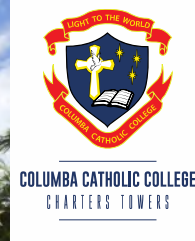


Incorporating Past Students from
St Columba's School,
St Mary's College &
Mt Carmel College

DECEMBER 2022

Past Student News



Dear Past Students,

2022 has been a year of great reflection, community engagement and growth. With a staggered start to the year and COVID restrictions, our staff, students and community members demonstrated their ability to be adaptive and responsive to learning and to each other. It certainly has been an eventful year with a busy school program. Students continued to enliven the spirit of our community through their participation in a range of spiritual, academic, sporting, cultural and community projects.

The highlight for the year was our 2022 Celebrations Weekend in June. We took time to reminisce, reflect and remember the deep history, tradition and story that is St Columba's School, St Mary's College and Mt Carmel College to strengthen the binding relationship that exists between our past and our present. Through this experience we recognised 140 years of St Mary's Campus and 120 years of Mt Carmel Campus.

We were blessed to be joined by the Papal Ambassador for Australia the Nuncio, Most Reverend Archbishop Charles Bolvo and Bishop Timothy Harris, Bishop of Townsville to open our celebrations with a special Mass. We gathered as a community in many ways. With a BBQ, High Tea, Cattle Club Exhibition, Netball and Rugby League games, a formal dinner, campus tours, heritage trail and brunch. All attended by past and present students proud to share their experiences of life in our community. Past students shared their memories of life at school and engaged in wonderful conversations with our current students about the similarities and differences between life at the College then and now.

I was blessed to join in the gathering of our Past Students group in July (albeit remotely) to share a recap of our 2022 Celebrations weekend and to provide an update on the many projects underway at the College. Thank you to our past students for continuing to share the story of our past with each other. It is this oral history that keeps our story alive.

Our College museum continues to be well attended and supported. Thank you to those past students and families who have donated artifacts for our records. New additions have included uniforms, school supplies and photos that span many decades. These contributions are appreciated.

2022 has been a time for planning and laying the foundations for future projects. We have recently commissioned a solar battery solution at St Mary's Campus and currently in the process of installing a solar farm on Mt Carmel. This year we installed a new Fire Hydrant System at Mt Carmel Campus to ensure the safety of students and staff on this campus. These projects are a reflection of

our commitment to Christian stewardship and future thinking. A review of Boarding was conducted this year and in 2023 we are embarking on the refurbishment of Comerford Residence at Mt Carmel to allow for the delivery of a contemporary residential life experience for our junior boys boarding students.

We acknowledge within our newsletter this year, with love and support the members of our community who are recently married, have welcomed new life into the world and we pray for those members of our community who have entered into God's care.

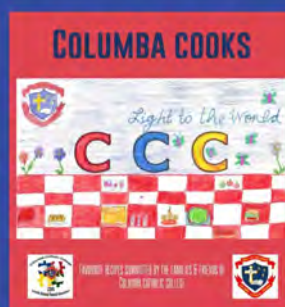
Thank you for continuing to be a part of our community. May God bless and keep you and may our 2022 Past Students Newsletter continue to ignite a passion for Catholic Education in our community.

Many blessings,



Melissa Turner
COLLEGE PRINCIPAL

COLUMBA COOKBOOK



PRICE LIST

\$35.00 for 1

\$32.50 for 2 - 4

\$30.00 for 5 +

Available for purchase from the administration office
at St Mary's Campus and Mt Carmel Campus

FOCUS ON REUBAN BUTLER

(1994-2006, College Leader 2006, College Dux 2006)

The annual College Awards Night was held on Tuesday 15th November 2022. We were delighted to welcome back past student Reuban Butler as our guest speaker. Following is a copy of Reuban's address at Awards Night:



Good evening everyone – thanks for the introduction, and for the opportunity to speak tonight.

I have very fond memories of Columba – I'll never forget the rush of running onto Monagle Oval for a footy match. It's also where I first fell in love – sneaking behind M block after class finished – much to my teachers' displeasure!

I also remember seemingly never-ending Speech Nights,

where someone like me was dishing out life lessons and we students couldn't wait to ESCAPE! I know your pain and I promise not to 'bang on' for too long.

As was mentioned earlier, I'm currently working as a doctor in Emergency on the Sunshine Coast. Getting there has been an interesting journey.

When I graduated from Columba I wasn't too sure about what I wanted to do. I considered medicine at JCU, but 6 years of study sounded like a life-sentence at the time, so I settled on a 4 year physiotherapy course in Brisbane. I was initially quite nervous about moving to the 'big smoke', and a bit intimidated by the 'city slickers' discussing their private tennis coaches and their new cars ... I didn't have a car, and I certainly wasn't getting private tennis lessons! I think Mum and Dad were a bit intimidated too ... by the cost of the on-campus student accommodation!

