We move confidently towards the future while remaining *true to our heritage* ...

Mrs Marise McConaghy
It is extraordinary to think that our youngest Strathcona students will graduate in 2028 and, by the year 2080, could still very well be in the workforce. Now, doesn’t that capture the imagination!

“I thank all who have so thoughtfully and open-heartedly shared their wisdom and insight.”

In my first year as an incoming Principal, it has been only natural that many have sought to quiz me on my philosophy for education, my core beliefs about learning and my vision for the School, and they have shared with me what they believe is missing. Discussion this year has focused on the philosophy which underpins the next strategic framework to take the School to the brink of the third decade of the twenty-first century.

Examining educational philosophy, considering optimal graduate attributes, scrutinising the past and peering into the future, looking inwards at our culture as well as outwards – far beyond our lovely, leafy suburbs – has been a central preoccupation. I thank all who have so thoughtfully and open-heartedly shared their wisdom and insight.

The challenge for twenty-first century educators is to prepare the next generation for their lives in a world which cannot quite be envisaged and is almost literally changing before our eyes. I am proud that at Strathcona we confidently - excitedly - embrace this challenge. We will do this through a relentless focus not only on best practice, but also next practice in teaching and learning; well-researched, nuanced and carefully implemented pastoral care strategies; wide-ranging co-curricular opportunities; outdoor education experiences; thoughtfully considered global connections; continuous staff development and empowerment; the improvement and clever utilisation of our learning places; as well as modernising our business practices. We move confidently towards the future while remaining true to our heritage, because we know that when development and innovation are aligned with moral purpose, impact is broad, deep and authentic.

The future belongs to those with lateral and creative thinking dispositions, those with a thirst for continued learning (who can learn, unlearn and learn again), and those with the human skills of creativity; communication, adaptability; originality, initiative and an entrepreneurial spirit. Whether it be through organisational agility, adaptability to change, flexibility in the use of technology or the capacity to develop multifaceted skill sets in an increasingly unpredictable job market, there is no doubt that the education provided for our current students must equip them to be nimble in navigating the future.

Our vision is to work with our parents and the community to provide experiences for our students to become creative, critical, independent, articulate, lifelong thinkers and learners who thrive as ethical and intellectually curious problem-solvers. At Strathcona, we know that learners who are future-proof are curious, they wonder how things came to be and experiment, trying things out to see if they work. They investigate, gather information and then explore possibilities with their imagination, using both mind and heart to look at things from different perspectives and put themselves in other’s shoes.

Effective learners are culturally adept and they know who to share ideas with and how to do this effectively. They balance creative brainwaves with hard critical reasoning, then stand
back and take stock by reflecting and evaluating. Most of all, successful learners have courage. They stick with things when the going gets tough and they know mistakes are a part of learning, not something to get upset about. What makes them successful is how they handle failure.

'... the education provided for our current students must equip them to be nimble in navigating the future.'

My aspiration for our School? True to its Christian heritage, Strathcona is a leading learning community which develops women who are courageous in thinking and ethical in action. They contribute to the world with wisdom, purpose and generosity of spirit.

- They are curious, courageous and creative in thinking, learning and research. (They are brave, fortiter.)
- They are judicious and purposeful in their contribution to humanity and are spiritually alive. (They are faithful, fideliter.)
- They are resourceful, resilient and optimistic in spirit. (They are happy, feliciter.)
- They are authentic, agile learners who flourish in varying living and learning environments. (Bravely, faithfully, happily.)

Fortiter, Fideliter, Feliciter' are Classical Latin words to guide us in the education of twenty-first century girls and young women.

Agility is a buzz word prevalent in the corporate world and is being used increasingly in schools. This is so because there is a need to foster agile, creative, forward thinking people - not just in our classrooms if schools are to be safely positioned for the future, but also in our core business practices. This year, after an initial external Organisational review where all members of management were individually interviewed and the School's systems closely examined, it was determined that a number of smaller reviews should occur in Finance, ICT (Information and Communications Technology), Marketing, Communications and Human Resources.

This exercise was undertaken to ensure that the School's operations are optimal, streamlined and in best practice, and that efficiencies created by the introduction of automation and online functionality across the many areas of school activities reduce costs, ensure compliance and withstand personnel changes, thus positioning the School for ease of responsiveness to future imperatives.

The School, in preparing its budget this year, was very mindful of the constraints on our families in the current economic climate. Following careful consideration with the Board, we were able to contain the fee rise for next year to 5.5%, reflecting the lowest percentage increase for many years and the School's concerted effort to contain and manage costs to reduce the consequent impact on families.

While engagement in and taking responsibility for good business practice is a critical part of my responsibility, I cannot say it has been the highlight of the year! I am an educator after all, and my passion has always been the education and care of girls and the growth and empowerment of individual staff and innovative teams of people to create exciting and challenging learning experiences.

So what were the highlights of the year?

I can't really select the highlights. That would be too exclusive. Everywhere I have gone during school days, at weekends and in the evenings, I am struck by the sense of enjoyment I feel seeing girls in blue checked dresses who are simply happy, loving being part of the School and being naturally supportive, affectionate and respectful towards each other and those around them. This surely is the core of what we value, especially in this digital age in which isolation and disconnection can be a constant presence. I feel truly optimistic about the shared enthusiasms which are a feature of this wonderful school.

'... we provide our children with a powerful advantage in life.'

Here are just a few particularly vivid memories of the year – not including the Rose Ceremony, the ELC Christmas Concert or the Prep to Year 2 Nativity Play. These are obvious choices as small wiggly children always win hands down and the rituals of Year 12s leaving tug at our heartstrings; our hopes and dreams for them are strongly felt.

Foundation Day, held at St Dominic's, was an occasion which brought the School community together to celebrate another year of Strathcona, and it was my Induction as Principal. Of that day, mostly I remember the beautiful music and the Year 12 girls' faces, the thoughtfulness and generosity of friends - old and new - and my family sitting with me in the front. There I was, a stranger to the community. I remember the hymn 'Here I Am Lord' and that I was welcomed with open arms. There seemed not only readiness for the challenge of change but palpable excitement. The important traditions and rituals of the community held us while the future beckoned.

While peace and tranquility prevailed at St Dominic's that day, the same thing could not be said for our Senior Campus at Canterbury which, quite literally, felt like a building site. I really struggled orientating myself at times! But then – by second term – as our artist-in-residence sketched away in the
courtyard on her work entitled ‘Metamorphosis’ – our wonderful new Contemporary Learning Centre emerged – on budget and on time, from the hoardings, the noise, and the dust. The builders packed their tool kits and drove off, portables were craned out, the business of teaching and learning calmly migrated to new environs and a new era in the School’s history began. The completion of the Year 10 Centre a few months later then drew that phase of building works to a close.

At this point, I would like to acknowledge a group of people who have been outstanding in their professionalism, patience and leadership. That is the Strathcona staff. I am sure they did complain about the challenges they faced during a period of such massive upheaval (the building, the moving, the technology shifts and school leadership change). That would only be human. However, they never missed a beat in their commitment to the girls’ learning which was – and remains – unwavering.

‘Your generosity of spirit and your gift of giving is a fine example to us all.’

In the past I have had the good fortune to work with outstanding educators. They have been acknowledged as such through national and international awards and appointments to senior leadership positions in universities, schools and educational institutions across the country. The Strathcona staff stand tall with them and deserve equal acclaim and appreciation. No one person carries a school, and these people – individually and in teams – have the intellect, creativity, goodness and drive to make this a truly great twenty-first century school. They are the School’s greatest asset and need to be acknowledged as such. Thank you from us all.

Schools are very complex entities and cannot thrive without the support of many. I take this opportunity to thank the Parent Groups associated with the School and the many volunteers: the Canteen Crew; the Family Association; Old Strathconians; the Music Support Group; the Rowing, Rhythmic Gymnastics and Snowsports Support Groups; Parent Representatives; Host Families; and the list goes on. Your generosity of spirit and your gift of giving is a fine example to us all.

Parents, thank you for entrusting us with the education of your precious daughters and ELC sons. I believe that you are the prime educators of your children and that, when we work in a strong, committed and positive partnership, we provide our children with a powerful advantage in life.

To Mrs Jenni Farmilo, my absolutely amazing, irrepressible Deputy and running mate – I give very heartfelt thanks.

How blessed was I that you were here? I cannot sing Jenni’s praises highly enough – her professionalism, strong work ethic, energy, optimism, sense of humour, warmth, wit, creativity, generosity and strong moral compass has enriched the culture of the School and the lives of us all.

I would like to thank the Strathcona Board and Committee members for the commitment, careful deliberation and the time given to ensure the School remains relevant and successful in ever-changing educational and legislative contexts. Thank you in particular, to Laurinda Gardiner, the Board Chair, who is a quietly wise mentor.

Now it is time to acknowledge our retiring staff: Dr Vicki Triedel, Mrs Mary Hall, Mrs Prue Clarke, Mrs Patricia Menke, Mrs Isabel Marsh and Mr Nicholas Van Ree. Thank you for the tireless commitment, love and talent you have given to your work and to generations of girls. As a group, you have given to us a total of nearly 150 years of service, a few of you having been appointed three Principals ago by the wonderful Mr Ken Lyall. Thank you - our best wishes go with you.

This leaves me with only one last acknowledgement. Year 12s, you will soon cease to be the most senior members of the Strathcona student population and custodians of our tradition. You will instead become the most junior members of our alumnae. I hope that you will become active members of the Old Strathconians’ Association and enjoy a lifelong relationship with the School. This means that no matter how far and wide you range in your life, you too will always carry with you some little part of the spirit of this wonderful School. School Captains, Georgia, Julia and Cora – I have loved getting to know you and I acknowledge your excellent leadership this year. Year 12s all - thank you for your individual and collective contribution. You are a fine example of what a Strathcona education represents and of what your parents raised you to be. I praise your achievements. I respect and admire your individualism and I feel excited by the unique paths you are each about to take. You will do it your way, in your own time and with your own creative spirit.

Travel the road of your life honestly, thoughtfully and courageously. Always take time for art and beauty, for quiet contemplation, for nature, for good deeds. You can turn to these lovely things for sustenance, for recharging when you need to dig deep into your store of resilience and fortitude. We live in exciting times. Go now, to your futures – 2028 and beyond. You are ready.

Mrs Marise McConaghy
May the road rise up to meet you
May the wind be always at your back
May the sun shine warm upon your face
The rains fall soft upon your fields
And until we meet again
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.
... learning facility which will stand Strathcona in good stead for many years to come.

board chair’s report

2015 has been a very special year for Strathcona. We have welcomed our new Principal, Mrs Marise McConaghy, seen the completion and opening of the Contemporary Learning Centre and had some stimulating discussions leading to agreement of the framework for the next Strathcona Strategic Plan.

Mrs Marise McConaghy hit the ground running in January and has dedicated herself to understanding the essence that is Strathcona, building relationships with staff, students and the Board and connecting with the broader Strathcona community. She has very ably tackled the less exciting aspects of being a school Principal, for example resourcing and systems, and ensured the Board is well informed regarding Strathcona operations. Mrs Marise McConaghy has also led, challenged and inspired the Board and teaching staff’s thinking about future directions.

‘... continued high standard of staffing to ensure the continuation of a high quality academic and co-curricular education and school environment.’

In June the Contemporary Learning Centre was opened and dedicated to the leadership and commitment to academic excellence of former Principals Mrs Helen Hughes and Mrs Ruth Bunyan. This followed eighteen months of disruption during demolition and construction. It also followed great vision and planning and hard work by our previous Principal Mrs Helen Hughes and very serious financial conversations with the Board. The result is an outstanding, contemporary learning facility which will stand Strathcona in good stead for many years to come. Also, and unlike many building projects you hear about, the building was constructed on time and on budget – quite a feat and again a tribute to the planning of Mrs Helen Hughes and her team, the Board Property Committee, particularly the Chair, Mr Ivan Andolfatto, Mr Rob McFee, and our builders, architects and project managers. The Board also acknowledges the patience and tolerance of staff and students throughout this disruptive period.

This year the Board and senior staff started our thinking for the next Strathcona Strategic Plan, covering the period 2016 – 2020. Through Mrs Marise McConaghy’s initiative two academics, Professor Erica McWilliam and Professor Peter Taylor, have been working with staff and the Board to better understand the future directions of education, what distinguishes Strathcona and what our future focus should be to ensure the continuing provision of an outstanding learning environment for girls. The Strategic Plan will be finalised early in 2016 and made widely available to the School community.

Mrs Marise McConaghy, with Board endorsement, has also had reviews undertaken of the School’s business operations, approach to risk management, building conditions, marketing and information technology systems. These reviews have indicated the sound foundations that exist across Strathcona and have also generated a menu of improvements which have already been completed or scheduled. In October the Board approved the budget and fee rates for 2016. The budget accommodates the planned loan repayments for the
Contemporary Learning Centre, capacity for some system improvements, maintenance of buildings and facilities and a continued high standard of staffing to ensure the continuation of a high quality academic and co-curricular school environment. The budget has also accommodated the lowest fee increase for the last ten years.

‘This was a very special year. All is set for more faith, bravery and fun in 2016.’

Four Board members retired this year. Dr Tim Day, my predecessor as Chair and a Board member for thirteen years, made an outstanding contribution to Strathcona through his leadership, commitment, wisdom and Christian faith. Mr Peter McGregor stepped down from the Board as Treasurer after six years. Peter brought significant financial skills to the Board and commitment to Strathcona and greatly aided the Board’s discussions around financing of the new building. Mr Edward Cohen, the Community Groups’ Representative on the Board, stepped down after six years. Edward very diligently kept the Board informed about what the various School community groups’ activities were, which in turn helped the Board stay connected to the broader, valuable School community. Most recently Mrs Libbie Smith, the Old Strathconians Association Representative, also retired after nine years on the Board. Libbie, as the former Chair of the Old Strathconians Association, has kept the Board informed regarding the activities of the School’s alumni and encouraged many younger former students to stay connected. Thank you Tim, Peter, Edward and Libbie.

Peter, Edward and Libbie’s shoes have been ably filled by Mr Chris O’Farrell as Treasurer, Mrs Jocelyn Furlan as Community Groups’ Representative and Ms Laura Loftus as the Old Strathconians Association Representative.

To Mrs Marise McConaghy, congratulations on your first successful year at Strathcona. We are so very pleased to have you as Principal and very optimistic about the future of Strathcona under your leadership and with your passion for girls’ education and commitment to continued learning for staff, building on the strengths that have been the foundation of Strathcona’s many achievements.

This was a very special year. All is set for more faith, bravery and fun in 2016.

Mrs Laurinda Gardner
Change is something that I strongly disliked as a child. The most traumatic childhood experience I remember having to endure was parting ways with our old, wire, front door. Something about its olive green appearance and rust covered hinges made having to watch it be hurled onto the hard rubbish van a very emotional experience. However, as I and the rest of the School community have learnt more than ever in 2015, change is inevitable and, more often than not, it is accompanied by extraordinary new opportunities, experiences and beginnings. For Strathcona, 2015 was a year where we began a new chapter in our School’s history and, as current members of the School community, we were extremely fortunate to be a part of all that unfolded. The first thing that was written in our new chapter was the welcoming of our new Principal, Mrs Marise McConaghy, who is the perfect fit to Mrs Helen Hughes’ glass slipper and was quickly adored by all of the girls. Next came the day of the opening of the new Knowledge Exchange, Middle School and Science block. The energy and excitement that radiated through the courtyard that morning, when the entire School community gathered as Mrs Helen Hughes officially cut the ribbon to declare the building open, will go down as one of the most memorable experiences I have had at Strathcona. However, the changes did not stop there. In Term 3, we also watched our old and well-loved library transform into a funky Year 10 Centre.

The Year 12s spent our year making sure we could squeeze into the space of ten months every last little ‘high school day’ memory we could to pass on to our grandchildren, whilst continuously reflecting on the past six years and wondering where all that time went. Time is a strange thing - when you are living in the moment, change is something that is not felt as it gradually creeps over us.

‘... we were extremely fortunate to be a part of all that unfolded.’

However, before we realise, we are no longer the Year 7 student waking up at 4am during the first week of Year 7 in fear of missing the first bell. Instead we are jumping in the pool at our final House Swimming Carnival or posing for a Rose Assembly photo with a Prep having just received the rose we will keep on the mantlepiece forever. Yet, if we reflect back now on all that has happened over the past six years, it feels as if this transformation has lasted a lifetime. Since entering the gates of Strathcona in 2010, a lot has occurred: the Prime Minister of Australia has changed five times; Justin Bieber and ‘One Direction’ stole the hearts of every tween (and mother) in the country; the first iPad was released; and - the greatest achievement of all - our permission slips are now completed online.

Nevertheless, what has remained a constant to us over these past six years is the unconditional support we have received from all members of the School community. Thank you to all the other girls in the School, both past and present, whom we have either looked up to or have been looked up to by. Thank you to Mrs Burns, Mr Phillips and Mrs Oprean for always having our best interests at heart. Thank you to all of our Year Level Coordinators over the years for teaching us all you did and supporting us in every way you could, in particular Mr Bradshaw. Mr Bradshaw has not only gone above and beyond to ensure our year runs as smoothly as possible but he has set a fine example to all of us about the type of people we should aspire to be when we eventually join the work force – someone who is extremely organised, hardworking...
and, most importantly, passionate about their job. Thank you to Mrs Jenni Farmilo for always looking out for us and ensuring she always has something to show or tell us that will make us smile – I do not know how we will continue to live week to week without updates on your adorable grandchildren.

‘Thank you to all the other girls in the school, both past and present, whom we have either looked up to or have been looked up to by.’

Finally, thank you to Mrs Helen Hughes, who left a legacy that has made Strathcona the warm, community-centred place we have been able to enjoy over these past years. Thank you also to Mrs Marise McConaghy for continuing to endorse this whilst also adding her own unique touches that have led to a most memorable year for all of us.

As 2015 draws to a close, departing students must pull behind us the door to our schooling experience. Although we will never be able to enter through this door again in our blue checked dresses, it will not remain shut forever, nor will our experiences here be thrown on the nature strip. Our memories and ability to remain connected with the School are the keys that unlock this door, keys which we will keep carefully placed in our back pocket for as long as we live. Thanks Strathcona, we will see you very soon.

Georgia Chester, School Captain 2015
‘Reunions are a wonderful way for past students to re-connect with each other and for the School to reconnect with past students ...’

Old Strathconians Association

2015 has been another busy and rewarding year for the OSA and we have enjoyed the chance to welcome Mrs Marise McConaghy, the new Principal, while celebrating some important milestones for the School.

Our key activity is our reunion programme, which has continued successfully during the past 12 months. Reunions have again been well attended and, for the first time, we held a 60 year reunion for the ladies who finished at Strathcona in 1955. Reunions are a wonderful way for past students to re-connect with each other and for the School to reconnect with past students, even in circumstances where they have not remained actively involved with the School since leaving, or have lost contact for a number of years. A great example of this was at the 25 year reunion in May, where we re-connected with Dr Vanessa Murrie (1990). This was the first school reunion that Vanessa has attended since leaving School, due to significant time spent working and studying overseas, including at Cambridge and the Mayo Graduate School. The connection formed at that reunion led to Vanessa being invited to open the Contemporary Learning Centre in July, where she spoke about her time at Strathcona and her work since leaving School. We receive consistent feedback that alumnae enjoy returning to School for their reunions, and in 2016 we are looking forward to being able to host some reunions in the Contemporary Learning Centre and the newly refurbished Year 10 Centre to showcase these areas to alumnae.

Other highlights from 2015 include the following:

Gingerbread House workshops

In December 2014 Gingerbread House workshops were held in the Food Technology kitchens and were well attended. These will be offered again in 2016 and will provide an opportunity to raise significant funds we can use for various projects and activities.

Musical Reunion

2015 marks 10 years of musicals at Strathcona, and the OSA helped to coordinate and run a reunion event for girls who had participated in musicals during their time at Strathcona. Tori Wood (2006), who has directed the OSA Cabaret performances, helped ensure the success of this evening, which was attended by past students from a range of year levels.

