



JUNE 2014

The Road

Recognition given to past contributors

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

By God's mercy we have been given this work to do! Is the Damascus College theme for 2014. My work as College Principal is one of great privilege and pride. On Friday 14th February I was enormously proud to stand before the Damascus College community as we opened our school year, blessed our student leaders and historically blessed and named new and refurbished buildings across the College. We did this in the context of holy Eucharist presided over by Bishop Paul Bird. The Mass and blessings enabled all members of the Damascus community to be part of this historical moment and celebrated the past contribution of individuals through the naming of buildings in their honour.

Sister Valda Ward and Sister Genevieve McDonald were both Sisters of Mercy who gave their lives to education in Ballarat

as followers of Jesus in the footsteps of Catherine McAuley. Sister Valda Ward was recognised through the naming of the Performing Arts Auditorium in her honour and we were fortunate to have her brother, Bill present and niece Georgina. The science wing has been named after Sister Genevieve McDonald and the College was also able to welcome a significant number of members of the extended McDonald clan. As a College community we believe that Valda's love of performing arts is appropriately recognised in our auditorium and that Genevieve's love of sciences is appropriately acknowledged in the naming of our science wing.

Damascus College already recognises Catherine McAuley in a variety of ways, particularly through the naming of one of our houses. Catherine was a lady who lived in Ireland in the early 1800s and spent her life in the service of God and

others. She founded the Sisters of Mercy in the 1830s. The College Board felt that Catherine's example of Christian living was so significant that it warranted further recognition in the naming of the Year 7 and 8 classroom wing, which was the original classroom building for St Martin's in the Pines.

Bishop Peter Connors, Bishop emeritus has been a wonderful supporter of this College. Under Bishop Peter's leadership the money that the parishes of Ballarat worked so hard to gain to purchase the Victoria Street site was invested in the facilities of this school as a place of learning for Years 9 and 10. That investment also enabled the construction and furnishing of the Our Lady of Mercy Chapel. This chapel is a place where the Mercy and diocesan contribution meet and provide a focal point for the liturgy and contemplation of students and school community members. It is a great

Buildings named and blessed

symbol of the partnership between the priests and sisters who have given their lives work to God's ministry. Within the chapel is an icon which is a painting in a particular style by artist Mrs Leopoldine Mimovich of Our Lady of Mercy. This painting was gifted to the College by then Governors; Sister Veronica Lawson and Father Adrian McNerney and is another symbol of the collaboration between the Sisters of Mercy and the priests of the diocese to support the learning of the young people of the College.

It was great to welcome Bishop Peter to the opening and to be able to acknowledge him for allowing Damascus College to use his name to help keep the diocesan story alive within our community.



Photo: Bishop Peter Connors opens and blesses the Bishop Connors Wing.

Photo: Our Lady of Mercy Chapel - entrance.

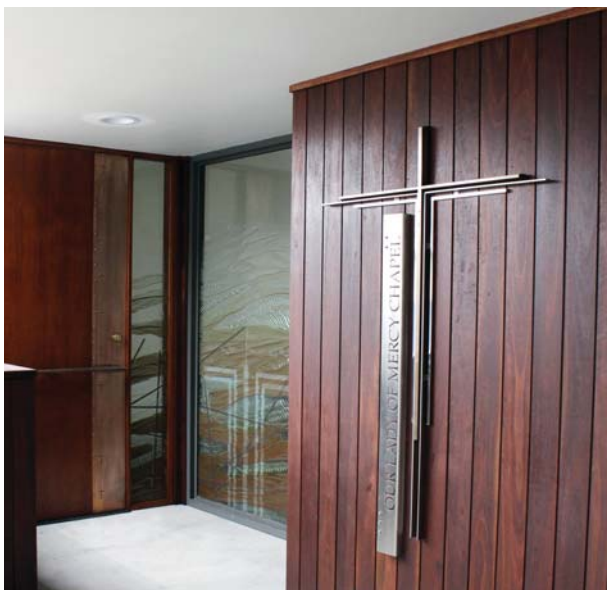


Photo: Bishop Paul Bird opens and blesses the Our Lady of Mercy Chapel.

Many people have contributed to the work that has led to our amazing school facility over a number of years. Over the past seven years more than \$15 million has been contributed to capital development on the site. College governors; Fr Adrian McNerney has led this College jointly with Sister Veronica Lawson and now Sister Berenice Kerr over this important time of facility development and College rejuvenation with the support of respective Damascus College Boards to bring about the College vision. Much of the real work on the ground to make our school such an aesthetically and educationally contemporary space has been led by the College Business Manager, Mr Paul Jans. His attention to detail and commitment to the College are evident right throughout our school community. Sister Marie Davey has been an ever present font of wisdom, common sense and commitment- as well as a living example of the work of Catherine McAuley. I acknowledge both Paul and Marie's work in liaising with significant contributors to this project- architects; Sandy Law and Greg Carden, our reliable and skilled builders SJ Weir; liturgical designer, Anthony Russo and our own committed grounds and maintenance staff; Peter Gay, Rob Jans, Paul Burns and Chris Kennedy.

I must acknowledge the Damascus College staff who for the last five years have professionally engaged in their work under often noisy and uncomfortable conditions. The staff right across this community have banded together to make this school the best it possibly can be and their commitment to school improvement has been enormous.

I have talked a lot about work and who all this work is to benefit - it is the students of Damascus College, both present and future who will gain from these labours. Through God's mercy we have all been given privileged work to do. For Damascus students, their work is learning and involving themselves in the full life of the College and that is a gift given through God's loving mercy. My hope is that as our students go about their work and walk through the Bishop Connors wing or perform in the Valda Ward Auditorium or conduct experiments in the Genevieve McDonald Science rooms, or that any community member contemplates or prays in Our Lady of Mercy Chapel. I encourage you to think of and remember those who've worked so hard for the opportunities supported both today and into the future by Damascus College.

Matthew Byrne, Principal

New student leadership structure

STUDENTS SHARE THE LEADERSHIP ROLE

Commencing in 2014, Damascus introduced a new student leadership structure for its Year 12 students. Previously, each of the four Houses had a House Captain, Sports Captain, Arts Captain and Liturgy Leader. This year, each House appointed four student leaders in Year 12, all of whom are known as House Captains. The House Captains share the responsibility for leadership of the House and are voted in by their peers at the end of Year 11. There are also two School Captains, both Year 12 students, as in previous years. In the other year levels there is one SRC representative from each House in each year level.

We are pleased to introduce the 2014 School Captains, Jack Cuttler and Demcee Davies as well as the sixteen House Captains. McAuley - Jessica Gladman, Daniel Mrockowski, Lauren Plover and Demi Tangey. O'Collins - Tom Corden, Sian Daykin, Michael Donaldson and Ashleigh Kent. Rice - Katie Barnett, Ryley Nagel, Ebony O'Brien and Maggie Toohey. Xavier - Jason Blood, Alannah Clifford, Rory Hudson and Madison O'Brien.



Photo: Sr Veronica Lawson along with relatives of Genevieve McDonald and Damascus students officially open the Genevieve McDonald Science Wing.



Photo: Sr Veronica Lawson along with Sr Valda Ward's brother and niece, Bill and Georgina Ward, officially open the Valda Ward Auditorium.

