89th annual report 2012

bring out her best.

STRATHCONA
school board

Board members as at November 2012:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Mrs Laurinda Gardner, B.A. (Hons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Chair</td>
<td>Mrs Sonia Rendigs, B.Public Relations and Organisational Communication (NY) (Marketing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Ms Trudy Skilbeck, B.Sc., LLB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Mr Peter McGregor, B.Com., F.Fin., ASA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Chair</td>
<td>Mr Ivan Andolfatto, B.A., LLB, MLIV, ASBL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Chair</td>
<td>Mr Gunther Jahnke, MBA, B.App.Sc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Marketing, Strategic Planning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist Union</td>
<td>Mrs Judy McMaster, B.Theol., TPTC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Groups rep.</td>
<td>Mr Edward Cohen, B.A., MICM, Cert. Credit Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Strathconians Association rep.</td>
<td>Mrs Libbie Smith, Dip.Arts (Fashion Design)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr Richard Sallows, B.Bus. (Acctg), CPA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As members of the Strathcona community, each of us is focused on making our School the best it can be for the benefit of the young people entrusted to our care. Whether a current active member or part of the wider School community, we take pride in Strathcona’s achievements and reputation.

The progress of the School in 2012 is testament to the commitment of staff, students, parents and the Board. In your reading of the many reports included in this publication, you will see the outcome of informed planning and dedicated effort.

Each year via professional development, I keep abreast of national and international directions in education to influence our School directions. In June, I participated in a residential seminar in Nottingham, UK, at the National College of School Leadership (NCSL). Attended by 250 Principals of forty nationalities, it provided a rich opportunity for discussion on leadership and capacity building of schools. The NCSL Conference, held in Birmingham, followed this with international keynote addresses and stimulating seminars for the 1900 delegates in attendance.

Ben Levin, Professor and Canada Research Chair in Educational Leadership and Policy, University of Toronto, spoke on the topic, 'What makes a great school?' Interestingly, he focused on three elements which are underpinned by teaching and learning, personal relationships and community relationships:

• Having excellent student outcomes on a range of indicators
• Being a warm, supportive, inclusive place
• Being intellectually stimulating and engaging.

Let us consider evidence of these three elements at Strathcona.

For student outcomes, we could firstly focus on external examinations, as each year, students at Strathcona achieve at the top ATAR ranks (for example, 24% over 95 in 2011) in the VCE examinations. Nationally, NAPLAN results provide a snapshot of literacy and numeracy development and we can be proud of the fact that, on average, our students perform approximately one to two years above the average score for students in the State. Equally, we are always pleased to see the achievement of High Distinctions and Distinctions in national competitions in English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography and internationally through the International Competitions and Assessment for Schools (ICAS) competitions.
This said, we would be narrowing our focus if we did not consider achievement relative to potential. Our emphasis at Strathcona is on individuals achieving at whatever academic level is appropriate for them. For example, the use of Edutesting in advance of Year 7 provides us with indicators of students' potential, enables programs to be tailored through the Advanced Learning Centre and guides staff on the best approaches for individual students. Understanding individual student needs, using data and research to inform the type of assistance provided and early targeted intervention underpin the progress of each child.

Good pastoral care has always been a core element of Strathcona. Structured to monitor and support each child, the pastoral network is made up of committed staff from the Dean of Students, Heads of Campus through to classroom teachers at Mellor House and Form Tutors in the Senior School. Knowledge of and attention to the needs of each student is an assumed part of each teacher's role. To ensure they know they are valued, respected and to instil a sense of belonging, there is shared responsibility for all students among staff. Identification with - and willingness to take such responsibility - is a key criterion in the selection of new staff.

Special programs assist in structuring pastoral support, including Peer Support and Big Sister/ Little Sister programs, and House activities which bring older and younger children together. The value of older students being role models who provide a sense of security so younger ones feel part of the School is vital. Leadership by students is essential in the creation of a supportive, inclusive place. The multiple leadership roles of the senior students impact throughout the School.

Teaching is a demanding, technical skill. While expertise can be developed individually, it is best built collectively among teachers. At Strathcona, there is a common understanding of best practice in the classroom. This, combined with individual adaptation, aims to stimulate and engage students.

Best practice is supported also by State standards and the National Professional Standards for Teachers, released in 2011. To fulfil these standards well requires the development of expertise to differentiate instruction in the classroom and to scaffold tasks to suit individual capabilities. It requires developing in students the right attitudes and dispositions for learning, thinking skills, interpersonal skills and use of technology to support learning. Special programs at Strathcona add to what is provided through the major curriculum. These include SEED (Seek, Engage, Enrich, Diversify) at Years 7 and 8 with its interdisciplinary links to develop creativity and thinking skills and I-Learning (Interdisciplinary, Interactive, Inquiry-based Learning) at Year 9. This emphasises active, purposeful and challenging learning, supported by technology with iPad use. Major inter-school undertakings such as Think Plus are impacting throughout the School, particularly with increasing awareness of the Growth Mindset, expounded by Prof. Carol Dweck of Stanford University, USA. Through the Inner Melbourne Cluster and the Borroondara Gifted Cluster, extension opportunities have been enthusiastically received by students in both Mellor House and Senior School. Importantly, the work of the Advanced Learning Centre teachers is influencing approaches by all classroom teachers throughout the School.

I agree with Ben Levin’s proposition at the NCSL seminar that, as important as resourcing, information technology, organisation of the school and the curriculum are, it will ultimately be the teaching and learning, personal relationships and community relationships which have greatest impact upon young people’s educational experiences.

We have a clear vision that ‘Strathcona girls achieve their best’ and an active Strategic Plan to guide all that we do. With strong alignment throughout the School with the School’s 7 Strategic Goals, and extensive professional involvement and learning taking place within and beyond the School, our commitment to continuous improvement is clear. New developments in our Professional Standards Scheme for staff will provide further impetus to strengthen Strathcona as a supportive, inclusive environment which stimulates and engages all our young people.

As a close working relationship amongst all staff provides a collegial environment which benefits our students, I express sincere appreciation to all our teachers, teacher assistants, administration and property staff who help one another to ensure the highest quality and smooth coordination of our ventures. We also have a strong, close leadership team aligned in the face of the multiple initiatives that present themselves and I express my congratulations and deep appreciation to the following people who so capably fulfil leadership and key administrative roles:

The School Executive:
Deputy Principal, Mrs Jenni Farmilo
Business Manager, Mr Richard Sallows
Dean of Students, Ms Terri Oprean
Dean of Studies, Mr Ross Phillips
Chaplain, Mrs Rhonda Burns
Head of Mellor House, Mr Chris Phyland
Head of Tay Creggan, Mr Geoff Wriedt
Directors of key whole school areas:

Director of Learning Technologies, Dr Tim Kitchen
Director of Information Technology Services, Mr David Young
Director of Information Services, Ms Mary Hall
Director of Enrolments and Marketing, Mrs Jo Wilson

Heads of Departments:

Mr Brit Biviano/Mrs Helen McCormack .......................... Art
Mr David Bradshaw ...................................................... Commerce
Mrs Marisa Rowlands .................................................... Drama
Ms Simone Boland .......................................................... Food & Technology
Mrs Pat Menke .................................................. Geography/History
Ms Terri Oprean ......................................................... Health & Human Development
Ms Veronica Swayne .................................................... Languages
Ms Tracy Herft .......................................................... Mathematics
Dr Tim Kitchen ................................................ Multimedia (VET)
Ms Georgina Nagy ........................................................ Music
Ms Kimberley Bate .................................................. Physical Education
Mrs Pam Welsford ....................................................... Science
Ms Megan Barber .......................................................... Sport

Mr Geoff Little .............................. Deputy Head of Mellor House
Mrs Melissa King ..................................................... Chief of Staff
Ms Annette Holtschke ........................................... Timetabler
Mr Matthew Morrison ........................................ Reporting Coordinator

Mrs Diana Little ................................ International & Interstate Links Coordinator
Mrs Lucinda Thom ......................................................... Strathconian Editor
Dr Vicki Treidel ........................................................ VCE Coordinator
Ms Liesl Woods ........................................ Outdoor Education Coordinator

Mrs Jacqueline Brennan ................................. Receptionist
Mrs Anthea Andrews ............................... Local Primary Science Program
Ms Sarah Knight .................................................. Science Laboratory Assistant
Mrs Kerri Rhodes ...................................................... School Psychologist
Mr Jared Cummings .......................................................... Coordinator of Rowing
Ms Erinn Frawley .................................................. Science/Psychology
Ms Samantha Lake ......................................................... ELC
Mr Geoff Little ..... Year 3 teacher, Deputy Head Mellor House
Mrs Janine Kertes ................................................... Mathematics/Science
Ms Catherine Marshall .... Business Office & HR Administrator
Mrs Lyn Martin ........................................................ Science Laboratory Assistant
Ms Simone Boland ....................................................... Military

In 2012 we welcomed the following new staff to Strathcona:

Ms Kimberley Bate ......................................................... Physical Education
Mrs Cathy Brotherton .................................................. Advanced Learning
Mr Jared Cummings .......................................................... Coordinator of Rowing
Mrs Karla Ellard .......................................................... Prep teacher
Ms Erin Frawley .................................................. Science/Psychology
Ms Samantha Lake ......................................................... ELC
Mr Geoff Little ..... Year 3 teacher, Deputy Head Mellor House
Mrs Christy Kertes ................................................... Mathematics/Science
Ms Catherine Marshall .... Business Office & HR Administrator
Mrs Lyn Martin ........................................................ Science Laboratory Assistant
Mrs Laura Osborne ......................................................... Junior School French

Year Coordinators:

Mr Scott Pannam ........................................... Year 12
Mrs Julie Plymin .................................................. Year 11
Mr Mark Hamilton ........................................ Year 10
Mrs Miranda Gazis ........................................ Year 8
Mrs Yvette Egondis ........................................ Year 7

Staff who have fulfilled contract positions this year:

Ms Christine Best
Ms Erin Horsley
Mrs Helen McCormack
Ms Nadine Pacella-Salce

Staff departing:

Appreciation is expressed to those staff who departed during the year or at the conclusion:

Mr Brit Biviano .......................................................... Head of Art
Ms Jacqui Bremner .................................................. Receptionist
Ms Wendy Hawkins .......................................................... Science Laboratory Assistant
Mr Norm Nicol ........................................................ Maintenance (after 25 years of dedicated service to Strathcona)

School Board

Commitment to good governance is essential for the success and ongoing planning of directions for any school. At Strathcona we are blessed with a Board which exudes integrity, and the Directors bring their expertise gained from their professional involvement in the broader community. Time is given generously for monthly meetings of the whole Board and sub-committees for governance, finance, property and
marketing. The strategic directions of the School have been determined through thorough Board/Senior Staff discussions and ensure alignment between policy directions and the daily management and leadership of the School.

I appreciate and deeply respect the contribution of Dr Timothy Day on the Board and as Chairperson (2006 – 2012). It has been an honour to work closely with a man with strong personal and professional ethics and I thank him for the time he gives to the School. Mrs Laurinda Gardner commenced as Chair this year and we will all benefit from her deep commitment to Strathcona, her values and expertise.

Parent and Alumni Community

In my introduction to the Annual Report, I expressed that community relationships are essential in the creation of a great school. At Strathcona we are fortunate in having close involvement by parents and alumni who generously give to the activities of the Family Association, the various Friends Groups, Brownlow Breakfast Committee, to year level activities, major events, the Swap Shop, Canteen and the activities of the Old Strathconians Association. Such participation and giving are an essential part of the tapestry of the School and provide our students with a real sense of being supported by a very large community of people. My sincere thanks go to our parents and alumni for all that you contribute.

Our students

I consider that I have one of the best jobs in the world. I get to spend every day (and what seems to be every minute of the day) thinking about what is happening for and might happen for each of our students in and beyond the classroom. I get to enjoy their many and varied talents, seeing children learn, grow, give and develop into people who make all of us proud. The staff and I are privileged to share such an awesome responsibility alongside our parents. I trust that each of our girls, and our boys in the Early Learning Centre, looks back on this year with satisfaction.

Year 12

I express gratitude to our Year 12 girls who have maturely led the School. As a unified group, they have enthusiastically involved themselves in major activities, taking up specific roles in Houses and other areas. I congratulate those who have fulfilled the wide range of leadership responsibilities and pay tribute to our School Captain, Amelia Hough, and Deputy Captains, Klara Morey and Samira Wakhlu. They have led with energy, warmth and creativity and have demonstrated the balance possible between the serious tasks and the fun that school can be. Thank you all, girls, for being such wonderful young people! I wish you great happiness and many opportunities for success and enjoyment in your lives. May you always feel part of Strathcona and remain connected to us.

To all in the School community and to all readers of this Annual Report, I trust that you will have a true sense of the incredible breadth and depth of the activities and achievements of this great school.

Warm wishes to all for a blessed Christmas and relaxation with family and friends.

Helen Hughes
Strathcona has performed strongly in 2012 and enjoyed successes in all facets of the School's activities. Most importantly, girls, both individually and in teams, have achieved their best academically, and in many co-curricular and sporting pursuits. The Board is responsible to ensure that the School provides the environment within which these successes can occur and this in turn requires significant focus on the way the School is governed, manages finances, enhances facilities and works with stakeholders that form our community.

2012 has been a year where the community and media spotlight has been shone on the structure of independent schools and the performance of their boards. Strathcona is a company limited by guarantee, therefore Board directors are bound by the requirements of the Corporations Act. In addition, six of the Board directors' appointments are endorsed by the Baptist Union of Victoria. These structures, along with the registration requirements of the Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority and various government reporting requirements, place a high level of scrutiny on the performance of the Board and the School.

As you would expect, the Board and individual directors take the responsibilities entrusted to them seriously. The Board operates in a manner truly reflective of all these expectations and of the ethos of the School. Board discussions and decision making are conducted with respect for individual views and perspectives, and are unrelenting in examining what is best for Strathcona today and into the future. The strong legacy built by previous Boards is one that the current Board is proud of and committed to sustain. The Governance Sub-committee continually examines the Board composition to ensure we have the right skills to meet the School's needs. In 2012, the Board welcomed Mr Rob McFee, a current parent, as a new Board member. Rob brings skills and experience in architecture and project management and therefore adds significant additional capability to the Board and the Property Sub-committee.

In May we were very saddened by the death of our former Board colleague, Anne Warren. Anne served on the Board from 1998 to 2009 and made a huge contribution to Strathcona as a parent, fundraiser and as member and leader of various friends groups. Anne epitomised what Strathcona stands for through her integrity, warmth and care for others.
The financial security of Strathcona is always a primary goal. for the School. development of a comprehensive risk management framework the Goal of sound governance of Strathcona, has been the ever-changing environment. A new initiative in support of whether the Goals were still appropriate in the current on progress on the actions to reach the Goals and tested Board’s annual Governance Day in August, the Board reflected out 7 Goals that frame what we aspire to for Strathcona. At the The School has a 5-year Strategic Plan (2011 – 2015) which sets What has the Board focused on in 2012? among our many community engagement activities this year, we by innovative marketing campaigns, have been very encouraging. Strathcona has responded strongly and enrolments, underpinned education outcomes whilst in our care. In this environment, Strathcona has responded strongly and enrolments, underpinned by innovative marketing campaigns, have been very encouraging. Among our many community engagement activities this year, we revitalised and expanded the content of our website in line with best practice, and we recreated our new Prospectus package to showcase our academic and extra and co-curricular offerings across all year levels. Keeping abreast of educational trends and innovations is of great interest to the Board and this year we had presentations and discussions regarding the I-Learning program in Year 9 and the application of new technologies in the classroom. The Board also receives regular reports from the Old Strathconians’ Association and the Strathcona Friends Groups. These connections bring perspectives that are essential to ensure the Board stays cognisant of broader experiences and expectations of families and our past students. The relationship between Board and the Principal is critical to the good governance and constructive environment of any school. At Strathcona, we have a proud tradition of strong partnerships between the Board and the Principal, exemplified now through the manner in which the Board works with Mrs Helen Hughes and the alignment of values and aspirations for Strathcona.

On behalf of my Board colleagues, my thanks and admiration go to Mrs Hughes for her strong leadership, commitment to her profession, care for staff and students, and her openness and trust in the Board. I also acknowledge and thank Richard Sallows, Business Manager and Company Secretary for his stewardship of the School finances and oversight of capital projects. The staff of the school have continued to dedicate their time and professional expertise to achieving the best outcomes for girls and to supporting each other.

To my Board colleagues, thank you for the time you contributed over the past year and a particular thanks to the Chairs of the Subcommittees: Peter McGregor, Finance Committee; Ivan Andolfatto, Property Committee and Gunther Jahnke, Marketing Committee.

In April this year I took over from Dr Timothy Day as Chair of the Strathcona Board. Over the last eight years, Dr Day has continued the very high standard of leadership set by previous Board Chairs, through his commitment and integrity. On behalf of the Board and the whole Strathcona community, thank you Tim for your commitment, outstanding integrity and embodiment of Strathcona’s values. Taking on the Chair role is both an honour and a new personal challenge for me and I acknowledge the trust placed in me and will strive to ‘Bring out my best’.

To the 2012 Year 12s, may all your dreams be fulfilled, and to all in the Strathcona community best wishes for a safe and happy festive season and successful 2013.

Laurinda Gardner
School finances 2011 (MySchool Website)

### Net recurrent income 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>$ Total</th>
<th>$ Per student</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australian Government recurrent funding</td>
<td>1,820,286</td>
<td>2,575</td>
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<td>State Government recurrent funding</td>
<td>476,264</td>
<td>674</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fees, charges and parent contributions</td>
<td>12,642,376</td>
<td>17,882</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other private sources</td>
<td>362,411</td>
<td>513</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total gross income</strong></td>
<td>15,301,357</td>
<td>21,643</td>
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(excluding government capital grants)

#### Less deductions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<tr>
<td>Income allocated to current capital projects</td>
<td>206,447</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total net recurrent income</strong></td>
<td>15,094,890</td>
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### Capital expenditure 2011

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<tr>
<td>Australian Government capital expenditure</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Government capital expenditure</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>New school loans</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Income allocated to current capital projects</td>
<td>206,447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>932,357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total capital expenditure</strong></td>
<td>1,424,738</td>
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Old Strathconians Association

2012 has been another rewarding year for the OSA and its partnership with the School, with a range of successful events and activities having taken place. Our major fundraiser, *Best Recipes*, was delivered just in time for Christmas 2011, before a stylish launch by Guy Grossi at the Strathcona Fair in March. *Best Recipes* contains a range of great recipes and wonderful photographs of Strathcona past and present that make it a beautiful keepsake. All profits from the sale of *Best Recipes* are being used to grow the OSA Scholarship Fund.

