I am a Mercy girl

Mercy is a young woman of secondary school age.
She mixes with many friendship groups.
Some friends are loud, whilst others are quiet.
Some friends achieve high grades whilst others are struggling with their learning.
She is neither the centre of attention nor is she shy.
She appreciates all her friends for who they are and does not judge them according to their looks, Grades, popularity or where they come from.
Her heart is big and she gives without expecting anything in return.
Mercy has a voice that is encouraging and understanding.
However, she is at her best when she listens, sitting alongside her friends who might be in trouble or are upset because they have been hurt.
She sits not in judgment of others but as their friend.
She can feel the pain in both the victim and the bully.
She gives people advice in a gentle and delicate manner.
Mercy makes you feel welcome, and always offers to share her paper and pens.
Her hands are expressive and caring.
Her feet are willing to walk by your side when someone may need help or support.
She never tires of walking that extra distance.
Mercy has a face reflecting with kindness and she is never impressed by the importance of money.
She is aware of simple pleasures and can make a party fun regardless of the money spent and the people invited.
She has accumulated a great deal of wisdom.
Whether it is from her parents, friends or the experiences she has had in life.
She is never heard to complain and always makes others feel the centre of her attention.
Mercy feels blessed and safe in the care of her maker, The God of the universe.
She rejoices in God’s creation and cares about the global community.
It is through her actions that we experience the love of God.
Have You met Mercy?
Welcome to the very exciting Summer edition of Always Aloysius. If Summer is a time of bright colours, interesting reads, a chance to catch up with family and friends and having some me-time to relax, then the articles in this edition will certainly not disappoint; inside there are illuminating insights into the 2015 version of St Aloysius College, interspersed by new learning, enveloped by a familiarity born only of a long and fruitful friendships and lots of potential to sit back, be yourself and soak it all in! Summer is a wonderful time, and the Summer publication of Always Aloysius remains a veritable favourite.

You may have noticed from the previous paragraph a small contradiction. This publication is called ‘Always Aloysius’ and yet I referred to the ‘2015 version of St Aloysius College’; on face value these two appear to be seemingly incongruous terms. In a way this appearance of a ‘disharmony’ between the concept of an ongoing ‘always’ and the reality of a ‘version’ encapsulates any living, breathing, functioning entity - including a school. To understand the same point in a different way, we might ask two questions: what makes St Aloysius ‘always’? What makes St Aloysius a yearly, monthly, daily ‘version’? These are two very good questions upon which we focus our attention, energy and our endeavours throughout almost every moment of every school day.

Ultimately, each of us in turning these pages, in absorbing the stories, the details and the nuances, in recognising the experiences, the traditions and the heritage, will come to our own answers, and these will be both nestled within, and enriched by our own experiences of this great school - and that is how it should be! But the analogy for me, which perhaps best explains the absolute harmony between being ‘always’ and simultaneously being a ‘version’, is that of a small sailing boat at harbour. The anchor secures its position - it is ‘always’; and yet the boat itself bobs to the motion of the ever-changing tide, the boat appears in different hues according to the rising and the setting of the sun, and occasionally there are new licks of paint to ensure the boat remains viable – these ensure it remains an ever-evolving ‘version’. ‘always’ and ‘version’ exist concurrently and in harmony, and each relies on the other; there can be no ‘always’ without a new ‘version’, and yet the ‘version’ only exists because of the characteristics it takes from the ‘always’ - in a way aren’t we ourselves both ‘always’ and yet always ‘versions’ of previous selves?

Please enjoy this wonderful collection of writings, which are themselves even a pale imitation of the wonderful opportunities and experiences our girls are exposed to. Perhaps rather than ‘always’ or ‘version’ we should just recognise that we are all part of ‘wonderful Aloysius’. Enjoy the read, and the Summer.

In the footsteps of Catherine McAuley,

Mary Farah
Principal
Karen Quinlan, Director of Bendigo Art Gallery
Key Note Speech

I started at St Aloysius in Year 7 (known as Form 1) in 1975, forty years ago. I wasn’t the first ‘Quinlan’ to be enrolled at St Al’s in fact my three sisters all attended over more than a two decade period, (not all at once fortunately for my parents). I graduated with my Year 12 ‘Higher School Certificate’ as it was then called, in 1980.

Although my teachers have all moved on and I imagine may have even passed away, it’s great to be able to report back to the school and say, that I am enjoying a very successful career which has had many highlights, not without degrees of hardship and challenges, all of which have made me a strong person with the same sense of optimism, hope and ambition that I think I developed at school. I didn’t know what I wanted to be back in 1980, but I knew I wanted to be something, to contribute to the world and to make a difference.