However, I soon realised the benefits of coming from a small boarding school in a regional community. At Columba you learn to interact with the full spectrum of people, from all different ages and backgrounds. And there's abundant opportunities to participate in sports and hobbies. I soon found out at uni, that I was the one of the few kids who could play a range of different sports – including tennis; I could handle myself okay in the debating arena; and - my city friends were astonished - I could even change a flat tyre without calling RACQ for backup ... even though I didn't own a car!

Seriously, if you see the strengths of coming from a small school in a regional town, it will give you the belief that you can make a good life: wherever you choose to go and whatever you choose to do. So have confidence in yourself!

There is a famous quote by Suzy Kassem, which rings true to me. She says: "Doubt kills more dreams than failure ever will."

There are so many times whilst studying and working that I have doubted myself; thought I wasn't up to the task. However, I have tried not to let that stop me from having a go.

Whilst working as a physio, I decided to take the entrance exam into medicine. Preparing for that exam was tough, months of late night study and I began to doubt that I had done the right thing. I had to recruit one of my ex-teachers, Mr Peck, to help me re-learn physics.

In the end, I snuck through the entrance exam and got to fulfil my dream of becoming a doctor.

So students, believe in yourself and good things will happen. And remember that you are never alone. Your parents and grandparents, and your teachers and friends have got your back! They want you to be amazing and believe that you can be.

The second thing I want to touch on tonight is respect for your fellow students. During my time in the hospital, I have seen an increasing number of young people present with mental health issues, sometimes with tragic outcomes.

School can be a tough place, particularly when you don't think you fit in with the majority. One of my biggest fears at school was being different. I remember in Grade 8 having a meltdown on Anzac Day because I had forgotten to pick up a school blazer to wear. I was so worried I would be the only person without a jacket, that I refused to go. Fortunately, my parents managed to come up with a blazer ... about 5 sizes too big. Be careful what you wish for!

But seriously, if everyone was the same – life would be oh so boring. So, celebrate your differences. In diversity, such as you have at Columba, are the riches that matter; the relationships that make our lives interesting and joyful.

And when you leave school, as the seniors will do later in the week, be reassured that there's a whole world of difference out there and, in time, you will find 'your' people.

Now, I promised not to 'bang on' for too long, so that's it from me. Be kind to each other. And believe in yourself – after all, you're Columba kids! Thank you.



2006 Dux of the College and The Northern Miner Award for Academic Excellence recipient, Reuban Butler.



120 YEARS

MT CARMEL COLLEGE

ST MARY'S COLLEGE

CELEBRATIONS

Friday - Celebration Mass and Meet & Greet



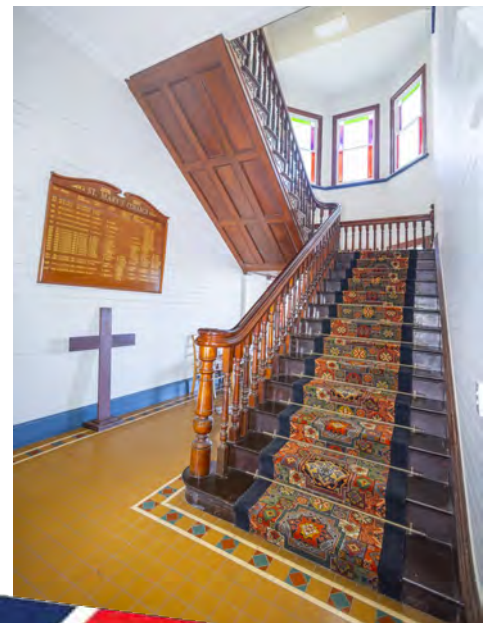
Saturday - High Tea, Cattle Club Exhibition, Netball & Football



Saturday - Dinner & Roll Call



Sunday - Farewell Brunch





JUST MARRIED



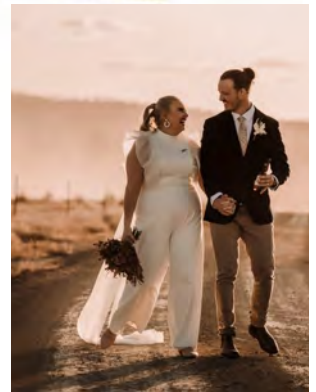
Reuban Butler (1994-2006) married Erin at Maleny Manor on the Sunshine Coast on 26th June 2021.



Natalie Keough (2010-2014) married Rick Moody (2000-2004) at Byron View Farm.



Shaylee Bartlett (2004-2016) married Tomasi Narayan at Roma Parklands on 7th August 2022. The wedding was photographed by past student, Brook Hill (nee Jurs 2007-2013).



Katie Kirby (2010-2011) married Ethan Hennessey on her family property in central Queensland on 16th April 2022. Katie's Maid of Honour was fellow Columba student, Lacie Clarke (2003-2011).



Rhiannon Power (2010-2012) married Brayden Bartlett (2002-2014) on 9th July at Leighton



Jaimi Johnston (2007-2011) married Harley Cranston on 18th June 2022 in Mackay.



Brodie Amos (2009-2015) married Amelia Newton in Maleny on 22nd September 2022.



