

NOVEMBER 2016

## Past Student News



COLUMBA CATHOLIC COLLEGE  
CHARTERS TOWERS

Dear Past Students,

2016 has been a wonderful year at Columba Catholic College. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to meet many of you and dearly hope to continue to do so over the next few years.

I would like to acknowledge the wonderful contribution of two champions of our College, Mrs Colleen Young and Mr Michael Peck who both received service awards for 35 years of service to Columba Catholic College in 2016 and who continue to make a huge positive difference in the lives of young people.

Many thanks to all who have contributed to the wonderful and positive community that is Columba Catholic College. I am particularly proud of our students and their achievements throughout the year. It is a privilege to be on this journey with our students and to watch with admiration as they grow and develop into fantastic young men and women.

Some of the highlights of 2016 include:

- The Opening of the Columba Catholic Kindy.
- The refurbishment of our beautiful Mt Carmel Chapel.
- The St Mary's Refurbishment receiving a Master Builders award for Best Educational facility up to \$5million.
- The implementation of Bring Your Own Devices and lockers at Mt Carmel campus
- The increase in technology on the St Marys campus through the introduction of Google Chromebooks
- The refurbishment of both of the College Pools and the upgrade of the new filtration system.
- The new College gym.
- The construction of the Comerford Deck and the tree planting on the Monagle Bank as we prepare to showcase our College to 48 schools at Confro 2018.
- The growth of the Catholic Schools Rugby League and Netball Carnival.

- The External Review of boarding and implementing its recommendations
- The successes of our students: academic, sporting, cultural
- The \$2million construction of new manual arts, art and covered area and refurbishment of the Kruger centre.

Columba Catholic College is certainly a place of complexity, P – 12, Boarding, multi campus. It is a College that I feel extremely proud to be associated with and I couldn't think of a better College for my own children to attend. It is a privilege and an honour to have this opportunity and to live this experience.

We are planning on completing the Past Students' Visitors Centre and Museum towards the end of 2017 and hope that you will make the trip to visit the College at some stage. We always love to hear of the tales of our past students and to share in the celebrations of your achievements.

In 2016, former student Dr Sally Meade (nee Wickham) was the guest speaker at our College Awards Night and did a brilliant job inspiring, entertaining and challenging our students.

2018 will see the Confraternity Rugby League being held at the Mt Carmel campus. This competition has grown to now include 48 teams and is the largest independent schoolboy rugby league carnival in Australia. We will certainly put on a good show and we hope to see some of you there.

May each year find you closer to God,



Dan McShea  
PRINCIPAL

## HANNAH NAMED QUALITY TEACHER



Earlier in 2016, Hannah Clarke (2005-2009, College Captain 2009) was awarded the ACHPER QLD 2016 Quality Teacher Award. This award recognises the significant contribution made by a Queensland HPE teacher to the promotion of active and healthy lifestyles through quality teaching practices within the school community. Hannah is currently teaching at Alpha State School.

# FOCUS ON SALLY MEADE (NEE WICKHAM '83-'87)

The annual College Awards Night was held on 21 October 2016. We were delighted to welcome back past student Dr Sally Meade (nee Wickham) as a guest presenter and speaker. Following is a copy of Sally's address at Awards Night:

Principal McShea, distinguished guests, students, parents and friends, thank you for inviting me to speak this evening. I feel honoured and humbled to have been asked actually. It has been such a long time since I have been 'home', and it has been lovely to have the opportunity to reflect on my time at Columba Catholic College, then known as St Mary's & Mt Carmel, and how that time has influenced the course of my life.

Born in Ingham, of school-teaching parents, we moved to the Towers in 1970. Anyhow, this is where I grew up, and attended St Mary's College from the early 1980's (these were great times for music; although questionable for fashion looking back at the old school magazine!). My family and I had a long association with the school as my parents were both school teachers there, and the school community, with the Christian Brothers and the Nuns, was like my second home. I have so many fond memories.

