

JOHN XXIII COLLEGE
SEEK JUSTICE



Heritage

ISSUE 55

2025

On board the **Loreto** **Express**

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS
OF LORETO, P16





Contemplatives in action

H In his letter to the Corinthians, St Paul writes, 'So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.'

As I reflect on this edition of *Heritage*, and the remarkable stories contained within its pages, I am struck by how this wisdom speaks to us today, serving as a reminder that our Ignatian tradition is fundamentally about forming people who can discern the deeper currents that run beneath the surface of our rapidly changing world.



The stories you will encounter within this edition of *Heritage* capture how the formation of a John XXIII College graduate extends into their own professional lives and to the service of others. Whether it be in the field of technology, entrepreneurship, community service, or environmental advocacy, we are witness to the active demonstration of an education that integrates faith, learning, and service.



In our current age of rapid technological advancement and ongoing social complexity, the late Pope Francis' exhortation to 'listen with the ear of the heart' becomes increasingly important.

We are reminded that technology, in all its remarkable capacity, needs to enhance, rather than diminish our humanity. Our Ignatian tradition of discernment helps us navigate these complex moral landscapes, ensuring innovation serves the common good and respects the dignity of every person.

The inclusion of stories from Refugee Week initiatives, Year 11 Pilgrimage experiences and NAIDOC celebrations



all reflect our understanding and commitment to a Catholic education that is expansive in its embrace of human dignity.

In our rapidly evolving world, then, our Ignatian heritage helps to provide both stability and dynamism as we are called to be contemplatives in action, maintaining deep spiritual roots, whilst also engaging fully with our contemporary challenges and opportunities.

This tension between reflection and engagement, between tradition and innovation, between personal growth and service to others, helps define the true essence of our John XXIII College education and I hope this commitment and understanding is evident throughout the stories you will read within our latest edition of *Heritage*.

Daniel Mahon
College Principal



Generations of connection



Our alumni community remains at the heart of the Loreto, St Louis and John XXIII story.

Spanning generations, it is a fellowship built on shared traditions, friendships, and values that continue to shape lives well beyond the College campus. Whether gathering for reunions, supporting current students or keeping the spirit of connection alive across the world, our graduates embody the legacy of three proud traditions united as one College family.

This year has been particularly special for our alumni community, marked by significant milestones and joyous reunions across all three traditions. We celebrated 150 years of Loreto in Australia with the theme 'Being Faithful to Grace', hosting both the Loreto exhibition and an All-Years Reunion. The St Louis community came together for their own All-Years Reunion, bringing together more than 70 Old Louisans.

For John XXIII alumni, highlights included milestone reunions for multiple classes, our second London reunion with 30 attendees, the popular industry networking event hosted by Pitcher Partners Wealth, and the launch of Fr Frank Brennan's two-volume collection, *Sir Gerard Brennan's Articles and Speeches*. Our community was also enriched by Fr Frank's time with us as an Academic in Residence.

Our Alumni Connect digital newsletters, distributed throughout the year, are an effective way of keeping our community informed of events, reunions and opportunities. Social media engagement continues to grow, and our *Heritage* magazine shines a spotlight on alumni stories that inspire and strengthen our community bonds.

For those wanting to learn more about our recent celebrations, you can read more about some of the Loreto and St Louis reunions, current happenings at the College, and the celebration of 150 years of Loreto through our Loreto Express. These detailed accounts capture the spirit and memories shared at these special gatherings, along with insights into Fr Frank's book launch and his valuable time with us as an Academic in Residence.

These communication channels serve as vital links in our extended family, ensuring that no matter where our alumni find themselves in the world, they remain connected to the College community that shaped their formative years.

We also encourage our alumni to share their own stories with us – whether it's career achievements, personal milestones, travel adventures, or simply fond memories from your school days. Your stories enrich

our community narrative and inspire both current students and fellow alumni.

At John XXIII College, graduation represents a transition into our vibrant, supportive alumni community.

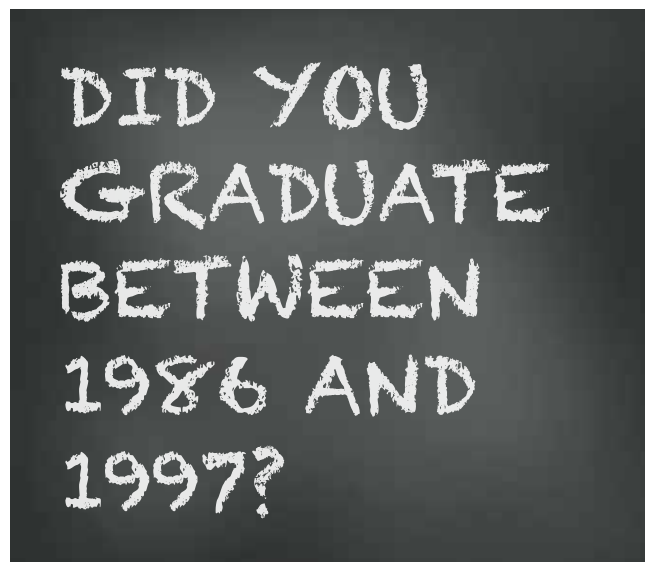
We invite all alumni to stay connected through our alumni portal, social media channels, and newsletters. Looking ahead, we will continue to announce new events designed to deepen connections and engage as many alumni as possible.

These celebrations and initiatives remind us that once you are part of the John XXIII family, you are always connected – across years, across places and across generations. Your connection to John XXIII College does not end at graduation; it evolves into something even more meaningful, creating new traditions for future generations of our College family.

If you would like to participate in mentorship, guest speaking or networking opportunities, or if you have stories and experiences to share with our community, please contact us at alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au.

Sue McLennan

Alumni Development



As we approach the 40th anniversary of our Mount Claremont campus in 2026, we want to hear from YOU – the pioneers who experienced our foundational years firsthand.

Share your memories, photos, videos, and memorabilia from those transformative early days. Your stories will help preserve our College heritage for future generations.

Contact Caroline at alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au or 08 9383 0400 to contribute to this special milestone celebration.



From St Louis to Fat Cat's Dad

H When **Greg Byrne** left Saint Louis in 1952 at just 14 years old, he could never have imagined that he would one day become Managing Director of Channel 7 and be known as 'Fat Cat's Dad' – the creator of Western Australia's most beloved children's television character.

Greg's early departure from school was born of necessity rather than choice. When his father passed away from an illness, Greg had to leave his junior year studies to support his mother and siblings. Despite being in a class of exceptional students who went on to achieve great success in their careers, Greg had to enter the workforce immediately.

'I had to go to work to support my mother, so I couldn't go on to do leaving,' Greg recalls. 'There were some outstanding students in that class of '52, and they went on to do leaving, of course.'

After leaving St Louis, Greg spent approximately seven years working at JH Wilberforce and Co, starting in the dispatch department at just 14 years old before becoming a sales representative covering country and suburban areas. His big break came in 1960, just six months after television started in Perth, when he successfully applied for a sales representative position at Channel 7, then known as TVW.



At the tender age of 23, Greg was transferred to Sydney in 1961 to run TVW 7's Sydney office. However, family circumstances brought him back to Perth in 1963 when his brother became a quadriplegic in a surfing accident. This return to Perth would prove fortuitous for both Greg's career and Western Australian television history.

In 1968, Greg was appointed Sales Director of Channel 7 and married Judith Oxer, a Western Australian swimming champion who had competed alongside Dawn Fraser and represented Australia at an international level. Their combined talents would soon create television magic.

In 1971, then Managing Director of Channel 7, Jim Cruthers, offered \$100 to any staff member who could create a new children's character to replace Percy Penguin or Taffy the Lion. Greg saw an opportunity to earn some money and had what he thought was a good name for a new mascot.

'I thought, well, we could use the \$100 to pay the phone bill or something,' Greg remembers. 'When I got home, I spoke to Judith and said, 'Look, Jim has offered \$100 to anyone on the staff who could come up with a new character. I think I've got a pretty good name, but I can't draw. Can you draw for me?'



Judith's original sketch became the foundation for Fat Cat, an icon that has been putting Western Australian children to bed at 7:30pm for 54 years and counting. Greg reflects with evident pride:

'If we've done nothing else in our lives, we've put smiles on the faces of thousands and thousands of children in WA.'

While Fat Cat became a cultural phenomenon, Greg's professional responsibilities continued to grow. He served as Sales Director under Robert Holmes à Court's Bell Group ownership before being appointed Managing Director under Christopher Skase's Qintex group in a period of significant change in Australian media.

When Greg took over from Kevin Campbell as Managing Director of TVW Enterprises in 1988, the station had a staff of 250 people. That same year, Skase's Qintex group purchased TVW for \$130 million from Bell Group, creating a national Seven Network.

Greg's innovative spirit extended beyond character creation. In 1990, recognising that the annual Christmas pageant was suffering from hot daytime conditions that left children crying and parents struggling, he proposed moving it to an evening timeslot with illuminated floats. Despite initial resistance from executives who claimed it was 'too hard to light floats,' Greg persisted.

'I'd been to Disneyland and had seen firsthand how much the floats and all the attractions came alive under lights,' he explains. 'Once they saw that, there was no turning back. It's been a much better pageant at night time, much more conducive to families.'

During his tenure as Managing Director of Channel 7 from 1988 to 1992, Greg oversaw a staff of 350 people – a stark contrast to today's 50-60 employees, as most programming is now networked from the eastern states.

Following his retirement in 1992, Greg and Judith moved to a 30-hectare property in Cowaramup, where they established Tapalinga vineyard (named after an Aboriginal word meaning 'a mystical lady who lives in the stars and showers down her blessings on the earth'). They now tend Cabernet and Shiraz grapes, along with 100 avocado trees and 1000 macadamia trees.

Greg shares an interesting insight about their macadamia operation: 'That's why macadamia is so expensive. There's so much work that goes into them.' The process involves dehusking the nuts, drying them to about 10% moisture, cracking them, and then packaging – all labour-intensive steps that justify the premium price.

When asked what advice he would give to current John XXIII students considering a media career, Greg emphasises the importance of versatility: 'Like everything, you've got to put in the hard work, put in the hard yards. It doesn't come easy. Try and get as much experience with as many areas as you can, so you become a bit of a jack of all trades and can turn your hand to a lot of different things and become employable.'



Greg's philosophy is simple but powerful:

'Once you make your mark and prove that you're capable, it's amazing how many doors open and how many things can happen to you.'

From leaving school at 14 to becoming one of Western Australia's most influential media figures, Greg Byrne's journey proves that with hard work, innovation, and a willingness to grasp opportunities, extraordinary things are possible. His legacy continues to beam into homes across Western Australia every evening, reminding us that the best investments in creativity often yield the most enduring returns.

Reflections of an Academic in Residence

Fr Frank Brennan SJ AO
August 2025

H I've had a great three weeks here at John XXIII College. Being a Jesuit priest who has spent a long time in the public square on issues to do with social justice, I was delighted to come to the College and share some of my experiences.

This year I am 50 years a Jesuit and 40 years a priest. When I joined the Jesuit novitiate, my novice master was Fr Tim Quinlan SJ. He asked me to go and spend a couple of months in Redfern, inner Sydney, where many homeless Aboriginal people lived at the time. I was the driver for Mum Shirl (Shirley Smith) who was a fearless Indigenous leader working in the courts and in the prison system. This was my introduction to Aboriginal rights – a topic dear to my heart all my Jesuit life.

It was such a privilege to have the College host a launch of my two-volume work of my father's articles and speeches. Dad was Chief Justice of Australia. He wrote the main judgment in the Mabo case which recognised the rights of Aboriginal people to their traditional lands. At the College launch of the books, Chief Justice Peter Quinlan spoke very movingly about my father's contribution to the law. Peter is a nephew of my novice master Tim, the one who introduced me to the work on Aboriginal rights.

Responding to the Chief Justice was Kate Alvarez, a young lawyer who is an alumna of the college, and Fred Chaney AO, who had been a minister in the Australian government – a longtime advocate for Aboriginal rights. Both Peter and Fred had children who attended John XXIII College. It was great having different generations of lawyers in attendance, with more than 100 people coming to the event.

I was also privileged to celebrate Mass for the whole school. The singing was superb, and the whole liturgy

was so inspiring. I enjoyed the opportunity to give classes to Years 10, 11 and 12. I also delivered a couple of professional development sessions for staff and led a couple of sessions for the College Council retreat. One of the highlights was being a judge for the Year 10 Atticus Finch Justice Award. The students spoke with such passion and conviction.

One day I was walking along Cottesloe Beach, and three young surfers greeted me: 'G'day Fr Frank.' I was so surprised. The boys were so friendly and engaged. They were Year 10 John XXIII students. We agreed that they had a very good life! Able to surf after school even when it wasn't summer. The whole College have been just so friendly. I so enjoyed the spontaneous concert put on in the grounds one lunchtime. Students from the Mary Ward classes mixed so readily in the crowd. When I visited the little ones in the primary school, some were heard calling: 'Here's Jesus.' They were not too disappointed, I hope, when they were told it was only Fr Frank.

For much of my time here, unfortunately the weather was foul – but great weather for writing. I was able to complete my next book, *Pope Francis – A Disruptive Pilgrim's Guide*. Janeen Murphy, Deputy Principal of Faith and Mission, wrote great questions for reflection at the end of each chapter. The AV team recorded brief videos linked to QR codes at the end of each chapter. I hope the book will be a great resource for teachers, inspired by the teachings and actions of Pope Francis.

The energy in this school is fantastic; and the ethos very Ignatian. Thanks for the opportunity to be with you all. I hope to return in the new year and launch the book on Pope Francis.



H John XXIII College was proud to host a distinguished Alumni Connect event in August, bringing together over 100 alumni, current parents, Year 12 students, and friends of the College for an evening that combined intellectual reflection with meaningful networking.

The occasion marked the Perth launch of *Gerard Brennan's Articles and Speeches*, a two-volume collection celebrating the legacy of former High Court Chief Justice Sir Gerard Brennan. The collection was edited by Sir Gerard's son Fr Frank Brennan SJ AO, who recently concluded a month as Academic in Residence at the College.

Distinguished speakers and engaged audiences came together to explore how Sir Gerard's judicial philosophy continues to shape Australian law and society today.

Superbly compered by College alumna **Samantha Martella (Class 1994)**, the event exemplified the purpose of the Alumni Connect series: to create opportunities for reconnection, professional dialogue, and for students to meet role models who embody our College's Ignatian values in their own professional lives.

A gathering of minds and generations

Chief Justice **Peter Quinlan (Class 1987)**, an alumnus and past parent of John XXIII College, delivered the keynote address. In his speech, later published as *The Law's Faithful Gardener*, the Chief Justice reflected on

Sir Gerard Brennan's lifelong fidelity to principle, his deep commitment to the common law tradition, and his steadfast concern for human dignity. He drew upon the memorable metaphor of Sir Gerard as 'the law's gardener' – someone who tended not only to the enduring tradition of the law but also the flourishing of new growth when justice and society required it.



Adding the perspective of a newer generation, alumna **Kate Alvarez (Class 2017)**, now a graduate lawyer, recounted how her own formation at John XXIII College instilled in her a passion for justice and service, which has carried into her legal career. For the Year 12 students present, her reflections offered an inspiring bridge between school life and the possibilities of the profession ahead.

Voices of justice and conscience

Former Deputy Opposition Leader and long-time Indigenous rights advocate Fred Chaney AO brought another dimension to the occasion. He recalled his personal encounters with Sir Gerard Brennan and



his reputation not only as a jurist of rare ability but as a man of moral clarity and human decency. Mr Chaney pointed to the landmark Mabo judgment as exemplifying Sir Gerard's ability to seize a 'Mansfield moment': to give the law a decisive nudge toward equity and equality, laying foundations that would irrevocably shape Australia's legal and social landscape.

Fr Frank Brennan offered both intellectual and deeply personal reflections on the legacy of his father, Sir Gerard. Through stories, correspondence, and casework – from the recognition of Indigenous land rights to his meditations on conscience and community values – the collection of speeches and writings captures the twin sparks that guided Sir Gerard's jurisprudence: justice according to law, and law in accord with justice.



More than law: a legacy for society

Although the volumes are of particular importance to lawyers, legal scholars, and students of politics, their resonance is far broader. Across subjects from administrative law reform to human rights, religion, and community values, Sir Gerard's voice emerges as one

consistently attentive to justice, human dignity, and the common good. Their significance lies not just in their contribution to Australia's legal heritage but in their illumination of the social and moral questions that shape our national life.



As compere, Sam Martella struck the perfect balance, bringing together the diverse elements of history, law, faith, and community that defined the evening. The format of the Alumni Connect series ensured that the formal proceedings gave way naturally to convivial networking and conversation – students, alumni, and guests continuing the dialogue in the Ignatian spirit of seeking truth together.

Watch a video of the
book launch event.





Continuing the conversation

Gerard Brennan's Articles and Speeches is a monumental work of legal history, social commentary, and intellectual reflection. But it is also, as Fr Frank Brennan has noted, a labour of love – a son's tribute to his father's enduring impact. Its launch at John XXIII College was therefore more than a book launch: it was an affirmation of our community's commitment to justice, conscience, and human dignity.

Sir Gerard's approach to law embodied the Ignatian principle of *magis* – always seeking the greater good – and his dedication to service, particularly to society's most vulnerable members. These same principles guide our College community today.

As one speaker observed, Sir Gerard's gentle gaze from the cover portrait of Volume I seems to say: 'My work is done; now it is over to you.' For our students, this call to responsibility opens pathways through subjects like Legal Studies, Philosophy, and English, as well as participation in social justice initiatives, debating, and community service programs. For our alumni and wider community, that same call remains as compelling as it is inspiring.