Way back then, we didn’t have social media, internet or in our case, (my mother won’t mind me saying this), we didn’t have a telephone in the house! We relied on the telephone booth in the street for communication and the class of 1980 had to rely upon Australia Post as we anxiously awaited our year 12 results. We lived in Maribyrnong where I remember waiting nervously all morning for that piece of paper which I believed would ultimately determine the next phase of life and indeed form the basis of my future career. (Will tell you what happened next a bit later).

I was nicknamed ‘tiny’ at St Margaret’s primary school in Maribyrnong and so by the time I entered Year 7, I just felt so small. And physically was. I was quiet, I lacked confidence and I was relatively intimidated by the ‘cool kids’. And yes those segmentations happened then too as they appear to happen now, according to my fifteen year old daughter Ruby! I always felt mostly irrelevant to the kids who felt they were ‘too cool for school’ but certainly was accepted as a kid who had a wicked sense of humour and someone whose best friend was extremely popular and who became school captain. She was brilliant at everything and as she fledged around, in and out of all of the friendship groups, she always came back to me. Erina was the one I would continue to see after school and over many subsequent years. Recently at her birthday we realised that our friendship had turned forty having first met at age 12. I raise this because that best friend you have now, perhaps the girl sitting next to you, could become your friend for life too. And friends are important.
We now both have teenage children; we have shared many houses while at University and have maintained a strong connection over the years. All the way, I was keen on art but Erina was the all-rounder. She became a very successful journalist and writer after studying at the University of Melbourne and now has her own business in media training and I became the Director of Bendigo Art Gallery.

Art started to become increasingly important to me throughout school. Even as I young child I was ‘creative’, making things, painting, printmaking, drawing, dressmaking and pretending to be a fashion designer. I loved it all. The art room was the place to be on a Friday afternoon, and art gave me a sense of freedom and importantly, it was the subject where I built my confidence and worked out my logical pathway. I didn’t have aspirations to be an artist, but I certainly thought that I would figure somewhere in the art world in the future. I loved art history and I believed that the decisions I made in relation to subject selection would take me somewhere! And thank goodness I was right.

St Aloysius was established in 1887 and coincidentally so was Bendigo Art Gallery. The late 19th century was a period of great development and some of our most historical buildings were as a direct result of the 1850s gold rush. Cities were developed, they were gentrified, and churches were built, fine art galleries, town halls and schools, such as this. If you visit Bendigo don’t forget to call into the Sacred Heart Cathedral which is a commanding piece of architecture, and one of Australia’s largest churches and the second tallest after St Patrick’s Cathedral in Melbourne. Of course, when you come to Bendigo, you will be visiting the Gallery, especially to see some of my future exhibitions!! The Bendigo Art Gallery has proven over and over that it has the capacity to drive social, cultural and economic benefits for our region.

On a daily basis I work for the community. I help to develop civic pride within our city, I support a major program of volunteering, and importantly within my role, I collect and display the visual arts as a language; as a visual language.

My school years are blurry because it seems so long ago. But the occasional class photograph can trigger some memories. As I drive so frequently back to Bendigo from Melbourne, I am reminded of the old school by the uniform you wear, particularly when I see you all at the Flemington Road tram stop, where I would take the 57 tram and my other friends, the 59, just like some of you do.

So enough reminiscing, what I do have, and what I think was instilled in us from the very first day was the important values that were engendered by the Sisters of Mercy. Sister Helen was our Principal and at the time the nuns taught in amongst the lay teachers. The chapel was always there for us and particularly encouraged in my later years. I often think about the dedication and professionalism of the Sisters. They showed incredible commitment to their vocation and to the community. They demonstrated a commitment that I only really understood once I started working myself and entered the professional world of teaching and the running of a cultural institution.

They really did demonstrate great care and compassion, and they inspired us to think outside the walls of the school yard. I have an innate sense of of honesty and fairness as a result, I believe in equality and I respect the notion of multi culturalism and community. Our school was multicultural then, and I expect that today it is made up of many Christians from all nations.

If we analyse the first phase of the 21st century, we certainly have a fairly restless world, as we all saw on the weekend with the unfortunate situation in Paris.

When I was finishing the piece on the weekend I couldn’t concentrate because of the terrible events of Friday night, but I started to think back to what the Sisters would say, …that we all should maintain hope and optimism in the face of adversity, that we should be very aware of what has happened, but we should not be frightened of living our lives. We must show empathy for others and we must continue to make a difference wherever we can. Those life-long principles have stayed with me, those values and those rules for life will always be there in my psychology as they are fundamentally the keys to a civilised world.