OSA Facebook page

In 2015 we established an OSA Facebook page, providing an opportunity to connect with a much broader audience than the Facebook group set up a couple of years ago. We have already seen increased engagement from our alumnae, with a number of attendees at reunions hearing about these events via the posts on the OSA and Strathcona pages.

oNews

This online newsletter was launched in August 2015 and allows us to communicate with alumnae on a more frequent basis. We hope to send out bi-monthly newsletters with information on past students, updates on school events and other material that may be of interest. We also hope it may be another way to engage with past students who have not attended reunions and for whom we may not have current contact details.

Thanks are due to a number of individuals in our Strathcona community for their continued support of the OSA. A special thank you to Elisabeth Chalmers for all she does so well on our behalf through the Community Relations Office. I would also like to thank Mrs Marise McConaghy for her
support and interest in the OSA. I know alumnae have very much enjoyed the opportunity to meet her at reunions this year. Thanks also to Mark Bremner in the Business Office and Michelle Newell for the work she has done with the Facebook page and oNews.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their contributions during the last 12 months and their support during my first year as President. It is a team effort and I have enjoyed working with all of you.

Laura Loftus, OSA President

Strathcona Family Association

The key activities of the Strathcona Family Association are raising funds towards programs and purchases that benefit students across the School, and bringing together the School community. These aims are achieved through a range of events which are either run or supported by the SFA, including:

• an Annual Christmas Charity lunch;
• provision of family support through meals to families in time of need;
• the Year 7 BBQ;
• the Soirée;
• BBQs at sporting events;

• Mother’s and Father’s Day stalls; and
• participation in the Westerfolds Park run for one of their weekly events.

This year, in place of an annual Christmas lunch, our regular guest speaker from the Salvation Army visited the Main School Campus, speaking to Year 8 students and accepting a special donation of $1,000 on behalf of the Strathcona Family Association. Our guest, Norman Gale, was also presented with donations from the girls for people in need over Christmas.

These events are made possible by the hard work of the team that makes up the SFA Committee, as well as the families who provide assistance throughout the year. My thanks go to all of you for your time and efforts. Special thanks to Elisabeth Chalmers in the Community Relations Office for her support, and to Sandra Staffieri, who is leaving after many years of doing an amazing job of coordinating the uniform shop. We have been very pleased to welcome Mrs Marise McConaghy, our new Principal, who has joined us on the Committee.

Every year the SFA contributes about $25,000 towards school programs and purchases. This year the main item was providing funds towards the cost of library shelving in the new building. Income to support these contributions is generated through the second hand uniform shop, second hand book sales, the voluntary levy and through a number of other events.

There is an open invitation to all parents to join us at our monthly meetings and make the most of opportunities to work with the School. I look forward to continuing the wonderful working relationship the SFA has with the School community in 2016.

David Craik, President

Friends Groups

Friends of Music

The Friends of Music group have enjoyed fundraising and supporting the Music programs again in 2015 at Strathcona. A small but dedicated committee has achieved this with great teamwork.

A highlight this year was hosting an afternoon High Tea at Tay Creggan, early in Term 3. This was a new initiative for Friends
of Music. With the High Tea format we were able to fill the hall twice, seating 120 people. Tickets sold out within two weeks of going on sale and we had a waiting list of people who had missed out. Guests included past staff and students and members of the public. Entertainment was provided by chamber groups and the Chanteuses. Students assisted with serving and gained valuable waiting experience. Yet more students were involved as tour guides, showing the guests through the historic campus. Friends of Music look forward to repeating this successful event next year.

We also supported the girls preparing for the two Concerto concerts and served tea and coffee at music events. The Concerto concerts were a highlight for all involved.

“We thank the school Music staff for their continuing dedication to developing musical skills in their students.”

We were very excited to see the new grand piano installed in Featherstone Hall and were pleased to be able to use Friends of Music funds to purchase the cover for it. Funds were also provided for new instrument purchases and as contribution to the cost of buses to the School Music Camp held in July. We were also in the position to make a $500 donation to charity this year.

We thank the school Music staff for their continuing dedication to developing musical skills in their students, and especially Ms Georgina Nagy for her role in directing the Music program.

Friends of Music look forward to our continued involvement in the Music program in 2016.

Jenny Robinson, President, Friends of Music

Friends of Rowing

Strathcona Rowing offers every Strathcona girl who wishes to row an opportunity to participate in the sport. The 2014/15 Strathcona rowing season was the School’s ninth season and its most successful one to date.

Strathcona’s results at the 2015 Head of Schoolgirls’ Regatta on 13 – 15 March 2015 were the best ever, achieving:

2 Gold medals (the first time Strathcona has won gold) – Year 10 Division 3 quad sculls and Year 10 Division 2 singles;

2 Silver medals – Year 10 Division 5 quads and Seniors (Open) Division 1 quad sculls; and

2 Bronze medals – Seniors (Open) Division 3 quad sculls and Seniors (Open) Division 4 quad sculls.

Over the course of the season, Strathcona entered 111 events, reached 71 A finals and won 14 Gold, 24 Silver and 14 Bronze medals, including:

Junior State Championships:
Gold medal – Year 10 Division 3 Coxed Quad Scull
Silver medal – Year 10 Division 5 Coxed Four

Senior State Championships:
Gold medal – U17 Female Coxed Quad Scull
Gold medal – A Grade Female Coxed Eight
Silver medal – Open Schoolgirls Coxed Quad Scull Division 2
Bronze medal – Open Schoolgirls Coxed Quad Scull Division 1
Bronze medal – B Grade Female Coxed Eight

These successes are a credit to the energy and enthusiasm of the rowers and the hard work and commitment of Head Coach, Jackson Harrison, Senior Coordinator, Jordan Smith, and all the coaches.

The girls enjoyed their first ever residential rowing camp over the summer holidays and Friends of Rowing continued to support the School’s rowing program with much valued parental involvement and hard work.

Strathcona Rowing owes a great deal of its success to the substantial commitment and hard work of the Director of Rowing, Michael Cornwell, who gives generously of his time and energy to ensure the continued growth and accomplishments of the program.

Jocelyn Furlan, President, Friends of Rowing

Friends of Snowsports

The 2015 Strathcona Snowsports team consisted of ten girls (seven from Senior School and three from Junior School) and was supported by Mr Phyland, Head of Mellor House, and four Committee members. All team members participated in the 2015 Victorian Interschools Championships held at Mt Buller in August. For the first time this year, the Committee funded a
three-hour, privately tutored race training session on Mt Buller, held three weeks prior to the competitions. This was conducted by a professional race instructor from the Mt Buller Ski School who guided the team down slalom race courses to enhance their technique. At the conclusion of the race training weekend, the team celebrated with their families at the annual team dinner held on Mt Buller.

‘The Committee has focussed on the theme of health and fitness this year, exploring sponsorship opportunities with 2XU ...’

The team first came together this year at the annual team breakfast held at Café Eden and was presented with their race information by the Principal. The Committee also presented Mrs Marise McConaghy with a Snowsports blanket. A social evening was held for the team and their families to celebrate fitness at Bounce Glen Iris. The Committee has focussed on the theme of health and fitness this year, exploring sponsorship opportunities with 2XU who provided discounted thermal compression pants with the Strathcona logo to all team members. This theme will be continued into 2016, supporting the team with fitness preparation, race training and sun smart protection for ski activity.

Nadine Goldsmith, Coordinator, Friends of Snowsports

Mellor House Aerobics

In 2015, the Mellor House Aerobics team grew to comprise a competitive team of nine girls from Years 4 to 6. To support the girls in their second year of training, a dedicated coach, Kristie Loidl, was appointed under the guidance of Tiffany Kelly (Head of Mellor House Sport) to further develop skill and finesse, the technical aspects of the Aerobics program.

This commenced with an intensive holiday session in December 2014 where the girls were assigned their teams and routines. Weekly training was also extended to cover strengthening, co-ordination and team work. The program culminated in solid performances at the AeroChallenge (club-based) Competition in June and AeroSkools in August.

Jacqueline Tremewen, Convenor

Kayaking

The 2015 Kayak Club, made up of 38 squad members, took part in an eclectic range of events this year. Commencing the year with Come and Try days, the club accrued a large cohort of junior students who committed thoroughly to Semester 1 paddling at Tay Creggan on the Yarra River. The girls greatly enjoyed the friendships formed during the long, scenic paddles down the Yarra and the memorable experience of capsizing and correcting the boats! Within a few weeks, 13 girls took the challenge of entering the All Schools Championships, where our senior paddlers Audrey Tandikoikusuma and Emily Toner achieved First Place in the U18/10km marathon paddle, while Kate Leyden and Cate Oldham achieved Third Place in the U16/8km marathon paddle.

As the only other girls’ school paddling, MLC invited the Strathcona squad to join them in a few, fun training sessions to build the relationship between the two schools. Starting at Fairfield Boathouse, the Strathcona girls loved experiencing a new section of the Yarra with its peaceful surrounds and lack of river traffic. They were particularly in awe of the bats! Throughout the Winter season, the squad participated in some social events, such as their Winter Warmer night at Tay Creggan, and participated in Ivanhoe Canoe Club’s Team Pursuit where boats work as a team to get across the finish line together as fast as they can. In acknowledgement of their team spirit, Strathcona’s team entered with face paint to match their boats and paddled strongly through the nine kilometre distance together. Spectators commented favourably on the girls’ positive, vocal encouragement along the river. The Winter season closed with a Pyjama paddle to mark the Winter Solstice. Costumes livened up the misty river in the early morning and the girls enjoyed having a laugh and feasting on hot chocolate after the session.

‘Spectators commented favourably on the girls’ positive, vocal encouragement along the river.’

Building fitness over Term 3, the girls were ready and excited to get back in the boats for Summer. The team entered the Footscray Marathon as a practice for their end of year relay, coming First place in every event for their boat category. The team of nine paddlers were very excited to receive their
medals for the difficult 10 – 17 km distances they had covered. The Ben Ward event was held on the Murray River during the December holidays, where eight girls represented the school in a weekend marathon relay, covering a total of 72km. Camping out overnight, the girls enjoyed the team culture and the scenery of the Murray River, as well as the experience of marathon kayaking.

In 2016, Strathcona is reigniting the relationship with Fairfield Canoe Club to offer beginner and advanced kayak courses to new and current team members. Club membership will allow students to train outside of school sessions and extend their racing experience at higher levels. We look forward to seeing the team advance whilst retaining their passionate team culture.

Liesl Woods, Outdoor Education Coordinator

Friends of Rhythmic Gymnastics

Rhythmic Gymnastics is a graceful sport that combines dance, acrobatics and gymnastics. 2015 has been a busy and enjoyable year for our 50 rhythmic gymnasts. We have had gymnasts competing at Club Invitational Competitions, Judges Invitational Competitions, State Championships and National Championships with pleasing results.

We hosted the Strathcona Cup in June which, as well as being a major competition on the calendar for Levels 1 – 6, is our major fundraiser. We raised over $4,700 and used this money to purchase a new stereo system for the gymnasium for all to use.

The sport requires the use of five different types of apparatus - ball, hoop, clubs, rope and ribbon. With money raised, we were able to purchase new equipment. We also provided funding to a gymnast who competed at a national level and we provided funding to coaches who attend courses.

Tiffany Kelly does an amazing job of running the Strathcona Rhythmic Gymnastics Club. We wish to thank Tiffany and all the coaches for their dedication and energy.

Tracey Tremewen, Friends of Rhythmic Gymnastics

Brownlow Medal Breakfast 2015

The weather on the morning of the Brownlow Medal Breakfast did not disappoint the 360 Melburnians who began arriving at Etihad Stadium’s Medallion Brasserie at 6.30am on Monday 28 September. It was a crisp, sunny start to our 25th anniversary of the Breakfast.

We were pleased to welcome past parent and one of the original founders, David Parkin. Unfortunately, Paul Wheelon and Jeffrey Browne, the other two founders of this unique Breakfast, were unable to attend. However, Jeffrey was represented by his daughter Sarah who left Strathcona in 2001.

Strathcona’s Brownlow Medal Breakfast is widely recognised as the start to the Grand Final week celebrations and enjoys the support of the Australian Football League (AFL), which provided us with the AFL Premiership Cup for display once again. Our Master of Ceremonies was Gerard Whatley, who extracted interesting and lively discussion from the panel consisting of Wayne Campbell (AFL National Umpiring Director), Guy McKenna (ABC Radio Commentator), Peggy O’Neal (Richmond Football Club President) and Kelli Underwood (Sports Journalist). Mark Dayman from Marshall White drew some excellent auction results from the audience and the lucky ticket draw raised $5,700 which, in keeping with the true Strathcona spirit of giving back to the wider community, will be donated to Life Education Victoria. The tradition of Mike Brady rounding off the morning with ‘Up there Cazaly’ and ‘One Day in September’ is always a crowd pleaser!

The Age and Herald Sun sports journalists were in attendance and articles featured in both newspapers.

We are extremely grateful to the sponsors of this event: Budget Rent A Car, Bendigo Canterbury Community Bank, Dobsons, PMDL, WOW! Travel, Capital Finance, NAB Education & Community Business, Grant Day James, Marshall White and Adams Print. Also special thanks are given to our generous donors: Coldflow Heating & Cooling, WOW! Travel, Mark Knight, Etihad Stadium, Bilia Volvo, Channel 9, Essendon Football Club, President of the Essendonians, Brands Australia, Milco, Schwarz Family, Beauty & the Feast Catering, Swimwear Galore, Acorn Nursery and Guardian Security.

Sincere thanks are extended to the 2015 Brownlow Medal Breakfast Committee: Brian Walsh, Lisa Fekete, Bruce Tobin, Chris Phyland, Julie Zammit, Adrian Janson and Diana Little for their networking contacts and commitment to making the event such a success. Our media students, Jackie Cho, Hayley Doran and Eleanor Forwood, were wonderful volunteers helping William Spry record the event. We also thank staff members, Megan Boyd, Rhonda Burns, Robyn Dunoon, Chelsea Forster, Gabbi Goldsmith, Bernadette and Tim Hodder, Michelle and Josh Holding, Lynton Kemp, Cathie Waldron and Jo Wilson, who so generously assisted.

Elisabeth Chalmers, Community Relations
As another year in the Community Relations Office draws to a close, a tinge of sadness comes with it as I farewell my colleague for the last decade, Mrs Diana Little, while she assumes a new role one day per week as Projects Officer, located in the Archives Office. It has been a pleasure to work with Diana and draw on her knowledge of the School, its past staff and past students. I sincerely thank Diana for her contribution and support to the Community Relations Office and her never-ending, enthusiastic, cheerful assistance, from making a repair to a student’s uniform to making scones for a reunion and for rising at 4am and assisting at the Brownlow Medal Breakfast. I have gleaned much information over the years from her and my best wishes go with her in her new role.

Fundraising events in 2015 included the Dinner Dance at Fenix Events in June and the 25th Brownlow Medal Breakfast at Etihad Stadium Medallion Club in September. These occasions are not only fundraisers but also ‘friend raisers’ and provide an opportunity for the School community to come together and enjoy each other’s company.

‘I have gleaned much information over the years from her and my best wishes go with her in her new role.’

The office has been supported by committees of devoted parents and volunteers who gave of their time tirelessly to ensure each function was successful. We sincerely thank the Dinner Dance Committee consisting of Janice Grieves, Jodee Kelly and Sarah Meers and the Brownlow Medal Breakfast Committee consisting of Lisa Fekete, Bruce Tobin, Brian Walsh, Julie Zammit, Chris Pfyland, Adrian Janson and Diana Little. We also thank the staff and student volunteers who worked so tirelessly to ensure each event ran smoothly and successfully.

Special parent functions are arranged by the Community Relations Office and this year began with the Soirée held in February at the Creative and Performing Arts Centre, welcoming new families and our new Principal, Mrs Marise McConaghy and her family to the School. This event provided an opportunity for her to meet School families. An evening for Class Representatives was held in March. Just as quickly as the year began, it drew to a close in November by thanking all the many parents who had given their time to assist the School in so many ways throughout the year at the Volunteers’ Cocktail Party.

Administrative support has been provided to Friends Groups and Class Representatives, while the organisation of the 14 annual reunions for the Old Strathconians Association (OSA) has also taken place throughout the year. Attendances at the reunions has been most pleasing and the reconnection of many past students has been assisted through the presence of Strathcona on social media as well as the oNews emailed to past students every two months. The OSA committee jointly host these reunions with the Community Relations Office and it is a pleasure to work with the committee.

I look forward in 2016 to continuing to assist the School community and getting to know our new families.

Elisabeth Chalmers, Community Relations
The private school sector continues to be very competitive, with parents wishing to ensure that their children have the best schooling experience, the best opportunities and the best education outcomes. Strathcona continues to respond strongly with innovative marketing, particularly now with online campaigns.

Throughout 2015, eight school tours were conducted giving prospective families the opportunity to visit the Early Learning Centre (ELC), Junior Campus, Year 9 Tay Creggan Campus and Senior Campus. The six Saturday morning tours proved to be extremely popular and provided families with the chance to visit the School and meet staff and students. The opening of the new Contemporary Learning Centre in Term 2 and the innovative Year 10 Centre in Term 3 have provided wonderful new resources for our students and have been extremely well received by current and future families.

Following Saturday morning tours at Canterbury, Tay Creggan was opened for tours and staff encouraged families to visit and experience the Year 9 Campus, many for the first time.

Two open mornings were conducted mid-week in May and July with excellent attendance. These open mornings provide an important opportunity for families to see Strathcona at work and experience the strong sense of community amongst the staff and students.

‘These open mornings provide an important opportunity for families to see Strathcona at work.’

Enrolments at Strathcona continue to be strong – reflecting the School’s reputation in its many activities, with a special emphasis on consistently outstanding Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) results. Enrolments are the life of any school and while Strathcona continues to have strong numbers it can be assured of a very bright and 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.

Marketing within the private school community continues to be very competitive; hence the marketing of Strathcona continues to be a high priority. Advertisements were placed in four local newspapers, including the Melbourne Weekly Magazine and other selected publications and guides. A strong online campaign was also introduced in 2015, increasing Strathcona's presence in this quickly growing and important medium.

Michelle Newell, Online Communications and Publications Manager, has been a wonderful addition to my Department, joining Strathcona in December 2014. Through Michelle’s work, Strathcona’s digital platforms have grown exponentially this year. Strathcona now has two very active Facebook accounts (for the School and the OSA), as well as Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn. In an effort to streamline communication for parents who have children of different ages in the school, our eNews was consolidated into one weekly feature covering five areas this year: Whole School; Main School (Years 7 to 8 and 10 to 12); Tay Creggan (Year 9); Junior School (Prep to Year 6); and the ELC. We also established Eventbrite as the ticketing site of choice for our events this year.

We continue to showcase Strathcona, our teachers and – most importantly – our students and their achievements. We have an excellent success rate with articles being published in the local papers and online and I thank Cathy Gowdie, our Public Relations consultant, for working with our staff and students in promoting Strathcona.

Joanne Wilson, Director of Enrolments and Marketing
Administration and Planning: From little things big things grow

These were the words that greeted the Main School staff and students every day as we walked from one area of the school to another at the beginning of this year. These words were painted along with sketches of girls in the Strathcona blue gingham dress on the barricade that separated us from the building site, were the Contemporary Learning Centre was erected. There was much excitement when we all returned to school in January as the building mostly hidden behind the barricade at the end of 2014 was literally rising and taking shape before our eyes.

Every day brought a new excitement as more was built. The Mellor House girls and Early Learning Centre (ELC) girls and boys could often be seen walking to a high vantage point on another building to see what was happening. What had seemed so far away was becoming a reality.

The area on the playing fields where the demountable classrooms were situated had affectionately become known as ‘The Village Green’. It is a compliment to the relationship and positive outlook between the girls and staff that made the transition to the five terms of classes in ‘The Village Green’ so seamless. The Years 7 and 8 girls in particular and staff simply enjoyed the new learning environment.