We have enjoyed continued success with the Reunion program this year, which is well organised on behalf of the OSA by Elisabeth Chalmers in the Community Relations Office. Past students come back to us from all around Melbourne, country Victoria and interstate. Others have scheduled visits from overseas to coincide with their reunion date: a good indicator of how popular the Reunion program is. We also hear of various groups meeting up in between the 5-year rotation of the school-based reunions. This year, the 1975 leavers’ group celebrated 40 years since they were at Tay Creggan with a lunch back at Tay Creggan.

The Former Strathconians 1924 – 42 are a special group within the OSA family. In November last year, after many years of dedicated service convening this group, Mrs Shirley Lowthian handed over the reins to the Community Relations Office. These are the ladies who established the OSA General Excellence Scholarship, and who have supported it generously in subsequent years. We owe these first Strathconians a great deal, and we were pleased to once again welcome those able to attend the annual luncheon in November. We’re also very grateful to many other generous ‘old girls’ and families of past students who have given to the OSA Scholarship Fund in 2012. One individual donation in particular has significantly increased the OSA Scholarship Fund this year. The OSA Scholarship for 2012/2013 was awarded to Sarah Keane, and for 2013/2014 to Annie Biggins. Both girls are the daughters of past Strathcona students.

The OSA Committee wishes to acknowledge the year round support we receive from Helen Hughes and the Strathcona staff. Their ready agreement to our use of the school facilities is always very much appreciated. 2012 saw the return of the OSA Cabaret, this time in the Creative and Performing Arts Centre Drama Studio. The creative team, led by Tori Wood, designed a brilliant show: 21st Century Musicals: Songs from Stage and Screen. The show was performed with panache by a very talented cast and supported by an excellent band of musicians and backstage crew. A sellout season of six performances attests to its ongoing popularity and we look forward to more next year!
The Careers Evening in August was once again very well attended by current senior students and their parents. It is gratifying to see the engagement between past students and the younger girls eager to learn from the experience of others and to gain insight into the latest developments that apply to their chosen career path. This interaction between past and current Strathy girls is an example of how the OSA is looking to make more effective use of the expertise amongst our alumni.

At the OSA Annual General Meeting in September we were pleased to welcome Mrs Judy Battle back to Strathcona as our guest speaker. Judy’s current involvement with a number of programs that support education under very difficult circumstances in Cambodia and Africa is an example to us of how we can look to serve the wider community in a really practical way.

I want to take this opportunity to thank my fellow OSA Committee members: Mel Fookes, Laura Loftus, Julie Craik, Fay Coysh, Desi Fkiaras and Clare Gardner, all of whom have contributed greatly to the success of the OSA this year. Our thanks to Helen Hughes who has again made time in her busy schedule to attend OSA events, meetings and reunions on a regular basis throughout 2012. Thanks also to Elisabeth Chalmers and Diana Little in the Community Relations Office and Trudy Skilbeck, whose practical assistance at Reunions has been very much appreciated. The OSA’s activities would not be possible without their continued support.

Libbie Smith
President, Old Strathconians Association

Strathcona Family Association

The Family Association’s main income streams continue to be the Second Hand Uniform and Badged Goods Shop, the Second Hand Book Sales, and the voluntary levy. These are supplemented by a number of other events such as the Mothers’ and Fathers’ day stalls and barbecues at sports events. The Association contributes at least $20,000 to programs and purchases for students across the School annually. This year, funds have:

- provided more interactive whiteboards for Mellor House, thus completing the full quota for all classes
- contributed to the refurbishment of the Tay Creggan library
- funded staff training for the introduction of the Read & Write Gold 10 reading assistance program
- funded the purchase of iPads for Mellor House for Prep and Year 3, 2013.

At the annual Christmas Charity lunch, 2011, we were delighted to have school parent, Cathy Catlow, share her family’s journey and involvement with Yooralla. Cathy’s humorous and heart-warming story touched everyone present, and thanks to the sale of auction items and mystery envelopes, we were able to donate $1,425 to Yooralla to assist families with children with disabilities. Special thanks to Jo Juler for her assistance in securing items towards this.

At the 2012 lunch, we welcomed Mary Muirhead, Boroondara’s inaugural Volunteer of the Year, and Director of the Learning 4Life Autism Centre. We all gained valuable understanding of what having a child within the Autism Spectrum can mean, and the effective work of key early intervention programs.

The Second Hand Uniform Shop, which also sells badged goods, continues to provide a great service to the community and raise funds. Special thanks to the roster of volunteers who staff it each week. Badged goods now include a popular new sports gear bag.

We are most appreciative of the support and advice from our Principal, Helen Hughes, and also thank the senior members of staff who have attended meetings as guest speakers. Special thanks go to Elisabeth Chalmers in the Community Relations Office for her invaluable knowledge, planning, organising and
support, Anita Burman in Elisabeth’s absence, and Diana Little for her support of Family Association activities.

Providing meals to support families during a time of need has been a most appreciated demonstration of care, and has been so kindly coordinated by Gayle Gower and a team of willing helpers.

The Family Association members, together with the wider Strathcona community, were saddened to hear of the passing of Anne Warren, former Association President and active member of the School community.

Although all parents of the School are in fact part of the Family Association, without the commitment and dedication of the core group, we would not be able to achieve what we do. Very special thanks to Edward Cohen, Deepa Fernando, Carolyn Gelme, Gayle Gower, Helen Harrison, Helen Katsoulis, Sarah Merrylees, Anita Mitchell, Carolyn Turner, and those who cannot attend but keep in touch and respond to requests.

On behalf of the Strathcona Family Association committee, I wish you all a wonderful and blessed Christmas season, and look forward to furthering the Association’s commitment to the School in 2013.

Di Gillies
President, Strathcona Family Association

Friends Groups

Friends of Aerobics

This has been an exciting year for our 16 eager participants of team-based competitive aerobics. Former student, Kate Nelson, coached our teams for the second year running and worked with the girls each Saturday morning. A new cohort of Year 9 girls joined the squad this year and, despite their lack of experience, this team of six managed to place a very respectable 4th place in the June Aerochallenge. In this same competition, our two Year 12 participants, Anna Milne and Lucy Pollard, competing as a Level 2 senior pair, received the gold medal. In August, two of our teams were highly excited to qualify for the 2012 AEROSkools National Championships that were hosted in Brisbane during the September holidays. For our Year 8 intermediate trio, this was the first time they had qualified for the prestigious event. Special congratulations go to our Year 9 Intermediate trio, Isabelle Winiarski, Isabella Rossidis and Sophie Brugliera, who received the silver medal in this event. By all accounts, it has been a terrific year for all of the Aerobics competitors.

Caroline Noble

Friends of Kayaking

Fun Come-n-Try days kick-started this year’s Kayak Club, with many new faces eager to try the sport. New members from Years 7 to 9 attended pool sessions where they could practise stroke technique, experience different types of kayaks, and become attuned to the steering and manoeuvrability of their crafts.

Once introduced to the Yarra, paddlers commuted to Tay Creggan to build on their skills related to controlling a craft, and river etiquette in the beautiful environment. On some of the hotter days, the girls practised capsizing and recovering; some purposefully, and some unintentionally! As winter grew closer, paddlers concluded their semester with a Winter Warmer evening of DVDs and pizza, snuggled by the cosy fireplace of Tay Creggan.

In recent months, paddlers have been stepping up their intensity, covering distances of up to 8km during sessions in their progression towards the end of year Kayak Kampout. Sessions have vastly improved with the return of alumni, Sophie and Naomi Johnson, Sophie Young, and the dedicated Lauren Watson, all of whom commit to their own training, jobs and study, as well as providing enthusiastic support to the current, young Strathconians. We thank these girls with much appreciation, and look forward to their future involvement as the young paddlers near their first races in 2013.

The Kayaking Club includes 15 members who will complete the year with the much-anticipated Kayak Kampout in the week following the end of Term 4, 2012. With the sun beginning to break through Melbourne’s four-season days, the girls will spend two days paddling sections of the Yarra with a picnic lunch on the city’s banks, and a campout on the lush grass of Tay Creggan. Paddlers will climb into their tents after a BBQ and DVD night, ready for day 2 of paddling. The girls in the Kayak Club have...
been looking forward to this since their 2011 Kampout experience and we very much look forward to offering these events and more in 2013!

Liesel Woods

Friends of Music

This year was the 20th anniversary of the formation of the Strathcona Friends of Music, and an opportunity to remember and thank all who have been a part of this group over the years. Our major event for the year, the Friends of Music Annual Dinner, was a great celebration of this significant milestone. The evening of delicious food and fine music was the result of a wonderful team effort truly representative of the spirit of the Friends of Music group.

Other fundraising events for the year included the sale of bulbs in autumn and providing supper for those attending the outstanding Concerto Night and the Annual Music Concert. This year, we have supported the Music Department by funding a workshop series designed to maximise student performance potential, funding bus travel for all students attending the Music Camp, and donating $4,000 for the purchase of musical equipment.

As our annual donation to support worthy music-related causes in the wider community, $500 was given to ABLE Australia, to provide resources for their music therapy program for people living with multiple disabilities.

A teak bench seat and plaque were dedicated as a memorial to Joy Buxton, founding member and longstanding treasurer of Friends of Music. The seat and plaque were placed at the entrance to the Creative and Performing Arts Centre in commemoration of her many years of volunteer service to the Music Department at Strathcona.

Several longstanding members of the Friends of Music are retiring this year as their daughters’ years at Strathcona have come to an end. I would like to sincerely thank them and all the members of the Friends of Music committee for their time and support, and welcome enquiries from any new parents who may be interested in joining us in 2013.

Judy Pietsch

Friends of Rowing

The 2012 Head of Schoolgirls Regatta (HOSGR) on 17 and 18 March 2012 marked the completion of the 6th season of rowing at Strathcona. In those six years we have seen the sport grow from a group of ten Year 9 girls responding to a notice on the board at Tay Creggan and forming two crews to compete at the 2007 HOSGR, to an established and thriving club of more than 70 girls competing for Strathcona each season over the last three years. Strathcona Rowing is fortunate to have its own facilities at Tay Creggan and the program is going from strength to strength through the great support of Mrs Hughes, the generous contribution of the hardworking Friends of Rowing Group, the wonderful parent support and, most importantly, the great enthusiasm from our squad of rowers.

Our 7th season sees another step in the Strathcona Rowing journey, with the appointment of Jared Cummings as Rowing Coordinator. This is very exciting news as it consolidates rowing as a sport at Strathcona and, with Jared and his talented and committed coaching group, we are well placed to take the next step in our progress. We welcome Jared to Strathcona and we all look forward to this season with great anticipation.

The 2011/2012 season was full of highlights. The HOSGR on 17 and 18 March saw 70 rowers represent Strathcona with pride and achieve some excellent results. The girls stayed in Torquay and 200 attended the HOSG dinner on the Saturday night. The weekend was a great success and an enjoyable experience for all. The Rowing Presentation Night is always a great event and this year was no exception with over 200 attending the evening in the Creative and Performing Arts Centre at the end of March. On the night, we acknowledged and celebrated all of the great achievements of the season. There was a host of awards presented as well as a fantastic DVD of the season’s rowing providing wonderful memories for girls and their parents.

After a term off, the new season of rowing began in July with about 55 rowers from Years 9 to 11 continuing their Strathcona Rowing experience and about 40 Year 8 girls trying rowing for the first time. The Annual Strathy House Regatta was held on 14 October - a magnificent spring day - at Footscray, where the rowing conditions were ideal. On the day there were 110 rowers competing in 28 events. There were races for House Quad Crews, Double Sculls, Single Sculls and seven Parent Quad Crews. Over 200 people attended the regatta with Gilbert and Grenfell joint winners of the Rowing House Cup. In the Parents’ Regatta, ‘Back in Black’ took out the men’s event and ‘Easy Oar’ won the A Final of the ladies’ division. ‘Easy Oar’ went on to win the inaugural Champion of Champions event. Our parent crews once again thoroughly enjoyed their rowing experience with many parents keen to train and compete again next year, whilst the House competition saw girls from Years 8 to 12 come together as one team. This in many ways epitomises what rowing at Strathcona is all about.

The Strathcona Rowing Squad was magnificently led through the 2011/2012 season by our Captain, Anna Cornwell, and
Deputy Captain, Tahlia Mollard. Through their contribution and leadership, Anna and Tahlia helped make rowing a rewarding and enjoyable experience for all. Congratulations to Chloe Nall for being appointed Captain and Rachelle Soumprou and Ashleigh Gale, Deputy Captains for the upcoming season.

As we all work towards the HOSG Regatta on 16 and 17 March 2013, the seventh season of rowing at Strathcona is full of promise and excitement.

Michael Cornwell

Friends of Rhythmic Gymnastics

Strathcona Rhythmic Gymnastics Club has had another great year. The club continues to offer training sessions four afternoons a week and Saturday mornings. Gymnasts between the ages of three and 18 attend one to three sessions a week and we have gymnasts competing in Levels 1 to 9 in the National stream.

The younger gymnasts in the club experienced their first competition at Strathcona in June when we hosted the Strathcona Junior Cup. The day is getting bigger every year and is a major fundraiser for our club. This year, we raised over $3,000. These funds made it possible to buy some new equipment and support travelling coaches, judges and gymnasts.

Girls from the club competed at selection trials for the Victorian team to compete at the Australian Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships in Sydney. Emma Morrison (Year 12) was selected for the Victorian team. Emma’s team came 4th at this event. Gymnasts have competed at the Senior and Junior Victorian Championships. The Senior gymnasts competed well, with Cara Adamopoulos (Year 10) achieving 2nd place in Level 9 and Emma Morrison achieving 4th in Level 8. The junior gymnasts competed well in the Junior Victorian Championships. The Strathcona team achieved 2nd place overall at this competition. Ellie Robinson (Year 8) achieved 7th place in Level 6. Three gymnasts from the club also travelled to Auckland in August to compete at the Shore Gymnastics Championships. This was a valuable experience to compete internationally.

The gymnasts are preparing for the Victorian Multiples Championships in December. They are also learning new routines for 2013 which will incorporate new regulations that are being introduced next year.

All this would not be possible without the coaches. The Friends of Rhythmic Gymnastics would like to thank Tiffany Kelly, Laura Macintosh and the other coaches for their efforts in 2012. As retiring convenor for the Friends of Rhythmic Gymnastics, I would particularly like to thank all the members of the committee for their help over the years and I wish the club much success in the years ahead.

Caroline Morrison

Friends of Snowsports

2012 was another great year for Strathcona Friends of Snowsports. Although not a large team this year, we had an extremely committed group of five girls from Year 5 upward.

Our Information Night in February started the year with the Snowsports Leaders being announced and the Snowsports Calendar of Events outlined to all interested students and their families.

The year consisted of social events, a family weekend at Mt Hotham and a Team Breakfast. Our main event was the Victorian Interschool Snowsports Championships held at Mt Buller. The Friends of Snowsports family weekend at Mt Hotham in July was a most enjoyable weekend with excellent snow conditions. Many thanks to the Patterson Family who have continued with Friends of Snowsports since their daughter Alex (1st Captain of Snowsports) finished in 2007.

The 2012 Snowsports Team representing Strathcona consisted of Monique St Clair (Year 12), Elisha Catlow (Year 11) as Co-Snowsports Captains, Evelyn Gomm (Year 12) as Vice-Captain, Shannon Griffiths (Year 10) and Tara Skelton (Year 5). These girls were part of the 5,533 competitors from over 140 schools at the 2012 Subaru Victorian Interschool Snowsports Championships. There was mixed weather, some skiing in clear skies and sunshine, but others struggling with poor visibility and strong winds.

Monique, Elisha and Evelyn were in Division 1. They competed across Alpine Giant Slalom, Moguls, and Evelyn in Skiercross. In Division 2, Shannon competed in Alpine Giant Slalom, and our youngest member Tara represented Mellor House,
competing in Skiercross. Strathcona was also proudly represented at both the opening ceremony and closing ceremony by the Snowsports Team and parents in attendance. It was a wonderful week watching each member of the Strathcona Snowsports Team compete and having the opportunity to socialise with many of our neighbouring schools.

The Presentation Night at the end of the year was a fun celebration and an opportunity to thank all involved. Snowsports especially appreciate the valuable support from Chris Phyland, Head of Mellor House and Snowsports Coordinator, the Committee - Debbie Griffiths, Nadine Goldsmith and Cathy Catlow, all Strathcona parents involved, and the Patterson family.

Friends of Snowsports encourage more families to participate in 2013. Students of all skiing abilities are welcome.

_Cathy Catlow_

**Brownlow Committee**

On Monday 24 September 2012, Strathcona hosted its 22nd Annual Brownlow Medal Breakfast in the Medallion Club at Etihad Stadium with an attendance of 350 past and present school parents, business people, and football fanatics from across Melbourne.

Strathcona’s Brownlow Medal Breakfast is widely recognised as the start to Grand Final week celebrations and enjoys the support of the AFL, who provided us with the Premiership Cup for display. Guests enjoyed having their photos taken with the Cup. Once again, one of the original founders of the Breakfast, David Parkin, was in attendance and was our guest speaker. Our Master of Ceremonies was Terry Wallace and the panel consisted of Kevin Sheedy (Greater Western Sydney Coach), Chelsea Roffey (AFL goal umpire), Debbie Lee (VWFL President and player) and Paul Barnard (past player of Essendon FC). Mike Brady rounded off the morning with ‘Up There Cazaly’.

