Ventured



Newsletter of the Mordialloc College Alumni Association (MCAA)

Issue 34, Spring 2023

PO Box 5121. Mordialloc 3195

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS ARE COMING!

FRIDAY 16 FEBRUARY & SATURDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2024



Planning for Mordialloc College's Centenary celebrations is beginning to ramp up as the time comes closer.

The Alumni Committee is in full swing, but is always grateful to anyone able to spare some time at either the monthly Committee meeting (see page 3 for details) or with any information that will enhance the celebrations.

Do you have contact with other students from your year, or any other year?

The more involved you are the more exciting the event will be for you!

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

Planning and representations for a local High School commenced in 1919 and the school officially opened in 1924, with 148 students in temporary

accommodation in the Mechanics Institute building in Albert Street, Mordialloc.

It took until 1928 for the permanent building on the selected site to be completed and occupied with an enrolment of 407 students.

Extra land was purchased and the school continued its growth, with several name changes, building alterations and additions over many decades.

Hundreds of teachers and thousands of students have passed through the school since then, with countless former students and teachers becoming well recognised in their chosen fields indeed, some famous.

Loads of friendships that formed in school days have endured, and many reunions have occurred throughout the years.

The school became, and remains, a fine example of public education one of the leading public secondary schools in the State of Victoria.

A CELEBRATION FOR EVERYONE!

All in all, we think you will agree that there is much to celebrate.

Don't miss the opportunity to reunite with classmates, teachers and friends from schooldays. There will be lots of class photos and memorabilia on display, and a guided tour of the present-day buildings and grounds. We are searching for the oldest former student, and also hoping that several past teachers will attend and be gratified to learn how their former students fared in adulthood.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT



BY MICHELLE ROBERTS

We look forward to our centenary celebrations in February 2024. The school and Alumni are working

together for planned events on Friday 16 February from midday to 3.30pm, and also on the Saturday onsite at the school (times to be confirmed), as well as an offsite event.

Please put these dates in your diary and spread the word to any former student or teacher that you still have contact with.

More detailed information about the specifics of the events will be promoted in the next newsletter.

FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

After a few delays due to complications with the footings and availability of some of the materials required, we are now on schedule to have the two-storey building balcony and back wall refurbishment completed.

The interview process for the appointment of the architects to lead the planning and development of our next major project with the \$12.6 million allocated by the State Government has been completed.

Minx Architecture (who have worked with us on all our other major building projects) has been appointed.

We look forward to beginning the planning process alongside the Victorian Building Authority and architects for the development of a new Arts/Technology centre.

The original plans were for a two-storey building, but we may need to look at another option to take into consideration the staging required for such a large project and the availability of speciality portables, as well as where these would be located.

The cost of these also must be covered by the allocated funding. We may find that we need the government to make a further funding commitment to the College.

STUDENT NUMBERS 2024

Endorsing our reputation as a leading education provider in the area is the continued growth in our student enrolments. We are only accepting 200 Year 7 students next year, given that we have reached our built capacity.

We are now on an enrolment management plan with the region to keep our enrolments within a 1,200-1,250 range of students.

We were still able to accept some outof-zone enrolments based on those applications closest to the school, however, unfortunately, we could not accept all of them.

200 students in Year 7 will be the maximum intake in forthcoming years.

SCHOOL PRODUCTION

Congratulations to all the students (cast and crew) who participated in this year's school production, a play called *Bully* with the creative inclusion of many dance and singing items related to the theme.

I am sure everyone in our school community would agree with me that it was a fantastic show of the highest quality, and such a powerful and relevant message was delivered by our students.

Special thanks must go to our wonderful teachers: Mara Sear (Production Director and Coordinator) and Kelly Ferguson (Vocal Coach).

Highlighting the sense of community that prevails at the College, former students from our graduating class of 2022 – Bronte Taylor, and Eliza D'Alberto – volunteered their time in supporting all the rehearsals since the start of the year and leading the choreography.



Membership of the Mordialloc College Alumni Association (MCAA) is open to all past students, teachers and friends of the school.

An annual fee of \$10 provides access to our extensive archive of photos, magazines etc. and four issues of *Ventured*.

So why not contact your friends and refer them to the Secretary at admin@mordialloccollegealumni.org

Alternatively, scan the QR code here, or go to mordialloccollegealumni.org

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SHOWCASE

Following the production week, we continued to celebrate the performing arts with three nights of our live Instrumental Music Showcase over Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday nights from 7.00pm to 8.30pm in the Performing Arts Centre each night.