Books can be purchased here:

***Gerard Brennan's
Articles and Speeches
Volume 1***



***Gerard Brennan's
Articles and Speeches
Volume 2***



Taking the plunge together

Grounds and maintenance staff with our newly installed Cockitrough®

H Twenty-three teachers stood nervously next to an ice-cold plunge pool while hundreds of students cheered them on. It was just one moment from John XXIII Day 2025, but it captured everything our College stands for – courage, community, and a willingness to dive in together.

This annual celebration has brought our community together since 1994. Everyone from Pre-Kindy to Year 12, and staff gathered to honour Pope Saint John XXIII, Mary Ward, and St Ignatius of Loyola through action, not just ceremony. Alumni joined us for the day's activities.



A day grounded in faith and tradition

To start the day, our whole College gathered for Mass, with Fr Mark Chia and Fr Frank Brennan SJ leading the ceremony. Pope St John XXIII's vision of openness and renewal still guides our College today, and it showed in the quiet moments of prayer and reflection. Students from Year 1 to Year 12 filled the spaces alongside staff, creating a powerful sense of unity as we began this important day together. The liturgy reminded us of our call to service and community – values that would be put into practice throughout the hours ahead.

Rite of passage

Then came the moment everyone had been waiting for – the Running of the Colonnades. Our graduating class sprinted down the iconic walkways, competing for the Golden Boot Award. Sport Captain Ruby Verleg and Ward House Captain Finn O'Donnell claimed victory this year, their names and times now permanently etched on the winners' honour board alongside past champions.



Service in action

True to the Ignatian call to be 'people for others,' students and House coordinators transformed our College grounds into a festival of community engagement. Ward House's cake stall drew its usual crowds, St Louis House served up their famous pasta, and everywhere you looked there were games and activities bringing people together.

Every dollar raised went directly to our Catholic charity partners – Loreto Ministries and Jesuit Mission. Jesuit Mission's work across 14 countries, from education and healthcare to emergency relief. Their focus on





reconciliation with indigenous peoples, supporting local leaders in cultural healing and education, aligns with our commitment to dignity and justice.



Innovation meets tradition

This year's new addition came from an idea by our Student Representative Council (SRC) – the Ice Plunge Challenge. Twenty-three staff volunteered to take the polar plunge alongside brave SRC members, creating a tiered fundraising structure that had the whole school buzzing with excitement:

- \$200 = 1 Staff + 1 SRC Member
- \$400 = 2 Staff + 2 SRC Members
- \$4,000 = ALL 20 Staff + 20 SRC Members

The ultimate goals promised our Vice Principal at \$5,000 and our Principal at \$10,000 would join the icy adventure. Watching teachers shiver in anticipation while students cheered them on captured something unique about our College – we are all willing to take the plunge together. The challenge smashed expectations, raising over \$10,000.



Watch video highlights of
the Ice Plunge Challenge



Athletic excellence connects past and present

The afternoon shifted to our College ovals for two beloved sporting traditions. The Sr Theresa Elliott Shield netball game saw current Year 12 students edge out alumni 16-15 in a nail-biting finish. The Ron Logan Cup Australian Rules football match was less close, with current students dominating 42-18, but the real victory was watching past and present members of our College family compete side by side.

Adding special significance to the Ron Logan Cup was the presence of Ron Logan's grandson, Mr Simon Tilley, who joined us representing his family.



Celebrating talent and community

The day wrapped up with the Variety Concert in the St Louis Sports Centre. Students stepped up to perform in bands, present skits, and sing songs – many pushing well outside their comfort zones. A highlight was the annual staff dance, which had the audience in stitches and showed our teachers' willingness to embrace the fun. Not to be outdone, the Year 12 SRC performed their own dance, bringing energy and entertainment to the afternoon.

Under the leadership of Music and Drama Captains Joshua Mengler and Madeleine Nankivell, the concert became a masterclass in supporting one another – a value both Mary Ward and Saint Ignatius would recognise.



Fostering lasting relationships

The celebration extended beyond the student day with a social gathering of current and former staff members. This tradition reflects Mary Ward's emphasis on community and the Ignatian principle of *cura personalis* – care for the whole person and the relationships that sustain us.

A living tradition

John XXIII Day 2025 reminded us that our College's values are as important as ever – they are living principles that shape who we are today. Through service, celebration, and connection, we honoured our founders while creating new memories.

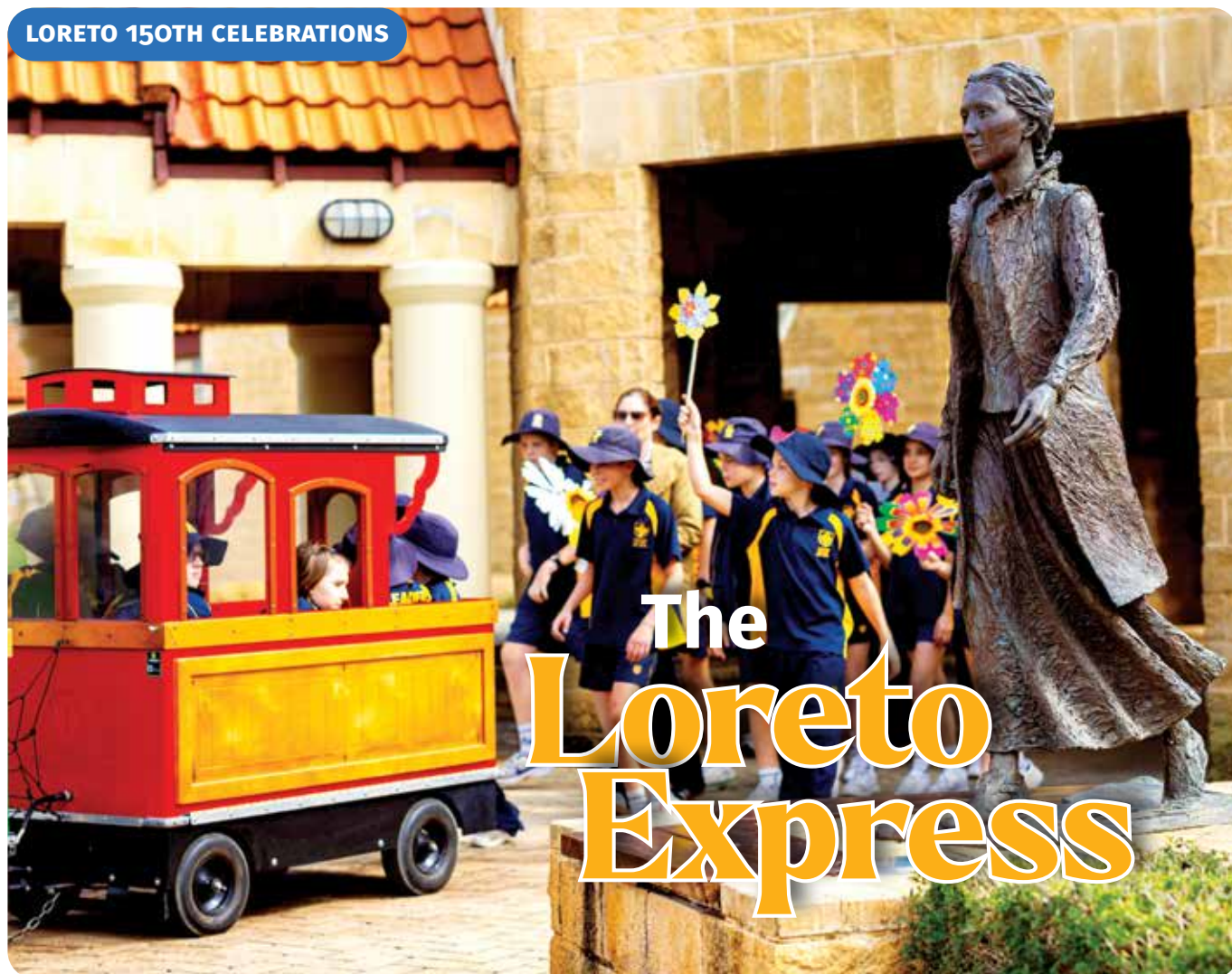
The day's success wasn't just measured in the \$10,000+ raised for our mission partners, but in countless moments of joy and connection. Students cheering for their peers and teachers about to hit ice-cold water. Alumni and current students sharing friendly banter on the football field. Year 7s wide-eyed watching their older peers take the stage.

As we look ahead to next year, we carry Pope St John XXIII's openness, Mary Ward's courage, and St Ignatius' call to service – values that continue to make our College an extraordinary place.



Watch a wonderful highlights reel of this year's John XXIII Day





The Loreto Express

H Each year, John XXIII College's Founders' Time brings our community together to explore the inspiring stories of those who shaped our College's values and mission.

This year marked a significant milestone: 150 years since Mother Mary Gonzaga Barry arrived in Australia and established Loreto education. The celebration brought this history to life through an innovative activity designed for Primary students.

The Loreto Express experience

Primary students and staff participated in the 'Loreto Express', an immersive experience that took them through six locations across our campus. Each stop recreated key moments from Mother Gonzaga Barry's life and mission, allowing students to connect personally with this historical figure.

Journey highlights

Dublin Departure: The journey began at Rathfarnham, Dublin, where Mother Gonzaga and nine Sisters left Ireland in 1875. Dressed in traditional habits, they faced emotional farewells as they departed for an unknown future. Students reflected on leaving home and making sacrifices for important goals through journal writing activities.

Cape of Good Hope Night Skies: At the telescope station, students imagined viewing the Southern Cross and Mars, just as Mother Gonzaga did during her Indian Ocean crossing. This stop symbolised the strong faith and vision that sustained her during the long sea voyage to Australia.





Mount Claremont Growth: The Mount Claremont stop connected Mother Gonzaga's vision to Perth's Loreto schools and the eventual emergence of John XXIII College. Stories of resilience, sound stewardship, and nurturing students' wellbeing highlighted how foundational values continue to flourish in the contemporary College community.

Broome & Beyond Outreach: The final station celebrated the Loreto Sisters' work in remote Western

Australian communities, particularly their respectful partnerships with Aboriginal peoples. Students experienced the spirit of community support and cultural understanding that defines the Sisters' ongoing mission.

Melbourne Welcome: Students learned about the Sisters' arrival in Australia and their meetings with Jesuit and Good Shepherd communities. This stop focused on the importance of welcoming newcomers and building supportive communities.



Ballarat Foundations: Near the lake setting, students discovered how Mother Gonzaga established Australia's first Loreto school. They explored her commitment to teacher training and high educational standards, reflecting on what makes work meaningful. Students paused to reflect on the concept of 'sacred work' – the dedication to cultivating knowledge and values that endure.



Continuing the legacy

For students, the experience culminated in the Chapel or classroom, where visual displays and stories empowered students to consider how they might continue the founder's work.

Staff members also participated in an adapted version for their professional development, where they examined Mother Gonzaga Barry's life within its historical and spiritual context. Teachers reflected on her educational vision and discussed how her ideals remain relevant for Catholic education today.

This anniversary celebration strengthened our College community's connection to its heritage while inspiring students to embrace the values that have guided Loreto education for 150 years.





Three brothers, many big ideas

H Three brothers from John XXIII College have transformed their shared passion for problem-solving into award-winning technology companies that are reshaping entire industries.

Jeremy and Andrew Hadfield (Class 1996) and younger brother **Peter Hadfield (Class 1999)** captured the 2024 Western Australia Innovator of the Year Award for their groundbreaking Visual Analysis Device – clear proof of how solid foundations in education can evolve into world-changing innovation.

The Hadfield brothers' journey began during their time at John XXIII College, where they developed the analytical thinking and collaborative spirit that became central to their approach.

Jeremy reflects on the College's influence, 'The computing labs at John XXIII back then were state-of-the-art... that shaped at least Andy's, Nick's, and my education. That was our best subject. We were all drawn to those topics and we pursued all of the courses that John XXIII made available around computing.' The entrepreneurial spirit clearly runs in the family, with fourth brother **Nick Hadfield (Class 1994)** also working in the technology sector.

Jeremy and Andrew, who are twins, initially pursued separate but complementary academic paths after graduation. Jeremy started with a science degree at the University of Western Australia, completed a double major in geology, then went back to do a degree in computer science with a double major in computer science and information systems.

Andrew also began with science at UWA but took 'a bit more of a winding path through university,' trying geology and even film and television for a couple of years before ultimately settling on computer science with a double major.

Peter followed a different path, studying mechanical engineering at Curtin University after initially starting with mechatronic engineering (robotics). After university, he worked for a Norwegian company in the oil and gas industry, spent time in Brazil, then moved to an engineering consultancy before joining Woodside as a subsea engineer for the last 10 years, now working in the decommissioning space. When the brothers needed engineering expertise for their grain analysis project, Peter was the natural choice to help with prototyping and fabrication design.

The twins' first venture, Phobos Consulting, established in 2008 as a boutique software development consultancy based in West Perth, became their testing ground for ambitious projects. Starting with just Jeremy and Andrew working out of their father's server room, the company has grown to around 23 consultants. The company builds mobile, web and desktop apps for startups through to large enterprises, solving complex problems and leveraging machine learning algorithms, optimisation frameworks, or nuts and bolts software development.

'Through Phobos Consulting, we have developed a reputation for solving hard problems and established a good working relationship with CBH Group,' Andrew explains. This reputation for tackling the impossible would prove crucial when they were approached to solve what the agricultural industry had long considered a 'holy grail' – automating visual grain analysis.

In 2020, the brothers established Deimos Laboratory, named after one of Mars' moons, to focus specifically on research and development of innovative hardware solutions. Deimos is a forward-thinking technology company that focuses on designing and manufacturing solutions to address sophisticated problems across various industries.

The development of their award-winning Visual Analysis Device epitomises the brothers' approach to innovation. 'In the early days we were developing prototypes in our garages,' Andrew recalled. 'After many, many prototypes and progressive optimisation, we feel the device has achieved what we set out to do'.

The Visual Analysis Device, which is roughly the size of an office printer, can be used to visually assess a half litre grain sample using custom-designed hardware, deep learning algorithms and software. Grain samples can be analysed faster, more accurately and more consistently than traditional manual methods.

The collaboration with CBH Group has completely reshaped grain analysis in the agricultural industry. CBH Group is Australia's largest cooperative and the nation's largest grain exporter, owned and controlled by around 3,500 Western Australian grain growing businesses. The cooperative handles approximately 90 percent of the Western Australian grain harvest through its extensive network of storage and handling facilities. CBH have deployed 180 Visual Analysis Devices for the 2025/26 harvest across receival sites in WA, demonstrating the real-world impact of their innovation.

Winning the Rio Tinto Growth Innovation Award at the 2024 WA Innovator of the Year ceremony was a moment of validation for years of dedicated work. Jeremy notes:



'Getting this recognition feels fantastic, not just for us but for both the Deimos and CBH teams, who have been working long nights and going above and beyond to get this device and software to where it is today. Without them none of this would have been possible'.

Between their two businesses, the brothers now employ around 45 people and expect significant growth over the next few years, particularly with Deimos. They have since established an office and factory in Bayswater, where they manufacture the devices.



Jeremy and Andrew's commitment to inspiring the next generation was evident when they brought their Visual Analysis Device to our College at the 2024 Year 9 Alumni Career Conversations event, where current students learnt about the machine firsthand and saw it in action up close.

Reflecting on their journey from John XXIII College to industry recognition, the brothers offer valuable insights for young people navigating their own career paths. With their technology now proving its worth in Western Australia's grain industry, the potential for international adoption looms large.

Jeremy emphasises finding your passion, 'In hindsight, why did I go and do that geology [degree] because



at school my favourite subject was computing and computer science. I got there eventually and pursued that as a degree... pursuing your passions is important.'

When asked about the unique dynamics of working as siblings, Andrew reflects, 'We've learned that family business brings its own set of considerations – you need to be clear about roles and communicate openly. But having that deep trust and shared values gives you a foundation that's hard to replicate with other business partners.'

On the day-to-day reality of working together, Jeremy admits, 'We bicker a lot, so we have our own offices to isolate us from everyone else. But it's just a habit, we bicker a lot and have done since we were kids... but we always agree on the important things.'

Peter, who serves as director of Deimos Laboratory, highlights the value of persistence, 'Innovation isn't just

about having a good idea – it's about seeing it through when everyone else thinks it can't be done.'

The collaboration between Deimos Laboratory and Phobos Consulting represents an ecosystem where hardware innovation meets software expertise. The brothers continue to push boundaries, working on new projects that could revolutionise other industries just as they have done with agriculture.



What started in garages and server rooms has grown into a thriving enterprise that employs 45 people across two innovative companies. For the Hadfield brothers, it's about more than just problem-solving – it's about the joy of creation itself.

As Jeremy reflects, 'We try to find opportunities to be creative, and we find that rewarding...' Andrew affirms, 'Don't be afraid to start small and iterate. Some of our best innovations came from being willing to fail fast, learn quickly, and try again.'



Finding success with **life balance**



JOHN XXIII

H The commitment, resilience, and determination of John XXIII College students were celebrated at the recent High Achievers' Breakfast.

Held to recognise Years 7–12 students who demonstrated outstanding achievement in Semester One 2025, this annual tradition reinforces our College's commitment to recognising student excellence.

The event brought students and staff together for a special morning of recognition and reflection. Beyond academic recognition, the breakfast provided an opportunity for students to connect and celebrate the joys of learning in a collaborative spirit.

A particular highlight was the keynote address by alumna **Grace Barbour (Class 2021)**. A regular member of the High Achievers' Club and recipient of the esteemed John XXIII Award, Grace has carried the values of passion and service throughout her journey. Now in her fourth year studying physiotherapy at Notre Dame, Grace reminded students that high achievement is about much more than academic results.



'In Year 12, I wasn't entirely sure what career path I wanted to pursue, and I remember feeling quite stressed about that,' Grace reflected, empathising with current students facing similar uncertainties. Through her engaging and heartfelt speech, Grace encouraged students to follow their interests, reassuring them that 'you don't need to have all the answers right now. Start by following what genuinely interests you, and allow your direction to develop over time.'

