

CELEBRATING
ST MARTIN DE PORRES

The Road

DAMASCUS COLLEGE

AUTUMN 2019

OUR COVER

CELEBRATING ST MARTIN DE PORRES

Our cover photo for the Autumn edition of The Road celebrates St Martin de Porres, patron saint of the poor and of social justice and also a patron of people of mixed race and racial harmony.

The cover portrait was drawn by the artist, Barbara Madden, a past staff member of Sacred Heart. It is a beautiful portrait, which hangs in the Parent Reception at Damascus College.

At the end of 2018, our fourth House was renamed from O'Collins to St Martin, in honour of St Martin's humility and his help of the poor, ill and marginalised. This change in House name is further explained on page 9.

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

MATTHEW BYRNE

Welcome to the Autumn edition of The Road, for the 2019 school year. It seems such a short time since we commenced the school year but already so much has taken place. Damascus College continues to experience high demand for enrolment. 2019 has seen 206 Year 7 students commence and our total student population exceed 1,100 for the first time, with 1,102 students enrolled. This growth in student enrolment has largely been grounded in student retention, which we are pleased with as a College.

This year we have been very deliberate in choosing a theme that invites members of our community to reflect on Christ's presence in their lives. Our theme comes from Luke's gospel, and it is a question posed by Jesus to His Disciples, "Who do you say that I am?"

In these times of mistrust of systems and structures, faith is critical. Our theme is deliberate in asking people to consider and name Christ, in their own way. Naturally, this is a perspective that will evolve throughout all of our lives but, at Damascus, we want to keep Jesus at the heart of our College, as our central reason for being. When we are asked to respond to Jesus' question, "Who do you say I am?", we hope that we will stimulate members of the community to deepen their experience and understanding of the divine in 2019. We will be working to support students in that growth, here at the College.

2019 is the year where we have commenced our new St Martin House. In exploring the Peruvian saint further, over the summer, it became clear that it was his care of all God's creation that was the hallmark of his ministry. His great example of Christian living has already inspired members of the House to success in the first carnival of 2019 – the Swimming carnival. I acknowledge the great work of House Leader, Daniel Jans, in leading the process of change for our new House and the support he received from Deb Larsen and Karen Goonan. To accommodate our growing numbers, we have also added an additional Teacher Advisor group to each House in 2019, to maintain the intimacy of care that this House system was designed to support.

Damascus has been fortunate to have a stable, committed and reliable workforce. The conclusion of 2019 saw a number of long-standing staff retire, and these are profiled later in this edition. The end of Term 1 also saw Karen Simpkin retire. Karen has been an extraordinary servant of Damascus and Sacred Heart Colleges. Her career with this community has spanned forty years. She has worked as a classroom teacher, through to the highest levels of school leadership. While she has had a passion for English, Humanities and Commerce, her heart has always been on nurturing the best outcomes for each young person she has encountered. Karen is, genuinely, a woman of Mercy and has been a great servant of Catholic and Mercy education.



A special welcome is extended to those staff who are new or returning from leave to Damascus in 2019. We welcome:

- Angela Carr, who has joined the St Martin Resource Centre as Assistant Library Technician
- Ally Forsyth, who has joined the Languages team
- Brett Stone, who has joined us as Health and PE Learning Area Leader
- Laura Quick, who has joined the Learning Support team
- Kayla Robson, who returns to the Science team from maternity leave
- Laura Kimm, who also returns to the H&PE and Maths teams from maternity leave
- Stephanie McDonald, who joins the English Team
- Hannah Muirhead, who joins the Humanities and English teams

Since the start of last year, we have welcomed a number of other staff into our ranks who are commencing their first full year with us: Tamzin Perkins in PE and ESTEEM, Marcus Probert as School Psychologist in the Wellbeing team, Daniel Cook in the role of Office Manager, Sarah McKnight and Catherine Richardson in the Maths and Science teams, Beth Carroll and Daniel Conway in the IT team, and Ryan Leaney and Sarah Lamana, who have enriched our staff as members of the Learning Support team.

Jane McKendrick has taken Long Service Leave for Term 1 and will return to cover the Long Service Leave being taken by Trish Rowe in Term 2 before she moves into retirement.

Staff members, Sally Wright, and her husband, Bill, welcomed a new member to their family this term, baby Isabelle Paige, as did staff member, Matt Allan, and his wife, Rachel, who welcomed Patrick (Paddy) Alexander.

Andrew Robertson is well known within the Damascus community and has commenced as Assistant Principal of Student Wellbeing, following an extensive recruitment process in 2018.

It is a year of review for the College in 2019, and we will draw on the review as a means of establishing the College's strategic framework

beyond 2020.

Damascus College is very fortunate to have strong governance and welcomes Fr Kevin Maloney, who joins Sr Berenice Kerr in the role of College Governor. Michael Myers and Paulene Barton continue their excellent leadership of the College Board, in their respective positions of Chair and Deputy Chair. We farewell and acknowledge the work of Directors, Marc Amos, Stephen Carey, Bill Slatter and Fr Peter Sherman, and thank each of these individuals for their generous contribution to the College Board and sub-committees over many years. Brett Holloway, Joe Cahir and Fr Marcello Colasante have joined the Board in 2019. I also thank and acknowledge the many other generous volunteers on the Board sub-committees for their contribution.

It is great to hear of so many former students of the College experiencing such diverse success in life and work, beyond their school days. We value the opportunity to hear of alumni achievements and the chance to catch up at reunions.

A cohort of students are about to head off to Indonesia for language immersion, and I thank Brendan Bawden for his leadership of this opportunity. We also have our Timor Leste immersion students heading off, again, in June. These students fund their own trips and I encourage you to donate if you see a fundraising opportunity, as all proceeds raised go to the families of Ainaro in Timor. I wish all of our international travellers well!

Our rowers again represented the College proudly in the Head of the Lake and state and national titles. Well done to all the rowers and our incredible coaches.

I congratulate the class of 2018 on their VCE and VCAL achievements and 2018 School Captain, Sean O'Beirne, on becoming Dux with his exceptional ATAR of 99.9.

2019 is filled with hope and promise for all within our College, and I thank you for being a part of it!

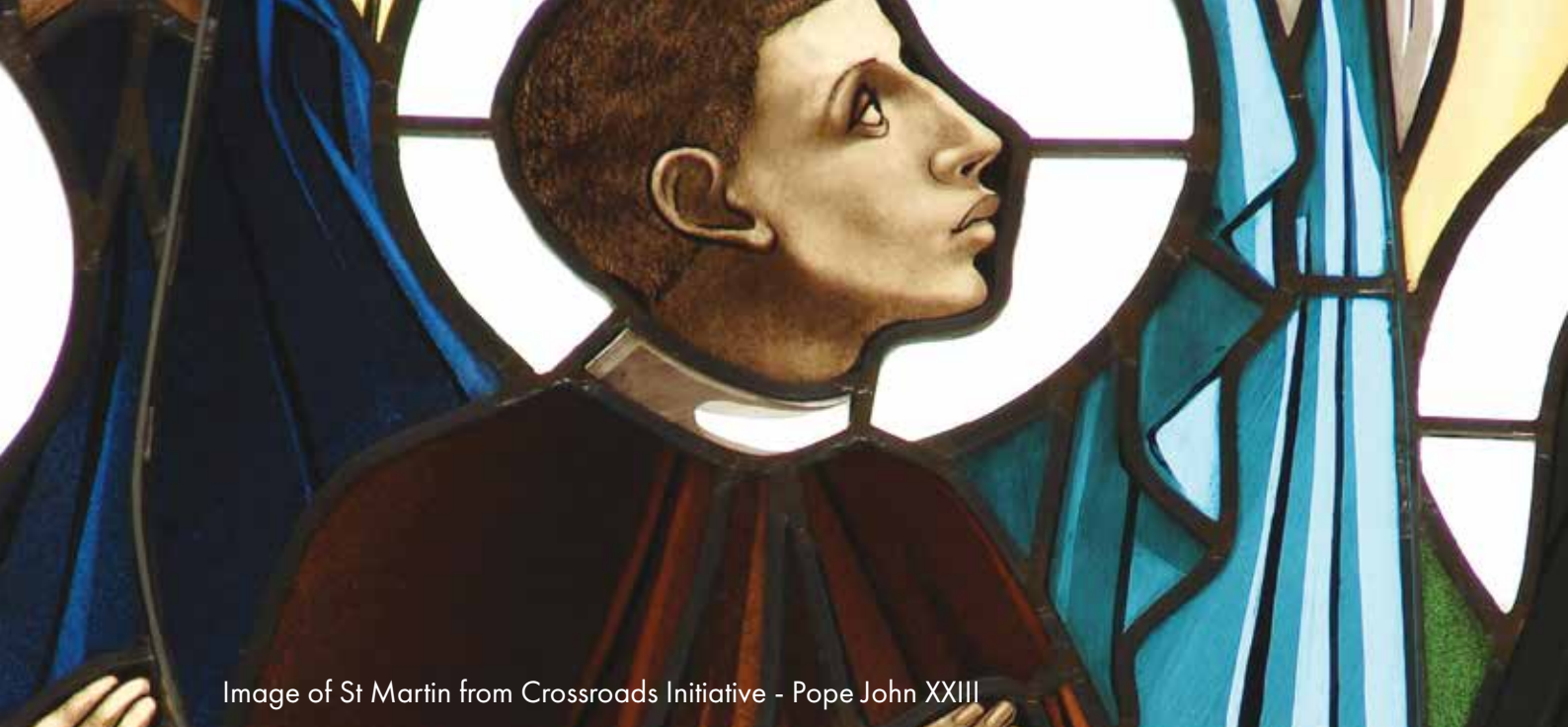


Image of St Martin from Crossroads Initiative - Pope John XXIII

WHO IS ST MARTIN DE PORRES?

CELEBRATING ST MARTIN DE PORRES - SERVANT OF GOD'S CREATION

St. Martin de Porres was born in Lima, Peru, on December 9th 1579. Martin was the illegitimate son to a Spanish gentleman and a freed slave from Panama, of African or, possibly, Native American descent. His mother was an Indian woman, Anna, a native of Panama, and Martin inherited the Indian features of his mother. At a young age, Martin's father abandoned him and his mother and his younger sister, leaving Martin to grow up in deep poverty. Often, as a child, Martin returned empty-handed from the market, having given away the food he had been sent to purchase to someone worse off than himself. After spending just two years in primary school, Martin was placed with a barber/surgeon where he would learn to cut hair and the medical arts.

As Martin grew older, he experienced a great deal of ridicule for being of mixed-race. In Peru, by law, all descendants of African or Indians were not allowed to become full members of religious orders. Martin, who spent long hours in prayer, found his only way into the community he longed for was to ask the Dominicans of Holy Rosary Priory in Lima to accept him as a volunteer, who performed the most menial tasks in the monastery. When Martin was 15, he asked for admission into the Dominican Convent of the Rosary in Lima and was received as a servant boy, and later became the church officer in charge of distributing money to deserving poor.

During his time in the Convent, Martin took on his old trades of barbering and healing. He also worked in the kitchen, did laundry and cleaned. He extended his care of the sick to those of the city and was instrumental in establishing an orphanage and founding a hospital. After eight more years with the Holy Rosary, Martin was granted the privilege to take his vows as a member of the Third Order of Saint Dominic by the prior, Juan de Lorenzana, who decided to disregard the law restricting Martin based on race. However, not all of the members in the Holy Rosary were as open-minded as Lorenzana, and Martin continued to be mocked for being illegitimate and descendent from slaves.

Martin became a lay brother in 1603, at the age of 24. Ten years later he was assigned to the infirmary, where he would remain in charge until his death. He became known for carefully and patiently caring for the sick, even in the most difficult situations.

Martin was praised for his unconditional care of all people, regardless of race or wealth. He took care of everyone, from the Spanish nobles to the African slaves. Martin didn't care if the person was diseased or dirty, he would welcome them. It is said that he had many extraordinary abilities, including spiritual knowledge and an excellent relationship with animals. Martin also founded an orphanage for abandoned children and slaves and is known for raising a dowry for young girls in short amounts of time. He became known as 'the Father of the Poor.'

Martin was great friends with both St. Juan Macías, a fellow Dominican lay brother, and St. Rose of Lima, a lay Dominican. In January of 1639, when Martin was 60 years old, he became very ill, with chills, fevers and tremors causing him great pain. He would experience almost a year full of illness until he passed away on 3rd of November 1639. He was carried to his grave by church dignitaries; something unheard of before.

By the time he died, he was widely known and talks of his miracles in medicine, cures of deadly diseases and caring for the sick were everywhere. St. Martin de Porres was beatified by Pope Gregory XVI on 29th October 1837, and canonised by Pope John XXIII on 6th May 1962.

He has become the patron saint of people for multiracial harmony, innkeepers, barbers, public health workers and more. His feast day is 3rd November.

St Martin was devoted to Jesus, to the service of others and to the care for all of God's creation.



ST MARTIN'S SIGNIFICANCE TO DAMASCUS COLLEGE

CELEBRATING ST MARTIN DE PORRES - SERVANT OF GOD'S CREATION

Sacred Heart College opened in 1881 as a primary and secondary boarding and day school for girls. In the early 1960s, a decision was made to build a senior campus on the Mt Clear property that was bequeathed by Miss Alice Fanning to the Sisters of Mercy who had been her carers for the final decade of her life.

In December 1949, Colin Hingston, the father of one of the students, became seriously ill after swallowing a fish bone. Colin's brother, a Dominican priest, introduced the principal, Mother Mary Bonaventure Healy, to Blessed Martin de Porres, trusting that Martin might intercede with God on Colin's behalf. Colin recovered and Martin became a favourite of both staff and students. Interestingly, Colin Hingston's daughter, Monica, later became a staff member at St Martin's in the Pines in the late seventies. In 1962, Martin de Porres was canonised and is now recognised as a saint. It was inevitable that the Sisters would turn to Martin when Miss Fanning's will was contested. Staff and students prayed the prayer that they had prayed so often in the past: "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, Martin de Porres help us, for the honour and glory of God and the salvation of all [creation]. Amen." The final settlement required that one shilling be paid. The 21 hectares became the property of the Sisters of Mercy and ultimately the site of our beautiful College.

The Sisters of Mercy were acutely aware of the natural beauty that was to be the home of this new senior secondary campus of Sacred Heart College. They considered Martin de Porres, 16th century Dominican brother from Peru and an extraordinary lover of the natural world, to be a fitting patron and protector for the College.

St Martin's in the Pines commenced construction in 1965 and was occupied in May 1967. Rumour has it, that although the intention had always been to call the new school Sacred Heart College – Senior School, it came to be known as St Martin's in the Pines, as this was the title that the construction crew building the school referred to the location as 'that St Martins place out in the pine trees.' When it came time to name the school, Mother Bonaventure said "what better name could it be known by, it is St Martin's in the Pines".

In 1967 a statue of St Martin was commissioned by the Sisters of Mercy, sculpted by Italian artist Ernesto Murgo, a well-known sculptor whose works can be found in private collections all over the world, including the Vatican. This statue was originally housed in the admin/dining room atrium at St Martin's in the Pines, and was formally blessed at the opening of the senior school on 21 April, 1968.