This high profile event is a major fundraiser for Strathcona, raising approximately $27,000 for our School. We were again pleased to donate the lucky ticket proceeds of $6,800 to Life Education Victoria.

We are extremely grateful to the sponsors of this event, Budget Rent A Car, Bendigo Bank, PMDL Architecture & Design, WOW! Travel, McConnell Dowell Constructors, Capital Finance, Cyan Press, Coldflow Heating & Cooling, Coffey, Grant Day James, Marshall White and Adams Print.

Sincere thanks are extended to the 2012 Brownlow Breakfast Committee: Paul Wheelton, Lisa Fekete, Michael Catlow, Brian Walsh, and staff, Helen Hughes, Richard Sallows, Chris Phyland, Tim Kitchen, Diana Little and Anita Burman, for their networking contacts and commitment to making the event such a success.

_Elisabeth Chalmers_
The Community Relations Office has continued to be a positive and proactive centre for a diverse range of activities throughout another year in the life of the School.

Fundraising events included the Strathcona Fair in March, the Dinner Dance at Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club in June and the 22nd Brownlow Medal Breakfast at the Medallion Club at Etihad Stadium in September. Funds raised from these events have contributed significantly to various improvements within the School.

Young and old enjoyed the Fair’s attractions in March. It was a great day of fine weather and lots of extremely excited, happy children. The enormous support we had from local businesses and School parents made the day a true community event with the funds raised contributing to the renovations of Featherstone Hall. Special thanks to the parents and staff who coordinated the large number of stalls and activities and to the coordinating Fair Committee consisting of Ann Balla, Julie Craik, Jenni Farmilo, John Forwood, Carolyn Gelme, Soraya Morrison, Lee Newcombe, Cathy Smith, Tania Watson and Lyn Wheat.

We sincerely thank the Dinner Dance Committee, consisting of Susan Fetherston and Tracy Schwarz with assistance from Gayle Gower, and the Brownlow Medal Breakfast Committee, consisting of Paul Wheelton, Lisa Fekete, Michael Catlow, Brian Walsh, Helen Hughes, Richard Sallows, Chris Phyland and Tim Kitchen, and the many staff and student volunteers who worked so tirelessly to ensure each event ran smoothly and successfully.

Support to Friends Groups, the Strathcona Family Association, Class Representatives, and the organisation of 13 annual reunions for the Old Strathconians Association has also been provided throughout the year. Reunions are vibrant and joyful occasions where past students enjoy reconnecting with each other. The publication of Best Recipes which is a compilation of recipes from past and present students and families of Strathcona, was launched by Guy Grossi at the Fair in March. The OSA held a Cabaret in August, led again by Tori Wood with the entire cast, crew and band made up of students who attended the School between 2005 and 2011.

The Feliciter Connection (past staff group) Annual Dinner was held on 28 April with Judy McMaster, former Chaplain and current Strathcona Board Member, as guest speaker. Approximately 50 past staff and interested friends joined together for a Burmese dinner at Tay Creggan. A soup lunch for the Feliciter Connection was held on 10 November at the main campus.

The relationships built through the Community Relations Office with School families have assisted in many areas of...
school life, including the sourcing of host families for interstate and overseas exchange students. The generous assistance of families in the International and Interstate Links Program is also greatly appreciated.

Special parent functions are arranged by the Community Relations Office. The year began with a Soirée held in February in the Creative and Performing Arts Centre to welcome new families to the School. An evening for Class Representatives was also held at the Principal’s home in March and it is always enjoyable to host the end of year Volunteers Cocktail Party to thank the many parents who have given their time to assist at the School in so many ways throughout the year.

The winter and summer editions of the Stratbcourier continue to be produced within the Community Relations Office. These publications keep the past and present School community up to date with the activities of the School. Very positive feedback and emails of appreciation are regularly received from those who enjoy reading the publication.

We extend our grateful thanks to all who have contributed to the work of the Community Relations Office in many ways in 2012 and look forward to another successful year in 2013.

Elisabeth Chalmers & Diana Little
The private school market remains very competitive with parents wishing to ensure that their children have the best schooling experience, the best opportunities and the best educational outcomes. In this environment, Strathcona has responded strongly and enrolments, underpinned by innovative marketing campaigns, have been very encouraging.

Throughout 2012, six school tours were conducted allowing families to visit the Early Learning Centre (ELC), Junior, Year 9 and Senior campuses. The Saturday morning tours were extremely popular and provided an excellent opportunity for families to visit the school, meet staff and students and tour the facilities.

Two well-attended open mornings were held mid-week in May and July, providing opportunities to see Strathcona at work and experience the strong sense of community amongst the staff and students. Prospective families also enjoyed presentations by the Principal, Mrs Helen Hughes, at the February and May tours.

Enrolments at Strathcona continue to be strong, reflecting the School’s reputation in its many activities, with a special emphasis on achieving consistently excellent VCE results.

Enrolments are the life of any school and while Strathcona continues to have strong numbers it can be assured of a prosperous future. At the same time, there is no room for complacency and the School will continue to place a strong emphasis on enrolment and marketing policies and activities.

The Marketing Committee has met regularly to consider strategies to promote the School. Two main tasks were undertaken by the Marketing Committee over the past 18 months: the publication of a new Prospectus package early in the year, and the introduction of a new website which went live at the start of Term 3. Both the Prospectus package and website have been well received by the School community and prospective families.

Advertisements were placed in local newspapers, *The Age*, *Melbourne Weekly Magazine* and other selected publications and guides. A number of students also appeared in various media stories highlighting their many individual and team successes. Many parents have commented on the positive image of Strathcona portrayed through these media opportunities.

School tours and advertising, both in media and online, are vital components of the marketing strategy for private schools. The Marketing Committee is committed to an extensive program to showcase Strathcona, our teachers and, most importantly, our students.

*Joanne Wilson*
Administration and Planning

William A Ward, one of America’s most quoted writers of inspirational maxims is credited as saying, “There are four steps to achievement: Plan purposefully. Prepare prayerfully. Proceed positively. Pursue persistently.”

The four words, plan, prepare, proceed and pursue are the directions that guide the administration and planning at Strathcona. In the past twelve there has been much to plan for, and shared delight as the journey unfurled. In all things, the teaching and learning of the staff and the students underpins every decision.

Policies and procedures are in a cyclic process of review and update. This year has seen close scrutiny of the Critical Incident Management plan in accordance with regulations. Hand in hand with that has been further refinement of the Emergency Procedures with assistance from the consultants we worked with last year.

Technology continues to support pedagogy, policy and procedures and pastoral care. Blackboard continues to be utilised extensively for the delivery and support of the curriculum as well as the day-to-day operations of the School. The use of SMS messaging is well established for absences as is the daily use of technology for absences, medical alerts and the like.

The use of iPads at Year 9 has been both welcomed and successful and the staff and students are continually finding new and creative ways to enhance teaching and learning for all students with technology.

The professional learning of staff is also being enhanced by technology with the use of Skype and online record-keeping and professional sharing. We really are living in a global world of professional educators.

This year, the period of refurbishment of Featherstone Hall has provided both challenges and surprising opportunities. The Senior School has held a weekly assembly in the gymnasium which has been warmly embraced by students and staff. The Mellor House girls have joined us at the start of each term which has been much anticipated by the senior girls. This combined assembly necessitated a different structure of the day for Tuesdays, which in turn has led to further changes for next year which will see added strength and support for the pastoral program.

William A Ward’s four ways of achieving are significant: purposefully, prayerfully, positively and persistently. Planning and administration are vital in supporting Strathcona to be the
furniture, carpet and a fresh coat of paint. Air conditioning was also installed into Tay Creggan’s Great Hall and Food Technology kitchen during 2012.

The Year 7 Centre at the main campus received new classroom furniture for the start of 2012. Plans are currently underway for the Year 8 area to receive new furniture for the start of 2013.

After a detailed planning period the renovation of Featherstone Hall commenced in July and was completed in October. The renovation has opened up the Hall to become a larger multi-function venue for assemblies, performances and other events. State-of-the-art audio visual and theatre lighting equipment will ensure professional facilities for students and parents to enjoy.

In September 2012, after 25 years of loyal service to the School, Mr Norm Nicol, the much loved school carpenter, retired. At Norm’s farewell he commented that when he joined the School, Featherstone Hall was being renovated and now 25 years later it is again being renovated. Best wishes to Norm for his retirement.

School Board

Part of the Business Manager’s role is to support and assist the School Board and its Subcommittees.

In 2012, planning of the future facilities of the School continued with the preparation and submission to local Council of a new senior campus Master Plan and a planning permit application for the New Learning Centre. Staff consultation has been a key factor in successful preparation of concept plans for the New Learning Centre. This facility is planned to open up the senior campus to become more accessible and flexible. It will link all surrounding buildings and create a new heart for the School.

I express my sincere thanks to the Administration and Business Office staff for all their hard work and diligence during the year. A special thank you to all the Property and Maintenance team members, led by Adrian Ammerlaan, for their efforts during 2012.

Richard Sallows

Business Administration

Administration and Business Office

The Administration staff support the Principal and whole School across a broad range of services, including reception and daily communications, student first aid and support services, printing and publications, music tuition coordination and facility and event management.

The Business Office staff ensure the smooth running of the School's financial systems and processes. Upgrading the School's administration and financial systems has continued during 2012 with enhancements to the Human Resources database and the family fee instalment systems.

The School relies on the diligence and hard work of the Administration and Business Office staff to ensure it runs smoothly day to day.

Property and Grounds

The Property and Grounds team ensure the School buildings and grounds, plant and equipment are fully operational every day. In 2012, a number of improvements to the School’s facilities have occurred.

With input in planning from Year 8 students and architects, PMDL, in 2011, the Property team completed a renovation of the Tay Creggan Library and computer laboratory into a modern Learning Lounge ready for the start of the 2012 school year. All of the classrooms at Tay Creggan received new

vibrant learning community that it is, as is the culture of our School. These things are carried out with purpose, prayer and reflection, and in a positive and persistent manner. This approach is modelled and demonstrated by our Principal, Mrs Helen Hughes, and I am most grateful for this and her many occasions of wise counsel.

In closing I would like to acknowledge the staff for their support and collegiality, and for the leadership of the Year 12 girls who have led with kindness, enthusiasm and a genuine love for their school.

Jenni Farmilo
Curriculum/Professional Development

Curriculum Development

Learning involves new experiences and making sense of them. Sometimes making sense of something involves seeing how it is similar to something else that you already know. The connection may be easy to make but your knowledge and understanding of the world are increased. Making the connection is not always easy and sometimes the new concept or perspective gained gives not simply more knowledge, but a deeper knowledge or knowledge of something really new. Getting to this point can take us down difficult paths and feed our self-doubt, but once we arrive we have great satisfaction.

Developing curriculum is about setting up the experiences that provide the challenges that bring our young people to these new understandings.

In Australia, we have our first national curriculum under development. This requires educators to gain a new perspective on curriculum and, therefore, there is struggle and debate. The first subjects to begin are English, Mathematics, History and Science from Prep to Year 10. Along with all other Victorian schools, Strathcona will be implementing this curriculum from 2013. Teachers in these departments have spent considerable time working out how we should best implement it. After all, the Australian Curriculum is just a list of items that Ministers of Education have agreed that our young people should understand at each stage of their development. Teachers in schools plan how they are going to help the children reach these milestones of development. This rethinking is time consuming, unsettling, contentious at times and leads to unfamiliar places, but these are the hallmarks of learning. Developing a new curriculum develops our teachers.

The curricula for Geography, The Arts and Languages are in advanced stages of development and Economics and Business, Civics and Citizenship, Technology and Health and Physical Education have begun. Some Year 11 subjects are planned for implementation in 2015.

Following the successful introduction of the interdisciplinary Year 7 and 8 program, SEED, in 2011, I-Learning was introduced at Year 9 in 2012. I-Learning has some common principles with SEED, in that it takes formal learning beyond the subject boundaries of a traditional curriculum and moves in some exciting new directions. I-Learning runs as four channels, one per term, that start with school curriculum areas but break out of the subject divisions, classroom walls and school gates to help the girls make real and lasting connections between their school learning and life in the world beyond.

The History Channel develops the girls' sense of place and belonging in Melbourne; the Science Channel explores the influence of science in society; the Arts Channel enlightens the girls on the diversity of human expression; and the Sustainability Channel raises awareness of their impact on the wider world and its impact on them. This experience has certainly challenged staff and students in ways that have led to lasting and transforming connections.

We gratefully acknowledge the Invergowrie Foundation’s generous support of our programs in Years 7 to 9 to provide a 21st Century Curriculum. This has made a significant contribution to the funding of staff professional development and team building, and resources for the implementation of the SEED and I-Learning programs.

This year’s Year 9 students also saw the introduction of personal mobile technology in the form of iPads. Students and teachers alike have found this tool to be useful in a myriad of ways, including storing textbooks, internet research, photographing the whiteboard, movie making, language learning, graphing, to name a few. Students and teachers have developed an iPad Etiquette to complement the Responsible Digital User Agreement to ensure that use of iPads remains positive and beneficial for learning.

Other changes at Year 9 have included three new subjects in place of the former elective program: Food, Health and Wellbeing; Art; and Performing Arts. All students have also taken part in an extended Outdoor Education program that has satisfied requirements for the Duke of Edinburgh’s Bronze Award.

Several staff have continued involvement with the de Bono Institute through the Think Plus program, promoting Carol Dweck’s Mindset concept and the benefit of feedback that...
fosters behaviours promoting learning rather than praising ability. Thirteen of us attended seminars and lectures by Dweck on her recent visit to Melbourne. We have worked with students in Years 7 to 9 on some simple understandings about neuroscience in order to empower them to engage in rational thinking when that is demanded of them (most academic challenges) rather than being trapped in instinctive reactions such as the fight-or-flight response that are more appropriate in life-threatening situations when there is no time to think rationally through options.

These developments address what has been termed the metacurriculum, a term that is synonymous with the term 21st Century Skills. The metacurriculum is about looking beyond the specifics of individual disciplines to explicitly address the thinking skills and personal skills that will serve students well in all of their classes, their personal lives and their future careers.

NAPLAN

National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) assesses students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9 in numeracy and literacy. This testing provides parents with some feedback on how their daughters have performed in literacy and numeracy compared with other students in the State. These reports were sent home in September. The School has access to the detailed marking of the tests which will assist with assessing the curriculum directions of the School and tracking the specific needs of individual students. The results are a snapshot of performance on the day of the test and are not an indication of a student’s potential. On average, our students perform approximately one to two years above the average score for students in the State. The data also reinforces our focus on differentiation, as it details the levels that the students are operating at, supporting the information gleaned by teachers in their day-to-day work with students. We are most interested in the growth of our students from test to test, which is on average very strong, but the data can highlight to us students who could possibly be performing a little better. We believe, as research supports, that a broad curriculum is advantageous in developing literacy and numeracy skills in all students, and that it is not just in Mathematics and English that these skills are learnt and reinforced. The following graphs
show the results of Strathcona this year compared with the rest of the State. In all tests except Year 7 Spelling and Year 9 Spelling and Numeracy, at least 50% of Strathcona’s students scored better than 75% of students in the State. The median score on each of the tests in Year 5 sits at the National Minimum Standard for Year 9!

**Professional Learning**

Good teachers are great learners. Teachers as professionals need to be continually stimulated and updated with new skills and knowledge about their subject disciplines, about the way young people learn and about new technologies. Also, teachers need to be able to put themselves in their students' shoes and model what being a learner is to the students.

Every experience in life has learning potential. Our teachers undertake deliberate and directed learning through professional reading, participation in professional networks, training days, attending talks by guest speakers, attendance at conferences and sharing with colleagues.

In 2012, we have worked together as a staff on the Australian Curriculum, use of mobile devices at school, and the School Goal: To deliver a future-focused, innovative and challenging curriculum. Staff members have kept up to date with relevant and mandated training in Evacuation, CPR, Management of Anaphylaxis, Asthma Management and First Aid.

We have an internal program of professional learning, drawing on the skills of our staff who have provided sessions for others on a large range of skills, including data-logging, staff professional development software, Blackboard journals and blogs, iPads in Mathematics and Science, Show Me, e-Books, Evernote, Clickview, iMovie, Blackboard Rubrics and Teaching for Understanding.

A number of staff have also been involved in ThinkPlus sessions on Mindsets, Neuroscience and de Bono’s Six Thinking Hats. Heads of Departments have engaged in reading and workshops on the topic of leading departments.

Conferences and dedicated sessions by external providers also feature strongly in the professional learning program of our staff. These include the Hawker Brownlow Teaching and Learning conference, Australian College of Educators - Education for the Future, the Australian Curriculum, the Victorian Information Technology Teachers’ Conference, History Teachers’ Association of Victoria Conference, Old Schools to Bold Schools, Play Based Learning, iPad 101, Running Technique, VCE subject conferences and Examiners’ Review sessions, Motivating LOTE Learners, Technology in K-12 Education, Teaching Girls with Asperger’s, Alliance of Girls Schools Conference and Leadership Development.

Helen Hughes, Jennifer Farmilo and Kimberley Moor are among those undertaking postgraduate university studies. The full list is too long to include and reflects not only the extent of formal learning that our staff are engaged in, but also the breadth and depth of networking that occurs.

Several of our staff have presented at conferences or delivered professional development sessions for external organisations including: Tim Kitchen, Charlotte Forwood, Kimberley Moor, Peixia Mo and Miranda Gazis.

A number of our staff are external assessors for the VCE: Anthea Andrews (Biology), Kimberley Bate (Physical Education), Simone Boland (English), Rhonda Burns (Religions and Society), Mark Hamilton (Physics), Katherine Harrington (Further Mathematics), Tracy Herft (Mathematical Methods), Erin Horsley (Studio Arts), Christy Kertes (Further Mathematics), Diana Li (Chinese Second Language), Kimberley Moor (VCD), Julie Plymin (Chemistry), Marisa Rowlands (Drama and Theatre Studies State Reviewer), Mary Thornhill (English) and Geoff Wriedt (Further Mathematics).

