Executive Officer’s Column

Congratulations to Fiona Godfrey and her Canberra-based Conference organising committee for what I hear was a truly outstanding couple of days of professional challenges and collegial experiences. It was also Fiona’s ‘swan-song’, and the ASA office staff and I thank Fiona for her dedicated efforts over the past two years as President. Despite a busy schedule as Principal of Radford College, Fiona always had time for matters important to ASA and led our network with energy and expertise.

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Congratulations to Jim Laussen (Principal, Overnewton Anglican Community College) on his election as President. Jim is a highly experienced and respected Victorian Principal and is ideally suited to be leading our network at this time. Congratulations also to Dr Mark Sly, Principal Coomera Anglican College (Qld), who has been elected to the position of President Elect.

I was saddened to miss this year’s National Conference in Canberra, and importantly the annual ‘catch-up’ with so many colleagues from across Australia. Recent surgery meant remaining in Perth was the only option. It was the first Conference I have missed this century!

**Recruiting Chaplains from across the World**

ASA’s Strategic Plan has a particular focus on and commitment to the ministry of School Chaplains. A key element of ASA’s Strategic Intent is to:

> ‘Strengthen support for School Chaplains, recognising that the ASA is one of their major collegiate networks.’

In 2013 the Management Committee set itself the following tasks to strengthen collaboration and support for School Chaplains:

- Reinvigorate the Chaplaincy Shadowing Program.
- Develop and foster a network of School Chaplains.
- Investigate a Chaplaincy Consultancy Committee with State Representatives to inform and assist the ASA Management Committee.
- Continue to investigate school chaplaincy training, in liaison with Diocesan Bishops.

At this year’s Annual General Meeting, a motion was passed to allow the number of Chaplains on the Management Committee to increase from one to two. This reflects our commitment to the ministry of Chaplains and chaplaincy as central to the life and wellbeing of any Anglican school, and therefore as important to discussion and decision-making at our national Committee meetings.

The Management Committee has also committed, as a priority, to assist schools with the recruitment of Anglican clergy for School Chaplaincy positions across Australia. A reality is that our Church does not have sufficient clergy available and suitably qualified and experienced in schools ministry to meet the demand for Chaplaincy positions in our 160 (and growing) ASA member schools.

As a membership ‘value add’, we now provide a complimentary ‘Chaplain Recruitment Service’ for Principals in our member schools. Interviews are held in London annually (of Church of England clergy) as well as other locations from time to time (where there are many Anglican clergy), with a list of suitable clergy made available to Principals on an annual basis. This list was recently sent to Principals of all member schools.

As part of a recent sabbatical, I conducted many interviews with Anglican clergy interested in School Chaplaincy in Australia. Clergy-persons came from across the UK, as well as South Africa. I also conducted Skype interviews with clergy from other parts of the world. Those deemed most suited to Chaplaincy positions were detailed on the list sent to Principals. Whilst this process does not remove the need for Principals and Bishops to undertake their own interviews and assessment processes, it does enable schools to access a wide variety of interested clergy, with an initial assessment having been undertaken for convenience.

I have been conducting these interviews for many years, initially for schools in Western Australia only. This has now been broadened to include all ASA member schools, due to the number of requests received in our office for assistance with Chaplaincy recruitment. It is not surprising that, over the years, the best candidates have been ‘snapped up’ by schools across Australia.

It is important to state that the provision of this service in no way reflects a lack of commitment to or belief in our ‘home-grown product!’ Indeed, the opposite applies. This member service has been introduced only because the ‘demand’ for clergy in our schools is greater than the ‘supply’ of clergy by the national Church. We pray for the day when the number of local candidates exceeds demand!

The Reverend Peter Laurence, Executive Officer of Anglican Schools Australia (ASA) (and CEO of the Anglican Schools Commission in WA), highlights the ASA’s commitment to the ministry of Chaplains and chaplaincy in the life of our schools. He also comments on the benefits of ASA’s new travel agreement with Virgin Australia.

ASA’s new travel agreement with Virgin Australia.

**Virgin Australia Travel Agreement**

Earlier this year, Anglican Schools Australia signed a Travel Agreement with Virgin Australia.

This Agreement offers our member schools and individual staff significant discounts on all Virgin Australia flights. It also provides big savings on all classes of fare for Singapore Airlines, Air New Zealand and Delta, all of whom are part owners of Virgin Australia.

Many Principals have taken up our offer of free Velocity Gold Acceleration, to the extent that ASA’s allocation has been exhausted! Based on the Agreement and proposed growth of business, more Gold Memberships will be available for Principals in 2016.

ASA continues to have two Travel Agreements, providing discounts for member schools; one with Qantas and the other with Virgin Australia. Members can access the respective benefits only when booking through Campus Travel, our selected Travel Management Company.

**Master of Theology for Chaplains**

Our first Australian Chaplain has commenced studying a Master of Theology in Chaplaincy Studies at the University of Cardiff Centre for Chaplaincy Studies.
Abuse. She advised that the Working Group’s focus is on redress and determining what type of scheme will be put in place. Finally, another school year draws to a close. So much to celebrate in the lives of all who comprise our school communities. I thank the members of our Management Committee for their dedication throughout the year: to Jim Laussen (President), Fiona Godfrey (Immediate Past President), Dr Mark Sly (President Elect), The Right Reverend Dr Matthew Brain (Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn), Gareth Lecchman (NSW), The Reverend Dr Nick Foad (NSW), Sheri Molloy (Qld), Christopher Prance (SA), Alan Jones (TAS), Lynne Thomson (WA) and The Reverend Andrew Minter (Chaplain Representative). Also a big ‘thank you’ to those in the ASA office who give time tirelessly to ASA matters: especially Irene Clarke and Asher Dymock in Finance, Philip Goldsworthy in Chaplaincy, Wendy Hillman as our Communications Manager and Hazel Cole as our Executive Secretary. They are a valued team.

The Gospels remind us that our faith is one based on hope: hope in the baby Jesus of Christmas, hope in the crucified and resurrected Jesus of Easter, and hope in the living Christ Jesus today. May your Advent and Christmas seasons be filled with hope, as together we look forward to the opportunities of 2016.

The Management Committee met recently in Melbourne for its fourth and final meeting of the year. Matters discussed included the Strategic Plan (current plan expires in 2016), school chaplaincy training, the development of a network of School Chaplains and the Adelaide Conference. In addition, Sheri Molloy provided an update on the work of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. She advised that the Working Group’s focus is on redress and determining what type of scheme will be put in place.

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After much thought, discussions with my loved ones, prayer and talking things through with Peter Laurence I decided to enrol in the MTh in Chaplaincy Studies. It was only with the help of the ASC that I was able to enrol in the course. It would not have been possible without their generous encouragement and financial support. As I was the first person representing Australian Chaplains in this venture one question came to mind, “Was I pioneer or a guinea pig?”

Am I a pioneer by being the first person to represent Australia in the MTh in Chaplaincy Studies at St Michael’s College (Cardiff University)? Am I forging the way for others to follow suit and enjoy the riches of my labour? Or, am I a guinea pig in an experiment, the aim of which is to study how I manage a full-time job as a School Chaplain alongside family life and study. Of particular note is the fact that I live thousands of kilometres away from the university campus. To be honest, I think it’s a little of both.

Pioneer

Love ‘em or hate ‘em clichés are mostly true: we live in a global village. The relationship between St Michael’s College and the Diocese of Hong Kong reflects this. With Australia/ASA in the fold, St Michael’s Master’s degree in Chaplaincy Studies embraces the reality of global village citizens. This pioneering course is forging new ground to better equip Chaplains for the work to which they were called. During my visit to St Michael’s College in September 2015 for the first intensive I met Chaplains from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. In January I will do the next intensive in Hong Kong with students from the Diocese of Hong Kong, with whom I have already been in online contact. We have discussed essays and research. The student intake is diverse - it goes beyond those of the UK, Diocese and agencies to follow suit. Having said that, I have encountered a number of challenges.

Guinea Pig

My major concern before applying to do the MTh was the workload. I’m a husband, a father of two sons (a 12-year-old and a nine-year-old), a full-time School Chaplain and an avid gardener. How would I find the time to study for a Master’s degree in an already overtly-busy schedule?

The first session at the residential in Cardiff focused on this issue. This course has been specifically designed (and refined over the years) for people in full-time work. The course takes one year to complete for full-time students but is run over three years for working Chaplains. Course requirements comprise six module essays and a dissertation. This equates to three essays a year for the first two years and a year to research and write the dissertation. That means a 4000-word essay every four months. It is manageable.

Disclaimer: I’m still in first year and doing my first assignment and cannot comment beyond that. However, it’s shaping up really well because the time pressure is not overbearing.

The availability of resources was another of my concerns, especially as I live thousands of kilometres from the College Library. To be honest this has been a challenge, but as the guinea pig it’s what I’m here for. The first essay had certain required reading. The books were snapped up before I left St Michael’s and have only recently been posted to me. This meant I couldn’t get started on my essay immediately. Given that I have four months to complete the essay, there is time for delays. On a positive note, from now on course materials (books and journals) will be available to Australian students on enrolment.

I’m still new to the course and have plenty of work to do. However, it hasn’t taken me long to see the quality of what St Michael’s offers and appreciate the experience of being part of the MTh. I recommend all School Chaplains consider enrolling in the course. For further information don’t hesitate to contact me at: jschroeder@stmarks.wa.edu.au.
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* Virgin Australia lounge members include those who have purchased a Lounge membership, as well as Business Class, Gold and Platinum Velocity frequent flyers with an eligible Domestic Virgin Australia flight.
Early in 2013, the great granddaughter of Bishop Hale, Sophie Rudd, was hosting a dinner at her Kensington home in London when a conversation occurred between BHP CEO Sam Walsh and herself. Sam mentioned he was from Perth and Sophie said, “My great grandfather was the first bishop of Perth.” This stirred Sam’s interest and before long Sophie said, “I still have his diaries upstairs.” Sam asked to see the diaries and was amazed by them. He then contacted Anglican Archbishop of Perth The Most Reverend Roger Herft and within weeks, the diaries went to Australia in a diplomatic bag to be transcribed at the State Library of Western Australia.

The diaries were written by Bishop Hale between 1856 and 1875, and include everything from what the weather was like through to detailed entries of his travels and thoughts on the education system. Hale was consecrated as the first bishop of WA in 1857, a year before he opened what would become Hale School, and his writings provide much insight into the challenges he faced throughout that time. Bishop Hale was also deeply concerned at the treatment of Aboriginals and a believer in the power of education to bring about change for good. He wrote, “If you look for the best” in prisoners “there could be so much achieved.”

The transcribing took two years but the diaries have now arrived at Hale School and are in the safe keeping of the Hale School Archives. But they won’t be gathering dust! Plans are afoot to showcase the Diaries to regional Western Australia in 2016. The Royal Historical Society of WA turns 90 in 2016 and to celebrate, members are organising a road show of Western Australian historical artefacts. We are hoping the diaries will join this tour and will hence be seen by thousands of people.
AIISSA Humanoid Robot Research Project

Monica Williams, Educational Consultant, AIISSA
Melissa Bray, eLearning Integrator, St Peter’s Girls’ School
Kate Mount, Director Early Learners’ Centre, St Peter’s Girls’ School
Anne Kruger and Mark Routley, Year 3 Teachers, St Peter’s Girls’ School

Thomas and Pink
Thomas and Pink are two humanoid robots that are making programming and robotics exciting and intellectually stimulating learning frontiers for students. The robots are built in France by Aldebaran. The Association of Independent Schools in South Australia (AIISSA) purchased these two NAO robots last year to research the impact of this innovative technology on student learning.

The NAO Humanoid Robot Research Project will provide over 20 South Australian independent schools with a unique opportunity to learn in a ‘hands on’ way about a new technology and its impact on learning. In this three-year research project, the AIISSA has partnered with Swinburne University (Dr Therese Keane), the Queensland University of Technology (Dr Chris Chalmers) and the University of Queensland (Dr Marie Boden) to work with selected independent schools to acquire a deeper understanding of:

• how students interact with humanoid robots
• the effect humanoid robots have on student learning
• the pedagogical approaches and teaching strategies that promote the best learning outcomes for students.