Day 1, Term 2 - 2015 … as the students entered the School, the landscape had changed! The demountable classrooms had gone, ‘The Village Green’ was no more. Instead the stunning Contemporary Learning Centre was ready. Staff and girls walked from area to area marvelling at the new Knowledge Exchange Centre, the Middle School area and the ‘out of this world’ science facilities. Just as it had with ‘The Village Green’, learning commenced seamlessly in this wonderful new environment.

As we were enjoying the new learning opportunities these facilities afforded, quickly and almost unnoticed the old library was being refurbished as a new centre for the Year 10 girls. So, at the beginning of Term 3 another wonderful opportunity awaited as the Year 10 Centre was opened.

The final and most welcomed return was the refurbishment of the Lyall Chapel. Through necessity, we had not been able to use it throughout the extensive building programs. At last we had reclaimed our spiritual centre and we once again claimed it as a place of worship, prayer and comfort.

‘Every day brought a new excitement as more was built.’

It is amazing at this time to recollect these major events that have had such an impact on the landscape and fabric of our School. Yet, in many ways, everything is still unchanged – the laughter, the care and support, the faith and hope, the striving for excellence – these hallmarks that are beacons for Strathcona remain unchanged in 2015 as I am sure they will in the years to come.

Guiding all these developments and refurbishments has been the strategic plan. We are committed to excellence and providing the best programs for the girls in all areas and it has been personally very gratifying to do this with a wonderful team of staff, including the Dean of Studies, the Dean of Students, Year Coordinators and the School Psychologist.
The School’s policies have been reviewed and amended as necessary, and particular attention has been given to the Privacy Policy, including new directives from the Government. A major focus this year has been the risk assessment involved with excursions, exchanges and overseas tours. We were audited by the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority and are confident in the policies and practices that are in place for the management of the School.

2015 has seen the School led by a very able group of Year 12 girls and it is always a highlight for our Principal, Mrs Marise McConaghy, and myself to meet with the Captains weekly and to share weekly lunches with girls from the year level.

In closing, I would like to thank Mrs Marise McConaghy for her inspirational leadership this year as she commenced her Principalship with us. It has been a joy to work with her and many more ‘big things will grow’ as she continues to inspire, guide and lead Strathcona.

Jenni Farmilo, Deputy Principal

Some 2015 Highlights

The Contemporary Learning Centre project commenced in December 2013 and concluded with its opening to students in Term 2, with the official opening in July 2015. The refurbished Year 10 Centre was completed and occupied in Term 3. Both spaces have been welcomed and actively used by students and teachers. This project is testimony to the hard work of the Executive, Board, Property and Project teams. Mr Adrian Ammerlaan and the Grounds and Maintenance team worked hard to ensure disruptions were kept to a minimum and the management of handovers from construction site to management phase were as smooth as possible.

The IT team continue developing innovative business solutions and platforms for the School and this year Strathcona introduced CareMonkey to assist in the online management of student details by parents. We hope to expand this application to reduce paper communications across various links with parents, as well as look to other online applications in our day-to-day dealings with the School community. The development of improved online reporting is another initiative further improved and refined with year-end reports for 2015. Thank you to Mr David Young and the IT team for all their endeavours and for their support this past year. We look forward to developing and delivering on key information, communications and technology strategic initiatives over 2016.

‘The development of improved online reporting is another initiative further improved and refined with year-end reports for 2015.’

A special thanks to Mr Mark Bremner who retires at the end of the year after ten years as Accountant at Strathcona. His loyalty and commitment to the school over these years is recognised and we wish him all the best in the next phase of his life.

The Finance team will need to undergo some changes as part of Mark’s leaving, however the year cannot close without recognition of the commitment and hard work of Mrs Ernesta Ramsay who continues to be an integral member of the finance team as Assistant Accountant.

There are so many other administrative and ancillary service staff and teams that work behind the scenes and are intrinsic to the effective and smooth management of the School – whether it be to deliver canteen services to students and staff, manage after-hours property bookings or provide support to managers and executives across the school.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Strathcona community for welcoming me to the School and continuing to be patient as I learn. I look forward to embracing the opportunities and managing the challenges of 2016.

Julie Zammit, Chief Financial Officer

Business Administration

Business Office

The commitment and dedication of all the Business Office teams, including Finance, Facility Management, Information Technology, Canteen and General Administration functions, enable Strathcona to deliver various critical projects successfully and maintain key operational and support functions throughout the year.

Mailys Pannier and Keely Kontaxis in front of the hoarding around the building site, at the start of the works.
Curriculum Development

One of the challenges in curriculum planning is the tension between breaking knowledge and skills up into discrete disciplines and building links between different areas of knowledge. There are so many specialisations that have developed and people who passionately champion each one. How do schools manage this? It is sometimes referred to as the ‘crowded curriculum’ and includes traditional and new academic disciplines, life skills, learning skills, technological skills and co-curricular participation.

The Australian Curriculum helps us to ensure that the school program is not dominated by any person’s particular passions. It divides the mandated curriculum into eight learning areas: English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Arts, Technologies, Health and Physical Education and Languages. We have freedom to do more and to cover the content of these learning areas as we like. Ensuring every student achieves positive learning in all of these areas is the core business of a school. As leading education researcher John Hattie says, ‘All students deserve at least a year’s progress for a year’s input, no matter where they start’.

One of the challenges in curriculum is the teaching of Languages. Australia has a poor record of achieving bilingualism, despite decades of governments setting goals. Strathcona has a strong languages program but we feel that we could do better. We have begun an exploration into our delivery of the Languages curriculum, in particular the format of language learning in Mellor House and how to cater for the vast range of student language experience and interest as girls enter the Senior School.

The use of new technologies continues to develop and, to follow on from our current one-to-one program in Mellor House, we are including Year 7 and 8 students in our iPad program for 2016. Years 7 to 9 will be required to have their own iPads while students in Years 10 to 12 will be able to ‘bring their own device’, be it phone, tablet or laptop, and connect to the School network. This ensures that our students are working with the latest tools for learning, accessing information and presenting and processing their work.

Under the influence of our visiting scholars, Professor Erica McWilliam and Professor Peter Taylor, teachers at Strathcona have gained a heightened awareness of ensuring that the learning intention of each lesson and task is clear.

... teachers at Strathcona have gained a heightened awareness of ensuring that the learning intention of each lesson and task is clear ...

Another development in 2015 has been the move to publishing semester reports online and making grades and marks available online to parents throughout the year.

Professional Learning

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) sets the standards required of teachers under the headings Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice and Professional Engagement. The seven standards are: know students and how they learn; know the content and how to teach it; plan for and implement effective teaching and learning; create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments; assess, provide feedback and report on student learning; engage in professional learning; and engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community.

As part of registration, teachers are required to engage in a minimum of twenty hours per year of professional learning to address these standards. This takes many forms, including guest speakers at Strathcona. This year the visiting scholars, Professor Erica McWilliam and Professor Peter Taylor from the Queensland University of Technology, challenged us on our classroom practice. To begin the year, they spoke to the whole staff on the theme ‘21st Century Learning: What’s New’. They spoke of the problems of a ‘praise-dependent’ generation and the need for praise to be attached to genuine achievement. They focused our attention as teachers on ensuring that the learning intention of lessons and tasks was clear. They worked with the staff to set clear goals for the year.

They returned in April to work with groups of staff to help them move ahead with their goals. On one evening at this time, they gave a parent seminar on ‘Praise dependent or powerful: optimising our children’s futures.’ At the end of Term 2 we had a third interaction with them at Strathcona, including a day of master classes where they worked with small groups of teachers to develop their thinking around centring their lessons on learners and learning.

We also had trainers come in to update staff in Evacuations, Management of Anaphylaxis, Asthma, First Aid and Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation.
Teaching also involves a lot of professional reading, keeping up-to-date with our subject areas and developments in pedagogy. As part of our Professional Standards Scheme, our teachers make reference to a number of influential texts, including ‘Teach Like a Champion’ by Doug Lemov, ‘The Art and Science of Teaching’ by Robert Marzano and ‘Visible Learning’ by Ron Ritchhart, among others. The Professional Standards Scheme involves teachers setting goals and working in trios. The members of the trios visit each other's lessons and share their observations via a protocol called the ‘ladder of feedback’. We also survey our students and analyse samples of their work to inform our teaching. The follow-up conversations are a rich time of sharing practice and challenges. Staff members have also found that sharing practice through a dedicated Twitter hashtag has been very rewarding.

'We also survey our students and analyse samples of their work to inform our teaching.'

Staff engaged in over 120 different formal professional learning events this year. Events of more general interest included a number of sessions on positive education, a movement that has grown out of Martin Seligman's positive psychology initiative. We also had several staff involved in leadership training and conferences including: Ross Phillips and Terri Oprean engaging in a ten month, partially funded program for school leaders with the Australian Institute of Management; Tracy Herft and Simone Boland at the Australian Council of Educational Leaders (ACEL) conference in Sydney; and Melissa King, Mark Hamilton and Tracy Herft at the Aspiring Leaders Conference at Bond University on the Gold Coast.

A number of staff, including Jennifer Farmilo, Kimberley Moor, Julie Plymin, Edwina Stawell, Margaret Bowden and Liesl Woods, have participated in postgraduate studies in 2015.

The following teachers are external assessors for the VCE, greatly adding to the knowledge of Strathcona staff of the fine details that lead to the success of our senior students:

- Anthea Andrews (Biology)
- Katherine Harrington (Further Mathematics)
- Erin Horsley (Art)
- Helen Jackson (Music Performance and Music Investigation)
- Diana Li (IB Chinese)
- Kimberley Moor (Visual Communication and Design)
- Terri Oprean (Health and Human Development)
- Julie Plymin (Chemistry)
- Sarah Quin (Biology)
- Marisa Rowlands (Drama and Theatre Studies State Reviewer)
- Vivian Simoncini (Italian)
- Mary Thornhill (English)
- Karen Whelan (Psychology)
- Geoff Wriedt (Further Mathematics)
The teachers at Strathcona have a high level of professional engagement.

Some are also engaged in providing VCE revision lectures, including Anthea Andrews and Geoff Wriedt, while others are involved in textbook writing, including Ross Phillips and Charlotte Forwood. Many are involved in networks with teachers in similar positions in other schools and some have presented at conferences and seminars, including Charlotte Forwood at City University, London, the National Convention Centre, Canberra and Independent Schools Victoria and Ross Phillips for the Australian College of Educators. Gabby Goldsmith taught for a term at Forest Hills Boys College in South East London.

The teachers at Strathcona have a high level of professional engagement.

NAPLAN

Our students continue to perform exceptionally well in the National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) tests with our average score being about two years ahead of the average student score in the state. The data also reinforces our focus on differentiation as it details the levels at which students are operating, supporting the information gleaned by the teachers in their day-to-day work with the students. We are most interested in the growth of our students from test to test, which on average is very strong. However, the data can also highlight to us students who perhaps could be doing 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 English and Mathematics that these skills are learnt and reinforced. The graphs to the right show the results of Strathcona this year compared with the rest of the State. In eleven of the twenty tests Strathcona students scored better than 75% of students in the State and on all tests well over 50% of our students performed better than 50% of students in the State.

Ross Phillips, Dean of Studies
Pastoral Care

Maintaining the wellbeing of our students is a primary concern at Strathcona. This is developed and encouraged within a climate where students and staff respect the rights and values of others. Strathcona is proud of its reputation as a ‘caring and nurturing school’, and Pastoral Care at Strathcona is very much a team approach, with serious layers of support for the girls. All staff support and encourage every student to grow and develop in all areas of life – physical, social, intellectual, emotional and spiritual – to become a caring and responsible member of the community.

Our team of coordinators consists of some staff taking on the role for the first time this year, but they have managed the challenge superbly. Mary Thornhill at Year 11 and David Bradshaw at Year 12 have moved into their respective roles comfortably. Experienced staff at other year levels have also continued to lead their teams and support the girls: Melissa King at Year 10, Michelle Holding at Year 7 and Miranda Gazis at Year 8. Julie Plymin has changed roles this year, moving from Year 11 Coordinator to Head of Tay Creggan, and she has made some significant changes and innovations to the programs as well as the day-to-day running of Tay Creggan. The Year 9 girls, under the close guidance of Julie Plymin, have had a memorable year at Tay Creggan.

Positive Education, which encompasses the mental health and wellbeing of students and staff, is supported via evidence-based strategies such as mindfulness, developing character strengths, supporting resilient thinking and cultivating hope and gratitude. The link of mindfulness and gratitude with well-being and happiness has been shown through much research to lead to enhanced educational outcomes. As part of their professional learning this year, our Year 7, 8 and 10 Coordinators have been involved in the Boroondara Positive Education Project, designed to support schools to embed the philosophy and practice of positive education across their school communities. It has provided advanced training in specific elements of positive education and mindfulness.

‘The field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives ...’

They have conducted a Mindfulness Research project (survey and workshops) at Year 7, 8 and 10, run by Rebecca Pallozzi, Provisional Psychologist and Doctor of Clinical Psychology Candidate, and attended the Positive Psychology Conference. From this, the creation of a What Went Well board was undertaken in the staffroom and a supporting #whatwentwell for staff Twitter users was developed through the Strathcona Professional Learning Network. They have had the Year 7s, 8s and 10s write gratitude letters at different stages of the year with much success and have utilised a variety of Apps such as Budhify and Smiling Minds at assemblies and Forum times for guided moments of mindfulness. These sessions have been complemented with mindfulness colouring-in for interested students.

We are planning on doing whole school staff training early next year and incorporating positive education skills into our Pastoral Program across the School. Positive Education is the scientific study of the strengths that enable individuals and communities to thrive. The field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, to cultivate what is best within themselves and to enhance their experiences of love, work and play. This can only benefit our staff and students.

‘All staff support and encourage every student to grow and develop in all areas of life ...’

We are mindful that it is important that parents also keep abreast of the issues their daughters are facing as they grow and develop. They are encouraged to be involved as much as possible in their daughter’s school life, maintaining two-way communications with the School. We began the year with parents, teachers and a panel of experts gathering in Featherstone Hall to launch ‘Drugs 101’, an educational parent guide that speaks frankly about drug and alcohol use among teenagers. The evening was a great way to bring our community together to ‘start a conversation’ around the issue of alcohol and drugs amongst our young people. We were also privileged to have Paul Dillon, Education Consultant from DARTA (Drug and Alcohol Research and Training), present at a Parent Evening and to speak with the Year 10s and 11s, whilst spending time reflecting with some of our staff on what constitutes best practice in the delivery of drug and alcohol education to young people. These sessions helped to affirm the messages that we are giving in our Pastoral programs.

We have also continued to provide the opportunity for parents to attend seminars on relevant topics. This year these have included: Resilience; Help your daughter have a good relationship with food, eating and her body; How best to protect your daughter on the Internet; and Sleep - a vital ingredient in academic success and wellbeing. These evenings have been well attended and appreciated by our parent community.

I would like to congratulate all the Year Level Coordinators and other members of the Pastoral Team who have worked with dedication to create an environment which engenders curiosity, enthusiasm, passion and a sense of community.

Terri Oprean, Dean of Students
Chaplaincy and Christian Education

The Strathcona approach to Chaplaincy follows a rich tradition, to offer wholeheartedly to our school family a Christian commitment to pastoral care during times of need, as well as to share in the joy of daily accomplishments. As School Chaplains, Bronwyn and I always find it a privilege to pray and care for our students and staff and to share in their joy.

The recently refurbished Chapel is instrumental in providing within a busy education setting a peaceful sanctuary. In the Strathcona school family, it is valued immensely for worship, prayer and reflection. During Term 4, the girls have appreciated the opportunity to worship in such a serene setting and thoughtfully meditate whilst looking at the beautiful and cherished stained glassed window. At appropriate times the altar is used respectfully as a shrine for personal and community prayer and reflection.

Christian Education classes have provided girls with a solid Christian foundation and developed further their appreciation of godly virtues. From a young age, girls have grown in their understanding of biblical knowledge and, with inquiry and experiential learning opportunities, they have been able to question and grow in their spiritual journey.

During the middle years of Christian Education there is a steady focus on Old Testament narrative stories and the life and teaching of Jesus. Girls also investigate Christian missions and charity work and grow in their understanding of the Baptist evangelical movement.

The Building Bridges program successfully enabled Year 10 participants to explore other faith traditions, such as Judaism, Islam and Catholicism. In the extra-curricular visits to other faith-based schools, our girls were able to learn about these faiths and to make wholesome friendship with students from other traditions. It was pleasing for the Building Bridges students to share with their peers their interfaith experiences.

Ethics and Values Education has once again provided an integrated approach to learning, by offering a curriculum to investigate issues that are often featured in other key subject areas and the media. The girls have valued the opportunity to discuss contemporary ethical issues and listen to an array of guest speakers.

As Chaplains we are very thankful to several groups and individuals who have supported the Chaplaincy and Christian Education program, particularly the Prayer and Care Team and the Parents Association, led by Carolyn Turner, for organising the gift of meals to school families in times of need. We must also acknowledge the commitment of the various Christian Education Faculty staff: Ms Kerry Wilson, Mrs Carolyn Holly and Mrs Cathy Waldron. A very special word of appreciation is also extended to Alisha McGill who was instrumental in the design and preparation of the Chapel refurbishment.

Rhonda Burns, Head of Christian Education/Chaplain

Mellor House

In Christian Education at Mellor House, we have been looking at an overview of Jesus’ life and teachings. We have been reading the gospel of Mark and looking at the questions raised by those looking on as Jesus taught, healed and ministered on this Earth. As we look at other people’s responses to Jesus, we have been asking ourselves: ‘What is my response to Jesus?’; ‘What would it be like if I was in that story?’; ‘How would I respond?’; ‘What questions would I like answers to?’ We looked specifically at the Easter Story, Jesus’ death and resurrection and the responses to these events, both in biblical times and today.

‘Thank you, Mellor House girls, for being so generous and making a difference in our world.’

In Semester 2, we have been attempting to step into the shoes of poor children around the world, imagining what it would be like to live in an impoverished country. This has also highlighted the many things we can be grateful for, especially living in Australia. In response, students created their own ‘Gratitude Journal’. Students also participated in a ‘Lunch order to fight hunger’, but it was not their usual lunch order; it was half a cup of rice, raising money to support World Vision’s 40 Hour Famine. Our girls raised $1,107, which was a great effort. World Vision have advised that the money raised will be able to feed 221 people for two weeks! Thank you, Mellor House girls, for being so generous and making a difference in our world.
In Term 4 we have celebrated and explored the biblical account of Christmas. We have looked at the characters within the Christmas story, the part they played and how their lives may have changed due to their encounter with Jesus.

It has been another great year at Mellor House.

Bronwyn Arnott, Mellor House Christian Education

Liberal Studies

The Year 12 Liberal Studies program in 2015 involved a one-period-per-week presentation with a variety of speakers, focusing on the following themes:

- resilience, overcoming adversity and development of confidence;
- study skills and examination preparation;
- community service and 'citizenship';
- spiritual wellbeing; and
- preparation for life after Strathcona.

A presentation in Term 1 by the inspirational Emma Gee, a former Strathcona student, left the biggest impression on our girls. Emma spoke about how her life changed dramatically when, at the age of 24, she suffered a stroke. Emma challenged the Year 12s to embrace the challenges that they may face in life and not to shy away from obstacles in their final year - be they academic, social or physical. Other sessions included: former student Megan White explaining how she uses artwork in counselling refugees and asylum seekers; a workshop on car maintenance run by Paul Robinson; a class on self-defence conducted by Howard Kimber; Michael Adeney’s explanation of the importance of sleep; and presentations by past students on adapting to university life and strategies for tackling their final examinations.

David Bradshaw, Year 12 Coordinator

VCE/VET

The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) results that Strathcona achieved for 2014 were excellent and ranked the School as twentieth in the state. An overview of our VCE results shows 5.5% of ATARS were over 99, 30.8% were over 95 and 50.5% of ATARS were over 90. The median ATAR was 89.6%. Eight of our girls achieved a perfect score of 50, with five being achieved in English and one each in French, Geography and History: Revolutions.

Vicki Treidel, VCE Coordinator

Mellor House

The 2015 School Year has provided many reasons for recognition and celebration.