It was three wonderful nights of celebration for our instrumental and vocal students along with their family members, with a full house each night in the Performing Arts Centre.

It was a credit to our dynamic music team — Demis Danoudis (Co-ordinator, and teacher of guitar, piano, and voice), Nigel Maas (woodwind), Damien Maughan (brass), Jason Liacos (guitar), Adrian De Luca (drums), and Kelly Ferguson (voice) — and I thank them all for their ongoing support of our students.

STUDY TOUR – INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS IN CALIFORNIA

In November 2019, I was awarded \$40,000 in prize money to be spent on professional learning, after winning the Outstanding Secondary School Principal Award and the Lindsay Thompson Award for Excellence in Education at the Victoria Education Excellence Awards.

With the interruption of the covid years, I only started to seriously think in 2022 about the best use of the funding for 2023.

The prize money, most significantly, is providing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for myself and two members of my leadership team to travel overseas on a study tour of some of the most innovative schools in the world.

The tour commences in San Francisco and finishes in San Diego. We will be visiting Brightworks School in San Francisco, d.school at Stanford University, Millennium School, and Nueva School both in San Francisco, Design 39 in San Diego, Del Lago Academy campus of Applied Science and then spending two days at High Tech High in San Diego to challenge our thinking, make some international connections and network with other participants.

Alumni notes



Annual General Meeting

The annual general meeting of the MCAA will be held at the **Kingston Heritage Centre**, **302 Como Parade West**, **Parkdale 3195**, on **Saturday 21 October** at **10.30am**.

Official business will be brief and elections will take place for office bearers for the coming year.

Everybody is welcome and morning tea will be served.

Plans and ideas for the centenary celebrations/open day at the school on 16-17 February 2024 will be discussed. Input and offers of help welcomed.

Monthly Meetings



Alumni Committee meetings are held on the second Saturday of each month at 10.30am in the Kingston Heritage Centre, 302 Como Parade

West, Parkdale (the old Baby Health Centre on the corner of Herbert Street, Parkdale).

Welcome To Our New Members

We extend a warm welcome to our new members:

- Kerrie Von Menge
- Trevor Buchanan
- Neil Oke
- Melissa Sinclair
- Peter Follett

MORDI MEMORIES

BONKER-BALL 1976 BY TREVOR PHILPOT, MCHS 1974-1978



It was lunch time at Mordi High. A cold July day in 1976. In the background the pile driver was pumping relentlessly away as construction on the new railway bridge across the creek was in full swing. The boys of 3D threw down their sandwiches and red cordial and it was time for the daily bonker-ball tournament. A violent game, bonker-ball. Not for the faint-hearted!

The game had evolved out of the old-time favourite, wall-ball, where a dozen or so boys would take random turns at hitting a tennis ball with the hand into the ground then up onto a brick wall. If you stuffed up the shot, you were out, and the numbers quickly dwindled until there were only two left. Then it was a grand final of sorts.

But bonker-ball twisted the rules of wall-ball somewhat.

Me, Neil, Garry, Richard, Helmut, John, Greg, Andrew, Norm and whoever else was brave enough to join us would head to a wall on the west end of the woodwork/art block. To the left was the corrugated tin wall of the bike shed, which added another layer of difficulty. The difference with our game was that

every time you missed a shot and were out, everyone else was obliged to punch you on the arm as hard as they could, as you sprinted from the court. Once you crossed the line and were off the court, you were safe.

If you were the first one out, you had eleven guys belting you as you ran for your life.

On this particular day, I was primed for a good showing. It was a Monday so I was still a bit sore from the previous day's footy match, but I had been in good bonker-ball form recently. Neil was my main danger — on two fronts — as he had quick reflexes and good hand/eye coordination, and his punches hurt. A lot. Today the first few boys got out relatively unscathed. Unfortunately, Garry got stuck in the corner and copped about six whacks to both arms as he desperately raced to the boundary line. He made it out alive, half laughing, half wincing in pain.

As the numbers reduced, it looked like my fears would be realised as Neil was in career-best form with his punching — and was controlling the ball pretty well too. He had the ability to get down low and hit shots that were barely off the ground.

A high-definition video review of some of his shots would have been handy, but this was 1976, and majority ruled when it came to who was out.

Helmut went out, copping a few on the upper arm, his face going red – whether in panic or pain, I couldn't say.

It was down to two. Neil and me. Neil was either not nervous or he was good at hiding it. "Good luck. You're gonna need it," was all he said as he served up. We had a long rally with some truly great shots played. The boundary of the court was now surrounded by not just the boys of 3D but some of the other kids who saw that it was down to the last two and were hoping for...what? A skilful game, or some brutal violence?

