

# VERITY

NOVEMBER 2014



ST MARY'S COLLEGE  
THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE





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# FROM THE PRINCIPAL

It is a sign of our times that most of these students have not completed their education with this degree but they will go on to specialise in graduate programs.

In recent weeks we said 'Vale' to seventeen students who have been living in College for the duration of their undergraduate degree. The annual Valedictory Dinner was an occasion for the College to celebrate their impending graduation as well as their contributions to the St. Mary's community over the last three years. The experience and wisdom of these senior students have been invaluable to the Student Club this year; they have exerted a particular influence over the academic and cultural life of the College.

It is a sign of our times that most of these students have not completed their education with this degree but they will go on to specialise in graduate programs. As advances in technology in the twentieth century were intended to reduce human labour, it would seem that the goal of technological innovation in the twenty-first century has been to enable us to gather more information and to make it accessible at all hours and from any geographic location. Hence the imperative for today's graduates to return to the university for even more specialist degrees in order to be competitive in the age of mass information. The Canadian philosopher, George Grant, was already disparaging the emergence of this 'multiversity' in the 1980s in his various laments on the eclipse of holistic education in the modern world. Grant's vision of education is much like that of Jürgen Moltmann, a German Protestant theologian, who contrasts modern,

instrumentalist ways of knowing with a classical one:

*The motive that impels modern reason to know must be described as the desire to conquer and dominate. For the Greek philosophers and the Fathers of the church, knowing meant something different: it meant knowing in wonder. By knowing or perceiving one participates in the life of the other. Here knowing does not transform the counterpart into the property of the knower; the knower does not appropriate what he knows. On the contrary, he is transformed through sympathy, becoming a participant in what he perceives.*

To learn through participation and in wonder is what happens in a university college. All of our activities—management of the student club by a General Committee, a musical production, public speaking, a visual arts exhibition—are pursued for the enjoyment and collegiality they induce. The hard skills of management, organisation and accounting which are picked up in the process are really incidental. The delight in learning and sharing knowledge is obvious in our academic activities as well, especially the tutorial program and, new this year, the student anthology *In Medias Res*. Where the university tutorial concentrates on knowledge to be assimilated for the exam, the college tutorial pauses to consider that same knowledge more deeply and in its broader implications. The other



DR PAUL GALLAGHER

part of Moltmann's observation—the transformation of the learner—is also true of the college experience. Many students tell me, as they are leaving St. Mary's, that their experience of college had changed them in so many ways: what they have learned and who they have become are two sides of the same coin.

Such personal, transformative learning is not incompatible with the specialist learning of the multiversity. The predominance of the latter only confirms the need for a community like St. Mary's within the university. It is very encouraging to see that the University of Melbourne, which is still in the midst of significant structural changes and growth, is building new residential spaces in the campus vicinity that will be opening to students in less than two years. Those residences will probably not look anything like the traditional colleges, some of which were built in the nineteenth-century—and they need not be like the colleges either. But they will provide more students with the option of living together with their peers very near to the campus, which may be all the foundation they need to indulge in learning beyond the specialisations of their chosen disciplines.

Dr Paul Gallagher  
Acting Principal



# FROM THE EDITOR

And so another year comes to a close at St Mary's and as the weather warms up we find ourselves looking forward to the summer break. Students are slowly finishing exams and winding their way home and the College is getting quieter by the day.

It's been a hectic semester and in this edition of *Verity* we bring you news and pictures a plenty of all the wonderful events that have taken place. Also in this edition we have some marvellous stories from alumni reflecting on their time at St Mary's – a most entertaining read.

July kicked off with O2 week, which was a great success, and the footy and netball rounds began. Christmas in July just missed the mark this year and was celebrated with great gusto on 1st August and High Table also commenced in the same week. We were fortunate to have many distinguished guests at High Table this semester and you can read more about this in the following pages.

The Dean's Dinner was held in the College dining room with an inspiring speech by Ms Burns on the subject of heroes.

Open Day saw a steady stream of visitors with College tours being expertly run by the students and the first of the Faculty Dinners was held with enthusiastic attendance.

September was another full month with the College Musical being performed to great acclaim, in addition to the College Ball, MADfest, Battle of the

Bands and culminating in the election and handover of the 2015 Student Club Committee.

October was no quieter as we celebrated the Sports Awards and Valedictory Dinners. The Annual Alumni Cocktail Party was a great triumph with over 100 alumni in attendance. In addition, great strides have been made in the formation of an Alumni Association with a new committee formed and much work going into re-connecting with ex-collegians. More detail on this later from the Dean. Our contacts on LinkedIn continue to grow and an Alumni Association Facebook page will be coming soon.

On that subject, don't forget to update your contact details with us to ensure you are kept informed of all that is happening at St Mary's. In particular, I encourage you to provide an email address as this is by far the easiest mode of communication. You can update your details via our website or by emailing me direct on [kexell@stmarys.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:kexell@stmarys.unimelb.edu.au)

Finally, we would love to hear from you if you would like to make a contribution to any future editions of *Verity*. Wishing you all a safe and happy Christmas and great success for the New Year.

**Kim Exell**  
College Secretary and Alumnist





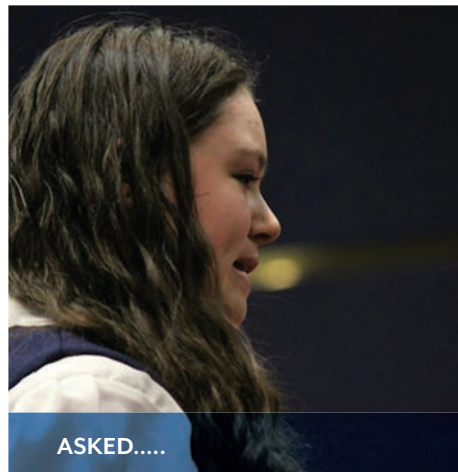
# CANBERRA LEADERSHIP TRIP

On Wednesday September 3rd, at 12.30pm, we boarded a plane for the National Student Leadership Forum in Canberra. Suitcases filled with formalwear for a dinner at Parliament House, old clothes for a community service project, and potential costumes for the much dreaded 'NSLF Barn Dance' we'd been invited to, we were unsure what to expect. So unsure, in fact, that Jeremy's suitcase was double the size of Sophie's – and perhaps, double the size of Sophie herself. We arrived in Canberra a day before the conference commenced, hoping to settle into the life of Canberrans, meet our fellow delegates, and fulfill our dreams of numerous selfies in Parliament House. The following morning, the conference began.



Jeremy Waite with Bronwyn Bishop

The National Student Leadership Forum (NSLF) is a conference held for young adults from all over Australia, and overseas, with a focus on faith and values and how these inform leadership: whether that be of a small community organisation, or of our country. With this in mind, we were



ASKED.....

privileged with the opportunity to meet, question, and be both challenged and inspired by men and women who have made incredible impacts on the lives of many; from Audette Exel, the CEO of a corporate finance for-purpose business that funds the ISIS Foundation, to Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten. We were given the opportunity to stand up and ask these leaders questions in front of hundreds of people – to question them on their faith (be it religious or not), their passions, their inspirations, and their values, and how these influence (or sometimes, how they can be reconciled with) their actions. At a dinner in Parliament House, with many of the forum's forty Parliamentary Hosts, Jeremy had the opportunity to learn from The Hon. Bronwyn Bishop (speaker for the House of Representatives) and Sophie the opportunity to challenge and be challenged by The Hon. Scott Morrison (Minister for Immigration and Border Protection).

The two hundred or more delegates were split into small groups, led by former delegates as mentors, who became our families throughout the forum. In these groups, we were encouraged to leave our perceptions of what it is to get to know someone ("What do you study?" "How are you? Good? Cool.") behind, and substitute the surface relationships we are so accustomed to having, for the deeper questions of what has shaped us, what angers us, and what makes us passionate. It is this new foundation for establishing relationships with others to which we can attribute much of the forum's impact. Perhaps it is also why almost every team mentor/former delegate who had a significant other met said significant other at the conference... Or perhaps it's



.... AND ANSWERED

*Sophie Cusworth gets an opportunity to ask the Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten, a question during her recent visit to Canberra for the National Student Leadership Forum.*

simply because, gathered in the theatres of Parliament House, sat hundreds of young leaders of diverse ethnic, religious, educational and socio-economic backgrounds, with shared values, passions and visions for the future.

Equally as important in our NSLF experience were the community service projects we took part in. Our small groups were divided among a number of community organisations, with which we volunteered for an afternoon. These included local public schools; a respite organisation for children, youth and adults with disability; a nursing home; and services providing support for those part of the devastatingly high homeless population of Canberra. Having stayed at the Hyatt Hotel throughout the conference and spent days in the beautiful Parliament House, it was so valuable to gain perspective: to delve into the wider community and to see how the leadership skills we had enhanced in such a luxurious environment, can and should be used to assist and encourage others.

We would like to thank Dr. Paul Gallagher and St Mary's College for nominating and sponsoring us for such an encouraging, inspiring and challenging opportunity. We are so grateful.

May we always strive to be leaders who are seekers of truth and doers of justice.

Sophie Cusworth and Jeremy Waite



# FROM THE DEAN

The enthusiasm and good will with which our students embrace all activities is infectious, and illustrates the often quoted phrase of “friendship wins”.

I am writing this on the first Tuesday in November while most of Melbourne is either at the Melbourne Cup or at least celebrating the day, but not here at College. The University of Melbourne considers itself a National University so does not acknowledge State or local public holidays and today is the second day of the three week university examination period. Whilst I am sure that there may be a few “flutters” on the Cup, the air here is a studious one.

We hold high academic expectations of all of our collegians and if the results from Semester 1 are anything to go by, they can look forward to fine results. An impressive 74% of all grades were Honours, and 31% were H1s. At the Dean’s dinner in August, academic awards were given to a number of students who achieved H1 average over all their subjects, as well as awards to some students whose grades were a marked improvement on those they achieved in the previous semester.

Many of our graduating students are moving on to further study. Norah Finn has been awarded an AMSI scholarship to pursue her Honours in Statistics at RMIT; Mathew Connolly is embarking on a year’s intensive language study in Yogyakarta; Emily Fitzgerald is joining the noble profession of teaching, studying Masters of Teaching here at the University of Melbourne. Others are awaiting results to apply for places in Medicine, Law,

Engineering and Architecture. We are proud of their achievements and thank them for their contributions to the life of the College during their three year stay.