One of the most popular young ones in the school this year was Zinnia, the trainee Guide Dog puppy. Zinnia was based in the Advanced Learning Department under the care of
Mrs Carolyn King. Students and adults enjoyed engaging with Zinnia and Zinnia certainly was well socialised throughout her immersion in a busy school setting.

The Early Learning Centre (ELC) continued to be a warm, vibrant and welcoming Centre, providing the children with exciting opportunities to learn. Staff carefully and expertly guided their students through social and academic experiences, working closely with parents during the process. A number of special events were inclusive of families so that community ties were strengthened. I acknowledge the good work of ELC Coordinator, Heather Henson, and all ELC staff for their dedication and efforts this year.

The focus of the primary school garden upgrade moved to the front of the School this year. New plantings and a beautiful water feature create an impact on arrival. The Prep courtyard has been rejuvenated with grass, plantings and seating and is now a much more usable, attractive and comfortable space for learning and play. I thank Mrs Pauline Eccleston for her hard work and creative vision with these projects.

This year our primary school became a 1:1 iPad school across all year levels. This and the availability of banks of laptop computers made us a technology rich school. Teachers moderated the use of these devices with more traditional technologies such as pen and paper so that students learn, create and develop skills in a range of ways, embracing the best of traditional and emerging methods of learning.

Our students made the most of an expanded list of opportunities to engage in sports and physical activities. Representative sports were offered more frequently and to younger girls. Bicycle Education was taught to Year 4 students for the first time, which coincided with the second Tour de Strathy. The Tour, this year, included a parents’ weekend ride.

The academic program was complemented by a range of educational and culturally rich experiences in and out of the classroom. Excursions to the National Gallery of Victoria for every year level, including the ELC, develop interest and awareness of a thriving visual arts scene. Similarly, excursions and incursions across all areas of the curriculum provided children with opportunities to engage with passionate people and diverse cultural experiences which have broadened their view of the world. Our children engaged with musicians, actors, artists, scientists, sports professionals, zoologists, academics, cooks, politicians, medical experts and historians.

The Mellor House community has generously supported areas of need through financial and practical means. Goods were donated for charitable organisations, books and stationery supplies were collected for overseas schools, funds were raised for Red Cross and Brain Cancer Research and ongoing support was given to our sponsored children overseas. Our Social Service Captains, Rebekah Rome and Emily Palit, are thanked for coordinating many of these initiatives.

Student leadership within the School was very apparent, with older girls engaged in formal and informal activities. All Year 6 girls led by example and set the tone for the rest of the student body, whether they held formal leadership positions or not. Our School Captains, Anjelica Dimitriou and Chloe Tremewen were outstanding in their roles, being fully prepared to take on all that was asked of them and using their

Past student Megan White spoke to the Year 12’s about her work using artwork to counsel refugees and asylum seekers.
initiative whenever required. Our Year 5 girls participated in formal ‘leadership’ sessions towards the end of year to help prepare them for the responsibilities ahead in 2016.

The Advanced Learning Department, working with all teachers, helped target learning experiences appropriate for students at every stage of learning. Students were extended and supported in their area of need. Support was provided in the classroom and through small group and individual intervention. Catering for individual needs is very much a team effort and the teaching and support staff were impressive in their approach to the responsibility.

Although academic and co-curricular success was evident in all areas, our staff focus was directed towards student learning, rather than student achievement. Following on from workshops with consultants Erica McWilliam and Peter Taylor, teacher awareness was placed on learning growth and development, not just on achievement. This focus will help drive curriculum planning and learning experiences for all children.

In Music, we collaborated with other schools to help motivate and extend our young musicians. The extension choir, Mellor House Singers, worked with Ruyton’s choir and our orchestra collaborated with Scotch College. In both cases, our girls appreciated the experience of seeing how others approach the learning and performance of music and enjoyed performing together.

At the end of this year, Mrs Isabelle Marsh will retire from her classroom teaching role at Strathcona. Mrs Judith Park has also formally resigned from her teaching position in the Early Learning Centre. Both of these teachers have made meaningful and significant contributions to the lives of our children and I thank them for their service to the School and wish them all the best.

There are many people responsible for this successful year in Mellor House. The best results are always achieved when all parties work well together with common goals. I have greatly appreciated working closely with Mr Geoff Little, Deputy Head of Mellor House. Students, parents and staff are also thanked for their support, hard work and positive approach to schooling. Together, we have enriched the lives of many and are setting our students up for active and meaningful engagement in their world, now and into the future.

Christopher Phyland, Head of Mellor House

Tay Creggan

Staff and students at Tay Creggan have throughout the year worked to reflect the school’s motto – fortiter, fideliter, feliciter. They have produced outstanding results across a range of activities: academic, sporting, cultural, personal and professional. 2015 included several initiatives that were a reflection of our ongoing commitment to education at the highest level.

The I-Learning program this year offered the girls the opportunity to develop greater awareness of learning beyond the classroom. This unique program encouraged greater responsibility for independent learning and reflection, developed teamwork strategies, resilience, a sense of belonging and an increased awareness of diversity within our community. I-Learning is based on an inquiry learning model that actively engages the girls in addressing the question: What does it mean to be a Melburnian? They explored an issue or problem while working productively in a group environment. This learning process – seeking understanding through questions generated from interests, curiosities and the perspectives and experiences of the learners – had productive outcomes in broadening their knowledge and experiences of the City of Melbourne. Our unique location allowed the I-Learning program to embrace the CBD as part of the students’ learning. Numerous educational stimuli were provided for the girls and these included: guided tours, musical performance, Eureka Skydeck, laneways, street art, a structured walk we call the ‘Hoddle Waddle’, guest speakers and The Race Around Melbourne. The product of their work was displayed on the evening of 11 November at the I-Learning Expo.

‘On the expo night, we led our parents through Tay Creggan to show them all of our I-Learning experiences from start to end. We had photos, Melbourne iMovies, other past projects and many other fun things on display for our parents to see. I-Learning was a really enjoyable experience and all the Year 9s learnt a lot about Melbourne during the experience.’

Natasha, (Year 9)

‘Numerous educational stimuli were provided for the girls …’

The Pastoral Care Program, leadership opportunities, together with the School’s co-curricular program played
an important role in developing the wellbeing of our Year 9 students. The program involved weekly sessions covering a wide variety of topics and issues. The sessions included Self Defence classes, Sex Ed, Cyber Safety with Project Rockit, the Resilience Project, Making the Link, Headspace and a variety of other guest speakers.

The School House system played a significant role in the Pastoral Care of students. The girls’ form groups were organised in House groups and this provided them with the opportunity to work together within their Houses to organise Social Service activities. The girls ran ‘Food Frenzy’ stalls on Fridays and organised a movie showing and a morning tea for the whole year level.

Within their Houses the students were provided with an array of opportunities to showcase their talents in Performing Arts, Dance, lunchtime sports and Music. These groupings enabled them to work together to foster a healthy and strong team spirit and to develop positive relationships with the other members of their House, nowhere more evident than in the House Dance Drama.

‘... thank you ... to the wonderful Year 9 girls who make every day at work a delight and who made my first year as Head of Tay Creggan a joyous one.’

I would like to congratulate all the participants in the House Dance and Drama Festival. House Drama Day was the culmination of a great deal of fun and work by the students. The theme of their work was ‘The greater the obstacle, the more glory in overcoming it.’ (Moliere). The Year 9 girls had to write scripts after just finishing their examinations and then conduct two and a half days of rehearsals to produce the final product and the performance. The girls performed during the day in Houses for each other and that evening parents also had a chance to see their daughter’s production. Drama Day is a wonderful celebration of House spirit and the creativity and ingenuity of the students, and it was pleasing that many parents were able to share this exciting event.

2015 saw us establishing a relationship with Andrew Kelly, the Yarra Riverkeeper. Andrew came to speak to the girls about the history of the Yarra River and its relevance in the lives of Melburnians. A grant was provided that enabled the employment of a specialist contractor to undertake weed control and re-vegetation. Melbourne Water provided the grant to start targeting weedy herbaceous creepers (such as ivy) across the frontage and to undertake a first stage of woody weed removal and re-vegetation behind the boat shed area. The girls were involved in the planting of 100 indigenous plants as we began the process of the reestablishment of the riverbank.

The relationship with the Yarra River was also strengthened during the Camp to Campus experience. The girls began their journey at the top of Mt Donna Buang and had to make their way back to Tay Creggan Campus. Over the course of seven days, the girls hiked, rode bikes and canoed their way back to TC. This challenging experience provided the girls with the opportunity to develop leadership qualities and personal resilience and to forge positive relationships with other members of their group. The joyous cheers as they rode into campus demonstrated their relief that they had got to the end in one piece but were also a celebration of sharing the success with their friends.

With the backdrop of the Abbotsford Convent, Tuesday, October 27 saw a large number of Year 9 girls and boys from Camberwell Grammar and Scotch College celebrating the end of their ballroom dancing classes. Fuelled by delicious sandwiches and home-made lemonade, the girls and boys dipped, turned and glided across the floor as they presented all the dances they had mastered over the previous five weeks.

I would like to thank everyone associated with Tay Creggan for their hard work and commitment to ensuring that our students not only enjoy their education but are able to fulfil their potential. As the end of year looms, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Tay Creggan staff for their care and support of all of our students. To all of the teachers, thank you for your dedicated, professional and engaging commitment to the students of Tay Creggan. To the Administration and Maintenance Staff, thank you for your hard work and support of all that we do. I thank all of the parents for your trust and engagement. Most importantly, thank you to the wonderful Year 9 girls who make every day at work a delight and who made my first year as Head of Tay Creggan a joyous one.

Julie Plymin, Head of Tay Creggan
As I come to write my last Annual Report for Presentation Night, after some 26 years at Strathcona and 19 years as the Director of Information Services, it is timely to reflect upon the journey that our Libraries have taken over that time.

“Our three libraries now occupy light, bright attractive venues with diverse, comfortable spaces, furniture and furnishings …”

When I first began as the head of the three libraries at Strathcona, the Junior School library was in its cosy upstairs room of what is now old Mellor House; the Year 9 Library occupied two pleasantly lit, yet rather shabby classrooms in the as yet unrenovated back wing of Tay Creggan; and the Senior Library at Main School was housed on the first floor above what is now the Senior Centre, where not even an attractive light well could dispel the gloom of dark ceiling beams and heavy furniture. The process of digitising the catalogue and conducting loans and returns by computer, using a Library Management System that was at best ‘simple’, had not long started and we had begun our first tentative steps towards using CD Rom, which ran on a single-user, slow and cumbersome player. Tay Creggan and Mellor House were not yet part of the network, with librarians still typing catalogue cards and effecting manual stocktakes. Collections were print dominated, the audio-visual section was still made up almost entirely of VHS tapes and staff were starting to attend Professional Development sessions on something called the World Wide Web, for which the de rigueur search engine was Alta Vista.

How things have changed!

Our three libraries now occupy light, bright attractive venues with diverse, comfortable spaces, furniture and furnishings to invite the social and academic collaborations that stimulate creativity and enhance learning. The move this year into the superb Wheelton Knowledge Exchange was the fulfilment of many years of planning to create a twenty-first century space for all members of the Strathcona community. The libraries are linked across the wireless network, with their databases searchable at any campus and from home 24/7. So too, an extensive suite of online encyclopedia, databases and indexes available to multiple, simultaneous users provides an alternative to hard copy, while the Internet, with its interactive, multimodal websites, digital video streaming and opportunities to participate in all kinds of online social media communities, means a virtual library is at our fingertips. ‘Google’ has become a verb in our daily lexicon and CD Rom, video and even DVD have been consigned to history. eBooks – both fiction and non-fiction – which can be read from anywhere at any time via any device with access to the internet, are an increasingly dominant part of our collection and will continue to grow. Inevitably, such change generates new teaching challenges. Guidance in digital citizenship and developing the critical information literacy skills needed to navigate and evaluate the online world are current foci for our teacher librarians. The most effective learning Apps for iPads and iPhones and the new frontier of virtual reality in the classroom represent the latest areas in staff Professional Learning.

‘The old order changeth, yielding place to new.’ – Alfred, Lord Tennyson.
‘The end of 2015 sees Strathcona’s three libraries well resourced, ably staffed and strategically positioned ...’

Throughout these years of rapid and wide-reaching change, Strathcona’s principals – Mr Ken Lyall, Mrs Ruth Bunyan, Mrs Helen Hughes and now Mrs Marise McConaghy – have each been committed to the role and growth of our libraries, and I thank them for their steadfast support and readiness to ensure our information centres are at the forefront of learning in the School. I also extend my deepest thanks to the members of the Library team, whose wholehearted dedication to furthering students’ information skills and to building a love of literature and reading has been essential to the achievement of our Departmental goals. To the many Year 12 students who have served as library Student Leaders over the years, including Jacinta Zhu from 2015; to our volunteer ‘covering ladies’ – Mrs Betty Dixon, Mrs Pat Ruglen and Mrs Laurice Cross; to the Mellor House team – Mrs Penny Joyce and Mrs Mishelle Spasov; to our Tay Creggan assistant – Mrs Bronwyn Breuer; to our technicians, past and present – Ms Chris Torode, Mrs Sue King and Ms Amanda McAuliffe; to our audio-visual librarian – Mr Nick van Ree; and to our full time librarian – Mrs Robyn Dunoon; to this enthusiastic and hardworking group much is owed. The end of 2015 sees Strathcona’s three libraries well resourced, ably staffed and strategically positioned to meet the challenges of learning in the twenty-first century. It has been a privilege to serve Strathcona in this important role and I wish my successor and the School every success in the stimulating times that lie ahead.

Mary Hall, Director of Information Services

Information Technology Services

We are all now surrounded by and immersed in the digital era, and subsequently there have been many IT changes occurring at Strathcona.

At the end of last year parents were alerted to a new system for managing medical and emergency contact details – CareMonkey. Strathcona understands that parents are constantly being asked to provide the same details over and over again, which can become quite laborious. With the introduction of CareMonkey, parents need only provide this information once and can ‘share’ the same information with any number of other organisations using the same system.

Providing this information to Strathcona is paramount to our Duty of Care responsibilities. Strathcona staff can access student profiles either at School or away on an excursion. Therefore, they always have the most current information available to them – no more paper copies which can get lost or are out of date. This has provided a significant time saver both for parents and Strathcona.

The School has now extended the functionality of CareMonkey to include eForms where permissions for excursions or other activities are requested. These are sent directly to parents and can be completed electronically via a desktop, notebook or smart phone. The School has received significant positive feedback from this initiative, and is looking forward to introducing, expanding and utilising more features of CareMonkey in the future.

One of the important communication resources used by everyone is the telephone. Over the 2014/15 holiday period, the school undertook an upgrade of the phone system from an outdated analogue PABX system to a purely network-based Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) digital solution. From the incoming telephone lines which are now managed via the School’s internet connection through to VoIP handsets in offices, the new phone system uses every aspect of the school data network and virtual server infrastructure. There is no longer any physical PABX hardware to manage as the new phone system has been incorporated within the School’s VMWare virtual environment.

There have also been significant facility changes at Strathcona with the new Contemporary Learning Centre incorporating the Knowledge Exchange, the Year 7 and 8 Centre and the Science laboratories, along with the refurbishment of the old library into a new Year 10 Centre.

IT Services are always looking towards improving the interoperability of building and classroom management with...
an emphasis on integration and flexibility. As part of the specifications for the new Contemporary Learning Centre, a new emerging technology known as HDMI over IP (HDMIoIP) was implemented. This enables any audio or video data signal to be transmitted through the School’s data network and be accessible through industry standard HDMI connections. With the implementation of HDMIoIP there was no further requirement for specific AV cabling, and all buildings now only use CAT6a data cabling for any purpose.

‘There have been a number of occasions where other schools have asked to see the Strathcona solution as it has been seen as very progressive and innovative.’

Linked in with the HDMIoIP solution, every classroom also incorporated additional equipment to allow our hearing impaired students to have full interaction within the classroom. Being able to hear clearly the school bells, audio from a DVD or YouTube or the teacher’s directives is something most students take for granted. With all these recent initiatives, our hearing impaired students have the same opportunity and are provided with the same full and engaging classroom environment.

While classrooms still use the basic 1:1 functionality for AV, i.e. one input (the teacher’s notebook) to one output (a television screen), there have been many occasions where it has been necessary to adjust the AV infrastructure quickly to allow one input signal to be displayed at multiple output locations and even to different buildings throughout the School. As an example, the video being played in the Main School Reception area actually appears in seven other locations from CPAC (the Creative and Performing Arts Centre) to Mellor House instantaneously and is distributed through the School via HDMIoIP and the school data network. There have been a number of occasions where other schools have asked to see the Strathcona solution as it has been seen as very progressive and innovative.

Providing a high degree of flexibility with our AV, telephones, data network, hearing impaired facilities and all other digital resources has now become the standard way of thinking and forms the basis of all our building projects. The new Year 10 facility was based on what was achieved with the Knowledge Exchange and seamlessly integrated with all the other digital resources when brought online.

The reliability and bandwidth available through the School’s internal network has enabled many new technologies to be adopted, future proofing our facilities for years to come. We are excited with the prospects provided by the emerging tools available to the educational environment and are looking forward to further initiatives around 3D printing and the evolving Virtual Reality arena.

David Young, Director of Information Technology

Advanced Learning Centre

The Advanced Learning Centre staff work with students, staff and parents at Mellor House, Tay Creggan and Senior School as part of a multidisciplinary team to advance the learning of all students.

Mellor House

Mrs Carolyn King and Mrs Elizabeth Wildsmith provide support in Mellor House and in the Early Learning Centre (ELC). Nicole Kapaniaris is responsible for delivering an enriching extension program for Prep to Year 4 with Dr Charlotte Forwood also providing enrichment and extension support to Years 5 and 6, particularly with the Maths Olympiads and the Science Talent Search. Students and teachers are assisted by our three integration aides: Mrs Nancy McGoldrick, Ms Jenni Haines and Mrs Jane Patrick.
The extension program delivers intimate small focus groups for problem solving and fostering of higher-order thinking skills. In May 2015 we were fortunate to receive our own two-month old Guide Dog Puppy, Zinnia. Zinnia has been part of our team this year, coming to School every day with Mrs King and attending Advanced Learning classes in Mellor House. Zinnia has been a calming influence on the girls and has provided support in ways only a dog can. In return, girls in Mellor House have learnt about responsible pet ownership as well as the specific requirements for raising a guide dog puppy. Zinnia will remain with us until March 2016.

Support programs include: individual and small group withdrawal classes; in-class support for students and teachers; and assistance with planning for differentiation. In Mellor House a range of programs are implemented for selected students in Years 5 to 6, including Elementary Maths Mastery (numeracy), Toe By Toe (reading decoding), Stride Ahead (reading decoding and comprehension), Expressive Writing, Stareway to Spelling (word recognition and spelling), Spelling Mastery (literacy) and the STARS program (reading comprehension).

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In the Senior School and at Tay Creggan, student learning is supported in many ways. Students access individualised support through small timetabled classes or individual sessions. Advanced Learning teachers spend time with class teachers to plan and resource lessons, with a focus on differentiation for all students in the class. Advanced Learning teachers also organise and run enrichment and extension activities within and beyond the School.

Dr Charlotte Forwood, Mrs Karyn Murray and Mrs Margaret Bowden are responsible for timetabled support classes in Years 7 to 10, with Dr Charlotte Forwood and Mrs Karyn Murray also supporting individual students in Years 11 and 12 with the assistance of Mrs Miranda Gazis. Our two integration aides, Mrs Julie Wagner and Mrs Jane Patrick, play an integral part in supporting students in the Senior School.

Students with hearing impairments access individual sessions with our Visiting Teacher for the Hearing Impaired.
Mrs Dimetra Sinetsis. Additional support for these girls is provided by Ms Sue Hymus, Hearing Impairment Specialist and Psychologist, who also works closely with the ELC and Mellor House to support social skill development in particular. The development of the new Learning Centre at the Senior School provided an opportunity to install state-of-the-art technology to assist students with hearing impairments. Collaboration between Ms Sue Hymus, Mr Nick Van Ree and Mr David Young has enabled these students’ engagement with their peers and teachers to be strengthened. It is important to acknowledge the generosity of the Beth Smallwood Trust, which enabled much of this to occur, including the provision of a new Advanced Learning space – appropriately named The Beth Smallwood McLaren Room.