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 senior school of Sacred Heart College. The sisters wanted the statue to capture the imagination while embodying the College motto 'In Altum Oculos Tollite' (Raise your eyes aloft), to remind us of the need to share his concern for all the creatures of the earth community. The statue had a fibre glass interior and was overlaid in bronze, and came with a warning that the bronze overlay had a limited life-span. At the time (1967), there were no funds to cast St Martin in bronze.

This iconic and significant statue now sits proudly with eyes aloft in the same location, within the beautiful atrium of the St Martin Resource Centre (library) at Damascus College. In addition to the statue in honour of St Martin, the library at Damascus College was named the St Martin Resource Centre, in recognition of our foundation college St Martin's in the Pines. The statue, of course, had particular significance, because it was located in the same building. At the same time, other buildings were named for our other two foundation colleges, the St Paul's Arts & Technology Centre and The Sacred Heart Wing.

Some 40 plus years later, thanks to generous donations that raised \$46,000, the statue was restored and cast in bronze in 2015, and was unveiled in July 2015 in its current glorious form. The unveiling was live streamed to the whole school, giving it a great sense of occasion and celebration.

With St Martin and all those who form part of our heritage, we raise our eyes aloft in praise and gratitude, as we keep our gaze firmly fixed on the cry of the earth community, and its call for mercy and compassion.



DAMASCUS WELCOMES A NEW IMAGE OF ST MARTIN

CELEBRATING ST MARTIN DE PORRES - SERVANT OF GOD'S CREATION

As St Martin de Porres was to be the new house patron, the College was tasked with finding the right image to represent St Martin. The process for the selection of a base for developing an image had its difficulties, given that there were no representations of St Martin from his own lifetime, only later artistic impressions. Indeed the College already has a number of artistic impressions of the Saint, in sculpture and paint.

After some deliberation, an internet image was found to have general appeal and suitability. The next step in the process was having an official copy commissioned as the Damascus College image of St Martin de Porres. But who was to do the artwork? Some investigation with former staff members, Sr. Marie Davey and Dianne Cody, discovered the original artist responsible for the first set of Damascus College House patron images. Barbara Madden, a one-time staff member at Sacred Heart College in the late 1970s, was the artist that had sketched the Catherine McAuley, Edmund Rice and Xavier Flood house patron images in 1997, and she still lived in Ballarat.

In late 2018, Barbara agreed to have a shot at St Martin and, given the need to have images ready for the new school year, she worked on the project within a limited time frame. The resulting image was a wonderful success. It is now used alongside the earlier house patron images in the John Shannon Centre, the Undercroft / Canteen, the Mercy Administration Wing and on the College Website. Barbara visited the College on 20th February 2019 to see the images in place and was happy to have made another contribution to the ongoing story of the College.

Prayer to St Martin de Porres

Blessed by your example of unbounded charity and humility of heart, we offer our prayers through you, St Martin de Porres.

Show people of every race and nation the paths of unity and of justice, for the honour and glory of God and the salvation of all creation. May we live by the light of Christ.

Amen

O'COLLINS HOUSE NAME CHANGED TO ST MARTIN

CELEBRATING ST MARTIN DE PORRES -
SERVANT OF GOD'S CREATION

Since the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse findings were handed down in 2018, the Damascus College Board considered the implications of these findings for our community. There were no allegations raised within the Royal Commission regarding Damascus College or its founding school, however, we know that there are people within our school community who are victims of abuse and, in some cases, institutional abuse. We may not know them or their stories personally, but as people of Ballarat, we know the effects of the harm that was caused.

Central to our mission as a Catholic school is living as Christian People. To look at how we move forward as a community of Christian people, we have looked to a series of guiding principles, as follows:

- the College remains committed to keeping young people in our care safe
- the College does not perpetuate harm for those who have been hurt; we are part of the Church, and the abuse is part of our collective history
- we look to the strongest expressions of Christian living as role models for young people
- we look at managing change so as not to cause harm to the current generation of young people and members of the Church and College community

Bishop James O'Collins was instrumental in the establishment of St Paul's College, and for that the Damascus College community is grateful. He achieved many great things over his life and ministry, but the Royal Commission concluded in its findings that he had the opportunity to act differently about allegations regarding diocesan clergy. Had he acted differently, some of the terrible abuse that transpired may have been avoided. While the College will always be grateful for the foundations he laid for us, there are people within the broader community who suffered and who continue to suffer because we celebrate his contribution.

The Damascus College Board considered this extensively and reached the well-considered position to not perpetuate harm by continuing to name and celebrate Bishop O'Collins' contribution. 2018 was the last year of O'Collins House at Damascus College.

While James O'Collins has been an important symbolic figure to Damascus College, the values and the people are what make up this House, and they are the things that we want to capture and celebrate as we move forward. House Leader, Dan Jans, convened a working group of past and current students of O'Collins House and staff. This group refined a process to establish a new name for O'Collins House that captures the spirit and values of this House while celebrating our Catholic heritage. With guidance from the Board, the working party arrived at the new name of St Martin House, to commence in 2019. St Martin House is named for St Martin de Porres, who is central to the history of our College and who provides many contemporary virtues for us to explore over the coming years.

"Everything; even sweeping, scraping vegetables, weeding a garden and waiting on the sick could be a prayer if it were offered to God."

Service

Participation

Trust

Diligence

Truth

Saint Martin de Porres 1579-1639

PERSONAL REFLECTION ON THE HOUSE NAME CHANGE

BY DANIEL JANS, ST MARTIN HOUSE LEADER

O'Collins House students are passionate, loyal and united. They have proudly adopted the values of participation, trust, truth, diligence and service, all distinguishing qualities our House is acknowledged for by others. It is in this unified belief and support of one another that we have always found the sustenance to move strongly forward, through all situations and challenges.

"The O'Collins House name has a rich past and has forged a legacy that we intend to continue as St Martin House. We will continue the legacy that O'Collins House has started. Yes, our House name represents us, but it is us as the people of this House who truly define it."

These words of the then O'Collins House School Captain for 2019, Mathew Snibson, provided inspiration and forward focus for the body of students and staff to become the first representatives of St Martin House in 2019.

There was much to consider in the process of renaming the House. The Board and Principal, Matt Byrne, were shining lights in setting guiding principles for selecting a new House Founder and for educating our alumni and wider Damascus community of the need for change. The new Founder needed to align with our Catholic Tradition, ensure our House Values can be used with Integrity, be a historical figure, and continue with gender balance across the four Houses. Consideration also was given for potential concerns of School SIMON Coding and Diocesan / Parish Connections.

Formation of a House renaming Committee was convened. The committee contained present students, including 2018 and 2019 House and School Captains, O'Collins House and other House staff, past O'Collins House and other alumni and fellow House leaders.

The committee's main objectives were working to ensure the selection of the strongest possible expression of Christian living as a role model and to educate and notify the wider student body of the need for change, with an inclusive and invested process. In addition to this, the everyday practicalities of a name change were also considered, such as reissuing House badges and updating founder pictures, banners, websites and room names. We were also conscious of the timing of the announcement of the decision to students and cognizant of how the information may affect the students, particularly our Year 12s, since it would be around exam time.

An exceptional selection of nominees was shortlisted, with St Martin de Porres elected unanimously following the voting. The board accepted



Painted by St Martin House Students





Daniel Jans, St Martin Student House Captains and Karen Goonan, Assistant House Leader

the decision and ratified the choice of St Martin House. It seemed an obvious choice, considering the St Martin connection within the Damascus story, his exemplary adherence to the guiding principles, and his inspirational and compassionate life paradigm, which captures the House spirit and values of service and truth. In addition to this, St Martin's statue lives as a centrepiece in our school, representing an already familiar figure to the school community.

At the announcement House assembly, it was important the student leaders were instrumental in explaining the process and notifying the students of the decision. This would enhance ownership and investment by the students. The anticipation was high, with student Eloise Sheridan stating, "I love O'Collins House, the name is changing but the people who make up this House are the same. I still love it, whatever we are called."

The collective House student leadership team, comprising of all House SRC members and House and School Captains, counted down from five and, in a unified voice, announced our new name, St Martin House. There was enthusiastic applause and further rousing comment from Milly Frost, the first joint St Martin House School Captain for 2019:

“ We are not the unlucky group that saw the end of O'Collins House, but rather we are the lucky group who are privileged to see the beginning of, and make history as, St Martin House ”

The statue of St Martin was adorned in brilliant green, in celebration. All other Houses assembled at the same time, where House Leaders read a scripted explanation of events. A cohesive understanding was ensured across the entire Damascus student body, where support for the new St Martin students was also requested. I was moved by the warm wishes and genuine conversations of encouragement held from students in other Houses following this occasion, as this is testament to the essence and soul of our school community.

The new St Martin students transitioned very smoothly, aided by the exceptional efforts of our Teacher Advisors. To enhance belonging to the new name, over the next week information and a series of videos was shown and disseminated in TA's, acquainting and deepening the students understanding of St Martin de Porres.

Now, as I write this, the new St Martin House is one term down in 2019, and House spirit is, characteristically, high. Passionate and dedicated teamwork was again on show at the Swimming Carnival, where team St Martin had their name etched on the shield for the first time. Year seven student, Chenoa Williams, painted the accompanying picture as a tribute to St Martin, which was presented to the House and is placed on display.

In essence, as team St Martin, we will continue to strive to foster in all students a sense of belonging, purpose and passion, as has gone before us in the past 23 years. In the words of past House Captain, Riley Holloway:

“In the good and bad times, this House has always supported me and was ready to catch me if I fell. The love and warmth I feel radiating off these special people is something I cherish and will never forget. You're never a stranger, you are made to feel and believe that even you, as an individual, has an important place and role to play amongst the House, and without you, this House would not be its best.”

Daniel Jans
St Martin House Leader
Physical Education and Religious Education Teacher



2019 COLLEGE CAPTAIN

MATTHEW SNIBSON

My name is Matt and I am one of your College Captains in 2019. I am 17 years old and was born here in Ballarat. My older sister, Sarah, also attended Damascus and graduated in the class of 2017.

Being elected the College Captain last year has had a big impact on my life, and I am now enjoying my new role this year. I have always viewed the role of School Captain as a great privilege that only a few get to experience, and also one that comes with many responsibilities and hard work. To me, the College Captain is someone that represents their school with pride and dignity and tries to encapsulate the values of Damascus in everything they do. I strive to take up presented opportunities and be someone who tries their best, in everything I do.

I am feeling very excited about the year ahead, and looking forward to getting involved in everything I can in my last year of high school. In particular, I am very happy to be part of the SRC for my third time here at Damascus, to lead my peers with pride in assemblies, Damascus Day and the final year 12 ceremonies.

The past five years at the College have flashed by, and it is difficult to recall all of the many positive memories I have had here. Some standouts include snow trips each year and the Year 12 retreat. My trip to the County Court, Parliament House for the Deakin Oration and my participation in a Model United Nations were also highlights over the past years. While excursions have always been exciting activities, some of my

fondlest memories have been simply reading my texts dramatically, as a class, in literature, spending time with my friends every day and discussing interesting legal cases in class.

I keep busy with a part-time job at Cold Rock and my hobbies include playing guitar (poorly), badminton, snowboarding and reading. I enjoy following politics, diplomacy and world events, including the humanitarian and environmental issues of the day. When I leave school, I intend to go to university and pursue a career in these areas.

At this point in time, what I enjoy most about my time at school is my relationship with my teachers, my role as college captain and studying subjects that I really enjoy, like literature, history and legal studies.

Damascus has suited me and allowed me to grow. I started my journey at Damascus a very different person, and through the environment that was provided, I have been able to develop into the person I am today. My older sister and I have always been encouraged to take up all opportunities available and the college has offered many of these, which we have both enjoyed. I encourage students in year 7 to push themselves, try new things, maybe join a new club and just do something that is out of their comfort zone.



2019 COLLEGE CAPTAIN

MILLY FROST

There is no better time to be a student at Damascus College. Here we have fantastic teaching staff, a dedicated Principal, and a wonderful admin team who keep the school running like clockwork. Our landscape is filled with native wildlife, our science and music classrooms are being upgraded, and the Drama department is about to launch our famous 'Final Hours' production!

It is certainly shaping up to be a GREAT year and I am enjoying every possible minute of it during my final year of studies.

My name is Milly Frost and this is my story (so far...)

Up until about Grade 5, I was not really inspired to learn. Despite completing endless homework sheets and reading books, it seemed like there was no purpose to the whole school experience. I also felt like I didn't fit into any social groups neatly enough to relax and just enjoy each day of school. By the end of that year, after comparing myself to all of my peers, I realised that I needed to answer a couple of simple questions: 'Who am I?' and 'What do I want to achieve?'

Fast forward nearly eight years later and those two questions have really helped shape my life. I am working hard in my VCE studies and I have received several academic awards over the past five years, represented the College at the National Youth Leaders Day Conference, been a peer mentor, served on the SRC, been fortunate enough to have performed in five school productions, including the Easter story of 'The Final Hours', and am now proud to have been elected to the position of School Captain.

None of these achievements have come easily, though, as I have not slacked off or accepted anything less than the best I can do. I have realised that education is a privilege and not a right, that I am lucky enough to have opportunities to better myself, and that with hard work and perseverance, I can achieve great things.

It is rare for an individual to be naturally gifted in all fields of academics, sport and the arts, and I am no exception! What I lack in the speediness of Usain Bolt or the fierce fitness of Serena Williams, I make up for with a 'giving it a go' attitude, participating in every swimming and athletics carnival, ball sports day and lap of the lake. I even tried my hand at tennis by joining the afterschool girls' team in Years 7 and 8.

Mostly, though, I am a creative soul with a passion for the performing arts. Alongside my heavy academic workload, drama and theatre allow me to have a creative outlet, a space where I can forget numbers and chemical equations and, rather, discover less tangible things, like diversity, compassion, imagination, honesty and trust. Through drama, I can try to understand what it means to be human and how I can contribute to better humanity.

With my final year of school comes even greater personal insight. I have discovered not to lose sight of the small things, the everyday helpful things that contribute to personal growth and change. I remember being a keen Year 7 student ready to knock everything off my school bucket-list and figure out the answer to life, the universe and everything (for those watching at home the answer is 42). What I realised is that this development cannot be rushed, in fact, it should be nurtured with time so that you can properly discover your passions, values, beliefs and skills.

My dream career goal is to move into the field of Medicine, hopefully becoming a doctor, someday in the future. After a year of dedicated school work, I hope to be accepted into a Bachelor of Science or Biomedicine undergraduate degree so I can begin my tertiary education journey. Along with university study, I hope to expand my horizons and knowledge of the world by travelling and deepening my cultural awareness. I am grateful for the opportunities that I have at Damascus under the guidance of a wonderful principal, the dedicated teaching staff and the greater school community, and look forward to the year ahead.



WHAT IS OUR 2018 COLLEGE DUX UP TO NOW?

ALUMNI STORY

When existing solely in an anticipative state, it is largely safe to say that the transition from secondary to tertiary education often appears an understandably surreal and distant prospect. Add to this the legal upgrade to the official status of “adult”, a physical relocation to a city that is a ten-hour drive from home, and the sudden necessity of expanding my culinary repertoire beyond the limits of pasta and porridge (though never together of course) and you have yourself a lovely recipe for what one would expect to be a thoroughly overwhelming start to university life.