Our staff in positions of leadership and half of the teaching staff participated in the Professional Standards Scheme, reflecting on their practice and meeting a well-defined professional goal for the year. Projects included: problem solving and spatial interactions; using assessment to inform our teaching; implementation of the Tournament of Minds Program; coaching sport at Strathcona; the teaching of Romeo and Juliet; and the Australian Curriculum. Some of the staff chose to participate in the highly effective process of classroom sharing that involves spending time observing each other’s classes and feeding back to each other on particular teaching techniques.

Ross Phillips

**Pastoral Care**

An experienced and dedicated team of Year Coordinators leads Pastoral Care in the Senior School at Strathcona. Their knowledge of the girls and their commitment to supporting each and every one of the students in their year level provides an environment for our girls to do their best
Chaplaincy, Christian Education and Liberal Studies

‘After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him.” Matthew 2: 1. NIV

The Magi, (three Kings) are mentioned in Matthew’s Gospel. Although few details are given about them in the Bible, it is generally agreed that they brought three gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh to the Christ child. The Three Kings recognised Jesus as the Messiah, even though he was still a child. They followed a star and travelled thousands of miles to worship him. When they met Jesus they offered gifts to symbolise Christ’s identity and mission: gold for a king, incense for God, and myrrh, used to anoint the dead. Despite their culture and religion in a foreign land, they accepted Jesus as their Saviour.

All stars illuminate and act as beacons of light in darkness. The Christmas star announced to the Magi, that there was hope and its glow directed them to Jesus and God’s plan of salvation for all people.

At Christmas time, the symbol of the star will once again proclaim this ancient message of hope. However, the sparkle of a star is not just a decorative symbol or terrestrial. Stardom also radiates from those who are faithful.

During 2012 our girls have shone like stars, in their beliefs and actions directing others as well as themselves in the Christian way. Opportunities to embrace and respect faith and practice have been evidenced in both the Christian Education classroom as well as through the various social service endeavours.

The team of Year Coordinators also work closely with the Deputy Principal, School Psychologist and Leader of Advanced Learning. I thank the wonderful Pastoral Team for all that they have done to support our girls throughout the year.

Terri Oprean
opportunities for girls to be actively involved in supporting their work. Several significant guest speakers worthy of mention have been Kim Saville, Deputy Director for the School of St. Jude, Tanzania, Dr Peter Vardy, British academic, philosopher and theologian, Cromwell Awady, Ghana, International Needs, Hugh Van Cuylenburg from School of St. Anthony’s, Cambodia, Dr. Maitre Goonetilleke, Swaziland, Possible Dreams Choir as well as a selection of speakers from the Jewish, Christian, Muslim Association, Bapcare – Sanctuary and the Camberwell Salvation Army. Each speaker effectively alerted girls to global issues and endeavours whereby individuals and organisations have effectively brought hope to those whose situation was hopeless.

It has been often said that it takes a whole village to raise a child and so it is that the spiritual development of our girls is also attributed to the many others who bring the Christian faith to Strathcona. Significant support networks have included the Strathcona Prayer and Care Team (led by Anita Mitchell and Susan Fetherston). I have greatly appreciated their continual commitment to prayer as well as practical support to our School family. Appreciation is also extended to the volunteers from Hosanna Church who organised the International Student Christian Group (led by Alicia Liu and Emily Chen) during lunch times over several months. Mustard have once again provided dedicated volunteers (Jessica Thomas and others) who have supported various faith based discussion groups at Tay Creggan and Main Campus.

In conclusion, I wish to offer all students and particularly our departing Year 12 students my prayerful support and interest. Wherever your life leads you, may you each always carry with you Strathcona’s sense of community, which will serve as a ray of hope throughout the rest of your life so that you will ‘shine like stars’.

Rhonda Burns

VCE

In 2011, Strathcona’s VCE students achieved excellent results in the Humanities and the areas of Science and Mathematics. To provide a picture of the overall results, the following can be highlighted: the median ATAR was 87.4; 5.5% or ATARs were over 99 and 24.2% were over 95; 23.3% of girls received study scores of 40 and over. There were five perfect scores of 50 achieved, of which four were for English and one for Theatre Studies.

Claire Smith, Dux of School, was one of the students who achieved a perfect score in English. Her broad academic program also included Literature, Mathematical Methods (CAS), and Psychology in Year 12 and International Studies in Year 11. For her Enhancement studies at the University of Melbourne in the Philosophy program, Claire achieved First Class Honours. As well as her broad academic program, Claire was involved in a range of co-curricular activities and held the position of Social Service Captain.

Several of our students included a university enhancement subject in their academic program. Studies undertaken included Media Studies, Philosophy and Economics and the students’ interest and commitment was reflected in exceptional results.

The option of a Vocational Education and Training course was also taken up by 20 of our students. Popular choices included Interactive Digital Media, Hospitality and Applied Fashion. Students undertook studies at both the Unit 1 and 2 and Unit 3 and 4 levels and were able to access courses at Main School and Tay Creggan. Again, student success in being deemed competent in the relevant skill areas was a reflection of great interest and determination to achieve their best.

We congratulate all VCE girls on their fine achievements in the 2011 academic year and wish them every success in their future studies.

Dr Vicki Treidel

Junior School

Reflecting on the events of this year, I feel privileged to have been involved in so many wonderful experiences. The children of our Early Learning Centre and Primary School are delightfully enthusiastic in their learning and their parents have been actively involved and supportive of their schooling. The partnership between School and home is vital to a great education and I am pleased to say that we have a healthy community that has worked effectively to support learning and create strong bonds to School as well as at an interpersonal level. Parents have actively contributed to a range of academic,
Some major artworks were completed over the year that beautify the School, but also connect the students to their environment. Every Early Learning Centre student is depicted in a large mural on display near the entrance to the ELC. The black and white figures are striking in appearance and give the children great joy as they pass by them each day. The ceramic murals created by the Years 3 and 4 students depict Australian animals on painted backgrounds. The Year 4 students were also involved in the Melbourne Zoo’s 150th Year celebrations by decorating a plastic elephant, which was displayed at the Zoo.

Our students have been involved in many competitions and events involving others outside of Strathcona. In the sporting field, our girls have competed and achieved highly in swimming, cross-country running, athletics, basketball, netball and skiing. Our girls have been involved in a range of external academic, dramatic, musical and cultural programs that have exposed them to important experiences, people and challenges. Through these, our girls develop confidence, learn important life skills and maintain Strathcona’s reputation as a school that provides a rich and broad curriculum for our students and facilitates positive involvement in the wider world.

I thank the students, staff and parents of Mellor House for a very successful year and look forward to the opportunity of working with everyone again in 2013.

Chris Phyland

Tay Creggan

The supportive and caring environment that exists at Tay Creggan enables the students to explore their personal characteristics and capabilities, identify their learning strengths and recognise areas for continued improvement. The girls have taken advantage of the programs offered and have enjoyed the new Learning Lounge, comfortable furniture and the extensive gardens.

The new L-Learning program introduced into the curriculum this year has offered an interactive, inquiry-based and interdisciplinary experience for our students.
Year 9 Camp

I-Learning comprises four distinct channels – History, Science, The Arts and Sustainability. Enthusiastically led by Mrs Margaret Bowden, and an equally enthusiastic group of teachers, I-Learning encourages learning beyond the core curriculum and beyond the gates of the School.

Tay Creggan’s unique location has allowed the I-Learning program to embrace the CBD as part of our learning ‘playground’. Numerous activities saw the students venturing into the city, exploring the rich texture of cultural and community resources on offer: museums, galleries, theatres, multicultural precincts and more.

Another benefit of the I-Learning program was the development of personal and inter-personal skills. Students were encouraged to accept responsibility for managing their time and resources effectively to complete set tasks. Working in groups, they have initiated ideas and negotiated appropriate courses of action to achieve their goals. Through research, they have increased their skills in critically evaluating sources of information.

This year has also seen the introduction of iPads into the general curriculum. These have provided almost unlimited access to information and the girls have enjoyed the hands-on access to numerous productive iPad apps. Many subjects have benefited from this excellent educational tool.

Panel Presentations have continued to provide the students with structured opportunities to reflect on their project work, with an emphasis on the skills developed and strategies applied. These occasions have also provided a vehicle for students to showcase their project work from the I-Learning Program. I am most appreciative of the time and talents of our staff who have assisted them in making this reflection process and the presentations beneficial for the girls’ learning.

I am continually amazed by the energy and enthusiasm the Year 9 girls exhibit. In academic fields they have participated in Mathematics, Science, Geography, Languages and Creative Writing competitions. Other activities on the Year 9 calendar include Debating, Music evenings, Garden Club, all the water based activities of the kayaking and rowing groups and inter-form, inter-house and inter-school sports. The dancing class program was again enthusiastically supported and the final night presentation saw the girls displaying their dancing skills with their fathers who appeared to relish the opportunity to display their dancing skills as well!

There were numerous Social Service events run this year, ably led by the Social Service Captains. These activities have helped the students gain a better understanding of the contributions they can make to their community. We had the traditional Anti-Cancer Fun Run, held stalls and baked cakes, sewed toiletry bags for a women’s refuge and assisted with removing graffiti in the local area.

The cross-country ski camp at Falls Creek was again a most successful event. The girls were supportive of each other as they undertook the experience of Nordic skiing, a first for the majority. All developed their confidence and skills during the camp and this was also frequently interspersed with much fun and laughter. Ms Woods led an eager group of girls on an overnight snow camping experience, returning safely and energised by the experience.

All Year 9 students have endeavoured to complete their Duke of Edinburgh’s Bronze Award this year. The Award offers young people the opportunity to achieve their best through setting goals in a non-competitive program of community service, adventurous, practical and physical activities. Miss Woods has been overseeing each girl’s progress and we look forward to the Bronze level award ceremony at the end of the year.

I commend all the House Captains for their leadership skills, particularly with the Dance and Drama Festival. They rose to the challenge of writing, casting and organising numerous rehearsals throughout Term 4 which culminated in a spectacular production.

It is a true joy to be part of the Tay Creggan experience. I gratefully thank the hardworking, enthusiastic and supportive staff who form the family environment at the campus and have made it possible for Tay Creggan to be the productive and cohesive community it has been during 2012.

Geoff Wriedt
Advanced Learning Centre

In 2012 we welcomed Mrs Cathy Brotherton, who joined the Advanced Learning Centre to work with Years 8 and 10 students. The Advanced Learning Centre staff work with students, staff and parents at Mellor House, Tay Creggan and Senior School, as part of a multi-disciplinary team, to advance the learning of all members of the School community.

Mrs Carolyn King and Mrs Elizabeth Wildsmith provide support in Mellor House and in the Early Learning Centre. Mrs Marg Bowden provides support in Year 9 at Tay Creggan. Mrs Cathy Brotherton and Mrs Charlotte Forwood support students in the Senior School. Students and teachers are assisted by our two integration aides: Mrs Julie Wagner and Mrs Jane Patrick. Students in Years 11 and 12 this also had access to additional English classes provided by Mrs Gabrielle Young and Ms Mary Thornhill this year.

Support programs include individual and small group withdrawal classes; in-class support for students and teachers; and assistance with planning for differentiation. Mellor House continues to offer intensive programs for many students in Years 3 to 6, including FastWord (auditory processing), Elementary Maths Mastery (numeracy), Toe By Toe (reading decoding) and Spelling Mastery (literacy).

This year, many students in Years 3 to 6 have been involved in a number of extension activities, including Philosophy, Writers' Workshops, G.A.T.E. ways, the Science Talent Search, Maths Olympiad and Tournament of Minds. Ten students from Year 6 received bursaries in the Science Talent Search, and Stephanie Hayes was invited to enter her experimental research in the BHP Billiton Science Awards 2012. An additional Maths Olympiad team was entered this year due to the breadth of mathematical problem-solving talent amongst the current Years 5 and 6 students. During Term 3, many Years 5 and 6 students also participated in Tournament of Minds, with two teams achieving honourable mentions – an outstanding achievement for our first year of competing.

Students in the Senior School have been involved in competitions and activities run within individual departments as well as activities provided through the Boroondara Gifted Network, such as the Da Vinci Decathlon, Maths Games Days, the United Nations Youth Association Security Council Moot (run by Mrs Melissa King), Mission to Mars and Pinhole Photography (run by Mr Brit Biviano, Head of Art). The recent Parliamentary Inquiry into the education of gifted and talented students noted the effectiveness of the Boroondara network in catering for this student population. Strathcona has been involved in the network for some years now and will continue to do so in the future.
Staff in the Advanced Learning Centre continue to explore the use of technology to enhance learning. In 2012, iPads have been used in lower primary to assist with numeracy skills development. The Strathcona Family Association provided funds, in addition to a government grant received, to enable access to TextHelp Read and Write Gold, a sophisticated software package with features including text-to-speech creation, vocabulary and spelling list formation, and collation of information for research tasks. Advanced Learning Centre staff will introduce this software to a wider group of students in 2013.

In 2013, we look forward to welcoming an extension teacher to the Advanced Learning Centre, to work specifically with students in Prep to Year 4. The Advanced Learning Centre staff will continue to assist students, teachers and parents to build their knowledge of pedagogical issues, with an emphasis on the latest research and its implementation.

Charlotte Forwood and Carolyn King

SEED Program

SEED, the interdisciplinary program for Years 7 and 8 has continued to evolve over the course of 2012, following its implementation in 2011. Changes to the program have included the reduction of the number of units completed by students, from four to three. The first units of the year were run as Year 7 only and Year 8 only classes. The final two units were run as combined Year 7 and 8 classes. It has been a great opportunity for the girls to interact across year levels.

SEED in 2012 has included new units such as:

- Sacred Food - a culinary-focused exploration of four faiths: Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam.
- The Chocolate and Coffee Trade - an exploration of the economics of coffee and chocolate, including production, retail and the ethics of fair trade.
- Head, Heart and Hand - an exploration of issues about which students are passionate. Topics included spending on presidential elections and the protection of orang-utans.
- Illuminating Identity - an exploration of the formation of identity during adolescence. This included the creation of a lamp to illuminate each student’s identity.

Teachers involved in the SEED program have continued to refine units and develop new topics as the year has progressed. It has been exciting to see and hear the students and their teachers engaged in interdisciplinary, active learning, which has challenged them to think about concepts related to the overarching concept of SEED: Making connections with our changing world.

Charlotte Forwood

Information Resources

In this National Year of Reading, with the slogan Love 2 Read, we are reminded once again of the power of the word and the visual image to engage us emotionally and intellectually, to feed our desire for understanding, to impel the reader forward in a search for those truths about ourselves and our world that make life rich and meaningful. While with what, and the way, we read may be changing, this relationship between reader and text remains constant and stands as one of the core values in the work of Strathcona’s three libraries, that make up the Information Resource Centre (SIRC).

2012 has seen the SIRC dramatically expand its collection of electronic books, both fiction and non-fiction. Concentrating mainly on resources for our Senior students, the non-fiction e-collection is accessible via BlackBoard and contains publications which provide search, translation, listening, citation and dictionary functionality, as well as the option to create a personal account for any e-book for note-taking and book-marking. These features, combined with the anywhere anytime access by an unlimited number of simultaneous users, mean that, despite their higher costs, e-books represent an efficient and accessible online resource highly compatible with the digital interests and expertise of contemporary learners.

Fiction e-books have been trialled with our Year 9 cohort, taking advantage of the ubiquitous adoption of the iPad by the students. Working with the Wheelers ePlat product, Strathcona has its own online portal where students can browse the novels in the collection before logging on and downloading books to their iPad for a period of two weeks. With the...
selection ranging from the classics of Jane Austen and Charles Dickens to the latest publications such as the CBC Shortlist for Young Adult Readers, the current collection of nearly 200 e-books means that students have ready access to reading materials, again, anywhere, anytime.

The Year 9 girls have also benefited from the redesign of the former Library and Computer Rooms to create what is now known as the Learning Lounge, a multi-purpose space to promote effective learning. A variety of types and sizes of furniture means that the space can cater for larger group presentation and performance, collaborative work in small groups as well as personal, independent work and reflection. Information sources, such as books, newspapers, posters and journals are near at hand, while laptops and iPads provide immediate internet access via the wireless network.

The enhanced technical infrastructure at Main School has enabled the SIRC to install ClickView, the online video storage and viewing system. Allowing unlimited, multi-user access across the School environment (including Mellor House and Tay Creggan), ClickView offers a ready-made collection of over 1,200 video and DVD titles and 11,000 off-air recordings via ClickView Exchange. In a world dominated by the visual image, this excellent resource means that the needs of visual learners can be catered for, as well as enhancing the literacy of all students working with visual media.

It is with admirable acumen that the Children’s Book Council chose for its 2012 Book Week theme, ‘Champions Read!’ Even as we celebrated the achievements of our Olympic athletes, both Senior School and Mellor House offered a stimulating range of Book Week activities, including a study of the short-listed books for the Book of the Year Awards, a Tweet Board of book reviews, a display of ‘champion writers’ from around the world and student selected ‘champion reads.’ Mellor House students also took the opportunity to dress up for their annual Book Week Parade.

During Mellor House Library lessons, students have enjoyed reading books and completing activities based on a different theme each term. Their newly acquired collection of indigenous picture story books kept them busy in Term 2, while a highlight for all was of course the London Olympics. The Mellor House Library was suitably decorated for their Olympic celebrations and the girls enjoyed watching Olympic highlights each morning on the big screen and keeping an Australian Olympic medal tally.

The Bronte Club, enthusiastically led by our Student Leader of Information Resources, Evelyn Gomm, has met regularly throughout the year, with a memorable event being an elegant Victorian luncheon to promote both the National Year of Reading and Charles Dickens’s 200th birthday. Bravura readings from A Tale of Two Cities, Great Expectations and Little Dorrit among others, as delicate cucumber sandwiches were served to the guests, ensured that our love of fine literature was well to the fore.