The Advanced Learning Centre oversees and supports enrichment and extension programs for students with particular areas of interest, talent or ability. This occurs across year levels and departments. There were many highlights in 2015. The Year 10 Constitutional Convention, organised by Mrs Karyn Murray, involved over 140 students from different schools attending a well-run and stimulating discussion about aspects of Australia’s constitution. This culminated in four students being selected to attend the State Constitutional Convention.

The Advanced Learning Centre has been the fortunate recipient of new learning spaces in the refurbished Hopkins building.

Strathcona is an active member of the Boroondara Gifted Network, which is a valuable professional learning network for staff. It also provides opportunities for students to participate in interschool activities for like-minded students. Some of the Boroondara Gifted Network activities have been run by network schools such as Scotch College, Camberwell Grammar School, Siena College and MLC. Activities include: the Year 7 Da Vinci Decathlon (third in the Regional finals); UN Diplomacy Challenge; Mission to Mars, Human Bioscience and Reach for the Stars workshops at the Victorian Space Science Education Centre; energy exploration; and philosophy workshops. Other student opportunities run through the Advanced Learning department include: the Spirit of Anzac Prize; Doodle for Google; the Boroondara Short Story Competition; the Year 7 & 8 Write Across Victoria story writing competition; Legacy Public Speaking; Year 9 gifted units; and the Senior Maths Olympiad team.

Advanced Learning staff continued to be involved in professional learning opportunities within and beyond the School, including the virtual world of Twitter. Dr Charlotte Forwood was guest curator of the @WeSpeechies Twitter handle during Speech Pathology week, with a focus on Adolescent Literacy and Language. Dr Charlotte Forwood and Mrs Karyn Murray teamed with Ms Tracy Herft and Ms Michelle Newell to encourage Strathcona staff to begin using Twitter as a professional learning opportunity. Staff have been involved in professional development focusing on differentiation, gifted and talented students, global connections, legal issues for counsellors and adolescent language difficulties. Dr Charlotte Forwood has been involved in Independent Schools Victoria’s seminar program and presented at the Speech Pathology Australia National Conference in Canberra. In September, Dr Charlotte Forwood travelled to the UK on an NGS (Non-Government Schools) Super Scholarship to visit schools and universities involved with supporting secondary school students. Her trip included giving presentations at City University, London, a government high school and a specialist school. The information collected during her trip will help inform future directions for the Advanced Learning Centre.

The Advanced Learning Centre has been the fortunate recipient of new learning spaces in the refurbished Hopkins building. We look forward to using these spaces further to expand the opportunities on offer to students in 2016.

Dr Charlotte Forwood, Leader of Advanced Learning and Mrs Carolyn King, Advanced Learning Coordinator – Mellor House

SEED

SEED (Seek, Engage, Enrich and Diversify), the interdisciplinary program which runs in Year 7 and 8 and is a precursor to the Year 9 I-Learning program, continued to evolve in 2015. The key focus of the program this year has been to implement a Guided Inquiry approach to investigation of overarching concepts. Guided Inquiry provides students with specific input points to teach key skills, such as question generation,
analysis of data and summarisation of information. It also includes time for students to explore ideas and information, demonstrate different levels and types of thinking skills and reflect on both the learning process and future exploration. Explicit instruction is a key element of Guided Inquiry.

‘Encourage students to take their new knowledge and ideas beyond the classroom.’

The Guided Inquiry process includes the following stages:

**Open**: Initiate wondering about a new concept, probe for current understandings, look at possibilities and acknowledge the initial response of students;

**Immerse**: Build background knowledge, connect with content, discover further possibilities and recognise what is not known;

**Explore**: Explore ideas, browse and scan for information;

**Identify**: Ponder, identify inquiry direction and generate questions – both macro and micro questions;

**Gather**: Sort, classifying and connecting information, identify useful, relevant and missing information, explore deeply;

**Create**: Construct, create and communicate new understandings, integrate ideas, articulate ideas clearly;

**Share**: Communicate with a wider audience, considering the relevant language for the audience; and

**Evaluate**: Reflect on the process, learning and content, evaluate the task.

An additional stage was included:

**Take Action**: Encourage students to take their new knowledge and ideas beyond the classroom.

In the introductory sessions of SEED in 2015, Year 7 and 8 students were introduced to the Guided Inquiry process, initially through an exploration of the ANZACs, to coincide with the hundredth anniversary of the Gallipoli campaign, and later in response to the question: What makes women inspirational? At the end of the year, Year 7 students explored the relationships between humans and animals, while Year 8 students provided possible solutions to real life problems.

This year’s SEED program was planned and prepared by the following staff members: Dr Charlotte Forwood, Ms Mary Hall, Mr Ross Phillips, Mrs Karyn Murray, Mrs Erin Horsely, Ms Eve Close, Mrs Ginetta Ito Cannon and Mrs Gabrielle Goldsmith.

*Charlotte Forwood, Leader of Advanced Learning*
Careers

Machines don’t have social and creative intelligence. Well, at least not yet anyway!

There is much talk about the changing nature of the job market. There is no doubt that automation and the developments in digital technologies will mean the loss of a large number of jobs to machines. However, there will still be the need to design, build and operate these machines, which will require the skills of engineers, programmers and database and systems analysts. There will also still be the need for those offering personal services across industries such as health and aged care, education, social services, hospitality and entertainment. There is also the certainty that new jobs that do not exist today will continue to evolve. There will be problems to solve involving urbanisation and the quality of life in cities, climate change and energy use, food production and the quality of water supplies, ageing populations and the demand to find cures and treatments for diseases. The list could go on and on.

Young people need not be too anxious about finding their niche too early. The focus should be on identifying a general range of interests and skills and nurturing these, whilst being aware of the need to work on those things they are not as naturally gifted in. Ideally there should be some focus on developing skills in one or more STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subject areas and/or developing communication and critical thinking skills as a foundation when moving into a more vocational study area.

The Careers program at the School is multi-targeted and aims to achieve this. Students in the middle years are encouraged to reflect on what interests them and to analyse their relative strengths in a range of skills and attributes. This is the beginning of the process that will lead them into subject selection and the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), where the focus will then move to identifying study and work opportunities that may prove a good fit considering the interests they have previously identified. This is not always easy and many young people will continue on this voyage of discovery after they leave school. I think it is important that young people understand this and they embrace the opportunities that further education can provide to discover what really interests them. Universities are increasingly developing programs that address the students’ need to identify further study and career plans.

‘Work Experience for many of the girls was very rewarding and gave them the chance to be treated as adults with genuine work expectations.’

Students at Strathcona in Years 9 to 12 have access to Careers Education and individual counselling within formal programs, as well as on a needs basis when these arise. All students are able to access our new Careers area for written material, brochures and books.

In 2015, Year 9 students have been briefed on the Work Experience Program for June 2016. They are also receiving Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) training as a legal requirement before taking a work placement. I am very keen for them to put some time and effort into securing a meaningful work experience placement next year. They need to be proactive and approach preferred employers early to maximise their chances of being accepted. I appreciate the efforts of parents in assisting their daughters to find a placement.
The Year 10 girls have had opportunities to explore their own skills and potential career pathways. In Semester 1 they have been guided through challenges such as resume writing, job applications and mock interviews. They were assisted by attending two seminars where presenters offered advice on what to do and what not to do in an interview situation – whether for a tertiary course, a scholarship or a job. They emphasised to the girls the importance of building their portfolio of experiences and overcoming the ‘modesty barrier’ by being confident when talking about themselves.

Work Experience for many of the girls was very rewarding and gave them the chance to be treated as adults with genuine work expectations. The very real benefit is for students to experience some of the routines of work, types of work and, for some, a snapshot of what work is like in a particular profession or job. The School is grateful to the many employers who continue to provide these opportunities for our students.

‘It is a challenging time but hopefully one which lays down the foundations for a rich and rewarding life full of learning.’

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. The results are predictive into early adulthood and I make use of these continually through the senior years in my counselling.

Years 11 and 12 students have had many opportunities to attend Careers events throughout the year. Events included the Careers Expo early in the year, seminars at Universities, Open Days in August and Information Sessions here at School. These have involved staff from different Universities speaking to small groups of girls about programs they offer in areas such as Business and Commerce, Science, Arts, and Health. These were all well attended by our girls. It is very important for them to hear from those directly involved in their interest areas. In July, the Year 12 girls were part of a panel discussion attended by students of the class of 2014. The focus was how they had found the transition from Strathcona to University and strategies they used to help the settling-in process. They each had a different story but were very positive about their experiences and the role the School had played in preparing them for the move. It was a very entertaining session and raised a number of important issues that may confront the girls next year and beyond. Making friends and feeling a sense of belonging, keeping informed and knowing where and how to find information, developing the self discipline to meet deadlines without being reminded and managing finances and keeping to budget were all covered during the discussion. It is a challenging time but hopefully one which lays down the foundations for a rich and rewarding life full of learning.

Graduating students from 2014 found placements in a range of tertiary courses such as Health Science, Business and Commerce, Arts and Media, Science, Art and Design, Law and Education. The vast majority of girls (80%) received an offer of one of their first two preferences. Many have opted for generalist degrees providing a flexible course structure and a range of specialist options at a later stage. Some have taken double degrees to gain a broad basis for future employment. Others deferred courses to travel or work.

Finally, good luck to our Year 12 students with the VCE results due on 14 December and for the tertiary offers period in early 2016.

Mark Duncan, Careers / Studies Advisor
International Students

Twenty-first century International Education is characterised by global engagement and is not only focused on export.

Strathcona currently has a reasonable international student enrolment for the size of the School (18 full-fee paying Chinese international students from Years 10 to 12) which brings diversity and cross-cultural character to the School. However, having international students is only the start. Retaining them is essential to our long-term success, for both the School and the students.

International students who fully engage in School life, embracing the opportunity to socialise outside their own ethnic group and create meaningful friendships, will be happier, well-adjusted and better ambassadors for our School. However, this type of engagement does not always come naturally. Significantly, the reality is that the same cultural differences that are the driving force behind the push for internationalisation can be their pitfall if not handled properly. Language, educational and social differences can unintentionally lead to segregation and a feeling of disconnect or alienation.

For this reason, it is extremely important to offer structured social activities designed to help international students become more actively engaged in both the School and our community.

At Strathcona, the co-curricular program offers opportunities in sport, music and the arts, and through the House system, the international students are involved in the compulsory activities – Swimming, Athletics, Cross-Country Running and the Performing Arts Festival.

Badminton is a popular sport for many international students and some are in the School team.

Audrey Tandiokusuma, International Student Leader

I would like to acknowledge Audrey’s leadership and commitment to this role as well as her participation in a broad range of co-curricular activities. As a leader, Audrey has been outstanding and has been very proactive in organising social activities and in supporting the international students across the three year levels (Years 10, 11 and 12).

In recognition of her leadership qualities, Strathcona nominated Audrey for ‘The ADF Long Tan Youth Leadership and Teamwork Award’. This Award recognises students who demonstrate leadership and teamwork within both their school and the broader community and who display strong values, such as doing one’s best, respect for others and “mateship”, that are integral to Australian society. It is an honour for our school that Audrey is the recipient of ‘The ADF Long Tan Youth Leadership and Teamwork Award’ for 2015.

On 8 September, Audrey organised an evening outing to Melbourne Central which was followed by a dinner. This evening included local and international students from Year 12.

Within the School, Audrey has organised a cross-cultural lunch with international students and local students from Year 12. The aim of the lunch was for students to get to know more people in their year level and to build friendships they can maintain which she says is crucial for VCE. Each international student invited one or two local (Australian) girls to come to lunch. They supplied customary Chinese
food and the local girls provided typical Australian style food. These cross-cultural luncheons are very popular with the students as sharing food is a sociable activity. The girls were comfortable interacting and discussing the vast range of Chinese food and new friendships were also made.

The Welcome Reception at Government House (11 March, 2015)

This annual event is held to welcome international students officially to our state and celebrate the diversity international education brings to Victoria. The ceremony was held in the State Ballroom where His Excellency, The Honourable Alex Chernov, AC, QC, Governor of Victoria, welcomed the international students.

The Honourable James Merlino, MP, Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, also welcomed the international students and the recipient of the Victorian International School Student Awards Scheme, Tuan Anh Tran, who spoke about his struggles with language, friends and cultural differences when he arrived in Australia from Vietnam. However, with the support of his teachers and his school’s International Student Coordinator, he was able to overcome these difficulties and rise to the challenges and successfully complete his Year 12 studies.

‘Each year Smart Choice offer their services to our School which the international students find beneficial.’

Year 12 students from Strathcona are selected each year to attend this event and Audrey Tandiokusuma, the International Student Leader, and Peiyuan Luo (Annie) were invited to attend along with Mrs Dunoon, the International Student Coordinator, and Ms Petsinis, the English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher.

Smart Choice VCE Presentation (29 May, 2015)

This presentation assists international students with the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) selection system, as well as options for future study and Visa renewal processes. Smart Choice Education invited Year 12 international students to participate in an on-campus seminar. Each year Smart Choice offer their services to our School which the international students find beneficial.

Vision International, an Association of Australian Schools

Vision was established to enable schools enrolling full fee paying international students to network and to provide mutual support in dealing with students from other cultures. Members include staff in a range of roles such as International Student Coordinators, Registrars and EAL teachers who deal with the many facets of international education.

Strathcona is a member of Vision International and the International Student Coordinator is a Committee member. Through this contact, the School is kept up-to-date on welfare issues, homestay, Visa compliance and policy directives.

Finally, I would like to thank Ms Petsinis for her ongoing support of the international students. Her commitment and dedication as an EAL teacher are commendable.

Robyn Dunoon, International Student Coordinator
Art Department

At Strathcona formal Art classes with qualified visual art educators begin in the Early Learning Centre (ELC) and continue right through to Year 12. This ensures that our students have the opportunity to observe, to analyse, to make aesthetic decisions and to implement and refine ideas and skills through learning in the visual arts.

‘Creating exposure to real life learning opportunities for our students continued to be an exciting part of our curriculum.’

A goal for 2015 was to ensure that students’ work was more visible in our School. This was consciously undertaken to both celebrate visual arts learning and develop a sense of pride in students for their work and the environment in which it is displayed. Art teachers embraced sharing their students’ art through social media, making for visually engaging posts. Art teachers also worked diligently to ensure a rotation of student work was on display. The new building provided fresh spaces to display work in the central hub of the School. To coincide with this philosophy, we hosted a Staff Art Exhibition, promoting our staff’s creativity and passions. The ultimate highlight for our exhibition program is, of course, our Student Art Exhibition. This year it was held in early September in Featherstone Hall. This exhibition was well received with its new location and celebratory opening night and we are proud to have made sure to display artwork by all our students from the ELC to VCE (Victorian Certificate of Education).

Creating exposure to real life learning opportunities for our students continued to be an exciting part of our curriculum. Fine artists, such as our inspiring artist-in-residence, Zhen Chew, an architect and a range of designers, visited our classes and inspired our girls to think creatively and understand the possibilities available to them in the future. Many of our guest speakers were Old Strathconians, which provided strong collaboration within our community. A commitment to excursions to the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), Heide Museum of Modern Art and the Ian Potter Museum of Art rounded out our program, developing an appreciation of art and culture for many of our ELC to Year 12 students.

This year we also saw the introduction of awarding Visual Arts Colours. This was an important initiative to nurture and celebrate the creative excellence of our artistic students. We are also pleased to celebrate the excellence of our Year 8 felt work being selected for display at the Zart Gallery, to have Mellor House students participate in the NGV ‘local landscapes’ extension program and to see Erin Dempsey’s Year 11 VCE artwork selected for the prestigious Silk Cut Lino award.

Another initiative of 2015 was the introduction of Photography as an elective at Year 10. This program proved to be very popular and ran in both semesters, with girls embracing both digital and analogue photographic practices. This was excellent feedback from our girls to continue to provide a number of choices within the Arts to maintain a rich and varied elective program.

The 2015 Art Captains, Jamie Yeung and Emma Davies, are to be commended for their helpful and cheerful assistance in running art activities on the leadership camp, organising
drawing classes for Year 7 and 8 students during the winter, promoting and developing activities for Arts Week and providing support for the Art Exhibition.

The Barbara Green Award for 2015 was awarded to Jamie Yeung. During Year 12 Jamie worked diligently and has produced excellent folio and written work in both Art and Visual Communication Design. The School community acknowledges and gives thanks to the Green family for making such an award available for our visual art students.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the broader School community for their support. Working with the Art department to display and celebrate our student artwork in all areas of the School has enabled us to play an important role in creating a visually exciting educational environment for us all to share.

Erin Horsley, Head of Art

Commerce

This has been another eventful year for our Commerce students. In the world of Economics this year we have seen a decline in Australia’s commodity prices (with a consequent depreciation in the value of the Australian Dollar) and a booming property market in Melbourne and Sydney fuelled by record-low interest rates. A highlight for the Year 11 Economics course was to investigate the viability of the Australian wine industry, looking specifically into the demand-supply dynamics affecting grape growers, the wine production process and factors affecting the performance of Australian wine exports. This culminated in a trip to the Yarra Valley wine region and a tour of the De Bortoli winery. The girls also investigated whether the housing markets of Melbourne and Sydney are indeed ‘bubbles’ and the potential consequences for Australia’s economy of a decline in property prices.

‘In total the students raised $1,400. All funds raised were donated to the ‘We Can’t Wait’ charity.’

Legal Studies students have focused on a number of potential changes to federal and state laws. Marriage equality and the proposed changes to the Marriage Act have been discussed, as has the potential legalisation of marijuana for medical purposes by the Andrews Government. The rights of children born of sperm donation to trace their biological parents have also been considered. The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) hearing brought by Ella Ingram against QBE Insurance over its exclusion of mental illness from travel insurance will be an interesting case to follow up in 2016.

In the Year 10 Commerce elective, Dollars and Sense, students were introduced to economic, finance, accounting and marketing concepts, which were further explored in a cupcake competition towards the end of Semester 1. The students created mock businesses and, in some cases, franchises and competed to make the highest profit. In total the students raised $1,400. All funds raised were donated to the ‘We Can’t Wait’ charity.

Our Year 11 and 12 Accounting students have been working with Quickbooks software this year, which we hope gives them a taste of the increasingly computerised world of Accounting.

We look forward to the continued engagement of our students in the Commerce subject offerings in 2016.

David Bradshaw, Year 12 Coordinator
Drama

Drama provides students enriching educational opportunities to develop vital skills for life. These crucial skills include team building and at Strathcona we offer our students immense opportunities to become part of a team and perform. Our year commences with a dramatic bang as the House Drama, Dance and Music Captains work feverishly, galvanising their Houses for the Performing Arts Festival, this year presented for the first time at the Besen Centre.

The Captains have three weeks to teach, direct and inspire all the Year 10, 11 and 12 students in their Houses to create dynamic drama, dance and music performances which must seamlessly integrate the three areas of the Performing Arts. The designated theme and associated criteria were imaginatively addressed and performed with commendable competence and skill. Once again we earnestly applaud all the Captains on their praise-worthy achievements. The Performing Arts Festival was an effervescent and entertaining evening of admirable teamwork and talent.

The annual School Musical also provides the students with an opportunity to hone their performance skills and work closely in a team for an extended period. This year a group of 60 students across seven year levels joined forces with Mr Jason Parker to present Annie. The musical was vibrant, joyous and utterly captivating. Our girls and the young men who joined the cast made our hearts soar with their beautiful singing and endearing characterisations. It is enormously uplifting to see the enjoyment the musical provides our students and the immeasurable prospects for collaboration and growth.

Drama also fosters higher order thinking and analytical skills. This year the Year 12 Theatre Studies students presented an astute, multilayered and meticulously crafted performance of August: Osage County and impressed their audience with perceptive analytical skills and outstanding acting. The Pulitzer Prize winning and extremely challenging text was conveyed with commendable insight and depth.