Rowers create history

Damascus students rowed their way into history this year, becoming the first ever victors for Damascus College in the Head of the Lake regatta. Two crews took out line honours in their division: Year 9 Girls Division 3 and Open Girls Division 4. The remaining four crews rowing for Damascus in this year's event also did extremely well, with three second places and one fourth place.

After a 15 year hiatus, the College's reintroduction to rowing came about in 2013 through the Wendouree Ballarat Rowing Club's Adopt-a-School Program. Enthusiasm for the sport amongst students, staff and parents soon grew to the point that the College commenced its own rowing program later in the year, appointing Peter Moon as Head of Rowing in October 2013.

Several crews competed in regattas around the state throughout the 2013/14 rowing season with pleasing results. The Year 9 girl's crew won their section of the coxed four division at the Dimboola Regatta in November last year, beating Melbourne Rowing Club. Damascus also had wins at the Hamilton regatta in December and a BAS regatta earlier in the season. But perhaps the most significant win was the Girls Year 9 Division 4 victory at the Head of School Girls regatta in Geelong in March, the most prestigious girl's regatta in Victoria.

Rowing has been a wonderful addition to the College's sports program and we have a number of eager students ready to join the rowing team when training recommences later this year.



Year 9 Girls Division 3 - 1st place.



Open Girls Division 4 - 1st place.



Year 9 Girls Division 5 - 2nd place.



Year 10 Girls Division 3 - 4th place.



Open Girls Division 6 - 2nd place.



Open Boys Division 5 - 2nd place.



The Year 9 Girls Division 3 crew take out the first ever victory for Damascus in a Head of the Lake regatta.



The Damascus spit crew cheer on the Open Girls Division 4 crew after their victorious race.



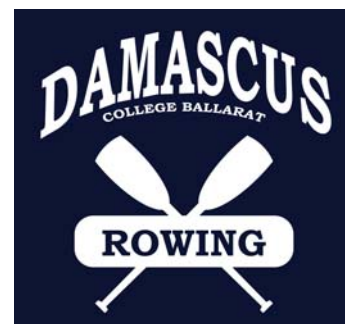
Head of Rowing Peter Moon.



Spit Crew captains Chloe Pearson & Carlie Steenhuis.



The Spit Crew in action.



The new Damascus College rowing logo.

Damascus students blitz Design Awards



Photo: Ellen Gay (2013) with her artwork 'A Thousand Moments' which won the Most Outstanding Artwork Across All Media Award.

The 'VCE Next Generation 2014' art and design awards exhibition opened to a packed audience in mid-February at the Ballarat Fine Art Gallery. This exhibition showcases the work of students who have just completed Year 12 VCE studies in Art, Studio Arts, Design and Technology, Visual Communication and Design, and Media. The students are from Government, Catholic and Independent schools mainly from the Ballarat and Grampians region.

The work of numerous Damascus College Visual Arts students was selected for this professionally curated exhibition. Talented participants from the class of 2013 included Rachael Beardall, Joanna Beswick, Monique Bodnar, Georgia Day, Ellen Gay, Christie Harrison, Jordan Holloway, Aislin Hughes, Damaris Keath-Watts, Bradley Oxlade, Georgia Schreenan and Jessica Young.

A highlight of the evening included the presentation of awards to two of our students. Ellen Gay's piece 'A Thousand Moments' took out the Most Outstanding Artwork Across All Media Award and Monique Bodnar's work 'Potions' won the Federation University Encouragement Award. A warm congratulations goes to all students and staff involved in this very proud moment for our College community.



Photo: Monique Bodnar (2013) with her artwork 'Potions' which won the Federation University Encouragement Award.



Georgia Schreenan (Yr 12) - 'Beauty within the machine'.



Brad Oxlade (2013) - 'Elephant Records guitar design'.



Joanna Beswick (2013) - 'Petite & Wild poster and iPhone cover'.

A Summer of Science



Year 12 student Bethany Claridge immerses herself in a summer of Science.

Over the summer holidays I went to what I affectionately call 'nerd camp', partly because that's what it was, and partly because Australian Science Innovations International Biology Olympiad Summer School Training Camp is a bit of a mouthful.

I was selected late last year after I, along with thousands of other high school students around Australia sat the entrance exams in Biology, Chemistry and Physics. I sat the exams for the purpose of using them as practice for the end of year exams, but I was fortunate enough to earn a place in the program at the same time.

There were 24 students selected for each of chemistry and physics, and 22 for biology – I gained one of the biology places. The purpose of the camp was to cover the first year of university biology in two weeks, and then select four students for the International Biology Olympiad later this year.

The camp took place down at Monash, and for two weeks I stayed in the Halls of Residence and took part in the most intense learning experience of my life. We had 13 hour days full of lectures and pracs that ranged from testing the dive reflex by sticking our heads in buckets of ice on that 46°C day, to looking at our own blood under a microscope, to dissections and microbiology activities using bacteria, stains and single celled organisms.

The experience was hectic and intense and interesting and absolutely fantastic! The group of people I spent the two weeks with were brilliant and we became close friends so fast, partly due to the close living and studying quarters, but also because we were spending time with other people who all think the same way. The two weeks were amazing, even with no weekends and very little sleep or spare time. I wouldn't have even given it up for the two weeks I would have spent at the beach, or anything else for that matter.

Unfortunately I did not progress through to the International Biology Olympiad, but it was an incredible experience all the same and one which I would highly recommend to other students.

By Year 12 student, Bethany Claridge

Following in their footsteps

While most people were frantically making their final preparations for Christmas last December, Year 12 student Oscar Zhang and his father Charles were tying their shoelaces and donning their back packs for an epic journey on foot from Robe in South Australia back to Ballarat.

The pair set out on December 15, 2013 to retrace the route taken by Chinese miners in the late 1850's who were forced to travel overland from South Australia, due to an immigration tax imposed on them by the Victorian Colonial Government. Oscar and Charles wanted to commemorate the contribution made by the Chinese gold diggers on the Central Victoria Goldfields, while promoting rural Australian towns and cities they visited along the way.

Charles and Oscar were drawn to undertake this journey because of the significant impact the Chinese people had on Victoria during the gold rush era. They wanted to get a feel for how grueling the journey must have been for these early settlers and they were fascinated by the stories and the history of these people.

The journey covered around 480km and took them through the towns of Penola, Dergholm, Casterton, Coleraine, Cavendish, Dunkeld, Willoura, Ararat, Buangor, Beaufort and Burrumbeet, before arriving in Ballarat on day 14 of their journey. Along the way they were welcomed in each town by well-wishers and people interested in their adventure who shared with them the history of Chinese settlers in their region.

Before leaving Ballarat Charles and Oscar visited the Chinese Temple at Sovereign Hill to ask for permission and good fortune from their ancestors during their adventure. Their journey also concluded at Sovereign Hill where they celebrated the completion of their trek with a group of supporters who had walked with them for the last part of their journey from the Arch of Victory.

The Damascus community congratulates Oscar and Charles on their wonderful achievement.

More photos and information on their journey can be found at: <http://www.voicefm.com.au/index.php?s=robe>



Year 12 student Oscar Zhang on the road from Robe to Ballarat.



Charles and Oscar in Penola with Councillor Robert Thomas and historian Evelynne Bowden at Chinamans Lane, where the Charles Market Gardens were once located, initially supplying vegetables to Chinese people who were travelling past.



Charles and Oscar arrive at Sovereign Hill at the end of their journey.