“However, somehow, I am very happy to say this has not been the case, as the transition to the new challenges of 2019 has, actually, miraculously felt almost entirely natural and intuitive.”

Although I was expecting to find the need to reassess pathways and expectations upon facing all that is new in a tertiary environment, I now feel awfully fortunate to be comfortable and confident in knowing that I

have made a decision that I am excited to see through over the next five or so years.

Although I am still open to the (likely) possibility of adjusting my pathway, later on, this year I have commenced studies of a combined Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Laws degree at the University of Sydney.

Throughout Year 12, I was largely indecisive as to which course and institution seemed the best choice for me and my future career, and even now I am still uncertain as to what actual profession lies beyond my eventual graduation.

However, I finally chose the University of Sydney for its breadth and quality of opportunities, its location within Australia’s most populous city, and the specific educational points of my degree. Now fully intending to take advantage of the vast range of opportunities available at such a firmly established and internationally connected university, I am sure much of what I learn and who I meet will assist me in shaping my career pathway.

It has also been exciting to hear from many of my fantastic friends from Damascus College, as they commence studies and other endeavours across Melbourne, Hobart, Adelaide, Geelong and, of course, Ballarat. Though we are now scattered across the country, rather than all together in one classroom, I wish them all the best of luck and know many of the relationships I built at Damascus will continue to be of great importance to me into the future.



Of course, moving interstate has not happened without being sorry to leave some things behind, especially my amazing family. I miss them all, every day, but am excited to come back home to visit in semester and mid-semester breaks.

In Sydney, I have moved into the suburb of Glebe – just a hop, skip, and jump away from the university’s primary campus. Again, I feel very fortunate to say that the friends I have made at my residence and within my degree are a lovely, funny, and hard-working bunch of people, with whom I look forward to sharing the year’s experiences.

For any Damascus College students who are unsure about what lies beyond school in the process of possibly moving away from home and choosing a university and degree, I would encourage you to seek advice from past students who have experienced the decision-making process. On this note, I would be very happy to answer any questions or discuss the transition process to university with Damascus students, especially for those perhaps considering interstate study in Sydney or elsewhere. (Office administration will have my contact details.)

Best of luck to the Damascus College community for 2019, I look forward to hearing of all your successes in the future.

Sean O’Beirne, Class of 2018
99.90 ATAR





VALDA WARD RSM

DAMASCUS SISTER OF MERCY

'I Can Never Love Enough'

Many of you reading this would have had the pleasure of knowing Sr Valda Ward as Principal of St. Martin's in the Pines, a post she held for 12 years, from 1983 to 1994. Many will not realise that she was a dedicated life-long learner herself, and was not afraid to move with the times. Even as a new teacher in the late 1950s, the School Inspector noted Valda's use of modern techniques and the positive response these techniques received in the classroom. Music and Drama always featured prominently in whatever class she was teaching, and many students received the benefit of her innovative and progressive style.

Valda really did know the value of quality education. From her time as a student at Sacred Heart College in the late 1940s until later in life, she never stopped learning and encouraging others, both students and her fellow Sisters of Mercy, to do the same.

Her desire to live in a more just and equitable world was the driving force behind her studies, and she was able to put her learning to good use both in her work and in living out her motto, 'I can never love enough'.

Valda was a woman who loved her work and her family and was loved in return. She was also a woman who loved a little retail therapy when she could get it, and her many travels, from Hong Kong to Canada and Papua New Guinea to Europe, allowed her to indulge a little in her love of clothes.

Valda was born in 1930 in Horsham, Victoria, and was educated by the Mercy Sisters, first in Casterton and then, later, at Sacred Heart College in Ballarat. In her school days, she loved ballet and drama, and she passed on this love during her years as a teacher and as a principal. The Valda Ward Auditorium at Damascus College is testament to Valda's passion for the performing arts. Over the years, Valda held many different positions, and she was passionate about every post she held – whether it was running the Teacher's College at Patrician House, being Congregation leader at Ballarat East, or working as Teacher and Principal at St. Martin's. Asked once by her dear friend, Sr Veronica Lawson, to reveal her favourite ministry, Valda didn't hesitate in replying, "Anything I did for the Sisters".



THE PREMIERS SPIRIT OF ANZAC PRIZE

BEN WRIGHT

In February of this year, Year 10 student, Ben Wright, was awarded the Premier's Spirit of ANZAC Prize, from a field of more than 400 applicants around Victoria. Ben will join the group of 22 students to visit Vietnam and Singapore this April, where he will undertake a once-in-a-lifetime tour of Vietnam and Singapore.

Ben recently received the prize from the Minister for Veteran Affairs, Hon. Robin Scott MP, at the award ceremony on Thursday 14 February, at the Park Hyatt Melbourne. This prize was open to Year 9 and 10 students currently enrolled in a Victorian school, where students were required to submit an entry that addressed one of the three topics, selected from WWI, WWII, the Vietnam War or more recent conflicts.

As part of the application process, Ben had to attend a group interview in Melbourne at the Shrine of Remembrance. Ben chose topic one "Explore or represent the perspectives and experiences of Australians in war," where he prepared a report in a diary format on the lesser known war location of Mesopotamia (now Iraq).

Ben said that one of his passions is flying, and that he was delighted to find that the Australian involvement in Mesopotamia in the Great War was exclusively aeronautical.

"One of the key factors I wanted to show in my entry was the perspectives of people who were in combat and how their attitudes towards war and what they were doing changed as time progressed. To convey this, I created five diary entries to provide a realistic view of a pilot in Mesopotamia. I chose the diary format so I could get inside the head of my character and his attitude towards the war," he said.

During his research, Ben visited the RAAF Base Williams at Point Cook in Melbourne, which is an extensive museum with lots of information and artefacts, as well as many full-sized aeroplanes. Included in Ben's diary is the fact that the first airman killed in action representing Australia in conflict was Flight Lieutenant George Mertz. He was raised and educated in Ballarat, was a doctor, and was killed in 1915 after crashing. He was killed by local tribesmen near Basra, Mesopotamia. Ben was surprised at the Ballarat connection.

"The main point of my entry is to alert people to the fact that, during the First World War, Gallipoli and the Western Front were not the only places where Australians fought and died, and that the war was just as bad in those other theatres. I feel as though Mesopotamia is somewhat forgotten in the shadow of Gallipoli and the Western Front and I hope that my work will remind readers that the 'Spirit of Anzac' is found just as much in distant lands as in better-known places."

Brendan Bawden, Damascus College teacher, has also been chosen to go on this trip, as he is one of three chosen teacher chaperones.

The group will depart for Vietnam and Singapore on Sunday 7 April, returning Wednesday 17 April. The prize includes accommodation, food, flights, meaning that Ben will only need to pay for his spending money.





BY DESIGN

ALUMNI STORY

The year of 2013 saw me graduate from Damascus College, with my focus major in Graphic Design. Like most school leavers I was eager to see what my future held and very excited to finally have some time away from study and to do some “me things”. Like most newly minted 18-year-olds, taking a gap year was a well-earned break, and making work and travel an absolute top priority! My life is now not where I’d originally thought I would be and my journey has changed direction many times.

In Year 12, I applied and was accepted into an amazing design course at Deakin University, where I was going to major in Communication Design. This was something I had been passionate about since beginning at Damascus College in 2008.

I was based at the beautiful, new and state-of-the-art Waterfront Campus in Geelong. After taking my gap year I was ready to begin my studies, move into a house with my best friend and begin my future after Damascus. I decided, after my first year, to postpone my studies at Deakin and pursue something different. I was quite conflicted in what it was I actually wanted to do and what I thought was missing in my degree. I knew I wanted to continue with further education and that my career path was in design.

After some serious in-depth searching, I realised that Interior Design was what I wanted to discover and learn more about. I have always had a passion for this side of design, and it involves parts of architecture without having to be an architect.

I decided to complete a Diploma of Interior Design through the Interior Design Institute, and found I could tap into my passion for colour, design and layouts, which really came through.

After completing this diploma, I decided to go back to university and finish off a bachelor degree, to compliment my current diploma degree. I knew after studying for the last two years that I wanted a degree that would not only enhance my design knowledge but also further my career path. At Swinburne, I found the course that would be that compliment.

The course is a Bachelor of Design and I am majoring in Branded Environments. It is, basically, how it sounds, and I am branding the environment around me, whether that be through branding, wayfinding and signage, communication design or interior work. Basically, it is a course that was made for me, and I’m excited to say that I’ll be finished my degree at the end of this year.

This year, I was privileged enough to be accepted into an internship in London, working with a marketing company in their design unit. Not only did it teach me so many new skills and help me develop my current knowledge that I can take into my future careers, but I also grew a lot within myself.

I am also proud to say that my hard work is paying off and the company I was interning for has taken me on to work for them as a freelance international designer. Living in London for two months allowed me to experience things that I and many other people wouldn’t normally get the chance to do. I grew emotionally and professionally, and I wouldn’t exchange that experience for anything.

Over the last 5 to 6 years since leaving school, I have managed multiple part-time and full-time jobs whilst handling my studies. Without these, I would not have been able to save the money to allow me to move out of home or travel. I have been lucky enough to travel around parts of America, Europe, Asia and the UK for both leisure and studies. I plan to continue my travels around the world in the future with the potential for it to be not only for leisure but also for work.

Since leaving school, my original plans changed from where I thought I initially was going to be. At times, it challenged me both academically and emotionally. However, I am so pleased that I have been led down this path, and I am excited and eagerly looking forward to what the future will hold for me.

Lauren Doyle, Class of 2013

2018 AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENT EVENING

DAMASCUS COLLEGE EVENT

The annual Awards and Achievement evening was held on Monday 3 December 2018, at the Regent Cinema Ballarat. This event recognises students who, throughout 2018, achieved academic excellence, general endeavour, sporting endeavour and age group champions.

The 2017 College Dux, Flynn Jamieson, was invited back to receive the Dr Yvonne Aitken Scholarship, sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy, and he provided a heart-warming and humorous address to the audience, on what he has been up to in the year since finishing high school. Flynn changed direction after only five weeks at university studying Physiotherapy when he decided the course wasn't for him. So, he got a job and began an intern program, coordinating a local youth group. He said that he now realises that the education he gained at Damascus has had a profound impact on him, really shaping the person he is today. He now plans to go back to university to complete a Bachelor of Science with a Master of Teaching, to eventually become a Science and Maths teacher.

In keeping with tradition, the College also invited a past student, Jacob Wood (Class of 2009), to speak about his life and experiences since leaving Damascus College. He spoke of his Law career and his commitment to human rights and helping those in marginalised communities.

Jacob shared that not everything has gone to plan in his life and that there are things that he could have done better. It wasn't that he should have studied more, passed more subjects, or been perfect. Instead, he wished

that he had have been more compassionate to himself when he didn't do well.

Jacob said that when we talk about compassion, it's in the context of showing sympathy or understanding to others. Compassion allows us to look at someone else's situation and respond with kindness, tolerance, care and warmth.

The audience was treated to various performances throughout the night, including a piano solo by 2018 College Captain, Sean O'Beirne, to welcome guests upon arrival, and a video interview and compilation of Year 12 student Sam Rizzo, featuring his many sporting accomplishments, most notably representing Australia at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

A wonderfully entertaining musical performance from the 2018 College music production, Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat, of singing 'Any Dream Will Do', was delivered by Ellie Carroll (Yr 12), Patrick Western (Yr 10), Jai Hillas (Yr 10), Sarah Buck (Yr 9), Amalee Eden (Yr 9), Eliza Karlake (Yr 9), Amber Kennett (Yr 9), Georgia Newman (Yr 9), Megan O'Beirne (Yr 8) and Elarin Johnson (Yr 7). The final performance that captivated the audience's attention, which had a great sense of fun and hilarity to it, was a solo drama, non-naturalistic performance of 'Santa Claus' by Year 12 student, Thomas Lopes.



Also acknowledged and celebrated at the Awards Night were the 2018 Senior and Junior Art Acquisition Awards, awarded to:

Senior Art Acquisition – **Sian Clifford**, Yr 12, for a series of four portrait drawings titled, 'Mad World, a world in which every one of us, at some point, are mentally, emotionally and physically distressed.'

Junior Art Acquisition – **Charlotte Grimes**, Yr 9, for a self-portrait using the medium of the blue pen to create a range of textures

'2018 Special Awards' were awarded and the recipients are listed below:

Pierre de Coubertin Award – **Eliza Lepair**

Sports Person of the Year Award – **Samuel Rizzo and Ellie Henderson**

Junior Debating Award sponsored by Geoff Howard – **Nicholas Kattula**

Junior Social Justice Award – **Amber Kennett**

Senior Social Justice Award – **Castley Webb**

Junior Performing Arts Award – **Eliza Karlake**

Senior Performing Arts Award – **Ellie Carroll**

Junior Leadership Award – **Megan O'Beirne**

Senior Leadership Award – **Matthew Harris**

Jo Reilly Award – **Mikayla Montgomery**

Damascus College Scholarship for the Arts – **Sofie Sawka**

Damascus College Scholarship for Sport – **Megan O'Beirne**

Damascus College Scholarship for Academic Study – **Nicholas Kattula**

Dorothy Irene-Ellis Thomas Scholarship – **Ellie Carroll & Sean O'Beirne**

Dr Yvonne Aitken Scholarship – **Flynn Jamieson**, Class of 2017, College Dux

Sisters of Mercy Dorothy Griffin Scholarship – **Hannah Mroczkowski & Patrick Western**

Catherine King Community Shield – **Jo-anne Kennedy**, Assistant Principal, Student Wellbeing

Senior Art Acquisition – **Sian Clifford**

Junior Art Acquisition – **Charlotte Grimes**

The evening was an affirmation of Damascus College students who have been given significant skills and talents and who have been required to make the most of their blessings. Congratulations to all award recipients on their contribution to the College and on their hard work and commitment to their education throughout 2018.



NEXT GEN EXHIBITION

DAMASCUS COLLEGE STUDENTS

The VCE Next Generation 2019 art and design awards exhibition opened to a packed audience in February 2019, at the Art Gallery of Ballarat. This exhibition showcased the work of students who completed their 2018 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.

Congratulations to the numerous Damascus College Visual Arts students whose work was selected for this professionally curated

exhibition. Our talented participants from the class of 2018 include Ruby Hyatt, Sian Clifford, Oscar Thomas, Anastasia Walker, Emily Armeni and Taya Letcher.

A special congratulations to Maison Doll for being our first Technology student to be accepted into the Next Gen exhibition. Job well done Maison.