The Year 10 Drama students also rose brilliantly to the challenge and performed an elegant and highly satirical performance of Noel Coward’s Private Lives. The girls enjoyed exploring the heightened theatrical style of this Comedy of Manners and presented an extremely sophisticated and stylised performance. They also specialised in stagecraft areas and produced a beautifully chic set to showcase their outstanding work.


Co-curricular Drama productions were also held at Year 8 and Year 10 levels. The Year 10s worked with praiseworthy commitment and fervour on The Real Inspector Hound, a play that incorporated Melodrama and Farce. The girls relished the inflated theatrical styles and created an extremely quirky performance peppered with idiosyncratic caricatures that delighted their audience. To further enhance performance opportunities, we turned Featherstone Hall into a nightclub and invited our wonderful Stage Band musicians, conducted by Mrs Stancombe, to play. Their beautiful music enriched two wonderful nights of theatre.

Our Year 8 students performed a script which explored an issue close to their hearts – mobile phones – and created adept characterisations and a very humorous performance. It is wonderful to see our students immersing themselves in the sumptuous and unique world of theatre and experiencing the exhilaration of performance.

Drama students are stimulated to ‘think outside the box’ and develop inventive and unique elucidations of specific subject material. The House Dance/Drama Festivals at Year 9 and Year 7 provide the students with a stimulating opportunity to create their own drama and dance performances. The girls are prompted to be creative and vigorous in their thinking so that they may intellectually and individually challenge themselves as they synthesise information to create their own theatrical statements. Their work is always fresh, uplifting and fun. The festival also provides an enriching leadership opportunity as Drama and Dance Captains are nominated for each House. The girls work collaboratively to support each
other and to shine. The Year 7 students particularly relish the opportunity of working with the Year 10 students, who create their performances for them. We sincerely applaud the manner in which our Year 10 Drama and Dance Captains look after the younger girls and model their exceptional love for theatre.

Our passionate School Drama and Dance Captains, Paris Balla and Madeleine Brown, appreciative of the rich benefits Drama provides, this year commenced a Drama Club for Year 7 and 8 students. The girls are to be commended on this valuable initiative. It is wonderful to witness the young, happy faces burst into the Drama Studio every Monday lunch time to work with their Year 12 leaders.

A huge thank you is offered to Paris and Madeleine; your love for Drama is a pleasure to behold. You have modelled passion for theatre in all its different guises and we wish you both a wonderfully happy and rewarding future.

Marisa Rowlands, Head of Drama

English

What makes a fire burn is space between the logs, a breathing space. Too much of a good thing, too many logs packed in too tight can douse the flames almost as surely as a pail of water would. So building fires requires attention to the spaces in between, as much as to the wood …

Judy Sorum Brown’s poem *Fire* is a fitting metaphor for where we find learning and teaching at this juncture in the 21st century. English is on the cusp of what will be a period of change with the new Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) studies. More broadly speaking, education and curricula, including competencies, must now be seen in the context of preparing young people to face an increasingly complex and unpredictable world. The pedagogical paradigms have begun to shift: some of the more traditional English teaching methods and skills base need to adapt and embrace the opportunities for change, ensuring that schooling remains relevant to the lives of our students. Hence, Strathcona continues to inspire students in the world of English - building the flame that fosters originality in their literary talents, exploring and taking issue with ideas, taking pleasure in the sounds and rhythms of language, encouraging the discovery of themselves and the human experience and thus enhancing their learning and understanding of the world.

Burning brightly this year was the Margaret Fendley Writing Competition entries. Brown’s poem as with others by Robert Frost and Margaret Atwood were some of the many writing inspirations used, along with Year 12 student art, to encourage effective writing on the theme ‘Fire and Ice’. Students brainstormed, mind-mapped, debated and challenged their way to their own understanding of this archetypal theme, a dominant idea in literature and art.

This year the Margaret Fendley Writing Competition was judged by the writer, Jane Godwin. The submissions continued to impress, with a broader range of styles and ideas coming into play. Congratulations to our winners: Tamsyn Lovass (Year 8), Eloise Bryce (Year 9), Eleanor Forwood (Year 11) and to all those students who were prize-winners.

We also welcomed Jane Godwin as a speaker to our Year 7s as her adolescent novel ‘Falling from Grace’ is a new text on the Year 7 course. It has been a popular choice due to the beachside location. The girls were captivated by Godwin’s detailed presentation as she revealed the processes that writers undergo in constructing a novel, from the inception of the first idea to the editing and publishing stages. Godwin explained how Victoria’s mysterious and sometimes tempestuous Point Nepean came to be the setting and how each character was created using her own life experiences of meeting interesting people. Her presentation gave the girls meaning and references to the context and inspired them to think about the possibilities for characters and plots in creative and interesting new ways.
... lighting the fire of curiosity, creativity and wonder.

The Year 8 Writers’ Workshop, which ran all day, continued to be a wonderful opportunity for students to explore and extend their writing skills. As with the teaching for the Writing Competition, the discipline of creative writing is not only about self-expression and responding to literary texts under study, but also about how to craft a piece of writing from the initial idea, through drafting to editing and publication. The relationship between purpose, audience, form and language is also explored and we encourage our students to read widely and pay more attention to choices made by authors in order to construct meaning. As a consequence, students learn to note the precision of language in creating an image for the reader. Published Australian authors and poets Gabrielle Williams, Lia Hills, Tim Pegler and Daniel Decrou took interactive classes for each of the Year 8 English classes. These sessions included suggestions about where to source inspiration for stories and advice about how to craft and edit stories and poetry. The writers were experienced presenters and the girls were totally engaged by their enthusiasm and expertise. The workshops provided an ideal beginning to the students’ own writing folio and, perhaps, inspiration for some future writers.

We also continue to offer authentic learning experiences for students through the opportunity to view live performance. The Year 9s and 10s saw performances of Romeo and Juliet and Macbeth, the Year 12s Summer of the Seventeenth Doll, while the Year 11 and 12 Literature classes had an evening excursion to the Malthouse Theatre to view a contemporary contextualisation of Antigone. Also Year 9 students at Tay Creggan were fortunate to visit the Holocaust Centre, which highlighted to students the central concern of the graphic novel Maus.

The whole English Department has also benefited from informal professional development days to work on developing the new VCE courses for English/EAL and Literature, all of which start next year. We are excited by the new possibilities for English/EAL, in terms of creative writing opportunities coming out of the texts, as well as the new area which involves comparing texts with regard to their ideas, issues and themes. The subject of Literature has informed our approach and this study design sees changes, with the emphasis on literary criticism and critical literacy. Many staff also went to Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) Implementation Sessions to better inform them of the changes.

Testing by the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) saw us achieving excellent results from Years 7 and 9 once again. Our students have continued to perform on average better than the state average for students two years older. We have made use of the data each year to inform our teaching and ensure our students, of all levels of achievement, attain high standards of literacy and language acquisition. We are also extremely proud of our outstanding 2014 Year 12 results, with five perfect results of 50, 55.3% scoring an A+ and 75.4% an ‘A’. Our median result for all Year 12s was 39.9, with the top 12.5% of our students attaining a study score of 48 or above. This provides further evidence of the solid language and literature teaching in the English Department. It is also a testament to the team orientated approach, passion, hard work and commitment of all English staff. It is this group of wonderful professionals who encourage students in their learning by allowing them the time to ponder the ‘spaces between the logs’, thus lighting the fire of curiosity, creativity and wonder.

Simone Boland, Head of English

Food Technology

The Food Technology faculty at Strathcona has continued to witness much enthusiasm from the students this year. Through the teaching of nutrition and food preparation skills, we have been able to play a fundamental role in equipping students for the future, including the acquisition of qualities such as creativity, perseverance, confidence and problem solving skills.
... the Nutrition and Cake Decoration electives were very popular, with the students practising perseverance, dedication and determination.

Healthy eating and its influence on wellbeing remain a focus in our teaching and our students have demonstrated a keen interest in modifying recipes to create a healthy option. ‘Hands on’ assessment tasks allowed the students to design their own recipes, enhancing their knowledge of nutrition, whilst developing their time management and organisation abilities.

2015 began on a very positive note, with an excellent set of 2014 Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) results.

- A study score over 40 (out of 50) was achieved by just over a third of the students.
- Erica Quan’s VCE folio was selected for exhibit at Top Designs at Melbourne Museum. Her folio was just one of 11 folios chosen from many entries around Victoria for Food Technology.
- Shania Killick and Alexandra Macafee’s folios were shortlisted for Top Designs.

The Year 9 Food Technology course this year was adapted to accommodate the large number of students wishing to undertake the course. The students expanded on their food knowledge, creating dishes from different cultures, developing a higher understanding of nutrition, managing financial restrictions and catering for large quantities. The highlight was the High Tea for grandparents, parents and special friends. After weeks of preparation, the girls held a very successful high tea in the magnificent Tay Creggan Ballroom.

In Year 10 Food Technology, both the Nutrition and Cake Decoration electives were very popular, with the students practising perseverance, dedication and determination. Thirty cakes were entered into the Royal Melbourne Show. The following students won prizes or commendations:

1st Prize .......................................................... Bella Hunt
2nd Prize ...................................................... Siobhan Roberts
Highly commended ....................................... Julieanne Kinsella
Commended .................................................. Isabelle Binnie-Peart
Commended .................................................. Holly Mitchell
Commended .................................................. Georgia Wong

The Food Technology staff have continued to update their knowledge: Narelle Cameron attended the Home Economics Victoria (HEV) Practical Day Out; Claire Chambers attended the Australian Curriculum Update Courses; Narelle Cameron, Kerry Wilson and Claire Chambers attended the Home Economics Annual Conference; and Claire Chambers presented on the topic of ‘VCE Examination Preparation’ at the HEV ‘Student Day Out’.

Thanks to Narelle Cameron, Kerry Wilson and Terri Opran for their dedication and much valued contributions to the faculty this year. Thank you also to our diligent and highly organised Food Technology assistant, Noelle Boyd.

Mrs Claire Chambers, Head of Food Technology
Geography, International Studies, The Global Citizen and Global Politics

Geography provides a structured framework of study that encourages students to see the interconnections and patterns that make up the great, complex diversity and wonder of our world. It integrates knowledge from the natural sciences, the social sciences and the humanities to create a challenging and distinctive discipline.

All students study one semester of Geography each year as part of the core curriculum from Years 7 to 10. In Years 7, 8 and 9 the courses have been completely revised to reflect the requirements of the Australian Curriculum. At Year 10 we will continue to offer our students a choice and they may select either People and Places or The Global Citizen. Students wishing to continue with their studies in Year 11 or Year 12 have available both Geography and Global Politics as Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Unit 3 and 4 studies. It is very pleasing to note the level of interest in these studies and that results have remained strong over the years. We congratulate Michelle Benington on her score of 50 for Geography in 2014.

‘Experiential learning and observation through fieldwork is particularly important in Geography.’

The study of global issues has continued to increase in popularity this year. The International Studies option at Year 9 provides an introduction to many current topics. At Year 10 the level of interest has been sufficient to support three classes of the Global Citizen elective. In addition, there have been two classes of VCE Unit 3 and 4 Global Politics, involving a combination of 29 Year 11 and 12 students. Topics such as globalisation, terrorism and human rights are investigated in the senior years. In VCE classes there is a specific focus on the rise of China and in Year 10 classes on the food and water crisis. With the increase in social media and access to immediate information, the popularity of these studies is likely to continue and is proving to be a strength in the humanities domain for Strathcona students.

Experiential learning and observation through fieldwork is particularly important in Geography. Year 8 students visited Toolangi State Forest for a full day excursion and studied Mountain Ash and rainforest environments and also forest management issues, including logging. The Year 9 students have visited a dairy farm to support their studies in a major unit on Biomes and Food Security. Year 10 students in the People and Places Geography elective conducted urban investigations at Beacon Cove.

Once again our Year 9 students took on the challenge of the Australian Geography Competition. The results this year were again outstanding. Out of 85 entries 12 students are to be particularly congratulated for being awarded High Distinctions. These students were Rachel Cordeiro, Bianca D’Anna, Nicci Marie Dimatos, Nastasya Dimitriou, Caitlin Jones, Sophie King, Hannah Patience, Madeline Phillips, Yvonne Song, Emily Toner, Elise Wright and Isabel Zhi. A further ten students received Distinctions.

Geography encourages students to think about global issues and the world in which they live. Melissa King is to be thanked for organising an interdisciplinary extension activity in which students from Years 8 to 12 participated in the annual UN Youth Australia Evatt Competition, a mock United Nations Security Council competition for youth requiring debating and diplomacy skills.

In preparation for the state UN Youth Victoria Evatt Trophy Competition, an in-house training day was run, with past students generously giving their time to chair the debates and provide feedback to the current students. This ongoing support is crucial to the continued success that Strathcona has achieved in UN debating.

Eleven teams then participated in the state-wide Evatt Trophy Competition. Each team of two students represented a member nation at a mock session of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The students independently researched their assigned country before expressing their nation’s foreign policy in debate sessions, which were run almost entirely by the real Security Council’s rules of procedure. All teams are to be congratulated on their efforts and the positive feedback they received from the judges.

From the semi-final rounds, where two teams of Strathcona students competed, the 15 teams to compete in the state grand final were chosen, with the Strathcona team of Alex Linehan and Eleanor Forwood being selected. The grand final was held at Parliament House in the Legislative Council and involved a full day of debate, including two impromptu resolutions. Alex and Eleanor are to be congratulated on their energy and impeccable research, which saw them compete against some of the strongest competition for many years.
Delia McKeon and Madison Sorrenti are also to be congratulated on their selection in the semi-final round. Four Year 8 students were also introduced to UN debating through a full day event run through the Boroondara gifted cluster, where they showcased their developing debating and negotiation skills. All students involved have developed important skills in research, public speaking and teamwork. They are to be commended for their passion and engagement.

This has been another busy and rewarding year. It has been a pleasure to see the interest, initiative and creativity that students have been able to bring to their learning over the year. It is important also to acknowledge the professionalism and commitment of the Geography teachers who have been so supportive of our students.

Pat Menke, Head of Geography

Health and Human Development

2015 has been a year of consolidation for the Health and Human Development Department. We have had strong numbers in both our Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Unit 1/2 and Unit 3/4 classes and staff consistency, with no changes to our staffing for this year. This being the second year of a new study design, it was an opportunity for staff to reinforce their professional learning to ensure we remain up-to-date with the course material.

One of the aims of this study is to enable students to critically examine health and human development from an individual, a community, a national and a global perspective. Unit 4 has a focus on Global Health and Human Development and takes on an approach that is consistent with those of the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations (UN). The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) - which range from halving extreme poverty rates to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, with a target date of 2015, form a blueprint agreed to by all the world’s countries and all the world’s leading development institutions. The MDGs have been a major area of study in Unit 4. With 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), or Global Goals, announced in September, we will be interested to see the impact they have on our course for 2016. Many of our students have a real compassion and empathy for Social Service and they have thoroughly enjoyed discussions around the MDGs and where we will be heading globally in the future.

Terri Oprean, Dean of Students

‘It was a fantastic opportunity for the students to see how they would react in scenarios common to risk takers in their age group.’

‘Many of our students have a real compassion and empathy for Social Service and they have thoroughly enjoyed discussions around the Millennium Development Goals ...’

The health and development of Australia’s youth was the focus of Unit 1. Students investigated a range of topics relevant to youth. A guest speaker on AIDS and HIV was one of the highlights of this unit. Another highlight was a day at the Royal Melbourne Hospital to undertake the program ‘Prevent Alcohol and Risk Related Trauma in Youth' (PARTY).

The day started with a seminar showing students the journey a trauma patient goes through from when the call to 000 is made, to the ambulance arriving with the person at hospital. They toured the hospital, including the Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit and a trauma ward. In each area students participated in activities that enabled them to empathise with nurses and patients. Students learnt about risk taking, choice and consequence. They examined the impact of risk taking on real people. An insight was given into the types of injuries seen at the hospital.

The focus of the afternoon was on rehabilitation. Students participated in rotations around the hospital including Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Pathology and Orthotics. It was a fantastic opportunity for the students to see how they would react in scenarios common to risk takers in their age group. They were educated on ways to prevent, deal and assist with the potential trauma and risks.

The field of health and human development encompasses a wide range of professions. Many of our students go on to study in areas of health care, nursing, nutrition and dietetics, athletic training, rehabilitation and therapy, sports medicine, child care, human services, gerontology, speech pathology and audiology, health promotion, fitness and sports, health-care management, hospitality, tourism, recreation and parks, education, research and other areas linked to health and human development.

Terri Oprean, Dean of Students
History

At Strathcona, History is an important core study for all students in Years 7 to 10. Not only do students develop an appreciation of historical events and how these have shaped the present, the study of History encourages informed decision-making and promotes thoughtful citizenship. History is a discipline that requires students to understand events from different perspectives, to evaluate the evidence available and to explain and justify different interpretations. In its pursuit of academic rigour and its concern with ethical and moral issues, History has a very important contribution to make towards implementing the goals of the School’s Strategic Plan.

In 2015 in Years 7 to 10, we have continued to implement the Australian Curriculum for History which we introduced in 2013. Our courses integrate the two strands of ‘Historical Knowledge and Understanding’ and ‘Historical Skills.’ We encourage our students to investigate issues using a structured inquiry process and to present their findings with careful attention to task requirements and assessment criteria. The two Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) courses that have run this year are Twentieth Century History in Year 11 and Revolutions in Year 12. The Year 12 results in 2014 were again very strong and Tessa Pietsch deserves our congratulations on her perfect score of 50. Next year will see the introduction of revised courses in all VCE History studies across the State.

The History Department has maintained its commitment to offering a broad range of historical activities to enrich the classroom experience. The annual Medieval Day, run by a specialist organisation and held at Tay Creggan, allowed students to participate in a range of experiences derived from daily life in the Middle Ages. Year 11 History students again hosted representatives of the Vietnam Veterans Association. This year students have been able to see engaging historical theatrical presentations by performer Brett Hunt. Year 9 students saw Fightin’ the Kaiser and Year 10 and Year 11 students saw Dusted Off, his performance about the Vietnam War. Both performances were memorable and gave the students much to consider.

The Australian History Competition was held in May for all of our students in Years 8 and 10. More than 23,000 students competed across Australia. Strathcona students achieved some fine results. In all, eight students were awarded High Distinctions and 27 students were awarded Distinctions in the competition.

At Strathcona the National History Challenge has been integrated into the History learning program at Year 9 as a research task for all students. There have been some very fine pieces of work across the year level but we warmly congratulate six of our Year 9 students on their outstanding results in the 2015 National History Challenge.

‘All of these girls gave considerable thought, time and energy to their entries and demonstrated a great commitment to excellence.’

Emily Clegg has been awarded a State Excellence Award for her thoroughly researched and creatively presented work on Rosie the Riveter, a very successful program created in the U.S.A. to encourage women to join the workforce during World War 2. Eloise Bryce and Alisha Sandhu are Victorian State winners of the Australia’s Heritage prize for their detailed poster on the life and achievements of Captain James Cook. Nicci-Marie Dimatos, Emma Scales and Jessica Humphrey have together been awarded a Victorian State Year 9 prize for their film about renowned British engineer, Joseph Bazalgette.

‘It has been a pleasure to see the initiative and creativity that our students have been able to bring to their learning over the year.’

All of these girls gave considerable thought, time and energy to their entries and demonstrated a great commitment to excellence. In addition, we must particularly thank their teacher, Mrs Jane Bromby, for her care, support and encouragement at every stage.

2015 has been an important year in Australian History as this year marked the centenary of the Gallipoli campaign. At Strathcona we commemorated this event with care. Amongst the range of activities, a group of our senior students prepared a historical presentation for an assembly on the theme of ‘Service and Sacrifice’. This was based on the experiences of real people in several wars. Members of the broader School community were invited to acknowledge a family member who had served in war by labelling a special poppy which then became part of a large poppy display. The girls in Mellor House and the Senior School received mementos about the Gallipoli campaign to mark the occasion at a special, whole School, commemorative assembly.