Growth of Energy Breakthrough Program

In 2014 Damascus College is embarking on its sixteenth year of Energy Breakthrough competition and progress is well underway on the construction of energy efficient vehicles for the RACV Energy Breakthrough event in Maryborough in November.

EBT is offered as a year-long Year 9 subject, but students from other year levels also assist at workshops held after school. These students make up a dedicated team, led by staff member Mark McLean, putting in many hours each week over the entire school year in preparation for the big event.

Last year the College's Energy Breakthrough Team comprised of 27 students who built two energy efficient vehicles known as 'Sharpie' and 'Nightrider'. Sharpie was a full carbon fibre monocoque construction, aerodynamically faired, hybrid, pedal-electric assist, recumbent vehicle. Nightrider was a lightweight, aerodynamic, fully electric vehicle. The Nightrider team were lucky enough to take out second place in the electric powered vehicle class, which was a fantastic effort.

In December last year the College was also notified that our Energy Breakthrough Team received the Holden Secondary Encouragement Award (HSEA). Schools entered in the hybrid class (our Sharpie team) of the event are eligible to win the HSEA and it is awarded to the team that has shown outstanding promise and participated in the spirit of friendly competition.

The HSEA is judged by the RACV Energy Breakthrough organisers and takes into account team operation and enthusiasm, preparatory efforts, past involvement and year-on-year improvement. Damascus College was the sole winner of this award in 2013. Another fantastic effort by our students, staff and parent helpers!

The EBT program has outgrown its home in the mud brick hut, with 45 students now active within the team. Construction of a shared EBT/rowing shed facility is almost complete, located adjacent to the Jones Avenue car park which will allow for the continued growth of the EBT program.



Nightrider and Sharpie on the track at last year's event.



Students and a parent helper work on Nightrider in 2013.



The new EBT facility which will also be used to store rowing boats.

WORLD DRAGON BOAT RACING SUCCESS



Photo: Therese Cerneaz (nee Lawson) right, with her sister Sr Veronica Lawson.

In August 2013, former Sacred Heart College student Therese Cerneaz (nee Lawson) was the proud winner of five medals (three silver and two gold) as part of the Australian Team at the World Dragon Boat Racing Championships in Szeged, Hungary. Therese was a student at SHC from 1957-1960. She graduated from RMIT as an Industrial Chemist in 1963 and worked in industry for some years. In 1965, she married a fellow RMIT student, Dom Cerneaz. When their four children reached school age, Therese trained as a secondary teacher and engaged in a very successful career as a science co-ordinator and teacher with qualifications in chemistry, physics, geology and biology. When her four children had all left school, she returned to University and obtained a Bachelor of Design (Fashion and Textiles) obtaining First Class Honours and the University Medal. She subsequently worked in both the Fashion and Film Industries as well as lecturing in Design. In retirement, she took up Dragon Boat Paddling. She has been a NSW State Representative for four consecutive years (2011-2014) at the Australian Championships. She plans to paddle with her club, Pittwater Dragon Boat Racing Club, at the World Club Championships in Ravenna, Italy, in September this year.

Riding her way to success

Lucinda Doodt has seen more sunrises than the average 16 year old, her alarm going off each morning somewhere between 3am and 5am so she can head off to work at Caerau Park, a racing stable on the outskirts of Ballarat. It is here with trainer Mark Lewis that Lucinda has commenced her four year apprenticeship to become a jockey.

Working with horses is not new to Lucinda, who has been attending Pony Club and eventing since she was 3 years old. To say that horses are her passion is an understatement. Six mornings a week she can be found at Caerau Park and Dowling Forest in the wee hours of the morning, and in the afternoons and on Sundays she's either strapping at a race track somewhere around Victoria or working with one of her own four horses at home. She's currently preparing them for the Melbourne International Horse Trials, a 3 day event in June as well as the State Horse Trials. She was also on the equestrian team at Damascus while she was still at school. And in her spare time? She heads off to Ballet classes or Highland Dancing competitions, where she also excels.

The road to become an apprentice jockey has not been easy and it's taken much determination and dedication on Lucinda's part to get where she is today. When she was in Year 9, an opportunity arose through Pony Club for Lucinda to commence riding track work. She then started doing jump-outs (when horses are released from the barriers at the start of a race) and it was at this point that she realised her passion for horse racing. She applied through Racing Victoria to become an apprentice jockey, but despite attending the selection camp in the final stages of the process, her application was unsuccessful.

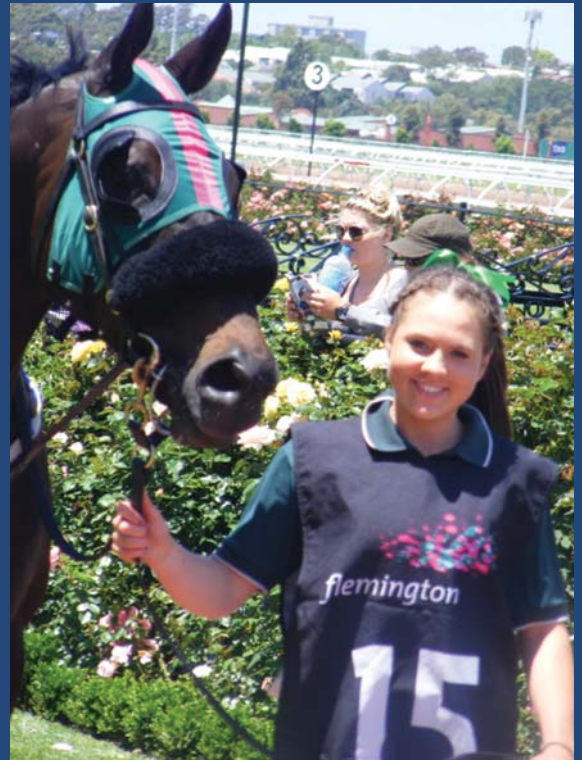


Photo: Lucinda Doodt on the job at Flemington.

Disappointed but undeterred, Lucinda approached Mark Lewis at Caerau Park and started riding track work for him during Year 10. Each morning before school, she'd be on the track from 4.30am to 7.30am before heading off on the school bus at 8am. She did this six days a week. In May 2013 when she was still in Year 10, she reapplied for the apprenticeship program. After several development camps and an interview before a panel of stewards and other members of Racing Victoria, Lucinda progressed to the final stage of the selection process, a three day camp at Flemington Racecourse, but this was no ordinary camp experience. As well as needing to show her skills on the track, Lucinda was required to undertake intensive fitness tests and interviews as well as complete sessions with a nutritionist, physiotherapist, psychologist and a doctor. Two months later after much waiting and anticipation, a very excited Lucinda received a phone call advising that she was one of nine successful new apprentice jockeys from a field of 35 applicants. All her hard work and early mornings on the track had paid off and she commenced her apprenticeship in January 2014.

For the next four years, Lucinda will attend apprentice school once a month at Flemington Racecourse where she will gain her qualification as a jockey, as well as obtaining a Certificate III and IV in fitness and personal training. Concurrently and with the encouragement of Racing Victoria, she will also complete her VCE through a TAFE program. When she's not at apprentice school, she'll be on the track six days a week with trainer Mark Lewis, riding up to eight horses each morning and strapping at the races in the afternoon.