Let’s return to the letter box in Maribyrnong and the opening up of my results in 1980. In those days the exam result was your total mark. It didn’t matter what had happened throughout the year, that mark was all that counted. My overall score was enough for me to be accepted into Melbourne State College. I did well. But I can confess now, that I got 58 for Art and that’s a ‘D’.

And the lesson here is that one must never give up, we must not lose hope and one must always have optimism. I am now very proud to be the Director of one of this nation’s most progressive cultural institutions and thank you to St Aloysius for giving me the grounding and the basis for what has been a brilliant career.

Thank you
In 1935 Thelma Jean Marmo was in Grade 6 at St Johns Primary School in Footscray Victoria when she was chosen with six other young girls to sit the annual State Schools Exam held at the Exhibition Buildings in Melbourne.

Thankfully Thelma was awarded a Three Year Scholarship to attend St Aloysius College in North Melbourne.

At this time living in Melbourne was extremely difficult due to the Great Depression, people were stood down from their jobs, unemployed with everything, including food, in short supply.

Every day, in all seasons of weather, Thelma managed to ride her bicycle the seven miles to St Aloysius College from the family home in White Street, Footscray. She was a dedicated student.

Her father made a rack on the back of the bicycle to carry a school bag and she had a bike kit, often having to repair the wheels.

Thelma made her own school uniform summer dress sometimes having to use a pin to hold it together and often having to patch over worn out fabric. In winter the girls wore a white shirt with a tie, a tunic and blazer with stockings and black shoes. As a young girl she was very conscious of her appearance, as neat attire was encouraged by the nuns and today she has fond memories of the discipline and identity she felt, and how it made her stand proud by the wearing of her uniform. I must say my mum Thelma is always most humbly and delightfully well presented.

Thelma’s dear mother, my sweet Grandmother Elsie Tainton (nee Cruickshank). Cruickshank is our family tree connection to First Fleet ancestors, Nathaniel Lucas and Olivia Gascoigne who arrived in 1788 to Norfolk Island as convict settlers, sent to set up a penal colony in New South Wales. I mention First Fleet not only because of the importance of history, but to acknowledge the hardship those early settlers encountered in the pioneer days of new beginnings and their having to work together to carve out and build a new country Australia. This is an incredible generational characteristic strength of spirit that is evident in Thelma where she thoughtfully cared for so many people. The First Fleet Lucas family had 16 children, Cruickshank family had 15 children and so on through six generations. Even so they considered themselves lucky; the lucky country, it is a privilege to live and to share and to love – we are blessed. When I was a toddler I can remember my parents Thelma and Ron Fraser, and my grandparents Elsie and Percy Marmo discussing our family connections across the country, telling the story to explain how everyone was connected, of who did what and where and when, and how all these people supported the new ones and cared for the old ones. Each culture has its story, Indigenous early Australians keeping their dreamtime alive. With no mobile phones
or computers, our ancestors were able to pass on a whole history of information necessary for the very survival of the human race.

In 1938 it was the beginning of WWII and at 16 years of age in her third year of study, the College sent Thelma for an interview at a Melbourne Company. She was employed as an office girl working at City Mutual Insurance Company located in Collins Street, Melbourne. Her duties involved shorthand, typing and accounts and Thelma worked under an elaborately decorated ceiling in a beautiful, architecturally designed building with a marble staircase entrance and an iron lace lift. There the people addressed each other as Miss Marmo and Mr. Ralph who was the general manager. She met a young man at the company who always shared the first sip of his milkshake with her. This patriotic young man joined the Navy and within a very short time his ship, HMAS Sydney, was shockingly announced as having been sunk by the enemy in Australian waters and all were killed. Thelma was at work on that morning in 1941 when the many names of the missing were read out over the radio. Thelma heard his name read as having been killed aboard HMAS Sydney in battle with German Kormoran, sunk somewhere in the Indian Ocean off Western Australia.

In October 1942 Thelma married Leslie Ronald Fraser at St Patrick’s Cathedral in Melbourne. When she returned to work after two days of being married, Mr Ralph called her into his office and said “I am sorry Thelma but we can’t employ married women” and reluctantly she had to leave her job.

Her new husband was shipped off to war in New Guinea and life was emotional with worry and concern for everyone.