Emerging Themes
The early findings of the AIISSA Humanoid Robot Research Project are based on the first five schools that participated in the project. Three of these schools are Anglican. The evidence suggests that integrating humanoid robots into learning increases student:

• engagement and deep learning
• critical and creative thinking
• collaborative problem solving
• computational thinking
• self-directed learning of challenging concepts

Early findings indicate that improvements in student learning are dependent on the pedagogy, and that innovative technologies require us to be re-visioning the roles of teacher and learner. The data links improvement in student engagement and learning to open ended tasks that foster student agency and creativity. The evidence also suggests that the human-like nature of the robot creates a different relationship between the child/student and the technology and this has a significant effect on engagement and learning. One of the surprising findings is the capacity of students to quite rapidly understand and manipulate the sophisticated software. The research findings at St Peter’s Girls’ School demonstrate that very young children are capable of complex computational thinking.

Communicating with Thomas
Thomas has also been a big hit with the children in Reception (five-year-olds). The girls so look forward to the day they spend with him each week. At this level they learn to communicate a message using the day they spend with him each week. At this level they learn to communicate a message using the language of symbols. In addition, they have developed empathy for Thomas as they recognised him through discussion and questions. They wanted to know about his life, his family, especially his sister P!nk.

They have learnt how to communicate with Thomas by speaking slowly and clearly. They have modified their language skills to suit his needs. They were encouraged to recall how they had thought when they were new to the School. This had the desired effect and it did not take long for the children to begin forming relationships with Thomas. They took Thomas’s photograph and added it to the class photo wall. Children began asking if Thomas had feelings and started calling him their friend.

She went on to say: “Being able to program Thomas to respond enabled us to connect the children with him through discussion and questions. They wanted to know about his life, his family, especially his sister P!nk.”

“Children have learnt how to communicate with Thomas by speaking slowly and clearly. They have modified their language skills to suit his needs. They miss him when he is not with them.”

Melissa said they have also “explored coding as a language and demonstrated strong thinking skills and strategies as they have grappled with understanding coding as a literacy of symbols. In addition, they have discussed how robots could be used in the future.”

The early findings of the AISSA Humanoid Robot Research Project note that “very young children are capable of complex computational thinking”. We then hear from staff at St Peter’s Girls’ School in Adelaide who are teaching children in the early years of primary school to interact with Thomas, a humanoid robot.
The girls took great delight in creating and testing their own programming sequences. They then reflected on the efficacy of their approaches before developing further sequences. Kate Mount said she is impressed by the young girls’ thinking skills and problem solving skills as they learn to become creators of technology.

**Digital Technologies and Robotics**

At Year 3 level, Thomas is used to generate interest in digital technologies and robotics. Melissa Bray said, “The girls explored coding software, investigating how to manipulate the different applications built within Thomas.” They learnt how to create programming sequences using drag and drop coding software for programming Thomas and enjoyed demonstrating these sequences to their classes. It was then time to move on to advanced manual coding where students use complex software to develop their own coding sequences. The girls set goals they wanted Thomas to achieve and developed programs to achieve these ends. Sequences were prototyped on a virtual robot before being demonstrated by Thomas.

Melissa Bray says the NAO Humanoid Robot Research Project reminds us of the importance of equipping students to be critical and creative learners. She said it has been an exciting time observing the young girls challenge their thinking and begin to build the digital literacy they will need as 21st Century learners.

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We’re for flexible learning
Our talk is replete with metaphors. In his brilliant book I is an Other, The Secret Life of Metaphor and How It Shapes the Way We See the World, James Geary says that we utter about six metaphors per minute. He goes on to quote an Australian weather forecast as an example (the metaphors are in italics):

‘Perth is in the grip of a heat wave with temperatures set to soar to 40 degrees Celsius by the end of the week. Australia is no stranger to extreme weather. Melbourne was pummelled with hailstones the size of golfballs on Saturday. Long term, droughts, bushfires, and floods have all plagued large swathes of Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.’ (p. 5)

As our English teachers told us in our teens, metaphors describe one thing in terms of another whereas similes, their close relations, say one thing is like another. Geary says that a simile is just ‘a metaphor with the scaffolding still up’ (p. 8). In this article, I risk causing Mr Bent, my English teacher, to turn in his grave as I lump them together as metaphors.

Some of the best teachers have a gift of being able to find illuminating metaphors when their students are wrestling with difficult ideas in the classroom. However, metaphors are much more than mere aids to communication of ideas to be dispensed with once the ideas are grasped or mere decorative adornments on the surface of our language.

**Metaphors by which we live**

Metaphors shape the way we see our world and live in it. In their groundbreaking work, Metaphors We Live By, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson argue that metaphors deeply inhabit our language and thought. For example, we think of the activity of debate and argument as if it were a form of warfare. We win arguments and lose arguments, we are defeated by stronger arguments, we attack the arguments of others. How different if we were to regard argument as not warfare but dance, a cooperative activity in which people take different positions and which leads not to winners and losers but to a mutually satisfying outcome. Again, we think and talk of time as if it were money. We spend, waste, lose and save time. How different is this view of time from that of, say, rural villagers in a remote location in Africa who tell us westerners that we have all the clocks but they have all the time.

Coming to see the heart as a pump led to advances in medicine that were impossible before the invention of pumps. Seeing electricity as current or light as wave or particle are not mere poetic embellishments of our theories but ways in science of extending our knowledge and deepening our understanding. These are examples of what are sometimes called ‘generative metaphors’, ones that lead to advances in our understanding. Other examples of seeing something as something else may be ‘degenerative’. Coming to see the brain as a telephone exchange or, more recently, as a computer tends towards a mechanistic view of the human being.

**What is teaching like?**

In his great book, The Courage to Teach, Parker Palmer tells how he asks teachers in workshops to fill in the blank: ‘When I am teaching at my best, I am like a …’ (p. 148). He asks them to do this quickly so as to reveal the images that operate at a deep level in their view of their work.

I have followed his example with groups of teachers and education students in many different countries and the words inserted in the blanks have been many and varied: fellow-traveller, mountain guide, parent giraffe pulling down high branches so that young can browse on them, orchestra conductor, leader of drum circle, gardener and many more. A young lady brought up on a farm in the American Midwest said she was like a manure distributor because she was scattering good stuff to enable seeds to fertilise and grow!

Nobody I have met so far has filled the blank with ‘army drill sergeant’ but I have known one or two teachers from my childhood who must have seen their role as that! This is surely an example of a degenerative metaphor for teaching as would be, for example, ‘actor on central stage’.

Palmer suggests that even our good metaphors for our teaching may reveal not only strengths but also shadows. He sees himself as being like a sheep dog, maintaining a space for the sheep to graze, holding the sheep together in that space, protecting the boundaries of that space and, when the grass is depleted, moving with them to a new space. The shadow side of his metaphor is that it can reveal a tendency to regard his students as mindless and docile.

As I get older, I increasingly want to see myself as being like a seanchai. The seanchai was the traditional storyteller in my native Ireland, an old man who went from village to village sharing the old lore, the oral traditions of the people preserved from generation to generation. Kieran Egan, a Canadian educator who, as it happens, was also brought up in Ireland, has written a book entitled Teaching as Storytelling in which he presents the role of even the teacher of Mathematics as storytelling. The shadow side of this metaphor for me is that I may prefer to be listened to by my students than to listen to them.
Metaphors in Education

In his RSA Animate lecture on 'Changing Education Paradigms' (available online), Sir Ken Robinson points out that our system of education was designed, conceived and structured in the economic circumstance of the Industrial Revolution. Because of this, schools are organised on factory lines with ringing bells, separate subjects and children educated by batches. Education starts from a production line mentality with an accompanying emphasis on standardisation. In other words, the dominant metaphor is the assembly line and, although that has its strengths, it also has its strong shadow side in a tendency to dehumanise and to work against the formation of a collaborative community of learning.

Closely related to the assembly line image is that of the modern marketplace. Christians, among others, may well want to argue that the school is, or should be, sufficiently unlike a modern marketplace to make talk of ‘clients’, ‘consumers’, ‘products’, ‘delivery’, ‘quality control’ and such terms quite inadequate.

In his book, To Know as We Are Known: A Spirituality of Education, Parker Palmer questions the dominance in our thinking about knowledge and the curriculum of the metaphor of knowing as power and suggests its replacement with that of the biblical metaphor of knowing as loving. Following Francis Bacon, from whom the power metaphor derives, we see reality as something to be mastered, analysed, formed and shaped to our ends. Learning becomes a matter of ‘mastering’ ideas, ‘grasping’ concepts, ‘wrestling with’ problems and ‘cracking’ them. Palmer goes on to suggest:

‘another kind of knowledge is available to us, one that begins in a different passion and is drawn toward other ends … . This is a knowledge that originates not in curiosity or control but in compassion, or love—a source celebrated not in our intellectual tradition but in our spiritual heritage.’ (p. 8)

My final example comes from a chapter by Harro Van Brummelen in Metaphors We Teach By, a book edited by him and Ken Badley. The chapter looks at common metaphors for assessment (measurement, inquiry, incentive, a piano lesson) before going on to consider metaphors that arise from the Bible (a blessing, grace, justice) which he brings together in a proposal that we should see assessment as a covenant. He concludes that:

‘Conceiving of assessment as a covenantal relationship that brings blessing, peace, and justice will yield dividends in the lives of both students and teachers. Let our assessment do more than focus on hitting the mark; let it light the candle of learning and this enlighten the lives of our students.’ (p. 106)

As Christians in Education, I believe that we need to become very aware of the metaphors that inhabit our language and thinking about teaching and learning. We need to promote ways of seeing our school communities and our students that resonate with a biblical view of human beings as being made in the image of God for loving and caring relationships with one another, with the wonderful world that he has made and with him who made it and us.
Anglicare Australia asks, Who is being left behind?

Kasy Chambers

Kasy Chambers, Executive Director of Anglicare Australia, writes about the organisation’s 15th State of the Family report, Who is being left behind?, which was launched at a press conference at Parliament House in Canberra in October, during Anti-Poverty Week. This year the report focuses on people who are at risk during Anti-Poverty Week. This year the report focuses on people who are at risk of falling beneath the poverty line. And so is at risk of deep and persistent disadvantage.

However, the combination of economic and demographic changes and the public policies of Australian governments have conspired to leave certain groups of people further and further behind. With that in mind, Anglicare Australia commissioned the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM) to look at the relative increases in living standards experienced by different groups of people across Australia over the past 10 years, and projections for the next 10 years based on current policies and economic directions.

It may seem superficial to judge how well things are going by looking at people’s income, but we cannot ignore the reality that being a part of our society costs money. For people who are already doing it tough, falling living standards are inevitably linked to ill health, insecure housing, poor educational outcomes, food insecurity, and under employment.

Anglicare Australia’s executive director, Kasy Chambers, said, “When you look closely at how people’s lives pan out, as we do in our State of the Family report this year, it’s clear the right support at the right time can make the difference.”

And so Who is being left behind? features stories about the kind of connection, engagement and opportunities that can make a difference to people at risk of that exclusion.

• Jeffrey Johnson-Abdelmalik explains how personal engagement and a safe place can provide a pathway to profound change for people facing ongoing alienation.

• Todd Yourell and June Wilke identify the specific investment in education we could be making into the young people in our collective care.

• David Law shows us that were you to live on the right side of the border your chances as someone with a disability of qualifying for vital education and employment support can be ten times higher than if you live on the other side.

• Trish Buhagiar shows us how the terrible shortage of affordable housing cripples the life experience of people we condemn to the purgatory of the bridging visa, when a secure home could do the reverse.

• Stephanie Carson spreads that insight to older women without their own home whose lives can so quickly and unfairly fall apart once they retire or lose a partner.

• Mark Glasson shows too that the complicated issues faced, for instance by a young mother escaping domestic violence, can sometimes be reversed through support as mundane as financial counselling, and he asks why we’re cutting back on such essential services.

• And Bronwen Hayes describes the context for the community commitment to child friendly communities and how such a wider approach might provide the support that individuals, families and children need.

Despite our best work, Who is being left behind? shows that it remains pretty hard to make a difference when the larger wheels of government policy, political ideology and economic forces are all stacked up to go the other way.

And that’s the point. Whatever the rationale, we can understand better what our public policies achieve if we pay attention to the stories of the people they affect. And it is through looking at these stories readers might find themselves asking why it is okay to simply leave so many behind. And if it is not okay, what we should be doing to bring everyone along instead.
A Spiritual Environment

Stephen Higgs

Stephen Higgs, Headmaster of Ballarat Grammar (Vic), writes about some of the trademarks he has left during his 21-year career as Headmaster of the School. In particular he writes about his passion for caring for the environment. He retires at the end of this year and is looking forward to ‘getting his hands dirty’ on his small farm.