Indeed we do ‘love 2 read’, and for the many opportunities we have as a school to read in a range of attractive physical places, online spaces, through a variety of types of texts in a variety of ways, we must thank our Principal and our Board and, above all, the SIRC team. Mrs Dunoon, Mr van Ree, Mrs Joyce, Mrs Breuer and Ms McAuliffe work with enormous energy and commitment to bring to all members of the School community the rich experience of reading which nourishes and sustains us all.

Mary Hall

Information Technology

Technology plays an important role in our daily lives. It is constantly changing with new features implemented, upgrades always available and something new to learn. Strathcona is not immune to technology and over the past 18 months the School has embarked on a significant technology upgrade process not only to improve current resources but also better prepare for whatever the future may hold.

The majority of technology is hidden from all of us. Generally, all we see is a Wi-Fi identifier or a blue cable connected to a wall outlet. No one really sees the physical servers we connect to which do not really exist but are running in a virtual environment. No one really sees the network infrastructure and all the interconnecting optical fibre or copper cables, the plethora of network switches, firewalls and wireless access points throughout the School’s campuses. No one really sees the hours of research and maintenance required and what it takes to keep the technology infrastructure and resources operating and running optimally and reliably. All we notice is that we are allowed to connect our individual MacBooks, iPhones, iPads and other devices to the network and gain access to files, library systems, web servers, Blackboard or browse internet based resources. But we all notice when it isn’t there!

The technology resources now available at Strathcona have allowed our staff and students to gain unprecedented access to information and we have been continually striving to make the user experience a welcoming and straightforward process. The implementation of iPads at Year 9 earlier this year taught us many things and provided us all with an insight into what we can expect in the years to come. Apart from some initial
technical issues, the upgraded infrastructure easily handled all the significantly increased network traffic and number of devices connected with plenty of room for growth. We did find, and we were not the only school to experience this, that due to the internet hungry nature of the iPad, a much larger than expected internet connection was needed. The Year 9 iPad program has been successful, however, we have identified bottlenecks which will be addressed over the Christmas holiday period. There will be a flow-on effect from Tay Creggan to Main School and, in anticipation of the influx of devices not only at Years 9 and 10, but other year levels as well.

Having completed Stage 1 of our infrastructure development, we are now beginning Stage 2, which includes upgrades to our internet services. We have also seen significant improvements in the way we manage our internal systems. A lot of systems integrations have also been quietly worked on behind the scenes to improve our data flow throughout the School. We are starting to see better deployment techniques now available and, from next year, our iPad configuration process will be a simple process of registration and download of a customised profile. While we still have the manual configuration process used this year as a backup, from our staff and students’ points of view, an automated process is much simpler and less prone to errors. This is the culmination of network integration along with systems integration and other aspects of the IT Services team’s work to provide the best possible experience to our users.

As a “dual boot” school, it is important that the students are exposed to and can use different operating systems. This provides a more grounded IT experience and focuses on being able to use the best software for the project at hand rather than having to compromise. Providing our learning environment with access to both the Apple OSX and Microsoft Windows operating systems has provided the IT Services Team with its own share of challenges but significant work has been done to ensure both systems work harmoniously together.

We have also seen the redevelopment of the School’s website and the implementation of an online newsletter, eNews, with plans to bring the school diary, eDiary, online well underway. Providing individual customised access for parents to the Schools’ Learning Management System, Blackboard, student/parent details and other wider community specific information are also under development. We continue to move forward and are addressing these requests and other usage requirements from our technology savvy community.

We will continually strive to ensure the resources available to staff, students and our wider School community are in keeping with best practices and are providing the technologically rich environment education now demands. We are focused on providing the best learning environment possible and are proud of what we have achieved and look forward to future improvements.

David Young

Careers

The decisions about what and where to study after leaving school are complex and require time, research and counselling at an individual level. The tertiary education landscape is constantly evolving and our girls are faced with real choices in what and how they want to study. The challenge is to be prepared to spend time in accessing the wealth of information available and to make informed decisions based on this research. Having returned to tertiary study myself this year, I have realised the extent to which technology is influencing how courses are taught and information is made available to students. Many institutions are offering lectures online, as podcasts complete with notes, as an alternative to the more formal lecture format. Many assessments are submitted electronically, and research relies heavily on online sources. Access to hardcopies of reference materials is limited as the demand is not there. The trend is for students to be spending less time actually on campuses, although some institutions have minimum attendance requirements at tutorials to maintain some face-to-face contact between students and staff, to encourage discussion and the exchange of ideas. I have said many times that in the business of selecting a course and a place to study, not one size fits all. I see my role as encouraging students to be as active as possible in thinking ahead and being proactive in exploring what is out there for them when they have finished school. The possibilities are endless.

At Strathcona, we have provided access to Careers Education and individual counselling within formal programs, as well as on a needs basis as and when these arise. There is a range of ways the girls can develop a greater understanding of themselves, their interests and abilities. Obviously, their work within the classroom will assist in this, but just as importantly, their preparedness to be involved in a range of extra-curricular opportunities that the School provides will help to shape their thinking about future options.

All students are able to access the Careers Room resources which include written material and career exploration software.

The Year 10 students have participated in the ‘My Future’ program, where they have had opportunities to explore the world of work and their own career pathways. Each student
has prepared a résumé, which can be continually modified as they prepare for future applications and interviews. A benefit of this process is for them to identify the range of skills and abilities that they have demonstrated in various involvements in their broader lives and how these may be seen as important in a workplace. The awareness is further developed in this program by the presentation of a number of activities that emphasise the importance of communication, working effectively in groups, creative thinking and effective leadership. The Mock Interview night was a great success and I continue to be impressed by the way our girls present themselves and articulate their skills, hopes and ambitions in this forum. I express thanks to those in the School community who continue to support this night as interviewers.

The Year 10 Work Experience week was again very successful, with the vast majority of girls receiving positive reports from supervisors and enjoying their time in the workplace. The diversity of placements was indicative of the range of interests and talents within the group. My visits to students exposed me to physiotherapy, social work with the aboriginal community, science research and childcare. The very real benefit is for students to experience some of the routines of work and, for some, a snapshot of what is involved in a particular profession or job. I am very grateful to those members of the School community who have supported me in offering work experience placements within their organisations.

The Morrisby testing process was again conducted with the Year 10 girls in June to help support the VCE selection process and provide valuable information to assist in future decisions about course selection and career options.

A major focus this year was the OSA Careers Night in August. Forty of our recent alumni were invited to be available for informal discussions about their experiences since leaving school and to describe the pathways they have followed since this time. The alumni represented a variety of career areas and were asked questions on a range of issues, including managing the demands of VCE, choosing a place to study upon leaving school, and how best to succeed in a tertiary environment. I am very grateful to have so many past students willing to give of their time to provide this opportunity for the girls. We were also able to host a number of university staff who provided advice and course information.

Years 11 and 12 students have had many opportunities to attend Careers events throughout the year. These included the Careers Expo early in the year, seminars at universities, information sessions and Open Days in August. These were all well attended by our girls and it is very important for them to hear from those directly involved in their interest areas. In June, the Year 12 girls attended a Tertiary Information afternoon at Deakin University which included a performance by a group of Drama students from the university looking at the transition from school to tertiary study and strategies to help in the settling-in process. It raised a number of important issues that may confront them next year and beyond.

Graduating students from 2011 found placements in a range of tertiary courses. Areas such as Health Sciences, Arts and Media, Business and Commerce, and Art and Design were popular. Careers that require good communication skills, such as Health Practitioners, Media, Journalism, Public Relations, Advertising,
Marketing and Management continue to be of interest to our girls. Some students are deferring courses to travel or work – some undertaking GAP programs overseas. These are realistic options that are of benefit to some. It is a decision that needs to be thought through carefully as there are many issues to consider, including the financial factors and the difficulty of returning to studies after an extended break.

Finally, all the very best to our Year 12 students as they await their results in December and for the offers period early next year.

Mark Duncan

International students

Trends in overseas students studying in schools

Visa applications from overseas students to study in Australian schools have nearly halved in recent years, according to data from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship. To date there has been a 38% drop in overseas enrolments in non-government schools. There were 5,000 enrolments in 2011, compared to 4,800 in 2008. Reasons for the decline include the strong Australian dollar (cost of studying in Australia has doubled in the last few years); tighter immigration policy; higher study requirements; reputational damage to the Australian brand; and better school delivery in home countries. School students predominantly come from China; new entrants from China have halved since 2008.

Despite the decline, Strathcona still attracts international students from China. Currently, there are 17 students in Years 9 to 12. This year, we have welcomed four new international students from China into Year 10. International students are valued for the richness of cultural experience they bring to schools and all students learn to work together in a spirit of understanding, goodwill and tolerance.

This year, Strathcona agreed to take part in an important Australian government survey – The International Students Survey 2012. Wallis Consulting Group was commissioned by Australian Education International (AEI) to conduct the survey for the schools sector. The survey was intended to provide updated insights into international students’ experiences and satisfaction whilst living and studying in Australia. A total of 2,262 eligible students participated in the survey. The Strathcona results from the Survey indicate positive student responses in the ‘very satisfied’ to ‘satisfied’ range.

To assist the students in the VTAC selection system, options for further study and visa application processes, Smart Choice Education provided on-campus seminars for VCE international students.

The Welcome Reception at Government House is an annual event to officially welcome international students to our State and celebrate the diversity international education brings to Victoria. Our students are always excited when this event is offered as it is an opportunity for them to visit Government House and to meet the Governor. The Reception was held in the State ballroom, where The Honourable Alex Chernov, Governor of Victoria, welcomed the international students followed by The Honourable Martin Dixon, Minister for Education. The tour of the State rooms of Government House was a highlight. Our students were accompanied by Mrs Dunoon, International Student Coordinator and Ms Petsinis, ESL teacher.

A Christian Fellowship group, initiated by Alicia Liu (Year 12, 2011) and organised by Mrs Burns, the School Chaplain in 2011, has continued with much interest again this year. The group meets on a monthly basis during lunchtime, facilitated by Youth Alpha group members from the Hosanna Church in Melbourne.

I would like to extend my thanks to this year’s International Student Leader, Younghee Cho (Korea), for her ongoing support and for her organisation of informal social activities, bringing the international students and local students together.

Finally, I would like to thank Ms Petsinis, known as ‘Miss Mary’ to the international students, for her support of the girls and for her ongoing commitment to ESL teaching. Under her guidance and dedicated tutoring, the international students have been most conscientious in their studies and have performed well.

Robyn Dunoon
Art

The Art department at Strathcona has continued to develop and implement a diverse range of learning programs that have been designed to enhance the intellectual and creative potential of all students, to further students’ problem solving skills and communication, to strengthen their cultural awareness and expand their capacity for self-expression. This has been achieved through a number of learning opportunities both in and outside the classroom, including gallery visits, art week, student art exhibitions, workshops and a series of lectures from art and design professionals.

In 2012 Art became a compulsory subject at Tay Creggan, to enable students to explore their creative capacities further. A stream of impressive artworks has resulted. For example, the girls developed a series of prints inspired by the beautiful surrounding gardens, each collection of prints then being transformed into a unique artist book; they also explored the use of three-dimensional media, namely copper and silver, to produce wearable art pieces which has involved many new techniques and processes.

Winner of the Barbara Green Art Award for 2012 was Monique St Clair. She received this award for her dedication and enthusiasm in all aspects of her Art studies. Monique has continued to work with diligence throughout this year and has produced an outstanding VCE folio of digital photography and oil painting.

The School community would like to acknowledge the Green family for their continued support by making this award available to our students.

I would also like to thank the 2012 Art Captains, Olivia McLardie-Hore and Kate Monkhouse, for their support and commitment to the role. Their enthusiasm and dedication were instrumental in the success of many departmental initiatives, such as the Art Week celebrations and activities. Their assistance in promoting the Art department by writing articles for the Strathconian and promoting the various Art shows throughout the year has been invaluable.

Congratulations go to Elena Halkas of Year 12, who entered the 2012 Cancer Council Arts Award. At the show which was held between 29 July and 29 August, Elena received a Special Mention in the Youth Visual Art Section for a digital photograph titled Jenna.’

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Art Department Staff and the broader School community for their ongoing support, which has enabled the Art department to play such an active and important part in the education of the Strathcona students.

Helen McCormack
Commerce

This year has been another eventful one for students of Commerce. Our Economics students studied the impact on Australia’s economy of EU austerity measures, the causes and consequences of the Australian Dollar appreciation, and the significant decline in State government tax revenue. Legal Studies students focused on two landmark decisions handed down by the High Court. In June, the High Court decided that Federal funding for chaplains in schools is invalid (on the basis that it encroached on the State’s powers over education). Then, in August, the High Court rejected big tobacco’s constitutional challenge to the Federal Government’s plain packaging laws.

There has been much to engage the Commerce students outside of the classroom. Three Legal Studies students competed in the Bond University Moot Court Competition. Year 11 students, Gabrielle Coulthard, Sophie Puika and Monique Fernandez, represented the Mudflats Coast Shire Council in a hypothetical civil action against a young boy who was injured using a bike track. The girls presented their case to a panel of judges, arguing that the duty of care was not breached by the Council, and that the plaintiff willingly accepted obvious risks associated with participating in a dangerous recreational activity. The girls spent considerable time preparing written submissions for the court, applied the relevant area of law to the facts of the case, and used several precedent cases to strengthen their case. Gabrielle was awarded an advocacy merit award for her particularly impressive presentation.

Three speakers addressed the Legal Studies students during Law Week in May. Parent, Mr Chris Pollard, again gave us his insight into the nature of work in the legal profession and the steps involved in a civil dispute. Leading Constable, Brett Phillips, who is the Youth Resource Officer for the Boroondara area, also spoke to the girls about the role of the police and the methods used by the police in bringing an accused to court. The girls gained a great deal from the experience and insight of each of these speakers. Retired South Australian District Court Judge, Peter Allan, also addressed the role of courts in law-making in the final week of Term 2.

Year 10 Commerce: Power People students had a ‘crime and justice experience’ during Term 2, spending a morning at the Melbourne Magistrates’ Court before heading to the Old Melbourne Gaol. The girls were taken on a historical tour of the prison, and then participated in a mock culpable driving trial.

2013 also promises to provide some fascinating material for students. What will be the outcome of the next Federal election? Will the Government manage to move the budget into surplus? And what will be the longer-term impact of the introduction of two new Federal taxes - the Carbon Tax and the Minerals Resource Rent Tax? As French economist, Jean Baptiste Colbert, famously said, ‘the art of taxation is in so plucking the goose as to obtain the largest possible amount of feathers with the smallest possible amount of hissing’.

David Bradshaw

Drama

We are enormously proud of the Drama achievements at Strathcona and 2012 has been a vibrant year for our young emerging thespians. The year commenced with a furore of excitement and outstanding House Spirit in the annual Performing Arts Festival staged in February. The School Dance and Drama Captains chose a quirky theme that inspired the House Dance, Drama and Music Captains to create wonderfully creative and amusing performances that delighted their audience. The Captains worked with irrepressible vitality and galvanised extraordinary House Spirit. The evening was a rich tapestry of music, dance and drama and a wonderfully joyous occasion to behold.

The School Musical, Witches of Eastwick, inspired the vast singing, dancing and musical talent in the School and performed to captivated audiences at the Renaissance Theatre. Praise must be bestowed on Jason Parker and his team of extremely dedicated and passionate Musical impresarios, who worked with enormous commitment and skill. Our students, together with a group of boys from neighbouring colleges, demonstrated praiseworthy diligence and exceptional talent and put on a superb show. They also had the time of their lives.

Early in the year, we received the outstanding news that Georgia Pandel attained a VCE Premier’s Award in Theatre Studies. Georgia was one of three students in the entire State to achieve a perfect score of 50 in Theatre Studies. We congratulate her on this extraordinary achievement.
89th annual report

Picnic at Hanging Rock
In May, the Year 10 Drama students performed Picnic at Hanging Rock. The class chose to stage the play at Tay Creggan, which provided the ideal location for Appleyard College. The students worked with admirable commitment and took charge of all the stagecraft areas as well as performing at least one role in the production. We commend the girls on an excellent show and also their teacher for Term 2, Mrs Christine Best.

The Year 10 Drama and Dance Captains concluded Term 3 with three enormously busy weeks of feverish and gratifying rehearsals for the Year 7 House Dance and Drama Festival. This year, each House was given a proverb to use as a stimulus for a theatrical performance. The Dance and Drama Captains displayed amazing creativity and skill in devising imaginative, satirical and enormously uplifting performances. It is always delightful to see the younger students bonding with the older girls and receiving the benefit of their experience and talent. A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated Year 10 Captains who nurtured the girls so kindly during the lead up to the festival. The younger students relished the opportunity of performing on stage in such a supportive and encouraging environment.

The Year 9 students performed at the Malthouse Theatre, competing against a range of Melbourne’s leading schools. Malthouse selected the stimulus material and our Year 9 students were asked to devise an ensemble performance on a specific theme. Our girls worked with remarkable creativity and ardour in developing their performances and then performing their work in front of other schools and the Artistic Director and his team. The Malthouse staff spoke enthusiastically of our girls’ ability for both playbuilding and performing. The Year 9 girls concluded their year with great enthusiasm at their Dance Drama Festival.

Year 8 students showcased their thespian talent in some humorous and engaging plays in Term 3. Quirky characterisations were sustained with admirable stage confidence and acting skill. Thank you once again to Jason Parker for providing this opportunity for our girls.

Congratulations to all our wonderful Drama students who have thrown themselves wholeheartedly into so many activities this year. Your thirst to step outside your comfort zone is commendable.

Finally, a heartfelt commendation must go to our wonderful School Drama and Dance Captains, Courtney Stephenson and Monique Warren. You have been beacons for Drama at Strathcona. You have guided rehearsals, introduced Dance and Drama Festivals, attended shows and performed at every opportunity possible. You have inspired so many to jump into Drama with exuberance, to have fun and to grow. Your zest, creativity, passion, joy and commitment to Drama have been outstanding. Courtney and Monique, you have been exceptional ambassadors for Drama and your warmth has touched so many. We will miss you both enormously.