Lucinda recently obtained her licence to commence riding trials. Once she has ridden 15 successful trial races, which each need to be signed off by a steward, she will obtain her Licence to Ride. At this point, she will be able to start riding in official races, which she hopes to be doing by July this year. With the determination she has shown to date, it's likely that she will achieve this goal.

Even though it was disappointing to miss out on becoming an apprentice jockey when she first applied, in hindsight Lucinda is now glad she completed Year 10. She acknowledges that her years at Damascus helped her get into the jockey program and gave her the skills she required to sit before a Racing Victoria interview panel and to stand out as a candidate for the jockey program. Whilst she misses the social aspect of school and the interaction with people her own age, Lucinda knows she has definitely made the right decision to pursue her passion for racing.

The Damascus College community is extremely proud of Lucinda and we wish her the best of luck for the years ahead.

Alumni connection to Timor Leste

Anthony Wyndham (2005) became involved in the Army in 2006, soon after finishing school. He enlisted in June and that same year, completed his basic and job specific training by the start of December. His career in the Army spanned five and half years in which he was deployed to both Timor Leste and Afghanistan. He was promoted to the rank of Lance Bombardier early in his third year of service and finished his career at the same rank. He discharged from the Army in October 2011, leaving behind his closest friends and colleagues. Anthony has recently donated some of his Army memorabilia to Damascus College and in the article below, he tells us of his experiences in Timor Leste.



Anthony Wyndham in Timor Leste.

A chance encounter with the school's past principal, John Shannon, enlightened me to the fact that Damascus has been conducting charity work for their sister school in Ainaro, Timor Leste. Unbeknownst to me, the school has apparently had links to the country since 2005, the year I finished. To further my surprise he told me that students have also been visiting the country to teach English to students.

This I informed him, was a subject very close to my heart, as I had served in a peace keeping role in Timor Leste some years earlier, during my career in the Australian Army.

In 2008 my Regiment received the Operational Order to deploy into Timor Leste and conduct peace keeping operations as part of TLBG V (Timor Leste Battle Group 5). Seeing as this was going to be my first deployment I was quite excited and rather nervous at the prospect of going. Others in my Regiment had been deployed there in past years and I had heard stories of countless days spent in a piquet box watching the world go by whilst they sweltered in body armour and helmets. Safe to say the deal was not enticing.

After completing 3 months of acclimatisation and readiness training in Darwin I deployed In Country on September 14, 2008. And to my surprise the tempo was much more relaxed than anything I or any of my peers had expected. Instead of being met by a cold-hearted, less than nice Corporal we were quickly and politely (as Army standards go) issued our stores and thrust into the community to travel southwest to Gleno.

The ride through the hills of Timor on my first day In Country is something I will never forget. The landscape was of course lush and bright but looking closer revealed the scars of the country's past. Burnt and destroyed buildings littered the countryside and the human toll was shown in the badly set leg of one elderly bloke I saw who had been beaten or tortured.

What struck me most was that this guy was waving to us and for all that plagued him, he looked happy. This was a common theme amongst the people as we drove. Everywhere we went there was an entourage of smiling, happy citizens waving and yelling to greet us. This from what I could see, was a country on the rebound and its people were brushing off the past and looking forward into a brighter future. I, like my mates, was glad to help all I could.

I spent the next eight months In Country conducting both mounted (in vehicle) and foot patrols, getting to experience all that Timor has to offer. The 'chicken' of questionable origin really isn't that bad and in regards to the sights I saw; some were brilliant. I highly recommend a Black Hawk flight through the hills and out past the coast of Dili to the statue of Jesus. Or just sitting and watching a sunset. On the other hand some sights...well they were quite odd. Amongst them included a man carrying a bull's head down the road just as casually as you or I would carry a bag of shopping, and old men and women with teeth stained red from chewing Beetle Nut.

I left the country in June 2009, in what I know was a better condition than what I found it. I am very proud to say that I in some small way have made a difference. My days in Timor will forever be ones that I cherish and share. I am even prouder to hear that Damascus is doing all it can to help its people and enrich their lives. I can only hope that those students who visit give all they can and take away their own amazing experiences. Most importantly though, I hope they can gain some perspective on life and realise how lucky we are as a country to have all that we have. Helping those in need is above all, the greatest gift one can give.

Artists explore the social fringe

Kim Anderson (1997) is a full-time professional artist based in Ballarat. Kim has a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) and a Post Graduate Certificate in Art Conservation. Kim also completed her Master of Fine Arts in 2008 at the University of Dundee, Scotland.

In March 2013 Kim participated in a unique project known as 'Under the Floorboards' with UnitingCare Ballarat, which involved 12 artists spending a month each with one of the diverse programs offered by the organisation. Each artist created works based on their experiences, providing an insight into the connection UnitingCare has with so many different parts of the community, and an understanding of the services it provides and the individuals and groups it assists.

Cliff Barclay, Executive Director of UnitingCare Ballarat said "We all see the world through different eyes and this project is a unique opportunity to have our services framed through the eyes of an artist." The project culminated in a gala event with an art auction of the works in November 2013, with the proceeds providing funding for the agency's programs.



'Frankie'. Created by Kim Anderson as part of the 'Under the Floorboards' artist-in-residence program.

ARTIST STATEMENT

BY KIM ANDERSON

While hospitals and retirement homes feature more prominently in our social awareness, residential care units such as Kallara and Wynalla exist at the very fringes of society and are home to some of the most vulnerable people. Some of them have a mental illness, some also have physical disabilities. Some have been affected by alcohol and drugs, others may simply have nowhere else to go. These places are their refuge, where there is safety in routine and meds and regular meal times. They're just trying to get by like the rest of us, often with the odds stacked against them.

I was the outsider here, a stranger with a camera in their midst, causing mild curiosity amongst some, unnoticed or deliberately ignored by others. Slowly, as familiarity grew, they opened up to me. Learning their names and discovering their personalities made me acutely aware that they are just like anyone else; they have unique identities, stories and experiences that are no more or less significant than those of us on the 'outside'. The only difference perhaps is how incredibly vulnerable they are. I could not help but think that it could be me or any of my family members in their place – the knife-edge is so fine. What is it that makes some people able to survive, while others fall by the wayside? The reality of it shook me.

It was truly a privilege to be able to undertake this project – I felt like I'd met some really genuine people who were, without realising it, teaching me what it is to be human. I hope I can do justice to them with my drawings, to tell each individual's story truthfully with my pen and paper. It's the least I can do.

More information and other artwork created as part of 'Under the Floorboards' can be found at: http://www.unitingcareballarat.com.au/?option=com_content&view=article&id=85

Freedom Fighter



Ronny Kareni (centre) with colleagues from 3CR Radio.

In August 2003, Ronny Kareni and Hein Arumisore began their studies at Damascus College and completed Year 12 the following year. Both boys were welcomed into the Damascus College community and became significant members of the Year 12 class group.

Here is some of Ronny's story.

For safety, Ronny's father had fled from West Papua with his family and travelled to Papua New Guinea. Ronny had been educated there and so was somewhat fluent in English when he arrived in Australia in 2003. Ronny soon became the group's story teller and interpreter. The passionate sharing of the situation in his homeland brought to our Ballarat community first hand insight into the injustice suffered in West Papua, and we were all challenged to act.

After leaving Damascus College Ronny went on to the University of Ballarat and with a scholarship, completed a degree in International Studies. Ronny had almost finished a second degree in Business Studies when he decided to work full time as an activist for the people of West Papua. He has recently returned to Australia after some months on the Flotilla raising awareness around Papua New Guinea and surrounding areas.