Maison Doll





Sian Clifford



Ruby Hyatt



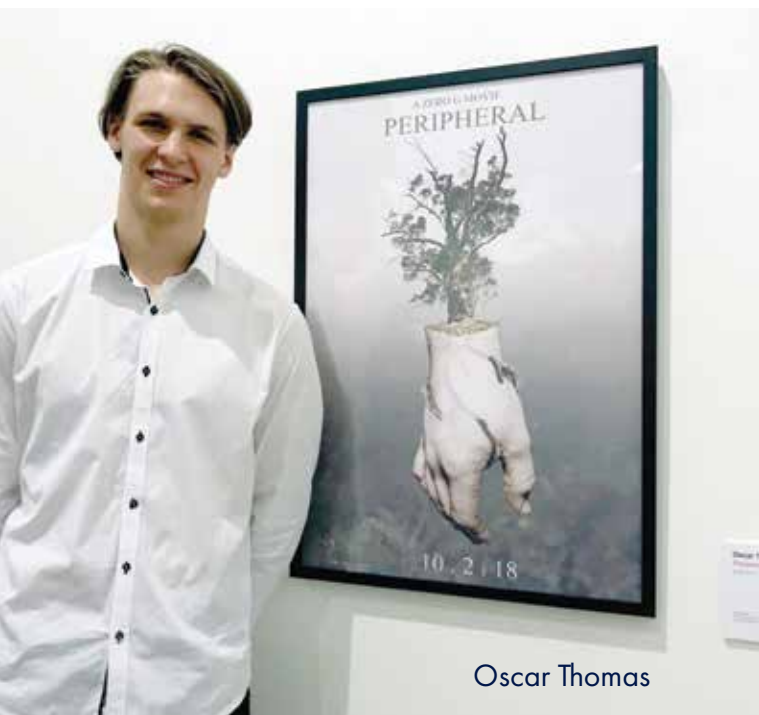
Sharen Wolfe (teacher) accepting award for Sian Clifford



Emily Armeni



Anastasia Walker



Oscar Thomas



Taya Letcher

MY STORY

BY MACKENZIE YANDELL

My name is Mackenzie Yandell and I was born in Daylesford, before moving to Ballarat. I am part of an average-sized family, with two sisters, both of whom have or are still attending Damascus College. However, my extended family, my Damascus family, is quite extensive ... as a Year 7 student, my teachers have always known me simply because my dad, Mr Nick Yandell, works at Damascus. Many people expect this to come with many benefits, however, I am here to let you all in on a secret; this is simply not the case, especially so when dad stopped bringing his wallet to school, and "borrowing" money for lunch became a much greater struggle. That said, he is very useful for filling me in on gossip whenever I miss a day, plus he can actually operate PAM, so that is a real help. I have attended Damascus for all of my high school years, and my parents chose Damascus for obvious reasons, as my older sister went here and, obviously, my dad works here; yet, it also offered my family the best option available for my education.

During my time as a little Year 8, I was roped into rowing by a couple of friends to strengthen my fitness. However, since then, I have become almost addicted to the sport, and it has become a large part of who I am today. Receiving the position of Captain of Boats meant a lot to me, as it was something to which I aspired since I began rowing. This year, being my final season, the Head of the Lake rowing regatta was a big part of my focus, as I wanted to represent my school as best I could, and we placed second by a mere 2.55 seconds. I love rowing, as it has strengthened my friendships and has truly shown me what it means to work hard.

The support from our classmates meant a lot to us, and many were there to support us, despite the regatta being postponed, due to weather. It truly made me proud to be a Damascus student and to see the lengths other students would go to in support of us is something we were extremely

proud of, and it meant a lot to us. This is one of the many reasons why I'm proud to be from Damascus, as we support each other in all endeavours, whether it be theatrical, academic or sporting.

In school, I'm a bit of a Maths nerd, choosing all three available Maths and Physics subjects or, as I have been told, "just applied math." I simply enjoy finding solutions and I find the concept of numbers and their use in our real world fascinating. I have many fond memories from school and, even though it seems as though there is still so much school to go, the idea of it ending does still make me sad.

Outside of school, other than rowing, I enjoy soccer, listening to music and, occasionally, a bit of PS4. Unfortunately, even with my love of music, I have absolutely zero musical ability, so I leave that to the professionals and to my talented friends and peers, who are far more musically talented than I am.

After school, I wish to dive right into university. I am currently considering doing Engineering or Applied Mathematics. It has been a dream of mine to study overseas, specifically Germany. After university, I would love to specialise in mechanical or renewable engineering, as I wish to make a difference in our world and to help the development of projects that will further the development of people as a sustainable society.

If I could tell my Year 7 self anything, it would be to relax a bit, as school is only as hard as you let it be, no matter what year you are in. If you focus on the stress instead of the fun, that's all it will become to you.

Mackenzie Yandell, Year 12 student



REPRESENTING AUSTRALIA IN U15 CRICKET

TAHLIA MEIER

Year 10 student, Tahlia Meier, was selected to represent Victoria in the U15 National Girls' Cricket Championship that was played in Canberra from 18 February to 1 March.

Tahlia said that she was the only player to be selected from Western Victoria.

"I recently returned from representing the U18 Victorian team in Bendigo and Ballarat, and was selected for the U15 team through playing in the Youth Premier League, in the Melbourne Renegades team," she said.

At the event, her Victorian team finished 4th overall, and Tahlia's personal performance was outstanding during the carnival, so much so that she was consequently selected for the Australian U15 squad.

"I had a great tournament," she said.

The Australian squad of 20 players will soon travel to Brisbane for a training camp, where the final squad of 13 will be selected to compete against the U18 team at the National Championships in January 2020.

Tahlia was the leading run scorer of all teams that played around Australia at the Canberra event, she came 3rd in the player of the series, and was also the first ever Victorian female to score a century in the U15 tournament, and the only century of the carnival.

"I feel very honoured and excited to be selected to represent Victoria and Australia."



LIFE'S DETOURS

ALUMNI STORY

I began my schooling at Sacred Heart College in 1972, as a Year 10 student, before my parents' circumstances changed and we moved to Melbourne to live with family. We had moved around a lot and I had attended schools in Colac, Maldon, Bendigo and Lancefield. I was happy to return as a student at St Martin's in the Pines in 1973 and 1974.

In my graduating year of 1974, I achieved excellent results and I enrolled at Melbourne University to do a bachelor's degree. However, before I began my studies, I was in a car accident that left me incapacitated for several months. I was packed off to Western Australia to stay with family who could care for me, and it was during this time that I met my husband Pete.

Pete and I married in 1977 and he continued to work on his parent's farm. His father had been unwell for several years, himself, and took early retirement. They moved into Fremantle and we lived on and worked the farm in the beautiful Swan Valley.

Sadly, Pete died from a heart attack at the age of 42, when our daughter Mary was just 2 years old. I was unable to stay on the farm and so Mary and I found ourselves moving from Western Australia to live with my Aunt in the Canadian capital of Ottawa. It was here that I finally went to university and gained my Accounting degree. While working at the Royal Bank of Canada, I met my second husband, David McKay.

David was originally from Luton, not far outside of London, so we packed up our small family and journeyed to Cambridge in the summer of 1995. It was a bit of a culture shock, but one to which we soon adapted. My mother died that same year and so I journeyed back to Australia for the first time since Mary and I had left.

While I was in Australia for my Mum's funeral, I learned that David and Mary had been in a motor vehicle accident. Mary was saved from serious injury because of the seat belt that she was wearing. David was thrown from the car and suffered a traumatic brain injury. His injuries and subsequent recovery required me to become his full-time carer.

Mary graduated from Moreleigh College and began a teaching career in 2011. Together, we took a holiday to Australia in 2013, and I had the pleasure of showing her the old Sacred Heart building and driving past St Martin's. While on this holiday, Mary met a lovely lad by the name of Stewart. They were married in London in 2013, and they have made me a proud granny of two, Claire and Peter.

Life has not always been easy, and I have been detoured a few times from where I thought I would go, however, in the end, I think I have always ended up where I was supposed to be.

Carol McKay nee Harrington, Class of 1974



2019 PERFORMING ARTS REUNION

UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENT

We are pleased to announce that in 2019 Damascus College will be hosting the inaugural Performing Arts reunion for Alumni of Damascus and its foundation colleges, Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's in the Pines.

This will be an afternoon where alumni can reconnect as we celebrate and remember their contributions to College productions.

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE

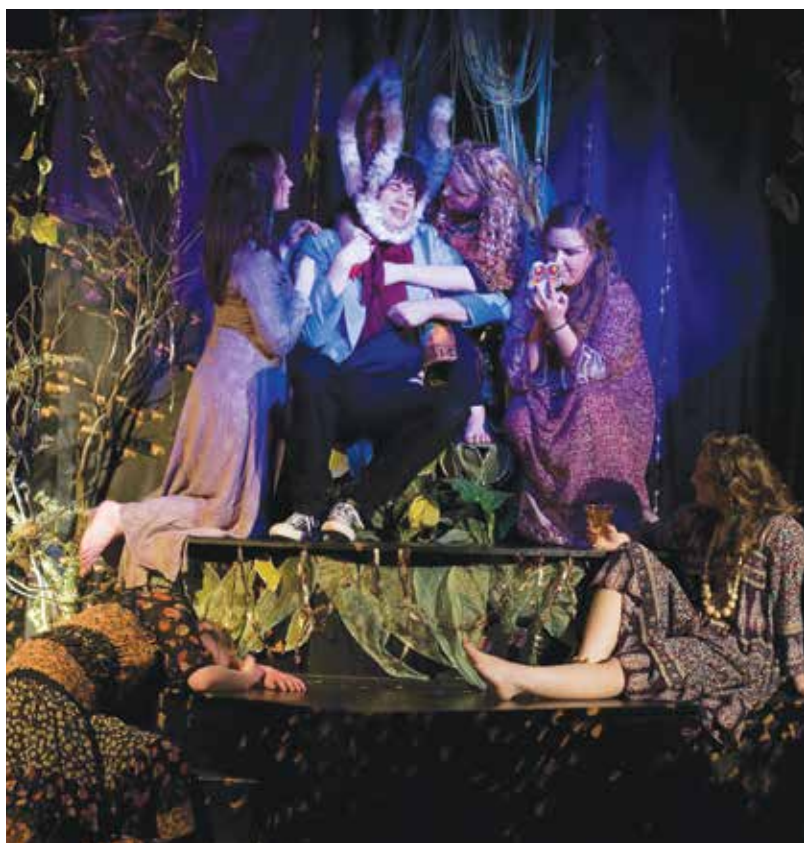
The Performing Arts Reunion will be held
on Saturday 19 October 2019
from 3pm
at Damascus College.

Alumni at Damascus College are defined as past students and staff of Damascus College and its foundation colleges, Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's in the Pines.

More details will be available later in 2019. Please visit
damascus.vic.edu.au/past-students-reunions-events
and complete the brief survey to help with planning and to stay informed.



connecting@Damascus





Kim Anderson, inaugural winner of the Damascus College Art Project

2020 ALUMNI ART PROJECT SUBMISSIONS

NOW OPEN

Expressions of interest are now invited for the 2020 Alumni Art Project.

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

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

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

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

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

The deadline for your 2020 Alumni Art Project submission of interest is Monday 1 July 2019.

The artist will be chosen and notified in August, with the art piece and artist's statement to be delivered to the College by mid-November.

Alumni at Damascus College are defined as past students and staff of Damascus College and its foundation colleges, Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's in the Pines.



Artist Peter Thomas works on his sculptural piece.



Artist Seona Murnane with her piece on display at Damascus College



connecting@Damascus

BLESSING OF THE BOATS

DAMASCUS COLLEGE ROWING

On Wednesday 13 February, the Damascus College rowing program held a blessing of the boats at Lake Wendouree, where we welcomed the acquisition of two new boats, named, MARGARET ISOBEL I and MARGARET ISOBEL II.

These boats are the first and only new boats, or new racers, that Damascus has been able to acquire.

Fr Brendan Davey was a parish priest here in the Diocese of Ballarat for all of his adult life. He passed away in August of 2016 and is remembered as a pastoral and generous man who spent his life in the service of others.

Brendan's estate was largely an inheritance that he received from his own aunt and Godmother Margaret Isobel Walsh, Brendan's mother's sister.

Fr Brendan left money to Damascus and his wish was that a boat be named the Margaret Isobel. Damascus College has been able to add to the gift provided by Fr Brendan, to acquire two racing boats, each honouring Fr Brendan's wishes.

“ Margaret Isobel Walsh was known as Isobel. ”

Isobel was the nurse of a prominent Melbourne surgeon, and she also nursed in Papua New Guinea in the Second World War.

While Fr Brendan was the beneficiary of her estate, out of her great affection for him, Fr Brendan did not prosper from the gift he received. Instead, he made that gift grow to provide opportunities for others.

We thank Margaret Isobel Walsh and Fr Brendan Davey for this extremely generous gift and know that these two boats are a welcome addition to the growing Damascus College rowing program.





2019 ALUMNI ART PROJECT

AMELIA JOHNSON

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

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

The 2019 artist commissioned is Amelia Johnson, Class of 2017. Amelia created this beautiful painting on canvas, titled 'The Hands'. Each artist is asked to develop an artist statement describing the motivation behind the piece.

2019 Artist Statement

Through my journey as a student at Damascus College, I was able to determine in my mind what it means 'To Live By The Light of Christ'. For me, the College motto means to give and love, unconditionally. The motto is demonstrated at Damascus through initiatives, like the Timor Leste Immersion program, and fund-raising efforts, for projects like 'Beyond Blue', Caritas and St Vincent de Paul. The motto was demonstrated not just to me, but to countless members of our community. It was a message of acceptance, support and generosity.

After graduating from Damascus College in 2017, I spent the majority of my time working in 2018. The two jobs I had, both in the community aid sector, widened my view of our country and the many people who

live and work here. These roles also showed me that the kindness and generosity that we are taught and see at a place like Damascus are gifts that we should take away with us and that we should aim to share and teach wherever we can.

As I went through the process of creating my painting, I felt its meaning and message develop, based on my experiences. I felt that by the end, the hands were able to communicate so much more than I had originally intended.

My art piece shows two hands reaching out towards the viewer, in a manner that I think shows no urgency or need but, instead, offers comfort. Personally, I see these hands as giving or hands that are willing to take away that which unnecessarily ties us down. These hands reach out from a wreath of Australian natives, including bush flowers and gum leaves, using muted and natural colours that I saw reflected all over the Damascus campus, and which represent the place that I believe we came from. The actions we take are reflected best here, they are real and solid, not just ideas or pretty words. They are well grounded, and just like the Australian bush that surrounds us, will be here and will continue to have an impact on many lives for what will, hopefully, be many years to come.

However, now that I have grown through my experiences of working and have spent time outside of school, it is my hope that whoever views this work can find their own meaning in it. This meaning would be one that pertains to their own circumstances and their own goals and passions. This piece will bring them to contemplate what the Damascus College motto of, "To Live By The Light of Christ", means to them.

Amelia Johnson, Class of 2017



2018/2019 ROWING SEASON REVIEW

DAMASCUS COLLEGE ROWING

In our sixth season of the Damascus College Rowing Program, we had 73 students participate, and we continued our growth and expansion in becoming a self-sufficient and independent rowing program, operating from within the Wendouree Ballarat Rowing Club (WBRC).

We welcomed back our experienced coaches, Michael Bennett, Robert Davis, Dean Kittelty, Riley Taylor, Grant McKechnie, Ryan Vanderlinden and Georgia Edwards, and welcomed new coaches, Tamzin Perkins, Millie Hockey (Class of 2018), Castley Webb (Class of 2018), Noah Arber (Class of 2018) and Sarah Collins (Class of 2017).

This season, the school invested heavily in the purchase of some much-needed equipment, assisted by the generous donation of the Davey Family and bolstered by a healthy sum of money raised from the previous season's parent fundraising efforts. We were able to acquire two brand new, top-of-the-range Wintech racing boats, eight new sweep oars, extra coxing equipment, four sets of walkie talkies for improved coach-to-crew communication, additional Batlogic shoes, five pairs of sculling oars, Damascus branded slings, ergo sliders and proper bow lights.