Grace's message extended beyond academic pursuits to encompass the broader school experience, highlighting the invaluable skills gained through co-curricular activities, sport, and service. 'These co-curriculars aren't just 'extras', they are where real-life skills are built,' she shared, drawing on her own experiences in school musicals and netball to underline the importance of teamwork, leadership, and friendship.



Central to her speech was the idea of redefining success. Grace urged students to consider success as 'discovering who you are, what you love to do, and how you show up for other people,' rather than simply grades and awards. She spoke

passionately about her involvement in community work, including volunteering with Uni Camp for Kids and Sony Camp, explaining how giving back 'doesn't just help others, it shapes you... It develops your empathy. And those soft skills, like communication, teamwork, [and] problem solving, those are what employers and universities really value, even more than perfect scores.'

Grace also addressed the universal challenge of maintaining balance, especially for high-achieving

students. She spoke openly about her own experiences with stress and burnout, offering practical advice on study strategies, choosing subjects based on genuine interest, and prioritising mental health.

'No goal is worth sacrificing your mental health or your relationships,' she reminded the audience, highlighting the importance of boundaries, rest, and pursuing joy outside of academic commitments.

Students left inspired to pursue not only academic excellence but also a life enriched by curiosity, service, and meaningful connections.

As Grace concluded:

'You're already being set up to do great things... don't rush the journey and miss the chance to enjoy where you are right now.'

The College congratulates all our high achievers and thanks Grace Barbour for returning to share her wisdom and encouragement.

Her message of balanced success embodies the values that define our College community – values that extend far beyond the classroom to shape young people who will make a positive difference in the world.



Magis: reaching higher

H Discovering the joy of learning more through personal discovery

The Latin word *magis* – meaning ‘more’ or ‘to a greater extent’, serves as far more than an educational catchphrase at John XXIII College. It captures the spirit of Ignatian pedagogy, a 450-year-old educational tradition that continues to inspire and challenge our students to reach beyond their perceived limitations.

The Ignatian foundation

Ignatian pedagogy, grounded in the educational philosophy of St Ignatius of Loyola, emphasises the development of the whole person – intellectually, spiritually, and socially. This approach encourages students to become ‘men and women for others,’ using their God-given talents not merely for personal advancement, but for the service of humanity. The concept of *magis* sits at the heart of this philosophy, calling students to excellence not as an end in itself, but as a means to greater service and deeper understanding.

In the Ignatian tradition, learning is not passive absorption of facts, but an active engagement with knowledge that transforms both the learner and their world. This pedagogy emphasises reflection,

discernment, and the cultivation of conscience – qualities that prepare students not just for academic success, but for lives of meaning and purpose.

International Baccalaureate methodology, adapted for young minds

Our Magis Elective Course draws its academic rigour from the International Baccalaureate (IB) framework, widely recognised as one of the world’s most demanding and comprehensive educational programs. The IB’s emphasis on inquiry-based learning, critical thinking, and international-mindedness aligns perfectly with Ignatian educational principles.

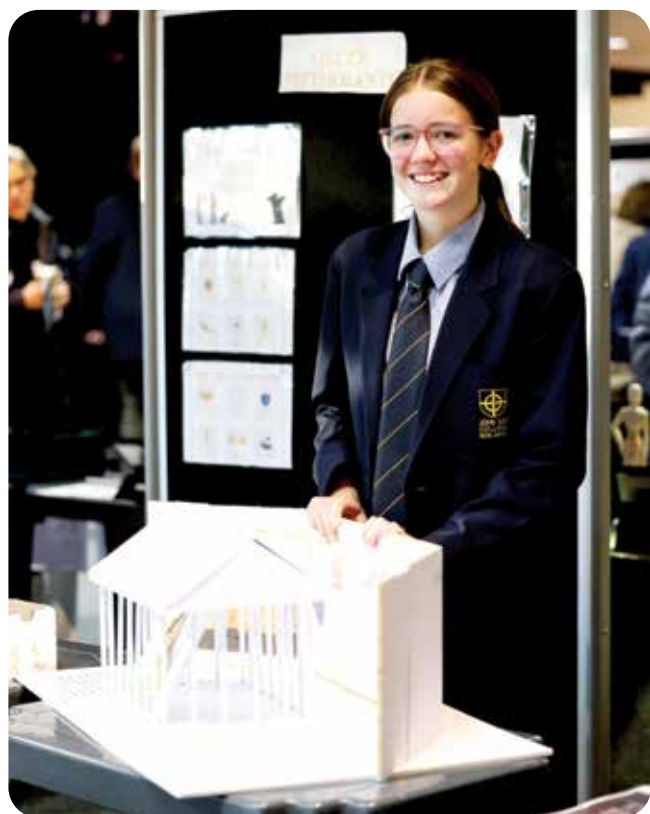
The IB Personal Project, typically undertaken by students aged 16-19, challenges learners to explore a topic of personal interest through independent research, demonstrating creativity, action, and service. Recognising the exceptional capabilities of our students, we have thoughtfully adapted this rigorous framework for our Years 7 and 8 Magis elective students, maintaining the intellectual challenge whilst ensuring age-appropriate scope and timeframes.

This adaptation allows our younger students to experience the depth and independence of tertiary-level inquiry whilst still providing the scaffolding and

support necessary for their developmental stage. The result is a program that stretches our students intellectually whilst nurturing their confidence and curiosity.

Chris Morris, Deputy Principal – Teaching and Learning, explains:

‘The Magis personal projects provide a space for students to dig deeper, think bigger, and discover more about themselves and the world. By blending Ignatian values with the global standards of the IB, these projects help young minds grow into thoughtful, confident learners who aren’t just aiming higher, but aiming with purpose.’



SEMESTER ONE SHOWCASE: A celebration of diverse passions

The recent Personal Project Exhibition at the Thomas More Exhibition Centre demonstrated the program’s effectiveness. Our 64 Magis students presented projects spanning a variety of topics, from the neuroscience of dreams to the evolution of Formula 1, from ancient Greek warfare to modern influencer culture.

The diversity of topics reflects the Ignatian principle of ‘finding God in all things’, encouraging students to



see learning opportunities in every field of human endeavour. Whether exploring the medical intricacies of podiatry, the artistic evolution of manga, or the environmental importance of bees, each student demonstrated the *magis* spirit of going beyond surface-level understanding to achieve genuine expertise.

Among the standout presentations was Year 8 student Niamh Jennings, whose project on women in politics exemplified the depth of inquiry the program inspires. Through extensive research examining historical and contemporary perspectives, Niamh demonstrated sophisticated analytical skills and a nuanced understanding of complex political landscapes. Her ability to synthesise diverse sources and present her findings with clarity and confidence showcased not only her academic capabilities but also her genuine passion for understanding how women have shaped and continue to influence political systems worldwide.



Beyond academic accomplishment

The exhibition revealed more than just academic accomplishment. Students displayed the confidence to discuss complex topics with visitors, the professionalism to present their findings effectively, and the enthusiasm that comes from pursuing genuine passions. These skills – communication, presentation, and intellectual curiosity – are key features of both Ignatian and IB education.



Observes Ms Daisy Farley, Head of Magis:

'The supportive atmosphere among the cohort, with students genuinely interested in each other's projects, reflects the Ignatian emphasis on community and mutual support. This camaraderie transforms individual achievement into collective celebration, embodying the principle that true excellence lifts others as it elevates oneself.'



Looking forward: the more that beckons

As we congratulate our Semester One Magis students on their impressive achievements, we recognise that this exhibition represents not a conclusion, but a foundation. The research skills, critical thinking abilities, and enthusiasm for learning that students have developed through their Personal Projects will serve them throughout their academic journey and beyond.

The program's strength lies not just in the quality of the projects produced, but in the transformation of the students themselves. They have discovered that they are capable of more than they imagined – more curiosity, more creativity, more insight, and more impact. This discovery is the true gift of *magis* – the realisation that our capacity for growth, learning, and service is boundless.



In the words of St Ignatius, we seek to help our students become 'contemplatives in action', individuals who combine deep reflection with meaningful engagement with the world. Through the Magis program, our students are not just learning more; they are becoming more – more confident, more capable, and more committed to using their talents in service of others.

The joy of learning more extends beyond acquiring knowledge; it is about discovering the infinite potential within us and our responsibility to use that potential for the greater good. In this, our Magis students embody the very best of both Ignatian tradition and international educational excellence.

The *Magis* Elective holds exhibitions every semester, providing ongoing opportunities to champion the meaningful contributions of our students. These events stand as proud reminders that at John XXIII College, we inspire students to discover the 'more' that lies within.



The circuitous path to Silicon Valley

H Discover how one startup has carved out a distinctive path in the competitive world of tech entrepreneurship, transforming how millions shop online.

After **Rory Garton-Smith (Class 2008)** finished high school, the future seemed wonderfully uncertain. 'I had no idea what to do with my life (which I think is quite normal), so I tried a bit of everything,' he reflects. Like many graduates, he faced the familiar crossroads of possibility without a clear destination in mind. What followed was a journey that would take him across continents to the heart of tech start-ups in Silicon Valley, where he now stands as the technical architect behind one of the most promising US shopping platforms in the digital economy.

The early years after graduation were marked by creative exploration rather than career-focused

direction. Rory dabbled in music composition, achieving the standout moment of landing a track in Triple J's Hottest 100 – clear evidence of his creative versatility. Academic pursuits meandered through law, engineering, and arts before crystallising around data science and software engineering through a master's degree at UWA.

This academic foundation opened doors that seemed almost impossibly distant from Perth. Apple's headquarters in San Francisco beckoned, offering Rory the extraordinary opportunity to work on the iPhone. 'I was surrounded by unbelievably smart people (much smarter than me) and I learned so much there,' he recalls.

'The iPhone is the single most successful product of all time so getting to see the inner workings of that engineering team was amazing.'

The experience provided both technical expertise and entrepreneurial inspiration that would prove foundational to his later ventures.

The transition to entrepreneurship occurred in 2022, when Rory partnered with fellow Perth natives Harry Dixon and Elliot Rampono to establish Checkmate. He explains their motivation:

'There was a clear disconnect between the technical hurdles being placed in by big tech to restrict marketing efforts, in order to boost their own ad networks, and the ability of merchants to reach consumers. We wanted to bridge the gap using a more modern tech stack.'

What began as recognition of a technical problem has evolved into something far more comprehensive – a shopping companion that serves over one million US users across more than 100,000 brands.

Checkmate addresses the friction points that plague modern online shopping through automated discount code application, gift card management, package tracking, and wish list maintenance. The platform also creates a 'ghost email inbox' for users that harvests promotional offers without cluttering personal inboxes. With plans to expand to Australia in 2027, Rory aims to bring his seamless shopping experience closer to home.

'We built Checkmate for the optimisers. The digital shopper looking for the right thing. For busy, productive people that don't have the time to dig for savings, tracking codes or items they might want to buy later,' he says. 'We are improving the end-to-end shopping experience by making it simple and personalised.'

The technical challenge that inspired Checkmate emerged from observing how major technology companies were inadvertently hampering e-commerce through privacy-focused restrictions. Apple's Identifier for Advertisers (IDFA) blocking and Google's third-party cookie deprecation, while beneficial for user privacy, created barriers between merchants and consumers. The founding team recognised an opportunity to bridge this gap using more sophisticated approaches.

Securing investment during a recession presented considerable obstacles. 'Capital raising during a recession was tough, but we had traction and learnt a lot during the process. Nonetheless it takes months and is a total grind,' Rory admits. Google's decision to lead their Series A funding round represented more than capital – it provided validation and

operational leverage. 'Getting Google on the capital table was a huge deal and opened a lot of doors for us operationally.'

The entrepreneurial lifestyle brings unique psychological demands that Rory describes with refreshing candour. 'There are new challenges every single day. The 'stress' cycle of a startup is not even weekly or monthly, but hourly, you can have a huge win and a huge loss in the same day.'

Yet these challenges are offset by extraordinary opportunities. Recent relocation to Manhattan has provided access to experiences he describes as surreal moments of gratitude.

Reflecting on his John XXIII College experience, Rory remains enthusiastic about the arts program and athletic pursuits that shaped his character. 'I'm a big fan of the performing arts program. The musicals were amazing! Also playing rugby, rowing for four years, cross-country, and handball in the library courtyard.' These experiences contributed to a foundation that values both creative expression and collaborative achievement.

His advice to current students emphasises substance over appearance:

'Study the hardest possible things you can study always, and just 'do the thing'. The world doesn't reward intelligence as much as it rewards high-agency.'

He advocates for technical proficiency in modern programming languages, databases, and user experience (UX) design, while championing statistics as transformative. 'I think statistics is probably the most underrated subject, and you don't need to learn a lot of it to make it useful,' he explains. 'Take the first year Frequentist and Bayesian stats unit at UWA if you can, I think it was one of the most eye-opening classes I ever had and it really changed how I saw the world!'

Rory's journey illustrates how exploration, technical mastery, and bold action can converge to create genuine innovation. His story suggests that the most meaningful careers often emerge not from rigid roadmaps, but from remaining open to unexpected opportunities while building the skills to capitalise on them when they arise.



Inspiring Hope and Excellence

H The John XXIII College 2025 Staff Conference brought together our entire College community for two days of reflection, learning, and celebration. Now in its 31st year – a tradition established in 1994 under Principal Greg Clune – this year’s gathering focused on ‘Inspiring Hope and Excellence.’

A sacred beginning

The conference opened with the Celebration of the Eucharist in our Chapel, led by Archbishop Timothy John Costelloe SDB. As Archbishop of Perth since 2012 and President of the Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference, his presence reinforced the spiritual foundation of our work as educators. Staff from all areas of the College united in prayer and reflection,

setting the tone for meaningful conversations about our role in students’ lives.

Challenge and reflection

Following the Eucharist, Archbishop Costelloe addressed staff in the Gonzaga Barry Lecture Theatre.

His keynote challenged everyone to consider how they witness hope within our school, particularly during times of change and uncertainty.

Teams across the College discussed these themes, exploring practical ways to embody hope in their daily work with students and colleagues. These conversations aligned with our commitment to *Cura Personalis* – Latin for ‘care for the whole person’ – and our





Ignatian values of reflection and service.

Community in action

The afternoon showcased staff talents through diverse wellbeing and service activities. The Community Kitchen Collective prepared meals for those

in need, while others participated in bouldering at Portside, floral arranging for the evening dinner, or the unique Silent Disco experience.

From the contemplative Sound Escape featuring didgeridoo and crystal bowls to energetic Zumba sessions, these activities fostered deeper connections among colleagues while demonstrating our values in action.



Celebrating service

The evening celebration at the UWA Club honoured staff members who have served the College for 10, 20, and 30 years. Darren Kowal delivered the traditional toast, capturing the gratitude and commitment that defines our College community.

These recognition moments highlighted the continuity and dedication that strengthen our educational mission year after year.



Innovation and the future

Day Two featured Dr Nici Sweaney, founder of Ai Her Way and nationally recognised AI strategist, who led three tailored sessions on artificial intelligence in education. Her approach – covering AI fundamentals for all staff, practical applications for teachers, and workflow improvements for support staff – demonstrated relevant professional development in action.



Dr Sweaney's philosophy that 'good AI, in the hands of good people, can heal the world' resonated with our mission to develop 'people for others.' The sessions, informed by a pre-conference staff survey, ensured practical application within our College context.

Professional growth

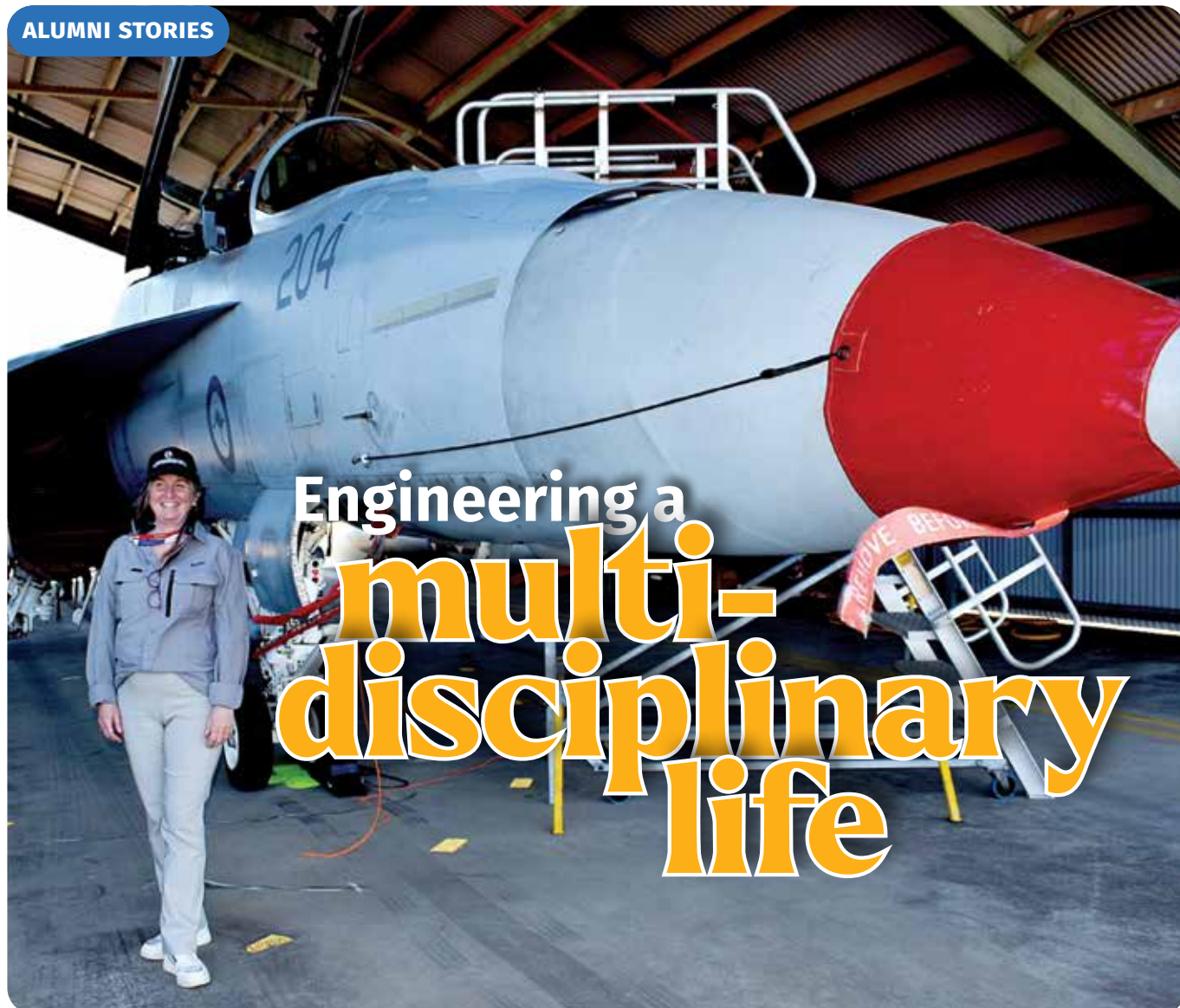
The conference provided three hours of faith-based professional learning, offering valuable Ongoing Renewal hours for staff with Accreditation to Teach/Work in a Catholic School. This commitment to continuous professional development supports our vision of shared excellence among all community members.