Ronny is now living in Melbourne, and has become a public figure as an activist for the group "Rize of the Morning Star".

Ronny is also a member of the band Tabura, both of these involvements aim to educate the public about West Papua through art and music. Ronny sees his music as a link to the cultural identity of West Papua. He first established Tabura as a choir. Eventually, it evolved into a band which became a more powerful way to express the message of the people of West Papua.

'Rize of the Morning Star' devised a performance which is an off-shoot from the organisation/movement of the same name, both campaigning for a free West Papua. It is presented by Ronny and other West Papuan activists and community members who voice the aspirations of Papua's struggle. They share songs, interviews, music and stories to create an exciting, uplifting, performance, showcasing Melanesian, Pacific, Indigenous and other musicians from the world.

This group is experienced in developing and implementing music, cultural and sporting programs for the West Papuan community and for other newly-arrived refugee communities in Australia. They run community supported, non-violent action programs in the Pacific.

Ronny and the musicians are very experienced in performance and in using music to build community confidence and relationships, and as a form of political expression.

Damascus College is very proud to have been part of Ronny's journey.

It is because of the continuing violence and oppression perpetrated by Indonesia in his homeland West Papua that Ronny Kareni's journey led him to Damascus College. Through the efforts of Jacob Rumbiak and Louise Byrne, who were West Papuan activists living in Melbourne, a group of West Papuan students were brought out to Australia on student visas to study here.

Approaches were made to the principals of St. Patrick's College, Loreto and Damascus College, asking them each to accept two students. They agreed to do so and with the support of the Sisters of Mercy and many local community members, six West Papuan students began their studies in Ballarat.



I'm proud to say I'm a past St Paul's Technical College student, and I have fond memories of attending the school opposite the Ballarat Railway Station. I'll never forget the bus trips in and out to school from Bungaree with the many students from the area. Much water has gone under the bridge since then, and when I left St Paul's I became an apprentice Letterpress Machinist Printer at J.A.Hoskin & Son in Peel St. After 8 years I left there to become an Insurance Agent for T&G.

I married Ange at age 21. Ange was a Sacred Heart girl and she was in the first intake into St Martin's in the Pines in 1967. We had four daughters, Michelle, Katrina, Jasmine and Carmen. At age 28 we moved to Bendigo where I took up the position of Agency Manager at T&G, and it was in Bendigo that our lives changed dramatically.



Carmen Maher, pictured at her Deb Ball

On a beautiful Sunday morning I was driving to Axedale (outside Bendigo) to go to a cricket function when I was seriously injured in a fatal car crash. An 18 year old girl lost control of her four-wheel-drive vehicle and collided with my car. Tragically Emma was killed and I was very seriously injured. Four months later at the age of 42, I was told that I'd never work again. This was a disaster because although Michelle was an apprentice hairdresser, Katrina was at University in Melbourne and Jasmine and Carmen were still at Catholic College in Bendigo. We had a home loan and other substantial financial commitments.

I spent some time in counselling trying to come to terms with the fact that a young girl had lost her life in my car crash, and I was struggling. I knew the crash wasn't my fault, but a young life was lost and I was in the crash. We were truly battling to recover our lives. Thirty months after my crash we seemed to be getting back on track when we were dealt the cruellest of blows when Carmen (18), the youngest of our four girls was killed in a car crash.

This absolutely devastated all of us and our extended family, but Carmen is really the one who gave me my life back because about 12 months after we lost Carmen I started giving presentations to secondary schools on road safety "Carmen's Road Safety Message", in the hope that Carmen's story will empower students to take more responsibility on the roads and become safer drivers. I tell students about Carmen, they learn what we have lost in Carmen's death in that car crash. By the time I'm finished telling them Carmen's story they understand that their family and friends will never get over them being killed in a car crash, they will be just like us, and we can't get over losing Carmen in this way.

I know that the students are taking on board Carmen's message and in 2012, Victoria had the lowest road toll ever recorded, and I'm proud to say that in 2013, Victoria's road toll was a massive 40 deaths less than the previous record of 2012. I'm not claiming that Carmen's message is wholly responsible for this wonderful result, but I know Carmen has had a huge impact.

Last year I spoke at 78 schools where more than 16,000 students heard Carmen's story, and I've been presenting Carmen's Road Safety Message to schools for 16 years and in that time I estimate that over 160,000 students have heard Carmen's message. Some of those early students are now in their 30's, and they're still playing their part in being safe drivers on our roads with Carmen's message as their foundation.

I received a huge surprise and a great honour in 2013 when I was nominated for the National Australia Day Council's "2013 Australian of the Year". If that wasn't surprise enough I was again nominated for the National Australia Day Council's "2014 Australian of the Year Awards", for my work in the schools, and while I'm incredibly proud to have been nominated, I know that it's really Carmen and her message that is the worthy nominee.

I'm on a mission to do everything in my power to make our young drivers understand how important they are to us, so that when they get behind the wheel of a car, they will drive with the knowledge that their death in a car crash will destroy their family and friends just as Carmen's death has done to us. In an ideal world I believe every student should hear Carmen's Road Safety Message, but obviously that isn't possible, but I'll attend any Secondary School if there's a chance that Carmen's message may save a life.

Ange and I now live in Brown Hill, whilst Michelle and Tony have two children, Jaida and Ruben and they live in Bungaree. Katrina and Simon have Cadell and Lucas and they're in Ballarat and Jasmine and Mark have Max and Tess and they have recently moved to Dunnstown. Our six grandchildren all attend Saint Francis Xavier Primary School. My family is an amazing support for me as I tell Carmen's story over and over again, because it becomes quite emotional for me. We're an incredibly close and happy family but there will always be someone missing....Carmen!

By John Maher P: 0414 397 194 E: carmenroadsafety@gmail.com W: www.johnmaher.com.au

Where are they now?

Sharon Hill (1987) has travelled in Asia, Latin America, the US and Europe and enjoys working in environments that promote principles of social justice. Sharon has worked with the Department of Human Services in Youth Work and Social Work. Sharon currently volunteers with the Good Shepherd Youth and Family Services, Melbourne. Sharon is also an Indonesian teacher at Seymour College in Seymour and has just travelled for a 7 week study tour of Lombok.

Sheridan Jacka (1993) has two daughters Brittaney (14) and Caitlin (12) and works as a Senior Fraud Manager with one of Australia's Top 4 Banks. In her spare time she works tirelessly with several animal welfare organisations, a no kill animal shelter and rescue groups. Her goal in life is to end puppy farming in Australia and advocate that 'Adoption is the only option'.

Therese Scarf (1998) is off to Nairobi to work at the Australian High Commission for 12 months.

Paul Manfreda (2000) is living in Ballarat and loves his fly in/fly out job as a diesel fitter in the mines in Cobar NSW.

Matt Kane (2004) and his wife Allana with their two children moved to Cairns in early January.

Anthony Wyndham (2005) has served with the Australian Army in Timor Leste and Afghanistan. Anthony is now living in Geraldton, WA working in the mining sector, driving front end loaders for a Garnet sand company. This change of pace has enabled Anthony to pursue other goals in graphic design and he has recently been accepted into the FZD school in Singapore (www.fzdschool.com) and will be moving there in September this year to study in its one year diploma program.