The season started with the mandatory Term 3 land training, which had a focus on improving our students' fitness, strength and conditioning for the repetitive nature of the rowing stroke.

Term 4 quickly got into full swing, thankfully with much better weather than the previous year, and all students eagerly took to the water. We had a lovely evening to kick off the season, where our Captains of Boats, Mackenzie Yandell and Gemma Smith, were presented. These leadership roles were treated seriously by these senior students, right throughout the season.

The first regatta of the season was the Head of the Goulburn Regatta, held on October 27, 2018. This is a 7.1 km long-distance event, starting from the Nagambie Caravan Park and finishing at Tahbilk Winery. Eight of our senior boys were selected to represent the College, and it was a fantastic experience for the boys, who finished in a time of 29 minutes flat, placing 3rd behind two very experienced club grade men's crews, and finishing first out of the other schoolboy entries.



Damascus College 2018/2019 Season Rowing Program

On 3 November 2018, there was a Rowing Victoria regatta held on Lake Wendouree, where nearly all of our crews had their first taste of racing for the season, and we saw some great results across the board. During that month, we also sent Intermediate Girls and Senior Boys crews to the Melbourne Head Regatta, another long-distance event (3.5km) along the winding and challenging Yarra River course, and our senior boys participated in the 8km Head of the Yarra Regatta. These long-distance regattas are fantastic training opportunities for our crews and provided exposure to different types of regatta experiences.

On 1 December, the full squad travelled to Nagambie, which provided our students with another racing experience before taking a break over the summer holidays. Our parents helped set up a BBQ and cooked up delicious pancakes for the students to enjoy between their races. For many crews, this was either their first or second race experience for the season. We had some fantastic results:

- Junior boys Division 1 crew won the Male D Grade Coxed Four
- Intermediate girls came 3rd in the Female C Grade Coxed Four
- Senior girls and Intermediate girls combined into eights, and one crew came 2nd in the Female C Grade Eight
- Senior girls and senior boys combined to win the Mixed Eight race

- Senior Division 1 Boys and our Intermediate Division 1 Boys both came 2nd in their respective Male C Grade Coxed Four events
- Another Intermediate Girls crew combination won the Female D Grade Coxed Four event
- Our senior boys placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the Male B Grade Coxed Four event.

Overall, it was a sensational day and well worth the effort.

In early December, we also held our first “away” training days for our senior squads, heading to the Barwon and Maribyrnong Rivers; however, the Barwon training day was hampered by extreme temperatures and gusty winds! Our visit to Essendon Rowing Club was much more productive, with milder weather conditions and a sheltered river, which allowed the students to train and participate in crew selection trials on the beautiful Maribyrnong River. Both excursions helped to bring together the two senior squads, who typically train at separate times, so both days were great team building opportunities.

Before we knew it, Term 4 concluded and our school holiday rowing camps were upon us, which offered excellent opportunities for students to refine their boat skills and improve their boat fitness. At these camps, our coaching group was able to pull together all of their data and observations of the students over the past two terms' worth of training, and selections of permanent crew combinations were starting to take shape.

During the summer holidays, we participated in the Ballarat Regatta and the JG King Wendouree Ballarat Regatta, where our students and parents' group were instrumental in the smooth running of these two fantastic events, providing support in boat holding, preparing umpire lunches, timing races and marshalling. Thank you to all who were involved.

At the end of Week 2 of Term 1, our seniors travelled to Nagambie for our first overnight training camp, where we stayed as a group in the cabins at the Nagambie Lakes Caravan Park. We travelled up on Friday after school, participated in the Nagambie Regatta on Saturday, and trained on the river on Sunday. Unfortunately, the squad was hit with a 24-hour tummy virus, which caused us to scratch and substitute crews on Saturday. However, the students put on brave faces and bounced back to make the most of the time we had on Sunday. A big thank you goes to Tamara McKechnie for all of her help in catering for and looking after our students while away on the camp, as well as Graeme Matheson and the Mavity family for their support on Saturday. It was also wonderful to have the support of Nikki Hexter, Head of Sport. Thank you to all involved.

Next up was the Head of the Schoolboys regatta on Lake Wendouree, which was a successful day for our boys, fantastically supported by our girls and many of our parents and teachers. All crews raced exceptionally well, with notable performances by our Senior Boys and many of our parents and teachers. All crews raced exceptionally well, with notable performances by our Senior Boys squad. Our Senior Boys Division 1 crew took out the title of the Schoolboys Open Division 1 Coxed Four, beating out Ballarat Grammar and St Patricks College (who failed to qualify for the final). Our Senior Boys Division 2 crew came 2nd in their event, and our Senior Boys Division 3 crew won the B Final, in a time that was only 0.4 seconds behind the winning time of the A final winners. Our Junior Boys Division 1 crew came 4th and our Junior Boys Division 2 crew came 5th, as did our Intermediate Boys Division 1 crew, and all had great rows. Congratulations to the boys and their coaches.





Head of the Lake was full of the colour, excitement and fanfare that we have come to expect from such a great local event. Armed with lessons learnt from last year, the wind soon crept up, and the school principals made the call to cancel the rest of the day's races, with a full re-row of the event scheduled for the following Wednesday. All of our crews took to the lake and had gutsy rows, with many achieving personal best times and enjoying the overall experience.

Our results were as follows:

- Girls Year 9 Division 2 – 4th
- Girls Year 9 Division 1 – 4th
- Girls Year 10 Division 4 – 3rd
- Girls Year 10 Division 3 – 3rd
- Girls Year 10 Division 2 – 4th
- Girls Year 10 Division 1 – 3rd
- Girls Open Division 2 – 5th
- Girls Open Division 1 – 5th
- Boys Year 9 Division 2 – 5th
- Boys Year 9 Division 1 – 5th
- Boys Year 10 Division 1 – 5th
- Boys Open Division 3 – 3rd
- Boys Open Division 2 – 2nd
- Boys Open Division 1 – 2nd



Congratulations to all crews and coaches.

The following weekend was the Victorian State Championships in Nagambie, where our senior boys represented strongly in their respective Schoolboy Championship events. Our Senior Boys Division 1 crew placed 4th, our Division 2 crew placed 2nd and our Division 3 crew placed 6th in the A final. Congratulations to all boys and coaches.



Over the course of Friday 15 March to Sunday 17 March, our entire girl's program competed in their major Championship event – The Head of the Schoolgirls Regatta in Geelong. This 3-day regatta is one of the largest regattas in the Southern Hemisphere, and we had eight crews proudly competing – two crews each in the senior and junior divisions and four crews in the intermediate girl's divisions. The weekend saw many girls finish their season with personal best times and having their best rows of the season, with some crews only just missing out on qualifying into the A finals.

Congratulations to all girls and coaches on your efforts this season.



One of the features of this regatta is the awarding of the Morongo Medal. This medal is awarded to girls who have competed in three or more Head of School Girls regattas. This year Gemma Smith and Maddy Edwards were both awarded the medal. For those unfamiliar with this regatta, it is held on a reduced lane course – where only four crews can qualify into each final, making it quite difficult to achieve a spot in the A final. Our final results were:

- Year 9 Division 3 – 3rd in B Final
- Year 9 Division 2 – 1st in B Final
- Year 10 Division 4 – 1st in C Final
- Year 10 Division 3 – 3rd in B Final
- Year 10 Division 2 – 2nd in C Final
- Year 10 Division 1 – 2nd in C Final
- Open Division 2 – 3rd in B Final
- Open Division 1 – 4th in B Final

At the time of writing, students, Mackenzie Yandell, Ethan Blackmore, Ethan Handley, Rhys Davis, James Mavity, Julian Hockey, Riley McCarthy, William McKechnie, Caspian Linayao and Sophie Brokenshire, are preparing for the Sydney International Rowing Regatta (Australian Nationals), to be held in Penrith NSW from Wednesday 27 March until Sunday 31 March. We have two crews representing the College in the Schoolboy Open Division 1 event. Grant McKechnie and I are attending as coaches, with the support of teaching staff, Mr Nick Yandell and Kara Linayao. We know both crews will represent the College admirably on the National stage.

I want to thank our coaches for their ongoing commitment to coaching and mentoring our students this year. Their tenacity, passion and dedication to our students and our rowing program are invaluable, and it's been a pleasure working with our coaching group. A special thank you to Dean Kittelty for keeping our tinnies fuelled and running, as well as helping to tow boats and repair breakages. Without Ryan Vanderlinden, who has been the backbone of our coaching group this season, many of our crews simply wouldn't have made it out on the water this season. Ryan coached three crews this year; the Senior Boys Division 3 crew (along with Millie Hockey), the Intermediate Girls Division 3 crew and the Intermediate Boys Division 1 crew. Thank you, Ryan, for being a great asset to our program, your willingness to help out and go beyond anyone's expectations was simply fantastic and greatly appreciated, by not only me but the coaching group as a whole. A special thank you also goes to Grant McKechnie who has

donated access to his fully-equipped gym at Ballarat Sport and Exercise Rehabilitation Centre for twice-weekly sessions for our senior boy's squad over the past two years. This donation of access to proper strength and conditioning programming has been invaluable to the development and the success of, our senior boy's program.

I would also like to thank our parents who volunteered as Boat Race Officials (BRO). I know that some may have missed the opportunity to be BRO at regattas, but I do hope you continue as a BRO next season. Thank you again to Noel Linayao, Julian Govan and Stephan Vanderlinden for your BRO expertise, and thank you to all other parents who volunteered in other capacities. It was great to see some new faces helping out!

“The Damascus rowing program can only exist through the generous support of the Wendouree Ballarat Rowing Club and I thank the club for their ongoing assistance.”

Similar to previous years, it would be remiss of me to neglect a special mention to our friends within the broader rowing community who have graciously extended their assistance to help the smooth running of our growing program; St Patricks College, Loreto College, Shelford Girls Grammar, Ballarat & Clarendon College, Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak and Ballarat City Rowing Club.

I would like to finish by farewelling and wishing well our Year 12 school leavers – Gemma Smith, Maddy Edwards, Mackenzie Yandell, Ethan Blackmore, Ethan Handley, Matt Watson and Rhys Davis, and to thank these students for their outstanding contribution to our rowing program over the past few years.

I hope everyone enjoys a well-deserved break over Term 2, and I look forward to seeing our current Year 8 to 11 students and coaches return to the program in Term 3, for another fantastic season in 2019/20.

Sharon Waters, Leader of Rowing
Nicole Hexter, Sports Coordinator

2018/2019 DAMASCUS COLLEGE ROWING TEAMS

Senior Boys

Mackenzie Yandell (Captain of Boats)
Rhys Davis
Ethan Blackmore
Ethan Handley
Matt Watson
Bailey Wilson
Doug Thibault
James Mavity
Julian Hockey
Jude Skewes-Clinton
William McKechnie
Riley McCarthy
Kalle Govan
Sophie Brokenshire
Caspian Linayao
Coaches: Grant McKechnie, Sharon Waters,
Ryan Vanderlinden, Millie Hockey

Inter Boys

Ben Cornish
Angus Shillito
Tom McKay
John Grimaldo
Rohan Shillito
Coach: Ryan Vanderlinden

Junior Boys

Thomas Ashley
Tim Collins
Aidan Stephens

Josh Matheson
Carson Oldaker
Brayden Welsh
Harrison Welsh
Campbell Palmer
Cooper Reid
Lachlan Jurcan
Oscar Matthews
Coaches: Michael Bennett, Robert Davis,
Noah Arber

Senior Girls

Gemma Smith (Captain of Boats)
Charlotte Ashley
Maddy Edwards
Sarah Matheson
Matilda Lloyd
Paris Murrell
Evie Sargisson
Hannah Vanderlinden
Marli Dockerill
Morgan McCann
Mikayla Dwyer
Coach: Georgia Edwards

Inter Girls

Jessica Blackmore
Sophie Brokenshire
Katrina Caldwell
Esther Dunlop
Hannah Foster

Tara Gannon
Brooke Gannon
Courtney Gass
Charlotte Grimes
Molly Hudson
Mia Lavery
Olivia Reyntjes
Madison Smith
Leila Thurling
Mia Wallace
Grace Byrne
Erica Webb
Zoe Wilson
Poppy Boucher
Gemma O'Donnell
Coaches: Dean Kittelty, Riley Taylor, Ryan
Vanderlinden, Sarah Collins

Junior Girls

Isabella Morgan
Sophie Longmire
Teisha Erody
Georgia Peart
Elli Lubeek
Morgan McCann
Sarah Elsey
Lilly Vanderlinden
Madison Dwyer
Tess Arber
Eva Gallagher
Coaches: Tamzin Perkins, Castley Webb





FINDING MY TRUE CALLING, THROUGH A VCAL PATHWAY

TABITHA HARRIS

My family and I are originally from the Gold Coast, Queensland, and moved to Victoria in late 2011, as we were after a tree change and wanted to be closer to family. I currently live at home with my brother, Jamison, who attends St Patricks College, and my parents, Scott and Simone, who both work for Federation University. We have lived in Ballarat for almost 8 years now, on a small hobby farm 15 minutes out of Ballarat, where we have dogs, cats, sheep, cows, horses and rabbits, most of which are rescues or which we have found abandoned around Victoria.

Before I attended Damascus, I went to St Alipius Parish School, which I enjoyed. The teachers (who I am still in contact with) were all nice and welcoming but, in saying that, school has never really been my thing. I've never been the one to get top marks, have always struggled to pass tests and assignments, and I've always just done what needs to be done and left it at that.

Before coming to Damascus, I had tours of some of the surrounding high schools, but nothing was really jumping out at me, as I just didn't want to go to school. I got so worked up about the idea of going to high school that I completely turned myself off the idea. In the end, I chose Damascus, as I felt it best suited the type of person I am. The first 3 years of high

school was a real struggle for me. I wasn't doing well in my classes and I was really struggling to keep up. Mum and I had numerous conversations about what could be done to get me back on track but nothing was really working out, as I wasn't engaged and I didn't see the purpose of the things we were learning.

I am the type of person that believes everything happens for a reason, and if I can't see a point or a purpose in doing it and I feel like I am wasting my time on it, I struggle. This is why I struggled with most of my education, as I could not see myself using any of the knowledge outside of school or later on in life.

Towards the end of Year 10, we had the option to choose either VCE or VCAL, I had absolutely no idea what either meant. I didn't know the difference between the two, so I didn't understand why one was more popular than the other. However, I wasn't the one to ask questions in those situations, so I clicked on the VCE option and started filling it out. Later that day I got an email from the teacher, who was in charge of those types of things, saying that I needed to go and see her. When I got there, she asked me if I wanted to do VCE or VCAL. Still not knowing the difference,

I just asked, "What was the most popular one?", and she said VCE, so I went with it.

The first week or so I actually really enjoyed it. I had great teachers and I was enjoying the classes I had chosen. However, as time went on, I started noticing my marks were going down, again, and I would find myself sitting in class looking around at everyone hard at work while I was asking myself, "What am I doing here? I'm never going to use any of this knowledge, I'm never going to go to University, I'm never going to be a psychologist, I'm never going to be any of these, so why am I here?" So, the next week, I went and spoke to some of my teachers about what I should do. Most of them said that moving to VCAL would probably be the best idea, but I really wanted to prove them all wrong and show them that I could do VCE. So, for the next week, I tried my absolute best to get my marks up and really made an effort, but it wasn't working. I didn't know it at the time, and I maybe didn't want to believe it, but I was trying to make something happen that just wasn't me, and it was never going to be me.