Moving forward

The 31st Annual Staff Conference reinforced our strategic priorities: enriching our Catholic faith community, inspiring educational excellence, practicing care for the whole person, nurturing inclusion, and embracing sustainability.

As we look to the future, we carry forward a renewed sense of purpose and community. The conference reminded us that excellence in Catholic education is an ongoing journey – one we undertake together, guided by our faith and values, committed to nurturing each student's unique potential.

In an uncertain world, our College community stands ready to inspire the next generation of Christ-centred leaders, strengthened by traditions like this annual gathering that has brought us closer together for over three decades.



H When **Giacinta Parish (nee Matassa) (Class 1989)** graduated from John XXIII College, she had no grand career plan.

As one of the academically top students, everyone expected her to pursue medicine. But Gia knew what she didn't want – medicine simply wasn't for her. She was naturally drawn to 'engineering or STEM... give me the numbers and the figures and the data,' she recalls, preferring analytical problem-solving over clinical practice.

Fast-forward three decades, and Gia now spends much of her time in exactly the kind of collaborative environment she gravitated towards. As Director of UWA's Defence and Security Institute and a Board Director of the Australian Remote Operations for Space and Earth (AROSE) consortium, she navigates high-level conversations with government officials, industry leaders, and researchers across the Asia-Pacific region.

Her circuitous route illustrates how careers can evolve in unexpected directions when you follow your interests rather than predetermined plans.

Gia's university journey began with uncertainty. Enrolling in a new major called chemical physics at UWA, she transferred to engineering in second year after her interest was piqued when attending first year engineering lectures with friends, and choosing electronic engineering in particular after discovering her passion for electrical fundamentals during physics classes.

Her unique combination of chemistry and electronic engineering made her the only student with that particular academic blend – creating some logistical timetabling challenges but ultimately proving invaluable.

A pivotal moment came during her master's when she encountered research on infrared sensors and semiconductor materials. 'This electronic materials business combines my chemistry and my electronic engineering. It does make sense,' she realised, finally seeing how her unconventional subject combination could lead somewhere meaningful.

Her master's research, working on defence applications through a partnership her supervisors had with a US defence company, opened doors to international collaboration. A scholarship-funded trip to Europe and the United States was a turning point, introducing her to cutting-edge research groups and ultimately leading to a PhD at the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), through a Fulbright Scholarship and UWA Hackett Scholarship.

UCSB proved to be an ideal environment for Gia's development as a researcher. The university's collaborative approach to engineering and physics research was revolutionary – professors worked together in large, shared facilities rather than competing in isolated laboratories. She explains:

'I was in a group that had 15 or more PhD students, sharing office space with another group of the same size, all working in related areas and all supporting each other.'

This collaborative model, combined with Santa Barbara's unique geography in which they could see the beach, including the occasional migrating whale, from their office window, created an extraordinary research environment.

Gia's PhD focused on gallium nitride research, working on materials that would eventually become crucial for LED technology and high-power electronics. Groups she worked alongside were at the forefront of the race to develop blue laser diodes, research that would later earn Nobel Prizes for key contributors.

The experience was professionally game-changing. 'It was a really exciting time to be there,' Gia reflects. The collaborative culture and cutting-edge research positioned her well for an academic career, with strong publication records and international networks that would prove invaluable upon returning to Australia.

Gia's return to Australia was shaped by practical constraints – her Fulbright Scholarship required a two-year return commitment, and her husband's medical issues necessitated coming home sooner rather than later. She secured an Australian Research Council postdoctoral fellowship, maintaining international collaborations while establishing herself at UWA.

However, Gia's experience highlights the structural challenges facing academic researchers, particularly

women balancing careers with family. Research careers depend heavily on continuous momentum and output, making career breaks particularly difficult to navigate.

After her first period of maternity leave, Gia managed to rebuild her research momentum successfully. The second time proved more challenging as collaborative networks had shifted, demonstrating how academic careers can be vulnerable to timing and circumstances beyond individual control.

Gia's experience reflects broader challenges for women in engineering. When she studied in the mid-1990s, women comprised around 20% of engineering students – a figure that dropped in subsequent years and has only recently returned to those levels despite decades of initiatives to increase female participation. Gia believes this persistent underrepresentation stems partly from how mathematics is taught in Australian primary schools, where girls are lost from the subject at higher rates than boys, creating a foundational barrier to STEM careers.

Gia's transition into leadership roles happened organically rather than through deliberate career planning. Her involvement in university committees led to opportunities in strategic research management, eventually becoming Associate Dean Research for the Faculty of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences.

'Most of these roles came through people approaching me rather than me deliberately mapping out my career trajectory,' Gia reflects.

Her expertise in defence-related research, combined with her strategic

thinking abilities, led to involvement in establishing UWA's Defence and Security Institute, and taking on the role of Deputy Chair. When the institute's director relocated during COVID border closures, Gia found herself also acting Director on many occasions, which then became interim Director after he moved on to a new role. After a significant period of time in the interim role this has recently become a formal appointment which sees her in the Director role until at least 2030.

The role has allowed Gia to combine her technical background with strategic thinking: 'I really enjoyed that role of looking up and out... whereas traditional research is a deep dive into a really high level, this is multidisciplinary cross linking.'





Today, Gia operates at the intersection of academia, industry, and government policy. Her work with the Defence and Security Institute involves strategic policy development, industry engagement, and thought leadership around Australia's defence capabilities, particularly the Indian Ocean perspective often missing in national discussions.

Through AROSE, she advocates for Australia's unique strengths in remote operations – capabilities developed through mining and resources sectors that could contribute to global space endeavours. Her meeting with former NASA astronaut Pam Melroy, who contributed to the founding of AROSE, highlighted how Australia's mining expertise in remote operations could become a distinctive contribution to international space efforts.

Gia's current roles reflect the evolution of modern academic careers, where technical expertise increasingly intersects with policy, strategy, and industry engagement.

Her memories of John XXIII include participating in the 1989 production of *The Sound of Music* and the excitement of moving to the new Mount Claremont campus in 1986. She recalls Mr Lloyd's English literature classes where students acted out scenes, particularly enjoying her role as an elderly, slightly batty mother character.

The IGSSA carnivals stand out vividly: 'We were a tiny half-school, and we did so badly. We'd learn our cheers and just be drowned out by everybody else. But there was one year when someone had been to the US and brought back these new cheers, and we were so pleased with ourselves.'

Gia's advice to current students challenges conventional wisdom about career planning: 'Don't be limited by what you think your career might be while you're at high school because you just don't know enough about potential careers.'

She advocates strongly for studying what genuinely interests you rather than pursuing subjects based on perceived career outcomes. 'If you study what interests you, then you will find the right career path.'

For engineering specifically, Gia emphasises the field's breadth:

'Engineering is using scientific principles to solve problems and those problems can be environmental, biomedical, defence-related, space technology, renewable energy systems, telecommunications, robotics, materials science, or infrastructure development – it's so much more than people think.'

'There's such a breadth in electrical engineering alone that it's just not understood, the kinds of things you can do.'



Perhaps most importantly, she urges students heading to university to embrace the full experience: 'Take advantage of being at university. It's more than just getting a degree.' The relationships formed through campus involvement, she argues, often prove more valuable than classroom learning alone.

With her appointment as Director secured until 2030, Gia continues strengthening Australia's position in defence technology and space operations. The girl who once preferred 'numbers and figures' now shapes national conversations about strategic capability. Her path demonstrates that technical excellence becomes most powerful when paired with the ability to communicate complex ideas across disciplines – a skill developed through three decades of saying yes to opportunities that didn't fit any conventional script.



Stepping forward into authentic leadership

H The morning **Kate Molinari (Class 2004)** decided to leave her role as Chief Marketing Officer at Seven West Media WA, she was grappling with more than just career uncertainty.

She was navigating the challenges of IVF treatment while managing the brands of one of Western Australia's largest media portfolios. It was a pivotal moment that would eventually lead her to create something entirely new.

'I really just put my family first,' Kate reflects on her decision to step away from the corporate world. 'Which was difficult because my career had always been such a big part of who I was.' What began as time to focus on family planning evolved into the foundation of her current venture – Striide, a leadership and communication training company that addresses a critical gap she identified in today's workforce.

Kate's journey to entrepreneurship took several unexpected turns. After graduating from John XXIII College, she started an arts degree at UWA before

quickly transferring to Notre Dame University to study PR and marketing. 'The arts degree wasn't the right fit and I didn't know what I wanted to do,' she admits. 'I wanted something that still had some breadth to it... something that could open up a few doors.'

Those doors led her first to Sydney, after a chance conversation in Perth with a family friend connected her with Channel Nine. What followed was a 14-year career in broadcast media that saw her rise through the ranks at both Channel Nine and Seven West Media. By 27, she was managing sales targets of around \$30 million and leading teams across multiple platforms.

'I was in the advertising and media industry, but my job at Nine was in sales, and I actually love sales,' Kate explains. The skills she developed – particularly in relationship building and communication – would prove invaluable when launching her own business. 'Most of the jobs that I've had along the way were offered to me because of a particular relationship and someone

trusted me to step into something which was out of my comfort zone.'

Her career trajectory included a significant shift when she became Chief Marketing Officer at Seven West Media, overseeing major brands including Channel 7, *The West Australian*, *Perth Now*, and *The Sunday Times*. This role provided her with extensive experience in brand management and strategic partnerships that would later inform her training approach.

The seed for Striide was planted during Kate's time away from the corporate world, while living at Christchurch Grammar School where her husband works as a boarding master. Observing both emerging professionals and school students, she identified two critical areas of opportunity in leadership development.

'The first was what I experienced firsthand with the more junior staff members I had worked with – the inability to pick up the phone, that real face-to-face communication,' she explains.

'My experience shows that success comes down to working with other people, and life is so much easier if you can just pick up the phone, call someone, and say, "I desperately need your help."'

The second opportunity arose from her own experience with leadership training. 'I felt like there was an opportunity to make training more engaging and relevant. I love facilitating. I love bringing energy to a room and getting the best out of teams and individuals.'

Striide now offers various workshops to a diverse client base of businesses, individuals, and schools, including the popular 'Present Like a Boss' program, which coaches participants on how to deliver compelling presentations with confidence and impact, and 'Path to Potential,' which focuses on building self-awareness and improving team dynamics. Kate's approach draws heavily on her leadership and executive background, using real-world examples to help participants navigate modern workplace challenges.

The transition to business ownership while raising two young children – Jimmy, four, and Jake, eight months – presents its own unique challenges. 'I'm now navigating



a very different experience, which is being a business owner with two kids,' she says.

The flexibility of running her own company allows her to maintain the work-life balance that prompted her career change in the first place.

As Striide continues to grow, Kate remains focused on creating sustainable success that aligns with her family priorities. 'I'm hoping to build a company that enables just that – it still allows me to do pickups and drop-offs the majority of the time and get to spend beautiful time with my kids while they're really young.'

Kate's time at John XXIII College, where she progressed through from Year 1 to Year 12, continues to influence her approach to both business and parenting. 'Some of my dearest friends now are people that I had started in Year 1 with,' she says, highlighting the enduring relationships nurtured by the College's community environment.

The co-educational experience particularly shaped her professional confidence. 'I've sat around boardroom tables where I'm the only female, I'm the youngest person, and I believe I learned a lot of those skills around how to have a voice and interact with men from being in a daily classroom environment with boys.'

For current students considering entrepreneurship, Kate's advice centres on building networks and relationships that lead to trust and reliability. 'For me, it's always about building a network, getting outside your comfort zone and meeting different people. It's the network that has helped me build my Striide – people were able to trust me because they knew me.'

Looking ahead, Kate sees Striide's role as crucial in developing leaders and successful teams.

'We need to equip people not just with technical skills, but with the confidence to communicate, to build relationships, and to lead with authenticity. That's what's going to make the difference in their careers and the businesses they work for.'

Connecting with your unique passion



H Standing on stage at the Pan Pacific Hotel in June 2025, **Xavier Anderson (Class 2015)** received the Konica Minolta Career Achievement Award at the 7NEWS Young Achiever Awards WA.

The recognition marked a significant milestone for the young entrepreneur who has built Audience Revolution into a strategic marketing powerhouse that has developed strong partnerships and generated substantial revenue for clients within its first three years.

Xavier is driven by a passion for meaningful connection and digital innovation, qualities that have propelled his success in the competitive digital marketing landscape. His journey since graduating from John XXIII College demonstrates how determination and vision can create remarkable outcomes.

Xavier's entrepreneurial journey began with some unexpected detours. Fresh out of John XXIII College in 2015, he had initially planned to study social media in Sydney. 'I enrolled at the University of Technology in Sydney and made a whole song and dance that I was going to be moving over there. I moved there for a few days, and I realised it was not for me,' Xavier recalls. 'It was actually 48 hours, if I'm going to be completely honest.'

This early setback led to a six-month gap before enrolling at Curtin University, where he pursued a Bachelor

of Arts and Commerce in Marketing and Internet Communications. However, Xavier was determined not to wait until graduation to enter the workforce. 'I had a goal that I wanted to have a full-time job in the industry before I finished my degree,' he explains.

While still completing his second year of studies, Xavier secured a position with IPG Media Brands at their Reprise Digital division, working with major WA brands including Tourism WA, Lotterywest, and RAC Insurance. 'I was so grateful for everything I learned there, and they really invested in me. I got paid practically nothing (reality of entry-level positions), but what I learnt I still say is more valuable than any sort of salary.'

The COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges and opportunities. Xavier found himself managing social media monitoring for the Department of Premier and Cabinet, tracking public sentiment during the uncertain early days of the pandemic. 'I had to stay across everything being said about the department online. Each morning and evening, I flagged key issues and delivered reports to ensure the department had a clear picture of the public mood.'

Like many during the pandemic, Xavier experienced a career reassessment. 'I had a quarter life crisis and realised I didn't want to work in that big agency

environment anymore.' After a stint in event marketing and another agency role, Xavier made the decision that would change his life.

'I said to myself, if I can get one client, I'll quit my job and I'll go full force. And then I did. I did get that client and so I started my own business.'

Audience Revolution is a strategic digital marketing firm in Perth that operates with a focus on connecting brands with their target audience. What started as a solo venture has grown into a team of five, with Xavier noting: 'It was never my intention to grow my business.

I thought if I could just make the same salary that I was making previously, if I could do that for myself, that'd be amazing.' The team includes fellow John XXIII College alum **Jude Quinlan (Class 2021)**, who manages organic social media content and brings his photography and graphic design expertise to projects.

The company's growth has been driven by Xavier's commitment to working only with clients he believes in. 'I prefer to work with clients that we are aligned with, brands that we're passionate about,' he says. 'I know with certainty that unless we believe in them, how can we market them?'

This philosophy has led to successful partnerships across residential construction, real estate, and event marketing. One notable client, Status Residential, has evolved beyond social media advertising to comprehensive marketing management and media buying, including traditional advertising channels such as billboards and radio.

The agency has also worked on high-profile projects including Leavers' celebrations, where they tackled the challenge of using creative design to promote alcohol-free events to 18-year-olds. 'On paper, it's a hard sell to the average 18-year-old – why they should attend,' Xavier acknowledges. Partnering with the event management team at Elevated Experiences Co, who contracted Audience Revolution for the project, their creative input formed part of a wider effort that led to stronger attendance.

Xavier's time at John XXIII College was instrumental in shaping his future success. He particularly enjoyed History,

Visual Arts, Media, and English. 'I truly enjoyed it. I loved my experience, and I appreciated the teachers so much.'

The learning support he received also made a lasting impression. 'I deeply valued... the learning enrichment,' he reflects. 'I think the time I spent there genuinely helped me. I always say to parents when they're trying to figure out what school to send their kids to, that whether they are the most academic person or not, JTC adapts, and they have the resources to support you accordingly.'

Looking back, Xavier recognises how his school subjects aligned with his eventual career path. 'Being

so interested in media, art and then history – if you mush them all together in a way, it kind of results in a creative marketing role as a career. I wish I would have known that back then.'

Xavier's approach to business and life is grounded in faith and perseverance. 'God does have a plan and so trust that plan,' he says. 'Everything will work out exactly how it is meant to. If I knew that when I was younger, that would have relieved me of a lot of stress or anxiety.'