Following his experience with both the AFL and VFL **Cameron Richardson (2005)** has taken up a coaching post at Maddingley Park as Bacchus Marsh playing coach for 2014.

Luke Butler (2005) has graduated with a Bachelor in Arts Management (majoring in Cultural Economics) awarded by the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA). He has been invited to complete Honours this year.

Jackson Cahir (2006) is currently working as an avionics technician for the RAAF in Adelaide.

Samantha Howard (2006) has been Australian Youth ambassador in Indonesia for the last 3 months. Samantha studied Indonesian at Damascus College and has had many wonderful experiences since. Samantha went on to study at Ballarat Grammar and continued Indonesian by correspondence.

Ella Dumaresq nee Mahoney (2006) finished a BA at Monash with Honours in German/Anthropology. This year she is studying dance movement therapy and learning the cello.

Lucy McNeil (2006) has completed a Creative Arts Degree with Honours from Latrobe University. Lucy has combined her study with her work at Sovereign Hill and trips to England, Wales, Scotland, Italy, France, Spain, Egypt and America and is about to set off to Russia later in the year.

After touring with the Australian/New Zealand production of Jersey Boys, **Brent Trotter (2006)** played the role of Gabe in "Next to Normal" presented by the Independent Theatre Company, Doorstep Arts at the Geelong Performing Arts Centre during March. The Courier March 12, 2014.

Allanah Morrell nee Carter (2007) received two awards from the University of Ballarat, one for general leadership and volunteering and the other for involvement in the student senate (main leadership group at the university). Allanah has also been involved with Beyond Blue, writing and directing a video that was presented at the Beyond Blue AGM by Natasha Stott-Despoja. Allanah has completed a Bachelor of Arts (Psychology), is married with one child and is now expecting a second.

Ben Oxlade (2007) has been working at Keating Freight Lines Shepparton since 2012 after completing a Certificate III in Transport and Logistics: Road Transport. He has been a CFA volunteer since 2009.

Congratulations to **Mallory Doyle (2008)** who was named Miss Rodeo Australia at the Sebastopol Bowling Club in October and will go on to represent Australia at the Miss Rodeo World Competition in Las Vegas. Mallory will travel to promote rodeos in Australia whilst fundraising for a chosen charity.

Sally Warren (2009) successfully competed in both the Gold Coast and Melbourne Marathons after having overcome some serious health issues. The Courier January 25, 2014.

Congratulations to **Lara Russell (2010)** who whilst completing her Graphic Design Degree at the University of Ballarat won the Lucato Peace Prize for her work 'Fallen and Lost'.

Alex Gay (2011) performed in the BLOC Music Theatre production of "Honk" (based on The Ugly Duckling) at the Wendouree Centre for Performing Arts in February.

Milan Saunders (2011) has completed a Certificate III in Media and Certificate IV in Digital Media and is now beginning a Diploma of Digital Media Technologies at Federation University Australia in Mt Helen.

Rory Purdie (2011) is currently studying a Bachelor of Sport Science and Indonesian at Deakin University and is working in Geelong as a rock climbing instructor.

Joshua Mann (2012) won the gold medal in World Skills in Carpentry (Wimmera Region). Joshua is a first year apprentice with Boadle Living and is doing his training with Federation University. The competition is held every two years against apprentices and tradespersons under the age of 25. He will now compete in the national titles held in Perth.

Congratulations to **Lucas Cooper (2013)** who took out Sportsman of the Year, the Senior Performing Arts Award and the Dorothy Irene Ellis Thomas scholarship at the Damascus Awards Night. Congratulations to all awards recipients.

Ballarat Lyric Theatre's successful Begonia Festival season of Phantom of the Opera featured members of the Damascus College Community; Stage Manager **Damian Muller (1981)**, **Shaune Davis (2003)** as Raoul, ensemble members **Ben Knight (2007)**, **Lucas Cooper (2013)**, Production Team members **Jason Muller (1990)**, **Nicole Burness (current staff)**, **Robby James (2009)** and **Megan Pinkerton (2001)**.

Congratulations to the Damascus College Past students who have graduated from Australian Catholic University this year; **Kenneth Martin (2009)** and **Nicolas Saunders (2005)** graduated from the Bachelor of Nursing/ Paramedicine at ACU, **Chantelle Herbert nee Megna (2005)** graduated from the Bachelor of Nursing at ACU specialising in mental health nursing, and has started her graduate year at Ballarat Mental Health Services in January.

Graduates with a Bachelor of Education Primary and Bachelor of Education Early Childhood; **Steffani Kuhn (2006)** with **Kyra Wood (2007)** who is now teaching at Emmaus Catholic Primary School in Mt Clear, **Amy McFarlane (2009)** is at Bacchus Marsh Primary School, **Lucy Ryan (2008)** is at St Columba's Primary School, Ballarat North, **Caitlin Mauric (2009)** is at Corpus Christi Primary School, Kingsville and **Madeline Reid (2009)** is at Williamstown Primary School. We wish them all well as they begin their respective careers.

MARRIAGES

Susan Gribble (1995) married Dwayne Durcan on December 28, 2013 at her parent's property in New Zealand.

Sean Toohey (2004) and **Jacqui Fenelon (2005)** were married on February 7, 2014 at Anglesea.

Sam Ryan (2005) and **Leah Kelly (2005)** were married at St Alipius Church on November 28, 2013. The reception was at Clyde Park Bannockburn. Leah was attended by her sisters **Breonie Campbell (2003)** and **Chelsea Kelly (2010)** as well as **Lucy Ryan (2008)**, **Jacqui Fenelon (2005)** and Jessamy Kaval. Sam was supported by groomsmen **Lachy Wright (2005)**, **David Donnelly (2005)**, Joe Ryan, his brother **Paddy Ryan (2012)** and **Dean Berlengeri (2005)**. Leah now teaches at Emmaus Catholic Primary School and Sam runs his own landscaping business, Rhino Landscaping.

Emma Hardy (2006) married Nathan Sanders on March 9, 2014 at Tumblers Green in Creswick.

Chris Kennedy (2007) and **Melissa Doodt (2007)** got engaged on Christmas Day 2013.

BIRTHS

Melissa Faulkner (1995) and her partner Nick welcomed Lachlan John Sereda on April 3, 2014.

Peter Kane (1995) and his wife Rachel had a baby girl on January 8, 2014. Ely Maree Kane is a sister to Jackson and Mitchell.

Nathan Mullane (1997) and his wife welcomed their third child Ava Mollie Mullane on the October 1, 2013. Ava is much loved by her brothers Harry and Oliver.

Karla Jaeger nee Grunwaldt (1998) and husband Mario welcomed their first baby Rosie on October 8, 2013.

Kellie Marsden (1999) gave birth to her beautiful daughters Scarlett Rose and Bobbi June. They were 5 weeks early but are now home happy and healthy and wonderful!

Pat Cleary (1999) and his wife Pricilla gave birth to twin boys Vincent and Roy on March 17, 2014, brothers to Eve.

Chris Crawley (2003) announced the early but safe arrival of little Ella Lucy Crawley, born on November 13, 2013.

Natalie Tingate nee Testa (2006) is married to Christopher and now have baby Matthew.