After I finally came to terms that VCE wasn't for me, I decided to go and chat with a teacher who was the 'go-to' person for all VCE and VCAL things. I explained to her my situation, and she asked me if I knew what VCAL was. By this time, I had a rough idea of what it was but I didn't fully know. She told me the basic outline of it and asked if it sounded like something more suited to me, which it was. It was more my style of learning and a lot more work-related, and I love working. So, by the next week, I was in VCAL and I was so much more relaxed, my anxiety had gone away and I was doing really well with all my school work. I could finally start focusing on my chosen career, which is horses. I've grown up with horses my entire life, for which I feel incredibly blessed, as I know some people don't have that opportunity.

Since being in the VCAL program at school, I have had so many amazing opportunities open up to me, like gaining a position in my dream job at one of the most successful racing stables in Victoria. I could only dream of this while being in VCE, as that just wasn't an option because of the workload. If it wasn't for VCAL, I probably wouldn't still be at school.

Instead, I would have dropped out, and wouldn't be doing any of the things I love, and I certainly wouldn't be working at the job I am now. I can confidently say that I wouldn't be as happy as I am now. Now, I'm not saying VCAL is for everyone. It has its days where some stuff is hard and there are sometimes things that I don't want to do, however, that's going to happen in any school, any job and pretty much life in general. However, for me, it was the best decision I've ever made and it gave me the encouragement to be who I really, truly am, and who I want to be in the future.

If you're sitting here reading this thinking to yourself that you may feel the same way or you know someone who is struggling with school, then maybe VCAL is for you. Or, maybe, you are too scared, like I was, to act on it because you might be seen as different from other people. Then, the best advice I can give you is to stop and really ask yourself, "Is this who I want to be in 20 years?" And, if your answer is no, like me, then it's time to make some changes.

If I could give one piece of advice to the Year 7 students, it would be that life really is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're going to get and you never know what's going to happen tomorrow. High School isn't always easy. Sometimes, you're going to want to quit, and, sometimes, you're going to want to cry all night because of the most random things. However, you're also going to laugh, make relationships with your friends that will last forever, and become who you really are.

School years really are the best and worst years of your life, so make the most of it. Go all out on assignments. If they say write a 500-word essay, write 600. Always be the best you can absolutely be, and good things will come. And, remember, not everything is always going to go in your favour; some things are going to hit the fan and some things won't have an outcome at all. But, if you're always trying your absolute best, then, guess what! You're one step ahead of everyone else.

Tabitha Harris, Year 12 student





ACADEMIC ASSEMBLY

DAMASCUS COLLEGE EVENT

On Friday 1 February 2019, the Damascus College community celebrated academic excellence at the annual Academic Assembly.

Senior students' academic excellence from 2018 was celebrated in front of all students, staff, Damascus College Board Directors, as well as award recipient family members.

It was a wonderful occasion where the audience was entertained by Year 9 student, Lewis Clarke, on the alto saxophone, accompanied on piano by Kristiana Withers, the woodwind brass and piano teacher, with both performing a beautiful rendition of 'Marche Militaire' by Franz Schubert.

Past student Jacob Wood, Class of 2009, was the guest speaker for the event, and he shared that his best experiences at Damascus College were when he pushed himself outside his comfort zone. He spoke of his Law career and his commitment to human rights and helping those in marginalised communities.

Jacob shared that not everything has gone to plan in his life and there are things that he could have done better. It wasn't that he should have studied more, passed more subjects, or been perfect. Instead, he wished he had have been more compassionate to himself when he didn't do well.

Jacob said that, when we talk about compassion, it is in the context of showing sympathy or understanding to others. Compassion allows us to look at someone else's situation and respond with kindness, tolerance, care and warmth.

"I think people, in particular people who are driven and high achieving, can struggle to extend this compassion to themselves," he said.

"Instead of being kind, tolerant, caring and understanding when looking at ourselves, we lean towards being critical, comparative and a perfectionist. You would think these are useful if you want to be successful – being critical of yourself helps you improve and, surely, perfection is something to which we aspire. Why wouldn't you compare yourself with others?"

"The reality is that, sometimes, you will fail a subject or not live up to expectations or forget your lines or sweat so much in a job interview that you are asked if you are okay. You will not always win, be the best, or be perfect. And, that's okay," he said.

"That's when you practice self-compassion. Take a step back and start being mindful with respect to how you think about yourself. When you do something weird, get an answer wrong or mess up, it's being kind to yourself in how you respond that counts. It's knowing the difference between making a bad decision and being a bad person. It's giving yourself permission to be imperfect and forgiving yourself for messing up." "Oscar Wilde said, "To love oneself is the beginning of a lifelong romance." RuPaul Charles said, "if you can't love yourself, how are you gonna love somebody else?"

"Knowing you're just human helps you realise that everyone else is, too."



Awards presented at the Assembly included:

2018 VCE Unit 3 & 4, Study Score of 40 plus Award:

Ruby Penhall	1 Drama	41
Oscar Thomas	Visual Communication	44
Ruby Hyatt *	Visual Communication	46
Ruby Hyatt *	Art	42
Sean O'Beirne *	French	52.87
Parisa Sharif	Persian	42
Ellie Carroll	English	40
Henry Anstis *	English	41
Alyssa Britten	English	41
Scarlett Pearce	English	40
Kiara Colantuono *	English	40
Marla Gibson *	English	43
Sophie Simmonds *	English	40
Henry Anstis *	Legal Studies	42
Kiara Colantuono *	Legal Studies	40
Marla Gibson *	Legal Studies	43
Sophie Simmonds *	Legal Studies	41
Cassidy White	Legal Studies	41
Sean O'Beirne *	Literature	45.23
Ruby Hyatt *	History: Resolutions	43.69
Matthew Snibson	Business Management	41
Wren Dreger *	Chemistry	42.04
Sean O'Beirne *	Chemistry	40.24
Wren Dreger *	Maths: Specialist Mathematics	49.88
Sean O'Beirne *	Maths: Specialist Mathematics	51.89
Wren Dreger *	Maths: Mathematical Methods	46.8
Sean O'Beirne *	Maths: Mathematical Methods	50.48
Henry Anstis *	Computing: Software Development	47
Kiara Colantuono *	Psychology	40
Riley Casey	Product Design	45
Wren Dreger *	Physics	48.25
Thomas Carter *	Psychology	46
Thomas Carter *	Health and Human Development	40
Imogen Brown	Health and Human Development	41
Taylah Den Ouden	Health and Human Development	41
Gemma Armeni	Physical Education	41
Ruby Haeusler	Physical Education	41

2018 VCE Baccaulaureate Award:

Gemma Armeni
Luisa Bonazzoli
William Grawich
Hayley Maisey
Sean O'Beirne

2018 VET & VCAL Achievement Award:

Amber Cooper
Oliver Watts
Hannah Cashmore

Westvic Staffing Solutions VET Excellence Award:

Ellie Sbardella

90+ ATARs in 2018:

Sophie Simmonds	91.2
Marla Gibson	91.75
Gemma Armeni	91.8
Henry Anstis	93.15
Ruby Hyatt	93.7
Thomas Carter	94.7
Wren Dreger	98.15
Sean O'Beirne	99.9

2018 Damascus College Dux:

Sean O'Beirne	99.9
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Guest speaker, Jacob Wood, Class of 2009





connecting@Damascus

THE SHINING LIGHT AWARD

INSPIRING ALUMNI

The Shining Light Award will recognise alumni who have contributed significantly through their chosen field to Damascus College and our global community, and who will be an inspiration to current and future students.

Damascus College and its foundation colleges, Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's in the Pines, value the contributions and achievements of all its alumni.

This year, we have launched the Shining Light Award for Inspiring Alumni, to be bestowed upon two alumni biennially, to recognise alumni who have contributed significantly, through their chosen field, to Damascus College and our global community, and who will be an inspiration to current and future students.

Nominations are now open and will close Friday 31 May 2019, at 4pm.

Anyone can submit a nominee for The Shining Light Award, based on the following criteria:

1. The recipients must be Damascus College Alumni, living or dead. (Please note that alumni at Damascus College are defined as past students and staff of Damascus College and its foundation colleges, Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's in the Pines).

2. The recipients must be successful in their chosen fields, as demonstrated by positions held, achievements, qualifications, awards/prizes/scholarships and length of service.
3. The work/actions of the recipients' chosen fields support and uphold social justice and Christian values.
4. The alumni have made contributions or supported the College and global community in ways that are inspirational or motivational.
5. Categories for selection are:
 - Service to the global community
 - Science/Technology
 - Arts
 - Sport
 - Business
 - Academia
 - Faith Development

Anyone can submit a nomination for the award.

Nominations must be submitted on the nomination form located on the Damascus College website, under Past Students, and include supporting documentation and relevant evidence. The nomination form may be completed online and submitted electronically or printed and mailed in.





2007

THEN AND NOW

PETER SARTORI

At secondary school, I always enjoyed helping my fellow classmates to solve problems in mathematics. At other times, it was fun to see who could find the value of “x” and it was like a race. I remember my Maths teachers the most, as they seemed to love all things Maths. I think it all started there, although, there was never a clear decision to become a teacher. I actually wanted to become a bank teller – these are quite a rare breed, these days.

At school, I wasn’t any good at English or History. In fact, I disliked them but maths was number one. I also enjoyed Physics and Chemistry (and French and Accounting, for a while). Looking back now, I suppose I was a bit of a nerd; it was only natural for me to pursue a science degree at university. Compared to today, there was a very limited range of courses with some being Science, Engineering, Medicine, and Law. A Science degree gave me the option to continue with Maths and Physics, and some Chemistry on the side.

While enjoying my subjects at Monash University, I was still not drawn to any particular career. The going thing, during those days, was to complete a one-year “Diploma in Education” course, which involved 9 weeks of in-school practice. There were three teaching rounds, each of three weeks, and I was lucky to complete my third round at the very school

where I did my secondary schooling – St Brigid’s College in Horsham. It was very strange to be teaching alongside the teachers who had taught me – they were great fun.

Following my teacher training, I was fortunate to achieve a teaching position at St Brigid’s, where I happily worked for four years. I should reveal that I taught a Year 9 student in science at Horsham and I currently have her son in my Physics class. (I don’t mind teaching children of my ex-students – I draw the line at grandchildren!!)

It was time to leave and I moved to St Patrick’s College Ballarat in 1985 – computers had just come in and were being used for word processing, chess, spreadsheets and not much else. Classes were large, and I recall 33 students in a Year 10 class. Interestingly, a teacher colleague shared a house with my wife. After three years in 1989, I migrated to St Martin’s in the Pines, which had just become co-educational.

There were no VET or VCAL courses and all students completed one course to Year 12. There was much less emphasis on technology all those years ago and even less consideration given to health and safety in science

practicals. There were no PE classes, just a weekly sports afternoon in which you could select cricket, football or basketball – choices were slim. The boys did woodwork and the girls did typing skills – we’ve come a long way.

It didn’t take long, after beginning as a teacher, for Mathematics to give way to Physics as my passion of choice. I have also been very fortunate to be able to teach in a wide variety of other areas, including Religious Education and Computer Studies. Currently, I’m teaching Maths and Physics. Physics is fun because it applies to many areas in society today. What other subject can explain the existence of the many universes, right down to sub-atomic particles? It is very gratifying to share these ideas with young people who also enjoy science.

There are many rewarding moments in a teaching career. All teachers cherish students leaving class, as they utter a ‘thank you’ or stop and chat when they cross your path out of school times. There are also sobering moments, too, when you think a student wasn’t suited to a particular course in science and years later they share that they have successfully taken that path.

Teaching is never monotonous. Each year, a new group of students bring their own excitement to classes, there are different roles that a teacher can undertake in a school, and it’s fun socialising and sharing with other teachers. Teachers are friendly, extremely helpful and willing to contribute to the workload and, above all, they have a fantastic sense of humour.

Throughout the last 37 years, the changes in science and technology have been phenomenal. Finding the existence of planets around distant stars, uncovering the genome and delving into the intricacies

of the brain, to name a few, have all been sources of enjoyment for young people. I’m still not sure whether mobiles and social media will be looked on favourably in fifty years. Education has also moved on (for the better) – young people now have more options towards a career and they have become independent learners.

“Most obvious, though, especially at Damascus College, is that the young people that have walked through our buildings and classrooms have been friendly, respectful, and sociable, and the vast majority have enjoyed learning and, as a result, have made the world a better place.”

There are not many vocations in which a group of people, aside from parents, can say that they contributed to the development of a young person in such a fundamental way.

Peter Sartori, Maths and Physics Teacher

2004



2019



2019 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

DAMASCUS COLLEGE



Absent: Paris Govan



2019 SRC PRESIDENT

NICOLA ROBSON

Hi, my name is Nicola and I have grown up, my whole life, in the small country town of Lexton. I went to a small primary school at Waubra, which had 45 students from Prep to Grade 6, so coming to Damascus College as a Year 7 student was a really big change. I found Damascus to be really friendly and even managed to find my way around the school.

What I like about Damascus is the fact that it has plenty of opportunities on offer and is like one big community, in that we all share and develop our own skills in the things that we like and the opportunities that are on offer. When I was in Year 9 as part of the Junior Rowing, our four teams represented and won Head of the Lake. This was such a proud moment for us all. In Year 10, I took up the responsibility of Peer Mentor for the Year 7s, as I could understand what a big difference it was coming to a much larger school and I wanted to help the Year 7s to be more comfortable in their new environment. I really enjoyed this opportunity and I still continue to be a Peer Mentor.

Other opportunities I have been fortunate enough to be Vice President of the Year 11 SRC and, now, President of the SRC for 2019. I have also been nominated as House Captain for Xavier in my final Year at school, of which I am really proud. My interests at school and out of school are sports, reading, music, going to concerts, my horses and generally helping out in the community of Lexton.

Being SRC President is not only just the chance to be part of a group but also the chance to represent and put into place ideas for the whole of the Damascus community.

I want to enjoy my senior year and create long-lasting friendships and pass Year 12, with the hope of going on to University to do a Bachelor of Education.