For current students considering similar pathways, Xavier offers this advice: 'Believe in yourself and value the uniqueness that you have as an individual. That's what will set you apart. And

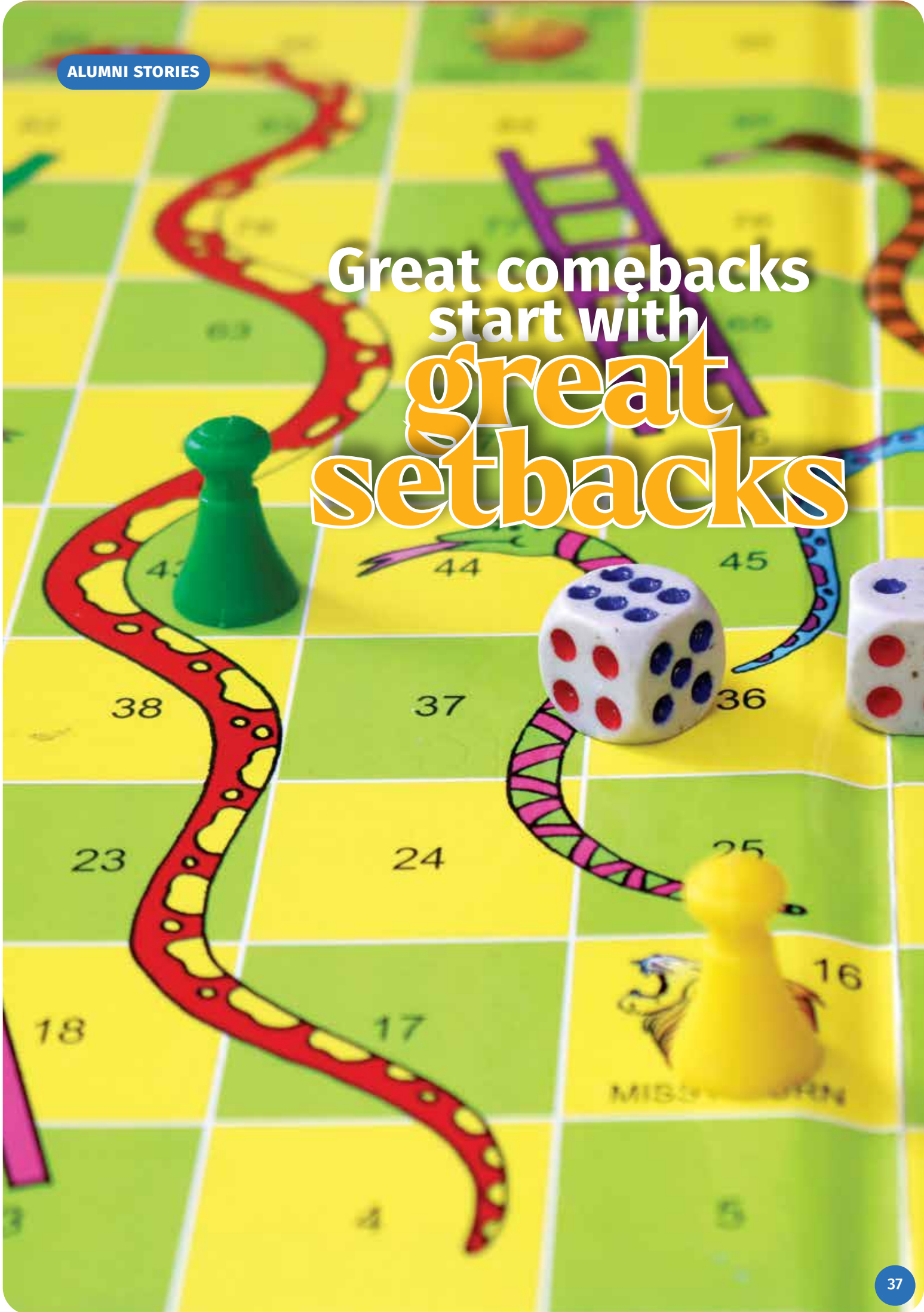
owning that. Don't try to fit the mould of everyone else. Just follow your instinct and follow your gut.'

Now three years into running Audience Revolution, Xavier remains focused on maintaining the quality and personal attention that has defined the agency's success. Rather than rapid expansion, the team concentrates on deepening relationships with existing clients and ensuring each partnership receives the strategic focus it deserves.

With this commitment to excellence over growth, Xavier continues to build the kind of marketing agency he always envisioned – one where meaningful connections drive lasting results.



Great comebacks start with **great setbacks**



H The journey of **Anthony Spiteri (Class 1996)** to becoming Director of Product Management for Asia, Pacific and Japan at Veeam Software began on the basketball courts of John XXIII College.

There, his love for both sport and computers would shape a distinctive career built on resilience and reinvention.

‘John XXIII was really fun from that perspective,’ the graduate recalls, speaking about his formative years spent predominantly on the A block courts. The College was evolving during his time here, with the music and arts programs expanding alongside the sporting culture that he and his friends embraced.

The sport that defined Anthony’s high school years would later prove foundational to his career. Today, at 46, he still plays cricket at Subiaco Marist Cricket Club. ‘Cricket is an incredible team sport and has always helped me,’ he notes. ‘Playing at a fairly high level has been a big part of my life, and sport has consistently provided much-needed balance.’

Anthony’s path was not conventional. After graduating from John XXIII, he enrolled in computer science at Curtin University but struggled to find focus. ‘I wasn’t focused or ready – I was simply keen to have a good time and enjoy university life,’ he admits candidly.

The consequences were harsh: three terminations from university over several years.

He recalls of his final dismissal:

‘They just kind of said, look, you’re probably not right for uni at this point.’

Rather than abandoning his passion for technology, Anthony took a sabbatical to Malta, his country of birth, to ‘get a few things out of my system.’

This period of reflection proved pivotal. Upon returning, he pursued the Microsoft Certified System Engineer (MCSE) qualification that his John XXIII computing teacher Mr Aidan McCarthy had first introduced to students back in Year 10. ‘It was always kind of ironic in that sense,’ Anthony notes, reflecting on how he completed the certification six years after Mr McCarthy first suggested it. ‘I managed to pass with a high distinction.’



Anthony’s story took an unusual academic turn when he later enrolled in a master’s degree at Charles Sturt University without completing an undergraduate degree. The MCSE certification, combined with his

work experience, provided exemptions that allowed direct entry.

‘It is based on capability,’ he explains about the IT industry’s approach to qualifications. ‘But if I was hiring and had two equally skilled people, I would naturally look for that extra something that distinguishes one candidate from another.’

Anthony’s first break came at Your ASP, a local internet service provider, where his boss Alex Liffers taught him

valuable lessons about precision and technique. ‘He was German, so his way of doing things was very precise and particular. He taught me a lot of good traits.’

He discovered the world of technology evangelism – a position that combines deep technical knowledge with community engagement and public speaking. ‘You live it, you leverage it. And then when you’re doing projects, instead of keeping it in for yourself, you can talk about it and you can make other people learn, learn in public,’ he explains.

‘Public speaking is one of the hardest things to do... but having the confidence to make that first level of conversation and talk about the technology that you are passionate about, that is a great first step.’

This route led to blogging, conference speaking, and eventually joining Veeam Software, the world’s number one backup and disaster recovery provider. Anthony’s technical blog became highly regarded in the industry, earning recognition as one of the top blogs in the VMware ecosystem and helping establish his reputation in the technology community.

Veeam’s software protects data for organisations of all sizes – including John XXIII College – by creating secure backups and enabling rapid recovery from disasters, cyberattacks, or system failures.

Earlier in his Veeam career, his duties required extensive international travel – sometimes 40-50% of the year – presenting at major technology conferences worldwide. ‘There’s no better feeling than when you’ve executed and delivered on it, to come off that stage,’ he describes the satisfaction of successful presentations, comparing it to winning a sporting event.

His current position provides better work-life balance with reduced travel demands, but more importantly represents a fundamental shift in focus. Unlike his previous sales-oriented evangelist work, Anthony now works from a research and development perspective, building deeper relationships with clients to understand their technical needs and challenges.

This transition requires different types of thinking and communication skills, with emphasis on listening rather than presenting. ‘It’s more rewarding,’ he affirms.

Beyond his corporate role, Anthony hosts the *Great Things with Great Tech* podcast, which has surpassed 100 episodes. ‘That podcast allows me to learn, and hopefully other people find some enjoyment out of that,’ he adds, emphasising the importance of continuous learning and collaboration.

For aspiring technology professionals, Anthony advocates for community engagement and hands-on experience over perfect academic records. He says:

‘The alternative pathways in computing are really exciting because if you’re passionate about computing... experience and experimentation can get you surprisingly far.’

He recommends starting in support roles: ‘Support work is a key part of that first step. And then, don’t be afraid to just keep on learning.’



Anthony’s journey also highlights the importance of authentic communication. ‘I would probably not go to the Tavern as much as I did and go to parties, you know, as much as I did initially,’ he jokes, but emphasises that each experience contributed to his development.

Looking back on his high school years, Anthony remains grateful for the foundation John XXIII College provided. ‘I’m a very proud JTC graduate,’ he states. ‘The grounding that John XXIII instilled has allowed me to be set up for success.’

Anthony’s journey reveals that success is not always linear, that failure can be formative, and that the values of collaboration, persistence, and community can lead to global impact.

For anyone navigating their own challenging paths, his experience offers both encouragement and practical wisdom about transforming setbacks into catalysts for professional fulfilment.

Listen to Anthony’s
*Great Things with
Great Tech* podcast





Meeting our First Principal

H John XXIII College recently welcomed our College's founding Principal, Fr Daven Day SJ, who was visiting from Sydney.

He returned to Perth to catch up with family and attend the St Louis Class of 1975 Reunion at Cottesloe Golf Club, where he had been Headmaster during the students' final year. While he was in Perth, we arranged for him to tour the campus and take part in several events.

Fr Day, a Jesuit priest, was our first Principal, holding the role from 1977 to 1978. Growing up in Nedlands, he attended Loreto Nedlands and St Louis School before joining the Jesuits and studying in Melbourne. He returned to Perth to serve as Headmaster of St Louis and later became the founding Principal of John XXIII College.

In 1977, Fr Day guided the merger of the Loreto and St Louis schools, forming the co-educational Catholic community that exists today. He helped establish our College's focus on academic and personal excellence, service, and justice.

The amalgamation of Loreto and St Louis was more than a simple administrative merger; it was a bold reimagining of Catholic education in the spirit of Vatican II.

Fr Day worked closely with Sr Angela Quill IBVM and others who played vital roles in our College's foundation, including Sr Bernadette Ziesing IBVM (Vice



Principal), Frank Owen (Deputy Principal), and other dedicated staff and community members. Together, they created a school grounded in Ignatian spirituality, Mary Ward's vision of women's education, and the reforming spirit of Pope John XXIII. This team effort established a foundation where students would be encouraged to serve others, seek justice, and live out our College's mission – a legacy that endures nearly five decades later.

Fr Day's visit comes as we prepare to mark two important anniversaries. In 2026, John XXIII College will celebrate 40 years at the Mount Claremont campus, and in 2027, 50 years since the Loreto and St Louis amalgamation. These milestones are reminders of our continued commitment to growth and positive change since we began in 1977.

During his visit, Fr Day met with staff and saw firsthand how the values established nearly 50 years ago remain present in our community. A morning tea was organised for staff to meet Fr Day. He expressed his thanks for their ongoing commitment to the mission of our College. He was also gifted John XXIII College uniform items as a gesture of appreciation. Later, he joined a small group for lunch, including College Captains, Faith and Mission Captains, his great-great-niece Isla (Year 9), and staff, providing an opportunity for students to hear about his hopes for our College.

Fr Day visited several primary classrooms, where students were excited to meet him. Head of Primary, Antoinette De Pinto, said the students were thrilled and made him feel very welcome, with one even asking if he was the King. He also visited Mary Ward Primary, our inclusive education program, which reflects a founding value of supporting all students.

Fr Day reflected on what he observed during his visit:

'I was quite overwhelmed with everything I experienced in the school: the amazing architecture, the sheer extent of the College facilities and the great warmth I felt from staff and students.'

Principal Daniel Mahon noted the significance of Fr Day's return, saying his work in bringing together two schools continues to inspire our College today.



'I was particularly taken by Fr Day's recognition of the warmth he felt from staff and students, especially given hospitality holds a special place within Ignatian spirituality, being much more than a mere gesture of welcome. By opening our hearts and offering our time and service, we nurture a community where every person feels seen, valued, and connected.'



Deputy Principal, Faith and Mission, Janeen Murphy, emphasised the importance of capturing our story: 'Fr Day's visit provided us with a precious opportunity to reflect on our past as we plan for our future. Understanding where we have come from helps us remain true to our founding vision while adapting to meet the needs of today's students.'

Earlier in the year, staff visited Fr Day in Sydney to document more about our College's origins. These conversations provided valuable insights into the decisions and values that shaped the College.

The strong foundation of John XXIII College was built by a team of committed religious and lay educators and parents who worked side by side with Fr Day. Their leadership helped create a school with a unique culture that continues to shape our community today.

We extend our deepest gratitude to Fr Day and all those who contributed to our College's founding years. As our milestone anniversaries approach, we remain grateful for their impact and are committed to upholding the mission and values established nearly five decades ago – to seek justice, embrace all people, and find God in all things, just as Fr Day and the founding team envisioned in 1977.



The impact of service and stage

H The story of **Lily Slattery (Class 2020)** began with a choice between staying on the expected path or taking a leap into the unknown.

Five years after graduating from John XXIII College in 2020, she has built a life that spans Melbourne's creative scene, First Nations housing advocacy, and disability justice work.

Starting university felt straightforward enough – a Bachelor of Behavioural Science at Notre Dame. But midway through, the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) came calling with an offer to study Screen Performance. Rather than agonising over the decision, Lily switched directions entirely. She says:

'My academic trajectory hasn't followed any textbook. But I've consistently chosen what excites me, and that's served me well.'

This instinct for following energy over expectation would become her career compass.

While training at WAAPA, Lily was simultaneously building expertise in an entirely different field. Starting as a swimming instructor with the Department of Education, she developed specialised skills teaching infants and eventually spent four years delivering programmes across Western Australia's remote communities. The work taught her about reaching diverse populations – experience that would prove invaluable later.

The transition to disability services happened almost accidentally. A role opened up at the Department of Communities as a Sector Development Support Officer, working across Access and Inclusion teams. Suddenly Lily was coordinating advocacy networks, helping organisations develop accessibility plans, and supporting disability rights legislation.

Then came Bennett Brook Disability Justice Centre – a secure facility for people with intellectual disabilities who have been deemed unfit to plea. As Business Support Coordinator, Lily found herself untangling decade-old filing systems, coordinating between

clinicians, Aboriginal liaisons, and justice officers, and helping redesign living spaces for accessibility. The work was complex, often heartbreaking, but essential. It also taught her about the emotional demands of frontline disability work.

‘One challenge in working with people with disability and First Nations communities is maintaining emotional resilience,’ she explains. ‘It can be hard when support doesn’t produce the outcomes you’d hoped for, or when clients are reluctant to engage. I’m still learning to hold space for others while also protecting my own mental wellbeing.’

When her government contract ended this year, Melbourne beckoned. The move wasn’t entirely spontaneous – she had already connected with ActUp, a disability-focused organisation, after sending what she calls ‘a cold email’ to founder Jasmine Radalj. Twelve weeks of volunteering had turned into paid work, and relocating meant the chance to establish ActUp’s Victorian branch.

The organisation runs creative programmes for people with disabilities, and Lily now oversees everything from school holiday workshops to their Term 4 Character Creation programme. What she didn’t expect was how much she would enjoy the business side – partnership development, family engagement, marketing strategies. ‘I am learning that I like wearing multiple hats,’ she admits.

Her latest role adds another dimension: Transitional Housing Support Worker with Ngwala Willumbong Aboriginal Corporation. Here, she works directly with First Nations clients facing housing crises, using culturally safe practices and self-determination frameworks. It’s demanding work that requires both practical skills and cultural sensitivity.

Threading through all of this remains her acting career. Melbourne has meant more auditions, better coaching, and a clearer pathway toward Lily’s goal of international opportunities. The industry’s unpredictability doesn’t faze her anymore. She observes:

‘The entertainment industry will test your resilience daily. Inconsistent opportunities, constant rejection, fierce competition. But when something clicks – even something small – it feels electric. That energy keeps me going.’

Looking back at John XXIII, Lily credits specific teachers with shaping her confidence. Ms Green and Mr Tsak in Drama, Ms Alexander in Music, Ms Hoy in Visual Arts – they saw potential and said so. More importantly, they helped her believe that creative work could be serious work.

Equally formative was learning alongside students from Mary Ward. ‘Most schools talk about inclusion theoretically,’ she notes. ‘We lived it daily at JTC. That experience shaped how I think about accessibility and advocacy – it’s not abstract policy work, it’s about real people with real needs.’



Her English classes with Mrs Brennan-Poland were equally influential, introducing critical frameworks for understanding power, culture, and social structures. Those analytical tools now inform her approach to community work and advocacy.

When asked about advice for our current students, Lily skips the usual platitudes about following dreams. Instead, she offers something more practical: ‘Ask yourself if you’d still want to do this work on the really difficult days. If the answer is yes, you’re probably onto something.’

She is particularly wary of career advice that prioritises passion over pragmatism. ‘People say ‘follow your passion’ like it’s magic,’ she observes. ‘But passion without skill-building and strategic thinking won’t pay your rent. I’ve been lucky to find work that matters to me, but I’ve also been deliberate about developing expertise.’

What strikes you about Lily’s approach is how she has refused to compartmentalise her interests. Acting informs her community work through storytelling and empathy. Her government experience brings structure to her non-profit leadership. Her disability advocacy work deepens her understanding of character and human complexity. Rather than choosing between different paths, she has created a career that integrates them all.



Sharing stories, building understanding

H As part of Refugee Week 2025, John XXIII College hosted a Human Library event – an innovative concept where people become ‘living books,’ sharing their personal stories in one-to-one conversations with participants who ‘borrow’ them for a session.