Evidence of their scholarship can be found in the exciting 1st edition of *In Medias Res*, an anthology of student work. The quality and variety of submissions overwhelmed the editors and they have produced a commendable magazine. Much discussion preceded the selection of the title, Latin for “in the midst of things”, a title which truly reflects the status of our students. Particular thanks and congratulations must go to the editorial team of Matthew Connolly, Liam Cain, Natalie Keynton and Monica La Macchia. They have certainly set the bar very high for future editions. Copies can be purchased from the College, and a digital version can be downloaded from the College website.

The activities this semester have not only been academic; there has been a wide variety of sports; there was the musical ably directed by Elizabeth Smart and Sian Fowler; there have been PFAs (Pleasant Friday Afternoons) and Turns; there have been fundraising breakfasts and as I write, moustaches are sprouting on every floor for Movember. The enthusiasm and good will with which our students embrace all activities is infectious, and illustrates the often quoted phrase of “friendship wins”.



I could not do my job as Dean without the support of the team of tutors and mentors. I thank the tutors: Anna Song, Head Tutor, Kishara de Silva, Zainab Hikmet, Danielle Majer-Keilbaska, Brian Kennedy, Chin Quek, and Xavier Snell. They have worked tirelessly and independently to support the students and me. Similarly the mentors: Laura Fielden, Head Mentor, Norah Finn, Emily Fitzgerald, Sian Fowler, Jack Henseleit, Erin Lawn, Hugh McDonald, Emily O’Grady, Daniel O’Shea, Imran Vilcassim and Sam Vuillerim. Their continuous care for their peers has been outstanding and the contributions of both of these groups of young people play a significant role in ensuring that the well-being of all students is promoted and supported.

I have enjoyed my year as Acting Dean and thank Dr Paul Gallagher and the staff for their support. May all here at St Marys’ continue to be seekers of truth and doers of justice in the spirit of felicity.

Late news: we congratulate second year student Erin Lawn who has recently become a published author! *Your Strengths Blueprint; How to be Engaged, Energized, and Happy at Work*, was co-written by Erin and Michelle L. McQuaid MAPP, an established writer in this genre.

[Elizabeth Burns](#)  
Acting Dean and deputy Principal





## OPEN DAY

On the 17th of August, we opened our gates to prospective students and their parents with great success. The day was well attended and the weather was kind. The many volunteer tour guides from the student body did a wonderful job of showcasing all aspects of life at St. Mary's. In addition, a number of students displayed their musical talents in the courtyard, while the kitchen staff demonstrated the culinary gifts of the college.

It was a successful and enjoyable day for all involved that made the current collegians even more enthusiastic to meet next year's incoming students.





# CHRISTMAS IN JULY



The annual Christmas In July dinner forsook its title this year by being held on 1st August, nonetheless it was as successful an evening as ever. The dining hall was bedecked with colour and the Christmas tree took pride of place on the high table stage, its base awash with kris kringle gifts.

With over 160 students, staff and guests comfortably seated, the festivities began with the customary Grace and then a warm welcome from Student Club President Matt Connolly.

As always the main purpose of the evening was to benefit the Sacred Heart Mission by donations of non-perishable goods and as the dining hall overflowed with laughter and christmas carols, the pile of tins and packets grew ever higher thanks to the generosity of St Mary's students.

Our special guests for the evening were Mr and Mrs Colin Nettlebeck, long term patrons of the Sacred Heart Mission, and their wonderful granddaughter Isobelle. During the course of a splendid Christmas dinner it emerged that Colin is an accomplished singer and pianist and that Isobelle is fast following in his footsteps. After much cajoling the two of them were finally persuaded to perform a duet, much to the delight of everyone present.







## TUTOR PROFILE – DANIELLE MAJER-KIELBASKA

Living away from home while studying a Master's degree can be a lot to handle. So when I received an offer to return to St Mary's as a residential tutor I was overjoyed.

My affiliation with St Mary's college began in 2006 when I helped my older brother move in on his fresher year. I remember waiting outside the gates, looking after his luggage while the car was parked when a college student came up to me and asked if I needed any assistance moving in. At age 14 I was absolutely thrilled to be mistaken for a university student. Along with this flattering mistake, the welcoming and friendly nature of all the other students I came across while helping move my brother in had me in awe of the college and determined to return, when I actually could call myself a university student.

Three years later my time came. I packed up all my stuff from my childhood home in Kuranda, Far North Queensland to move down to the Big Smoke. While this was a daunting experience, moving from a small village in the tropics, to one of Australia's largest cities, I knew I was in good hands.

On arrival at St Mary's College, it was exactly how I'd imagined it. The friendly and welcoming nature of the students had not faded and within hours I felt right at home with my new family of 160 students.

After spending two years at St Mary's meeting new friends and growing into the role of a university student, I felt

ready to transition into a share house. I moved out with two college and one university friends. I lived there for one and a half years, during which time I graduated with a Bachelor of Science, majoring in Geology, and began a Masters of Earth Science.

The Masters of Earth Science at Melbourne University is a two year research degree. My thesis is based on the tectonic evolution of East Africa, and until the outbreak of Ebola, a trip to Kenya was included in my project proposal.

While living in a share house was an amazing experience, the stress of having to financially support myself while studying a full-time postgraduate degree was weighing me down. So the opportunity to return to St Mary's as a residential tutor was one I couldn't resist.

Ever since moving out of home, St Mary's college has played a major role in my life. It has provided a nurturing and encouraging environment to grow into an independent person.

I am happy to be able to return to St Mary's as a residential tutor where I can aid in this transition for many other students. The last semester living at St Mary's as a residential tutor has been a great experience and I look forward to seeing what next year will bring.



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# DEAN'S DINNER SPEECH GIVEN BY MS ELIZABETH BURNS

## *We can be heroes*

There were very many heroes here at the commencement of the year, mostly of the men-and-women-in-tights variety, though of course we still have one of them here in College, something unique to St Mary's I think. Not only do we have the best food on the Crescent, we have our very own Hero.

There have been and still are very many heroes in my life, people I admire, people who I look up to. They can be categorised in a number of ways – personal, those associated with my profession, those of the Mandela, Mother Teresa or Ghandi variety and other random folk.

Let's start with the random. You have all heard of the Nobel Prize – more about that later – but who has heard of the IgNobels or the Darwin? Now the former are heroic but not so those who win the Darwin Prize. To be nominated for this prize, people must

“significantly improve the gene pool by eliminating themselves from the human race in an obviously stupid way. They are self-selected examples of the dangers inherent in a lack of common sense, and all human races, cultures, and socioeconomic groups are eligible to compete. I am sure that these criteria are not specifically written for or about College students but the thought has crossed my mind.

As you know I am on the Ethics Committee for a large medical institution and the projects I review have riveting titles such as: *A First in Human (FIH) clinical study to assess safety and performance of hepatic sympathetic denervation for treatment of inadequately controlled type 2 diabetic subjects on oral antihyperglycemic agents.*

But the Ignobles are an entirely different category. These are awarded with due pomp and ceremony every year for research that makes people laugh and think. The 2014 awards are to be announced on 18 September and I encourage you to read the blogs. I think that you can also watch them live. Here are some wonderful examples from previous years:

The 2013 IgNobel for Medicine went to Japanese researchers who “assessed the effect of listening to opera, on heart transplant patients who are mice.” In Psychology, a multinational team was given the award “for confirming, by experiment, that people who think they are drunk also think they are attractive”, something that may have been witnessed at College Turns. I like the title of their paper: *Beauty is in the Eye of the Beer Holder: People who think they are drunk also think they are attractive.*

**And the PEACE PRIZE:** Alexander Lukashenko, President of Belarus for making it illegal to applaud in public, and to the Belarus State Police, for arresting a one-armed man for applauding.

We may laugh but the organisation who awards these momentous prizes – named Improbable Research – are serious and I quote from their web-site:

“Our goal is to make people laugh, then make them think. We also hope to spur people's curiosity, and to raise the question: How do you decide what's important and what's not, and what's real and what's not — in science and everywhere else?”

I like these questions – maybe our definition of a hero can be thought of as someone

who *is* curious, *does* seek to know what is important and what is not, and *does* search for what is real and what is not. Certainly the heroes of the Catholic Church and, in particular, Ignatius Loyola and Mary Ward, the founders of the Jesuits and Loretos respectively, exhibited these traits, and what is more, knew why they were important. Their faith in Christ spurred them on to the greatness they achieved in establishing their orders through both failure and triumph. Winston Churchill talked about a successful person being one who can pick himself up time and time again after disappointment and temporary defeat. Mary Ward's order was repressed during her lifetime – by a particularly nasty papal bull of suppression, nailed outside the by then numerous institutions. Nowadays it would be on the Vatican website. Similarly the Jesuits were suppressed, though in 1767 long after Ignatius' death. But the reasons for these suppressions were predominantly similar; the independence of thought by both Orders, and with Mary Ward the freedom and advantages it gave to women challenged the current orthodoxy. So other traits of our heroes are that of persistence and resilience, and for us in a Loreto Institution, to do this in faith, with sincerity and felicity. And of course the purpose is fundamental; to be seekers of truth and doers of justice.

But let us return to the prizes and those Nobel heroes. As a mathematician, I am vexed as to why there is no prize for mathematics. I am also amused by the fact that Nobel invented and manufactured dynamite and yet the Peace Prize is perhaps the most valued. Thank God











that there are now two important world prizes for mathematics the Fields Medal which is given every four years to young mathematicians; Dr Terry Tao, originally from Adelaide, is an Australian recipient, a hero. There is also a new \$3 million prize donated by Facebook folk Yuri Milner and Mark Zuckerberg. But the likes of Hilbert, who at a Mathematical congress in 1900 presented 23 problems which would guide the development of Mathematics in the 21<sup>st</sup> C (many still have to be solved), GH Hardy and Srinivasa Ramanujan (both numbers men) have missed out.

