first job was with Consumer Affairs Victoria.

She later worked at the Australian Government Solicitor's (AGS) office in the 1980s and 1990s, where she was a principal solicitor in the property and commercial branch. A natural with clients, she built up a considerable practice advising on large scale Commonwealth construction and leasing projects. Sue was widely recognised within the Commonwealth government as an expert in this area and during her time at AGS was engaged to provide advice on several high profile projects outside Victoria.

Sue went on to work at the Department of Human Services in late 1990s through to the early 2000s as manager of the commercial

and property branch. Here she advised and worked on a number of significant commercial and property matters, including the redevelopment of the Alfred Hospital and establishment of its helipad.

Sue built a considerable practice advising government. At the VGSO, Sue's practice expanded beyond property-related transactions, major Victorian projects, to encompass a wider range of procurement projects and public sector governance. Sue is remembered for providing frank, legally sound advice to government departments and agencies on a host of complex commercial, property and governance issues.

Significant projects Sue led and advised on during her tenure at VGSO included the sale of the Palais and the Palace in St Kilda, the St Kilda Triangle and Mt Hotham projects. Sue was also key in advising the state on contract negotiations with Telstra for the provision of the National Early Warning System following the Black Saturday bushfires, where Victoria entered the contract on behalf of all other jurisdictions.

Sue loved being a government lawyer and had a prodigious capacity for work. She never shirked a challenge and enjoyed tackling new and complex issues.

She combined attention to detail with commercial nous. Her advice to clients was always firm, concise and practical.

Sue was strongly committed to integrity and sound governance in the public sector. Her approach to her role as a government lawyer was informed by the deep understanding of government she had developed over many years of experience. Her ability to see the broader implications of and to highlight the "whole of government" perspective on any particular issue was invaluable to her clients and colleagues and made her the ideal lawyer to navigate the complexities of multi-stakeholder projects. She was a trusted adviser to many senior government clients. In recognition of her expertise and commitment, she received the LIV's government lawyer of the year award in 2007.

Sue's dedication, commitment and contribution to government law and thus the Victorian community was outstanding. She was highly regarded and respected not only by colleagues but also clients. Sue was a true role model for not only government lawyers but women in law. Her success and leadership as a female senior lawyer was truly inspirational. Sue was a role model for women lawyers and women in government.

As colleagues, we all admired Sue's courage and dignity in dealing with the challenges life threw at her. She just got on with things without drama or fuss and never wasted even a moment on complaint or self-pity. She was characteristically straightforward and candid about her illness, and her openness helped others to talk to her about it. We are grateful for her generosity in sharing her experiences, even when this must have been difficult at times.

Written by Margaret Marotti and Carolyn Doyle, managing principal solicitors of the Commercial, Property and Technology branch of the Victorian Government Solicitors Office.

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20 YEAR ANNIVERSARY DINNER PHOTOGRAPHS

PAGE 18 AND 19 FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

Demcee Davies, Marie-Angeline Economou
Brendan Bawden, Andrew Robertson, Gavan Walsh, Martin Ryan
Tony Haintz, Anna Haintz, Elle-Louise Smith, Demcee Davies
Matthew Byrne, Annette Schneider rsm
Marie Davey rsm, Joe Cahir
Carmel Russell, Keran Mewett, Brian Blood, Denise Blood
Brent Trotter
Jan Anderson, John Anderson
Erin Marshall, Judy Vanderkley, Aleceia Smith
Jordan Hill, Erin O'Beirne, Ruby Penhall, Ellie Carroll,
Willow Dreger, Shiona Long, Keira Foy
John Bath, Sarah Crane, Dan Jans, Ashlee Milne
Julie Byrne, Bishop Peter Connors, Keran Mewett
Chris Wyatt, Cheryl Wyatt, Jess Palmer, Grant Wyatt
Fr Paul Mercovich, Frank Stuart, Lorraine Stuart, Fr Adrian McInerney
Celia Economou, Sue Gibson, Marg Lavery, Catriona Sexton

PAGE 20 AND 21 FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

Matthew Byrne
Adrian Newman (bagpipes)
Angela Finkel, Cathy Prunty, Jan Bibby
Donnie Davidson
Cindy Armstrong, Louise Buckle-Smith
Brendan Bawden, Justin McInerney, Brett Simpson
Bridget Davies
Paul O'Beirne, Lucy O'Beirne, Katrina Scopel, John Scopel
Damian Foster, Cathy Milner
Grant Wyatt, Andrew Roberston
John Scopel, Rita Hayes rsm
Chris Leonard, Bernie Shanahan
Dionne Deverall, Regina Paganini, Monique Walsh
Ann Bawden, Angela Finkel, Tracey Williams, Maree Lawlor
Maureen McGreehan, Trish Carrucan
Tracey Williams, Denise Blood, Brian Blood, Kath Milne
Danielle Valentine, Brent Trotter
Pam Nam, Helen Turley, Roland Nam, David Turley
Belinda Powers, Lisa Dawson, Suzie Wilkins, Natalie Hunt,
Cherrie Neale
Noel Coxall, Pam Coxall, Nola Sexton, Eugene Sexton, Joan Powell,
Con Powell
Mary Fitz-Gerald, Andrew Seeary
Joan Jamieson, Frank Stuart, John Jamieson
Charles Smith
Dale Darby, Josh Darby
Seona Murnane, Brett Simpson, Katie Whitecross, Justin
McInerney
Brendan Bawden, Mary Fitz-Gerald, Jo O'Mara, Helen Goode,
Pam Nam
Mary Fitz-Gerald, Jo O'Mara, Yvette Nesire-McNeil, Helen Goode



Celebrating 20 Years



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