My 21 years as Headmaster of Ballarat Grammar have left a few trademarks. There’s one of my tweed jackets which staff bought at a charity auction, to hang on the wall. Some think this attire a response to the Ballarat climate, but it’s more about a connection with the craft of teaching, which I’ve been keen to maintain.

More extensively, though, there’s evidence of a commitment to the environment, which remains one of my passions. I see it as the proper concern of us all as Anglicans, charged with stewardship of the planet. One dimension of this was expressed earlier this year in an article The Moral Imperative of Climate Action by the Primates of Australia and South Africa, Archbishops Dr Philip Freier and Archbishop Dr Thabo Cecil Makgoba. This message was reinforced by Pope Francis’s recent encyclical.

A recent CSIRO survey, however, uncovered widespread ignorance of, or indifference to, climate change issues amongst Australians, and here I see schools as having an important responsibility. The vertical axis wind turbine on our street-front classroom block makes a statement to our community. Less obvious is the underground labyrinth which replaces mechanical air-conditioning for our auditorium. These and a number of other experimental sustainability initiatives provide prompts for student engagement, and reduce emissions and expenditure, and there is valuable activity by the student environmental committee. But we have seen the potential for a deeper engagement to develop a sense of responsibility for the natural world at a younger age.

Seven years ago the School acquired a 50Ha farm, 3 km north of the main campus. Our agriculture students help run sheep and cattle studs, and a cropping program is run with community partnership involvement. Forest and wetland precincts encourage wildlife. Recently we opened an environmentally-themed learning centre where Year 4 students spend their whole year mastering the required Australian Curriculum (within the international Baccalaureate PYP framework) in the context of a rich natural environment.

Research from different angles is increasingly showing that connection with the natural world is a powerful ingredient of personal wellbeing and growth. Dr Tonia Gray, who has studied our program, says:

“Although a relatively embryonic field of research, preliminary evidence suggests that a variety of mechanisms enable natural environments to boost academic performance, reduce stress and depression, improve confidence and self-esteem, foster creativity and imagination, improve concentration, reduce the symptoms of ADHD, develop motor skills and decrease the risk of obesity.”

Not a bad list! Yet we are rapidly eliminating the nation’s backyards, and finding that parents have less time to take children out into the wider world. Where are the trees they can climb or the tadpoles they can observe? Increasingly, if young people are to engage with trees and vegetable-growing, frogs and chooks, it will be through their school experience. The children at Mount Rowan have personal experience of birth and death on the farm (not too much of the latter); they take responsibility for nurturing plants and animals and for stoking the boiler; they notice soil and water, birds and bees, fire and frost. They harvest, record and calculate.

Now in its second year, the program is meeting with resounding affirmation from students, parents and staff, and proving a significant enrolment drawcard. Beyond the more obvious attractions of the program are underpinnings that we believe will be of long-lasting value: the fostering of spirituality, an ethos of care, and the Christian promise of hope in new life. The Good Shepherd andparable of the Sower take on real meaning.

The Farm Campus is on the flanks of Mount Rowan, an extinct (we hope!) volcano. Walking with students up to the summit, talking with them about eruptions, about Indigenous people and their management of the area, about former potato-growing on the Mount, I think we all gain a better sense of our place in the natural world, and a feeling of wonder at the beauty of Creation.

One of the pleasures of my 21 years has been to share ideas and experiences with colleagues in ASA. Over that period, the Association has grown from fledgling ideas and experiences with colleagues in ASA. Over that period, the Association has grown from fledgling status to maturity, and it has been a pleasure to play a small part in that growth. Among other things, retirement will give me a chance to spend more time getting the hands dirty on our small farm: visitors welcome! I hope you find time for some ‘ecotherapy’ yourself!
Ivanhoe Celebrates 100 Years

Rae Byrom

Rae Byrom, Communications & Marketing Manager at Melbourne’s Ivanhoe Grammar School, writes about the School’s ‘Year of Celebrations’ to mark its Centenary. She describes 2015 as “a year filled with celebrations and poignant moments”.

2015 at Ivanhoe Grammar School was a year filled with celebrations and poignant moments as current and past staff, students, alumni and the extended Ivanhoe family celebrated the School’s 100th year. As the year of celebrations draws to a close, it is time to reflect on the year that was, closing the chapter of the School’s 100-year history and looking forward to the next century at Ivanhoe Grammar School.

Getting Organised

The Centenary Committee was established to help formulate and integrate the many aspects of the School’s celebratory events. The Committee’s aim was to create a program that highlighted the important historical record of the School as well as enhancing the connections between, and support of, parents, alumni and friends.

Eighteen months of meticulous planning was undertaken prior to the celebrations to ensure the success of the events. This included the establishment of the Centenary website, specifically designed for all things Centenary; social media strategies; digital imagery and video, culminating in an exclusively commissioned video entitled Proud.

Recognising the Past

The first major event on the School’s Centenary calendar, an all school cross-campus event for students, staff and members of Ivanhoe’s broader community, focused on the past and how Ivanhoe Grammar School has developed since it opened its doors in 1915. At the Ivanhoe Campus the day commenced at St James Church, where students and staff assembled in preparation for a parade from the School’s original site, through the suburb of Ivanhoe to the campus we know today. A special re-enactment of the first assembly with The Reverend Sydney Buckley and his first day boys was a highlight. Students in the primary years commemorated the year with a collaborative art project, creating an array of native flowers to form a truly magnificent artwork. Meanwhile at the Plenty Campus in Mernda, festivities were in full swing, with a number of students coming to school via horse and cart. Traditional games and activities were enjoyed throughout the afternoon and all students gathered for a Smoke Ceremony conducted by a Wurundjeri elder.

Launch of the School History

Over 250 guests witnessed the official launch of A Passion to Serve, a commemorative history book of Ivanhoe Grammar School. A feature of the evening was a poignant interview with the late Mary Buckley, daughter of the School’s founder.

Staff Cocktail Party

The Chairman welcomed all current staff and close to 100 past staff to a special cocktail event held at the School in April. The Principal and Chairman spoke about the enormous contribution made by Ivanhoe staff to the School and its students.

Centenary Ball

The Grand Hyatt Ballroom provided an opulent space for the Centenary Ball. Billed as the social event of the year, over 650 past and present parents, alumni, staff and friends ‘danced the night away’ to the eclectic sounds of the Baker Boys Band. Guests were entertained by a floorshow featuring four talented alumni who performed songs from each of the eras over the last 100 years.

School Concerts

Ivanhoe Grammar School has a long and rich tradition of music and the performing arts. This year the School staged three concerts to commemorate the future through the eyes of the students, acknowledging its rich diversity and internationalism, the Centenary Gala paid tribute to the School’s past. Buckley House (ELC-Year 6) celebrated the future through the eyes of the students. Over 700 students from all campuses, together with alumni and staff, showcased their talents in what was a truly memorable event. A specially commissioned school song, Faithful Ivanhoe, was premiered at this event.

Gala Performance

Launching the School History

Celebrating the themes of belonging and internationalism, the Centenary Gala paid tribute to the School’s past, celebrated its rich diversity and celebrated the future through the eyes of the students. Months of preparation had gone into staging this musical and performing arts event on 16 June and all were eager to see it come together on the night at Hamer Hall, Melbourne’s premier concert venue.

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Homecoming Weekend

From Friday 20 March to Sunday 22 March the School hosted an Old Ivanhoe Grammarians’ homecoming weekend of celebrations. The weekend provided an opportunity for alumni to catch up with old friends (and make some new ones) as well as see how the School has developed. Celebrations, which attracted past and current staff and almost 200 alumni, began with the launch of the Old Ivanhoe Centenary Golden Ale Beer on Friday evening. They continued on the following day with a variety of activities at The Ridgeway and Plenty Campuses, including the launch of the Heritage Trail, sporting events, the Huxley Comedy Debate, a chapel service, art displays and much more. The OIGA Centenary Dinner promised to be a highlight of the weekend…and it was! The formal three-course dinner featured a panel of alumni speakers who entertained and enthralled the packed audience.

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Orchestra, String Ensemble, Wind Band, Choir, Chamber Ensembles and Soloists, both vocal and instrumental, celebrated 100 years of Music with a special performance at Buckley Hall. The Plenty Campus (P-Year 12) celebrated 25 years of the performing arts with a program of music and dance from primary and secondary students together with performances from alumni.

**Teams of the Centenary**

The last major event was the Teams of the Centenary held at Leonda on the Yarra on Wednesday 28 October. Three hundred guests gathered to celebrate 100 years of great sporting achievements by Ivanhoe’s students. As well as recognising fine performances in the five original sports (swimming, athletics, AFL football, cricket and tennis), the event celebrated the diverse range of sports the School offers including kayaking, snowsports, lawn bowls and softball.

**Principal Honoured**

To top off this wonderful year, the School’s Principal, Mr Roderick Fraser, was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia as part of the 2015 Queen’s Birthday Honours Awards. The award recognised Mr Fraser’s significant service to secondary education, to national and international learning development organisations, and to the community.

Mr Fraser, AM commenced his role as Principal of Ivanhoe Grammar School in 1996, only the fourth Principal in the School’s 100-year history. He has had an extensive educational career in three states of Australia as a teacher and senior administrator, including as Head of The Scots School in Bathurst prior to being appointed Principal at Ivanhoe.

Mr Fraser announced his retirement in 2015, after 20 years of remarkable and dedicated service to the School. Mr Fraser’s belief in the importance of developing students’ global competency has resulted in Ivanhoe Grammar School making a commitment to internationalising the curriculum, both within and beyond the classroom, and the School salutes his wonderful achievements.

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The Reverend Dr Philip Raymont, Senior Chaplain and Head of the Religion, Philosophy and Ethics Faculty at Guildford Grammar School (WA) writes about the introduction and development of the School’s K-10 Religious Education syllabus, Religion, Philosophy & Ethics. Developed over a six-year period by a team of specialist teachers working under the direction of Dr Raymont, the syllabus has been tailored to the students’ needs. The curriculum is rigorous and engaging and provides the appropriate background for students who wish to study Philosophy & Ethics and Religion & Life at Year 11 and 12 level.

In compiling this article Philip Raymont drew on the expertise of his colleagues in Religion Philosophy & Ethics, Matthew Weston, Boarding Year Coordinator and Teacher-in-Charge-of Cricket; The Reverend Lisa Perkins, Chaplain; James Perrin, Convenor of the Theological Society and Boarding Year Coordinator; and Mrs Selinna Forward, Director of Service Learning and Convenor of the School’s Philosothon team. Each writes about one aspect of the Religion, Philosophy & Ethics curriculum.

The Western Australian Anglican Schools Association Religious Educators’ Day on 30 June 2015 provided an appropriate forum for members of the Faculty of Religion, Philosophy & Ethics (RPE) at Guildford Grammar School (GGGS) to present the complete scope and sequence details for the School’s K-10 Religious Education syllabus, Religion, Philosophy & Ethics (RPE). This milestone in the development of the syllabus and in the life of the School and its RPE Faculty was the result of a number of factors coming together over the last six years: be that the introduction of a new academic structure and associated timetable, the enthusiasm, initiative and expertise of highly qualified and motivated staff, and the leadership and “latitude” provided for innovation and responsibility by the Headmaster and the Head of Faculty. It also represented an appreciation of, and a thoughtful response as to, how might an Anglican School construct (and continue to construct) a syllabus suited to a student population in which many come from unchurched families, but for reasons of aesthetics, history and tradition, and sense of space and place, greatly respect and consider central to the School’s life the iconic revivalist gothic Chapel of St Mary & St George. In developing the syllabus Faculty members were mindful of the observations Stephen Webber, Headmaster, refers to in his Foreword to the published syllabus when he affirms that “We can at times under-estimate the desire students have to grapple with the ‘big questions’ such as their place and purpose in the world, how their lives can have meaning, and what frameworks they should turn to in making ethical decisions.” As he continues “Developing meaningful and engaging curricula that enables students to confidently address such questions is of the utmost importance and lies at the heart of why our schools exist.”