Hardy and Ramanujan were at Cambridge approximately 100 years ago, the time of the war to end all wars, the Great War or WW1. You cannot have failed to miss the current deluge of articles, television shows, remembrance ceremonies for this disaster which unfolded in August 1914, 100 years ago this month. Much that I have recently read tells of the “slide into war”, the decisions driven by the timetable for moving troops, the inability for all sides to compromise and, more importantly, the total lack of comprehension of what was to come. You read of the rush to arms by all manner of people; the notion that going into this war was heroic, for God and the Empire; the eulogies for the “brave heroic men” who died in the trenches; we still “celebrate” Anzac Day and the landing at Gallipoli, forgetting it seems to me that this was a country we invaded. I am sure that the men who did rush to arms did so with great pride and I am also sure that they performed many heroic deeds, but the leaders who sent them there and let them be cannon fodder should all have been candidates for Darwin’s Prize, before the War! You can witness the consequences of this tragedy in every country town in Australia (and in the UK, in France, in Germany, in Italy, in Russia, in Turkey etc) by the memorials placed in every town square, often showing multiple deaths in the same family. There are also Avenues of Honour. When young, with my brothers and sisters, we would count the trees on each side of the highway leading from the memorial on Sturt St in Ballarat as we visited our grandfather in the small gold mining town of Waterloo, near Beaufort. For us they were just trees and a way of passing the time,

but for the families they were a tangible reminder of who they had lost, an Avenue of Honour. All the trees were named, an inscribed plaque under each tree. And there were other pointers to this loss. My grandfather had four sisters, none of whom married. There were not enough men left!

But of course there are heroes from this war and here are some of mine. In Australia the referendum for conscription was lost, and the battle against it was led by many including Vida Goldstein and Archbishop Mannix; many pacifists (mostly for religious reasons) in the UK and USA where there was conscription, were jailed and suffered terribly because they refused to bear arms; we have the poems and writings of Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Rupert Brookes to name a few. Inspired by the 1881 poem by George Meredith, Ralph Vaughan Williams commenced composing his most wondrous piece of music for violin and orchestra, the Lark Ascending, prior to the War and completed it sometime prior to its first performance in London in 1921; and Elgar’s powerful Cello concerto commemorates the fallen. Out of tragedy can come beauty. And influence! The winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 1962 was Barbara Tuchman’s book on the outbreak of the War, *The Guns of August*. JFK was reading this book, and gave copies to all his aids during the Cuban crisis of 1963. Unlike the leaders in 1914, he (and his USSR counterpart Krushchev) was not persuaded by his generals to hit the button and nuclear war was averted. Another hero!

Vera Britten’s excellent book *Testament of Youth*, published in 1933, relates her war experiences- the deaths of her brother, fiancée and another dear friend, and her service as a nurse. After the war, she became an ardent pacifist and marched in anti-war rallies and was arrested well into her old age. In 1914, against fierce opposition from her family, Vera (a hero) had been admitted to Somerville, a women’s College at Oxford. When she was protesting in the late 60s, I was a student here, the women’s College of St Mary’s. The Vietnam War was in full force, boys were being conscripted (a ballot) and the universities were fully engaged in the anti-war battle. The literature mentioned earlier

– Owen, Brookes and Sassoon really came into prominence as their stories told the truth of the horrors and the futility of war. Of course it was not just English authors who wrote of the horrors. The German book *All Quiet on the Western Front* by Erich Remarque was a best seller early on and then was banned by the Nazis. At the time I was more familiar with the protest songs of Joan Baez, Bob Dylan and Pete Seeger than these works but they certainly influenced the thinking at the time. My father, a Naval Lieutenant in WWII, revered Sassoon.

Whitlam came to power, the Vietnam War ended and yes, we have been involved in conflicts since but none of you are sitting hear worried that your number may come up and you will have to serve two years in the forces and maybe be killed! Are you the lucky ones? In some ways yes and others no. My education was basically free and jobs were plentiful and secure. The landscape has changed but you are the privileged ones, just as I was. You all do have a great future to look forward to and yes, you too can be heroes. You do not have to be famous, you do not have to do anything earth-shattering, you just have to be curious, know what is important, be seekers of truth and doers of justice in all that you do. Heroes just do good things well. They reflect on what they have done and they seek challenges; they treat all people with dignity and respect, and love in its truest sense as all people are children of God.

And to finish, for you all, the Prayer of Sir Francis Drake, intrepid explorer and certainly a hero:

Disturb us, Lord when  
We are too well pleased with ourselves,  
When our dreams have come true  
Because we have dreamed too little,  
When we have arrived safely  
Because we sailed too close to the shore

Disturb us Lord, to dare more boldly,  
To venture on wider seas  
Where storms will show your mastery,  
Where losing sight of land  
We shall find the stars

Thank you  
[Elizabeth Burns](#)

## IN MEDIAS RES

*In medias res* is a journal published by the students of St. Mary's College to contribute to the rich intellectual nature of the College community. It is underpinned by a very simple idea: that the students of the College needed more opportunities to share their academic interests and pursuits, whilst engaging with the world around them. This idea arose from discussions with students from all year levels, and was enthusiastically supported by many at the College, none more so than the acting dean, Ms. Elizabeth Burns. Her vim and vigour has delighted us all over the past year, and her vision for the College, one which embraces its intellectual and artistic potential, will long endure. Indeed, the potential for *In medias res* to represent a renewed academic vision for the College was not only its inspiration, it also somewhat became its *raison d'être*.

Though inaugurated in 2014, *In medias res* speaks to a long history of academic pursuit at St. Mary's, and, more broadly, to a public-spirited engagement in the pressing issues of our time. Established in the knowledge that with the privilege afforded by membership of a community such as St. Mary's, comes the responsibility to practise the values extolled by the Loreto Order – freedom, justice, integrity, felicity and verity – its content will always lean in the direction of a moral and critical assessment of the wider world. In essence, *In medias res* will allow students to explore the debates both within and without their chosen field; this, in itself, will help to broaden their education in a truly liberal way.

Assembled to reflect the strong sense of community at the College, the journal should be seen as a window into the progress of our collective pursuit of knowledge, rather than the final result of our efforts. The title of the journal, *In medias res*, is derived from a Latin literary

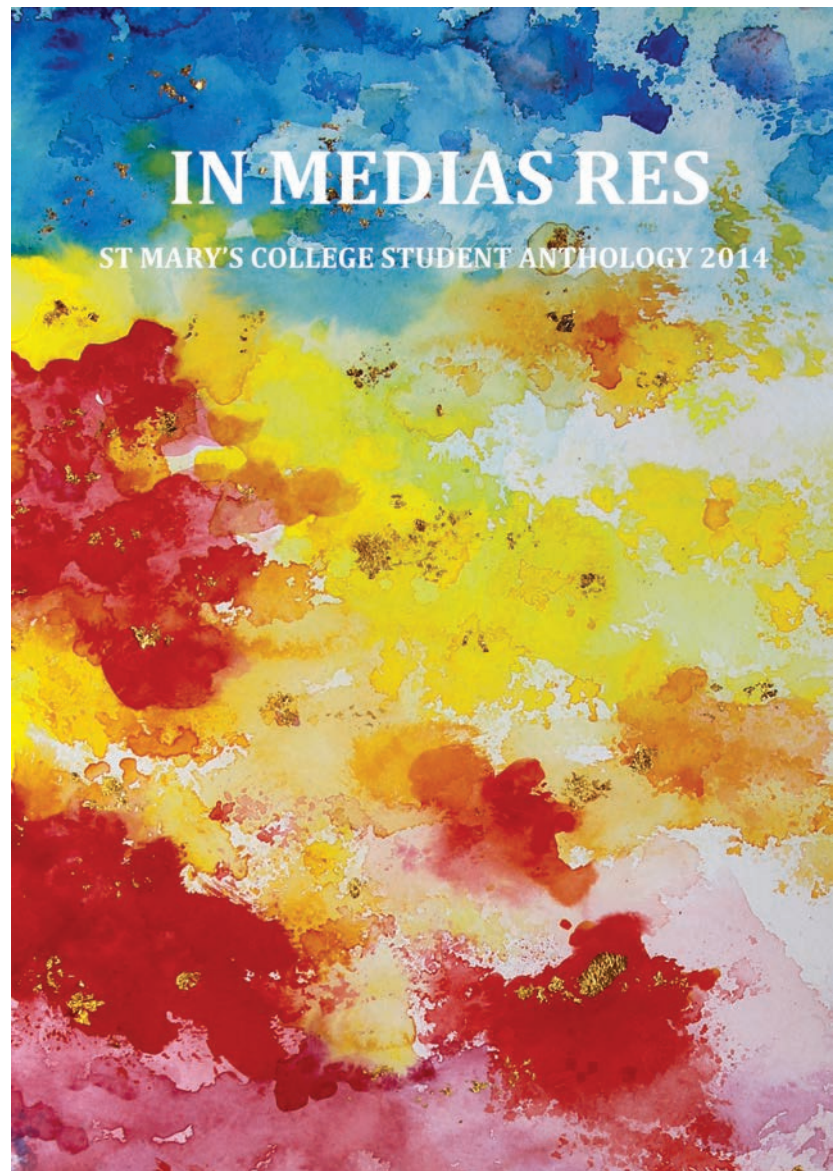
technique whereby the author begins in the middle, rather than at the beginning, of the narrative. Both Homer in the *Odyssey*, and Virgil in the *Aeneid* used to narrate their respective epics, yet it was in the work of Horace that the phrase first appeared. Literally translated as 'in the midst of things', *In medias res* is an appropriate title for our purposes because it refers to the nature and context of the compositions within; that is, the works are situated in the middle of our studies, not at the beginning, nor at the end. As such, we have placed the reader 'in the midst' of our learning.

Ultimately born of a desire to renew the academic spirit of the College, it is hoped by each of the editors – Matthew, Natalie, Monica, and myself – that *In medias res*

will continue to be seen as a forum for intellectual debate, as well as artistic and scholastic development at St. Mary's for many years to come. *In medias res* is a journal that invites its readers to glimpse the progress of the students of the College, a journal that is tempered by its vision and by a philosophy adopted by many students here: that in our future lives and vocations we will never stop learning; that we will forever be *in medias res*.

Liam Cain 2nd Year

The full version of *In medias res* can be downloaded from the College website – [www.stmarys.unimelb.edu.au](http://www.stmarys.unimelb.edu.au) – or a copy can be purchased from the office at the College.



Cover of *In medias res*, designed and painted by Natalie Keynton



# STORIES FROM HIGH TABLE

The college was very fortunate this year to host many great guests on high table when formal hall was in session. Some of these guests spoke during dinner to the staff, tutors and students about their experiences and journey from the university to where they are today. The students were then invited to join the guest in the JCR after dinner for further discussion.