Up to today:
Thelma’s darling great granddaughter, Lavinia Kailis attends the Mercy College, St Brigid’s College in Perth, Western Australia. (We call Lavinia, ‘Luvvy’ – because she is.) On Friday, 28th August this year, Luvvy travelled with other students of St Brigid’s College to St Aloysius College, North Melbourne. There, the annual Frayne Speech Festival was being conducted which brings together students from schools across Australia which are founded in the traditions of Mercy Education. The Frayne Speech Festival was established in 1996 and named after Mother Ursula Frayne, leader of the first group of Sisters of Mercy to arrive in Australia from Ireland in 1846. The Festival promotes excellence and provides an opportunity for spirited competition in debating, public speaking and voice choir.

With Luvvy in Melbourne and at Thelma’s Alma Mater, the perfect opportunity presented for Thelma and Luvvy to meet. Here was the reason for Thelma’s return visit to St Aloysius College after such a long time had passed. These photographs show Thelma and Luvvy meeting on that special day.

Leonie Butler (nee Fraser)
Daughter of Thelma Fraser (nee Marmo)
A school with a 128 year history must have experienced thousands of staff and students experiencing a ‘first year’. Like for many others, I am sure the blended feelings of anxiety and uncertainty were smoothly sculptured into a happy sense of support and inclusion, due to the warmth and hospitality of the staff. This expression of respect and friendship was certainly the case in my first year at St Aloysius.

The challenge for me was fulfilling the responsibilities of my role which by its nature meant changing and affecting certain practices whilst being respectful to a history and a community that held St Aloysius College most affectionately. It is a little bit like warmly welcoming a basketball player into the netball team; you know they can leap and catch the ball well but will they mistakenly go for the three point throw? The college community, whilst warmly welcoming me, must have wondered if my skills were transferable. I needed to assure staff and students that I was here to help; design change only if it added value, audit curriculum only to offer beneficial, contemporary programs and work alongside teachers only to enhance the learning of our students. I was acutely aware of how treasured the students were in the eyes of all staff but I understood my role as a member of the Leadership Team was to help carry St Aloysius forward, embrace the changes that were necessary to prepare our students for their future.

Within a very short time, St Aloysius became home. The students are indeed delightful: polite, curious, friendly and fun and absolutely deserving of the best education we can offer. The staff are assisting the students to ‘strive for higher things’. I sometimes ponder the challenges faced and the courage needed of the 19th century Sisters of Mercy as they developed strategies to transform young women and girls; providing safety and community, options and opportunities. Prejudice, poverty and exclusion still exist in the 21st century so a quality education that allows students to be skilled in identifying options, creating solutions and embracing change and challenge is highly valued. I am energised with the responsibility of my new role and I gain much satisfaction being part of the Leadership Team at St Aloysius and look forward to a long relationship with the St Aloysius Community.

Rachel Valentine, Deputy Principal

International

Japan

Another very successful exchange program involving students from our Japanese sister-School, Kyoto Seibo Gakuin Junior & Senior High School occurred in August. Eighteen very enthusiastic Japanese students ranging in age from 13 years to 17 years and two teachers were with St Aloysius College community for twelve days.

Whilst at the College, the girls enjoyed a busy program including intensive English classes, a range of other subject specific classes and excursions. The itinerary included the usual tourist attractions such as Queen Victoria Market, Sovereign Hill and Phillip Island. The girls were hosted by families of the College’s students and some staff members. The Farewell Dinner is always a happy but sad time as by that point friendships and understanding have been established. There were tears when it was time to say the final goodbye. The generous support provided by Host Families makes this exchange program possible and fortunately helps pave the way for life-long friendships and experiences.
**Italy**

The St Aloysius College trip to Italy last April, engaged fifteen students and three staff on a breath-taking three week tour taking in Milan, Venice, Florence and Rome. A highlight of the tour was the visit to our sister school Educandato Statale-Emanuela Setti Carraro Della Chies in Milan, the visit to the birthplace of St Aloysius Gonzaga. Visits to many churches were included in the itinerary, with each one as beautiful and inspiring as the one before it; and of course visits to many historical sites such as the Colosseum, The Roman Forum and L’Accademia in Florence. There were many unforgettable moments and many special memories that will last a lifetime.

**Cambodia**

Last May, a joint venture between St. Aloysius College North Melbourne and Mercy College Coburg provided an opportunity for students to make a positive contribution to the communities of Cambodia through Mercy in Action. The focus was on serving others – to be a blessing to all we meet.

This Immersion Program involved Dr. Brendan Hyde, Head of Catholic Identity and Action and four St. Aloysius students being of service and outreach to the community of Cambodia. A program of house building through the Tabitha Foundation was undertaken, where, under the supervision of Tabitha staff and local Cambodian builders, assistance was given in constructing five houses for families in a small village community.