For those ordained and oftentimes in charge of the ‘religious education’ syllabus in an Anglican School the words of the Great Commission, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you (Matthew 28:19-20)” are apposite while the exhortations of the Ordinal add another dimension to thinking about a suitable syllabus; when being made deacon the exhortation is “to strengthen the faithful, teach the young, search out the careless and indifferent” while the priest is exhorted “as the Lord’s messenger, proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ” and “Be a teacher taught by the Lord in wisdom and holiness.”

It is for these reasons and out of these contexts that the scope and sequence for our syllabus is offered in humility to all as an approach to such provision in schools with Christian foundations. This approach, as I say in concluding remarks in the Introduction to the published syllabus, of “having a highly regarded and respected program of Religion, Philosophy & Ethics from Kindergarten to Year 12 provides fertile soil upon which to build up the catechumenal and missional life of the Church in the School. Ministry and chapel life therefore are able to engage with students, families and former students in an environment where matters of faith and religion are understood as real questions to be addressed, considered and answered” and where they are understood to inform, and be informed by, the School Purpose “Inspiring students to achieve personal excellence and to be
outstanding citizens who work to create a just, loving and peaceful society” and are the basis for the School Values of Excellence, Respect, Integrity, Spirituality, Teamwork and Compassion.

In 2010 Year 7 to 9 students commenced a new academic syllabus which brought with it a new timetable and length of teaching period. Henceforth RPE classes would be of one hour’s duration and within any fortnight rotation students would have two periods in Year 7 and alternately three or four periods in Years 8, 9 and 10.

Starting Point
I had arrived at the School in July 2009 to take up my appointment as Chaplain to the Senior School and Coordinator of Religious Education. I had never worked in a school, the Chaplain in the Preparatory School had been called up for immediate military chaplaincy, the only teacher of what was then called ‘religious education’ was taught by 12 different teachers! What were they to teach I wondered? Given the need to find a syllabus and having been a doctoral student and lecturer in History with the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge in the United Kingdom for nine years, I investigated the textbooks used for GCSE and for Keystage 3. These were available so a large order of OCR and AQA textbooks for use by students in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 was placed so they and staff would have access to good quality material. Class sets were provided. The quality of these texts certainly helped the staff with limited or no real background in the subject, though there remained issues as to level of commitment and quality of teaching and ability to assess; indeed to excite and enthuse.

The scenario might be summarised as: given the majority of the students are unchurched the teaching of religious education was to be undertaken by teachers with no particular training in theology, religion, philosophy or ethics to students who had no cultural or intellectual reason to believe the study of religion was important. Given that background it became clear very quickly that alongside any form of good quality curriculum materials the subject needed to be taught by people who were specialists in the subject area and thereby could provide academic rigour, not only to teaching and learning, but in assessment. It also became clear that unlike other subjects in the School the study of RPE was perceived as having no utility; to that end the School also needed to offer the Year 11 and 12 Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE) subjects, viz Philosophy & Ethics, Religion & Life, which RPE necessarily lead into as another means by which the subject in the lower years could be understood by students and parents as having academic credibility.

For the standing of RPE in an Anglican School it needed to have its own status as a Faculty alongside English, Mathematics, Science, Society & the Environment, Design and Technology, the Arts, Languages, and Health & Physical Education. To the great credit of the School’s leadership and not least that of the present Headmaster, Stephen Webber, those aspirations have been met in the Senior School. Over the last two years through the fine work of The Reverend Lisa Perkins, Chaplain, and the support and enthusiasm of Mr Simon Edgar, Deputy Head (Curriculum), and Mr Justin Krause, Head, Preparatory School, a comprehensive curriculum from Kindergarten - Year 6 is being put in place in the Preparatory School to be taught by class room teachers. The possibility of a specialist teacher in the Preparatory School is not a closed discussion.

Appointment of Specialist Teachers
Since 2010 the School has appointed four specialist teachers, Mrs Selinna Forward, Mr Matthew Weston, Mr James Perrin and Rev’d Perkins, all with either an Honours or Masters’ degree. They have been given and taken the initiative to lead and develop the curriculum, find the resources, and put in place challenging and appropriate assessment regimes.

Alongside this curriculum work these staff members have assisted in the growing credibility of the subject area by gaining very encouraging results with our WACE students in Philosophy & Ethics. They have also been most willing to attend and present at conferences, be involved in the related professional associations, to convene our successful Philosothon teams and the School’s weekly Theological Society. They are also active outside of Faculty matters being involved as leaders in the boarding community, various sports, and other co-curricular activities such as a Blanket Drive. Mrs Forward is the Director of Service Learning across the School. Having staff with such profiles and enthusiasm across the range of school activities ensures the profile, credibility and importance of RPE is noted by students, fellow staff and parents.

The work of Faculty members has been greatly
assisted by the support and enthusiasm for the subject disciplines by the School’s Librarian, Ms Michelle Pritchard. Not only does she eagerly provide advice as to worthwhile resources, she is attentive to requests, and always attends our regular Faculty meetings.

Annual Review

The work is always ongoing and each year the Faculty meets intentionally to review the curriculum to ensure that it is as well organised as it should be. In 2014 the decision was made to change the order in which the major world religions were taught so that Judaism became a Year 7 module thus giving a context to Jesus as a Jew and the world into which he proclaimed his New Covenant. Given the currency and complexities of issues relating to Islam it was moved to the Year 10 curriculum. Oversight of the curriculum in each year including the development of assessment tasks, is given over to a lead teacher for that year; normally they are working with two other colleagues.

Presently the GGS model addresses Christianity, Ethics, Philosophy of Religion and World Religions but not Stillness and Silence. Quite deliberately in 2016 that will be introduced as part of a Retreat program for Year 11 and 12 students, delivered under the auspices of Chaplaincy.

Given the leadership, dedication and enthusiasm of the Faculty staff it is only right and proper that those who have been particularly involved in the evolution of the syllabus should have input. To that end each member of the RPE Faculty now writes about a particular aspect of the syllabus.

Assessment

A focus of the newly developed RPE scope and sequence was that students would be challenged to demonstrate their understanding through a variety of formal assessments. Not only would the assessments be formal in nature but consistent across all classes in the Year group. Previously teachers of RPE were allowed to develop their own style of assessments. A new standard was set and moderated by senior teachers to ensure all students had the opportunity to be assessed fairly and equitably. The assessments are designed to allow for distractions and imbalances in each student’s learning experience. Our goal was to transform the ‘To Know, Worship and Love’ (KWL) series as its foundational text. The KWL series is produced by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne and is a comprehensive resource spanning the primary and high school years. Its theology is sound and age-appropriate, and incorporates key events within the Christian calendar such as Easter and Christmas. A wealth of comprehensive resource spanning the primary and high school years. Its theology is sound and age-appropriate, and incorporates key events within the Christian calendar such as Easter and Christmas. A wealth of free online resources are available to complement the teacher textbooks, including blackline masters.

Preparatory School curriculum

The RP&E curriculum in the Preparatory School uses the ‘To Know, Worship and Love’ (KWL) series as its foundational text. The KWL series is produced by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne and is a comprehensive resource spanning the primary and high school years. Its theology is sound and age-appropriate, and incorporates key events within the Christian calendar such as Easter and Christmas. A wealth of free online resources are available to complement the teacher textbooks, including blackline masters.

Preparatory School students are introduced to key concepts and ideas within the Christian faith, at a level appropriate for their age and building upon previous years of study. It also aims to incorporate significant liturgical events as they occur. For example, Term 1 includes a study related to Lent and Holy Week for all Year levels, and similarly in Term 4 all classes study material related to Advent and Christmas. Suggested learning activities are noted for all units, however no lesson-by-lesson program is set. This allows for class teachers to spend differing amounts of time on suggested activities, as best suits their students’ learning needs. It also gives freedom to class teachers to supplement the core program components with other related activities, drawing upon resources available on the KWL website or from other religious education resources.

While the classroom teacher is primarily responsible for the delivery of the RPE programme, the chaplains are available to visit and assist at any time. In Year 4 we run a sacramental course as part of the RPE syllabus which introduces students to the sacraments of Baptism and Communion, as well as other aspects of church life. The course uses ‘Going to the Supper of the Lord’ as its main resource. This takes one term to complete and all sessions are run by the Chaplain. Following completion of this course, Year 4 students may seek Baptism and/or Welcome to Holy Communion, though this is not compulsory.

The Reverend Lisa Perkins

Electives

In Years 7 to 10 students have the opportunity to choose from a range of electives. Such flexibility gives students a degree of freedom to choose their own educational pathways. It also offers teachers a chance to teach content and skills about which they are passionate. Currently the RPE Faculty offers two electives. The first, ‘Ethics in Sport’, is offered at Year 7 level with a follow-up course in Years 8 and 9. These full gridline term-long courses focus on exploring, discussing, analysing and critically evaluating a series of ethical issues that relate to sport. Students use a variety of stimuli, mostly current newspapers and the internet, to explore ethical questions and dilemmas that arise in and through sport. They gain an in-depth understanding of the issues and are able to reflect on their own experiences. They also discuss how these issues may be resolved. Students are also required to compare popular opinions on these matters with Christian perspectives. They are challenged to find strengths and weaknesses in each case.

The second subject, ‘Philosophy through Popular Film’, is a semester long, full-gridline subject offered exclusively at Year 10 level. Film is, by its nature highly engaging, and can be used as a catalyst for philosophical inquiry. We examine a range of topics within Philosophy such as: ontology; pleasure, the mind-body distinction and aesthetics. Films studied include The Matrix, Pleasantville, Inception and American Beauty. This course is a brilliant basis for further studies in Philosophy and Ethics and we have had a number of Year 10 students who have studied this elective choose Philosophy & Ethics in Year 11.

James Perrin

Service Learning

Fundamental to any understanding of Christianity is service. If we truly understand the power and witness of the story of Jesus Christ, we must also understand and see a desire to serve others, and not to be served. This desire to serve others, is reinforced by references and teachings in the Bible which show the link with the reign of God and compassion for others; this is particularly clear in Matthew 20:28, Mark 10:45, John 13:1-17. Every school that claims Christianity as its spiritual core has a duty to show its students the power and purpose of service to others and of leading through serving. This service provision is very much a part of the Guildford Grammar School in its Service Learning Program, which encourages service in all aspects of school life. This demonstrates that service should not be delegated to one aspect of living and separated from the rest.

There is a special place for service in the study of RPE. It is in these classes that social justice issues are clear and the desire and necessity to serve others, the sick, the widow, the alien and the prisoner; ie the homeless, the outcast, the poor, the vulnerable and the weak, is paramount. RPE classes permit relevant lessons to be taught alongside practical ways by which they might be solved. However, this practical Service Learning should not be left to be done outside of school time, but needs to be built into the academic curriculum. At Guildford Grammar School one example of this is our Year 8 Recycling program. Over the course of one semester Year 8 students work in class on a school wide recycling program; students go out in search of paper waste from classrooms and various offices around the school while completing a module of work called ‘The Environment and Stewardship’. They learn about Biblical teachings of stewardship and what that means in taking care of our world; they investigate the impact of waste and how recycling can help; and they discuss ways that people can make a difference at a local, national and global level. As with all Service Learning, this program encourages leadership, teamwork and communication while at the same time reinforcing the learning that is done in class. This practical approach to recycling reinforces the elements of stewardship, and the Christian need and desire to serve others. It allows students to feel genuinely helpful and gives them a purpose that they might not otherwise experience in a subject such as this; they feel capable and learn that they are able to make a real difference. This feeling means that students engage in the learning well beyond the classroom.

Selimna Forward

Team-work

The experience of working together on the development of the syllabus with its scope and sequence has been a valuable one for all staff members; the Headmaster acknowledged this rather strikingly in the opening remarks of his Foreword, "It has been a pleasure to
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witness the development and growth in the Religion, Philosophy and Ethics Faculty during my time as Headmaster at Guildford Grammar School. This has been due to focus on appointing passionate, dynamic and highly qualified staff in the field and each of them enthusiastically contributing to curriculum renewal, with a strong focus on team-work.”

Might this project undertaken by this group of teachers and its fruit now available in the public domain by contacting Selinna Forward (Selinna.Forward@ggs.wa.edu.au) be an encouragement to all others who labour in the vineyard for the building up of God’s Kingdom and the proclamation of his Gospel of love, peace and justice.