I'd better mention one more rule: the loser of the grand final could get belted by everyone else until he crossed the line. I told you it was a violent game. Neil played a perfect cross-court shot and I was done. I knew it before I even played it, so as I slapped at the ball I was already heading in the opposite direction.

I bolted towards the edge as several boys converged on me, but I was

moving so fast, I got through only copping a couple of hard punches.

Covered in sweat, I got my breath back, satisfied that I had made it to the last two, and relieved I wasn't injured.

Someone yelled out, "teacher!", and we all took off at high speed in different directions as our feared history teacher came marching around the corner.

I caught up to Neil behind the shelter sheds.

"Good fun, eh?" he said.

"Yeah. Best game ever invented." Looking back nearly fifty years later, it was fun; something kids of today would never get away with. But that was the era I grew up in and in a way, I'm glad I did. (I grew up to be a pretty placid guy, so I must have got all the punching out of my system at a young age.) NB: No bones were ever broken in bonker-ball.



Growing up in Edithvale, Trevor is the second eldest of the five Philpot siblings to attend MCHS in the 70s/80s. Since then, he has followed a career with Victoria Police. In his youth, he was a member of the Chelsea Athletics Club and he continues his passion for distance running. He played senior football at 'Edi As' until he was 43 years old. Trevor's four daughters also attended Mordialloc College. He is a live band enthusiast, frequenting the Melbourne scene for five decades and somehow still has his hearing.

THE THOMAS STORY

Four Thomas children attended Mordi High (as it was then known) during the 1950s and 1960.

The Thomases lived at 1 Albert Street Mordialloc in a large Edwardian home on approximately one acre.

Jim Thomas – the eldest and, it seems, a bit of a lad – recalled that he gave his teachers a hard time. He played senior football, was a member of the inter-school swimming team, as well as a member of the athletics team and was a house captain.

His sister Jill remembers one very embarrassing moment, probably in 1955 when she was in form 1, of Jim parading the cadets in a very loud voice just outside the portable classroom where she was listening to Mrs Thompson taking a history lesson. She thinks he was trying to wind Mrs Thompson up!

Jim headed over to WA when he finished school, and started working for Lang Hancock as a jackeroo, and for most of his life he worked in the outback of WA as well as becoming a champion motor bike racer. He passed away in 2016 aged 80.

David Thomas – more of a gentle soul – was also a member of the inter-school swimming team as well as the senior cricket team. He was the academic of the Thomas family – he left Mordi High to

attend Melbourne
High School during
years 11 and 12, and
went on to become a
primary teacher.
David, like Jim, spent
his most of his life
in WA, and when
he wasn't teaching
became a rep for
Elders and other
farming companies
in the regional areas
of WA.



He passed away in 2021 aged 84.

Peter Thomas spent just a few years at Mordi High and in 1955 and 1956 played in the boys' tennis team. The Thomas kids were very lucky to have a tennis court at home, so all played with various abilities. Peter is retired and lives in Barwon Heads, Victoria. Jill Thomas was a house vice-captain for Mentone, was also in the swimming team, as well as the tennis team, and was captain of the winter softball team — all during 1960, when she was in year 11.

It was a hard act to follow with three older brothers but she enjoyed her school years at Mordi High. She is now retired and living on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland after spending a few decades farming in Victoria's Macedon Ranges.



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

THE CONQUERORS

BY PAULA MCCARTHY

In February 1981, 17-year-old Meg Stevens arrived at Mordialloc-Chelsea High School from Johannesburg, South Africa.

Meg had completed her secondary studies as a boarder in Pretoria, and she and her best friend had applied for Rotary Exchange Student scholarships. These awards were prestigious at this time and in the days of only snail mail and the occasional trunk call, it took an adventurous spirit to uproot yourself as a teenager from all that was familiar and to cross the globe. Meg was to be hosted by Aspendale Rotary Club. The club's outgoing student was Darren Jehu (MCHS 1975-1978) who was headed to the Northern Transvaal (as it was then known).

During Meg's year-long stay, the van der Zypp family was the third of Meg's four Rotary host families. This was a very suitable placement as Meg





was well-versed in Afrikaans and this aligned with the van der Zypp's Dutch heritage. Andy van der Zypp had always put up his hand to host students and many had enjoyed the family's hospitality.