The first guest was Mr Sze-Beng Tang, a Melbourne Law graduate turned freelance journalist who has written for ESPNCricinfo, The Guardian and All Out Cricket. His love for journalism stemmed from the days when he was one of the editors for the

*Esteemed High Table guest,  
Alice Pung*

Melbourne University Law Review. Dr Izelle Labuschagne, a clinical neuroscientist and a Research Fellow at Monash University, together with Dr Olivia Burns, a clinical research scientist at Glaxo Smith Kline, shared their stories of how they entered their careers. Mrs Jane Carolan, an alumni of the college talked about her professional experience as a historian and her latest book, *"A Row of Goodly Pearls"* that documents the 125 years of the contribution of the Loreto Sisters to the education of women in Melbourne. Ms Sophie Johnson, the sister of our tutor Naomi Johnson, found the experience of being a psychiatric nurse very rewarding. Mr Liao Chuanj Jing, a PhD candidate from a university in China, presented his research work on problems faced by the left behind children in China as parents move to cities in search of work leaving their children in the care of their grandparents. Mr Alistair Webster,



an advisor to a federal MP, spoke about how his interest in politics stemmed from experiences with indigenous communities in northern Australia. Mr Charles Zhang, the father of our GC president for 2015 Albert Zhang, described the 480 kilometre trek that he walked from Robe to Ballarat together with his son, Oscar, in December 2013, following the Chinese footsteps in search of gold in the 1850s. Mr Stephen Polesel is a current student of the Juris Doctor program at Melbourne Law School and he shared with the audience his past experience as a Victorian Government intern. Jennifer Ames talked of her decision to join the Teach for Australia program and her consequent experiences teaching in outer suburban Melbourne and in an indigenous community in the Northern Territory. Ms Alice Pung, a writer, editor and lawyer, inspired the many budding writers among the audience with her personal experiences. Last but not least, Prof Lea Waters, an alumni and a Professor in Psychology, emphasized how she benefited from the college environment and further delighted the audience with her tales of Eskimo Pie eating competitions with collegians during her time at college.

We are extremely grateful to all of our guests at high table this semester who have made the evenings so worthwhile for our students.

Annie Wong





## WINE APPRECIATION EVENING

Wine ultimately embodies connection. The connection between the earth and the sky, or as Galileo Galilei so beautifully put it “wine is sunlight, held together by water.” The connection between man and earth, and the cycles of cultivation unbroken across millennia. And most importantly, the connection between friends, brought together to enjoy the fruits of their labours and their lands.

The senior student wine appreciation evening was a wonderful occasion that enabled the third years to reflect on, and celebrate, our shared college experience. For one night only, the all-purpose Frewin Room was transformed from standard function area into an intimate fine dining establishment to rival Melbourne’s best.

Dr Sigfredo Fuentes, Senior Lecturer in Wine Science at the University of Melbourne, was our host for the evening. In addition to bringing his Chilean flair and passion to the night, the viticulture expert provided us with a wealth of knowledge that is bound to improve our wine drinking etiquette and erudition. No longer will any of us be in any doubt on how to examine the fruity aromas of a vibrant sauvignon blanc or the complex spices that go into a deliciously dark Shiraz. Truthfully, I hope

we acquired enough wine tasting lingo and mannerisms to give us a superficial aura of sophistication at least.

The night could have just as easily been called a food appreciation evening, as we were treated to five tasting plates and an elaborate cheese platter to accompany the wines. The Sydney Rock Oysters, sesame coated lamb loin and the gorgonzola picante remain firmly entrenched in my good food memory bank.

On behalf of the senior students, I’d like to thank admin and our ceaselessly brilliant kitchen staff for putting on such an enjoyable night for us. While we always feel appreciated and valued at St. Mary’s, it is simply another example of how the college goes above and beyond to serve its students.

Daniel O’Shea







DR SIGFREDO FUENTES



# ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

It is the end of 2014 already and I guess it is my age, but every year seems to pass with greater speed. Which means that a couple of important anniversaries will be upon us very soon. In 2016, we will be celebrating 50 years of St Mary's College Swanston St and in 2018, 100 years of St Mary's Hall/College. In his talk to the valetants this year, Michael McGirr commented with bemusement on the respective openings of St Mary's and Newman, a few weeks apart in 1918. Archbishop Mannix presided over the Newman celebrations and such was the excitement generated by the opening of the men's Catholic College, an entire edition of the Advocate was devoted to this prestigious event. In contrast, a few weeks later, Mannix's opening of St Mary's Hall earned half a page some distance away from the front page of that same newspaper. Things are somewhat different 100 years later.

For further reading, I commend to you not the annals of the Advocate but *A Row of Goodly Pearls, One hundred and twenty-five years of Loreto in Melbourne* by St Mary's alumni Jane Mayo Carolan. It is perhaps time to commission a history of our College, but in the meantime, all of the book and Chapter 4 in particular provide insight. She quotes a visiting journalist who wrote:

"Many brilliant graduates have issued from St Mary's Hall. The writer of these lines once heard one well qualified to express an opinion on the matter saying: I have met a large number of men with degrees whose knowledge of literature was, to say the least, patchy. But I have yet to meet a girl from St Mary's Hall who has not a real love for and understanding of it."

For this love and understanding of literature and other disciplines, we need to thank Mother Gonzaga Barry and the intelligent Loreto women who guided the students here at St Mary's: Mothers Patrick Callinan and Francis Frewin, and Sisters Veronica Brady, Margaret Manion, Joan Nowotney, Jane Kelly, Deidre Rofe, Caroline McSweeney, Maureen Burke and Liz Hepburn, to name a few. It is vitally important that we continue to foster this love of learning in our current students. This year, we are making a big effort to reconnect with all our "brilliant graduates" and I commend our new College secretary Ms Kim Exell on her efforts via email, telephone, facebook and LinkedIn to contact you all. Thank you to those who have responded and please keep the communication coming. We have recently re-established the Alumni Association Committee the purpose of which is just what its names states: to associate! The inaugural committee consists of Sam Vorwerg, Gay Ryan, Matthew Connolly, Anna Coldwell, Jill Fenwick, Melissa Evans, Mark Houlihan, Michelle McCarty, Kim Exell and myself and we shall report early next year on our proposed program of events for 2015. Our recent cocktail party was a great success and we welcome ideas for future events.

In the meantime, please call in! It is well known that the food at St Mary's is the best on the crescent and you are all welcome to partake.

May you all have a peaceful and joyous Christmas break.

Elizabeth Burns  
Acting Dean and Deputy Principal

# LIFE AT ST. MARY'S AS AN EXCHANGE STUDENT



When I found out that my exchange destination was Australia my initial thoughts were, great I've got a year in the sun where I can escape the cold Edinburgh winter whilst learning to surf and eating endless barbecues. How Perfect! However soon this idealistic dream turned into panic, apprehension and sheer excitement. I'd never previously been to Australia so questions like 'what was everyone going to be like?', 'Will my pale skin survive the Australian sun?' and of course 'where was I going to live?' ran through my mind. When I applied to St. Mary's I must admit I didn't really know what I was signing up for, I simply thought, well we don't have colleges in the UK so I should probably give it a try whilst I was here. However having lived here for five months now, I can certainly say that, as an exchange student, there is nowhere else I would rather be living.

As an exchange student I really wanted two things out of my exchange experience (besides the academic aspect!). Firstly, I wanted to do EVERYTHING Australia has to offer, as you're aware the UK is very far away, therefore, making the most of time was really important. Secondly, I wanted to live amongst as many Australian people as possible, not just others on exchange. Living at St. Mary's has given me the best opportunity to do both of these



things. Since the day I arrived both staff and students at the College have been so welcoming and friendly, making St Mary's feel like a home away from home. In only five months I've learned to play AFL, took a night cruise down the Yarra and travelled with college friends down the Great Ocean Road and over to Mount Gambier. Had I not lived at St Mary's I doubt I would have any of these amazing memories. St Mary's allowed me to meet so many great friends in a way nowhere else could, especially at the start, when I knew few other people; it really did help me settle into my exchange programme.

More seriously, both the academic and sporting facilities and opportunities that St. Mary's provides have helped me develop skills that I will take back and use in the UK in my final year of University.

I honestly can't imagine having the same amazing experience without having lived in St. Mary's this year and I will certainly leave college with wonderful memories and lifelong friends. Over the summer I am off to New Zealand and then onto the Gold Coast with other St. Mary's students before I return for my second semester. I can't wait to see what St Mary's has to offer next semester and meeting a whole new group of people as the freshers arrive. If it's anything like this semester has been then I am sure I'm in for a great time.

Harry Wilson



# LUNCH AT LORETO

Did you know that the beautiful Loreto Room is available to Alumni for functions, lunches or get togethers \*year round?

Enjoy a sumptuous lunch in the private and serene dining room and then settle into the comfortable chesterfields in the sitting room for coffee and tea.

A variety of menus, freshly prepared by our excellent chefs, can be offered in consultation with our Conference Co-ordinator at a variety of prices to suit your needs.

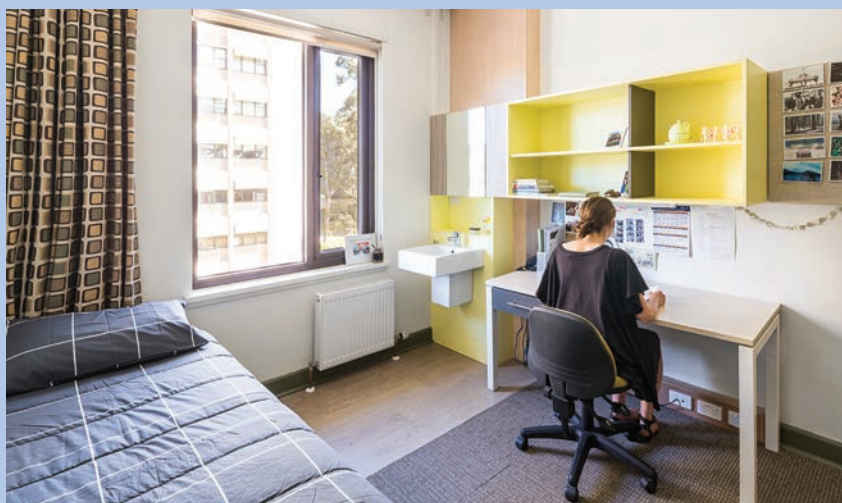
\* Excluding summer break 2015 due to renovations.