Opening of the new Guildford Grammar Preparatory School.
Following in the Footsteps of Jesus: A Year 8 Virtual Pilgrimage to Israel

Marianne Hale

Marianne Hale, Head of Religious Education at Korowa Anglican Girls’ School, Glen Iris, Victoria, writes about the School’s Year 8 Religious Education (RE) program. The course centres around a virtual pilgrimage to Israel. Digitalisation of archaeological and historical resources means that the girls can be transported to Jesus’ world to learn who he was, where he lived, and what he hoped to achieve. They also study the Gospel of St Luke. In addition, a series of creative IT exercises encourages the development of personal and collective images of God and an understanding of the Christian narratives.

Marianne Hale says, “Capturing the imagination and making intuitive connections using the power of the internet opens a range of new possibilities for the learning tasks in our quest to follow in the steps of Jesus.”

Jesus’ World

Entering into Jesus’ world and understanding who he was, what he had come into the world to do and where he lived, is a personal journey undertaken by Korowa’s Year 8s through a virtual pilgrimage to Israel.

Using Cambridge Professor Peter Walker’s book in the Steps of Jesus as a base, students are led through touchstones of archaeological and historical research as well as associated Gospel passages in an exploration of ‘faith seeking understanding’ in the modern world.

Once a week for a term a virtual world is brought to life through a tableau of collaborative class work. We craft slides on our journey as we go. This process helps maintain a spirit of cooperation and community whilst travelling through time and space in our quest to know and feel for the times and people in the Gospel stories. Experience making an Easter prayer symbol and participating in music and meditation reflection enhances our journey. Discussion helps us build a PowerPoint library of slides and OneNote pages that detail the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ some 2000 years ago. We also use Paint programs to develop a Beatitudes poster and colourful Fruits of the Spirit illustration. Short excerpts from YouTube travel blogs on Bethlehem and Nazareth are just some of the resources we use to complement selected material from the text. Students support the building of a class slide and can make further connections when selecting their own images.

Building A Sacred Place

During Term 2 the students continue discovering the time, place and context of the Gospels, whilst being required to design a sacred space on the Sea of Galilee in which Jesus could speak today. This project requires research, imagination and creative flair. Each student must decide on an appropriate title for her sacred space, and design elements that work together with the location to create an authentic Christian spiritual place of gathering.

Design criteria include:

- Evidence of a specific location on the Sea of Galilee, with a satellite image marking the spot.
- Appropriate design making use of symbolism/shape/setting.
- Inclusion of religious aspects: symbols, ritual references, meditation and worship elements, scripture, ethical elements providing for the needy and/or support services.
- Imagery relating to the Gospel messages of Faith.
Hope and Love; Peace and Justice; and Service.

- A written reflection on the process as part of the assessment.
- Oral presentation to the class.

**Discovery Quiz**

A Discovery Quiz also forms part of the course work. Using material from In the Steps of Jesus and Luke’s Gospel, students are required to answer a series of questions about the early years of Jesus’ life in Nazareth and his Public Ministry around the Sea of Galilee. In addition, the girls are invited to make a pictorial grid (comic strip/gallery) of dot points and images, titled ‘The Locations of Jesus’ Ministry’. Another task aligned to this discovery process is the development of a Galilee Travel Poster.

**Galilee Travel Poster**

Students enjoy gathering the latest tourist information on Jesus Boat tours on the Sea of Galilee together with that of Kibbutz and hostel accommodation; hotels rates; and tours and tour prices; for their posters. The Jesus Boat archaeological exhibit of a 2000 year old fishing boat conserved in the Jesus Boat Museum, Tiberius, Israel is seen as a highlight as are fishing and white water rafting. They plan an advertising poster, identifying all the interesting options available to pilgrims seeking connection to the Gospels at this destination. Some excerpts from David Suchet’s BBC series ‘In the Footsteps of St Peter’ are useful in promoting particular sites such as the synagogue ruins at Capernaum.

**Resurrection Assignment**

A feature of Term 3 is the freedom to write at a deeply personal level reflecting on selected Gospel passages, answering questions without the intrusion of a teacher’s eye. This exploration of sacred text takes place in the context of a selection of parables from all four Gospels as part of the Resurrection Assignment. Students complete a minimum of two passages with questions and a maximum of four, selected from eight possibilities. There is no fixed time constraint and genuine engagement is sought whilst soft reflective music by Einaudi, Westlake, Bach, Vivaldi and Hillsong plays in the background.

**Resurrection CD Cover**

When every student has completed at least two sets of questions, the next level of spiritual expression is undertaken. Equipped with a deeper understanding of Jesus’ message of God’s healing mercy and life-giving hope, students create their own ‘Resurrection CD’ expressing Jesus’ love ethic and victory over death. They assemble a collage or design a single image that communicates the message of the resurrection - life after death, comfort after sorrow, healing after hurt, the power of love over the desolation of loss - for their CD covers. Students create two song lists for the back of their Resurrection CD Cover; a list of 10 songs of struggle, difficult challenges, loss and sadness, as well as a list of 10 life-affirming songs of love, support, resilience, forgiveness, friendship and hope. They collect images from nature for their resurrection messages of hope and resilience. No man-made objects or people can be incorporated without special permission. This creative process brings to life the information in their text. This can be a very moving and powerful medium through which the students can grow their connection to God and deepen their faith through the use of their creative gifts.

As part of a self-reflection process each student posts a journal entry on the Year 8 RE Virtual Classroom Konnect page. Each journal reflection captures the most valued elements of the process from the student’s perspective on a ‘Social Stream’ open to viewing and comment. This enables an insight into the student’s thinking with statements of intent and personal value of the assignment. Posts are entitled ‘My Voice, My Journey’.

To conclude the course in Term 4 students work in pairs on a ‘Faith In Action’ portfolio, creating a modern day discipleship brochure on World Vision, Caritas, Anglicare, Jesuit Refugee Services, Benetas, or another Christian organisation working to make a difference in society by living out Jesus’ Love Ethic locally or globally with responsible citizenship. Korowa’s Year 8 RE course aims at opening hearts and minds to the Good News by inviting students on a virtual journey into the reality of Jesus’ life in Israel and reinforcing his message of mercy and hope in the Kingdom of God.
Mind and spirit, bodily present in the Chapel of Christ the King.

Phil Chappell, Head of Religious and Values Education at Canberra Grammar School, ACT, presents an overview of the School’s Year 7-10 Religious and Values Education curriculum. Chaplain, Fr Chris Welsh follows with his reflections on the programme.

This Page: Mind and spirit, bodily present in the Chapel of Christ the King. Head of RaVE, Phil Chappell and Chaplain, Fr Chris Welsh with senior students.

Religious and Values Education Curriculum

The Religious and Values Education (RaVE) curriculum at Canberra Grammar School (CGS) has evolved over the past 15 years. The original was the (inspired) brainchild of my predecessor, Jeff Knowles, when he was Head of RaVE. He brought me in after he had developed a curriculum significantly different from a ‘traditional’ RE curriculum in a number of key areas.

RaVE works under the following four assumptions:

• That we are teaching and learning in an Anglican school, which seeks to live as a Christian community, but whose members, in the majority, are not explicitly of the Christian faith;
• That an awareness of the spiritual dimension of life should, nevertheless, form an essential part of the development of all young people in a world of multiculturalism and materialism;
• That a true understanding of spirituality and faith and a thoughtful approach to them is best achieved through experience and personal exploration, rather than mere phenomenological examination;
• That space must be made in the lives of our young people for stillness and reflection, and that the only way that will happen is if they make that space themselves.

Our curriculum, which is loosely based on Peter Vardy’s original Five Strand Curriculum, aims at broadening and deepening our students’ spiritual experience, and through that, their spiritual literacy. Our version of the Five Strands is as follows:

**Biblical Strand**

Students learn about the Christian faith, its diversity, its history, its sacred texts and the place of all these things in our cultural background, and experience some of the richness and complexity of the Christian faith and its spiritual outlook.

**World Religions Strand**

Students are exposed to the depth and richness of many others of the world’s major traditions and their unique spiritual perspectives.

**Ethical Strand**

Students learn the fundamental ideas behind morals and ethics, from both a religious and a non-religious standpoint.

**Philosophical Strand**

Students open the vault of ideas that have developed across many cultures for millennia, in their shared attempts to crack open the big questions of life, the universe and human endeavour.

**Affective Strand**

Students learn some theory and practice about stillness and reflection and their value in a busy, materialistic world.

We try to ensure that students at each Year level explore elements from each of these strands. But, after more than a decade, we acknowledge the balance is stillness and reflection and their value in a busy, materialistic world.

**Year 7**

After being introduced to RaVE methodology, Year 7s learn a little about the first Christian festival of the year (Easter) and the beliefs and practices that surround it. They then explore the world’s religions in a unit designed to help them learn about the world of spirituality, with the emphasis being on the relationships between the world’s greatest traditions, their similarities and differences. In Semester Two, students embark on an exercise designed to encourage them to think about the origins of religion and spirituality. They take this learning on a journey with Moses and the Israelites through Exodus, finishing with an assignment on religious ethics, the spotlight of which is the Ten Commandments.

**Year 8**

Year 8 begins with more ethical conundrums, explored through Robert Kirkwood’s God Knows Who I Am, in which students learn not only about their own ethical ideas, but about the value of reflection and considered thought. After a short unit on the history of the Christian faith (and its denominations), they embark on a semester’s study of Indian religions, beginning with Hinduism and moving into the realm of Buddhism, both theistic and non-theistic.

**Year 9**

Year 9s explore ideas in non-religious ethics. Their studies, which focus on natural law, consequentialism, deontology and virtue ethics, culminate with a written piece on a specific ethical issue affecting the lives of young Australians. In the latter part of Semester One, they immerse themselves in the Islamic world, learning about the fundamental beliefs and practices of the world’s fastest growing religion. In Semester Two, they begin with a unit on The Matrix, introducing them to some significant ideas from the world of philosophy, this time from outside the realm of ethics. This is followed with a unit on East Asian religions, including an in-depth reading and exposition of the Tao Te Ching and some Zen ideas and practices.

**Year 10**

In the final year of RaVE we take the opportunity to explore the central texts of the Christian faith - the gospels, in detail. As we progress we broaden our focus to include other meaningful texts. We discuss the nature of evil and the concept of the devil in religion and in society in general. Our final semester begins with a survey of philosophical epistemology, which leads directly to a consideration of the sometimes turbulent relationship between science and religion.

The circular nature of the curriculum, returning again and again to the same central themes and the same methodologies, is designed to enable students to achieve a degree of ‘spiritual literacy’ often deferred until students begin their university studies.

The RaVE Department and the chaplaincy work hand-in-hand to ensure that our alumni are as well-equipped as possible for the complex, materialistic and increasingly demanding world they will enter when they graduate from the School.
Chaplain Reflects

Fr Chris Welsh

The establishment of the RaVE programme at Canberra Grammar School saw an intentional separation of the work of the classroom from the work of the chaplains. It was thought, correctly in my view, that this area of learning warranted its own identity and standing as an academic discipline, demanding and thorough intellectually.

Importantly, the chaplains teach in this area, both in the senior and primary years. This presence is critical to the intersection of an academic subject and the communication of faith that is part of the chaplains’ work. In my own language, RaVE provides a literacy in matters of faith, religion and the broader search for meaning. Our work as chaplains places this in a context of faith, of belief in, of our encounters with the transcendent.

At bottom, we offer to some the merest possibility of God, and our work in the classroom is critical to this. We cannot talk about God without some common language, a shared (if not agreed) understanding of a word, an idea, a being that is real in the experience of the faithful.

Critically, the presence of a chaplain in the teaching programme where other traditions are explored, contentious philosophical notions debated, generates an openness to the Christian faith that is foundational in the identity and lived experience of the School every day. Yet we want our young people to be curious and rigorous, to value the intellectual challenge of religious discourse. One of the common enemies of the initiated is that people of faith (especially Christians) are required to leave their brain at the door.

Central to this is some formation in how to read sacred text, whatever the tradition. How are young people to grasp what was written fifteen hundred, two thousand, three thousand years and longer ago and make sense of it for their own lives now? This is a significant factor in the incremental challenge of the secondary years. Paradoxically, younger students remain more accepting of mystery and myth, of the allegorical nature of much sacred text.