For Di, aged 22, the arrival of Meg was a delight and they formed a close, continuous and enduring friendship now spanning five decades. Meg also enjoyed adventures with Belinda who was the same age and had recently gained her driving licence.

Over the many years since 1981, Di and Meg have exchanged letters, then emails and now texts.

In recent times, Di sent Meg a message suggesting a 2023 cruise from Amsterdam to Iceland, and Meg's response was that she had an alternative idea, to fulfil a dream... of climbing Mt Kilimanjaro for her 60th birthday! Di replied "that's OK, if that's what we have to do to see you, we are in!".

Di and her partner Neil both love Meg and her husband Ken's company, and

another family was on board who sounded like they would be fun too.

With the expedition locked in, the enormity of their commitment became apparent when they started reviewing You Tube videos and they wondered "what have we gotten ourselves into?".

Beginning with very minimal suitable gear, the training started in the flat environs of Echuca/Moama where Di and Neil run a guest resort on the Murray. They bought a step machine and crossed their fingers that they would be 'match fit'. What they couldn't train for was altitude, so they agreed that no matter what happened, it was all an experience and they could only do their best. They would be happy to even make it to day 4 of the climb! Preparation also involved a series of injections for yellow fever, typhoid, etc.

The intrepid explorers' rendezvous was in Moshi, Tanzania with Mt Kilimanjaro looming in the distance.

Di was filled with a sense of wonder — she had journeyed with Meg to the bottom of Africa where the Indian Ocean meets the Atlantic and now she was standing on the brink of reaching the highest point in Africa and thinking "Who would have thought?"!

Well I know you both, and my heart burst with joy to follow your journey and to finally read your news that you had made it to the summit of the highest point in Africa, the fourth highest in the world!

I was intrigued by the path you followed, the terrain, oxygen deprivation, altitude adjustment, the constant threat of altitude sickness, the need to consume 3-4 litres of water a day, and the worry of having to be airlifted off at \$5K!

It took six days to ascend through bushland, rainforest, moorland, arctic desert and over volcanic debris, rising, rising every day closer to their target.

The final ascent commenced at midnight on day 7 and as the sun rose over the Great Rift Valley of Africa, the friends finally reached the top of Mt Kilimanjaro!

The two-day descent was treacherous in parts with a long stretch downwards through thick mud in the rainforest. Exhaustion had set in. What a relief to finally make it back to the National Park gate. A shower, a meal and a proper bed.

Casting our minds back to Aspendale in 1981, this wonderful friendship is a tribute to the vision of the Rotary Clubs in our district and to our school's contribution to the exchange program. The aspirations of Rotary are to help to make the world a better place and through this unique experience. lifelong friendships are forged.

Forty-three years later, it was Meg's amazing birthday wish to stand on "Africa's Rooftop".

Di describes receiving the greatest gift, an achievement that they thought might be impossible but one of the grandest moments of their forever friendship.

Wel gedaan (Well done)

Photos show (clockwise from top left):

- Mt Kilimanjaro from Moshi (photo courtesy of Ken Fargher)
- A huge sense of relief upon reaching the summit
- Elation!
- The route marked in red (photo courtesy of Di van der Zypp)









MORDI MEMORIES

JOAN SYLVIA REYNOLDS MCHS 1931-1934

Joan was born in 1919 in Essex and arrived in Melbourne with her family in November 1920 aboard the *Benalla* She was aged 18 months and her sister Dorothy was aged 8.

Their father Thomas was an Electric Meter Inspector.

The family settled in Aspendale and lived at *Devonia*, 21 First Ave.

Dorothy commenced at MCHS as a foundation student in 1924 and Joan was enrolled from 1931 when she entered the school in Form F1.

After completing four years at MCHS, the depression was hitting families hard, and Joan left to go to work.

After leaving school, Joan attended secretarial college to study shorthand and typing and worked as a secretary.

She was a strong unionist as well as, for a time, a member of the Communist Party where she met her husband Richard Curlewis, a chemist, who grew up at Perth's Observatory – the son of Western Australia's chief astronomer and meteorologist.

Joan and Richard married in 1946 and raised their family, firstly in South Melbourne and then in North Bayswater.

They dedicated their lives to the rights of working people and their communities, and to democracy in the workplace.

Joan was a founding member of the Eureka Youth League, and also the Union of Australia Women where she



Dot and Joan in 1924 – Dot as a foundation student of MCHS in her uniform

developed her journalistic talents in editing their magazine *Our Women*.

She was a strong advocate for women's rights and made a presentation to the Federal Government's Australian Conciliation and Arbitration Commission's hearings on the National Wage and Equal Pay case in 1972.