We can even offer you a post lunch stroll around the College with a lovely chance to relive some of your experiences of life at St Mary's.



# ACCOMMODATION AT ST MARY'S



St Mary's can also offer a variety of accommodation packages for Alumni, during semester breaks.

Whether you are in town for a play or dining out with friends, you can enjoy your time so much more if you do not have the long drive home.

For more details see the Conference page later in this issue or contact the College Secretary on 9349 9502 or [kexell@stmarys.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:kexell@stmarys.unimelb.edu.au)



# ALUMNI COCKTAIL PARTY

The annual Francis Frewin Cocktail Party was a great success this year. Over 100 alumni from across the generations, including a number of recent graduates, were in attendance to meet old friends and to share their stories of St. Mary's College—and even St. Mary's Hall—with new friends. One of the stories that I was able to pass on to our alumni had come to me a few months earlier in an email from Maureen Chew, the daughter of alumna Lucy Chew (nee Chin), who had passed away in America last year at the age of 90. Originally from Malaysia, Lucy was a student at St. Mary's Hall in 1946-47. I had read Maureen Chew's email to the alumni; it was a succinct description of what I assume was her mother's last night at St. Mary's Hall:

"Lucy spent her wedding eve at St. Mary's at the invitation of Mother Superior Frances, who thought Lucy was 'alone' in Melbourne. The Sisters had so much fun dressing Lucy the next day. The Kavanaugh's who lived next door to St. Mary's were very good to us. Mr. Kavanaugh gave the bride away. I think Maureen Christie was Lucy's matron-of honour."

Maureen Chew was named after this close friend of her mother's as well as another Maureen: Maureen Christie. Maureen Chew had also sent me a scan of a photo of her mother with some friends at the Hall, which we have not seen before as it is not in our archives. Indeed, we do not have many photos from the Hall, and if you have some, we would appreciate seeing them too!

The buoyant atmosphere at the Cocktail Party has inspired the newly minted Alumni Association in its endeavour to keep you connected with the College as well as your old College mates. Watch the College website for updates on their future activities.

**Dr. Paul Gallagher**  
Acting Principal









# RECOLLECTIONS OF ST MARY'S HALL IN THE EARLY 1960S

As a country girl I arrived at the College, then situated in The Avenue, Parkville, with trepidation, excitement and hope. I initially beheld a stately two storey mansion with its extensive entrance hall, grand, sweeping staircase and two capacious reception rooms. This building and a smaller one, also very gracious in style with elegant iron lacework, were set in beautiful gardens several kilometres from the university. The smaller building, "le Buis" would be my accommodation for the next two years, while most activities and dining occurred in the main building.

Mother Francis Frewin was in charge. She was a genteel lady, very fair, but firm in all her dealings with her charges. She protected us with great diligence – too much so in our opinion.

My experience at the Hall was one I treasure. While there were the occasional tears and pressure to complete work well and on time, these moments were overshadowed by the learning, support,

fun and laughter we shared with each other and the overarching care of the staff.

Many special memories come to mind. I hope the following stories will be of interest to you.

Daily Latin Mass was celebrated each morning in the Chapel around 6.30am. Attendance was optional but much encouraged, and all girls were required to take turns to deliver the Latin responses. It was expected the "servers" would be ten minutes early so they could settle themselves into a quiet inner space first. The Le Buis girls would rush across the gardens, up the back stairs and along to the Chapel. We often arrived just as the priest was walking to the altar, hoping our university gowns would hide the pyjamas underneath. We prayed our rolled up pyjama legs would not unfurl. Sometimes we were unlucky in this matter and duly received many disapproving looks from the nuns and the very senior students.

Dates with boys had their own special procedure. Firstly, we had to obtain permission from Mother. We filled out cards with names, venue, date and the time we were to be picked up and time of return. These cards were placed in a box outside Mother's office. If we received approval we could go. Boys were expected to ring the front door bell and wait to be escorted across the entrance hall to a reception room. The relevant girl would then be sent for and she would make her entrance down the stairway from the first floor. This included the girls from Le Buis too. Only the very brave and dedicated young men would repeat this procedure and we could only hope they would not lose their enthusiasm. If we were going to a ball, our dates were encouraged to stand at the bottom of the staircase to welcome us as we gingerly descended the stairs, hoping we would not slip and we looked maturely elegant and sophisticated.

To avoid this experience we would try other methods to slip out quietly. One method was to squeeze our way out of the window bars in Le Buis. Only the exceptionally thin could manage this, and luckily I was in this category.

We had very little contact with the other colleges, with the exception of Newman. This was partly due to us not being on the University campus. However, an event in 1962 brought some increase in fraternisation.

We heard a whisper that JCH and Woman's College were planning a female rowing race on the Yarra. This was a first. A strike for feminism. Why shouldn't we be in this? A few of us broached the idea with Mother Francis. Initially she was totally against the idea – too unsafe and unladylike. We very diplomatically persevered in our objective and Mother finally relented. We had six weeks to prepare. The rules for the challenge were somewhat unusual.

We were to practise on land only until race day. We were to find an experienced male coxswain to lead us and we had to find a racing shell.

Undaunted, we beleaguered, badgered and cajoled Newman College. This was mostly done using the nearby public phone box



Anne McLeod-Nibbs (far left) with friends at this year's Alumni Cocktail party.



as there was only one phone line into the college. Success of a kind was achieved. We had the oldest racing shell Newman had. We coerced one of the Newman coxswains to row with us although he had a perpetual scowl throughout the entire time; and one of the Newman football teams lent us their jumpers for the day so we could appear as a more professional team. This was achieved because one of the boys was sweet on one of our rowers. It was a backhanded gift though, as the jumpers had probably never been washed and deeply offended our olfactories. We doused them in cheap perfume to kill some of the aroma and returned them that way after the race.

We got to work on the floor to develop a sense of rhythm and flow. Of course we had no practise with oars either. Did that stop us? No. We had enough determination for anything.

Race day was kind weatherwise. Crowds lined the banks. Most of the males were hoping for a good laugh at our expense. With the coxswain yelling at us not to hole the craft as we clambered in and trying to show us how to hold the oars and use them in the water with catching crabs, we got to the start. We were all allowed a few minutes practise. Then the gun was fired. What a victory for women!!! Too soon it was over. JCH came in first, just ahead of us. Women's College followed but they had a girl overboard. We were delighted at the whole event. After the obligatory dunking of the coxswain and the Number One we were all pushed in the water by the cheering crowds. We later heard a rumour that JCH had practised on the river leading up to the race. True or not this brought us even more joy that we had done so well.

Mother Francis was greatly relieved the day was over and we were safe and sound. She later told us how proud we had made her and it was yet another accolade for St Mary's.

Time spent at St. Mary's expanded our lives in many ways and deep, long-term friendships were forged. We were very fortunate to be so blessed.

Anne McLeod-Nibbs lfsf

## THE FIRST (UNDERGRADUATE) MEN AT ST MARY'S - 1977

Mark Phillips, Steve Vizard, Rod Hodge, Phil Lane, Tony Krohn...

1977 doesn't seem that long ago...yet there are names I know I've forgotten. That was the year when I and 11 (?) other men became the first undergraduate males in residence at St Mary's. We were all in the later years of our degrees – I think the college wanted to ease men in gently. I remember some of the lady students telling me very seriously that although they disagreed with the decision to bring men into the College, they were quite prepared to welcome us now that it was a 'fait accompli'. Indeed, the welcome was wonderful. At the Newman BBQ at the start of the term I was told 'we just get our food and go' and when I mentioned that I had a coffee percolator in my room I was immediately inundated with guests.

Other memories come to mind...the shock I caused at dinner one night because, after not bothering to get a haircut for some months I decided that short back and sides was the new fashion; Steve Vizard and Mark Phillips always looking good; Karin Chua introducing some of us to real Singaporean food with red hot chillis; watching football with some of the 'Bendigo St' girls - Gemma Carroll, Pauline Holland, Ellen Ryan; going to concerts with Midori Imagawa; hearing Mary O'Farrell and Mary O'Brien on the piano; many late night coffees and conversations with Kathleen Fogarty, Mary-Lyn Ross, Dina Selman and Kerry Bryden; going to the football with Tony Patti; Vicki Guzys agreeing to marry me.

I can't speak for anyone else, but for me my two years at St Mary's were the most fun I'd had in my life to that point! 'Fun' because of the ready acceptance by the College community of all in the community. There was a genuine feeling of family, and an acceptance of the eccentricities and differences that are inevitable in a group of 120 odd people. The College leadership at that time – Srs Elizabeth and Ruth (Principal and Vice-Principal), and John Kennedy (Dean) - kept a fairly light hand on things, and most issues were resolved without fuss. At least, that's my recollection after almost 40 years. In summary I am still incredibly grateful that the college decided to accept men, and feel privileged that I had the experience of two years college life.

Jim Curtain,  
Music 75-78, St Mary's 77-78.



Jim and Vicky Curtain

# THE COLLEGE BALL



Fasten your seat belts, it's going to be a bumpy night.

On the evening of Friday, September 12, the dashing and dapper young women and men of the college ventured to the Regal Ballroom, Northcote to celebrate. It was the annual Ball, and this year's theme was *A Hollywood Story*.



The evening started in splendid style with pre-ball drinks at the College, giving an opportunity for some photos in the courtyard and then it was time to depart for the Regal.

Chandeliers hung from the ceiling, beautiful flowers adorned the tables, and silent clips of Marilyn Monroe, Humphrey Bogart, Gene Kelly, and Bing Crosby projected on the wall creating an atmosphere of stepping back into the world of musical and cinematic stardom of the 1950s.



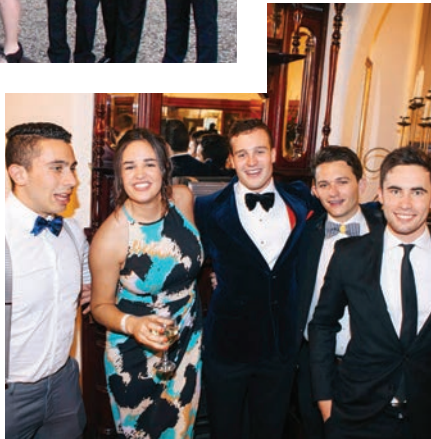
Food and drink were plentiful during the evening, and the eclectic musical choices of the DJ kept everyone dancing all evening. With just over 300 guests, current students, ex-collegians, staff, and friends alike had a wonderful night.