“Is it true?” I ask them. “No”, is the frequent response. “But is there truth in it?” is the supplementary question, invariably met with a resonant “Yes!” They understand more about the contextual nature of truth as a concept and this opens the young mind to its possibilities, especially those beyond the scientific, verificationist understandings that tend to prevail.

In a departure from the original Five Strands model, the School has sought to expand the nature of the Affective Strand. Vardy himself acknowledges that the original concept was too narrow. We seek to weave the fifth strand through the others to nurture emotional and spiritual “grasp” of intellectual constructs. (Fig 1) Engagement of the mind is critical, as we have said, but the nature of Godstuff, spiritual experience, supersensible realities, ethical challenges only begin to make sense when the whole person is engaged.

At best, it is rich and fertile work. Some contend that the programme is “not Christian enough”, but there is a shared commitment to the classroom being a place of catechesis; hence the healthy relationship with the chaplaincy. And it fits in with the open entry policy of the School where young people of all faiths, and none, are welcome.

This cannot bear fruit without teachers who themselves engage in the same way with the delightful complexity of it all. As in all educational work, they are the ones who can make it valuable or break it as a lifeless, content-driven enterprise. It calls for people who interpret and engage in the same way with the delightful complexity of the intersection of an academic subject and the work of the chaplains. And it fits in with the open entry policy of the School where young people of all faiths, and none, are welcome.

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Through the four strands is woven the affective strand. Together these seek to ‘teach and nurture faith’ and provide a literacy in breadth to equip students in their own search for meaning.

1. Textual Strand
   - Biblical literacy
   - Ethical literacy
   - World religions
   - Philosophical literacy (knowledge and religion)

2. Values Strand
   - Offers both the opportunity to consider ways of determining right and wrong and the opportunity to consider contemporary challenges, how different religious and other groups respond to them and why.

3. World Religions Strand
   - Become familiar with the main world religions

4. Philosophy Strand
   - Introduce young people to central areas in Philosophy of Religion, including the nature of God, arguments for and against his existence, etc.

Teaching Values
Religion, Ethics is not just about imparting a received body of knowledge it is about developing awareness, skills and an attitude which will enable people to respond to culture, to other people, ethical challenges, big questions and difficult human experiences effectively. (P Vardy)

Figure 1
Prayer Spaces at St John’s

The Reverend Susan Crothers-Robertson

The Reverend Susan Crothers-Robertson is Chaplain at St John’s Anglican College, Forest Lake, Brisbane. She writes about innovative Prayer Spaces in Schools, a concept developed by Englishman, Phil Togwell. St John’s held its first Prayer Space in December 2014 and continues to hold one each term.

Susan receives ongoing support from Phil Togwell and his team in England.

St John’s Anglican College’s approach to developing mindfulness within students has been to use the idea of Prayer Spaces in Schools. We used this English concept to create an imaginative and interactive environment in which we could teach students about prayer – how to pray and how to connect with God. Our Prayer Spaces are places of wonder, mystery, peace and beauty – places where participants feel nurtured on an emotional, physical and spiritual level.

An important aspect of the Prayer Space is that it is invitational, so students can opt out if they choose. What we have found however, is that as students are innately curious, most do participate. Feedback reveals that most students were surprised that they actually enjoyed being in the Prayer Space. The invitational aspect of the space means it is inclusive of all faiths allowing students to find their own paths and connections with themselves and with God.

The invitational element means students move naturally into mindfulness, being in the moment. They found they were able to be still and reflect. They had an opportunity to ask the “BIG questions” as they grappled with issues such as:

- What is my purpose?
- What is my identity?
- What is the meaning of life?

Some students said the space enabled them to forgive past hurts whilst others said it made them feel “special” and helped them learn more about themselves. One student said they felt better about an issue after visiting the Sorry Station whereas another felt released from feelings of guilt and anger towards others.

There was time for reflection with staff after being in the Prayer Space.

The overwhelming response from staff and students was that the space was calm, peaceful and quiet, which the students loved. They said being given the opportunity to find time for mindfulness in the busyness of school life was a gift. Students had formal time in the tranquil Prayer Space as part of their Religious Education classes but were also encouraged to spend time there during their breaks. Many took advantage of this opportunity to be quiet and still.

One of the associated benefits of the introduction of our college’s Prayer Space has been the development in the students’ self-reflection skills – so essential for managing their busy lives in our technology-rich world. Creating a balanced life in which time for understanding themselves and others is an important part, is a key element of St John’s pastoral care program.
The event named ASPiRe - Anglican Schools Praying for Refugees – was supported by a Facebook page. Students took turns, an hour at a time, “to pray for Syrians fleeing the hell that has engulfed their homeland,” a provincial spokesman said. The students began their prayer-work at 3.00pm local time on 15 October and kept the vigil through the night, stopping at 3.00pm local time on Friday 16 October.

‘Hundreds took part’, a spokesman said. “Dilworth, for example, had more than 100 of its students, across its three Auckland campuses, keeping vigil between 3.00am and 6.00am this morning, and more than 100 boarders at King’s College took part, too.”

“They embraced sacrifice. For example, the kids at Basden College in Suva and All Saints School in Labasa put up their hands for the graveyard shift, and prayed from midnight to 2.00am; while St Margaret’s College in Christchurch had young women praying through the whole 24 hours.”

Students used a variety of prayer techniques including praying in silence, in sing together, and in intercession. They prayer-walked, lit candles, and wrote letters and cards of support to kids their own age who’ve been swept up in the Syrian maelstrom.

The Reverend Dr Anne van Gend, Executive Director of the Anglican Schools Office in the Province, undertook to gather up the heart-warming messages and have them distributed by an aid organisation which is working in the refugee camps in Jordan.

The students also used their allotted times to compose ‘prayer chains’ – prayers written on interlinked loops of card – which were strung around Wellington’s Cathedral of St Paul.

“IT is so inspiring and encouraging to see this support from our schools”, the Archbishop of New Zealand, The Most Reverend Philip Richardson, said. “As a church we are working hard to demonstrate to our government that as a country we can take many more refugees than the small number currently agreed to. The largest movement of refugees since the Second World War demands a generous response from us.”

In a statement, the Archbishop thanked the students for their “wonderful contribution to this work”.

“I doubt that any of these remarkable young (people) would disagree with you,” he said. “The point of prayer is firstly to change the person praying. Each one of them has got up in the middle of the night and spent an hour in the presence of that which they hold most sacred thinking in a concentrated manner about the issue … Their own and others thinking has been changed by tonight’s event … And in the long run who is most likely to take effective action to solve difficult problems? Those … who pray? Or those who doubt?”
Did you know in the future
There are a million different yous?

A billion different yous?
A trillion different yous?
A bizzillion, gigantillion, infinijillian different yous?

So how do you meet the best one?
How do you walk in those shoes?

So begins the recently released story book created by Perth College Anglican School for Girls, for its students from Kindergarten through to Year 12.

Be The Best Version of You There Can Be encourages girls to celebrate their differences and help them ‘find’ their unique selves.

The book is a result of staff taking some time to interrogate what really leads a young girl down the path to academic, career and life success.

“Few things in life come without hard work and research shows that grit and perseverance lead to long-term success more than any other character strengths,” Principal, Jenny Ethell, said.

“Grit has recently been found to be more important than IQ in predicting academic achievement and long-term success, and we kept this in mind as we redeveloped our website and undertook a new advertising and branding strategy.”

“The recurring comments from students, staff and parents who participated in our focus groups were about the determination, independence and self-confidence of Perth College girls, and so we wrote a book about it.”

“This story gives parents a better idea of our philosophies regarding young women than any marketing brochure ever could; it encapsulates the values we pass on to our students but we also believe these messages are important for any girl to hear.”

In life you’ll have choices
Like all young girls do
You’ll wonder what’s the right one, what’s the left one
And which one will just do.
But it’s the hard ones you have to pay attention to
These are the ones that will really make you, you.

More than 100 years of history as a girls’ school and research through Perth College’s InsideOut self-leadership programme have shown young girls often lack confidence, are afraid to put their hand up in class or don’t want to stand out from the crowd, especially in mixed company.

The School implemented InsideOut in 2012 to help all of its students – even the Kindergarten girls – become more resilient, emotionally stronger and confident, improve general wellbeing, and cope with challenges, especially as they begin forming their identity during adolescence.

Workshops, seminars and guest speakers specific to each Year group complement classroom activities and the pastoral care programme.

InsideOut Director, Deb Perich, said the School recognised each girl had her own unique set of qualities and strengths that could be boosted with the right opportunities and guidance.

“We aim to enable every student’s abilities and talents to be seen, heard and experienced,” she said.

“InsideOut enhances the girls’ leadership skills, encourages them to understand their personal leadership style, inspires them, and helps them to learn through experience.”

In the younger Year groups, the focus is on girls developing their social and emotional intelligence. They are taught the basics of communication, how to express themselves using words, and to identify and understand emotion.

Students in Years 1 and 2 piloted the first draft of Be The Best Version of You There Can Be, talking about its messages in class and whether they could relate, and even providing direction for the illustrations.

“Our biggest use of the book in Year 2 has been to keep using the language “be the best version of yourself,”” teacher, Kate Walton, said.

“I refer to this in a few different situations, namely when the girls are resolving problems and we talk about choices and being the best version of ourselves.

“We also refer to the book when the girls are taking an assessment or receiving feedback; we talk about working at their own level, as long as they strive for their personal best, and not worrying about anyone else’s best.”

So whatever you get into, whatever it might be
Whether it’s building rocket ships, making speeches or curing disease
Or even something silly like tickling bees’ knees
Love it and own it and shout it and grow it
And be the best at it that anyone’s ever seen.
Throughout her 13 years as Perth College Principal, Mrs Ethell has always encouraged students to reach for their personal best, whatever level that might be.

“Regardless of her age, and whether her talents lie in academia, in performance or public speaking, or on the sporting field, I want each girl to know she has the potential to be the absolute best at whatever she puts her mind to,” she said.

“There are no limits to what Perth College girls can achieve.

“We do a lot of work with students to develop their ‘growth mindset’, to help them understand that their talents and abilities can be developed through effort, good teaching and persistence.

“Students with a growth mindset – as opposed to a ‘fixed mindset’ – are more likely to continue working hard despite setbacks and believe they will become smarter if they work at it.”

The favourable response to the book has spread beyond its intended target market; Be The Best Version of You There Can Be won three silver medals at the Perth Advertising and Design Club Awards in October, in the categories of Brand Design/Publication Design, Print – Best Writing, and Best Art Direction and Design.

Families considering a Perth College education for their daughter also receive a copy of Be The Best Version of You There Can Be.

“The book is designed as a keepsake for every girl, to help her on her way in life and assure her it’s okay to be unique, to be her best, and to celebrate this by shining,” Mrs Ethell said.

“We’ve received phone calls for additional copies, which is fantastic – gradually, its messages will spread to a wider audience.”

Be The Best Version of You There Can Be has proved an ideal gift for Year 10 students as they move into InsideOut focusing on the techniques of positive self-leadership.

“The goal with the Year 10s is to make their personal and school lives more effective and meaningful, and the messages in the book really align with the girls learning how to utilise their character strengths, set SMART goals, increase positive emotions, serve others and lead,” Dr Perich said.

You’ll worry if this is too big
Or if that’s too small
You’ll worry about your nose, your eyebrows, your belly button
Or if your freckles are too tall
But a smart girl knows
No two are made the same
And every girl, yourself included,
Is the best that’s ever been made.
Building Authentic Community Connections

Mark Grainger

Mark Grainger, Assistant to Head of Chaplaincy Services at Somerset College (Qld) on the Gold Coast, writes about the College’s Service Learning and Indigenous Partnerships programmes. He notes that Service Learning and Indigenous Partnerships are about much more than charitable intent. Rather, they are about the development of genuine relationships and open conversations with community partners and the implementation of sustainable initiatives that provide mutually beneficial outcomes for the recipients and the students. The College values ‘service with others’ as an important way of engaging in principled action with local, regional and international communities.

Introduction

Building authentic community connections has been fundamental to the development and success of Somerset College’s Service Learning and Indigenous Partnerships programmes. Often seen as areas of charitable intent, the focus of our programmes has shifted from fundraising to developing genuine, relationships and open conversations with staff and volunteers from a selected group of community partners and implementing sustainable projects that provide mutually beneficial outcomes for the students and the broader community. The result of this renewed approach has been the development of a number of exciting service learning and indigenous initiatives that have produced significant outcomes and have scope to evolve.