Marisa Rowlands

English

Whether Picnic at Hanging Rock is fact or fiction, my readers must decide for themselves. As the fateful picnic took place in the year 1900, and all the characters are long since dead, it hardly seems important. ~ Joan Lindsay

It was with these eerie sentiments and the haunting strains of pan flutes softly echoing in our ears, that the Year 8 students set off for Hanging Rock in Mount Macedon on St Valentine’s Day this year. All students and staff gathered with excitement, dressed in Victorian garb and listened to the address given by Mrs Appleyard (otherwise known as Mrs Hughes), also suitably attired. ‘… as the day is likely to be warm, you may remove your gloves after the drag has passed Woodend… you are therefore forbidden to engage in any tomboy foolishness… the vicinity is renowned for its venomous snakes and poisonous ants. These instructions, while met with some solemnity, were also a cause of great mirth. There was a palpable eagerness to get underway to explore the mysteries of The Rock which all had read about but few had visited.

Thus, Strathcona continues to inspire students in the world of English. These authentic learning experiences best enable our students to engage with their learning by making it relevant and meaningful to their lives. It is well known that students are then better able to construct knowledge and to make connections from school-based learning. In fact, a 21st Century education views The Rock as a learning environment that is inherently multidisciplinary, as it combines English, Art, Geography, Science, History and even Mathematics. It also lends itself to authentic assessment tasks such as the multimodal presentations that students put together using sound, music, photographs and their own reflections and creative descriptions. Similarly, the Year 7 Canterbury Gardens excursion also ensures an integrated approach to curriculum.

In doing these sorts of excursions, we also foster a love for Literature and Language while joining students on a discovery of themselves and the human experience. As teachers, nothing inspires our literary passions more than texts that give insight into the human condition and struggle over time and place. The commonality of events that occurs in our lives; emotions that we all feel; and the things that give our existence meaning are explored, discussed and dissected in detail. Hence,
the mystery genre covered in this Australian classic added to our range of styles, forms and narratives being taught across the School.

Interestingly, it was the Literature strand of the Australian Curriculum that provided our entree into this national document. This curriculum provides a clear framework to deliver an explicit teaching and learning program that identifies what is important for students to achieve at different stages of their schooling and sets standards for those achievements. We began auditing our text lists to ensure breadth and quality of texts, including those that are Australian. Discussion and analysis also centred on course content in the Aus VELS, new terminology, our pedagogy and how we teach critical language and literacy aspects. We have also begun to interrogate the curriculum’s multidimensional structure and manipulate it according to our own particular needs. The process of aligning our reports to reflect the achievement standards at each year level is underway.

We also continue to offer other authentic experiences through the opportunity to view live performance. The Complete Works Theatre Company performed Romeo and Juliet and Macbeth to Years 10 and 11 students, while the Eagles Nest Theatre Company conducted workshops on the play, Twelve Angry Men. This provided the Year 12 students with different readings of key scenes and an invaluable resource to determine their own interpretation. The Year 11 and 12 Literature classes also stepped out for the evening to see Queen Lear at the Malthouse Theatre.

The Year 8 Writers’ Workshop continues to go from strength to strength. It again ran for a full day with published Australian authors and poets, Gabrielle Williams, Lia Hills, Tim Pegler and Daniel Decrou. These interactive classes provided a variety of strategies for students to stimulate more effective, descriptive and original creative writing. Gabrielle Williams was also the judge of the Margaret Fendley Writing Competition, which continues to be an impressive showcase for all students in Years 7 to 12. Congratulations to Eleanor Forward (Year 8), Morgan Macleod-Finke (Year 9) and Samantha Litchfield (Year 11) for winning their respective divisions. Commendations also to Eleanor Forwood and Jacinta Zhu (Year 9) for being highly commended in the 2012 Boroondara Literary Awards.

Our ICAS (International Competitions and Assessment for Schools) English Competition results Years 7 to 9 were impressive. This is designed to test a range of literacy skills and requires students to read both literary passages and factual texts in order to answer a variety of comprehension, language, vocabulary, punctuation and spelling questions. There were five High Distinctions, 40 Distinctions and 58 Credits. Similarly, the NAPLAN results indicate that our students are achieving above the State average in all areas. However, a scope and sequencing of skill development across Years 7 to 10 is also taking place to further target the spelling, language conventions and comprehension sections of the NAPLAN to enhance results.

The 2011 Year 12 results in English, Literature and ESL were, once again, outstanding. In English, close to 50% achieved a study score of 40 or above. Four students received a perfect study score of 50 with 46.6% scoring an ‘A+’ and 26.9% an ‘A’. Literature students in the School also attained well above the mean at 82.5% compared to the State. These students, as with our Year 8 students, now have all the meaningful experiences and skills they need to write their own narrative in the next stage of life’s journey.

Simone Boland

Food Technology

‘Cooking at home could add years to your life’, according to researchers from Monash University and Taiwan’s National Health Institute. The 10 year study found that people who had home-cooked meals were more likely to experience longevity. Monash University’s Professor Mark Wahlqvist said those who cooked more frequently had a better diet and more favourable nutrient densities. The researchers found that dietary diversity was also associated with greater survival rates amongst the participants.1

It is an indisputable fact that having the skills to make wise choices, being equipped with basic food preparation skills, and having the confidence to make healthy, nutritious meals, allows us the freedom to choose and prepare a range of high-quality meals, without having to rely on the services of Mr McCain or Mr Heinz.

This year, the Food Technology staff have continued to play an important role in educating our students on the importance of healthy eating and its link to general wellbeing, while teaching a wide variety of hands-on, practical skills to produce healthy and nutritious meals.

It has again been encouraging to see so much enthusiasm and creativity from students throughout the School and this year we have seen some outstanding achievements at a number of levels.

We began 2012 on a very positive note, with an excellent set of 2011 VCE results, half of the students achieving a study score of 40 and above. Three of our students VCE folios were chosen to be displayed at the Melbourne Museum’s Top Designs – Season of Excellence exhibition, an honour bestowed upon just 20 Food and Technology students in Victoria every year. We congratulate Isabella Stephens, Kate Monkhouse and Klara Morey on this significant achievement.

Our younger students in Year 8 have been busy learning new skills, creating healthy and exciting food items, and adapting recipes using a variety of ingredients. The Year 10 students focused on nutrition, while further advancing their practical skills in Semester 1. In Semester 2 they created a beautifully decorated iced cake, 50 of which were chosen for entry to the Royal Melbourne Show. Congratulations to Amelia Wallingford for being awarded a Highly Commended in the Schools’ category.

Our new Year 9 Program at Tay Creggan, Food, Health and Wellbeing, was undertaken by all students for the duration of the year. This was a significant and exciting development for the Department where we were able to expand our teaching to include topics such as Mental Health, Body Image and Nutrition. As well as a variety of delicious food items being produced, the students carried out a very enjoyable Masterchef Challenge and undertook the planning of an Afternoon Tea and Morning Tea for parents, grandparents and friends, which was a great success. The majority of the recipes used were from the recently produced Strathcona Best Recipes publication.

Our commercial kitchen facilities at Tay Creggan have continued to provide an excellent learning environment for the Year 11 Hospitality students who have again produced outstanding work. We are currently planning our End of Year Dinner for teachers, parents and friends to showcase the students’ achievements in food preparation and service.

With regard to staffing, we continue to benefit from a highly professional and friendly Department and I am most grateful to Ms Terri Oprean and Ms Kerry Wilson for their excellent teaching this year. I would also like to thank our industrious and talented Food Technology assistant, Ms Noelle Boyd, who has continued to make all things possible!

Finally, to the Food Technology students, we extend our congratulations on your overwhelming enthusiasm and passion in Food Technology this year and we look forward to a most successful 2013.

Claire Chambers

Geography and International Studies

Geography encourages students to develop an holistic view of the world in which they live and a sense of respect and curiosity. Our courses use an inquiry approach to learning to assist students to develop the skills needed to make informed and thoughtful decisions as citizens.

Geography is organised on a semester basis in Years 7, 8 and 10. In Year 9, the course runs over the whole year. Three Geography options have run at Year 10. Students could select from Resource Management, People and Places and International Studies. The re-developed International Studies elective has remained a popular choice in Year 9. In 2013, the Year 10 International Issues course will become The Global Citizen course to more closely align with changes in the VCE. In VCE, Units 3 and 4 classes have run in both VCE Geography and in VCE Global Politics. Both of these courses have been made available as acceleration options to Year 11 students.

The Geography Department remains committed to promoting active learning and broad opportunities. To extend and enrich the students’ classroom experience, once again, a varied and successful fieldwork program has been integrated into the learning in all year levels. In addition, in March of this year, all Year 9 students participated in the Australian Geography Competition with extremely pleasing results. Anna Terry is to be congratulated on achieving a High Distinction. A further 23 Year 9 students were awarded Distinctions or Credits.

Geography helps to support active citizenship and an interest in current international issues. Our participation in United Nations style debating has expanded this year and this activity now includes students from Years 9 to 12. In preparation for the State United Nations Youth Victoria’s Thant-Evatt Trophy competition, an in-house training afternoon was coordinated. Two past students, Tessa Clegg and Gemma Hallett, who represented Strathcona in the State grand final in 2011, were able to manage their busy university schedules and return to chair the debates. The topics included the illegal small arms trade and an humanitarian intervention into Syria. Their feedback and advice were invaluable to the students and we thank them for their ongoing support.
Health and Human Development

This year was the third year of the revised Health & Human Development course so there were no major changes to the Study Design, which allowed us to consolidate the course material. Ms Kerry Wilson took on the teaching of Unit 1 and 2 classes, and team teaching with myself the Unit 3 and 4 classes, providing an opportunity to discuss and refine the way we deliver the course and the support materials we provide for the students.

The health and development of Australia’s youth was the focus of Unit 1. Highlights included visiting the Big Issue Classroom in the city, to examine homelessness as a challenging issue for youth. The Big Issue Classroom was a unique educational experience providing students with real life lessons about homelessness and disadvantage, as experienced by thousands of Australians every night. In particular, the students investigated the impact of homelessness on the physical, social and emotional dimensions of health. They heard first hand from someone who had experienced homelessness.

In Semester 2, students examined health and development throughout the lifespan. One of the highlights was having Lilian Bishop and her newborn baby, Poppy, visit the class. Lilian gave an insight into the changes experienced during pregnancy as well as the physical, social, cognitive and emotional development of an infant. The class was shown video footage of one of Lilian’s ultrasounds and delighted in observing Poppy’s development. The milestones of development came alive as we watched Poppy show off her new achievements, including crawling, clapping and standing.

Unit 3 focuses on the health of Australians, and it provides the girls with an opportunity to develop an understanding of the health of our nation, as well as gain some insight into their own health and major influences on it. For a number of students it is the first time they analyse their own diet and behaviours to determine what the risk and protective factors for their health are.

At Strathcona, we have a strong social service focus, and the study we do in Unit 4, looking at the health and human development of people living in developing countries, strongly supports this. One of the highlights for my class was seeing the work that Hugh Jackman has been doing in Ethiopia to promote Sustainable Human Development.

Terri Oprean

History

History, as a particular discipline with its own process of inquiry, makes an important contribution to the education of every student. A knowledge of history helps students to understand the forces that have shaped modern societies and assists them to become involved and thoughtful citizens. The fact that History has been included as one of the four...
subjects that make up the first phase of the new Australian Curriculum to be introduced in 2013 is a recognition of its educational significance.

During 2011 and 2012, the History Department has been planning for the full implementation of the Australian Curriculum. Next year, this will be the basis of all of our history courses from Years 7 to 10. This has been a wonderful opportunity to introduce new content, new approaches and new learning materials into our courses. The new curriculum offers a more global context for many historical issues and was introduced into Year 9 this year as part of a staged transition to the Australian Curriculum. Elements of the new curriculum have also been incorporated into the history courses in the other year levels in 2012. In addition, a completely new elective course on Revolutionary China has been developed as an elective available to Year 10 students from 2013 onwards. This new option will replace the existing Civil Rights elective, as these issues are now part of the new Australian Curriculum and will be integrated into the general Year 10 History course for all students from 2013 onwards.

It is important to continue to offer students the broadest possible range of interesting historical activities to build on their classroom experience. During Term 1, the Year 9 students were able to further enrich their historical understanding of Melbourne through their participation in the I-Learning program which offered students an engaging, active and inquiry-based experience of their own city. The Year 9 students have also had the benefit of being able to hear an indigenous speaker, Bernadette Atkinson, a Wolithiga woman from the Yorta Yorta Nations and researcher at Monash University, currently studying for her Masters in Education. All Year 9 students have participated in the National History Challenge. There were some fine creative responses, but special congratulations are due to Jasmine Clegg and Megan Petrie whose entries were selected by external judges to go forward to the State finals.

Students across Year 8 and Year 10 participated in the Australian History Competition. The nine students who received High Distinctions are to be congratulated, but the results were pleasing across both levels. In November, we ran the Ancient History Day for all Year 7 students and a Medieval Day for all Year 8 students. The students were able to participate in an extensive range of authentic historical experiences and activities created by specialist organisations. The Year 11 students have heard directly from some of those who experienced significant historical events. They visited the Jewish Holocaust Museum and hosted speakers from the Vietnam Veterans Association. History Week in August generated a significant number of entries in a competition to identify important historical events. The Junior winner was Lucy Garnham of Year 7. The joint Senior winners were Mia-Annalea Craik and Lucy Pollard of Year 12. These students displayed impressive historical knowledge.

The creativity, empathy and imagination shown by so many of our students have made this a most positive and rewarding year.

Pat Menke

Learning Technologies

“I now get it,” was the comment from one of our teachers after receiving an iPad to use. “I never really felt comfortable integrating ICT in my teaching until now.” The introduction of the digital tablet has revolutionised the way many teachers operate throughout the world.

iPads @ Strathcona

With the iPad program involving both Years 9 and 10 in 2013, we have provided an iPad to most of our secondary teachers and continue to support them with ongoing professional learning opportunities.

2012 was a trial year for iPads in Year 9 and we have discovered that, as a personally owned device, they can be a distraction in class, however, when strict classroom management procedures are in place, the iPad can be an outstanding learning companion. The new I-Learning program has made extensive use of iPads, as have most other Year 9 curriculum areas.

Here is a small sample of some of the comments about the iPad made by Year 9 students in one of the surveys conducted this year:

• ‘I use it for all kinds of research!’
• ‘A useful tool to assist with my learning.’
• ‘I love how easy it is to use and how portable it is.’

• ‘The iPad has been very useful in transposing work between home and school and I have found it extremely helpful with the use of iCloud and email, I always have a copy of my work wherever I am.’

• ‘Well it was a bit distracting at first but it has settled down and it is a great tool for learning.’

Here are some of the survey comments made by the Year 9 teachers:

• ‘I have found the girls having easy access to material I put on Blackboard in class useful - and so do they.’

• ‘Students have learned new things and have been engaged with new tools. They have textbooks and calculators on them and they are ever available.’

Professional Learning

This year, along with the everyday informal professional learning that takes place, we have dedicated two after-school sessions each term for internal professional learning electives with a focus on ICT. Staff who have an affinity with a particular application that they believe would benefit others are invited to share their experiences and the teaching staff are able to nominate their preferred session via an online booking process.

STV Studio

The STV Studio and multimedia classroom have had extensive use this year for STV content generated by our senior media students, as well as a number of the Years 7 and 8 SEED groups. It has been great to see the exciting teamwork, thinking skills and problem solving that go hand in hand with TV production. We are very fortunate to have such good TV recording facilities and at least once a month we had visits from other schools hoping to emulate what we have and what we do.

STV

Term in Review is the name of the new 2012 show on STV. Mrs Hughes and Mrs Farmilo have helped to host this program which highlights various events throughout the year. The senior media students have produced most of the content with the addition of a new, Year 7 and 8 SEED elective called Making TV, which produced the Term 3 edition. Episodes of STV’s Term in Review are featured on screens throughout the School, including the Year 7 foyer this year, the Year 8 foyer and in the Senior Centre. It can also be seen online via the STV site on Blackboard.

STV now has nearly 500 videos online via Blackboard and Vimeo. Most of these clips are stories about Strathcona events but a number are training videos to help students and staff with the vast array of Strathcona hardware and software.

STV online is available for all Strathcona students, parents and staff via the STV tab on Blackboard.

Blackboard

The Strathcona Blackboard LMS (learning management system) has been a vital communication tool between teachers and students for over 10 years. At a basic level, it has provided Strathcona students with access to important curriculum material from anywhere they can access the internet at any time.

The most recent development has been the use of Blackboard by parents. Strathcona parents have generic access to Blackboard, allowing them to see the archive of newsletters, subject information, year level information, the Wellbeing site, STV and much more.

We are currently preparing the School network to accommodate individual logins for parents based on their email accounts that can be changed if forgotten. Strategically, we see Blackboard as the key online communication tool for all members of the Strathcona community.

Year 7 & 8 ICT/IL

This year, the Year 7 and 8 Form Tutors have been facilitating Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) and Information Literacy (IL) sessions during weekly forum sessions. These sessions have been designed and created by Dr Kitchen, Director of Learning Technologies and Ms Hall, Director of Information Resources. They involve self-paced online courses delivered via Blackboard. ICT and IL are vital aspects of modern communication; these courses aim to develop a range of skills that the students can use in all areas of their learning and communication experiences.
VITTA Video Challenge

This year, we achieved 1st place in the Primary division of the VITTA Video Challenge and 2nd place in the Senior Secondary division. Our winners were all presented with prizes in front of the Victorian Minister of Technology, The Hon Gordon Rich-Phillips, and their films were shown on the giant screen at Federation Square during ICT Week.

Our senior students

There has been a very strong interest in the Web and Animation Design subject this year from Year 10 students, with 26 students choosing to learn some of the online publication skills that have become a vital 21st Century literacy skill.