Second year Bachelor of Biomedicine student Sophie Therkelsen was in charge of the Ball Committee this year, and suffice to say that without her the evening wouldn't have been possible. The rest of the students on the Committee: Grace Newman, Beth Newton, Sarah Carroll, Sarah Richardson, Sam Vuillermis, and Caitlyn Bendall, must be thanked as well.









# COLLEGE – THE MUSICAL

The 2014 St. Mary's College production was once again a success, with more than 50 students involved – a third of the student body at St. Mary's!

Every aspect of the Musical was performed and produced by students; from the band and actors, to lighting and sound technicians and production co-ordinators – an astonishing feat for our small College.

The production was put together over the first 8 weeks of Semester 2, and could not have been such a success without the rigorous rehearsal schedule and dedication of all students involved.

For the third consecutive year, the Drama Committee chose to take on a musical. The production chosen was 'College: The Musical', a small time American show that seemed to capture the participatory spirit and fun filled times of students in a College much like St. Mary's.

Whilst originally an American production, the directors used their creative licence to tweak a few lines and character names and before long the production seemed to show a microcosm of the real St. Mary's College life.

The show was a sensation on opening night and could not have been so without the support of an excited audience filled with College staff and students, family and friends.

The Musical did not come without its challenges, a nasty cold went around in production week, the lead actress fell ill and the trusty director had to step in to fill her role just days before opening night.

However, even with hiccups along the way, the Musical was beyond doubt a positive experience for all involved and it was fantastic to see so many people showcase their talents.

Whilst the Musical is all wrapped up for this year, we look forward to see the creative fruits of next year's student body at St. Mary's College – it's always entertaining!









# VALETE

In late October, the College farewelled seventeen valetants with due ceremony. They are:

**Matthew Connolly**

*Bachelor of Arts*

**Amelia Chiappazzo**

*Bachelor of Biomedicine*

**Olivia Collette**

*Bachelor of Science*

**Laura Fielden**

*Bachelor of Biomedicine*

**Norah Finn**

*RMIT Statistics*

**Emily Fitzgerald**

*Bachelor of Arts*

**Kate Goodridge-Griffiths**

*Bachelor of Arts*

**Jack Henseleit**

*Bachelor of Arts*

**Fenella Keenan**

*RMIT Psychology*

**Gabriella La Macchia**

*Bachelor of Science*

**Emily O'Grady**

*Bachelor of Science*

**Richard Ong**

*Bachelor of Commerce*

**Daniel O'Shea**

*Bachelor of Arts*

**Andrew Rogers**

*Bachelor of Science*

**Claire Straw**

*Bachelor of Science*

**Imran Vilcassim**

*Bachelor of Science*

**Sam Vuillermin**

*Bachelor of Science*

As is the tradition, the festivities took place over two nights. On Friday 17 October the whole College gathered for dinner and were addressed in turn by a College member who spoke warmly, and often humorously, of each valetant. They were also addressed by resident tutor and barrister Mr Brian Kennedy who farewelled them all with some sage advice. The spirit of comradery was alive and well in the Dining Hall that night.

The celebration continued the following night, this time with family and friends of the valetants. The evening commenced with Mass in the Frewin Room celebrated by the College Chaplain Fr Michael Elligate. In his homily, Fr Elligate encouraged the exiting students to keep alive the commitment to be "seekers of truth and doers of justice".

During dinner, the gathered community was fortunate to be addressed by the celebrated author and current Director of Mission at St Kevin's College, Michael McGirr. (*Michael's address can be found ...in this magazine*). He spoke of the real importance of love evoking the poetry of John Shaw Nielson, Mary Gilmore and Peter Steele SJ.

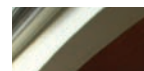
We give thanks for the presence of our valetants and thank them for all their contributions to College life. We know that as ex-collegians, they will always feel welcome here at St Mary's and we look forward to welcoming them back to dinner early next year. We wish them every success in the next important phase of their career.



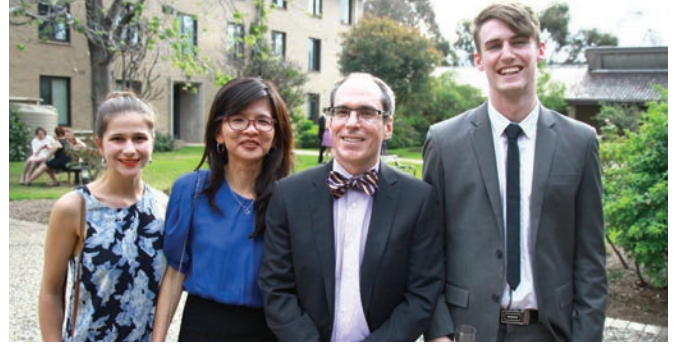












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# ADDRESS GIVEN BY MICHAEL MCGIRR TO ST MARY'S VALETANTS

## Never say die

It is terrific to be able to share this evening and this moment with you. I know that most of you are more interested in the slideshow currently playing on the wall behind me than in anything that I might have to say and that is no bad thing. The photos on display, in which nearly everyone is smiling, are reminders of the experience of community that has embraced you at St Mary's College. The gift of belonging is never to be taken for granted. Many people long for it and never find it. My hope tonight is that being part of this vibrant community will be a resource for all the wonderful things you are going to do in your lives. My prayer is that you will create community for others, especially those least able to do so for themselves.

This community has deep roots. It was established at one of the most bruised moments in history, 1918, and was part of a vision that helped to budge the world beyond the dreadful pain of World War I. The vision of St Mary's was initially about the role of educated women in society and, with that, it was a sign of hope in a world close to despair. Its depth and purpose were nurtured by generations of remarkable Loreto sisters who shaped and reshaped St Mary's. I am thinking of them tonight because I know St Mary's is in a process of change. The Loreto sisters have always been good at change; they are a most creative group of women.

I count myself blessed to have known the last four sisters who led this college and could speak with warmth about them all.

In particular, may I say how deeply grateful I have been for the friendship of Sr Jane Kelly who was principal here for 16 years. I am not sure where to begin to speak about the ways in which she has helped people grow. In the early eighties I was working with homeless people in Fitzroy in a wacky place called The Way. The young volunteers who came from St Mary's never thought of themselves as adding something to their CV. They saw their studies and their work on the streets as all part of one rich package. They counted themselves blessed to get to know the great characters whose bruising experiences of both themselves and the world had led them to the streets. Jane understood all this.

This strikes me as close to the vision of St Ignatius whose spirituality Mary Ward was drawn to when she brought the Loreto sisters together. It is a vision in which the life of the mind and the movements of the heart animate and support each other. Ignatius knew that the only safe passage to the heart was through the mind and vice versa. Sr Jane was among those who put this into practice. I can recall when a dear cousin of mine, a recent student of St Mary's, was dying. Sr Jane went with me to find an elusive kind of fruit juice which was among the few things Matthew could manage to keep down. Her spirituality was on its feet. I felt the same thing when another friend and young former student, Lucy Duncan, died in tragic circumstances. Jane was there among the mourners in a small town west of Mildura, as far from St Mary's as you can go and still be in Victoria. Not long ago, Jane showed me the notes

that Sr Gonzaga Barry kept on the retreat she made before coming to Australia to lead the sisters here. At one stage she says bluntly, 'it will be purgatory.' There is nervousness in these words but also great honesty; honesty is a quality I have come to associate with the Loreto sisters. Their honesty is often elegant, but it is honesty nonetheless. They have fostered a unique spirit in this college.

\*

Tonight, I'd like to offer those of you leaving the college three Australian poems to think about. It is a small gift but one that I hope adds something to the lining of your heart as you leave.

I have chosen the first because of the long connection of St Mary's with families in regional Australia. I believe that urban Australians increasingly fail to understand that huge part of the country affectionately known as 'the bush.' Besides, John Shaw Neilson has, for many years, been a source of peace for me. When I lived in Yarraville, I would sometimes visit his grave in the Footscray cemetery, squeezed between Francis Street and Geelong Road. He is buried in a modest plot between two of the busiest thoroughfares in Melbourne. If you look over your shoulder, you can see the spot on Geelong Road where an undertaker competes for business next to a brothel. A parlour is supposed to be a place where you speak but a funeral parlour and a massage parlour are, I imagine, places where honest words are often difficult. I once noticed a man duck out of the undertaker and slip into the brothel.



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Maybe he felt the need to cheat on his mortality. Perhaps he just had the wrong address. Anyway, the area is the perfect resting place for a man who salvaged gentle poetry from a harsh and indifferent world.

John Shaw Neilson was born in Penola in 1872. There must be something in the water there. I won't rehearse the severity of his life but he had less than 18 months formal schooling and trudged all over western Victoria from one dreary form of back breaking labour to another. Don Watson in his excellent new book, *The Bush*, says that Neilson worked for 200 employers in a period of 30 years. Along the way, he lost his eyesight. Dame Mary Gilmore, to whom I will refer in a moment, wrote of him: 'his gift is of beauty, and the hand that holds the pen is calloused by the spade; the mind that should sing is broken by bodily fatigue.' His friend and first biographer, James Devaney recalled:

*He would speak of the bewilderment and distress that religion meant to him as taught and enforced by his mother. It was a dour, primitive Presbyterianism, fanatically rigid, and she was a zealot, though so warm hearted and kindly in all worldly ways. There was little love or joy in that uncompromising formalism. To him it was a religion of fear, and God a daily threat.*

Neilson ended up in the Footscray cemetery because after 1930 the Country Roads Board found him a job that he could manage based in Melbourne. His little house in Gordon Street has long been knocked down to make room for a car park for the Western General Hospital. But the mystery I'd ask

you to think about is how such the brutal experiences of a tough life found their outlet in the tender, lyrical and romantic poetry of John Shaw Neilson. Read 'The Gentle Water Bird' and marvel at its discovery of a gentle God. Or consider these exquisite lines:

*The schoolgirls hastening through the light  
Touch the unknowable Divine.*

The poem I'd like to share in full is a love poem. I hope that each of you will also experience *Love's Coming*.

### Love's Coming

QUIETLY as rosebuds  
Talk to thin air,  
Love came so lightly  
I knew not he was there.