SERVICE LEARNING

Awareness and Action

Traditionally, service related endeavours at Somerset College have revolved around fundraising activities. However, it was increasingly recognised that more often than not students had little understanding of or connection to the cause for which they were raising funds. Awareness Sessions and Awareness Events are now a feature of our Service Learning programme. Guest speakers from the various charities we support are invited to come to the College to speak about their causes. We have found that by enhancing the students’ awareness of why they are fundraising there has been a shift in focus from the dollar amount raised to the practical difference financial contributions will make to the lives of the recipients and their communities. While the financial benefit to the charitable organisations we support continues, Awareness Sessions and Awareness Events have contributed to the development of the students’ worldviews and their increased empathy to the situations of others; outcomes not realised in any great measure simply through fundraising. The formation of genuine relationships with our community partners has been central to the realisation of these enhanced outcomes for students.

This year Somerset College held its inaugural Service Learning Dinner. The initiative provided students, parents and staff with the opportunity to dine with representatives from the ten charities we support and discuss the work their organisations do on a daily basis to assist others. Guests at this gala event were also privileged to hear from keynote speaker, Colonel Ian Cumming of the Australian Defence Force. Colonel Cumming was the officer in charge of the Australian relief and rebuilding effort in Banda Aceh, Indonesia, after the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami. His presentation was incredibly moving as he shared openly his recollections of the horrific conditions under which his soldiers worked to provide relief and service to those affected by the tsunami’s devastation. His honest and emotive presentation reminded us of the importance of ‘rolling up our sleeves’ and engaging directly with our communities in meaningful acts of service.

Direct Service

The direct service activities in which our students engage are the result of an ongoing process of collaboration, reflection and refinement; a process made more authentic by the genuine relationships we have with our community partners. Regular catch-ups and open conversations with our community partners are central to this process and have contributed to the introduction of new, meaningful, engaging and age-appropriate service activities, as well as to the ongoing evolution of existing activities. The key purpose of these open conversations has been to ensure that we are not burdensome to our community partners, but rather enhance the outcomes they are able to provide to the people they are endeavouring to serve. Open conversation with our community partners has also led to the development of service activities in which students feel empowered and equipped to be involved. Most importantly they feel appropriately supported whilst participating. The students’ sense of preparedness for service has contributed to a substantial rise in the number of participants involved in direct service activities, as well as to the quality of service that they are able to offer our community partners. Genuine relationships and open conversation have been central to the realisation of these mutually beneficial outcomes.

In an effort to provide students with a comprehensive direct service experience, we provide students with opportunities in local, national and international contexts, as well as ensure that students in the Middle and Senior Schools have a clear pathway for involvement. In the local context, students have opportunities on a weekly basis to participate in direct service activities with a diverse group of community partners. Middle School students can choose to visit the local aged care facility to share afternoon tea with the elderly, construct wooden projects with men from the local men’s shed, run motor skills programmes for students in our Junior School or facilitate a reading programme with Early Years students at the local state school. Senior School students can volunteer to visit the local special school and engage in play based activities with their students, assist the Chaplain at the local state school with a Breakfast Club programme,
or offer tutoring and homework assistance to Junior School students. Volunteering at the local special school is particularly popular, with nearly every student in Year 11 committing to volunteer for a minimum of a month block during their school year; a fine reflection on the community mindedness they have developed through participation in the service learning programme in earlier years.

On a national level, students can volunteer to assist in hosting students from Central Australia during their annual visit to the Gold Coast for Somerset College’s Celebration of Literature or participate in a return visit to Central Australia to assist with classroom activities at the local school. Internationally, Year 6 - Year 8 students can nominate to attend a bi-annual trip to Thailand as part of an annual trip to work alongside non-government organisation RAW Impact to develop a greater understanding of the cultural heritage and history of our Gold Coast region.

Reconciliation Action Plan

The Somerset College Reconciliation Action Plan has listed over sixty specific actions, identified in consultation with our local Indigenous community, which will contribute to the process of reconciliation within our nation. In implementing these actions we have three overriding aims:

- To see members of the Somerset College community form genuine and lasting friendships with local Indigenous people that are based upon mutual respect and a shared sense of responsibility for Australia.
- To develop a greater understanding of the cultural heritage and history of our Gold Coast region.
- To build of these connections has seen both programmes move beyond simply being vessels of charitable intent, to channels through which mutually beneficial outcomes for students and the community can be achieved, and through which genuine social change can be realised.

Conclusion

Fundamental to the success of the Service Learning and Indigenous Partnerships programmes at Somerset College has been the authentic community connections we have established. The sincerity of these connections and the authenticity of these programmes move beyond simply being vessels of charitable intent, to channels through which mutually beneficial outcomes for students and the community can be achieved, and through which genuine social change can be realised.

For additional information about the Service Learning or Indigenous Partnerships programme at Somerset College please contact Mark Grainger at mgrainger@somerset.qld.edu.au.
Swan Valley Anglican Community School’s (SVACS) Year 3C students chose ‘respect for the land and its sacredness’ as the theme for their Term 3 Assembly. Inspired by their Inquiry Unit which explored Indigenous culture and their Pastoral Care unit which investigated connection they began their Assembly with the following words:

“We have learned by the example of the Aboriginal people that we need to care, respect and love our place. We acknowledge the ongoing and significant role we play in honouring the Whadjuk people’s land and the local Aboriginal sites, such as the local Yagan memorial.”

The class invited Indigenous Elder and local Whadjuk man, Phillip Narkle, to attend the Assembly to assist them deliver their message. They hoped his attendance would underscore the importance of their message and encourage Junior School students to make better choices about their connection with and responsibility to the land upon which Swan Valley Anglican Community School is built.

The students wrote prayers to embolden them to take their message beyond the Assembly. They felt they could be motivated by their Christian purpose and that the School’s values of commitment, integrity, compassion, service and faith would encourage them to be mindful of their responsibilities. One of the prayers the students had written together was:

‘Help us to care, love, protect and honour the land.’

They felt they could love and protect the Whadjuk country and Swan Valley Anglican Community School by keeping it free of damage and rubbish. As members of a global community they also reminded us all to treat the Earth lovingly, for the longevity of our planet for all to share.

Wardandi Elder, Lyall Tilbrook from Margaret River, made a message stick for the children so they could symbolically ‘pass’ their message directly to their school community and to the School’s community leaders. Traditionally Aboriginal people had their messages painted or carved into a message stick. Elder Tilbrook engraved traditional Aboriginal symbols representing the Whadjuk country upon which SVACS is built, on the stick. The burnt engravings depicted waterholes, people’s movement over the land, the many nations and the boundaries across the nations. Elders Narkle and Tilbrook gave authority to the School’s community leaders to continue to espouse the student’s message both orally and by using the message stick.

Elder Tilbrook made the gifts that were used by Aboriginal leader, Ken Colbung, when he travelled to Britain to campaign to bring Yagan back to his country in the Swan Valley.

The Assembly concluded with Phil Narkle celebrating the Year 3 class’s deep awareness to love, protect and care for the Whadjuk land. He acknowledged diversity as well as the importance of dialogue. He was touched by the students’ knowledge and embraced the children’s joy of learning. He will always be a part of the school community in the hearts and minds of the students and we look forward to continuing our dialogue with him.
Alicia Dodd and Aaron Butcher recently led Hume Anglican Grammar’s (Vic) sixth service learning trip to Oenpelli, a remote Indigenous community in the Northern Territory. Each year a group of senior students volunteer ‘to work’ at the community’s school for a week. Though they go ‘to give’ and ‘to work’ they find it is very much ‘a learning experience’ and they are the key beneficiaries. They make new friends and learn about a culture that is very different from their own.

Excitement intensifies when we look through the plane windows and see the iconic red dirt. Students suddenly realise they are officially out of their comfort zones.

For the past six years Hume Anglican Grammar has been travelling to the remote Indigenous community in West Arnhem Land, in the Northern Territory, known as Oenpelli - or Gunbalanya as the locals call it. Here students volunteer for a week in the local school, under the guise of teaching, whilst really learning. The purpose of this trip is to give our students the experience of living and working in an Indigenous community. We hope they will make some new friends and learn as much as they can about a culture that is very different from their own. This experience initially commenced with a science focus, but over time it has developed into an opportunity for our students to engage with children from a variety of Year levels at the community’s school. They ‘teach’ a range of programs according to the school’s needs. This experience forms an integral part of Hume Anglican Grammar’s curriculum.

We are all aware of the inclusion in the Australian Curriculum of the cross-curriculum priority of providing ‘opportunities for all learners to deepen their knowledge of Australia by engaging with the world’s oldest continuous living cultures’. Yet, across Australia, the majority of students have limited exposure and opportunities to be involved with or communicate with Indigenous Australians. This program gives a number of our students that opportunity.

After an intensive selection process, five Year 10 students were chosen to participate in this year’s Oenpelli trip (3-13 September 2015). Traditionally, students have been asked to take part responsibility for their expenses. It is felt that they will appreciate the experience more if they have to ‘work’ for it. This has meant going out and getting a part-time job, striking deals with parents, and more recently, fundraising within the community through the sale of chocolates, beverages, sausages and greeting cards.

En Route to Oenpelli

This year we spent the first five days of our trip in Darwin. We visited many sites including the Mindil Beach markets, where we bought obligatory souvenirs and enjoyed dinner whilst watching the sunset over the water. We also ventured to the NT Museum and Art Gallery where we viewed Indigenous Australian art work, various specimens of NT wildlife including Sweetheart, and the Cyclone Tracy exhibition. We stopped in at Fannie Bay Gaol where we learnt about the last people to be hanged in the Territory and the Darwin Military Museum, where we discovered a great deal about Australia’s involvement in various wars. It was here that we watched a visual presentation about the bombing of Darwin. Some of us took the opportunity to dress up like a World War One digger. We also visited the Parap Markets before driving to Litchfield National Park, just south of Darwin, where we walked to the top of Wangi Falls before having a well-deserved swim and visiting Buley Rock Hole and Florence Falls.

Gunbalanya in Arnhem Land

From Darwin we travelled through Kakadu into Arnhem Land and on to our accommodation - ‘Toad Hall’ - at Oenpelli. First up we went for a walk along the billabong, to see the beauty that is Arnhem Land. The amount of noise from the birdlife was astounding, as it wasn’t what was expected; the first of many lessons. The next day we were up early and ready for school. Our role was to assist the local students with reading, mathematics and any other school activity their teachers had timetabled. We were split into two groups and the groups worked with different classes throughout the week.

At dinner we reflected on what we had learned that day. Here are some of the many lessons our students learnt:

- Education is valued differently by different people and cultures

During the school day students would walk into class hours after school had officially started. This would occur at various times throughout the day. Our flabbergasted students realised that the children were still welcomed as the aim was to get students to school as often as possible, through positive reinforcement. Teachers would regularly reward...
The students for their good work, by allowing them to watch part of a movie or play some music - even playing ‘Just Dance’. All of the students would join in and loved it. The school was by no means resource poor as is the common misconception. The goal of the school is to have students ready for work by the end of their schooling

- **Not everyone learns to read at the same age**

For reading comprehension, students from Years 2 to 8 were divided into groups based on their ability to work together on activities. Therefore, you could be working with students from a range of Year levels in the one group. This is because English is the students’ second language. More often than not they spoke in their local tongue in the classroom; it was only when talking with the teacher that they would speak in English. Whilst their spoken English was generally good, their reading and writing were not of a similar standard.

- **The value of learning through play**

One morning a group of our students was allocated to work in the crèche. This was a highlight – playing inside with the kids, building with blocks and reading. We also spent a lot of time outside riding bikes and playing with water. The value of these activities was evident across all ages.

Sport plays a big part in the life of the school. Every Friday morning classes are combined for a rotating series of sporting activities. We coached kick ball.

- **Education is not all about reading, writing and arithmetic**

Many of the activities the students participated in involved art and craft or music. Some of us also did sewing, making handbags and paper baskets similar to the ones the Indigenous women make.

At the end of each week, the school does something called ‘crew time’ whereby the teachers can do what they want with the kids. One of the classes made called ‘crew time’ whereby the teachers can do what they want with the kids. At the end of each week, the school does something called ‘crew time’ whereby the teachers can do what they want with the kids. One of the classes made a highlight - playing inside with the kids, building with blocks and reading. We also spent a lot of time outside riding bikes and playing with water. The value of these activities was evident across all ages.