It has been a pleasure to see the initiative and creativity that our students have been able to bring to their learning over the year. The History Department has been fortunate in having highly professional and committed teachers who have been so supportive of our students.
This year marks the retirement of Dr Treidel who has been an outstanding contributor to History teaching and learning in the School. Dr Treidel's expertise and educational leadership will be greatly missed.

Pat Menke, Head of History

Languages

As a largely monolingual nation in a world where bilingualism or multilingualism is increasingly the norm, Australia still has much progress to make if we are not only to compete financially but also to enjoy the social and cognitive benefits that come with studying another language. State and federal governments debate the best strategies for tackling the educational and community changes which will need to occur if the coming generation of young Australians is to thrive in a world where a knowledge of English alone will not suffice. Against this background of ongoing policy discussions, language learning flourishes at Strathcona, as our teachers inspire the girls to relish the challenges involved in learning to experience the world through another language. Some go on to pursue their passion for languages through exchanges to overseas universities, sometimes even taking on a third foreign language during their tertiary studies.

Our overseas tours and exchanges provide ideal opportunities for students to test their language skills, as well as exposing them to the latest in Chinese, French and Italian culture. This year, 13 students in Years 10 and 11 spent three weeks in France, where they enjoyed the homestay experience in Montpellier, followed by a tour of the World War 1 battlefields and a final few glorious days visiting the cultural icons of Paris. Sincere thanks must go to Ms Holding and Mr Phillips who bravely led the tour without the security blanket of an accompanying French speaker.

As we rise to the challenge of the changing demands of language learning, we are embarking on a wide-ranging review of our languages program from Prep to Year 12 which will continue through 2016. The key questions guiding our discussions will be: what do we want our students to gain from their languages study at Strathcona and how can we best achieve this? This will involve intensive research on the most effective language-learning strategies for students of all levels and I thank all members of the Languages Department for their valuable contributions to the current Languages program and for their input into the recommendations we forward to the School Board.

Verónica Suwayne, Head of Languages

Learning Technologies

Learning Technologies @Strathcona

Middle School IT/Multimedia continues to grow. In first semester, Year 9 Robotics was run for the second time following its successful introduction in 2014, with 16 students undertaking the course. New Lego EV3 robotics kits were purchased for students to use and add to our existing kits. Students began by learning how to construct and program robots to perform a number of simple tasks, including being controlled via their iPads. For their major project, students formed groups and were challenged to build a more complex robot that would be able to problem solve and interact with its environment. In building their robots, students were able to earn Digital Badges, which were piloted in the class as an additional form of progressive assessment.

Year 9 iPad Development ran in Semester 2 with 13 students undertaking the course. After first learning how to create Apps by working through a number of tutorials, they formed small groups and each developed one of their own. The iPad Development elective was also offered to Year 10 students and has proved to be a popular choice, with 24 students enrolled.

Year 9 Video Production ran in both Semesters 1 and 2 with a total of 57 students undertaking the course. A number of new video cameras and tripods were purchased this year so that students at Tay Creggan would not only be able to utilise them for Video Production but also create video content for other subjects.
The Year 10 Lights, Camera, Action course also continues to be very popular with students. In second semester, 13 students undertook the course developing their expertise in the use of the STV studio and their skills in video production. Some projects were prepared for entry into various film competitions.

Once again there has been interest in the Web and Animation Design subject this year from Year 10 students, with eight students choosing to learn some of the online publishing skills that have become a vital twenty-first century literacy skill.

The Year 11 and 12 VET/VCE (Vocational Education and Training/Victorian Certificate of Education) Media class has been conducted on Thursday evenings with a number of Year 11 and 12 students enrolled. Beginning in 2016, Strathcona will offer VCE Computing Units 1 and 2 with the second year of the VET Multimedia subject (which will be phased out). The new VCE Computing curriculum offers some exciting opportunities for students in the areas of informatics, social media, programming and multimodal design and, with the strong enrolments in Middle School, should provide a valuable pathway to those students interested in Engineering or IT careers.

iPads @Strathcona

2015 saw the use of iPads at Strathcona go from strength to strength. Our iPad program expanded once again so that both Grade 2 and 6 students had access. With this expansion Mellor House achieved a 1:1 ratio. 2016 will see the program expand once again. iPads will be introduced to Year 7 and 8 (making Years 7, 8 and 9 all 1:1 in iPads). The BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) program will be extended down to include Year 7. Teachers and students will use the iPads extensively in the curriculum and we are excited to see the continued development and use of multimedia Apps for the creation of interactive content.

Professional Learning

Professional learning in the use of Learning Technologies takes place regularly both through informal sharing of knowledge and skills as well as through the provision of Professional Development sessions outside of school hours. The ICT (Information and Communication Technology) Professional Learning program encompasses a wide range of both skills and technologies and is delivered by the ICT staff as well as those who have an innovative experience to share. With the expansion of the iPad program, there has been an emphasis on iPad Apps and the use of iPads in the classroom.

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 groups of students throughout the School.

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 within the School. These are so impressive that other schools will often arrange to have a tour of our facilities.

In addition to the use of the studio and recording facilities within the School, Strathcona has a long standing relationship with the production company Wilkar Productions, that not only provides support with the recording of School events but also gives interested girls the opportunity to gain valuable industry experience in the field of video production.

STV

Senior Media students continue to produce content for STV that the School community can access via Blackboard. STV has over 500 videos online. Most of these videos 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.

This year saw the trial of a live broadcast system called LiveStream. The system was used successfully to broadcast a whole school assembly to students at Tay Creggan so they did not have to travel to Main Campus for the event. We also broadcast the Annual Music Concert using the system so that those in the School community not able to attend were able to watch the concert live. The concert was watched live – and on repeat over the following weekend – by family and friends in Australia, New Zealand, the USA, Japan and the UK on over 550 computers, tablets and mobile phones.

Media Crew

The official Strathcona Media Crew consists of girls from Years 7 to 12 under the guidance of the Director of Learning Technologies and the Media Captain. The Media Crew worked to produce content for STV covering special events within the School as well as special features. Having a mix of year levels provides an excellent opportunity for junior students who have an interest in media production not only to get involved but also to have the opportunity to develop into leadership roles within the group. Meetings were held regularly throughout the year to organise upcoming events and to discuss film and media.
Blackboard

The Strathcona Blackboard LMS (Learning Management System) has been a vital communication tool between teachers and students for over ten years. It has provided Strathcona students with access to important curriculum material from anywhere they can access the Internet and at any time.

This year saw the introduction of parent access to Blackboard and students' grades via the MyStrathcona portal interface. Teachers gave feedback to students throughout the year via this system and semester reports were distributed electronically for the first time in Strathcona's history.

Adrian Janson, Director of Learning Technologies

Mathematics

Studying Mathematics is important for all students and, as a Department, our role is to ensure that each student:

- learns transferable and everyday life skills;
- is exposed to different ways of thinking and seeing the world;
- has an insight into the beauty and elegance of Mathematics; and
- is prepared for career pathways requiring mathematical backgrounds.

Our purpose is to teach in such a way that each student’s needs are catered for, with these overarching goals in mind.

A significant part of this year has focused on preparing our VCE coursework for 2016, to expedite the introduction of a new curriculum. All Units 1 to 4 Mathematics subjects have undergone significant change, including new content, course structures and assessment arrangements. This has required insight and work from all VCE staff in preparing new documentation and courses to ensure smooth implementation next year.

This year we introduced our Mathematics Mentor Program at VCE. Students undertaking Mathematical Methods or Further Mathematics could participate by working in a study group of three (usually from different classes), completing tasks that vary in type, length and complexity every fortnight under the guidance of a Mentor (Mr Duncan or Mrs Harrington). The Mentor meets with the students to discuss their work or provides written feedback. Students finish the year by attending internal Revision Lectures at the School in Term 4. The program is focusing on the idea of supporting each other by working and learning together.

‘There is a strong enrolment in Mathematics at Strathcona ...’

We have been building the links between Mellor House Mathematics teaching and the Senior School Mathematics Department through shared teaching by Mrs Patel and Mrs Forwood, with a particular focus on extension Mathematics.

A select group of students at Years 7 and 8 have participated in the Australasian Problem Solving Mathematical Olympiad, which provides an opportunity for students to develop their strategies and problem solving skills and the joy of meeting mathematical challenges.

There is a strong enrolment in Mathematics at Strathcona, with 91 students completing at least one Unit 3 and Unit 4 study in 2014. In Further Mathematics, the median ATAR result was 33. In Mathematical Methods, the median ATAR score was 38.3. In Specialist Mathematics, 11 of the 12 students achieved an ATAR result of 40 or above.

Congratulations to the students who completed a Unit 3 and 4 Mathematics in 2014.

Next year, one of the main focuses of the Mathematics Department will be ensuring we meaningfully implement the use of iPads at Year 7 and 8 to enhance our teaching. We continually reflect on the teaching and learning in the classroom and always strive to improve our practice. We will also introduce a Mathematics Week and have our first Strathcona Mathematics Extension Day for local primary schools.

Thank you to all staff members of the Mathematics Department, whose dedication and much valued contribution to the department have made this year successful. Their team-oriented approach, hard work and commitment have been superb. They have guided and supported our students on their learning journeys.

Tracy Herft, Head of Mathematics

Left: Creative STEM class, combining Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths in Year 8. Right: Year 8 students receive awards from Mrs Forwood and Mrs Gazis for the Maths Olympiad.
Physical Education

The Physical Education department prides itself on offering an enriching program where students are provided with countless opportunities outside the classroom to be physically active. As we move further forward through the technology-driven twenty-first century and the learning landscape changes, it is important to remind ourselves of the continuing value of being physically active. In addition to the physical benefits, it strengthens social relationships and human connections. Participating in physical activity has a social benefit and can be such a positive experience, with an important role in managing stress, reducing anxiety, encouraging healthy risk taking and promoting healthy self-efficacy.

In 2015, the Physical Education department has supported our students through a variety of physical pursuits. In Years 7 and 8 the students continue to build and develop their skill base in more traditional sports such as swimming, gymnastics and netball. However, in Year 9 and 10, the focus shifts towards more non-traditional activities that can continue to be pursued later in life, such as Ultimate Frisbee, Bocce, Gaelic Football and Fitness and Weight Training, all of which aim to engage and develop them as life long participants in physical activity.

‘The aim was to develop students’ creativity as well as questioning, investigation and report writing skills.’

‘Our staff are excited about the developing and planning that will take place and the new changes and challenges that this presents.’

In Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) classes the focus shifts to the classroom and students develop their understanding of Physical Education and use practical classes to apply their knowledge. The 2015 Unit 3 and 4 students were lucky enough to be involved in the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) Enhancement Program, where the aim is to develop a deeper understanding of the course content. The visit to RMIT included a tour of their state of the art Sports Science facility and one student, Stephanie Thom, was lucky enough to participate in a VO2 max test, a measure of the maximum volume of oxygen an athlete can use.

Early in Term 4, Health and Physical Education Week was celebrated and a variety of practical activities were offered to encourage all students to participate. The highlight of the week was certainly Strathy’s Commando – Stone Guy – who ran two packed boot camp sessions at lunchtime.

As a department we have spent a lot of time reviewing the current curriculum and completing an audit in preparation for the Australian Curriculum and Assessment Authority’s (ACARA’s) endorsement of the Australian Health and Physical Education curriculum which was finalised in September this year. Our staff are excited about the developing and planning that will take place and the new changes and challenges that this presents. We are looking forward to the continued engagement of our students in 2016.

I would like to thank the PE department of Pam, Liesl, Michelle, Jess, Michelle, Megan and Nathan for their enthusiasm and their ongoing commitment to Physical Education, and I would like to acknowledge the work of Michelle Hodges during her time as Acting Head of Physical Education.

This year we will be farewelling Nathan Cole, the Swimming programs officer who worked closely with the Physical Education department for the past five years. We thank him for his continued contribution to the School programs and his commitment to the students and Aquatic Education, which has been second to none. We would also like to wish Megan Boyd well as she will be on maternity leave for 2016. We thank her for her outstanding commitment to the Physical Education department and her exceptional leadership of Sport here at Strathcona.

We thank all the students for their enthusiasm and look forward to 2016 and all that it has to offer.

Kim Bate, Head of Physical Education and Michelle Hodges, Acting Head of Physical Education

Science

Science learning in 2015 has been enhanced through refining learning goals and the much anticipated new physical environment. On a staff day in January, Erica McWilliam (Fellow of the Australian Council of Educators and an Associate Fellow of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council from Queensland University of Technology) asked departments to establish a goal for 2015. The Science department’s goal was for all students in Years 8 to 10 to undertake an experimental investigation that would be formally assessed. The aim was to develop students’ creativity as well as questioning, investigation and report writing skills.

The learning environment for students achieving this goal was improved significantly as the new building, with five laboratories containing designated practical and theory areas, was opened for Term 2. Part of the Term 1 break was spent unpacking and appreciating the new learning spaces. There is now better access to materials, including equipment that had been in storage for eighteen months. The girls have valued working in these fresh, quiet spaces after the temporary demountable classrooms.
The learning environment for students achieving this goal was improved significantly as the new building ... was opened for Term 2.’

The Year 8 Science Talent Search Experimental Investigations have produced many high quality reports and a total of over $600 in prize money. Major Bursaries were awarded to Bronte Coxhill, Maya Weston, Jasmine Fehring, Anna Zeng, Tamsyn Lovass, Sophie Altmann (Year 8) and Eleanor Forwood (Year 11). In 2014 Eleanor was a semi-finalist in the National BHP Billiton Awards.

Strathcona students have also performed well in the National ICAS (International Competitions and Assessments for Schools) Science competition. High Distinctions (Top 1%) were awarded to Natasha Looi, Jessica Parris (Year 7), Tamsyn Lovass, Maya Weston, Anna Zeng (Year 8), and Yvonne Song (Year 9) and 17 Distinctions (next 10%) were also awarded to Strathcona students. Other outstanding academic performances have come from the 2014 Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) Physics class which gained the two highest results and the second greatest number of 40+ scores of any girls’ school in Victoria. Strathcona girls also continued to perform well across all VCE Science subjects. Ashlea Coxhill (2014 Dux) is to be congratulated on being offered a position in the Chancellor’s Scholars Program in Biomedicine at the University of Melbourne.

As always, there has been a change in staff teaching specific year levels. With a focus on developing skills and expertise, 2015 had seen much more movement than usual of staff across year levels. This has brought challenges but also professional growth. The department also welcomed Karen Whelan and Ruth Rae to the Science department. Karen is teaching VCE Psychology and Ruth takes junior Science.

Pam Welsford, Head of Science
Social Service

The Baptist Christian tradition has a proud colonial history of Social Service. Our four Houses are named after significant identities in the Baptist Church, including Ellen Arnold, Marie Gilbert and Margaret Findlay for their exemplary missionary service to India and Sir Wilfred Grenfell, who centred most of his life's work on the hospital ship, SS Strathcona.

‘The evening concert, organised and chaired by the Social Service Captains, was a huge success.’

In the spirit of philanthropy, our four Year 12 Social Service Captains – Louisa Chiam, Hannah Brown, Chloe van Nierop and Amelia McKay – have followed this rich heritage and shown an outstanding commitment to developing awareness of social issues and raising a considerable sum of money to donate to various charities during this year. Coupled with this, at each year level, I must acknowledge the girls who have passionately and tirelessly worked in the field of Social Service.

A special highlight of 2015 was the inaugural 'Strathy's Got Talent' competition. The four Social Service Captains, armed with a vision to raise funds for the charity We Can't Wait, successfully organised the competition so that it was most enjoyable for girls across all year levels. The evening concert, organised and chaired by the Social Service Captains, was a huge success. It was indeed a privilege to participate in assisting We Can't Wait to build toilets in Indian schools, in order for girls to be able to attend school.

The 40 Hour Famine was also a most successful campaign, being supported across several year levels. The girls who participated in this event made personal sacrifices and learnt about World Vision’s work to alleviate global poverty. This year a special highlight was the Mellor House campaign, where a large number of girls shared a lunchtime meal of cooked rice.

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This year our Main Campus casual dress days supported charities such as the School of St Jude, We Can’t Wait, the Australian Red Cross and Samaritan’s Purse.

In the spirit of Christmas giving, the girls collected Christmas food donations for Urban Seed at Collins Street Baptist Church and for asylum seekers through BaptCare Sanctuary. It was also most pleasing to have our Year 7 and 8 girls host a Christmas Concert and afternoon tea for elderly residents from Hedley Sutton and Camberwell Green Retirement Villages.

All in all, it has once again been a most successful year of Community Service, with girls raising well over $25,000 for several charities. A special word of appreciation to our Year 12 Social Service Captains and also the various Social Service Captains from each year level who have made a valuable contribution to our school Social Service program. Your effort has made a big difference to those who have so little.

Rhonda Burns, Social Service Coordinator and Chaplain
Compass Award

The Compass Award program has had another successful year. It has been pleasing to see students volunteering to participate in the Compass Award Program, with numbers increasing every year. To date, we have had a large number of students who have continued with the program and over 20 new students have taken the opportunity to engage in this co-curricular activity.

‘It is non-competitive and provides challenges to the students.’

Many students have achieved or are working towards their personal goals while developing self-esteem, having fun, building confidence as well as satisfying a desire to help others.

The Compass Award is available to all Year 5 to 8 students. It is non-competitive and provides challenges to the students. The program involves taking part in a hobby, volunteering, exploration and a physical activity. From the program, participants then decide on four specific activities they would like to pursue and formulate their goals accordingly. They are required to use their initiative to find a suitable assessor and record their results in their booklet, stating that they have met the hours required and achieved their chosen goals. Often photographs are included showing their involvement in the activity. After a level is completed and approved, the students receive a badge which they wear proudly on their School blazer as well as a certificate.

Our committee for this year was comprised of four committed Year 8 Compass students who not only assisted with the Mellor House students but also organised a fundraising event. Charlotte Mudgway, Tamsyn Lovass, Lucy Ballment and Audrey To, together with all the Compass students, took part in supporting two charities by collecting donated goods from the Strathcona community during Term 3. This year, scarves of all colours and sizes and toiletries – little bottles of shampoo, soap, toothpaste and toothbrushes – were contributed and distributed to the Baptcare and Salvation Army organisations. Norman Gale, Community Services Director at the Salvation Army Camberwell, was presented with giftwrapped boxes of scarves in a Year 8 Assembly by the Compass Committee.

I am delighted to announce the achievements for this year. Alexandra Sarlos-Welsh and Caitlin Doyle, now both in Year 9, completed all four levels of the Compass Award and received their Level 4 badge at the beginning of this year. We also congratulate Tamsyn Lovass, our most recent Award recipient of all four levels and Audrey To who achieved Levels 3 and 4. This is a great accomplishment and we wish them well as they now move into the Duke of Edinburgh program.

Pamela Allan, Compass Coordinator

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 diverse audiences is an essential leadership and life skill. It is increasingly becoming more important for our students as they become global citizens and attempt to connect with other communities and cultures.

At Strathcona, we encourage all students to participate in the range of public speaking 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 has all students from Years 7 to 12 present a prepared speech, and finals are held in Featherstone Hall. Congratulations to the winners Erica Quan (Year 12, Senior Section), Isabella Hunt (Year 10, Intermediate Section) and Bianca Vains (Year 8, Middle Section). Senior Division second place winner,
‘The girls spoke on a range of topics ... displaying a great flair for speaking and poise under pressure.’

Hannah Brown, also went on to represent Strathcona proudly at the Victorian Assessment and Curriculum Authority (VCAA) Plain English Speaking Competition. This competition is one of the premier forums for public speaking in the state and the standard is always exemplary. Hannah’s passionate speech on baby hatches saw her awarded Runner-Up in the region. Clare McLean (Year 10) entered the Rotary Four-way Award and Briana Pappalardo (Year 11) and Clare Duyker (Year 10) the Richmond Rotary Ainger Award. Four girls entered the Legacy Junior Public Speaking Competition – Sophie Altman and Hannah Venema from Year 8 and Kate Joseland and Hannah Smith from Year 7. The girls spoke on a range of topics including compassion and community service and for their first attempt in this competition did a tremendous job, displaying a great flair for speaking and poise under pressure. Thank you to Mrs Murray for facilitating this.