Reunions

SACRED HEART REUNION - APRIL 2014



L to R from back:

Row 1: Kath O'Brien, Sr Liz Teggelove, Margaret Powell, Denise Slater, Glenys Rochford, Suzanne Quinane, Sr Anne Forbes

Row 2: Margaret Eddy, Mary Darcy, Sr Gerardine Cooney, Marilla Murphy, Nola Donovan, Carmel McKee

Row 3: Angela O'Donnell, Pauline Righetti, Margaret Lavery, Doreen Spruce, Anne Dunn, Noelene Anderson, Tricia O'Loughlin, Winnie Maher, Mary Kelly

Row 4: Aileen Gargan, Mary Conheady, Anne Conheady, Sonia Carroll, Margaret Horwood, Margaret Sullivan, Margaret Gargan, Frances Connellan, Lorraine Whelan

Front: Val Blood, Fran Hanrahan, Mary Gleeson. Absent: Kaye Leonard

CLASS OF 1984 REUNION

"We had an amazing weekend. Everyone was in high spirits and so pleased to see each other. Thanks to Sr Marie and Tony Haintz who showed us around the College, we enjoyed seeing the changes".

Liz Revell, Deidre White, Dominique Searle, Helen O'Brien, Jenny Paulsen, Karen Dunn, Helen Wheelahan, Rosalee Guthrie, Lou Scanlon, Catherine O'Callaghan, Liz Fenaughty, Jodie Lochnan, Louise Rae, Sonja Vodusek, Andrea Reid, Felicity Pierce and Leanne Vanner.



On April 18 this year the Sisters of Mercy farewelled Sr Anne Gargan. Some of you would know her from her days in Primary Schools in Ballarat or from her many years in the country Parishes before she returned to Ballarat.

Born Monica Josephine Gargan (to her family she was Josie) on May 18, 1915 in Beulah, she was the third of four children of Joseph and Teresa, and she grew into a beautiful little girl, much loved by all around her.

From the stories she told of herself I think it would be true to say she was the much cherished - could we even say spoilt - youngest daughter. She was one who always expected that she would get what she wanted and seemed to have the charming knack of getting it! And in doing so she was able to make the world a better place for those around her as well.



Sr Anne followed her two older sisters, Mollie and Kath, in entering the Ballarat East congregation in June, 1935. She began her ministry of teaching in Ballarat, being appointed to St Columba's in Ballarat North in 1942. Incidentally, 1942 has another significance – when checking out a few things about her life, I found listed in her qualifications in 1942: Certificate in a study in Air Raid Precautions from the Victorian State Emergency Services. I hope that was a talent she didn't need to call on!

Her listings following 1942 see her move all around the diocese: St Arnaud, Warracknabeal, St Arnaud again, Penshurst, St James, Sebastopol – where she was the founding Principal, Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree – again founding Principal, St Alipius Ballarat East, Birchip, Warracknabeal a second time, Mortlake, St Francis Xavier St Arnaud – which then became McAuley College at Dooboobetic. She then moved into semi-retirement when she moved back to St Martin's in the Pines, Mt Clear doing some private tutoring.

In 1987 she took a new path into visitation and Parish work in the Parish of Harrow. For one who loved people and loved having lots of people around, the isolation of that experience was not easy and she moved back to St Martin's in 1988, assisting some of the "specials" out at St Martin's, then Damascus College by tutoring in English.

Wherever she went, Anne immersed herself in the community of the town and became much appreciated and loved.

In 2000, she moved from her home at Mt Clear into Ballarat East. With her sister, Sr Madeleine, she provided a welcoming home where many people felt the warmth of hospitality.

In retirement Anne's influence still reached out. The Prayer Ministry which touches the lives of so many was an important part of that outreach. We would not know how many letters she wrote to those who had asked for the prayers of the sisters. Those letters were greatly appreciated by people from all walks of life.

Well in her go's her keen interest in those who are less advantaged resulted in the Knitting Circle – providing hundreds of jumpers for new born babies in Africa. What an inspiration – a woman in her go's urging others to take up the challenge to make a difference to the lives of so many. She also encouraged all to participate in the Shared Table project to help Fr Michael McKinnon's work in Peru.

She took a keen interest in life around her right up until her final weeks. Walk into her room on a weekend in winter and you would probably find a keen follower of the Cats! Walk into her room on a Saturday in Spring or indeed any time of the year and you would definitely find her supporting the TAB. There was not much going on that Anne didn't know about and she always took a keen interest in life around her.

She moved into Nazareth House three weeks before her death and once again showed her gracious spirit in accepting that the time had come for change once again.

Anne was a deeply spiritual person – her motto "My God and my All" was central to her way of life. She always loved a party and on Wednesday morning April 18, just before Easter, when she quietly took her last breath she was in time for the ultimate celebration of the Resurrection with those she loved.

May she rest in peace.

Written by Sr Marie Davey rsm

Staff Retirements

Fran McCarty has been a wonderful support person for students, staff and families in her role as College Counsellor over her 26 years at Damascus College and Sacred Heart. Fran's calm voice and approach has guided so many difficult situations within the Damascus Community.



Fran seemed to have limitless patience and would always make time for others, even when she had no time. She had the sort of smile that put people at ease and the students' wellbeing was always at the foundation of all her work.

Fran remained professionally non-judgemental as she led restorative practice sessions in and outside the classroom. She helped resolve conflicts between friends and gave strategies on how to make new friends. She supported many families through the difficult issues that confront adolescents and families today and always had a listening and compassionate ear for staff and colleagues.

Fran has long provided considered, wise and professional advice and Damascus College thanks her for her generous and compassionate contribution to the wellbeing of our community.

Denise Blood has retired after 24 years at Damascus College and St Paul's. She has worked for 32 years overall in the Catholic education system including positions at St Mary's in Swan Hill and the Catholic Education Office in Ballarat.



In 1991 Denise enrolled at the Ballarat School of Mines and obtained a Diploma of Business Commerce. It was at this time that she started at St Paul's where she remained until the amalgamation with Sacred Heart and St Martin's in the Pines in 1995. Denise has since worked as an Accounts Officer at Damascus College and her wonderful knowledge of Damascus and St Paul's from the early days has been an asset during the development of the Past Student outreach project.

Denise has been a very caring and wonderful colleague balancing her time between study and work but always leaving plenty of time for her friends and family. These friendships have stood the test of time showing what a giving, loving person she is. Denise has enjoyed many overseas and Aussie adventures with her friends and will

continue to have many more adventures as she embarks on this next phase of her life.

On behalf of the Damascus community we wish Denise and her husband Brian well in their retirement.

Elaine Flavell began at Sacred Heart College in 1986 as part of a pilot program introducing "Integration Aides" into Catholic Schools across Victoria. The program lasted six months and it is testimony to the quality of Elaine's work and character that she was invited to stay on at the



school through the generosity of the Sisters of Mercy. Elaine went on to make a significant contribution to the staff and students of Damascus College until she retired in 2013.

Elaine had previously worked at St Mary's Mission on the outskirts of Alice Springs, Katherine Area School, also in the Northern Territory and had a working holiday in the UK. She also worked at the Ballarat Children's Home for 7 years; in total working with children and young adults for nearly 45 years!

This vast experience equipped Elaine to work with students with physical, emotional, social, behavioural and learning challenges as an Integration Aide/Student Support Officer to help them reach their potential.

Elaine has always been a much-loved member of the special education team. Her warm, compassionate nature and willingness to listen to and help others endeared her to everyone who worked with her - both staff and students alike.