After being introduced to the work of Bobbi Oliver – an Australian who assists the elderly who live at a rubbish dump on the outskirts of Phnom Penh, the group travelled north to Siem Reap, where they met Sr Dennise, a Sister of Mercy from Brisbane who has been living in Cambodia for the last 27 years. She has worked with refugees and those whose lives have been affected by cluster bombs and land mines. There the group’s building skills were put into practice, again assisting with house construction as well as organising activities for children from a local primary school.

Although often challenging and confronting, the girls from both St. Aloysius College and Mercy College Coburg engaged themselves wholeheartedly and some are now quite proficient in the art of constructing bamboo flooring for Cambodian-style houses!
Mercy Day Celebrations

The origin of Mercy Day goes back to September 24th 1827 when the House on Baggot Street was opened by Catherine McAuley as a school and a safe house for homeless girls and women. Today that building is known as Mercy House.

In living the vision of Catherine McAuley, we celebrated Mercy Day on Friday 11th September. We began with Mass, presided over by Fr. Hien Vu, Parish Priest of St. Brendan’s Parish Flemington and concelebrated by Fr. Jo Dirks. The Mass echoed our College theme “We should be as shining lamps giving light to all around us”.

We were also privileged to have two guest speakers – Kara Tieman and Winter Icely – from McAuley Community Services for Women. They spoke about the prevalence of family violence and what we, as a College community, might do to raise an awareness of this disturbing trend in Australia today.

After Mass each Pastoral Group then prepared stalls, selling everything from cupcakes to popcorn and a movie to raise funds for our four House aligned Mercy supported organisations: McAuley Community Services for Women (McAuley House), Mercy Works – Timor Leste (Fallon House), Mercy Works – Refugees (Verdon House) and Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (Scully House).

The staff of the College also helped to raise funds for these Mercy causes through an auction of goods donated by them, conducted in the afternoon after students were dismissed. The day was a great success, with staff and students not only having fun but also taking some time to reflect, and act upon Mercy values.
The 21st October 2015 marked the final day of celebrations for the St Aloysius Year 12 students. In the evening students were joined by parents, family members, staff of the College, Sisters of Mercy with close links to the College and members of the College Advisory Council to celebrate Mass which was followed by a formal dinner.

“Every young woman educated by the Mercy tradition touches the beauty and splendour of Catherine McAuley’s vision”. These words, spoken by the celebrant Fr Max Vodola in his homily, struck a chord with all who were present.

This occasion marked both the end of one era, the completion of secondary education, and the beginning of a new chapter in life for these young women.

It was wonderful to see the number of Year 12 students and their parents who responded to the invitation to participate in the Mass – the opening procession, readings, prayers of the faithful, and receiving communion and blessings.

Graduations are gateways of transition. They are gateways that serve as markers in time. The College community’s prayer for this graduating class is that, no matter what this new chapter of life brings, they carry within their hearts the Mercy tradition of Catherine McAuley and the light of the Gospel that gives hope and life to the world.
This year the Feast of St. Aloysius fell upon a Sunday, and so the College community celebrated this event on Friday 19th June. Born into wealth and nobility, Aloysius (Luigi Gonzaga) was called from a life of comfort and power to be of service to those less fortunate. He studied to be Jesuit priest. Although he died at the young age of 24, and had himself suffered ill health, Aloysius cared for the sick and the dying, particularly the young. He displayed many of the qualities that would eventually come to be associated with Catherine McAuley – respect, hospitality and service. It is fitting then, that St Aloysius College which educates young women in the Mercy Tradition should have Aloysius as its patron saint.

The Feast Day commenced with Mass at St. Patrick’s cathedral. It was presided over by Bishop Vincent Long, Auxiliary Bishop for the Western region of the Archdiocese of Melbourne. The co-celebrants were Fr. Max Vodola, Fr. Jo Dirks and Fr. Joseph Ngoc Tan Tran. The theme for the Mass was our College theme for 2015, “We should be as shining lamps, giving light to all around us”. This was reflected especially through the Gospel reading (Lamp on the lampstand, Mark 4:21-25), our liturgical music and our opening procession, in which Pastoral Group representatives carried decorated lanterns. The lanterns were placed on the steps of the sanctuary, symbolising our light – the way in which we make known the presence of Jesus Christ through our words, actions and engagement with others.

Returning to school, students and staff engaged in an afternoon of festivities and activities. Students dressed up to the theme of “Throw it Back” (to 90s, the 80s, the 70s, the 60s and even to the 50s!). There was, of course, the ever popular disco in the College Hall along with student performances in the gazebo, a student versus staff volleyball match and quieter activities such as chess.
Shirley Myra Mary Robertson (nee McCarthy) peacefully passed away on the 31st May 2015.