I had dreamt of being a surgeon since I was 8yrs old, and in the hopes that my chances of getting into medical school would be improved by attending school in Brisbane, I'd made application to Lourdes Hill... but was soundly rejected – well, really, Cath. Ed. had said there was a perfectly good Catholic school in my diocese, and that I should go there. So I said, "Fine! I will get into medical school anyway!!" But as it turns out, that was the best thing to happen to me; to stay at Mt Carmel & St Mary's. It's funny how things work out.

As it eventuated, my upbringing here engendered strong community and family values. I was *always* supported by my school and the wider community and, in particular, my family to foster a belief in myself that I could do or be whatever I dreamed of – which I think was particularly relevant being a girl in that era – and at no point did I get the impression from my parents or teachers that there would be any barriers.

There was so much on offer here in which to throw myself – sport, debating, ballroom dancing lessons, disco s (Ahhh, the 80's - seriously bad fashion! Great music!), school excursions, theatre restaurant, and of course... the school curriculum to be done and won! And there was no drawback here at Mt Carmel – Sense of belonging... tick! Personal development... tick! And ultimately, entrée into Medical School.

So, after my school days were over, I did fly away... to the University of Queensland in Brisbane. It was, *finally*, my opportunity to escape my small town roots and become a high-flying surgeon who'd *light up the world*... And I actually had no intention of ever coming back!!

I went on to complete 6yrs at medical school, 10years of training thereafter to become a FRACS, and then a further two years of 'Post-Fellowship

Subspecialty Surgical Training'. This had me in many different locations over the course of those years, including Brisbane, Maryborough, Eidsvoll & Biggenden, Canberra, Townsville, Darwin, & Victoria, and I have done surgery in Sydney, Melbourne, UK, Milan and New York. What struck me through all my training and travels, is that people have the same medical conditions and are in need of the same high quality of surgical care wherever they may live; just the traffic is worse in the big cities!

So when my colleagues in Townsville asked me to join in practice with them, I was eager to come home, not only because I missed my home and sense of belonging I had always found here, but because my school and community had given so much to me in my formative years, and it became clear to me that *my* community deserved surgeons equal to the best in the world. Thus I have found my place and purpose – with a commitment to my own continued professional development, and to the teaching and training of the next generation of surgeons. But with the equally good fortune, I have friends and colleagues all over the world to visit anytime!

Apart from these connections, I am fortunate in my job. What is the appeal of surgery you might ask? Well, it involves puzzles & problem solving, mastery of technical skills, and relationship building actually (especially in oncology, or cancer care). I am a general surgeon so, when I am on-call, I perform such operations as appendicectomies, removal of gallbladders, and performance of other intra-abdominal or trauma surgeries. I spend most of my time though, performing breast cancer, and thyroid and parathyroid surgery.

What I particularly love about my job is that I am witness to all manifestations of human behavior, which I find endlessly fascinating. I can't say that I have seen the absolute worst of people (we all get to see that on the news daily), but I do see people and their loved-ones in seriously bad form, and at times pretty cranky, because they are worried, and sick, vulnerable and in distress. But I am also witness to the love and support and kindness of patients, their friends and family, and my wonderful team of colleagues who work with me to deliver care. It is my privilege to help in whatever small way I can, to surgically cure those when possible, and hold the hands of, and never abandon, those whose conditions unfortunately cannot be cured at this time – ensuring they will not die alone or in pain or without dignity. This is my privilege and my pleasure. To bring comfort, reassurance and assistance to make someone's day or life or week better is what I live for and brings more personal satisfaction than all the gold in the world.

My work, not only involves direct patient care though, but as an educator, I also gain much joy from teaching and guiding medical students, junior doctors and surgeons-in-training who will be our doctors and surgeons of the future. I work in both the public and private hospital sectors, and have an appointment at the JCU as lecturer in surgery and mentor for medical students, shaping these bright and brave young men and women to be the best they can be, for *you* and our community.

This is my vocation. Sure, I have worked hard to be here. And in that time, I have borne and raised two beautiful children, with the help of my wonderful husband. And yes it is and has been demanding... but many people do 'tough' jobs. For me, the arduousness is vastly outweighed by the fact that, every day, I get out of bed and have the enormous good-fortune of doing that thing I had always wanted to do since I was 8yrs old, and for me, I would not have it any other way.