The Human Library creates a safe, respectful space for open conversations, allowing students and staff to engage directly with refugees and individuals working closely with refugee communities, gaining insight into their lived experiences and challenges.

This event represented more than an educational activity. It was grounded in the College’s Catholic values and the Gospel call to welcome the stranger and stand in solidarity with the vulnerable. The Human Library provided a tangible way to live out Gospel values, fostering empathy, understanding, and genuine community.

As the 2025 Refugee Week theme, ‘Finding Freedom: Diversity in Community’, reminds us, diverse communities flourish when every voice is heard and

valued, and when we support each other through life’s challenges.

Libraries are more than shelves of books – they are spaces where communities gather, stories are shared, and understanding is deepened. Hosting a Human Library in our own library space reminded us that the most powerful narratives often come from the voices of those who have lived them. In this setting, our students discovered that some of the most important lessons cannot be found in textbooks, but in the courage and resilience of real people sharing their journeys.

Throughout the day, students and staff engaged in meaningful one-to-one conversations with our diverse guest speakers.

Watch a highlight
video of Refugee
Week at the College





Assadullah

who shared his journey from Afghanistan to Australia, highlighting the challenges of displacement and the importance of advocacy and understanding.



Volodymyr Ksenyk

who recounted his family's escape from war in Ukraine and the role of community and kindness in their resettlement in Perth.



Timothy Dymond

whose career focuses on supporting refugees and newly arrived migrants, helping them navigate complex systems and build new lives in Australia.



Wahida Aziz

who spoke about her family's migration journey from Afghanistan to India and then Australia, and her ongoing commitment to education and empowerment for others starting anew.

'Events like the Human Library are at the heart of what we do at John XXIII College,' explains Library and Learning Services Educator Jean Redfern. 'We believe deeply in forming young people who are not just academically capable, but who embody the Ignatian ideal of being 'people for others.'

'The Human Library allowed our students to encounter real stories of courage and resilience, helping them develop the empathy and understanding essential to living out our Catholic mission of inclusion and service.'

A highlight of the event was Volodymyr's reflection:

'Thank you for inviting me and organising such an important event. It was amazing to see how engaged the kids were, especially Year 6. I truly felt that my words mattered, and I hope they understood that even a small act of compassion from a child can have a meaningful impact on the lives of others and their families. My wife and I are so proud that our son is part of this wonderful community.'

The Human Library at John XXIII College was more than just an event – it was a living expression of compassion, understanding, and the power of community to welcome, support, and celebrate diversity. By listening to others' stories, students and staff were challenged to see beyond stereotypes and recognise our shared humanity.

As our College continues its commitment to social justice and inclusion, the Human Library stands as a reminder that every person's story matters – and that, together, we can build a more compassionate and welcoming community for all.

Our journey of
**walking
together**

H A living story now adorns our walls. Visitors coming into reception now pause to trace the flowing pathways in Mel Spillman's artwork.

But *People for Others* represents far more than decoration – it stands as a daily reminder of our commitment to reconciliation and our shared journey as a community.

The three-panelled artwork, created in collaboration with our Year 12 Visual Arts ATAR students, captures our College identity through rich symbolism and cultural connection. Flowing water represents the Swan River and the Wagyl – the Rainbow Serpent, a powerful creator being in Noongar culture – reminding us of our spiritual bond with Boodja, the land on which we live and learn. The pathways winding through the landscape symbolise the journeys our students take from Pre-Kindergarten through to Year 12. Circles of people represent our inclusivity and community strength.

At the heart of Mel's design lies our call to be 'People for Others', caring for one another, for God, and for Country. The presence of the Carnaby's Cockatoo speaks to our environmental stewardship, while the Noongar word *katiji* (to reflect) emphasises our commitment to thoughtful learning and growth.

A commitment that extends beyond art

While this artwork serves as a beautiful focal point, our commitment to reconciliation extends far beyond its panels. We have made reconciliation part of daily College life, ensuring that our students, staff, and community engage meaningfully with First Nations cultures, histories, and perspectives.

Our approach is built on three fundamental pillars: Relationships, Respect, and Opportunities – each guiding us toward a more inclusive and just community.

Building authentic relationships

This year has been filled with opportunities to build authentic relationships with First Nations communities. Our secondary students participated in a meaningful Year 8 Reflection Day that incorporated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on healthy relationships. Meanwhile, our Year 11 students embarked on a cultural competency Pilgrimage to Far North Queensland, where they engaged with Community Elders and Traditional Owners, deepening their understanding of Australia's First Nations heritage.

Throughout the year, we have welcomed Indigenous guest speakers into our classrooms and incorporated Indigenous literature, music, and artwork into our learning environments. These are not one-off events

but part of our ongoing commitment to ensuring First Nations voices are heard and valued in our educational community.

Demonstrating respect through action

Our respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures is visible throughout our campus and embedded in our daily practices. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags fly proudly year-round, while our assemblies and formal meetings begin with an Acknowledgement of Country. Each week, our homeroom sessions start with students acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the land on which we learn.

Our teaching staff regularly engage in professional learning on cultural awareness and reconciliation, ensuring they can deliver teaching that honours Aboriginal cultures across all year levels and learning areas. We have also implemented anti-racism education as part of our pastoral care program, promoting respectful and culturally sensitive language when discussing Indigenous matters.

Creating meaningful opportunities

Our commitment to reconciliation extends to creating meaningful opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and businesses. We actively support First Nations suppliers through our procurement processes and increase our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplier diversity.

Within our curriculum, we have embedded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives across all learning areas, from English and Humanities to Politics and Law. Our library actively promotes Aboriginal cultures, particularly during significant weeks like National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week.

Celebrating National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week 2025

This year's National Reconciliation Week (27 May to 3 June) was particularly meaningful, with the theme 'Bridging Now to Next' calling us to honour our progress while committing to the work ahead. As Faith and Mission Captains Logan Blake and Luke Green reminded our assembly: 'Reconciliation isn't just a moment; it's an ongoing journey that calls on each of us to acknowledge the impact of our history, the truth of our past and playing our part in working together toward healing and justice for Indigenous Australians.'

The week coincided with Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) Week, allowing our Years 7 and 9 students to build a symbolic 'bridge of commitment' to reconciliation in their classes. Students gathered during



lunch breaks for Indigenous-themed documentary screenings, participated in a reconciliation colouring competition, and navigated a reconciliation Amazing Race across campus. Our annual HASS Week BBQ raised funds for Redfern Jarjum College, whose mission is to educate urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are not participating or coping in mainstream primary education.

The Wesley Modijti Mob brought energy and culture to our assembly with traditional dance and contemporary music performances. Noongar Traditional Owners Matthew and Walter McGuire led a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony, with Matthew sharing a song about the spider in Kings Park that provided rich metaphorical teaching about interconnectedness, personal impact, and caring for country – core values that resonate deeply with our College community.

NAIDOC Week 2025 marked a significant milestone, 50 years of honouring Indigenous voices, cultures, and resilience. The theme 'The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy' celebrates not only past achievements but the bright future ahead, empowered by young leaders and guided by ancestral wisdom. Through Matthew and Walter McGuire's reflective ceremony, we were reminded of our connection to the land and our responsibility as its stewards.

A journey of faith and justice

As a College shaped by Jesuit and Loreto traditions, our commitment to reconciliation flows naturally from our foundational values of competence, conscience, and compassion. Our motto 'Seek Justice' calls us to be in right relationship with each other and our environment. This spiritual dimension of reconciliation work connects us to something greater than ourselves and challenges us to be agents of change in our community and beyond.



Our partnerships with organisations like NATSICC (National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council) and our alignment with the broader Jesuit and Loreto justice networks strengthen our capacity to make a meaningful difference. These relationships provide ongoing support for our cultural competency training and help us stay connected to best practices in reconciliation education.

As Janeen Murphy, our Deputy Principal – Faith and Mission, reflects: 'It is essential that we continue to build a school culture that listens deeply, respects unconditionally, and acts justly. We must walk together in dialogue and hope as we work toward reconciliation.'

Looking forward: a continuing journey

As we look at Mel Spillman's artwork each day, we are reminded that reconciliation requires ongoing commitment, learning, and action. The flowing water in the artwork reminds us that like the Swan River, our reconciliation efforts continue to move forward, shaped by the landscape it travels through but always progressing toward its destination.

Our students, from Pre-Kindergarten to Year 12, are growing up in a learning environment that values and celebrates Australia's First Nations heritage. They are developing the cultural competency, respect, and understanding that will serve them throughout their lives and enable them to contribute meaningfully to Australia's ongoing reconciliation journey.

The artwork reminds us what is possible when we work together, when we listen deeply, and when we commit to walking the path of reconciliation with courage, hope, and faith. As we continue this journey, we invite our entire College community to join us in making reconciliation not just a concept but a lived reality in our daily lives.

Together, we embrace the spirit of Danjoo Koorliny – walking together toward a more just and reconciled Australia.



How you can get involved

- Attend our regular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander guest speaker sessions.
- Participate in NAIDOC Week and National Reconciliation Week activities.
- Support First Nations businesses in our local community.
- Engage with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander literature and art.
- Join conversations about reconciliation in your homerooms and classes.

Standing in solidarity



H John XXIII College's Year 11 students completed their annual pilgrimage to Cape York Peninsula – an experience that challenged perspectives and deepened understanding of Australia's First Nations heritage.



Led by Mrs Janeen Murphy, Deputy Principal Faith and Mission, and supported by Red Earth, the journey offered students meaningful encounters with the world's oldest continuous civilisation.

The timing held special significance, aligning with the Catholic Church's 2025 Jubilee Year theme 'Pilgrims of Hope'. Pope Francis called upon Catholics to renew their hope in Christ and 'be tangible signs of hope for those of our brothers and sisters who experience hardships of any kind'. This message resonated with our College's mission to seek justice and serve marginalised communities.

Answering the call

'The pilgrimage program embodies our College's commitment to reconciliation and our founders' call to support those on the margins,' Mrs Murphy explained.

'By engaging with Traditional Owners, our students witness firsthand the importance of listening, standing in solidarity, and truth-telling – all essential components of authentic reconciliation.'

The experience formed a central element of the participants' *Id Quod Volo* (Latin for 'I will what I choose') leadership program, built on servant leadership principles. Through year-long preparation with Mrs Murphy, students readied themselves for encounters with communities whose experiences differed vastly from their own.

This preparation was grounded in Ignatian spirituality, where the journey proves as formative as the destination. St Ignatius of Loyola's own pilgrimage from Loyola to Jerusalem taught him about surrendering

control and recognising God in all circumstances. These lessons proved invaluable as our pilgrims navigated the uncertainties of their Cape York adventure.

Walking together

For participants, the pilgrimage transcended typical travel. It became an opportunity to learn from and serve remote communities, building empathy and understanding across cultural boundaries. The program challenged assumptions while developing capacity for thoughtful listening and compassionate response.

As student Duccio Fraulini reflected, 'The Traditional Owners welcomed us into their day-to-day lives, showing how they find beauty in simple moments like hunting or relaxing by the creek, as well as complex experiences like presenting at international conferences. These moments gave me a much better appreciation of the resilience and diversity within First Nations cultures.'

Our College's dedication to reconciliation runs throughout this program. Through engagement with Australia's Traditional Owners, students gained insights



into the world's oldest continuous civilisation, fostering greater understanding of the truth-telling process that underpins authentic reconciliation efforts.

Student Lily Lucas shared, 'Hearing directly from Traditional Owners was very different to what you learn at school or see on TV. What struck me was their desire to share their culture while also learning about ours, so we can work toward a future where everyone is informed and understanding of each other.'

This powerful journey was made possible through the support of accompanying staff members Mr Luke Bostelman, Miss Jessica Pillera, Miss Erin Basile, and Mr Xavier Mitchell. They guided participants through extensive preparation and travel, ensuring the pilgrimage aligned with our College's motto, 'Seek Justice'. Miss Basile observed, 'One of the biggest changes I saw in our students was their mindset shift. Living on Country allowed them to expand their knowledge of cultures while reflecting on their own lives. They developed a greater understanding of stewardship – that we all have a collective responsibility to share knowledge and protect land, people, and cultures.'

The journey continues

The program exemplifies our College's educational philosophy, where academic rigour meets spiritual formation and social responsibility. By placing students in situations requiring genuine connection with different realities, our College supports its mission to nurture graduates of competence, conscience, and compassion.

As pilgrims returned from Cape York, they brought more than memories – they carried a transformed understanding of their role in pursuing justice and supporting marginalised communities. Equipped with empathy, listening skills, and commitment to solidarity, these young leaders embody Pope Francis' call to be 'Pilgrims of Hope'.

Their experience demonstrates that genuine reconciliation begins with genuine connection, and that education at its best changes both mind and heart, preparing students for lives of service and justice-seeking in our contemporary world.







Amplifying young voices

H When **Cat Aniere** learned she had received a Medal of the Order of Australia on Australia Day 2025, she was standing in a drain in the Basque region, waiting for a bus in pouring rain. Her phone began pinging with congratulations from around the world. It was, she reflects, a perfectly fitting moment for someone who has always followed her own path.

The award recognised her extraordinary contribution to environmental education through Millennium Kids, the youth-led, not-for-profit organisation she co-founded in 1996. But Cat's journey began much earlier, shaped by her experiences as a student at Loreto in the 1970s.

'Geography and English were my favourite subjects,' recalls Cat, who attended Loreto before completing her education elsewhere. 'We used to go on excursions down in Rockingham for Geography. That's half the reason I got excited about outdoor science and learning outside the classroom.'

Those formative experiences, combined with robust social justice discussions in Religious Education classes, helped shape her core values. 'The service that we always talked about when we were at school' became central to her life's work, she explains. 'Those values are really important to me. It's about doing the doing and being a good human.'

After graduating, Cat taught in the Pilbara where encounters with remote communities profoundly shifted her perspective. She recalls:

'I met Indigenous peoples in the Pilbara who really made me think about living on Country and how we were living unsustainably. It was happening in my own backyard.'

She also became involved with Green Teach, a group working to implement environmental education in schools.

These experiences converged in 1995 when her primary school students in South Perth were invited to present at the first UN Children's Conference on the Environment in the UK. Though heavily pregnant and unable to attend, Cat made a prescient leadership decision. 'You don't get to do all the fun stuff all the time,' she reflects. 'You need to let other people step up.'

The students who attended returned with a critique that would change everything. They felt the conference, while branded as being run by children, was actually controlled by adults. 'It was branded as being run by kids, but they felt that the adults had written the speeches and that the kids were just the glue.'

The organisers had the right motivations but we underestimate kids all the time. They could have run the whole thing.'

In response, Cat and her students organised the world's first children's environmental conference genuinely run by children in 1996. The event at Perth Zoo drew 185 participants, was opened by then Premier Richard Court, and concluded with children presenting their concerns and ideas directly to government.

This success led to the incorporation of Millennium Kids in 1999, but with a revolutionary difference. Cat collaborated with lawyers to create what she believes is still 'pretty much the only constitution I've ever seen where the children are embedded in the meeting and decision-making process.' The adult council and 15 members aged 10-24 make decisions together around the same boardroom table.

'It's total chaos,' Cat laughs about the meetings, 'but it works effectively. Everyone told us it wasn't sustainable, but this is our 26th year.'

The group's approach has consistently stayed ahead of mainstream thinking. 'We've had kids banging on about global warming since the 90s,' Cat notes. 'Here we are in 2025, and the kids aren't being quiet about it anymore.' When traditional advocacy seemed insufficient, Millennium Kids innovated again, creating programs where young people receive funding to manage and deliver their own climate initiatives.

This methodology has gained international recognition. Cat recently co-presented at a global training session on deliberative democracy in Warsaw, where experts acknowledged that Millennium Kids had 'innovated' beyond conventional models. While traditional citizen assemblies present recommendations to government, Cat's organisation bypassed potentially unresponsive authorities. 'Our kids said, "Well, what's the point of creating these things for government? They haven't been listening. Let's just do it ourselves."'

Today, participants lead signature programs including GreenLAB, Agents of Climate Change, Kids on Country and the RAC Ignite Leadership program collaboration, putting their skills-for-life training into action. Aligned with the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, Millennium Kids supports youth to pitch and implement their own projects.

The results speak for themselves. Their alumni include a member of parliament, the founder of 100 Women (an initiative supporting women's education), entrepreneurs developing sustainable business practices, and countless others who have carried

forward their skills-for-life training. 'It's actually the young people who are employing us now,' Cat observes. 'They are now middle managers in some places.'

Cat's distinctive path from teaching diploma to university researcher – without having obtained a university degree – exemplifies her message to current students considering environmental advocacy. Rather than prescribing activism, she encourages students to find groups that match their values and skills. 'We ask young people, "What do you want to do?" and "What's your skill set?" Then we match them with opportunities.'



The Order of Australia recognition has opened new doors and validated their methodology. But Cat remains grounded, asking her young chairperson to 'slap me down' if she gets 'beyond myself.' The award, she emphasises, 'is a responsibility to the community to use the award respectfully and advance the cause of those who are incredibly invested in the future of the planet.'

Looking forward, Cat hints at another significant announcement coming later this year, likely related to her advocacy for alternative educational pathways. 'We're not all ready to go to university when we're 17,' she argues, reflecting on the pressure youth face to make life-defining decisions too early.

Cat's story reflects the values instilled during her time at Loreto – service, thoughtful discussion, and thinking beyond oneself. From those Geography excursions in Rockingham to global recognition for environmental leadership, she has remained true to the principle that guided her from the beginning: inspiring others to step up and create change.

'Kids are the future,' she says simply. 'Empowering them to be change makers is at the heart of Millennium Kids Inc.'



One very cool career

H **Dr Nicholas Gales (Class 1975)** was just six months away from completing his veterinary science degree when a casual conversation with a lecturer completely transformed his future. That conversation led to a remarkable four-decade career studying marine mammals, from Antarctica's icy waters to his current leadership roles in international ocean diplomacy.