Shirley was an “old girl” of St Aloysius College having attended the school from 1938 just after her sixth birthday at year level Prep; to 1950 where she successfully completed her Leaving Certificate and Business Year.

Shirley enjoyed her years at St Aloysius where she had many successes academically, but also enjoyed the friendships of her school friends, many of which continued throughout her life. Shirley would often attend the many functions that she and others would assist in organising for her cohort, and enjoy the camaraderie of these life long friendships.

After leaving St Aloysius, Shirley worked in administration, met and married William (Bill) Robertson, and started a family with one son. Shirley was born in North Melbourne and moved to Pascoe Vale South when she was ten. After marrying Bill Robertson she moved a few streets away to the house that became her home for the rest of her life.

Shirley was very busy outside family and work, with being involved in a number of charity organisations such as school committees and the support group for the Mercy Hospital. For many of these groups, Shirley usually undertook public office type roles including President.

Shirley was passionate about gender equality and other community programmes, particularly early childhood development. She was one of the foundation members of Women’s Electoral Lobby, and only later joined a political party when it was clear that the women were not there to make the tea and scones. She won three terms as a councillor and Mayor of Coburg, becoming the first female in Coburg to do so.

One of her greatest achievements was the establishment of an early childhood centre in Coburg. It was one of only three kindergartens in Victoria offering before- and after-hours care. Shirley was very proud of this centre, the great people who staffed it, and how the centre continued to grow over the years. It is a legacy that bears her name.

Shirley was also successful in gaining an offer to undertake tertiary studies as an adult, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts and a Graduate Diploma. She also undertook the responsibilities of being a Justice of the Peace.

Shirley continued working, and enjoyed her work at Melbourne College, which later became Melbourne University. She became the Registrar for the Centre of Early Childhood Development, and continued to make many life long friends.

For a person who is accustomed to being involved and seeing what can be done to help the community, retirement did not stop her, with Shirley becoming one of the Foundation Members of the Preston Probus Club and holding public office.

Shirley enjoyed travelling, visiting the UK, Europe, Egypt, USA, Canada, New Zealand, Norfolk Island, Cape York and other places. This continued after the death of her husband Bill in 2007.

Her son Stephen, daughter-in-law Lisa and grandchildren Sean and Erin survive her.

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Valma Ross passed away peacefully on the 30th October 2014 in the presence of her sister Carole Stacey (nee Ross). Just two months prior to Valma’s passing she had enjoyed the College reunion seeing again her alma mater and catching up with friends.

Valma was born on the 4th June 1934 and attended St Mary’s Star of the Sea Primary School in West Melbourne. She proceeded to attend St Aloysius College in 1948, when she completed her Sub-Intermediate and then in 1949 successfully completed her Intermediate (Examination Number 9041).

She is sadly missed.
Siobhan Bloomfield

Taking that big step nearly three years ago in making the decision to move over 15,000 km from home, leaving behind all I knew, both in my personal and professional life has led to many enjoyable learning experiences and challenges. I always held an interest in teaching as I undertook my undergraduate studies in Visual Communication Design at Waterford Institute of Technology in Ireland. In my extracurricular activities I always seemed to be in a position which led to my teaching or instructing at some level. These included holding a leadership position and instructing in my unit of the Irish Naval Service Reserves as well as being Secretary and then Captain of my college kayak club. However, it wasn’t until a summer spent in India volunteering to teach English in a school, did I realise that teaching was my true passion. So, taking the next step I spent a hectic year studying for my teaching degree at Crawford College of Art and Design in Cork, Ireland, whilst also teaching part time, as part of my course requirements, at St Aloysius College, Cork.

After graduating I also trained and received my Canine Instructor Certificate and worked part time for two years as a puppy fosterer and dog trainer for Autism Assistance Dogs Ireland which trained and placed dogs with children who have autism. After a very fulfilling two years with AADI I decided I wanted to get back into the classroom full time. I missed the hustle and bustle that comes with a creative art room. However, due to the economic recession in Ireland at the time, teaching jobs were hard to find. So along with a fellow Irish art teacher we headed to Australia to chase our dreams.

In 2014 I was given the great opportunity to come back to a community that had already shown me such warmth, kindness and hospitality. I commenced my employment as an Art and Visual Communication Design teacher at St Aloysius College North Melbourne. In 2015 I also took on the role of Arts Key Learning Area Team Leader.