Quietly as lovers  
Creep at the middle noon,  
Softly as players tremble  
In the tears of a tune;

Quietly as lilies  
Their faint vows declare,  
Came the shy pilgrim:  
I knew not he was there.

Quietly as tears fall  
On a wild sin,  
Softly as griefs call  
In a violin;

Without hail or tempest,  
Blue sword or flame,  
Love came so lightly  
I knew not that he came.

\*

The second poem I have chosen is by Dame Mary Gilmore. It comes to mind partly because St Mary's has had such a significant role in encouraging women to live lives of creative impact. Mary Gilmore was born in 1865 and almost lived to see her hundredth birthday. She began as a school teacher but her career found voice for all sorts of people in all sorts of places. She was the spiritual godmother of magazines such as *The Australian Women's Weekly*, but that is a story too long for now.

Her customary view of the world was from the first floor meaning she didn't look down from 30,000 ft but nor was she lost in the daily demands of life that happen on the ground. Her perch was slightly elevated. For thirty years after World War II, she occupied a first floor flat in Darlinghurst Road, Kings Cross, and wrote about the changing face of inner Sydney. She wrote about the experience of being depressed. Mary Gilmore was a pioneer in bringing honesty to bear on what it was like to be in the blues. In 1921, she took a first floor room at the Imperial Hotel in Goulburn (also now demolished). By this stage she had not seen either her husband, an alcoholic, nor her only son for some years. She wrote: 'there is an ache and an emptiness ... life is filled with things as a shelf is filled with empty tins ... In its continual doing, even the heart itself refuses to remember that it is hungry and starved.'



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Mary Gilmore has been a source of huge hope for me because she, like few others, had the courage to not to run from the darker side of herself. St Ignatius, of whom I spoke earlier, advised us famously 'in time of desolation, never to make a change.' Yet our culture refuses to believe this. Our anxiety keeps us on the move. We have invested untold energy in denying our contemplative needs. Mary Gilmore was one, at least, who knew that the human ego was soul destroying. She understood that we are never the solution to our own problems although we may well be part of the solution to someone else's. Think about especially about her lines: 'the fruit is never the tree; nor the singer the song.'

## Heritage

Not of ourselves are we free,  
Not of ourselves are we strong;  
The fruit is never the tree,  
Not the singer the song.

Out of temptation old, so old  
The story hides in the dark Untold,  
In some far, dim, ancestral hour  
There is our root of power.

The strength we give is the strength  
we make;  
And the strength we have is the strength  
we take,  
Given us down from the long gone years,  
Cleansed in the salt of others' tears.

The fruit is never the tree,  
Not the singer the song;  
Not of ourselves are we free,  
Not of ourselves are we strong.

\*

Last of all, I'd like to read something from a truly great religious poet who happened to be a true friend to this community and a true friend to me. Peter Steele, a Jesuit priest, died in 2012. He was a long standing and much loved resident of Newman College, your next door neighbour. During his final illness, Peter was nursed by many people including a Loreto sister, Professor Margaret Manion, who shared his commitment to the life of the mind both in and beyond the life of the body. I could not easily speak about the depths of Peter's spirituality nor the nimble and searching wit of his poetry. The poem I wish to share was written in his little room at Newman, where he was known to fry up an occasional sausage and egg, overlooking the roundabout at the top of Swanston Street, a road that carries a vast quantity of freight between those two famous rivals, the cemetery and the university. Both the roundabout and the boneyard feature in this poem. Indeed, before you leave this college you may care, if you have not already, to spend some time in that cemetery and notice, for example, how a former prime-minister lies in death next to a former nobody. It is not morbid but only honest to remind ourselves that our bodies will all be spending much longer in a place such as that than they will anywhere else. Clive James had said recently that it is 'better to think back on all the poems you have ever loved and to realise what they have in common: the life you soon must lose.'

Peter Steele's poem 'Rehearsal' was written as he came to terms with his diagnosis of cancer. It revisits many of the places that had energised his living and whose memory would now energise his dying. I read it for those leaving this place because it is about returning to this place. It is about the great surrender to which we are called, the surrender of our ego and all its silly games. For Christians, living and dying are part of the same mysterious story, one in which each of you has a part to enjoy to the full:

## Rehearsal

Upright again, fritters of mint in my fingers,  
I'm given pause in the kitchen patch  
by the cars' whine, the loud harrumph  
of lorries  
that round the stand on Two-Tree Hill  
and hustle past the boneyard.

I've taken leave of the Cliffs of Moher,  
the unsmiling  
Campus guard at Georgetwon, the fall  
Of Richelieu's scarlet enclosed by the  
London gloom:  
I've watched my last candle gutter  
For dear ones, back in Paris,

sung, as with Francis, the spill of an  
Umbrian morning,  
each breath a gift, each glance a blessing:  
have said farewell to Bhutan of the  
high passes  
and the ragged hillmen, to the  
Basque dancers  
praising their limping fellow,

to the Square of Blood in Beijing, to the  
virid islands  
that speckle the Pacific acres,  
to moseying sheep in Judaeon scrub,  
to leopard  
and bison, a zoo for quartering, and  
to the airy stone of Chartres.

But here's the mint still on my hands.  
A wreath,  
so Pliny thought, was 'good for students,  
To exhilarate their minds.' Late in the  
course,  
I'll settle for a sprig or two –  
the savour gracious, the leaves brimmingly  
green –  
as if to never say die.

*Michael McGirr is the dean of faith and mission at St Kevin's College in Melbourne.*



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# STUDENT CLUB REPORT

Without the Student Club, this last semester would have been quiet indeed. The calendar was packed full of all the usual projects and events, and we even found space for some extras too!

Highlights included: the annual ski trip (this year to Mt Buller), an orientation week for semester 2 new students, the Drama Committee's production of *College: the Musical*, our *Hollywood Story*-themed Ball, an afternoon charity market with music in the courtyard, as well as countless sporting matches and carnivals, and an intercollegiate Battle of the Bands and film festival. Of course, the list goes on.

A particularly exciting new venture this year was the publication of an anthology of students' academic and artistic work, called *In medias res*. This was a very exciting project that involved almost a third of the college in some way or another. In addition to lobbying for an Academic Awards Dinner, this helped develop the intellectual nature of the current cohort of students too.

Another project that the student body, and therefore the Student Club, took a keen interest in was the level of pastoral support at the college. This has been an area of recurring attention over recent years, and with some help from the College itself, progress was made this semester and last. Focused mainly on the level of mental health support available to students, two improvements were made: firstly, additional training for student "mentors" to help them

promote good mental health practise, as well as recognise and refer potential mental health problems; and secondly, the fact that a high level of demand for better in-house mental health support was articulated to the College Council, for action.

Much excitement is also building within the Student Club about the formalisation of the Alumni association. The prospect of reaching out to this organisation, not just for financial support but personal and professional mentoring, and much else, has confirmed many Collegians' belief that doing so would significantly enrich the experience of students at the college. As the body primarily responsible for students' college experience, this is certainly something that the Club hopes to pursue in 2015, and beyond.

In the last few weeks of semester, elections for 2015 Student Club leadership positions took place as well. This always serves as an opportunity for everyone to reflect on what makes her or his time at St Mary's so memorable. For some people it was the sport they played, or plays the produced; for others, it was the friendships they made, or mischief they got up to; for most, it was the sense of community and welcome that they felt in their time here.



Outgoing SC President, Matthew Connolly

Indeed, the Student Club in semester two has kept everyone very busy. From sport, to culture, to social events, it has seemed like hardly a moment has been spare. We've made new friendships, and cemented old ones; made new memories, and laughed about those past. We've all certainly been very lucky to be here.

The one memory I have that best sums up College this semester was overhearing a semester two fresher in the dining hall exclaim: "Oh, why does uni have to keep getting in the way of college!"

Matthew Connolly  
2014 Student Club President

# NEWS FROM THE ACADEMIC CENTRE

## Highlights from an Irish library

For the past several years a mid-winter festival called Rare Book Week has been held in Melbourne, to celebrate the written word, the printed book and the city's shared literary heritage. Melbourne Rare Book Week is organised by members of the Australian and New Zealand Association of Antiquarian Booksellers and the tireless convenor of the event is Kay Craddock – of Collins Street bookstore fame. Back in 2012, Kay telephoned the Academic Centre out of the blue to invite us to participate. She had heard that Newman and St Mary's Colleges were home to some interesting old and rare books. Three years on, we are regulars on the program for Rare Book Week. This year the centre ran a small exhibition called 'Highlights from an Irish library' and hosted a night of Irish song in the Jabiru room.

The exhibition ran from Monday 21 to Friday 25 July, and featured books and manuscripts from the library of Dr Nicholas O'Donnell (1862-1920). Nicholas was an interesting chap. He came from modest means as the son of Irish migrant parents who farmed at Bullengarook near Gisborne, and was raised from a very young age by his widowed mother. He studied medicine at the University of Melbourne, went on to run a medical practice in West Melbourne and to raise a family with his wife Molly Bruen, while playing a lead role in his community and corresponding closely on matters of language, culture and politics with key

figures in Ireland. He was an Australian-born Irish language scholar who never visited Ireland.

Dr O'Donnell's books, and the Irish library that has grown around them, are now housed in the Gerry Higgins Irish Room in the centre. We were fortunate to be able to include in the exhibition a handwritten autobiography and family history recorded by Nicholas in the early 20th century. This manuscript was generously lent by his descendants who are the children of writer Niall Brennan, Nicholas O'Donnell's grandson.

The exhibition and the related musical performance were also an anniversary celebration, marking 90 years since Dr O'Donnell's collection of rare Irish books and manuscripts was given to Newman College by his family. The Irish Catholic connection has of course been a strong thread through the communities of both Newman and St Mary's over many decades.

The performance on the evening of Wednesday 23 July was called 'Songs in Irish and English from the Nicholas O'Donnell Collection' and it featured Greg Ó Broin on guitar and Miriam Uí Dhonnabháin on vocals. Dr Val Noone was a fine master of ceremonies. Between the songs, Miriam treated the audience to wonderful stories about the origins of the song texts and the tunes, and the presentation reflected both

musicians' deep knowledge and love of their material. Their capacity to bring this cultural heritage alive with a mix of scholarship, story, musicianship and humour made the evening special and memorable.