The team particularly enjoyed her fun-loving nature, mischievous sense of humour and positive outlook. Elaine's kindness was well known and she would often give a lovely hand-made card or small gift just to let people know she was thinking of them.

Elaine always ensured that her care and commitment extended to the families of each student she worked with and she still loves to keep in touch with her past students to this day.

Elaine's retirement has brought her to Northcote (inner-city living) to be closer to the Russian Orthodox Church that she's involved in, and her family. In Elaine's words, when asked about retirement, her response tells it all. "I LOVE IT!"

DEPARTURES

After 8 years of distinguished service as our Head of Mathematics, **Andrea Carter** has left Damascus to pursue opportunities offered to members of her family. Andrea's level of commitment to her teaching, to her students and to the professional support and development of her colleagues was exemplary.



Andrea's love of mathematics was infectious, she engaged students with her enthusiasm for maths and used many creative strategies to help them see the link between mathematics and life. Andrea taught junior classes as well as senior Methods and Specialist Maths and no matter how busy Andrea was she always generously gave her time to every student who knocked at her office door. Andrea's professional integrity and concern for academic achievement were greatly appreciated in the Learning Area Leaders Group and by the Mathematical Team. Andrea could see the "big picture" and always considered what was good for the students and the College overall, not just what was good for the Maths department.

Andrea has been an integral part of the Year 11 social justice retreat with Fr. Bob Maguire in South Melbourne. This involved Andrea sleeping on the floor with students at CBC St Kilda and ushering them to day placements at caring centres around the city. In this capacity she was a wonderful support for students and staff alike, coping with stressful situations on the streets of Melbourne.

We acknowledge and celebrate that her excellent skills have been recognised by the Korowa Girls community in Melbourne to which Andrea has moved and we thank her on behalf of Damascus and wish the Carter family well with their relocation.

Leon Beaton's work at the College began as a teacher of Mathematics, Physical Education and Commerce at St Paul's Technical College in 1989. People who know Leon know that he is always open to new opportunities, so as the College amalgamated Leon went on to add Health, Science, Food Technology and Religious Education to his teaching resumé.



Leon also put his skills and talents towards many activities outside the classroom. He had a passion for athletics and enjoyed coaching both athletics and football. He enjoyed his work with the VCAL group and initiated the High Ropes Challenge Camp which took students out of their comfort zone to help them realise their potential and personal power. From 2007 Leon was one of the key photographers at many

College events. Wherever Leon was, we all knew there would be a camera in hand to capture the event and atmosphere of the occasion. He understood the power of the image to capture the "spirit of our young people and our College". Leon supported the EBT group at many competition events and was cook and photographer for the 2009 EBT trip from Darwin to Melbourne.

Leon lived by the philosophy that his students were his best teachers. He had the skill and perception to understand where they were at and then adjust his teaching to get the message through. He certainly made a difference in many students' lives and many of our past students will attest to his positive influence. Leon's interest in and commitment to the personal and spiritual growth of each student was evident as he skilfully led the Personal Search for Meaning Year 11 Retreats. But it was his own spiritual journey that eventually led him on a new path. Leon now brings his positive life messages to young people and adults through his writing, his empowerment courses and life coaching. We wish Leon all the very best with his new work.

IN MEMORY

Jeffrey Thomas Rowe was born on March 24, 1934 in Ballarat East, the 12th child to Vivian and Eva Rowe. Jeff went to Eureka Street State School, the Ballarat Junior Technical School and the School of Mines where he studied Technical Drawing, Fitting and Turning and Commercial Law.



While his son David was at St. Paul's Technical College in the early 70's Jeff helped with bottle drives and newspaper collection and became very well known in the school community. In 1977 he was offered a position doing maintenance around the school and in 1978 Jeff became a full-time staff member. Jeff went on to teach sheet metal, plastics and woodwork and was instrumental in setting up the woodwork and metal rooms at Victoria Street. Jeff was also very involved in the school camps and in maintaining the Brother's beach house at Apollo Bay.

During his retirement days Jeff kept busy with grandchildren and in 1996 he took on the role as construction supervisor for the community playground at Lake Wendouree. In July 1997 Jeff was presented with a plaque from the City of Ballarat for his service to the Ballarat community. After his wife died suddenly in 2000 Jeff decided to travel and enjoyed trips abroad. When Jeff moved to The Home Residential Care in 2001 he was able to set up a small workshop in a shed out the back where he continued to potter around with his dog Oscar by his side. In 2007 he moved to Hailey House when further care was needed.

Jeff's funeral was on February 18, 2014 at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. May he rest in Peace.

Upcoming Events

Damascus College 20 Year Celebrations

20 Year Celebration Dinner

Damascus College warmly invites all current families, alumni and friends of Damascus to join us for an evening of celebration on Saturday 21st March 2015 in the John Shannon Centre.

The evening will commence at 5.30pm with an optional school tour accompanied by champagne and canapés on the lawn. We will then proceed to the JSC for a 2 course sit down dinner.

Tickets can be purchased through the College website at a cost of \$50 per head. Seating will be arranged in tables of 10 and people can choose to purchase a table or individual tickets.

Anniversary Rose

The Damascus College 20 Year Celebration Rose grows to around 160cm in height and has an exquisite fragrance with dark red blooms.

The rose can be ordered online through the Damascus College website and will be distributed in July 2015. Roses can be picked up from the College or mailed out for an additional fee. Supplies are limited so we recommend placing an early order.

See the College website for further details.

EVENTS

Up to date details of each event will be emailed and posted on the Damascus College Website and on the Damascus College Alumni Facebook Group Page.

"TIMELINES" Alumni Art Exhibition will now be held every second year. We are eager to hear from any artists who might wish to exhibit in the future.

Please email connecting@damascus.vic.edu.au with your expression of interest.

ST MARTINS IN THE PINES

"October Spring Lunch". For bookings please contact Jo Reidy: reidy.joanne.m@gmail.com

"Chat and Cuppa" will be held at Sails on the Lake on August 30 at 2.30pm. For bookings please contact Mollie Cleary on 5338 7248.

RETIRED STAFF NETWORK of Damascus College and the former schools Sacred Heart College, St Martin's in the Pines and St Paul's Technical College are invited to gather during 2014 on June 18, October 15 and December 3.

"CUPPA @ THE CONVENT" will be organised for a Wednesday in August for those wishing to visit the retired Sisters of Mercy who have worked at our College. For inquiries please contact Yvette at connecting@damascus.vic.edu.au

CLASS GROUP REUNIONS

1974

Organising group: Therese Kitching (Pocock), Anne Maree Collins, Colleen Holloway.

Date: 7pm, Saturday 2nd August

Venue: The Barkly on Main Rd.

Invitations with payment details to follow.

Tour of the School will commence at 3pm.

RSVP: By 2nd June to Colleen Holloway SHC.STM@live.com.au

1994

Organising group: Ailie Cuthbertson, Jane Fraser (Patton)

Date: 7pm, Saturday 18th October

Venue: The Alexandria, 30 Lydiard Street North (opposite The Regent theatre)

\$40 per person for finger food and commemorative stubby holder. Drinks at bar prices.

Tour of the School will commence at 4pm.

2004

Organising group: Charlene Conroy, Elise Torrington.

Date: 7pm, Saturday 4th October

Venue: The Lake View.

Invitations will be sent closer to the event.

Tour of the School will commence at 4pm.