'St Louis was about my 13th or 14th school over that period,' Dr Gales recalls. As the son of a British army officer, he had spent his childhood moving around South-East Asia before his family settled in Perth in 1972. Despite arriving midway through high school, Dr Gales graduated from St Louis in 1975 – fifty years ago.

The rigorous education proved instrumental in his success. 'It's really thanks to the St Louis education,' he reflects. 'With some particularly fabulous teachers, like the wonderful (now sadly late) Tim Dalmau, I was able to do really well in maths and sciences.'

Growing up in warm climates fostered Dr Gales' love for the ocean and marine mammals. 'I'm a saltwater baby. Having been brought up in Southeast Asia, every spare moment was spent snorkelling and diving. When we got to WA, I immediately fell in love with diving, swimming and body surfing. My passion was saltwater in the veins.'

When choosing his university path, Dr Gales found himself torn between veterinary science and marine biology. Murdoch University's new veterinary school offered an option closer to home. The pivotal moment came during his final year when he chose marine mammal medicine as an elective. 'My lecturer at the time

said, "Oh, I didn't know you're interested in that. We just had a call recently from Atlantis Marine Park, wondering about veterinarians with marine mammal experience." The lecturer pulled a piece of paper from his wastepaper bin – a moment that would change everything.

Dr Gales' early work at Atlantis Marine Park near Two Rocks was challenging and educational. 'It was a different time,' he reflects on the now controversial 1980s era of marine parks. After four years working with dolphins, seals, penguins, turtles, fish, and sharks, he wanted to pursue research with wild animals.

The opportunity came through an advertisement from the Australian Antarctic Division. 'My veterinary expertise was regarded as very helpful, because I needed to anaesthetise elephant seals to measure their blubber thickness and body shape.'

His time in Antarctica was life-changing. Dr Gales spent time on volcanic, subantarctic Heard Island and wintered at Davis Station, Antarctica, in 1986. 'I loved it and was passionate about the research,' he reflects. This period made him the first director of the Australian Antarctic Division to have wintered in Antarctica.

After completing his PhD on Australian sea lion reproductive cycles, he ventured to New Zealand for four years. He and his wife even lived on a yacht, sailing from Perth to Wellington with their five year old son and newborn daughter when she was just three weeks old.

In 2000, Dr Gales rejoined the Australian Antarctic Division to 'develop their marine mammal work in the Southern



Ocean and in Antarctica.' He progressed through senior roles to become Chief Scientist and ultimately Director, in charge of Australia's Antarctic program.

Today, Dr Gales continues to shape Antarctic and marine science policy through influential positions. Since 2024, he has served as Chair of the Australian Antarctic Science Council. 'My aim is for the council to act as a champion for the Australian Antarctic Science Program, with a sharp focus on the science of greatest priority for all Australians.'

Since 2016, Dr Gales has been Australia's Commissioner to the International Whaling Commission, recently stepping into the role of Chair of the Commission. One of his most significant contributions came through Australia's successful legal challenge against Japan's Southern Ocean whaling program. 'The court case with Japan was an extraordinary thing. We spent three years in the lead up with no expectation that Australia would win, and we ended up winning.'

As someone who has studied Antarctica for decades, Dr Gales has witnessed climate change firsthand. 'Climate change is such a huge issue that is most evident in Antarctica in many ways. It's that enormous expanse of ocean between Australia and Antarctica, the Southern Ocean... that's the machine that drives all our weather, our droughts, our floods, our rains... everything.'

The current focus of Antarctic research centres on 'what are the key questions around climate change, not arguing whether climate change is real or not. That's been done for a long time now. It's unambiguous.'

Drawing from decades of leadership experience, Dr Gales emphasises essential qualities for building relationships and professional growth. 'Be respectful, understand, make sure you're across the issues in detail so that you know what the challenge of the leadership is and the direction you want to take it. And to empower and entrust those that sit alongside you and below you.'

For students considering science careers, Dr Gales offers practical guidance. 'Being strong in statistics and mathematics to understand data and being able to run models in appropriate computer languages, is crucial.'

However, technical competence alone is not enough. 'Following your passion is equally important, but it's not as simple as just having enthusiasm. You've got to follow your passion, but be dogged and persistent and look at all sorts of avenues for how you can get engaged in the work that you're most interested in.'

He stresses bringing the necessary skills while remaining open to possibilities:

'A mix of having the right skills, being persistent and chasing opportunities down – that's how it's been in my career. That's how I've been extraordinarily lucky to get into the areas I most enjoyed.'

At this stage of his life, Dr Gales has found 'a nice balance' and is 'really enjoying this sweet spot' between meaningful work and personal time. The family's connection to Perth remains strong – his older brother Chris is a racehorse veterinarian in Perth, his elder sister Pippa is now retired and lives in Quindalup, while his younger sister Rosemary followed a similar route into marine studies.

Looking ahead to his 50th school reunion and the Cape-to-Cape walk with his wife, Dr Gales reflects on his journey. 'I didn't come to any reunions until the 40th and that was a real treat,' he notes. While his responsibilities advising on Australia's Antarctic science strategy and chairing the International Whaling Commission keep him busy, his path shows how curiosity and persistence can guide a life in ways no career plan could predict.





Design that's kind to cockatoos

H In the spirit of Pope Francis' *Laudato Si'*, which calls us to be faithful stewards of creation, our Year 6 students have embraced their role as environmental guardians through an engaging sustainable gardens project.

This initiative perfectly embodies our College's Strategic Pillar of Environmental Stewardship and demonstrates how education can drive meaningful conservation action.



Our students gained invaluable insights when Sustainability Coordinator Mr Adrian Sims arranged for Professor Kingsley Dixon from Curtin University's School of Molecular and Life Sciences to visit our Year

6 classrooms. As a leading researcher on the feeding and breeding habits of endangered Carnaby's Black Cockatoos, Professor Dixon helped our students understand the critical challenges facing these iconic Western Australian birds.

The timing of this educational opportunity was particularly significant, as our ongoing conservation efforts have begun to yield remarkable results.

We have witnessed greater numbers of Carnaby's Black Cockatoos returning to our school campus – direct evidence of the success of our Sustainability Club's habitat restoration through water and food sources, including our recently installed Cockitrough® bird watering station.

Working in teams, these students embarked on researching and designing innovative 'sustainable gardens' specifically aimed at supporting the vulnerable Carnaby's Cockatoo population. This hands-on assignment challenged participants to think critically about habitat requirements, native plant selection, and practical conservation strategies.

Drawing on knowledge shared by Professor Dixon, they thoughtfully incorporated feeding stations within their designs, stocking them with macadamia nuts after

discovering these are a valuable food source for the cockatoos. Many students chose to include banksia trees in their designs after learning they provide essential food sources. They carefully ensured the banksias were placed in sandy soil conditions to meet the plants' growing requirements.



Some students brought in banksia cones collected from their local environment, many showing signs of having been chewed by the strong beaks of Carnaby's Black Cockatoos, providing real-world evidence to support their learning.

The culmination of their hard work came when both Mr Sims and Professor Dixon returned to witness our young conservationists present their outstanding designs. The presentations showcased not only their understanding of the ecological needs of Carnaby's Cockatoos but also our students' creativity in developing practical solutions that could make a real difference to this at-risk species.

This initiative exemplifies our commitment to ecological education that goes beyond the classroom. By connecting students directly with leading researchers



and real-world challenges, we are nurturing the next generation of sustainability-oriented guardians who understand their responsibility to care for creation. Through alignment with our College's Strategic Pillar of Environmental Stewardship, this project demonstrates how authentic learning experiences can foster both academic excellence and purposeful community impact.



Building on this success, students have moved beyond design to action, participating in planting sessions to establish banksia trees on the western side of the oval. Through endeavours like these, we are teaching all within our College community the vital importance of environmental responsibility. Our Year 6 students have demonstrated that age is no barrier to making an impactful contribution to conservation efforts, and their sustainable garden designs represent hope for the future of Western Australia's precious native wildlife.

As we continue our journey of environmental stewardship, initiatives like these remind us that every action, no matter how small, contributes to the greater good of our common home.



H Fifty years is a long time by anyone's measure, but for the Loreto Class of 1975, it felt like yesterday when they gathered at John XXIII College.

The Friday evening reunion brought together women who had shared their formative years at the original Loreto girls' school, now ready to celebrate half a century of friendship.

What started as a simple get-together quickly became something much more meaningful. Between the laughter and animated conversations, it was obvious these friendships had only grown stronger over the decades.

The evening became even more special when two familiar faces appeared: former teachers Marg Herley and Jenny Stratton. Having these beloved educators join the celebration added a wonderful dimension to the night, connecting the past with the present in a way that only they could.

The real magic happened when the College unveiled a special display of old school memorabilia. Suddenly, the room was transported back to the 1970s as photographs, documents, and keepsakes sparked memories that had been tucked away for years. The Loretians found

themselves deep in animated discussions about teachers, school traditions, and those pivotal moments that had shaped who they became.



These weren't just nostalgic conversations about the good old days. The evening revealed something deeper about what their Loreto education had given them – not just knowledge, but the values and relationships that had sustained them through careers, families, and all of life's adventures.

As the night wound down, it was clear this reunion had achieved something remarkable. Adding a lovely touch to the evening, the St Louis Class of 1975 had sent their congratulations via a note, showing that the bonds between the schools remain strong. The Class of 1975 had proved that the connections formed during their school years remain as vital today as they were five decades ago. Their gathering stands as a beautiful reminder of why John XXIII College treasures its connection to Loreto's legacy.

Our College extends heartfelt congratulations to these inspiring women on their golden milestone, and we hope they will celebrate many more reunions together in the years ahead.



A photograph of two elderly men standing indoors at a reunion. The man on the left is wearing a dark jacket and holding a glass of beer. The man on the right is wearing a grey sweater over a plaid shirt and also holding a glass of beer. In the background, another man is visible, and the setting appears to be a restaurant with warm lighting and hanging plants.

Friendships mark a diamond anniversary

**Ready to reconnect with
your graduating class?**

Contact Sue McLennan at
alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au
to start planning your own
reunion celebration.

H The St Louis Class of 1965 reached a significant milestone on Wednesday, 27 August, 2025, gathering at Grissini Restaurant in Nedlands for their 60-year reunion.

Nineteen former classmates came together to celebrate six decades since their graduation from St Louis.

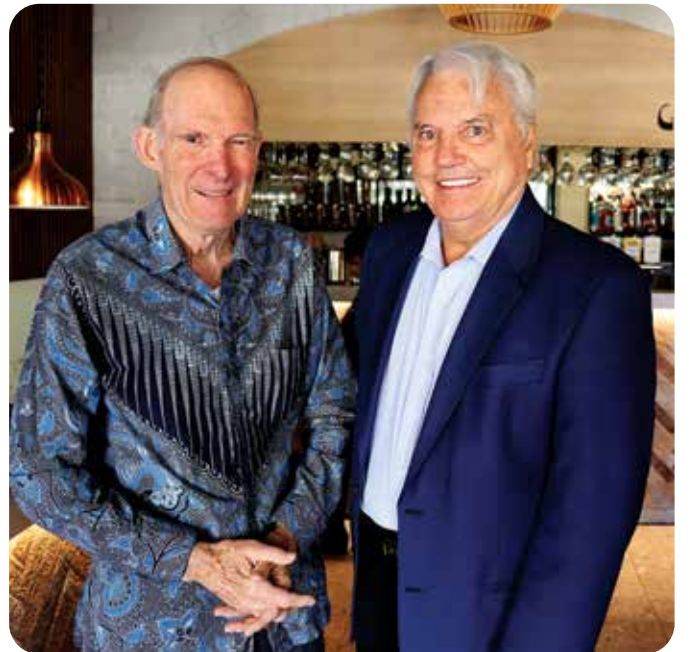
The lunch event provided a wonderful opportunity for alumni to reconnect, share memories, and reflect on their diverse journeys since leaving school. The reunion brought together classmates including John Brennan, Graeme Chinnery, Andre Papineau, Jamie Quinlan, and many others who have maintained their bonds of friendship across the decades.

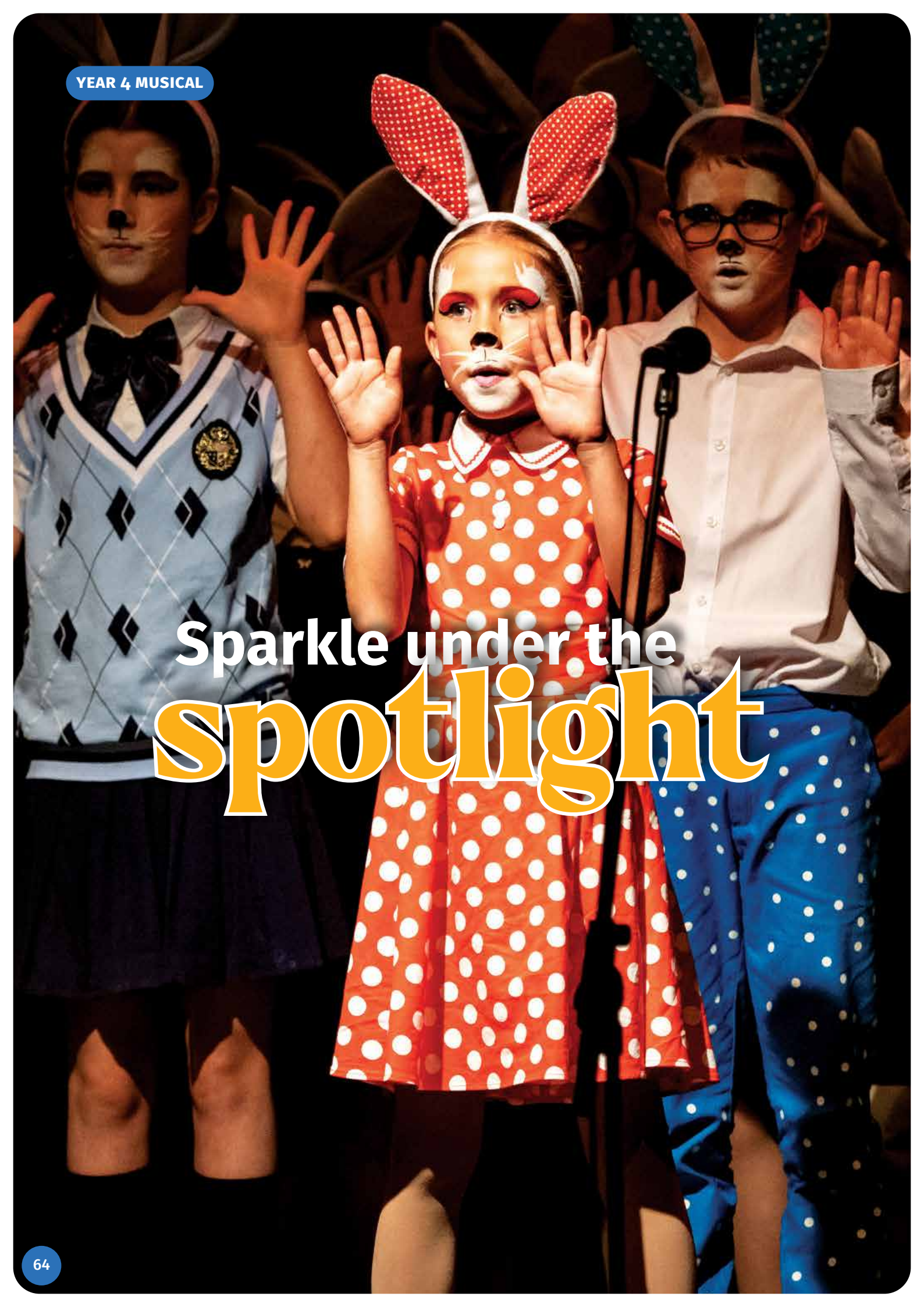
A special highlight of the celebration was the creation of a comprehensive class dossier, featuring summaries from each alumnus detailing their careers, families,

hobbies, and interests. This thoughtful compilation ensures the event captures not only the rich history of the cohort but also showcases the diverse paths their lives have taken since 1965.

Particularly touching was the inclusion of contributions from family members of classmates who have passed away, ensuring their memory and legacy remain part of the St Louis community story. The dossier serves as a record of the enduring connections built during their school years and the continuing bond that unites the Class of 1965.

The joyful gathering demonstrated the lasting impact of the St Louis educational experience and the lifelong friendships it created.



A photograph of three children performing on a stage. They are all wearing bunny ears and face paint. The child on the left is a girl in a blue and white argyle sweater vest over a white shirt with a dark bow tie, and a dark skirt. The child in the center is a girl in a red dress with white polka dots. The child on the right is a boy in a white shirt and blue pants with white polka dots, wearing glasses. They are all raising their hands in a synchronized gesture. The background is dark with some foliage.

YEAR 4 MUSICAL

Sparkle under the spotlight

H There's something magical that happens each year when our Year 4 students take to the stage for their annual musical. This year's production, *Hippity Hop*, written by Mrs Catherine Haydon, was no exception, filled with laughter, music, and memories.

What makes our Year 4 musical so special? Every student has a part and gets their chance to sparkle under the spotlight. Whether they are naturally drawn to the stage or need a gentle nudge of encouragement, each student discovers something wonderful about themselves through this experience. Music teacher and director Catherine Haydon shares her perspective:



'It's heartwarming to watch initially shy students find their voice, natural performers grow in confidence, and the entire year group come together as one big, enthusiastic ensemble. In a world where performance opportunities often go to the loudest or most confident, our show creates space for every personality to flourish.'

Under the fantastic leadership of Mrs Haydon and drama teacher Ms Sasha Cattapan, *Hippity Hop* has become so much more than just a school production. It's a whole community celebration! Parents and staff were busy with makeup brushes and sewing machines, our grounds team hammered away at sets, and families patiently listened to countless rehearsals of songs at home.

This wonderful web of support shows our students that great things happen when everyone works together, and that their performance is something our College community is excited to celebrate.