Nicola Robson, Year 12 student

2019 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

POSITION	Mc AULEY	ST MARTIN	RICE	XAVIER
College Captains		Milly Frost Matthew Sribson		
House Captain	Jonte Crabtree	Mackenzie Yandell	Ethan Handley	Chelsea Todd
House Captain	Eloise Hennig	Asher Kuhn	Emma Webb	Matthew Watson
House Captain	Madelyn Edwards	Jordan Hill	Daisy Jessup	Nicola Robson
House Captain	Ebony O'Doherty-Bowman	Laura Holmes	Eliza Lepair	Maddison Alcock
Year 11 SRC	Rylan Walker	Jack Davidson	Imogen Batrouney	William Smith
Year 10 SRC	Tara Gannon	William Norwood	Hannah Foster	Riley Frantantoro
Year 9 SRC	Mykaylah Gardiner	Mikayla Montgomery	Cooper Guinea	Laura Lee
Year 8 SRC	Sophie Busuttil	Julia Primerano	Poppy Rowland	Wyatt Pilmore
Year 7 SRC	Zoe Newman	Isabella McCarthy	Chelsea Oellering	Paris Govan



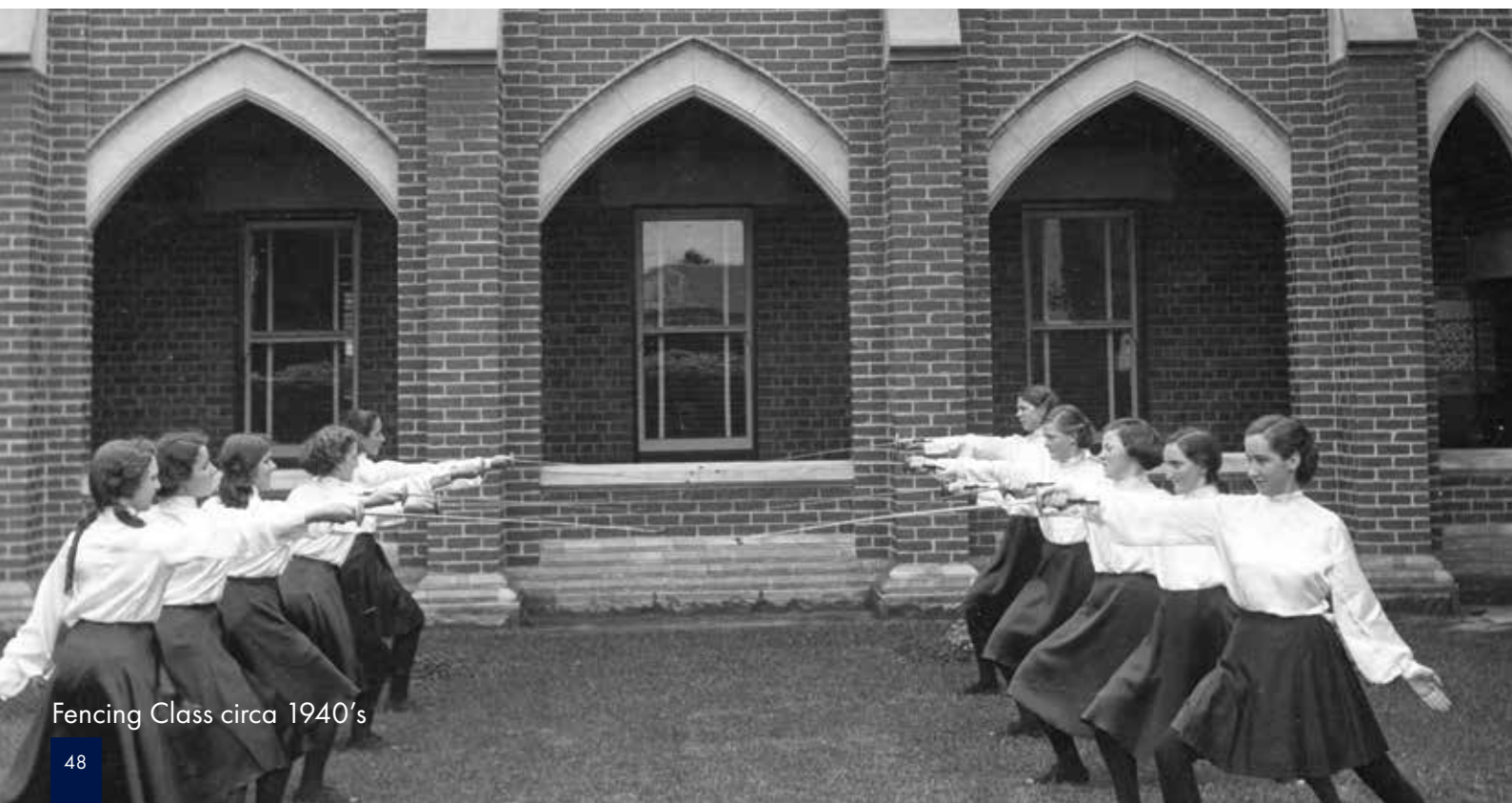
Mr. Stanley teaching his compulsory Eurythmics class 1927



Eurythmics class 1927



Recreation area 1926



Fencing Class circa 1940's

KEEPING ACTIVE AT SACRED HEART COLLEGE

BLAST FROM THE PAST

You may have driven past Damascus College and noticed students in their comfortable and practical PE gear on the oval, engaged in a spirited game of touch football or, perhaps, some ultimate frisbee or soccer. Now, imagine driving past to see girls in long skirts and shirts, swords in hand, shouting 'En Guardel', students flying gracefully through the air during regular Eurythmics class, or enjoying a spot of Vigoro in their spare time.

Eurythmics was developed in the early 20th century by a Swiss musician, in an attempt to increase musical abilities through rhythm. The rhythmic bodily movements were designed to improve concentration, as well as physical reaction time. Sacred Heart College was renowned for the musical talent of its students, so Eurythmics was taken up with passion by teacher, Mr. Stanley. Another popular sport with the SHC girls was Vigoro. Also, an early 20th-century creation, Vigoro is a cross between tennis and cricket and is played mainly by Australian women.

These beautiful photographs from the Sacred Heart College archives reveal the depth of the PE program, which beautifully complimented by other aspects of the curriculum, such as Music and Performing Arts. With tennis and basketball professionals travelling from Melbourne to coach the students, and the dedication of Physical Education teachers, such as Mr Stanley and Sr Raphael, the SHC girls were certainly not short of sporting opportunity.

Natasha Adam, Archivist



1st Tennis IV 1926-7 L-R Rosa Fraser, Mary Mitchell (Sr Raphael), Dorothy Daniel, Marion Watkinson.



Golf circa 1940's



THE MEANING OF SPORT

ROD MATTHEWS

Sport has been a huge part of my life and is centremost of what I do. Growing up in a small country town of Yaapeet, in times of no computers, smartphones, Facebook etc., sport provided much to me, as a young person growing up in a close-knit community.

Attending the local school where the student population did not exceed 20 pupils, recess and lunch times were spent playing sport. We couldn't wait to get out in the yard to play rounders, cricket, football, basketball and, in the later years, baseball (having an Australian Baseball Pitcher marry one of our teachers was a huge thrill for all students). These primary school years provided me with the earliest education of the long-term benefits of sport from a physical, social and mental aspect of life.

The winter months revolved around the local football club, which sadly is no longer. Football clubs are the fabric and identity of small communities. It is not about the winning or the losing (even though winning, occasionally, was a highlight), it is the opportunity to come together socially two to three times a week. As I got older and worked my way towards senior ranks, training became twice a week, as is traditional for most clubs. By this time, I was in secondary school and, in senior levels, I couldn't wait to get off the bus and get to training early (only a small 400m walk to the oval) and do some additional work before others arrived.

One of our coaches had a roll of attendance at training, and this was always a part of my motivation to be the person to attend training the most throughout the year. This set me up for what lay ahead in the years to come. Arriving at home Mum would always ask, "Have you got any homework to do before training?" Without saying it, I am sure you would be aware of my response. This would then see me coming home after training and socialising, working on school work late into the night. I wouldn't have it any other way. Mum knew what the response was going to be every week but she also knew the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle through sport, hence, the arguments around training nights were

limited.

On leaving school, sport took me into my current career as a teacher. I undertook training and gained qualifications in Human Movement, then Education and the Massage field of Sport. I haven't always taught in a structured approach at school but have had many great opportunities working for Sport and Recreation Victoria as a Junior Sports Consultant, the University of Ballarat in Human Movement and Sports Sciences, and the Melbourne Football Club and North Ballarat Football Club in recovery and rehabilitation, as a Massage Therapist. I also had my own Remedial Massage Therapy Practice, which also provided opportunities for me to travel to the World University Games on the Australian medical team, on two occasions.

Sport is a huge part of who I am. While I may be slowing down in my own personal pursuits around sport, I get great satisfaction in working with the students at Damascus in all sports, particularly around Athletics and Cross Country running. I also coach a small group of athletes away from school and the enjoyment and thrills I get out of watching them develop as athletes, and more so as young adults, is as rewarding as any success I have had personally in sport. Watching my two daughters undertake sport in the manner that they do, and continuing a family tradition in the importance of sport, has been extremely pleasing to me.

In participating in sport, I have always stuck to the following: "Run Fast, Run Well but Whatever You Do, Do So Having Done Your Best". Sport is much more than winning or losing. The health benefits of being physically active cannot be underestimated, more so now than any other time in our history with the demands that life presents to us. Sport is a Life Long Pursuit – "You are a Long Time Retired".

Rod Matthews,
Learning Analytics Leader
Maths and Physical Education Teacher



RUNNING

ELIZA LEPAIR

I began athletics back in 2011, as a shy nine-year-old who couldn't even run a lap of the track; I will honestly admit that I absolutely hated it. Now, eight years later, I've fallen in love with the sport, and it is the thing that gets me out of bed every morning.

Last June, I competed in the Victorian Cross Country Championships, where I finished 10th from 133 girls in the under 18 event. I was then selected for the Australian Championships to be held in Queensland, which was my first time competing for Victoria. At the 2017 Victorian Championships I had finished in around 60th place, so to have improved by that margin and be selected in 2018 was an amazing feeling.

A month out from the Australian Championships, I sustained an injury to my foot, which began as peroneal tendonitis and progressed to a stress fracture. I was forced to cut back heavily on training, reduced to a few light, painful jogs over the next few weeks. Somehow, I got myself to the start line and, although, it wasn't pretty, I also managed to get myself to the finish line. Nonetheless, I felt very privileged to be a part of a team, especially as they cheered me on while I hobbled across the line in 79th place. Despite everything that occurred that day and in the lead-up, my Nationals experience was incredible and I would do it all again in a heartbeat.

Following the BAS Lap of the Lake in late August (four days after Nationals and not my best decision, as it further worsened my already fractured foot), I spent almost three months out of action. It wasn't until after this race that I learned of the fracture, and I then spent almost 6 weeks hobbling around in a moonboot. It was the most frustrating experience, but it helped me to realise how much I rely on running and the benefits it brings, both physically and, especially, mentally.

Due to the injury, I was unsure if I would get back to competing in time for the 2018/2019 track season. To my complete shock, I ran a personal best in the 1500m merely a few weeks after my very first run back, and barely two months since being in the moonboot. I was ecstatic, and over the remainder of the season, I managed to cut 11 seconds from my 1500m PB!

2019 will be my ninth year of running, and I am hopeful as I look forward to seeing what this year will bring. As I enter my final year of school, I am wary of the potential challenges that may lie ahead of me as I attempt to balance my studies with daily training sessions. However, I feel I am up to the challenge, and I am very lucky to have the continued encouragement from those closest to me. The distance running community is full of the most amazing people, and I am incredibly grateful to have such a supportive network of individuals around me, each of whom love the sport just as much as I do.

Eliza Lepair, Year 12 student

STAFF RETIREMENTS

DAMASCUS COLLEGE

Celebrating 195 years of collective service to Damascus College and our foundation colleges.

Greg Dow, is a long-standing member of staff who retired at the conclusion of 2018. Greg has engaged hundreds of young men and women in the love of English and Legal Studies, across nearly 30 years in this community. Greg has held leadership roles, most recently in Professional Practice, but, prior to that, he was VCE Coordinator and has fulfilled various other responsibilities throughout his time. Greg's Damascus journey began at St Martin's in the Pines in 1989, which makes 2018 his 29th year of Catholic education in Ballarat. Greg also taught at Therry College in Broadmeadows (1981-83), St Leo's College in Box Hill (1984-86) and CLC in Eltham (1987-88). Thirty-seven years of Catholic education is a great achievement, and I congratulate Greg on his retirement.

Jo-anne Kennedy retired at the end of 2018. Jo began at Sacred Heart College in 1985, having taught at CRC Melton prior to that. In her 33 years of service at Damascus College, she has fulfilled many roles – as a classroom teacher, House Leader of O'Collins for many years, and,

in 2012, she moved into the newly established role of Assistant Principal of Student Wellbeing. In all these, she embodied the principles of our founding Sisters of Mercy, with her compassion and care of those in the school community - staff, students and families. She is a great listener and her door is always open to those in need. Her leadership is characterized by wisdom and Mercy, sprinkled with a great sense of humour. She sees potential in those around her, and has provided much support in helping students develop and grow into wonderful young adults. Her contribution to the Damascus story has been significant, and we take this opportunity to acknowledge her and thank her for all she has done.

Jane McKendrick commenced a period of leave for Term 1, 2019, and will return to the College for Term 2, prior to retirement at the commencement of Term 3. Jane has been a member of the Damascus staff for the past 12 years and has been a key contributor to Damascus English, particularly in the senior years. She has been a committed and hard-working educator. Jane has had 21 years in education, including 8 Years at MacKillop College in Swan Hill.

Greg Dow



Jo-anne Kennedy



Jane McKendrick



Mark Maclean concluded his time at Damascus at the end of 2018, to explore exciting opportunities in Queensland. Mark is a former student of St Paul's College, and he began his career in Catholic education at St Paul's College in 1983, in Lydiard Street. Mark moved with the St Paul's staff to Victoria Street in 1990 and also became a part of the amalgamated staff team in 1995. Mark's contribution as a teacher to the College has been remarkable, and his leadership of the Energy Breakthrough program is quite extraordinary. His 35 years of service to this school community include recognition of Mark through the Catherine King community shield award. The EBT sub-community celebrated Mark's contribution at an event at Bray Raceway on 20 October 2018.

Rhonda Metcalfe finished up at the end of 2018. Rhonda has been a face of welcome and warmth in the St Martin's Resource Centre for 17 years, ever since she joined the team in 2001 at Victoria Street, before coming out to Mt Clear in 2011. Rhonda's 17 years here have been a great gift to this community, and we wish her well in retirement.

Maureen Myers also moved on from Damascus at the end of 2018. Min has been a stalwart of the Languages department, throughout her time here at the College. She has led the English and Languages team, amongst her many other contributions. She has always had a great affinity for her students and colleagues and provided wonderful care for those around her. The French Immersion Trip has been an enormous contribution by Min, over the past decade. Min joined the St Martin's

in the Pines staff in 1992 before becoming part of the amalgamated Damascus staff in 1995. Min's career has seen her teach from Prep to Year 12, beginning her Catholic teaching at St Mary's in Sale in 1977. Over her 40 years, she has worked at St Francis Xavier, St Alipius and St Columba's. Her 26-year contribution to Damascus has been extraordinary and, to her credit, Min is still looking at education opportunities beyond her Damascus experience.

Karen Simpkin also retired at the end of Term 1, 2019, after more than 40 years of dedicated service to Damascus College and Sacred Heart College. Karen started teaching at Sacred Heart College in 1977 and was in her 41st year of teaching at Damascus College. Prior to this, she did some CRT work at Mt Clear College and Ballarat High School, but her teaching career, as a whole, has been amongst our Damascus community. Karen's passion is RE, English and Humanities, and she has held numerous roles throughout these 40 years, including Sports Coordinator, Connell House Leader, Transition Coordinator, McAuley House Leader, Senior School Coordinator and Campus Coordinator (for a 12-month maternity leave position). Karen has very fond memories of her time in our community, and has made long-lasting friendships throughout her time at the College. She is genuinely a woman of Mercy, and has been a great servant of Catholic and Mercy education.