The Tuesday night Year 11 and 12 VET/VCE Media class has again this year welcomed boys from other schools, this year from Wesley College and Forest Hills Secondary College. The boys always add a positive element to each class and are in constant awe of the Strathcona media facilities.

Going international

In July this year, Dr Tim Kitchen was given the opportunity to represent Strathcona and Australia at the Apple Global Education Institute in Cork, Ireland. There were 230 educators from across the globe present and many of them were fascinated by the innovation that occurs in Melbourne, which was the first city in the world to have a 1:1 students to computer program in the early 1990s and the first city to have a 1:1 iPad program in a school. Melbourne has led the way in terms of mobile computing and general ICT integration in education and Strathcona now has an international reputation as being a leading school in this area.

Dr Tim Kitchen

Languages

In the Languages Department, teachers of Chinese, French and Italian have been making increasing use of new tools to enhance language learning. Access to iPad technology for Year 9 students of Chinese, for example, has enabled them to create their own e-books and iMovies, reinforcing concepts and language and bringing an exciting and personalised dimension to language classes.

Offering our students the possibility to practise their language skills in a country where that language is spoken is one of the great joys of language teaching. Ms Mo, Mrs Bowden and 11 students spent a week at our sister school, Wuxi No 1 Girls School, renewing contacts made two months ago when their host sisters visited Strathcona. Our girls readily embraced the cultural differences they encountered and returned with some entertaining stories of experiencing such a different way of life.

Earlier in the year, Mrs Plymin, Mr Phillips and Ms Moor took a group of 26 students to Italy for three weeks. As with the past two tours, the girls were based at a language school in Mondavio. In addition to their language and cooking classes, the girls loved their homestay experiences in this tiny hilltop town and marvelled at the artistic treasures and markets in Rome, Milan, Venice and Florence.

Currently, Mrs Clarke, Mrs Prior and Ms Swayne are finalising details for the 2013 Tour to France. They too will be renewing contacts made over the past six years through a homestay experience in some of the tiny villages near Montpellier. A new highlight of the Tour will be a visit to some of the châteaux of the Loire Valley, where we will explore the stunning history and architecture of the French Renaissance.

Another extension to the Language Department’s offerings for its students came this year through an invitation to join with students from other independent schools to participate in a six-week exchange with a group of schools in Lyon in eastern France. Two of our Year 10 students will be going to Lyon during the coming summer holidays and will in turn welcome their French host sisters to Strathcona in July next year. We are also hoping to be able to provide a similar exchange experience for our Year 10 and 11 students of Chinese in the near future.

As the need to prepare young Australians to communicate with other cultures through other languages grows, we look forward to offering our language students ever more resources and opportunities to use their skills within the confronting but wonderful experience of a country where the language is spoken.

Veronica Swayne

Mathematics

Mathematics is a crucial knowledge we need in order to function in modern society. As mathematics teachers, our aim is to ensure students develop their mathematical skills by exploring, classifying, generalising, calculating, predicting, representing and measuring the world around them. It is also crucial that we help students appreciate the beauty and power of mathematics and develop an understanding of how it underpins many areas of the real world.

At Year 7, we have had a considered focus on the ideas and practices of formative assessment. These practices are designed for teachers to deliberately engineer opportunities that reveal whether, and what, students are learning as they are learning.

The team of teachers received an Australian Government Quality
Teacher Program (AGQTP) Grant for 2012, which enabled them to meet on a regular basis with a representative from the Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) and to attend a number of key professional development sessions with Dr Julie Landvogt.

At Year 8, we have had a successful implementation of an Extension Program for selected students, which provided them with opportunities to explore ideas outside of the current curriculum and be involved in competitions such as the Australasian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiad.

At Year 10, our staff are currently looking at ways to effectively use iPads in our mathematics classrooms in anticipation of the 2013 Year 10 students returning from Tay Creggan.

There continues to be a strong enrolment in Mathematics at Strathcona, with nearly all students completing at least one Unit 3 and Unit 4 study. The 2011 Year 12 results were of a good standard with 28.2% of assessment grades at the A+ or A level. In Further Mathematics, the median study score was 33.4. In Mathematical Methods, the median study score was 35.3. In Specialist Mathematics, approximately 6 out of the 12 students achieved a result of 40 or above (adjusted). Congratulations to the 2011 Year 12 students.

A total of 317 students from Years 7 to 10 and 17 students undertaking Year 11 General Mathematics A participated in the International Competitions and Assessment for Schools (ICAS) Mathematics Competition. All students participated well and 33 students received Distinctions, an increase from last year’s results. Of particular note, the following students received High Distinctions: Rui Wang (Year 10), Jacinta Zhu (Year 9), Eleanor Forwood (Year 8) and Lucy Garnham (Year 7).

Congratulations to these students for an outstanding performance in this competition.

Once again, we had a successful Year 7 Maths Games Day in Semester 1. The day focused on mathematical team problem solving, a treasure hunt and games. Some selected Year 10 students were involved as leaders, assisting the students and running sections of the day. During Semester 2, our students attended a drama performance: History of Mathematics.

Currently, the Mathematics Department is finalising the curriculum documentation to ensure that it meets the implementation of the Australian National Curriculum next year. In addition to this implementation, we will also be undertaking a significant review of our program at Year 8 with particular attention being directed to developing some new teaching and learning activities and approaches. We will also look to continue with our interest and implementation of formative assessment practices and extend this further than our Year 7 focus of this year.

We are very proud of the dedication of staff in their support of students and their commitment to the development of our curriculum and to continually seeking to improve the teaching and learning taking place in all Mathematics classrooms. And finally, congratulations to all students for the persistence and resilience demonstrated in their mathematical studies, and for the interest and passion they show in the Mathematics classroom.

Tracy Herft

Physical Education

The Physical Education Department at Strathcona has continued to develop programs that are supported by the upgraded facilities, through swimming and water safety in the pool, to the use of the training room in senior classes. These are key to promoting health and wellbeing and developing students that are lifelong learners and participants in physical activity.

This year, students in classes in Years 7 to 10 competed in the Strathcona Olympics, which ran during the two weeks of the London Olympics. Senior classes were involved in bike education programs and ice-skating, and the Unit 3 and 4 class completed a Duathlon. This is in addition to the vast range of sports and physical pursuits undertaken in classes that aim to challenge the girls and assist in the development of their self-esteem and confidence.

We are continually aiming to bridge the gap between Physical Education and ICT, through the use of emerging technologies that aim to promote effective teaching and learning. We are currently preparing for the use of iPads at Years 9 and 10 in 2013, reflecting on our teaching practices and working collaboratively as a team. This reflects the Physical Education Department’s commitment to providing valuable learning opportunities for all girls through a stimulating and engaging curriculum.

Kimberley Bate
Science

Adapting to the Australian Curriculum

The Science department has undertaken considerable re-planning in 2012 to cater for the Australian Curriculum. Courses, especially in Year 7, have been redesigned. New sequencing of content (Science for Understanding) and the development of associated Science Inquiry Skills have been the focus for 2012. Two new members of the Department, Ms Erin Frawley and Mrs Christy Kertes, have brought ideas from their respective schools to incorporate into the new curriculum planning.

The Australian Curriculum’s Science as a Human Endeavour strand has been strengthened through Science Week where the girls were addressed by a meteorologist, ophthalmist, and a past student undertaking research into breast cancer. Students in Year 9 have focused on the Human Endeavour strand through the Science Channel in the I-Learning program, and the Year 7 and 8 Environment group visited a recycling plant to improve their understanding of the engineering involved in separating our curbside recyclables.

In 2013, mid-year VCE Science examinations will no longer be held. This has meant that all VCE Science courses have been modified to account for shorter examination time.

The extra-curricular component of Science courses has again been substantial. Science Club proved popular with Year 7 girls, with new activities being undertaken this year. Excursions continue to be popular and have included an extended Year 11 Physics camp, Year 11 invitational program to Genetech Toxic Stories program, Year 11 rock platform analysis and a Year 7 Zoological gardens classification excursion.

Individual Successes

The 2011 VCE results were again strong with many girls undertaking more than one Science subject. Claire Smith gained a VCE Study Score of 49 in Psychology.

2012 Science competition and result successes have included:

• In the ICAS Science Competition, the following high achievements were noted:
  
  High Distinction: Lucinda Garnham (Year 7).


• Lucinda Garnham (Year 7) gained a High Distinction in the University of New South Wales Science Competition (top 1%). (20 students in Years 7 to 9 achieved in the top 10% of results for their sections).

• Laura Donaldson, Maluki Fernando and Gemma Smith (Year 11) attained High Distinctions (top 10%) in the Australian National Chemistry Quiz.

• 35 students from Years 6 to 8 entered the Science Talent Search with five students gaining major bursaries and nine students gaining minor bursaries.

• Madison Fairlie (Year 11) has been selected to attend the National Youth Science Forum at the Australian National University in January 2013.

Science staff

The Science staff continue to undertake professional development. As well as attending sessions on the Australian Curriculum and their specific VCE area, they have marked VCE papers and judged for the Science Talent Search.

In September, our laboratory technician, Wendy Hawkins, returned to the United States of America. Lyn Martin has since joined the Strathcona staff after many years of service at the Austin hospital.

Pam Welsford
Community Service

Under the capable leadership of Jaynaya Dwyer and Melanie Weiss, Social Service has once again been a focus of life at Strathcona. Fundraising activities have been organised throughout the year. Highlights have included the fun-filled annual Helpathlon for Years 4 to 8 that raised money for the School of St Jude in Tanzania. Individual forms have organised fundraisers to support local, national and international charitable organisations and individuals in their work. These have included locally, The Royal Children’s Hospital and the Cancer Council; nationally and internationally, the Oaktree Foundation, World Vision and Baptcare. Total funds raised have been approximately $15,000.

The Year 12 students have continued their sponsorship of Martha Geremu, a young girl who lives in Ethiopia, while the School also continues to sponsor Freddielyn Eugenio Busel who lives in the Philippines. As attention has recently been focused on access to educational opportunities for girls in less developed areas of the globe, it is timely to note that our sponsorship helps to facilitate this access for these young girls.

We extend our thanks to all the girls who, often in conjunction with their parents, have given of their time and effort to support the ongoing work of Social Service in the School. It is always possible to make a difference, if only in small ways, and the enthusiasm for this altruistic component of the Strathcona co-curricular program is truly commendable.

Rhonda Burns/Vicki Treidel/Claire Chambers

Compass Award

This co-curricular activity is part of the prestigious ‘Awards Victoria’ program and is open to all Years 5 to 8 students at Strathcona. It is the stepping stone to the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award Scheme. It offers students non-competitive situations, where participants set specific goals and develop their own level of competency in four areas: Hobbies/Skills; Exploration; Physical Activity; and Volunteering/Service.

In 2012, students chose a range of activities from cake making to running in the Mothers’ Day Classic to learning the trumpet. They then set their own tangible goals and worked towards achieving them. This Award has helped the girls discover hidden talents, extend their existing skills and give enjoyment and satisfaction in their chosen activities. An awareness of the community, developing self-esteem, confidence and using initiative are all benefits of the program.

Strathcona enrolments have now grown to just over 50 students and it is pleasing to note that many of the students are achieving multiple levels over the four years. We congratulate Anna Doyle,
Debating and Public Speaking

Speaking in public has always been one of the major human fears. Yet the ability to present articulately and eloquently to an audience is an essential leadership and life skill. Students who can confidently and consistently speak in front of others have greater self-confidence and are more likely to experience success.

At Strathcona, we encourage all students to participate in the range of activities on offer. We believe that anyone can learn to speak in front of others - it simply takes practice and encouragement. The security of the classroom provides the ideal environment to practise vital communication skills and provides a firm basis to participate in co-curricular and external competitions.

The School’s Public Speaking Competition involves all students from Years 7 to 12, who present a prepared speech in class with the finals being held in Year Level Assemblies. This year, for the first time, the senior student finalists of Years 11 and 12 showcased their exemplary style and skill to students in a whole School Assembly. Congratulations to the winners Caitlin Wilson (Senior Section), Lucy Brusamarello (Intermediate section) and Hannah Samaddar (Middle section).

Significantly, Caitlin Wilson (Year 12), with her speech on the recognition of Indigenous people in Australia’s constitution, went on to represent the School at the State finals of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) Plain English Speaking Competition. Her thoughtful, erudite and sincere presentation, along with a clever impromptu speech, saw her awarded Second place in Victoria. Given that this is one of the premier forums for public speaking in the State, this was an outstanding achievement.

Debating has also been of a high standard this year with many personal accomplishments. The Debaters’ Association of Victoria (DAV) Interschool Competition enables students from Years 9 to 12 to research and prepare debates with a range of topical issues. Strathcona students are always extremely committed in their approach to preparation, and many teams experienced well-earned success. In particular, Team 2 (Year 10) made it through to the Finals. Joyce Lim, Lucy Brusamarello and Phoebe Stewart were extremely accomplished in their respective roles and are to be commended for this fine achievement. They demonstrated enthusiasm and researched assiduously to grapple with the secret topics at this level.

Each year the Debating Association of Victoria also runs an evening program of training and inter-school debating for students in Years 7 and 8. The students are to be congratulated on their enthusiasm, preparation and commitment. Over the course of the program, the students’ skills developed steadily so that by the last round of debates the three Year 7 teams competing on the night were able to win all of their debates. The Year 8 team members were always well prepared and they won their debates on two out of three occasions. Students awarded Best Speaker included, Emma Brown, Eleanor Forwood, Tess Plowman and Georgia Wong.

The success of the program owes a great deal to the efforts of the Year 11 students who trained the teams and offered excellent support and encouragement. Acknowledgement is made to Laura Collins, Gabrielle Coulthard, Katie Dean, Monique Fernandez, Maluki Fernando, Sophie Puika, Bronte Shinkfield, Phoebe Sloane, Gemma Smith and Laura Young.

This year, we had twelve teams enter the UNYA Thant Trophy Competition which is a Mock UN competition where teams of two are allocated a country. We had six of twelve teams progress to the State semi-finals to compete at the University of Melbourne for a place in the State Finals.

Pam Allan

An exciting Awards Victoria initiative for 2012 was the introduction of the Youth Award Leader training program. Eight students in Year 8 had the opportunity to take part in a one-day course that concentrated on leadership, teamwork, communication, organisation and reflection. With their newfound knowledge and enthusiasm, they were presented with the Youth Leaders official badge and now have the skills to confidently assist, encourage and support the younger Compass Award participants in their endeavours, and to promote the Awards program throughout the School. The students were also introduced to The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award, a component of the Year 9 curriculum, and they now have a comprehensive understanding of the next stage of the Awards program.

As Coordinator, I attended the Awards Partnership Day and had the opportunity to connect with organisations offering Volunteering, Adventurous Journey and project activities. These included the SES, the CFA and Conservation Volunteers.

I wish to acknowledge and praise all Compass Award participants for their efforts this year.
Duke of Edinburgh’s Awards Scheme

The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award was new vocabulary for Year 9 students this year, with the whole of Year 9 experiencing the program for the first time. The Award has four different components: Physical Recreation, Skill, Volunteering and Adventurous Journeys, with criteria needing to be met, and an online journal being kept in order to be processed for a badge and certificate after one year’s efforts. Year 9 students reported that they very much enjoyed the challenge of participating in volunteering opportunities, and that they had learnt skills that would be very useful in future, particularly in their part time work. Some students used the program as an opportunity to take up interesting community activities or recreational pursuits. These included: cheer leading, trapeze, ukulele, aerobics, gardening, volunteering in a soup kitchen, training guide dogs, spending time with elderly neighbours, and tutoring younger students. It was a delight to see so many students stepping outside their comfort zone and engaging with the local community. In reflection on their online records, students noted that setting goals helped them to develop more than they expected throughout the year. For the Adventurous Journey component of the Award, many Year 9 students chose to compose a Cultural Report based on their journeys overseas. Destinations and topics ranged from Food preparation in Bali, to Cycling in Holland. More locally, students prepared and led camps to the Brisbane and Cathedral Ranges in Victoria. It has been remarkable to watch the progress of the Year 9 Bronze Award participants, many of whom were nearing completion of their award six months on.

The Silver and Gold participants in senior year levels have been looking forward to their coastal hike due to depart in early December. Their recent adventure to Mt Buffalo was a suitable challenge for girls who showed great enthusiasm to enter the new environment and explore the plateau over three days of hiking. We are extremely proud of our 5 Silver and 5 current Gold participants who are due to receive their awards at Government House early next year. All participants are commended on their participation.

Liesel Woods

International and Interstate Links Program

Students involved in the wide variety of tours and exchanges offered this year have expressed their enjoyment of many new experiences, developing independence, appreciating cultural differences and taking up a variety of opportunities and challenges. Lifelong friends were made and some of the best times were experienced by Strathcona girls from Years 8 and 10 who participated in the 2012 International and Interstate Links Program.

The hospitality of many Strathcona families was appreciated by visiting students from our sister schools: Soshin Girls School in Yokohama, Japan; Ewha Girls High School in Seoul, Korea, as well as our exchange schools: Somerset College, South Africa; Durham Academy, USA; Columba College, New Zealand; Meriden School, Sydney; PLC Armidale, NSW and Rockhampton Girls Grammar, Queensland. Host sisters developed friendships and participated in many excursions exploring Melbourne with visiting students. The Soshin students willingly shared Japanese culture and customs with Year 7 SEED Program students and all year levels in Mellor House.

Study tours to Italy and China were held for language students this year and a group from Years 10 and 11 toured Kakadu and Central Australia. These tours were a highlight of the year for these students. Plans are underway for a study tour to France and a service tour to the Solomon Islands in 2013.

The following students represented Strathcona on exchange this year:

To: PLC Armidale, NSW - a reciprocal exchange with Strathcona students hosting visiting students from Armidale: Brigit Dossetto, Eleanor Forwood, Eliza Sammells and Caitlin Shinnie (Year 8).

To: Rockhampton Girls Grammar, Queensland – Annabel Chandler, Georgia Downie, Nina Odgers, Mabry Simpson Bull. Visiting students from Rockhampton were hosted by Jaime Kost, Jacqueline Lawson, Stephanie Hurley and Claire Simpson (Year 8).
To: Meriden, Sydney (reciprocal) – Laura Chiaramonte, Annabel Marks (Year 8).