My grandmother often says that I was merely coming home; that fate and God led me back to a St Aloysius school, as my placement in St Aloysius College Cork nurtured and taught me the true spirit of Mercy values during my teacher training. Catherine Macaulay has never been too far from my thoughts, as a fellow Irish lady, and as I have made my own journey here at St Aloysius College. Living by, and teaching through the Mercy values of compassion, justice, service, hospitality, respect and courage, have helped me grow into the educator and young woman I am today. I teach my students compassion through having a nonjudgmental understanding of other people’s needs which results in unselfish giving to meet that need. An example of this can be seen in my VCAL Personal Development Skills class when the girls gave up their own time in the evening to prepare and distribute soup and sandwiches to the homeless of Melbourne. This project also developed skills within the value of service. The students demonstrated outstanding leadership skills and made a positive difference to the lives of individuals and the community. I teach my students justice through teaching each student to treat every person with fairness. This value arises frequently in my ethics and morality class, as students learn to voice their opinions but also to respect opinions and beliefs of others that may be in direct opposition to their own. I teach my students dignity by recognising that each person needs to be treated with respect, and we must recognise everyone’s value and worth. Living these values was further demonstrated during Art Club this year. Students designed props and backdrops for the school musical. Each group had to work as a team listening to each person’s ideas and utilising each of their talents. Hospitality is described as being the creation of a welcoming, open, inclusive and respectful environment for all individuals through word and deed. This Mercy value, I believe, is taught through example. I work to ensure that an environment in all of my classrooms is created where students feel safe, welcomed and free of any judgment. I then see these values reflected in how my students relate to each other and my fellow teaching staff.

I truly have enjoyed every moment of my time teaching at St Aloysius College and I look forward to new challenges and learning experiences next year. It has been a privilege working with such a great team of caring, compassionate and enthusiastic teachers. Also, it has been such a great and rewarding experience to teach such dedicated, creative and interested students that we are fortunate to have at St Aloysius College, North Melbourne.
Eden Foster

As the College Counsellor at St Aloysius College, I have had the privilege of working with amazing and inspirational students and staff. This year has seen a change in my career path from a psychologist counselling adults with addictions, to supporting young women during one of the most significant periods in their life, their schooling. I strongly feel that prevention and early intervention are the keys to building resilience, and it is for this reason that I have been driven to working with young people. Although my early career took me down a different path, my work with adults stirred my aspiration to assist young people. Preventing the onset of serious mental illness is assisted through developing appropriate coping skills early in life. I knew that I could make a difference to a young person’s life, and which better place to do this than in a school environment.

During my own early high school years, my dream was to be an architect, but a change in high schools during Year 10 led me down a very different path, that is, psychology. I recall my Year 12 Psychology teacher lecturing me on my average grades in Psychology and advising me that with marks like that, I wouldn’t be successful in becoming a psychologist. It was from that moment that I became increasingly more determined to prove her wrong…and I did. However, had I possessed a different mindset, that comment could have made a difference to the choice I made. I have since spent over seven years studying psychology, including more recently, completing a Masters in Psychology (Clinical) whilst working full-time. It has been a challenge at times, but I have learnt and experienced so much through this, and I wouldn’t change a thing. I feel blessed that opportunities have arisen at the most suitable times, including my role at St Aloysius College.

Until seeing the advertisement for College Psychologist at St Aloysius College, I had not heard of the College (bear in mind I live in the South Eastern suburbs, one hour commute from the College). However, upon my first encounter, during my interview, I was impressed by the warmth and friendliness of the people who welcomed me. I was also interested in the College’s history and impressed by its Mercy values. These values have provided support of my counselling in relation to student well-being and psychoeducation. I don’t only see school as a place to acquire academic skills, but also a place where young people can learn life skills and build their emotional intelligence.

This year I have been able to implement my ideas in relation to providing preventative programs for young women including lunchtime Mindfulness sessions, Year 7 Stress Management workshops, Years 9 and 10 Well-Being sessions, and Year 12 Meditation and Mindfulness classes. I have also had the opportunity to work with parents of Year 12 students preparing for examinations, and providing supportive advice in the preparation of one of the most stressful times in a young person’s life. I look forward to continuing these sessions and developing further programs in 2016 to enhance students’ learning and well-being.