Mark McLean



Rhonda Metcalf



Maureen Myers



Karen Simpkin



WHERE ARE THEY NOW

ALUMNI NEWS

Harry Gibcus (Past staff at St Paul's and Damascus College) was honoured by the City of Ballarat in February, for his work as a Justice of the Peace (JP) for participating at more than 100 sessions at one police station. Harry was celebrated at the Royal Victorian Association of Honorary Justices annual dinner for his inclusion in the '100 Club'.

Helen FitzGerald, Class of 1984, is a bestselling novelist and a screenwriter for the BBC production of *The Cry*, based on Helen's book of the same name. The mini-series (4 episodes) was voted one of the best for 2018 in the UK and is now being shown here in Australia on ABC.

Philip Auchetti, Class of 2003, has been named Young Architect of the Year 2018 by the American Institute of Architecture - San Diego.

Jordan Walker, Class of 2017, should be very proud of his athletic achievements. He was the 1600m winner at the Daylesford Gift Carnival and came in 2nd in the 3200m at the Castlemaine Gift Carnival.

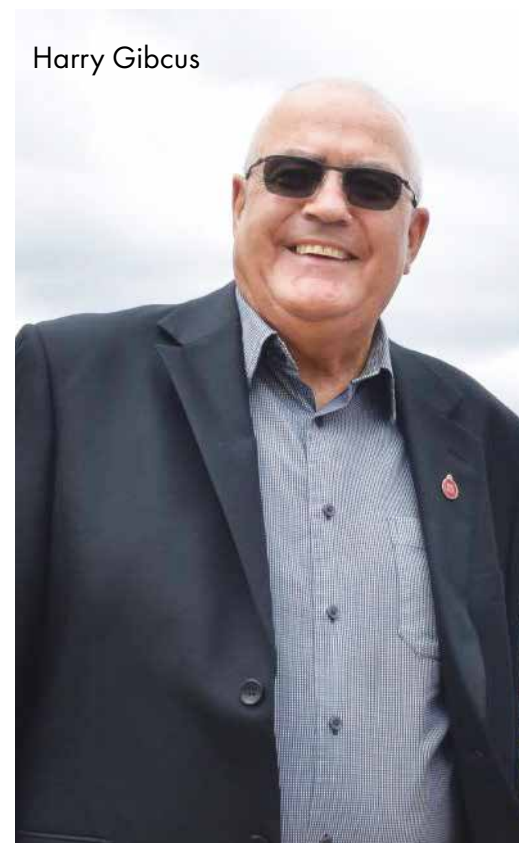
Macio Nash, past student was the 120m Novice winner at the Maryborough Highland Gathering on New Year's Day. Macio was also the 120m Under 18 winner at the Castlemaine Gift Carnival.



Jordan Walker



Macio Nash



Harry Gibcus

STAYING CONNECTED

DAMASCUS ALUMNI

Damascus College was formed in 1995 from the amalgamation of St Paul's Technical College, Sacred Heart College and St Martin's in the Pines. Past students and staff of these foundation Colleges and Damascus form our Alumni.

The purpose and aim of the Damascus College Alumni group is to:

- Create ongoing links between the College and the Alumni Community
- Engage Alumni through the provision of activities of interest to members
- Actively seek to involve its Alumni in the life of the College
- Recognise its Alumni for their contributions to the wider community, the College and its students
- Provide a means for its Alumni to provide support for the College
- Develop Alumni connections to the Damascus College Vision and Mission, the origins of the College and its Catholic tradition
- Promote benefits of Alumni membership to all current students

For further information or to reconnect as a past student or staff member, please go to:

[damascus.vic.edu.au/Past Students](http://damascus.vic.edu.au/Past%20Students).

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & IN MEMORY

ALUMNI NEWS

Matt Allan (Staff) and wife Rachel welcomed baby, Patrick (Paddy) Alexander, into their family in March. Paddy is a little brother for Tom and Tilly.

Sally Wright (Staff) and Bill welcomed a baby girl, Isabelle Paige, on 1 March. The arrival of Isabelle Paige means 3 daughters for Sally and Bill.

Lucy Marquand nee Ryan, Class of 2008, and husband, Hamish, welcomed their first child, Ruby, in February 2019.

Tim Csorba, Class of 2012, and his wife, Chloe, have just had their second child, Mackenzie Jade Lillian Csorba, on 10 March, 2019.

Mark van Oirschot, Class of 1990, married Jo Anderson on 19th January 2019.

Dean Berlingeri, Class of 2005, was married to Lauren on 23rd February at Pennyroyal, Victoria.

Brother Brian Lawrence Kelly (Staff 1968 – 1970) died in Warrnambool on 20 December 2018. Brian was the beloved son of Leo and Elsie and a much-loved brother to Colin, Jenny and Paul. Br Brian was a member of the Christian Brothers and taught at St. Paul's from 1968 to 1970. He was a renowned Science teacher and basketball coach. He died aged 78.

Greg Dean (Former staff) died in early January 2019. Greg was only 50 when he died. He is survived by his wife, Catherine, and his children, Lachlan and Molly. Greg's funeral service was held at St Patrick's Cathedral.

Ruth Strauss nee McDonald, Class of 1989, died aged just 46 after a battle with a rare form of lung cancer. Ruth was the beloved wife of Andrew (former England cricket captain). Ruth leaves behind two young sons, Sam and Luca.



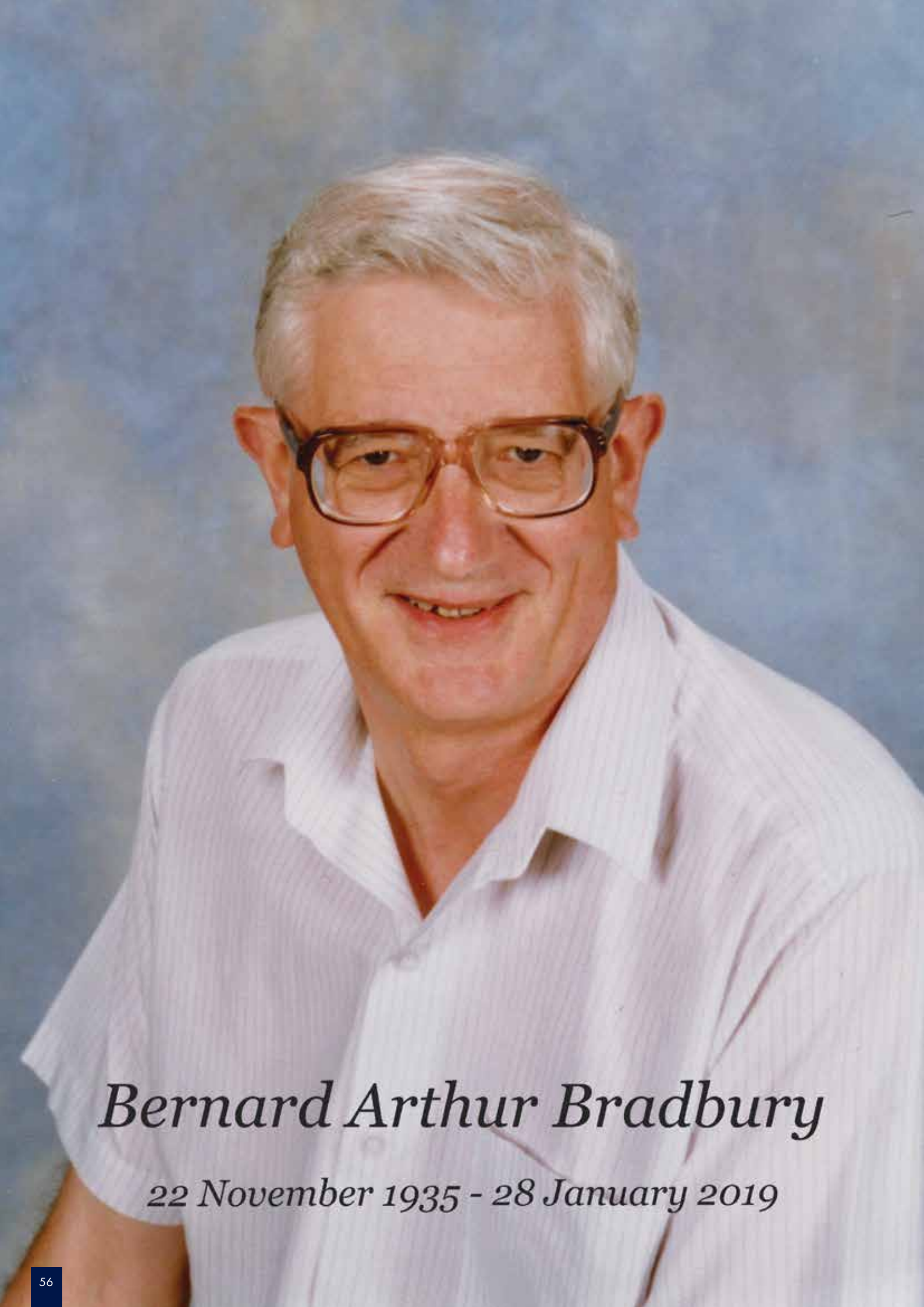
Paddy



Isabelle Paige



Ruby



Bernard Arthur Bradbury

22 November 1935 - 28 January 2019

A TRIBUTE TO BERNARD BRADBURY

IN MEMORIUM

On Monday 28 January 2019, we were sad to learn of the passing of former St Martin's and Damascus staff member, Bernard Bradbury.

Bernard was a much beloved, long term staff member of St Martin's and Damascus, he filled a variety of leadership roles and was highly respected within the school community. He was on staff from 1976 to 2001. Bernard authored a publication in his retirement, titled "Into the Light", reflecting on the first 10 years of Damascus College, which was published in 2004. Bernard was a Director on the Damascus College Board for several years, ending in 2012.

He is survived by his wife, Vivienne, and their children.

A Requiem Mass was offered at St. Alipius Church, Ballarat, on Friday 1 February 2019, and the eulogy from that Mass is provided here.

I have encountered a number of people, some former students or peers of Bernard's, over the last few days. On hearing the news of Bernard's death, there has been a lovely response, like two "ah's", a sad "ah" on hearing the news, and then, as if a lovely memory has been recalled, an affirming "ah". Not a lot of words spoken but true feelings expressed, which speaks of the man.

The family chose as the Gospel to celebrate Bernard's life, the words of Jesus as he was travelling his road to death, "Do not let your hearts be troubled". Jesus believed that beyond death there was a place in the Father's house and "many rooms" for Jesus, God was welcoming and hospitable and generous, rooms were not exclusive or limited, and there are many rooms reflecting many people, cultures, faiths and searchings. But just not in heaven.

Theologian, Hans Von Balthasar, writes, "we do not build the kingdom of God on earth by our own efforts, however, assisted by grace the most we can do through genuine prayer is to make as much room as possible in ourselves and in the world for the Kingdom of God so that it's energy can go to work".

I would like to suggest that Bernard, in his life, made room within himself and the world for many people who came into his life. I would like to acknowledge Bernard's contribution to Catholic Education in our parish and our diocese, as a teacher, educator, leader and person of wisdom.

Pope John Paul writes of the teacher, "The life of a teacher, as I know from personal experience, is very challenging and demanding, but it is also profoundly satisfying. It is more than a job, for it is rooted in our deepest convictions and values. To be intimately concerned in the development of a young person, of hundreds of young people, is a highly responsible task. As teachers, you kindle in your students a thirst for truth and wisdom. You spark off in them a desire for beauty. You introduce them to their cultural heritage. You help them to discover the treasure of other cultures and peoples. What an awesome responsibility and privilege is yours in the teaching profession".

In the spirit of our reading from the Prophet Isaiah, Bernard has certainly done the planting, as a faithful sower.

Over the last few years, Bernard was afflicted with dementia but, as his capacity to remember diminished, those around him continued to remember him, and he was not forgotten.

Vivian, I affirm your beautiful care of Bernard along with your sons and their families. Dementia changes relationships, even reverses relationships, and coming to terms with this change is a great call of love. Even in the toughest of times, he knew he was loved, respected and not alone.

Today we give thanks for a good man who has lived among us, whose search for love, service and wisdom brought him to us from the other side of the world, via the Philippines. He set the bar high for himself, but as St Paul writes, "he fought the good fight, he finished the race, he kept and spread the faith". May he receive his crown but in his spirit, not just him but all who wait in faith.

May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the love of God, live in peace.

Amen

Eulogy provided by Fr Peter Sherman



connecting@Damascus

BRIGHT FUTURES SCHOLARSHIP

SOCIAL JUSTICE

When families are in crisis, disaster strikes or financial disadvantage is overwhelming, keeping kids in school and on track to succeed can be challenging, if not impossible. Around the world, 124 million children and youth are out of school. We believe that a brighter future starts with an education and giving a child the opportunity to thrive at Damascus College is the aim of the Bright Futures Scholarship.

Established in 2018 the Damascus College Bright Futures scholarship sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy (John Thirsk Estate), Fr Brendan Davey and Damascus College, is for the purpose of supporting students and families who are experiencing financial or personal disadvantage, and who demonstrate a strong commitment to social justice activities and contribute to their local community, but may not otherwise be able to afford a Catholic education.

This scholarship is awarded annually to one incoming Year 7 student for 50% tuition relief, and is awarded for the duration of a student's enrolment at Damascus College (maximum of 6 years).

Primary School Principals support/endorse one Grade 5 student per year from their Primary School community, to be considered for this Damascus College scholarship.

A bit about the scholarship benefactors...

John Thirsk was a notable sports journalist who was cared for by the Sisters of Mercy as a result of family tragedy. The Sisters of Mercy provided John with an education and a safe place for him to return throughout his life. He considered the sisters as family and his gift to them was to enable them to provide for others the support that they offered to him. The Sisters have entrusted these funds to Damascus College.

Fr Brendan Davey grew up in Ballarat and was priest of the Diocese for over 60 years. Fr Brendan always had a great empathy for human vulnerability and valued the gift of education. Upon his death he gifted Damascus College with funds to enable Catholic education to be made available to young people who may not otherwise be able to access it.

The Bright Futures scholarship honours the Christian spirit that prevailed through the work of Fr Brendan as a priest of the Diocese and the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Bright Futures Scholarship Fundraising Breakfast

Damascus College is excited to launch the Bright Futures Breakfast, a new annual fundraising event for our alumni and wider community members.

In holding this fundraising breakfast, the College seeks to extend this scholarship opportunity to be able to offer it to more than one Year 7 student per year. Proceeds raised will support this worthy scholarship fund, in order to extend its reach to multiple students each year.

We invite our alumni of Damascus College, Sacred Heart, St Paul's and St Martin's in the Pines, and the wider community, to enjoy a sumptuous breakfast, network with other alumni and community members, and to hear from guest speakers who are recognised members of the community.

If you would like to financially contribute to the Bright Futures Scholarship please contact Damascus College 03 5337 2222 or info@damascus.vic.edu.au.



connecting@Damascus

BRIGHT FUTURES FUNDRAISING BREAKFAST

UPCOMING ALUMNI EVENT

PLEASE SAVE THE DATE

Thursday 19 September 7am - 8.45am

More details will be available later in 2019. Please visit

damascus.vic.edu.au/past-students-reunions-events

and complete the brief survey to help with planning and to stay informed





The best start for a **bright future**
damascus.vic.edu.au