To: Columba College, New Zealand – Emily Holding and Keely Simpson-Bull (Year 10). Visiting students from New Zealand were hosted by Paris Balla and Anna Doyle (Year 9).

To: Somerset College, South Africa (reciprocal) – Shannon McKenna, Jessica Stewart, Tara Gelme and Chelsea Newton (Year 10).

To: Durham Academy, North Carolina USA (reciprocal) – Molly Young, Georgia Lyon, Amy Cubit and Mia Arrowsmith (Year 10).

Strathcona has also hosted students Alexane Baissac and Juliette Baudin from France, Elena Steiger from Switzerland and Teresa Amoroso from Italy. Atsuko Ao and Chinami Iida from Soshin Girls School attended Strathcona in Term 1 and So-yeon An and Ji-hyun Jang from Ewha Girls High School attended for the year.

I express thanks to all students and parents who contributed to the success of these programs.

Dianna Little

Music

The talent of our girls, their capacity to share that talent and their generosity never cease to amaze us in the Music Department and this year has been no different. We have had a strong focus on performance, particularly performance preparation at the senior level, where the girls have participated in performance mastery workshops given by Anneliese Gill (member of the music-psychology team at Monash University). These workshops were specifically aimed at performance mastery and overcoming performance anxiety for our VCE students. The workshops were informative and most enjoyable. The skills that our students acquired were quickly put into practice at the first formal VCE Recital. However, it was the recital in September where all the work that the girls had done in this area, and their talent, were showcased. They were remarkable performances. Yo-Yo Ma said that ‘the goal of music performance is not perfection but expression.’ These performances were definitely about expression and very close to perfection! We hope to continue mentoring our young musicians with professionals who perform and work in the musical areas that are relevant to each of them.

The Concerto Night, held at Tay Creggan, was a resounding success with standing room only! Nine of our soloists performed a movement each of a concerto. It was the first time that the girls had played as soloists with an orchestra. This was quite a challenge for our musicians, soloists and orchestral members alike. It was a truly big ask of a very young orchestra, where they had to play original compositions by great masters and not school arrangements. They were very excited and nervous on the night, but also very focused, and they acquitted themselves admirably.

Our Music Camp was held in July and it was wonderful to see 90 students working together across the year levels, grappling with challenging music and helping one another. There was much laughter, much noise, a huge amount of music, little sleep and a real sense of camaraderie which all assisted in our preparations for the Annual Concert. This concert, which presented all our larger ensembles, was held this year at the Xavier College Performing Arts Centre. We were very proud of the girls’ performances.

There have been many more memorable performances throughout the year, including in the wider community, where our Chamber Ensembles, Strings and Choirs have been asked
to perform at both formal and informal occasions. Stage Band and the Modern Jazz Band also performed at the Melbourne club, Dizzy’s Jazz Club. Our girls are always impressive on these occasions, especially as they play like professional jazz musicians, right down to the improvising!

Our Friends of Music have also been very active this year and the Dinner held in August was a feast of superb food, excellent company and wonderful music performed by our Chamber Ensembles. As always, my gratitude and that of all the music staff, goes to the Friends of Music, who support us so generously in all that we do and in all that we wish to do.

I would like to say thank you to our Captains, Alana Foster and Georgia Hunter, for their leadership this year and to all our Year 12 students who have contributed so much to the Music Program over the last six years. You have been tremendous role models and an inspiration to so many of our younger students. May the next phase of your journey be filled with much music.

Georgina Nagy

Outdoor Education Program/ Camps

What is your dream adventure? To paddle a white washed river? To shave a snowy slope with a flick of your skis? Or is it to climb a rocky outcrop and break through the canopy only to be exposed to a view of endless wilderness lit by the sun’s striking spotlight? This year has offered Strathcona girls opportunities to explore many different environments to tantalise the senses and inspire future adventures.

While our Year 7 students enjoyed the thrilling challenge activities of YMCA’s Lady Northcote Recreation Camp in Bacchus Marsh, the Year 8 students simultaneously explored the Goulburn River in inflatable canoes, residing for two nights in a tent along the river and one night in the beautiful surrounds of Alexandra at Crystal Creek Christian Camp. In the depths of winter, the Year 9 students embraced the cold to experience Falls Creek and its outstanding season of snowfall. These girls learnt more than just cross country skiing, shown in their daring photos of sliding down cornices, creating snow sculptures, exploring various ways of travelling on the skis, and camping out in the elements, making both a camp kitchen and home for one cold night out! What brave girls we have! When the snow had melted, Year 10 students celebrated the start of summer during their water-based camp at Merricks Lodge, Mornington Peninsula, kayaking, sailing, snorkeling and surfing among the exquisite creatures of Westernport and Port Phillip Bays.
In addition to the year level camps, some girls had the special opportunity of travelling to Phillip Island for a Learn to Surf Day early in the year. They were blessed with perfectly hot weather, a short tour of the Island, as well as a two hour lesson after which all six participants were able to show their competence. The Learn to Ski Day, hosted at Mount Buller, was another successful day of learning, with 18 students learning the basics and being able to carve the slopes by the end of only one day!

Liesel Woods

Speech, Drama and Effective Communication

The Speech and Drama program engages students in developing performance and communications skills through the teaching of performance texts (play scripts, monologues and poetry), drama games, improvisation, mime, reading skills and public speaking. Speech theory is taught formally alongside performance work with introductory analysis of literature involving rhythm and structural aspects of poetry and character, plot and emotional themes in monologue selections. Breathing and voice control theory are also introduced as appropriate to levels of study.

Over 40 students are currently enrolled in Speech and Drama. The program is particularly popular with students at upper primary level. While Mellor House students (Years 4 to 6) account for more than half of all enrolments, there are small numbers of students who continue through to senior years. All students have an opportunity to present for parents at an informal concert held in May. The earlier concert was well attended with four in every five enrolled students presenting.

Our participation in Eisteddfod by the Bay again provided a focus for most students in Semester 1. Characters in costume, solo poetry and script work (duo and trio) were popular. Strathcona students placed well in all sections. We achieved outstanding results in solo poetry, placing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in 10 and under, 1st, 2nd and equal 3rd in 12 and under, and 1st and equal 2nd in 14 and under. While the two days of competition were long, the girls were encouraging and supportive of one another.

Mellor House students had further opportunities to perform through the year with concert assemblies, informal classroom performances and, for some of our newest students, an informal short visit to perform to the Year 4 classroom. Examinations are encouraged at all levels.
While not compulsory, examinations can provide focus and encourage disciplined practice patterns. This year, 22 students undertook Trinity Guildhall examinations from Grade 1 Speech and Drama through to Grade 8 Shakespeare. An examiner visiting from London attended the School on 25 October. Students reported an enjoyable and positive experience.

Laura Collins (Year 11) completed her fifth year of tuition, completing her Grade 8 examination with a solo Shakespeare examination. She used her skills to audition and gain a place in the Australian Shakespeare Company’s youth production of Comedy of Errors. Grade 7 and 8 examinations are VCE creditable.

The program continues to see strong enrolments, high numbers entering for examinations and even larger numbers participating in Eisteddfods. Each semester offers core performance opportunities that focus student attention and ensure the program remains vibrant and engaging for students at all levels.

Fiona Marantelli

Girls Sport Victoria
Sporting Activities

The value of participation in regular physical activity and team sport is intangible; it can contribute to developing a young woman’s identity and a sense of belonging to her community.

There have been new and exciting additions to the many sporting opportunities available at Strathcona this year, beginning in Term 1 with Girls Sailing and Triathlon. Strathcona had 28 girls participate in the Triathlon, the second largest number of participants from any GSV school. The girls made up nine teams of 2 or 3, with three brave girls competing individually. The girls found the event challenging but rewarding and enjoyed the experience. One of our senior teams placed 1st in their age group. In addition to this, students also took up the opportunity to try new sports through GSV sport skills courses, including Fencing, Diving, Golf and Track Cycling.

This year, approximately 350 girls represented Strathcona in 53 weekly sports teams, including a Senior AFL team. There was an enthusiastic response to the introduction of AFL with over 50
girls from Years 10 to 12 involved in initial trials. We had several weekly sport teams qualify for the GSV Finals this year including; Senior Tennis and Hockey Teams, Junior G Netball Team, Intermediate A, B and C Netball Teams and the Junior A and B Volleyball Teams. There were many more teams who narrowly missed out on the finals, placing either 2nd or 3rd in their zone.

It was a very exciting year for GSV Carnivals that saw Strathcona qualify and compete in Division 1 in all four major GSV Sports Carnivals. We placed 6th in the Swimming, 7th in Diving, 7th in Cross Country and 6th in Track and Field. The girls also experienced great individual success with 25 qualifying for the Swimming Finals Evening. Strathcona finished 3rd on the overall medal tally with 16 medals: 5 gold, 6 silver and 5 bronze medals. We had three girls qualify for the Diving Finals Evening, with both girls who competed placing 5th. The Track and Field Finals Evening saw 29 girls compete, including 6 relay teams, coming away with 5 medals and 2 new GSV records. We look forward to building on this in 2013.

Megan Barber
Achievements in academic pursuits and the arts

• Claire Smith, Dux of 2011, was awarded an Australian Student Prize for academic excellence in the 2011 school year. This is a highly prestigious award, only 500 prizes being awarded nationally each year.

• Georgia Pandel, Year 12, 2011, was selected to perform in Top Class Theatre Studies in May at the Melbourne Recital Centre. This followed her selection in 2010 for Top Class Drama. She also received a VCE Premier’s Award for Theatre Studies.

• Anna Mitchell, Year 12, was selected to attend the Youth Science Forum held at ANU in January 2012.

• The Food and Technology folios of Kate Monkhouse, Klara Morey and Isabella Stephens, Year 12, were displayed at the VCE Season of Excellence Top Designs exhibition in July.

• Caitlin Wilson, Year 12, was the winner of the VCAA Plain English Speaking Award Regional Final and was runner-up in the State Final.

• Anna Milne, Year 12, and Phoebe Stewart, Year 10, competed in the Ainger Memorial Award for Public Speaking at Richmond Rotary.

• Anna Milne, Year 12, was runner-up of the VCAA Plain English Speaking Award Regional Final.

• Madison Fairlie, Year 11, has been selected to attend the National Youth Science Forum at the Australian National University in January 2013.

• Madison Fairlie, Year 11, was chosen as one of VITTA’s ICT Achievers – Girls in ICT in 2012. Madison was invited to attend the VITTA Conference held at the Caulfield Racecourse in August, to assist Colin Gover of NZ in a live TV studio within the Expo.

• In the Dante Alighieri competition, Madison Fairlie, Year 11, came 1st for Original Poetry, Monique St Clair, Year 12, came 3rd for Original Poetry and Sophie Brugliera, Year 9, came 3rd for Poetry Recitation.

• The Food Technology folios of Rebecca Glover, Rebecca Dickinson and Meena Chockalingam, Year 11, have been short-listed for Top Designs.

• Madeline Hallett and Michelle Benington, Year 10, reached the State Grand Final of the UN Debating competition. This is an outstanding achievement in a high level competition.

• Michelle Benington Year 10, has been selected for the Kwong Lee Dow Scholars Program of Melbourne University.
special achievements

Claire Smith, Dux of School 2011

ents

Regan Lamble
• In the Australian History Competition, Amy Cubit and Elisia Killick, Year 10, and Eleanor Forwood, Charlotte Pannier, Nicky Price, Elizabeth Robinson, Julia Rowlands, Kate Skinner and Madison Sorrenti, Year 8, achieved High Distinctions.

• Eleanor Forwood, Year 8, studying German with the Victorian School of Languages, was one of two winners of the 'Gold Award for the Language Perfect World Championships 2012'.

• Lucinda Garnham, Year 7, gained a High Distinction in the ICAS Science Competition. She also gained a High Distinction in the University of NSW Science Competition.

• In the ICAS Mathematics Competition, four students achieved High Distinctions: Rui Wang, Year 10, Jacinta Zhu, Year 9, Eleanor Forwood, Year 8, and Lucinda Garnham, Year 7.

• In the ICAS English Competition, Lucinda Garnham, Year 7, achieved the top score for Year 7s in Victoria. She was presented with a medal at the ICAS Medal Presentation Ceremony in November.

• In the Science Talent Search, in recognition of the high quality of entries over the breadth of sections from our students, Strathcona was awarded a special STS Award, presented at La Trobe University on 29 October. Twelve entries were submitted from the Senior School and 7 bursaries were won. For Mellor House, 23 entries were submitted and 7 bursaries won. Sixteen Certificates of Merit were also awarded and Stephanie Hayes, Year 6, has been invited to enter the BHP Billiton National Science Awards.

Achievements in Sport

• Regan Lamble, Year 12, 2009, was selected as part of this year's Olympic Track and Field team and competed in the 20km walking race, placing 17th and achieving a personal best time.

• Emma Morrison, Year 12 was selected for the Victorian Gymnastics State Team to compete in Sydney at the National Championships in the Level 8 division. Emma, and Cara Adamopoulos, Year 10, competed in the Rhythmic Gymnastics State Championships. Cara (Level 9) placed 2nd overall and 2nd in Hoop, Balls, Clubs and Ribbons. Emma (Level 8) placed 4th overall and 2nd in Ball. Emma also competed in the Australian Rhythmic Gymnastics Championships held in Sydney in early June and placed 26th overall. Emma was awarded a Local Sporting Champions Grant for her participation in Rhythmic Gymnastics at the National Championships.

• Sophie Bangs, Year 12, has received a prestigious Pierre de Coubertin Award for her achievements in and commitment to sport.

• Amelia Hough and Julia Gair, Year 12, were selected for the GSV representative hockey team.

• Madeline Morrison, Year 12, was selected for the GSV representative netball team and captained the team.

• Sarah Chancellor-Goddard, Year 11, a member of the U18 Victorian Cricket team, competed in the National Championships. The team finished 2nd. Sarah also gained selection for the School Sport Victoria team. At a match against the GSV representative team, she was awarded as the best and fairest player by the GSV team.

• Phoebe Sloane, Year 11, represented Victoria in Discus and Shot Put at the 2012 Australian Athletic Championships in Sydney and won a Silver Medal in the U18 Women's Discus Final. Phoebe was also selected to represent Australia in the 2012 Oceania Athletics Championships in Cairns, 27 to 29 June, and competed in the Open Women's Discus event, winning a silver medal for Australia. Phoebe competed for Strathcona at the 2012 Victorian All Schools Athletics Competition and won the Gold medal in the U18 girls Discus event and the Silver medal in the U18 girls Shot Put event. Phoebe will represent Strathcona at the National All Schools Athletics Competition in Hobart in December.

• Christie Donaghey, Year 10, competed in the Aloha Gymfest in Hawaii in January, placing 3rd on Beam, 3rd on Bars, 2nd on Floor and 1st on Vault. Overall, Christie placed 1st at National Level 9. Christie also represented Victoria at the National Women’s Gymnastics Championships and won the event at National Level 9, making her the Australian Champion. Christie also competed in the Victorian Artistic Gymnastics Championships at Level 9, placing 1st on Vault, 1st on Floor, 2nd on Beam and 2nd on Bars. Overall, she placed 1st, making her the State Champion.

• Laura Seddon, Year 9, competed in the Australian National Open Water Swimming Championships in Perth in February.

• Sarah Martin, Year 9, competed in the National Swimming Competition in Perth in February, coming 8th in the National Open Water Race.

• Bella Poon, Year 9, was selected for the Under 16 State Indoor Cricket team and then competed in the National Championships.

• Tess Plowman, Year 7, was selected to compete in the National Schools Cross Country Championships in Adelaide.

• Isabelle Harris, Year 7, won the Victorian Fencing Championship for Girls U13 Foil, then competed in the National Championship.
2012
year 12 students

Georgia Andolfatto
Sophie Bangs
Kate Benington
Lisa Bennett
Laura Bowden
Gabrielle Bramich
Carla Brugliera
Jacqueline Catalano
Wai Yee Chan
Amelia Chiodo
Younghee Cho
Meenakshi Chockalingam
Cassandra Cohen
Anna Cornwell
Mia-Annalea Craik
Katherine Dartnell
Lauren Daw
Amara Devereux
Amanda Donaghey
Kelsey Dubar
Jaynaya Dwyer
Evangelie Fetherston-Miller
Sara Fortunato
Alana Foster
Janjira Gair
Vanessa Giokas
Rebekah Glover
Evelyn Gomm
Carli Gotsis
Michelle Green
Elena Halkas
Claire Hall
Charlotte Hawkins
Amelia Hough
Laura Hunt
Georgia Hunter
Daisy James
Katie Lau
Yi Li
Shan Li
Amy Lind
Darby Lyndon
Ollivya McLardie-Hore
Georgia McNeil
Anna Milne
Anna Mitchell
Tahlia Mollard
Lilian Monk
Kate Monkhouse
Klara Morey
Emma Morrison
Madeleine Morrison
Divya Neelamegam
Gemma O’Farrell
Megan O’Keefe
Emily Orive
Sarah Palma
Olivia Phillips
Lucy Pollard
Mathilda Robertson
Madeleine Robinson
Meaghan Ryan
Rebecca Schwarz
Stephanie Speakman
Monique St Clair
Isabella Stephens
Courtney Stephenson
Ellen Sudholz
Caitlin Tracey
Simena Tsalkos
Alicia Un
Emma van Ryn
Anna van Stiphout
Madeleine Voumard
Samira Wakhlu
Yueyang Wang
Monique Warren
Melanie Weiss
Nicola Williams
Caitlin Wilson
Katharine Wood
Cathryn Youings
Main Campus: Senior/Middle School & ELC,
34 Scott Street, Canterbury

Year 9 Campus: Tay Creggan,
30 Yarra Street, Hawthorn

Junior Campus: Mellor House – Prep to Year 6,
173 Prospect Hill Road, Canterbury

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bring out her best.