Niki Makris

I commenced teaching at St Aloysius College at the commencement of this school year. Currently I teach a range of Commerce subjects, in particular Business Management and Accounting. Prior to my training as a teacher, I had been employed in managerial positions in large-scale organisations. I had always had a passion to contribute to the formation of younger people and provide opportunities for their advancement in life. In following this vocation, I hoped to not only be a provider of information but also share educational experiences that would contribute to the development of optimism and wisdom in my students. I recognised the impact that a teacher might have on students from my experiences whilst at secondary school. This is not only from a educational perspective, but also emotionally. I have the fondest memories of teachers who have been influential in my choices in life. In particular, my Economics teacher always taught me to look outside the box and to help others in need, no matter what it takes.

Education to me is not only about academic results, but also contributing to a bigger and wider purpose. I have been so proud of the contributions to our society that our girls at St Aloysius have made. The sense of community within St Aloysius College, as well as its connectedness to groups within the broader community, drew me to the College and resonates with me the power of education. Education of the whole person is powerful, as once it is received it is shared, provides direction and continues to grow and extend.

As Aristotle once quoted ‘Educating the mind, without educating the heart is no education at all’.
This year on the 8th of October, St Aloysius College introduced the first annual Arts and Technology Exhibition, exhibiting selected works from Years 7 to 12 students studying Art, Studio Arts, Visual Communication Design, Textiles, Media, Photography, VET Applied Fashion and Design Technology and Food Technology. This exhibition also featured selected works from Alumnae of the College who are currently completing courses in Interior Design and Fine Arts at R.M.I.T., Architecture at Monash University and Filmmaking & Photography at The Academy of Design.

It has been extensively researched and established that when students participate in creative subjects such as those in the arts and technology sectors, schools produce students with a range of skills including the capacity to be creative problem solvers. Through the arts and technology subjects, we educate our students to appreciate that problems can, and often do, have more than one solution, thus enabling students to build resilience. Arts education provides the critical thinking skills, communication skills and creativity, essential for students to be successful in the 21st century. These subjects also help to cultivate confidence. As students master new and varied skills, they are able to step outside their comfort zone. As they develop and recognise their own progress, their self-confidence grows. The Arts help to develop students’ decision making skills and strengthen their critical thinking skills. How do I express this feeling through my art work? How do I develop my own style of design? Learning how to...
make these choices and decisions carry over into their education in other subjects and other parts of life, and this is certainly a valuable skill in adulthood. Arts and Technology subjects build students’ perseverance. They develop an understanding that when trying to master new skills, there are times when it can become frustrating and there maybe times where they want to abandon the project. However they don’t, and after practicing hard, learn that hard work and perseverance pay off as can be seen from the examples of art work displayed. Arts and Technology subjects assist students in building a strong sense of focus. Students develop an idea, and with research, work to develop the idea to fruition through many stages, never losing sight of the main goal. This year our students continue to develop and refine their ability to channel their artistic creativity and be inspired by the everyday. The art work displayed at the exhibition showcased the varied and individual artistic talents of our students.

We believe that our current students are greatly inspired by the successes of our past students, and by showcasing alumnae’s work they have contributed to our students’ artistic and creative education.

Ms Siobhan Bloomfield
Key Learning Area Team Leader – The Arts
This year saw a very successful production of the Wizard of Oz. This well-known and much-loved musical proved to be very popular with the students, with a large number of students auditioning to be a part of the cast or the band. Those who were lucky enough to be given a part were very dedicated throughout the long rehearsal schedule, and this resulted in four top-class performances. The audiences were enthralled by many highlights, such as the Munchkins singing and dancing, the Wicked Witch’s terrifying demeanour and of course Dorothy’s “Over the Rainbow”.

A wonderful feature of this year’s Production was the fabulous props and sets that were made by the Art Club. Never before have we had so many students involved in making such a large number of props. It really made the visual display on stage stunning.

When you count up the number of students in the cast, band, crew, art club and ushers, there were well over 100 students involved, which is a high percentage of our total student population. This production was definitely a huge team effort, and everyone who was involved should be very proud of the finished product.

Andrew Dulhunty – Production Director 2015
On the first Saturday of September this year, Alumnae met for their annual reunion at St Aloysius College. The day was a happy occasion with many friends meeting and others renewing old friendships. There were positive responses upon seeing the newly refurbished learning areas and up to date facilities of the College. Morning tea was a plentiful and delicious spread prepared by the College’s Food Technology team of staff.

On Sunday 1st November Father Huyen, Parish Priest of St Brendan’s Parish, Flemington welcomed some alumnae and College staff to Mass, at which deceased alumnae and alumni of St Aloysius College were remembered. The Parish’s morning tea thoughtfully provided an opportunity to meet and chat after Mass, and particularly to meet Fr. Huyen and the St Brendan’s parishioners.
Strive for Higher Things