So, students, tonight is not about me, it's about you! You may not entirely or specifically know what you want to do with your life – and why would you? You have many more years to accumulate life's experiences which will mould you into the person you become.

My only real advice to you is to, 'Do what you love, and love what you do.'

Whatever career or life path you choose, do everything wholeheartedly, with integrity, honesty, passion, and a proud and strong work ethic, and I would encourage you to take time each day to reflect...to consider what contribution *you* can make, to bring '*Light to the World*' through positive contribution to your community.

I derive enormous personal satisfaction by doing the best I can for my patients, and I am so grateful and blessed, looking back, to have had the opportunity to attend this great school, where I learnt so well the importance of community.

Thank you.



Sally pictured with 2016 College Dux—Afan Mahmood



## MARRIED RECENTLY



Jenna Solari (2005-2006) and Haydn Champion (1998-2008) were married in the Atherton Tabelands on April 9, 2016. The Bridal Party included past students Riley West (2004-2007), Clay Geisel (2004-2008) and Declan Collins (1998-2008).



Ben Callcott (1985-1989) married Jodie Williamson on September 23 in Anzac Park, Townsville.



Kacey McIntyre (2004-2007) married Arlen Whelan on November 5 in Ayer.



Belinda Haynes (1995-1999) married Daniel Andrejevich at Fitzroy Island on 15 October 2016.



Jessica Berryman (2006-2010) married Gordon Arnold (2006-2010) in Townsville on 24 September 2016.

## BALCH NEWS...

Earlier this year the College received correspondence from Veronica Balch (nee Bourke 1946-1947) with an update on her grandsons Shane (1995-1999) and Craig (1992-1994). Since our last newsletter, Veronica was lucky enough to see Shane when his ship 'H.M.A.S Adelaide' was in port in Townsville. Earlier in 2016, Craig and his wife Julie visited Charters Towers and were pleased to have a tour of the College with Mr Dan Kyle (Deputy Principal - Pastoral/Residential, Past Student 1980-1984).



Photo above - Julie, Veronica and Craig with Julie and Craig's sons, Grayson and Harry. Photo left - Shayne and Alyshia married in Victoria on 3 August 2016 with sons Ayden and Rory.

## CCC TRIATHLON



64 entrants took to the course on Saturday 29 October to vie for honours in the very first CCC Triathlon. It was great to see past students compete.

Photo L to R - Amanda Neilson (nee Parker 1987 & 1988), Kristal King (nee Callcott 1989-1993), Julia Broad (nee Callcott 1987-1991), Jason Godier (1990-1991) and Brendan Rowe (1998-2003).



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## CAUGHT ON CAMPUS

We were happy to welcome back Vincenza Greco (nee Zina Cardillo 1945-1946) to the College in April this year.

## CONGRATULATIONS



Congratulations to Rachael Bell (1989-1993) - TAFE Queensland North graduate who was named the Vocational Student of the Year at the central Queensland regional final of the Queensland Training Awards in 2016.

## CLASS OF '81 - 35 YEAR REUNION

The Class of '81 celebrated a 35 year class reunion in August 2016.



## WITH SYMPATHY

In the 2015 publication of the Past Students' Newsletter was an article **Catherine "Dadie" Dawes** (nee Eckford) who celebrated her 100th birthday in Brisbane in July 2015. The College was saddened to hear the news that Dadie passed away earlier this year. Catherine "Dadie" Dawes

July 23, 1915 – March 7, 2016.

<http://www.northqueenslandregister.com.au/story/3806582/vale-dadie-dawes-pillar-of-the-west/?cs=4784>



**Michael Hollingsworth (1972-1974)**

Passed away 2015

**Brian Close (1950's)**

Passed away 18 July 2016

**Adrian Bell (nee Piscitelli 1941-1945)**

Passed away 28 August 2016

**Bridie Stevenson (Mt. Carmel Staff)**

Passed away 1 November 2016

**Leigh Piva (1986)**

Passed away July 2016

## CLASS OF '65 - 50 YEAR REUNION



The 1965 Mt Carmel Seniors travelled back to Charters Towers to mark their 50 year Reunion in September 2015. Deputy Principal and Past Student Dan Kyle hosted a tour of the College.