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- **The value of learning through play**

Each afternoon after school we participated in a different activity so that we could learn more about the new and exciting setting in which we found ourselves. We did so with the assistance of the teachers and locals. One afternoon we hiked to the springs and had a swim. On another we went crocodile spotting at Cahill’s Crossing, watching several crazy locals go fishing there. We visited the town pool with the Youth Centre program and played with some of the kids from school as well as making new friends. After visiting the Three Legged Dog and hearing about the dreaming story of how Gunbalanya was founded, we visited a place where the locals go turtle hunting. One evening we went to Ubirr Rock to see the sunset and learnt about the Aboriginal drawings and what they represent.

On our last day in Gunbalanya we had a guided tour of Injalak Hill. We saw several sites that are important to the local people and learnt about the history and stories behind the art. In particular, we learnt how the local people use their art to pass stories down from generation to the next, including warning or informing children about consequences and rewards.

- **You can learn outside of the classroom**

We also visited the Injalak Arts and Crafts Centre where it was a privilege to witness women weaving by hand, making beautiful baskets and jewellery, and men painting and explaining what they used for paint and how they achieved such precise lines.

- **There are obvious gaps in health care**

Our parents get nervous when the Parent Information evening prior to the trip we run through the possibility of lice, scabies and worms. But it is a reality in places like Gunbalanya. In the younger Year levels, students are supplied with toothbrushes and are expected to brush their teeth as soon as they arrive at school. Washing hands is taught and done regularly, before and after play and meals. Blowing your nose is taught through song. The students also have breakfast, recess snacks and lunch supplied to them, ensuring they always eat nutritiously.

- **The crucial significance of community**

Family and culture play a crucial role in Indigenous students’ lives. This was evidenced by the stories we heard on the Injalak Hill tour and the elders’ story telling roles. In each classroom there is an Aboriginal teaching assistant whose main role is to monitor the students’ behaviour. They would regularly discipline the kids by speaking to them in their own tongue.

After an action packed week we reluctantly headed back to Darwin on Saturday afternoon. We spent our last day in the Territory visiting Crocodylus Park and Burnett House, preoccupied with thoughts of the past week and of the friends we had left behind.

We had all been touched by the people and places of the Northern Territory and we had learnt a lot about our hosts and ourselves. Everyone took many lessons away from the trip - lessons about the wonderful, diverse country in which we live and the people with whom we share it. As one of our students reflected: “There was no one highlight, the entire trip was a highlight.” The memories we shared will stay with us forever.
The students also visited the local primary school and spent time in the classrooms teaching English and organising various activities. It was immediately apparent that the school was lacking resources and some students couldn’t afford uniforms, so we decided to buy some resources for the school. The teaching staff were very thankful and our students found it difficult to comprehend that receiving a gift such as a pencil meant so much to these children. It really was a powerful experience.

The students also learnt about the Sandakan to Ranau Death Marches of the Second World War which resulted in the deaths of 2,345 Allied prisoners of war held captive by the Japanese. Widely considered to be the worst atrocity Australian servicemen suffered during the war, the students found it difficult to comprehend the deprivation the soldiers were forced to endure.

The group donated money to a scholarship program which supports the education of children, particularly girls, from the same tribe that helped the Australian prisoners of war. They also donated to the Memorial at Sandakan, which stands on the former site of the POW camp and which was damaged during the earthquake.

The community project was the most rewarding aspect for the students who stayed in ‘basic accommodation’, learnt to share, interact with the village children and face the challenge of primitive toilets. It was a huge achievement for some, the biggest challenge for most, was doing without the internet or their phones for three weeks. They had absolutely no access to the internet for the entire time. They were offered the opportunity to use the internet in Singapore Airport on the way home and only a handful chose to use it.

But it wasn’t all hard work and deprivation. The students had time to go white water rafting, visit an Orang-utan sanctuary and stay in a ‘Jungle Kamp’ where they learnt how to survive in the jungle and eat live grasshoppers. “They taste like prawns,” one brave student said.

A lasting legacy, apart from the church and various donations, was the friendships they forged with the local villagers. A daily highlight was a game of volleyball with the local people in the village. The students also played handball, elastics, badminton and frisbee with the children.

Another challenge for the girls was the fact that females are not treated equally in the village. The locals were intrigued by the fact that the St John’s girls could play volleyball - and play it very well - and that they assisted with manual work on the project. Consequently there were a few marriage proposals. Village girls their age were married and some even had babies!

Parents of the students on the trip had much to be proud of about the way their children coped with the challenges. Each student had different challenges to overcome, they did not complain once, adapted to the conditions and circumstances as well as looked after each other at all times.

During the students’ debrief session the consensus was that they hadn’t missed having the internet or their phones. They are also now proficient in mixing cement. They have returned having had a trip of a lifetime and having learnt some very valuable life lessons.
Geraldton Grammar School (Grammar) is situated in Geraldton, 424kms north of Perth. With sweeping views of the Indian Ocean this coastal city’s natural landscape is second to none on the Australian mainland. However, living in a regional area can sometimes be isolating for students who wish to experience a more diverse range of cultural opportunities. Grammar has begun addressing this issue by developing relationships with schools in Nepal, Indonesia, China and India.

**Nepal**

While this year’s Nepalese earthquake did not directly affect our sister school, Shree Janakalyan Primary School, it did have a major impact on transportation and service networks within Nepal causing us to abandon our planned social service trip. Instead, the School raised significant funds in support of Nepal’s recovery efforts.

**China**

Following our inaugural Chinese exchange in April, our friends from Putuo Middle School No.2 visited Geraldton. Grammar students took great pride in showing their Chinese counterparts some of the MidWest’s most spectacular sites. Groups visited Kalbarri, the Abrolhos Islands, Pink Lake and the Lobster Factory. Some of the exchange students even got the chance to play AFL (football), which was a highlight.

Principal Zhou was impressed with our school and with the warm reception he, his staff and students received from Grammar’s community. Plans are already underway for reciprocal visits next year.

**Indonesia**

17 August 2015 marked the 70th Anniversary of Indonesia’s Declaration of Independence from the Netherlands. With help from language teacher, Pak Young, our primary students celebrated Hari Merdeka, Indonesia’s Independence Day. They tasted Indonesian food, dressed in traditional red and white clothing and participated in team building games. This celebration enriched our students’ understanding of some aspects of Indonesia’s way of life.

**India**

An exciting addition to our international program is the Australia-India Bridge Program. In Term 4 Mrs Price, Head of Humanities, travelled to Sydney to meet with Mrs Gautam from Mother’s Global School, New Delhi. This journey and the professional learning program that followed signified the start of a sister school relationship between Geraldton Grammar and Mother’s Global School. On her way back to India Mrs Gautam spent five days in Geraldton gaining a greater understanding about our Australian education system and our culture. In January 2016 Mrs Price will spend a week in India visiting Mother’s Global School. We anticipate that this partnership will develop online with Middle and Senior School students and teachers sharing ideas in Humanities classes.

**Global Focus**

French novelist, Marcel Prouse, observed that “the real voyage of discovery consists not in seeing new lands but in seeing with new eyes.” The global focus at Geraldton Grammar School is designed to create rich cultural experiences through personal interaction.
St George’s Opens In City Centre

St George’s Anglican Grammar School (SGAGS) opened its doors in Perth’s CBD on Monday 27 July. The school day began with students and staff congregating at the ‘old’ Murdoch campus before being bussed to Murdoch Train Station to catch a train into the city. On arrival the Principal, Mrs Rensché Diggenden, staff and students walked to Forrest Place where they were met by the Lord Mayor, Ms Lisa Scaffidi, and the Dean of Perth, The Very Reverend Richard Pengelley. The Lord Mayor welcomed ‘the School’ to the city and the Dean of Perth blessed the students and staff. They then walked to their inner city high-rise campus situated at 50 William Street.

Excitement was rife. Students spent the day acquainting themselves with their new school and exploring the city. They were delighted by what they found at St George’s, especially the brightly coloured ultra-modern classrooms, science labs, drama studio and state-of-the-art music room. The cafeteria and rooftop recreation area with its basketball hoops and table tennis tables were also given a big tick. Then it was time to familiarise themselves with a number of the city’s facilities that they would be using on a regular basis. First was St George’s Cathedral, which was to become their ‘chapel’, followed by the Art Gallery of Western Australia, the Perth City Library and the Museum of WA.

Lisa Scaffidi said the city should be a place where students “felt comfortable, each and every day”. Many would be spending a great deal of their working lives in Perth’s CBD. Having a school open in the city for the first time in a century was “something to talk about”, she said.

Official Opening and Dedication

Six weeks later the School assembled in St George’s Cathedral for the official opening and dedication of SGAGS and the commissioning of the Principal, Chaplain and staff by the Archbishop of Perth, The Most Reverend Roger Herft AM, and the Minister for Education, The Honourable Peter Collier MLC.

The Service began with a moving rendition of Lord, the Light of Your Love and an acknowledgement of the Noongar people as the original custodians of the land and concluded with a rousing version of Shout to the Lord. Interspersed the congregation heard from the Archbishop, the Minister for Education and SGAGS’s Principal, Mrs Rensché Diggenden, as well as words of congratulations from the Chair and CEO of the ASC.

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The Archbishop welcomed dignitaries, guests, staff, students and parents to the Cathedral, which also...
Peter Collier also spoke about the responsibilities of wearing ‘the red blazer’ and being a foundation student at SGAGS. He said he was sure the School and its students would add much to “the tapestry of a vibrant and dynamic city”.

In wishing the teachers good luck, the former teacher told them that they had “the best job on earth”.

At the conclusion of his address Peter Collier presented a book on the history of Fremantle and Perth to SGAGS before revealing a plaque to officially open the School. The Archbishop then presented the School’s official banner to the Principal.

The Reverend Peter Laurence, CEO of the ASC and Chair of SGAGS Council, was then called upon to congratulate the School. He thanked the Archbishop and the Minister for their words and the Mayor of Perth, for her full support in getting “this wild and crazy idea” of establishing an inner-city school in a high rise building off the ground.

Thanks were also extended to Mr Brad Viney from the Department of Education Services for his support and to the Dean of Perth and Chapter for having the Cathedral — the best school chapel in Western Australia — ready for the commissioning service.

As Chair of the ASC Mrs Barbara Godwin OAM, welcomed students and staff to the ASC’s “family of schools”.

At the conclusion of his address Peter Collier presented the School’s official School Banner.

Dedication and Blessing of School Site

At the conclusion of the Service the congregation procession to 50 William Street for the dedication and blessing of the school site. They did so to the beat of the City of Perth Marching Band. Much like the parting of the Red Sea, traffic came to a halt as the procession crossed St Georges Terrace. It was then time for lunch, provided by SGAGS’s Café, and student-led tours of the campus. Visitors were impressed with the modern facilities, especially the distinctive colour scheme of each floor.

As Rensché Diggeden said: “The day was a wonderful celebration for the entire school community and a fortuitous beginning to this significant new chapter in the life of St George’s Anglican Grammar School.”

Making the Most of the City’s Facilities

Since relocating to Perth, staff and students have maximised their opportunities to utilise the city’s magnificent facilities and resources. Students have benefited from art lessons in the Art Gallery of WA, study visits to the Perth City Library, photography classes at iconic locations, paddle boarding on the Swan River and archery classes at Langley Park. One highlight was staging the drama production — Popstars, The Musical — at the State Theatre, another was holding the Art Exhibition in the foyer of Central Park. Staff and students feel privileged to attend weekly Chapel Services in St George’s Cathedral. They have also enjoyed having access to the Cathedral’s Burt Memorial Hall for the St George’s Music Festival, St George’s Theatre Challenge and Senior Guild elections.

Rensché Diggeden said numerous people have commented on the ‘wonderful level of energy the students bring to the city’. She said she is ‘very proud of them for their excellent representation of the School and the way in which they have navigated such a significant change of environment’.

THIS PAGE (TOP): St George’s Anglican Grammar School.
THIS PAGE (BOTTOM): Marketing St George’s.
OPPOSITE PAGE (L-R): Commissioning of St George’s Anglican Grammar School’s Principal, Mrs Rensché Diggeden, L-R: The Archbishop, Tony Howes, Rensché Diggeden, Barbara Godwin and Peter Laurence.
School Banner.