Stacey Jackson (1998-2005) married Allen Adeville in Townsville in 2022.



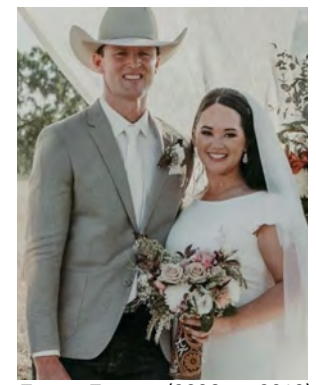
Nikki Power (1974-1985) married Ross Stockham in Winton on 18th September 2022.



Jacob Stainkey (2007-2013) married Zoe in Townsville on 21st September 2022.



Matthew Martell (1995-2006) married Natalie Walsh at Texas Longhorns, Charters Towers on 24th September 2022.



Tom Terry (2006 -2010) married Keri Ramsay in Charters Towers on 29th October 2022.

PAST STUDENTS' NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Father Mick Lowcock (1963-1966) on being nominated for the Queensland Senior Australian of the Year in 2022. Fr Mick is well-known as an indigenous advocate and founder of the North West Queensland Indigenous Catholic Social Services. He's been honoured many times for his work. Two years ago he was named a Queensland Great by Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk as part of Queensland Day celebrations.



BRISBANE GATHERING



The tradition of past students in the Brisbane area to attend Mass at St. Patrick's Church in Fortitude Valley, followed by morning tea took place again this year on Sunday 18th July. Thank you again to Carmel Brougham for organizing this gathering.

1960'S SMC GIRLS CATCH UP



A group of ladies from the 1960's SMC cohort have lunch with Sr Colleen O'Brien (known to them in the 60's as Sr Mary Magdalene), once or twice each year. The ladies recently gathered with her to celebrate her 88th birthday at Fielders Restaurant Tingalpa. The girls present were from left (back) Jayne (Salmon) Turnbull, Diann (Gottwaltz) Deneen, Trish Slaterry, Judy (Murnane) Gillespie, Linda Allen, Trish (Thatcher) Woodward, Kerry (Pike) Varvari, Patsy (Pike) Rowe, Peggy (Maloney) Kennedy. Front from left Frances McDonald, Sr Colleen O'Brien, Robyn (Wright) Michel. Anyone interested in joining the ladies going forward is most welcome. Please contact Columba Catholic College Office for contact details.

WITH SYMPATHY

Bridget Catherine Paterson (née Bourke 1943) passed away on 27th August, 2018.

Lyne Ahern (Burrbridge) passed away a couple of years ago.

Denis Lyons (1960's) passed away peacefully at Riverland General Hospital on Tuesday November 9, 2022. Aged 75 years.

Robyn Michel (nee Wright—1960's) passed away 1st November, 2022.

Margaret Bryan (nee Phelan 1964-1966) passed away in the Burdekin earlier this year.

Paul Turner (Nickname 'Dooley' 1969-1972) Monday 24th October 2022

William Vincent Doyle (1995-2000) passed away 11th May 2022.

John (Verch) Vecchio passed away in Home Hill on 4th February 2022. Information received from Past Student Geoff Casey (1968-1971) -

John passed away in Home Hill on 4th February, 2022, aged 66 years. Unfortunately, we have lost another Mt Carmel Old Boy. The years roll on and our number diminishes. John was an unassuming ratbag with a heart of gold who was good for a laugh or a helping hand. He was a boarder at Mt Carmel from 1969 to 1971. John and I were trained to operate and maintained the "new" pool. We fished cane toads out of the pool and made fertiliser from them which we applied to the pool lawns. These were the "jewel of North Queensland" according to Br. Murphy. (I think he was biased). It would be true to say that the quick thinking of Verch may well have saved the life of Br. McGrath when there was a mishap in the pool pump room. One of the chlorine gas regulators had failed and was leaking large quantities of chlorine gas into the pump room. Br. McGrath was overcome by the gas, but John's quick thinking enabled him to get into the pump room and shut off the gas flow. The remaining gas was neutralised, rendering the area safe. After a short stay in hospital Br. McGrath was back on deck. After this incident, we changed over to using dry powder chlorine. John was not a great academic but a genius with mechanical and practical things. He developed many design improvements on his sugar-cane harvesters that were later "borrowed" and incorporated into new model harvesters. Many of these improvements are still in use today. He and I cleaned out the old well down behind the No.1 oval scoreboard and refurbished the jack-pump that was there. The idea was to pump water for the bottom oval, and the trees planted there, rather than cart drums of water down for them. The pump worked well but for some reason we could not get an engine to drive the pump and had to resort to using the pump's large pulley as a treadmill, which didn't last long as we tired quickly - it was hard yakka!. We were both very disappointed when, at the 2002 reunion, we saw that the well had been filled in. John was a Son, a Husband, a Father, Father-in-law, Grandfather, Brother, Brother-in-law and Uncle, a man loved by many. A man Mt Carmel College can be proud to call a Son, a Carmel Man! He will live on in the hearts of many, I'm sure.