In 1982, Joan died suddenly aged just 62, immediately after she had completed an interview with historian Wendy Lowenstein.

Joan made a lasting impact on all who knew her and Australian society through her advocacy for women's rights, especially equal pay.



Joan in school uniform in the early 1930s

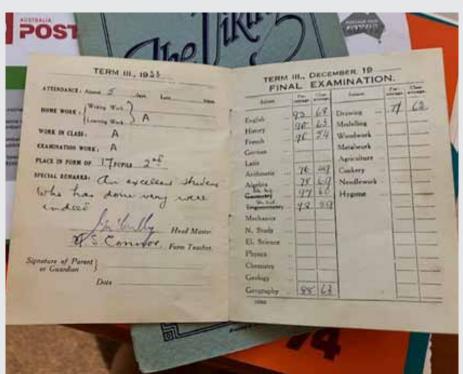
We have received from Joan's family her exquisite report books, kindly scanned by the family, along with a hard copy that has been donated to us.

They are diminutive, measuring just $100 \text{mm} \times 130 \text{mm}$ but they tell us a lot about Joan's academic life at MCHS. The class list register tells us very little, but the reports are extremely valuable because they indicate which forms Joan was in between 1931 and 1934 (F1 - 1931; E1 - 1932; D2 - 1933; C2 - 1934) and give an insight into Joan's school performance – she was an excellent student as you can see from this entry.



Dorothy and Joan with their mother. Joan is pictured on the right in school uniform

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ALSWINI COMMISMITY NEWS

We are delighted to present recent milestone occasions and more will be celebrated throughout the rest of the year – watch this space!

If you would like to have a celebration included in future editions, please get in touch.

Just contact us at admin@mordialloccollegealumni.org.

DYLAN STYLES, MC 2006-2011

Happy birthday to past President and Alumni Committee member Dylan on the occasion of your 30th Birthday, no doubt celebrated exuberantly. We wish you all the best in your exciting endeavours in years to come.

Dylan was the inaugural Visual Arts Captain at MC in 2011, and is pictured below right with other Performing Arts Captains Taylor Sansom and Juliet Lewis.

He is currently working as an advisor with the Victorian Government and is an advocate for various community groups.





ABOUT VENTURED

Ventured is the newsletter of the Mordialloc College Alumni Association (MCAA). Ventured welcomes member contributions, including stories and articles about the school; people or events of the past related to the school; and insight into what has happened to people after leaving school.

All information in *Ventured* is provided in good faith and is derived from sources believed to be accurate and current as at the date of publication. The Editor is not obliged to publish a submission and reserves the right to edit submissions. Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily endorsed or approved by the MCAA or Mordialloc College.

All contributors are requested to read the submission guidelines on the website: **mordialloccollegealumni.org**. Contributions should be sent by email to Editor Barbara Dowling, at **admin@mordialloccollegealumni.org** or via normal mail to **PO Box 5121, Mordialloc 3195**.

Thanks to the many people who have contributed to the production of *Ventured*, and to our wonderful sponsors. We are grateful for their support of public education. *Ventured* is printed by Kosdown Printing.





JUDITH ANDERSON (NÉE LEWIS) MCHS 1965-1968

Judy had a quiet and very enjoyable 70th birthday celebration with her family.

She is still working part time in retail and in her own small business, and has no retirement plans just yet — but when the time comes, she and her husband plan to see as much of Australia as possible.

Judy is pictured here front and centre in 1968 Form 4D.





TAHLI CLAYTON MCSC 1986-1991

Tahli celebrated her recent milestone birthday with family and friends, including a few Mordialloc Chelsea Secondary College alumni.

Tahli works as an Operations Analyst and Project Manager.

She is happily married with three lovely children and two fabulous step-children.

Photo shows Tahli with other House Captains in 1991: front row – Tahli, Joanne Boyd and Judy Oakes. back row – Marsha Bell, Lee Turner, Jonathan Dee and Brad Canavan.

OUR SPONSORS

Thank you to all the organisations and individuals that have donated money, vouchers, or in-kind items. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Community Bank Aspendale Gardens-Edithvale



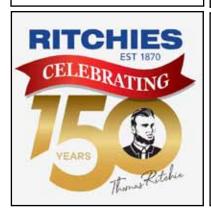
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Be part of the story

We welcome stories and photos from your time at MCHS/Mordialloc College. Just send them to admin@mordialloccollegealumni.org
or PO Box 5121, Mordialloc 3195