Antoinette De Pinto, Head of Primary, shares: 'Beyond the obvious fun of singing, dancing, and acting, our Year 4s have been developing some pretty impressive life skills. They've learned about commitment through rehearsal schedules, teamwork, and the satisfaction that comes from working hard toward a shared goal.'



The two performances meant students got to experience both the excitement of a daytime audience of their school friends and the magic of an evening performance



for families. Both shows were absolutely delightful, filled with genuine joy that's impossible not to catch!



Perhaps the most beautiful part of watching *Hippity Hop* unfold has been seeing students surprise themselves with what they can achieve. Those butterflies before the curtain goes up? They transform into beaming smiles and proud waves to the audience. The nervous giggles during rehearsals? They become confident performances that had audiences cheering.

As we take our final bow on another successful Year 4 musical, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to Mrs Haydon and Ms Cattapan for their incredible dedication and creativity. To our Year 4 teachers, Miss Emma Eisenmann and Miss Emily Krikstolaitis, all the parent volunteers, staff members, and family supporters who helped bring *Hippity Hop* to life, you have been wonderful.

Most of all, congratulations to our amazing Year 4 students who reminded us all that when you give children a chance to shine, they absolutely will. *Hippity Hop* has been a celebration of talent, friendship, and the pure joy that comes from sharing your gifts with others.

Here's to another year of discovering that our students are capable of even more magic than they imagined!



Watch a fun highlight reel of the Year 4s performing *Hippity Hop*





At home in the digital world



H In an era where digital literacy is no longer optional but essential, John XXIII College has transformed its Media Lab into a cutting-edge creative hub that reflects the evolving demands of our increasingly connected world.

The comprehensive renovation represents more than just a physical upgrade; it embodies our commitment to preparing students for careers and life in the digital age.

Why media skills matter more than ever

Today's students are growing up in a world where the ability to create compelling visual content, understand digital platforms, and communicate effectively through multiple media channels has become essential across virtually every industry. From marketing and journalism to healthcare and education, media skills are no longer optional extras – they are fundamental requirements.



The modern workforce demands graduates who can navigate complex digital landscapes, collaborate seamlessly across virtual platforms, and adapt to rapidly evolving technologies. Media literacy extends far beyond simply consuming content.

It encompasses critical thinking about digital information, understanding the ethical implications of media creation, and developing the technical skills to produce professional-quality work.

As Media teacher Mr Rob Di Giallonardo observes,

'Our students aren't just passive consumers of media – they're active creators, storytellers, and digital citizens who will shape the future of communication. We need to give them professional-grade tools and flexible learning environments to develop both the technical competencies and creative confidence they'll need.'



Professional tools for real-world experience

The renovated Media Lab boasts impressive technical specifications that mirror professional production environments. The curved 'infinity wall' wrapping around the rear of the room features one half painted chroma-green for digital effects work and one half painted white for traditional studio photography. Curtain rails with black drapes extend around the entire perimeter, with an additional rail down the middle allowing the space to be split into two separate production areas when needed.

The suspended lighting grid, complete with permanent studio lighting fixtures, can be adjusted and programmed via a separate control panel, giving students hands-on experience with professional lighting techniques. The computer hub features high-powered Apple Mac Studio workstations paired with 4K monitors, providing the processing power needed for complex video editing, graphic design, and multimedia production.

For optimal viewing experiences, the lab includes a new 4K Ultra HD Blu-Ray player and Dolby Atmos wireless surround speaker system, complementing the existing 75" 4K interactive classroom display. This setup allows students to study films and media with the same quality and precision used in professional environments.

Media Captain, Henry Gooch, appreciates the difference the professional equipment makes: 'The new media equipment has made a huge impact for students – it has given us the ability to work faster with the newer computers and be more creative with projects we want to create with the new green screen and white cyclorama.'

Creating authentic learning experiences

The renovation emphasises the importance of authentic, real-world learning experiences. The new concrete floor and carpet lining eliminate flexing and creaking during film shoots, ensuring professional-quality audio recording. Blackout blinds provide optimal lighting conditions for studio work, while the flexible furniture arrangement allows students to configure the space according to their specific project needs.

These features combine to create an environment where students experience the genuine challenges and rewards of professional media production. Whether they are creating documentaries, producing podcasts, designing digital campaigns, or experimenting with virtual reality, students work with the same tools and face the same technical considerations as industry professionals.

Collaboration in the digital age

The flexible design of the Media Lab recognises that modern media creation is inherently collaborative. Students learn to work in teams, sharing ideas, dividing responsibilities, and combining their individual strengths to create compelling content. The mobile furniture and adaptable technology setup encourage

this collaboration while also providing spaces for individual reflection and focused work.

The ability to reconfigure the space quickly means that students can engage in different types of learning activities within a single class period – from group discussions and peer reviews to individual editing sessions and collaborative production work. This variety keeps students engaged while developing the adaptability skills they'll need in their future careers.

Preparing for an uncertain future

Perhaps most importantly, the renovated Media Lab prepares students for careers that may not yet exist. The rapid pace of technological change means that today's students will likely work in fields that are still being invented. By providing them with a strong foundation in media literacy, technical skills, and creative problem-solving, we are giving them the tools they need to adapt and thrive regardless of how the digital landscape evolves.

The emphasis on flexibility – both in the physical space and in learning approaches – mirrors the adaptability that will be essential for success in tomorrow's workforce. Students learn not just to use current technologies, but to approach new tools and platforms with confidence and creativity.





A space for innovation

The renovated Media Lab represents more than just upgraded technology – it is a space where innovation thrives, where students can experiment with emerging technologies, and where the boundaries between traditional subjects begin to blur. The flexible environment supports cross-curricular learning and creative exploration.

Recent student projects showcase the lab's versatility across all year levels. Year 8 students have been producing podcast episodes on their favourite topics using our full RodeCaster podcasting setup, while Year 9s are delivering a digital sports broadcast package. They create still and video assets of John XXIII College sports teams, then integrate these into Adobe *After Effects* templates designed to mimic professional live sports broadcasts.

Year 9s have also progressed to virtual production, using the green screen to place themselves into live 3D studio environments created in Unreal Engine – mimicking professional 'pre-game' studio panel segments. Year 10s are creating short films that incorporate set extensions using the green screen technology. Next year, the Media Club plans to launch a live weekly news broadcast using professional streaming equipment from the studio.

These projects demonstrate how the space enables students to apply their learning in meaningful, real-world contexts while working with the same technologies used in professional media production.



Finding their voice

H The John XXIII College community gathered on Monday, 20 October, for the opening evening of the Annual Art Exhibition, an event that transformed the campus into a vibrant gallery celebrating the artistic talents of students from Primary through to Year 12. The week-long exhibition revealed the incredible diversity and talent of creative work developed within our College's Visual Arts program.

The opening evening brought together students, families, staff, and the broader community to recognise imagination and artistic achievement. Following tradition, the evening featured an inspirational address from **Dr Susanna Castleden (Class 1985)** a College alumna who had pursued a career in the arts, sharing her journey and the meaningful impact her education at John XXIII College had on her creative growth.

'My time at John XXIII College didn't just teach me technical skills,' reflected Dr Castleden. 'It taught me to see art as a powerful vehicle for expressing my values and connecting with others. The College's emphasis on seeking justice and serving others continues to influence every piece I create today. I encourage all our current students to embrace their creative gifts, whether as a future career or as a lifelong passion that enriches their souls.'

The exhibition presented an extraordinary tapestry of visual storytelling, featuring pieces across diverse mediums including textiles, paintings, sculpture, ceramics, and digital art. From the vibrant energy captured in primary students' colourful creations to the sophisticated conceptual works of Year 12 ATAR students, the showcase demonstrated the progressive advancement of artistic skills and inventive confidence throughout their College journey.



One student reflected on the significance of having her work displayed:

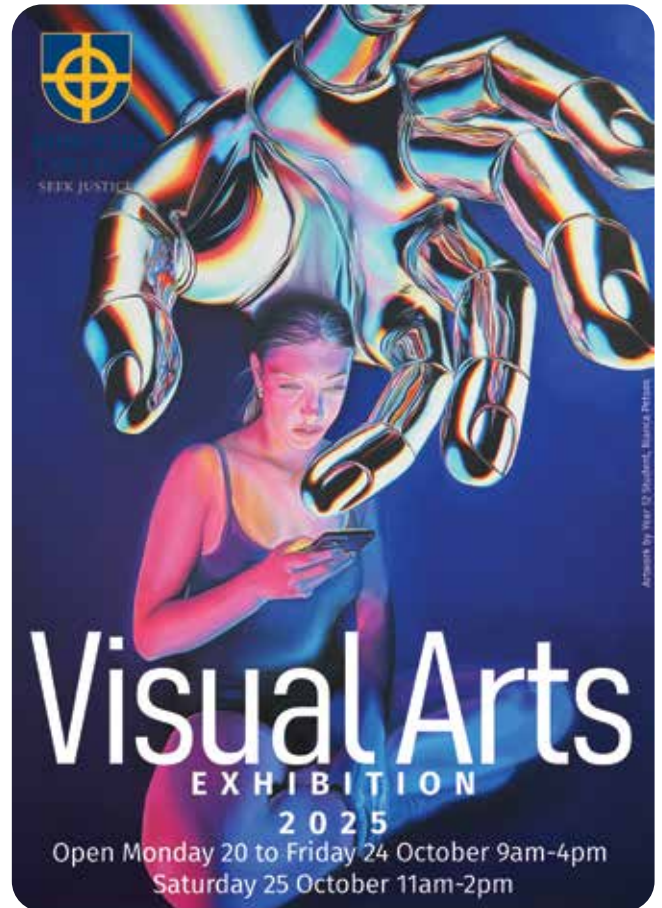
'Seeing my artwork alongside pieces from students across all year levels was incredibly moving. It reminded me that art is about more than technique, it's about finding your voice and sharing your perspective with the world.'

'This exhibition gave us all the opportunity to be proud of our creativity and to inspire others through our artistic expression.'



The exhibition drew steady crowds throughout the week, with Primary and Secondary students visiting to appreciate the creations of their peers. Staff members enjoyed a special morning tea viewing, where they voted for their favourite piece in the annual 'Staff Choice' category, adding another layer of community engagement to the event.

Visual Arts teacher Ms Kiri Moore emphasised the vital role that Visual Arts plays in students' broader personal development. 'Our students demonstrate that they are not only highly skilled and discerning in their selection and use of media, but also incredibly socially conscious, creating a diverse range of works that comment on



the world around them and reflect on their own experiences as young people in contemporary society.'

The showcase exemplified our College's approach to supporting the complete student, reflecting the Ignatian principle of *cura personalis* – care for the individual in all their dimensions. By recognising artistic talent alongside academic achievement, our College reinforces its understanding that creativity is essential to developing people of competence, conscience, and compassion.

As visitors moved through the exhibition space, they witnessed more than just artistic skill; they observed our College's values of justice, love, and service manifested through creative expression. Many pieces addressed contemporary social issues, demonstrating how young artists had embraced art as a means of engaging with the world around them and advocating for positive change.

The exhibition's impact underscored the importance of creative work in education. It recognised not only the artistic achievements of individual students but also our College's dedication to creating spaces where imagination thrives and where students are encouraged to explore their unique gifts in service of others and in pursuit of justice.

ANNUAL ART EXHIBITION





ANGELICO ART EXHIBITION



Bianca Petsos: 404: Authenticity Not Found

Year 12 student and College Captain, Bianca Petsos, was awarded both the Packers Prize and 1st Place in General Exhibition.

Her oil painting *404: Authenticity Not Found* demonstrates sophisticated artistic and conceptual maturity that aligns perfectly with the exhibition's emphasis on meaningful social commentary.

Her artist statement reveals a deeply thoughtful critique of AI's impact on creativity and authenticity. The work explores the tension between human imagination and artificial intelligence, questioning whether technology supports or consumes authentic creative expression.

As she notes, 'AI doesn't reflect reality – it abstracts it. Built on data and probabilities, it struggles to create with true authenticity.' This resonates with the Angelico Exhibition's tradition of featuring 'bold social statements' alongside spiritual works.

H The Angelico Art Exhibition is a prestigious annual event on the Catholic school art calendar, named after Blessed Fra Angelico, Patron before God of Artists.

The exhibition provides a broad public forum through which Catholic students throughout Western Australia can exhibit their dynamic artistic talent, open to students from Pre-Primary to Year 12. The exhibition runs for three weeks and features an array of creative, colourful, inspirational and spiritual works ranging from Aboriginal and contemporary paintings, ceramics, sculpture, furniture pieces and textiles, with works coming from as far as Kununurra, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Albany and Broome.





Zach Grainger: *Bilby*

Year 6 student Zach's artwork *Bilby* winning the Catholic Earthcare Australia Award represents a strong thematic alignment between subject matter and award purpose. Catholic Earthcare Australia is the environmental arm of the Catholic Church in Australia, mandated with 'stimulating and sustaining ecological conversion' throughout the Catholic Church and works to 'generate ecological dialogue to care for our common home' through environmental education and advocacy.

The bilby is an ideal subject for this environmental award. Before European settlement, Greater Bilbies were found on over 70% of the Australian mainland but now occur in less than 20% of their former range, making them an endangered species facing threats from feral cats, foxes, habitat loss, and altered fire regimes.

Beyond their conservation status, bilbies play a crucial role as 'ecosystem engineers' – their digging helps water infiltrate soil, creates fertile pockets for plant germination, and cycles organic material back into the

ground. They can shift more than 1.5 tonnes of soil per kilogram of body mass annually, and their burrows provide vital shelter for other creatures including insects, reptiles, birds and small mammals.

For a young Primary student to choose this endangered native species demonstrates conservation-focused awareness that embodies Catholic Earthcare's mission of caring for creation. This choice reflects understanding that 'our environment is sacred and endangered and must be protected and sustained for present and future generations.'

Both winners exemplify the Angelico Exhibition's celebration of student talent while addressing contemporary issues – Bianca's sophisticated exploration of authenticity in the digital age, and Zach's environmental consciousness through depicting an endangered species that symbolises Australia's fragile ecosystem balance.

Tribute to excellence



H For over three decades, our College has cultivated outstanding rowers who have represented both the state and the nation at junior and senior levels. Recognising this impressive legacy, alumnus, former rower, and coach **Steven 'Stevo' Vincent (Class 2017)** initiated the creation of a rowing honour board to commemorate these achievements. He explained his motivation for the project:

'The Rowing program has produced exceptional athletes throughout its history, and I felt it was important to create a permanent tribute to acknowledge their achievements and inspire future generations of rowers.'

Through the generous support of the College's alumni and Foundation, the Rowing Club secured full funding for the honour board, which was first unveiled at the 2023 Rowing Presentation Dinner. Though initially displayed without names, the unveiling sparked excitement within the current rowing community about this meaningful project.

While balancing coaching responsibilities and full-time work, Stevo embarked on extensive research, connecting with alumni who had been part of the

rowing program. Special recognition goes to **Verity Keogh (Class 1994)**, a longtime fixture in the WA Rowing community, who met with Stevo and provided valuable leads for his research. Throughout the 2024 season, Stevo's diligent research and alumni outreach steadily advanced the honour board project.

The research revealed the College's early rowing success, particularly from 1997-2008, when seven athletes secured a collective 28 positions on state and national teams. Stevo was particularly impressed by the club's accomplishments during these formative years.

The period from 2013 to present – an era Stevo knows well, having begun rowing in 2012 – has proven equally impressive. This period has featured at least one student/alumni on state or national teams every year, surpassing the 1997-2008 era by one year, with 11 athletes earning 26 team selections.

'When starting this project, I was thrilled to discover how successful the club was in its early years. The depth of talent across all eras of College Rowing is truly outstanding, and it's been a privilege to help preserve this legacy for current and future rowers to appreciate,' Stevo reflected on the significance of his discoveries during the research process.



The large number of team selections, especially from the club's early years, necessitated revising the original layout to ensure sufficient space for future honourees. After consulting with former Rowing Coordinator, Jerram Gibson, they finalised a new design and received College approval for the initial listed names.

On 7 September, 2024, at the annual Rowing Presentation Night, Stevo had the privilege of presenting the honour board to the College Rowing community, inviting College Foundation Chair, James Thompson, and Rowing Club President, Gavin Allan, to participate in the unveiling ceremony.

The Rowing honour board now proudly resides in the rowing display cabinet at the St Louis Sports Centre, with provisions for future updates to recognise continuing excellence.

Special thanks to everyone involved in this significant project, including College staff, alumni, and the College Foundation, whose collective contributions have made it possible to honour the John XXIII College Rowing Club legacy in this meaningful way.

ALUMNI NETWORK

stay in touch

Are your contact details up to date?

Please take the time to ensure we have your most up-to-date details.

Help find lost Alumni

As part of our efforts to stay in touch with our extended College family, we are always looking to expand our Alumni database. Can you help?

alumni.johnxxiii.edu.au/#missingmembers

This page lists Alumni from your year group whose contact details we are missing. If you can help us reconnect with any of them, simply click 'lost' under their name. Use the options at the top of the page to search for missing Alumni from other years.

To update your details online visit alumni.johnxxiii.edu.au

1. Login
2. Under the top navigation select 'Your Account' and click 'Update Your Details'
3. Enter your updated contact information and then click 'Save'.

Alternatively, contact our Alumni Office with your updated details:

- 08 9383 0520
- alumni@johnxxiii.edu.au

Stay connected

-  Alumni: JohnXXIIICollegeAlumni
-  Alumni: alumni.johnxxiii.edu.au
-  College: linkedin.com/school/johnxxiiicollege
-  College: [johnxxiiicollege](https://facebook.com/johnxxiiicollege)
-  College: @JTC_johnxxiii
-  College: @johnxxiii_college
-  Foundation: foundation.johnxxiii.edu.au



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[John XXIII College](https://www.youtube.com/JohnXXIIICollege)