Miriam had spent much of January 2014 working in the Irish library at the Academic Centre as a resident O'Donnell Fellow in Irish Studies. She is currently writing a PhD thesis in Modern Irish through University College Cork and as part of her PhD research she has made a study of song texts, many in the Irish language, that she has found throughout the Irish collection. Miriam is originally from West Cork but currently lives at Dromana in Victoria. Guitarist Greg Ó Broin is president of the Irish Language Association of Australia. Originally from County Leitrim and now resident in Melbourne, Greg is a regular attendee of the Irish-language school that gathers weekly - Tuesday nights for anyone interested! - at the Celtic Club in Queens Street.

We were honoured that so many members of the O'Donnell and Brennan families were able to attend the musical evening, some travelling from Adelaide and New South Wales for the event. Some family members were in fact brought together for the first time by this occasion, which in itself made the whole undertaking worthwhile.

Otherwise, why do we take part in events like Rare Book Week? It is one way to open our doors in welcome and to share college life and heritage with the Melbourne community, as well as with college alumni.

Look out for Rare Book Week events in 2015. Dates are 16 – 26 July and details will be available at [www.rarebookweek.com](http://www.rarebookweek.com)

Angela Gehrig  
Director



### Connect With Us.

If you would like to be on the Academic Centre's outreach mailing list please drop a line to [outreach@snac.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:outreach@snac.unimelb.edu.au)

We circulate emails about events in the colleges and on campus, like talks, concerts and exhibitions.



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# BIRTHS, DEATHS, MARRIAGES

## KATHLEEN FLAHERTY R.I.P.

1 April, 1932 - 25 June, 2014

Kathleen was a student at St. Mary's in the late forties and early fifties when it was located in Parkville at 156 The Avenue, then known as St. Mary's Hall.<sup>1</sup> She was at boarding school at Loreto College, Ballarat [formerly Mary's Mount] and came to study music, both piano and violin at the University Conservatorium in Melbourne in 1949.

Kath was born in Adelaide on 1st April, 1932, the third in a family of four, and as a very young child the family moved to Warrnambool in the Western district of Victoria. It was a musical family: mother played the piano, and father, the violin. In the days before television there were many musical evenings and visitors were always entertained by members of the family, playing, on various instruments, the latest additions to their repertoire. Music then was a very important part of family life so it probably was not surprising that the three girls in the family all chose to study music. Carina, the eldest, played piano and Denise, the youngest, played piano and 'cello. The only boy, James, played trumpet and was a member of the Warrnambool Boys' Band for many years. All three girls were students at St. Mary's Hall.

Kath spent many years teaching music. For some time she was on the music staff at Loreto, Mandeville Hall, Toorak. At another time she returned to Warrnambool to look after her aging father, her mother having died of a heart condition. While there she taught music at the High School in Warrnambool.

But music was only a part of Kath's life. She loved reading especially poetry and wrote quite a number of poems herself, one of which was selected and published in an American anthology. She loved going to plays in the Malt House Theatre and to the Musica Viva Concerts at the Elizabeth Murdoch Recital Centre as well as Symphony concerts. She also patronised the Australian Opera. Probably the *great* love of her life was to travel especially on cruises and organised tours. She went to Europe including Turkey and Russia, to North and South America and to China. The latter must have been a great favourite as she went there four times. Her eightieth birthday was spent in Singapore where one of her nieces was living at the time.

Another part of her life which she did not talk about was her great charitable work especially in the parish of Port Melbourne where she spent the last twenty years of her life. She visited the prisons regularly and would send messages to prisoners' families. She also contributed to the liturgy by being a regular reader at Mass. People have remarked since her death that they miss her doing the reading at Mass.

Her niece, Helen, who lives in Warrnambool, wrote about the influence Auntie Kath had on all her family as youngsters after their father's early death. Kath was the person who told them stories of their grand-parents and what happened when their Dad was young. Helen wrote: "You could always rely on Kath to tell you exactly what she thought – no beating around the bush! You knew exactly where you stood with her. Right to the end she showed amazing courage, will and determination to have everything in order." Helen summed up her aunt as: "strong,

## RUTH MORRIS (FALVEY)

Ruth Morris (Falvey) passed away on the 2nd December 2013. Ruth was at St. Mary's from 1947 - 1950. She studied music (piano & organ) and was involved in music all her life as well as bringing up a big family!!

determined, proud, family orientated, loved a good story, straight shooter, passionate, business woman, political, musical." And so we say farewell to a loved sister, sister-in-law, aunt and friend.

We give her into the embrace of God. May she rest in peace.

[Sr Carina Flaherty ibvm](#)

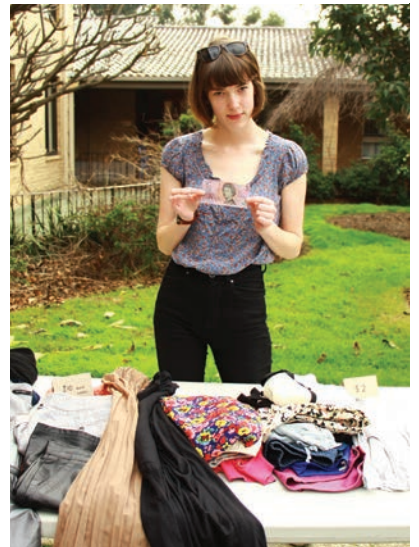
<sup>1</sup> It was only in the sixties that St. Mary's was re-located to its present position in Swanston Street and renamed St. Mary's College. I can remember Mother Francis Frewin showing me round the new college at the end of 1965! She had had to wait a long time before permission was given by the then Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr. Daniel Mannix who kept on insisting that the university was no place for women!! Mother Francis had to convince him that whether or not they should be there, the fact was: **they were there!!!**

# ST MARY'S MARKET

This year saw the first St. Mary's Market. St Mary's students came together to sell anything their hearts desired: ranging from vintage clothes, to cupcakes, hand-painted cards, and even miniature cacti! In aiming to raise money for charity, it was a great Friday afternoon for all, boasting great tunes played by the wonderful Rad Navajo and a relaxing time for friends to come together and have fun.









# CULTURE REPORT

St Mary's College has been involved in many cultural events this semester. The final ICAC event of the season was Battle of the Bands and, true to form, it didn't disappoint. The Mary's team consisted of Christopher Trail, Marcus Ryan, Richard Ong, April Gareffa, Sean McConnell, Bernard Yue and Tom May who played a brilliant set list consisting of The Police's 'Roxanne,' Arctic Monkey's 'Are You Mine' and Tame Impala's 'Elephant.' Coming up against some tough competition, Mary's finished in 7th place, which put us in equal 5th on the final scores for the ICAC Cup.

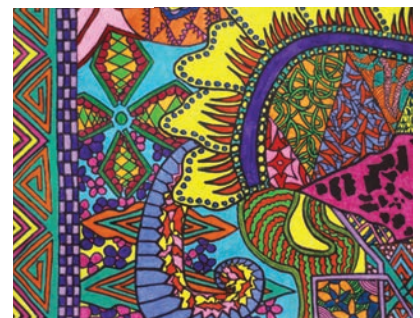
In second semester JCR JAM was graced by the wonderful Amelia Chiappazzo who serenaded the audience with a rendition of Iggy Azalea's "Fancy". Following that up was a performance of Harry Potter Puppet Pals and the first look at the St. Mary's Musical for 2014: "College the Musical". The Three Bernards, Leticia Atkinson, Liam Gibson, Sean McConnell

with Catherine Keneley and (as always) North 1 also performed. Another cracker of an evening!"

Mary's MADfest was a great success. The range of art and music was of such a high calibre and was enjoyed by all who attended. Some personal highlights for me were Monica La Macchia's watercolours, Sophie Baker's textile dresses, April Gareffa's performance of 'Kissing You' by Des'ree and Gabriella La Macchia's piano recital pieces.

A big thank you to all who were involved in each of these event and the parents who made the effort to come and celebrate Mary's cultural successes.

Lucy Hay  
Cultural Representative 2015





# ST. MARY'S COLLEGE CATERING & EVENTS

*Excellent conference facilities, competitively priced, without compromising quality.*

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**Bettina Richen**

**P: 9349 9501**

**[brichen@stmarys.unimelb.edu.au](mailto:brichen@stmarys.unimelb.edu.au)**



## ST. MARY'S COLLEGE ACCOMMODATION

St. Mary's College is a peaceful residential haven adjacent to the University of Melbourne, situated on the corner of College Crescent and Tin Alley, Parkville and yet only a tram ride away from the CBD.

Over the summer and winter semester breaks St. Mary's College offers high quality and affordable accommodation to the public in our student rooms. We can provide accommodation for up to 159 people during these periods. Most rooms overlook either our surrounding gardens or internal courtyard, offering a relaxed and secure ambience.

Our rates include continental breakfast and WiFi on request. All rooms are equipped with personal hand basin, single bed with linen/bedding, fresh towels, heater, study desk and wardrobes. Bedrooms are conveniently located to ample shared unisex bathroom facilities, which for larger groups can be gender allocated.

St. Mary's is ideal for large groups, tourists, sports fans, business travellers who don't require all the frills of a hotel.





## SPORTS REPORT

The 2014 sporting year at St Mary's was as fun filled as ever. Both semesters of sport saw many new and old faces on pitches, courts, in the pool, on the track and on the field. It has been an immense pleasure being involved in such an integral part of College life that brings so many present and past students together, from St Mary's and around the Crescent. Some highlights throughout the year were the awesome 3rd place result in the swimming carnival, the competitiveness seen in both men and women's volleyball and as always, the rowing regatta held on the Yarra. This year St Mary's sporting prowess has improved across the board, as seen in rowing and soccer, and despite the increase in competitiveness, Maryians still know how to have a good time and come back smiling. It has been great working with a college full of sportsmanship and friendship.

The sporting year concluded with the annual Sports Awards dinner. Guest speaker this year was barrister,



Simone Bailey, who captivated the audience with stories of her rise to the bar and her consuming love for amateur boxing. Simone also offered some sage advice to students on achieving their goals which was very well received.

A new award presented this year was the Sr Elizabeth Hepburn ibvm Award for Service to Sport which was awarded to Fergus Bartram for his unfailing support of St Mary's sports events. The Sean Dooley Sportsman and Sportswoman of the Year Awards went to Krysten Gandhi and Gabrielle Johnston respectively.



*Simone Bailey, guest speaker at this year's Sports Awards Dinner*









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