Debating has also been of a solid standard this year with many personal accomplishments. The Debaters' Association of Victoria (DAV) Interschool Competition, held at Camberwell Grammar for our region, enables students from Years 9 to 12 to research and prepare debates with a range of topical issues from ‘Magazines should ban photo editing’ to ‘We should abolish welfare quarantining’. Strathcona students are always extremely committed in their approach to preparation and many teams experienced success. In particular, Year 11 student Alexandra Linehan was presented with a Swannie Award in a ceremony at MLC to celebrate the fact that she was the outstanding Best Speaker in the region for the B-Grade Division. She was also nominated for the the overall State B Grade Champion; an outstanding effort!

The House Debating was also very successful this year with the Grand Final taking place between Arnold and Findlay. The topic ‘The Bachelor should not be allowed on television’ was debated with both wit and humour, with Findlay passionately winning the affirmative case.

‘Debating has also been of a solid standard this year with many personal accomplishments.’

Strathcona students also participated in the Evatt Competition with impressive results once again. This is a debating and diplomacy competition for teams of two based on the style of discussion and voting in the United Nations’ Security Council. This competition focuses on current global issues, with teams progressing through to further rounds based not only on their knowledge and debating ability but also on their negotiation and reasoning skills. Year 11 duo Alexandra Linehan and Eleanor Forwood reached the State Finals, which involved competing against the top 15 teams in Victoria.

Mrs King has provided clear leadership to our teams which has seen Strathcona go from strength to strength over the last few years.

Our Year 7 and 8 students also entered the debating fray for the DAV Junior Secondary Program held at Camberwell Grammar. This has been a very popular program with increasing numbers of students. We were able to enter four different teams each week and had almost forty students from Year 7 and 8 involved. The success of our Junior Secondary students owes a great deal to the efforts of the Year 11 student mentors who coached the teams. Acknowledgement is due to Isabella Harre, Delia McKeon, Alexandra Linehan, Hannah Murphy, Madison Sorrenti, Julia Rowland, Eleanor Forwood, Alexandra Lloyd, Madeleine Lodge, Briana Pappalardo, Bronte Hough and Phillippa Turner for their excellent team management and advice.

Strathcona Junior Secondary teams won on 8 out of 12 occasions. Girls who were nominated as ‘Best Speaker’ were Kara McKenzie (7A), Eva Williams (7A), Jasmine Fehring (8B), Olivia Gazeas (8B), Marion Clegg (8C), Tamsyn Lovass (8C), Kathreen Forwood (8C) and Alison Blair-West (8C). It was pleasing to see the level of team commitment and the additional support offered by a number girls who contributed to the success of the program by attending the debates as reserves.

Year 12 student leaders Emily-Rose Blake and Rebecca Gill are also to be congratulated for the leadership and organisational ability they have demonstrated throughout the year in preparing all teams for the DAV debates and the Inter-House competition.

Finally, the dedication and hard work of staff coaching these teams is appreciated. My thanks are extended to Mrs Menke, Ms Thornhill, Mrs Gazis, Mrs Bromby, Mrs Young and Mrs Ward.

Simone Boland, Head of English
Duke of Edinburgh’s Award

The Duke of Edinburgh’s Award is a criteria-based award that requires students to complete four components with regular commitment to each over a set time frame. Students complete a Skill, a Service, a Physical Recreation and an Adventurous Journey to achieve their Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.

This year has proven successful for students participating in the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award and Strathcona has made new connections with the community through the Service element of the Award. Students in Year 9 raised the bar in their commitment to the Bronze Award, having 60% of the year level near completion by Term 4. Among the many activities explored, a small group of Bronze Award students contributed towards a Performance Project group that aimed to voice stories of their communities through creative means. Working with Joanne Trentini, these girls put much energy into the sessions, concluding with a professional photoshoot for a photo book to celebrate members of the community. Other service pursuits included working in aged care homes, volunteering at youth centres, walking pets for adults with disabilities and conserving local bushland habitats. Cate Oldham and Carla Tobin, Award Leaders at Year 9, were instrumental in conducting a Scavenger Hunt that raised awareness of disabilities as students ran around the campus to find and answer questions.

“We currently have 112 students registered in the Award scheme, with eight students due to complete their Gold Award in 2016.’

Student Award Leaders Audrey Tandiokusuma and Anna Doyle, completing their Gold Award in Year 12, led meetings to assist younger students in recording their progress online and planning their Adventurous Journeys. In the Silver and Gold Awards, students explored many different environments to fulfil their Adventurous Journey component. Journeys included tours to India and to Bali, the Year 9 Camp to Campus journey and hikes in Croajingolong National Park and Wilsons Promontory National Park. Planning for these journeys involved organising a menu, route plan, safety outline and packing list. Students were excellent in their leadership on the hikes and they very much enjoyed the interaction with peers from different year levels.

We currently have 112 students registered in the Award scheme, with eight students due to complete their Gold Award in 2016. Congratulations to the 24 girls who completed their Bronze and Silver Awards by Term 4, 2015. Awards Victoria announced Strathcona as a finalist in three award categories for the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award scheme: Longevity, Outstanding Program Delivery and Outstanding Youth Award Leader.

Liesel Woods, Outdoor Education Coordinator
Exchanges and Tours

After many years coordinating Exchanges and Tours at Strathcona, Mrs Diana Little has passed on this responsibility to Mrs Karyn Murray. Mrs Little continues at Strathcona for one day a week as a Projects Officer working on Feliciter Connection (Past Staff) functions, archives and stories of exchanges and tours over the years.

Expressions of enjoyment in many new experiences, development of independence, appreciation of cultural differences and taking up different opportunities and challenges have been stated as benefits by students involved in the wide variety of tours and exchanges offered this year. Most of our exchanges are reciprocal, with participating students hosting visiting students as well as travelling to experience life at another school. 2015 saw the introduction of two new opportunities for Year 10 and 11 students, a tour to India and a reciprocal exchange to Chile.

Host sisters developed friendships and participated in many excursions exploring Melbourne and surrounds with visiting students. In August, 22 Soshin students arrived on their school's annual visit from Japan. They joined in numerous classes to share Japanese culture and developed friendships with their host sisters and families while enjoying their family life. The Soshin students' presentation of songs and a dance at the Annual Music Concert, assemblies, Church and Chapel services will long be remembered.

A study tour to France was held for language students and a memorable staff and friends tour to China was ably led by Ms Peixia Mo. Mrs Little and Ms Chalmers, Community Relations, joined a weekend of Centenary Celebrations at Columba College, our first exchange school in Dunedin, New Zealand.

The hospitality of many Strathcona families has been appreciated by visiting students from our sister schools: Soshin in Yokohama, Japan; Ewha in Seoul, Korea; Columba College in Dunedin, New Zealand; Meriden in Sydney, NSW; PLC in Armidale, NSW; Rockhampton Girls Grammar, Queensland; and St Margaret's British School in Chile.

It has been a privilege to be involved in organising exchanges and tours and arranging the hosting of so many visiting students over many years.

Diana Little, Programs Coordinator

Host sisters developed friendships and participated in many excursions exploring Melbourne and surrounds with visiting students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students representing Strathcona on Exchange 2015</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>To PLC Armidale, NSW, 15 – 27 August</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alannah Frampton (8B)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoe Steer (8A)</td>
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<td>Tamasyne Lloyd-Teese (8D)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To Meriden, Sydney, 15 – 27 August</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Tara Robinson (8A)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sophie Altmann (8D)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To Rockhampton, Queensland 25 August – 8 September</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Isabel Dedoncker (8D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hannah Downie (8B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molly Chard (8A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maya Weston (8C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host sisters for visiting Rockhampton students were Jacinta Finlayson, Matilda Hankin, Isabel Savenake and Olivia Starick.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To St Margaret's British School, Chile</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Louise Blair-West (10C)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harriet Grimsey (10A)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bridget Hough (10D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura Martin (10A)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexandra McLeod (10D)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ashley Rubin (10A)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sarah van der Hock (10B)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Host sisters for visiting Chilean students were Louise Blair-West, Harriet Grimsey, Bridget Hough, Caitlin Lynch, Laura Martin, Alexandra McLeod, Annabel Pittendrigh, Ashley Rubin, Amber Sinclair and Sarah Van der Hock.</td>
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Music

Once again we are incredibly proud of our emerging and established musicians for their outstanding performances this year. In Term 1, Strings and the Combined Choirs performed sacred repertoires at both the Foundation Day Service and at the Easter Service. The girls felt particularly honoured to be a part of Mrs McConaghy’s induction at the beginning of the year.

‘The calibre of musicianship, the level of focus and superb memory work demonstrated by these students ... was astounding.’

Students quickly launched into rehearsals for the Performing Arts Festival, where skills in leadership, teamwork, arranging music, running rehearsals and an ability to communicate were very quickly developed. This resulted in a most entertaining evening where the musical contributions were excellent.

Second and third terms are always very busy for the Music Department and this year two Recital Evenings were held at Tay Creggan for our Scholarship Holders and Advanced Musicians. The calibre of musicianship, the level of focus and superb memory work demonstrated by these students, the youngest of whom is in Year 5, was astounding.

These attributes were again demonstrated at the two Concerto Evenings, the first of which showcased our senior soloists from Years 11 and 12 and the second our Year 8 and 10 soloists. Concertos are always a challenge for musicians, soloists and orchestral members alike. Our congratulations go to Jeanie Kim, Mollie Zacharchuk and Samantha Sheldon (Year 8), You Min Ahn and Scarlett Chen (Year 10), Alexandra Lloyd, Charlotte Pannier and Elizabeth Robinson (Year 11), Mabel Chong and Vivian Chen (Year 12) for their outstanding performances on these occasions. These young musicians, soloists and orchestral players alike, are to be commended for tackling and successfully performing a demanding repertoire of art music that is frequently heard in the great concert halls around the world.

‘Their leadership has been outstanding and has been valued by the girls and staff alike.’

This year 110 students attended the Music Camp in preparation for the Annual Music Concert, a weekend that was filled with glorious musical sounds and much laughter. It is always fascinating to see our older students interacting closely with our young ones, with many lessons learned on both sides. The close collaboration with staff, the sharing of musical ideas, the development of focused attention in rehearsals and the strengthening of a sense of connectedness among the group provide an invaluable experience for all participants. This concert showcased all our larger ensembles and for the first time was streamed live around the world!

Our first Friends of Music High Tea was also held in third term and featured all our Chamber Ensembles. This was an incredibly successful event, with both sittings booked out.

well in advance of the function. The Friends of Music are to be congratulated upon the excellent organisation of this event and are also to be thanked for their tireless efforts and their ongoing support of all things musical within the School.

Special mention must be made of our two Music Captains Morgan Macleod-Finke and Vivian Chen. Their leadership has been outstanding and has been valued by the girls and staff alike. It has been a joy and privilege to participate in their musical development over the years and to share this journey with them.

Georgina Nagy, Director of Music

Outdoor Education

Outdoor Education at Strathcona provides opportunities for students to experience different landscapes, work together in challenging and stimulating activities and to have enjoyable, memorable experiences to share with their peers over their time at school and beyond their school days.

This year Outdoor Education experiences were offered in the form of Year level camps, Duke of Edinburgh’s Award journeys, a Learn to Surf day and a Learn to Ski day. Between the year level programs, there is a visible change in the confidence and maturity of students as they learn skills year-to-year that improve their self-management, understanding and positive approach towards the activities.

‘... taking greater measures to enhance students’ skills in leadership and resilience.’

Year 7 Camp was located at Halls Outdoor Education site at Gembrook. Students enjoyed the natural, lush landscape and the activities, such as caving and abseiling. Year 7s were also lucky enough to experience an orientation Surf Day which provided them an opportunity to get to know each other while learning about swimming, surfing and water safety. The Year 8 Camp was held at The Outdoor Education Group’s site, Camp Jungai, in Taggerty. Girls experienced an overnight bushwalk, rockclimbing, rafting, canoeing and low ropes, with many games and group reflections in between these activities. Upon return, the year level created a stunning tree representing their learning and memories from the program. Year 9s ventured out on their Camp to Campus journey, following the Yarra River from its source to their Hawthorn campus, Tay Creggan. The girls were sufficiently challenged, finding ways to entertain and motivate themselves through the journey and becoming closer as a result after the seven days. All the girls were very proud of their achievements. Year 10 Camp, hosted by the Uniting Church group at Merricks, explored stunning marine environments and a range of new skills for the girls to experience. The warm weather was ideal for the water-based activities that the girls participated in enthusiastically. Highlights included swimming with seals and dolphins!

The Learn to Ski day was offered to Year 7 to 12 students to encourage an appreciation for the alpine environment. As usual, the participants attended with little experience and returned able to ski.

Outdoor Education programs at Strathcona are constantly reviewed to ensure value is added in line with the most current research and suggestions for youth development. This year, as a response to the Positive Education Network...
and research demonstrating the value of Mindfulness, our Outdoor Education programs incorporated activities that integrated such suggestions. Guided journal writing, attention activities such as audio-mapping sounds of nature and association with ‘Aha’ moments helped students to become present in their experiences. ‘Indijicate’ advocate, Sean Andrews, supported this notion in his approach to teaching students about Indigenous relationships with the land. We look forward to developing further this relationship with the land and cultivating the mindfulness of students on these programs, whilst also taking greater measures to enhance students’ skills in leadership and resilience.

Liesel Woods, Outdoor Education Coordinator

Speech, Drama and Effective Communication

The Speech and Drama program engages students in developing communication and performance skills. The curriculum engages students through chosen performance texts at all levels and adds writing skills together with debate and public speaking at higher levels. Core to the curriculum are intentional opportunities to present performance work to audiences.

‘The program remains stable in relation to enrolment levels, eisteddfod participation and examinations undertaken.’

Students study performance skills through performing texts (poetry, monologues and play extracts); engaging in drama games, improvisation and mime; developing reading skills; and participating in public speaking. Introductory analysis of literature also complements and informs performance. Analysis involves understanding rhythm and structural aspects of poetry and character, plot and emotional themes in monologue selections and play extracts. Speech theory and vocal techniques are taught formally alongside performance work at all levels. Breathing and voice care theory are also introduced as appropriate to levels of study.

‘... feel they have achieved more and are significantly more likely to continue tuition the following year.’

Enrolments continue at comparable levels to 2014. As usual the program sees an attrition rate of about 15% across the year. These are students who begin tuition but discontinue at some point during the year. A small intake of new students, usually attracted by word of mouth recommendation, has seen a stable enrolment of around 40 students in 2015. The program continues to attract students from across a wide range of year levels. Half of enrolments come from Mellor House from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. This year has seen our youngest enrolments ever with five students from Year 3. The program again sees strong interest in Year 7 and 8 after which enrolments often decline with competing interests in Years 9 to 12. Currently the program has two Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) level enrolments.

The program continues to be structured around a number of specific performance opportunities: a studio concert for parents hosted at school in May, the Eisteddfod by the Bay in late May early-June and external Trinity Examinations in October to November.

At the Eisteddfod by the Bay, 31 students entered for a total of 126 solo and group performances. Most popular among students are competition in solo poetry, solo character and small group scripts (duo and trio performances). Strathcona again had a successful Eisteddfod experience. Significant numbers of girls headed home with medals clinking. Most notably Chloe Tremewen (Year 6) was the recipient of a $500 scholarship, one of two prizes offered to commemorate the Eisteddfod’s sixtieth year. Samantha Sheppard (Year 11) took
out awards in Senior Shakespeare, Senior Drama and the Senior Encouragement Award (Perpetual Trophy). It is a privilege to see girls excelling in this area and being prepared to display their skills. Both girls went on to offer performances at a presentation assembly.

All students are offered an opportunity to present for Trinity Guildhall practical examinations. These examinations are performance-based and conducted by an external examiner who visits the school. This year 19 students have enrolled for examinations ranging from Year 1 through to Year 4. This number is down slightly, particularly with the absence of any students undertaking Advanced Levels (Years 6 – 8). The program has a number of promising students and it is my hope we can return to form with one or two students each year undertaking advanced examinations. Again most popular is the Speech and Drama Syllabus, while a small number have chosen alternate syllabi, including Shakespeare and Acting Skills. Grade levels are structured similarly to Music examinations with Grades 7 and 8 considered VCE equivalent. Diplomas are possible.

‘... a clearer picture of how the subjects and co-curricular activities they are doing now and in the near future might relate to a future pathway.’

GSV Sport

The school vision to ‘Bring out her best’ comes from the culture of involvement. At Strathcona Baptist Girls Grammar School the sport program is committed to providing an environment that enables and encourages participation, where all girls’ sporting experience is aligned with our school motto ‘Bravely, Faithfully, Happily': Bravely, for the courage girls display when they compete; Faithfully, for the devotion and loyalty they have to their school and the belief and compassion they feel for their teammates; and Happily, for the enthusiasm, graciousness, integrity and joy all girls display when representing their School.

Our philosophy is to encourage girls to embrace their education wholeheartedly and sport forms an integral part of our educational ethos. Through our association with Girls Sport Victoria (GSV), we strive to provide access to a diverse range of co-curricular sporting activities which offer opportunities for students to pursue their areas of interest and talent and to develop leadership skills, teamwork, commitment, self-discipline and positive relationships. We promote a sense of belonging and community and foster a passion for physical activity, health and well-being.

The girls at Strathcona are known for their motivation and determination and I am very proud of their efforts and attitude when representing our School. This year we entered 77 teams in co-curricular sporting competitions spanning 22 different sports. This translated to approximately 480 students involved in a co-curricular activity (nearly 80% of the senior school), underpinning our endeavour to provide as many girls as possible with a School sporting experience. We value a sense of belonging and community and encourage the girls’ connectedness to the School. Sport often becomes the social glue within a school that ties people together, as well as promoting health and fitness.

2015 GSV Finalists:
• Junior A Tennis
• Junior B Tennis
• Intermediate A Tennis
• Intermediate A Softball
• Intermediate A Netball

2015 Runners-Up:
• Intermediate A Softball
• Junior C Volleyball
• Junior 5-a-side Soccer

‘We value a sense of belonging and community’

Setting key focal points in external eisteddfods and examinations provides a structure to the year’s teaching. It further provides students with focus and encourages disciplined practice patterns. It remains a common experience that those choosing to participate in eisteddfods and examinations report higher levels of enjoyment, feel they have achieved more and are significantly more likely to continue tuition the following year.

Mellor House students remain keen to perform in the Friday afternoon assembly. Across the year, the Speech Program contributes approximately 15 performances. Year 3 and 4 students will also take their piece away to perform to their peers at their year level camps.

The program remains stable in relation to enrolment levels, eisteddfod participation and examinations undertaken. Students continue to excel and perform at or above general standard, with outstanding results at eisteddfods and in examinations. Each semester continues to offer core performance opportunities that focus student attention and ensure the program remains vibrant and engaging for students at all levels.

Fiona Marantelli, Speech and Drama Teacher
2015 Premiers:
• Senior B Tennis
• Junior F Netball
• Senior A Basketball

Swimming
After placing third in the GSV Preliminary Carnival, the Swim team qualified for Division 2 in the GSV Championship Carnival. After some wonderful efforts and many personal bests, the team managed to secure second place on the day. Team Captains were Audrey Tandiokusuma and Madeline Wild. Nineteen girls qualified for the Finals evening.

Silver Medalists:
Taegen Coxhill.......... 50m Butterfly, 4 x 50m Medley Relay and 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay (Year 10)
Madeline Wild ........................................... 50m Butterfly and 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay (Year 12)
Phillipa Mitchell ....................... 4 x 50m Medley Relay and 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay (Year 10)
Estelle Warren ...................... 4 x 50m Medley Relay and 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay (Year 10)
Isabelle Binnie-Peart ............. 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay (Year 10)
Scarlett Chen........................ 4 x 50m Medley Relay (Year 10)
Audrey Tandiokusuma ........... 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay (Year 12)
Sarah Martin ................. 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay (Year 12)
Anna Terry .................. 4 x 50m Freestyle Relay (Year 12)

Bronze Medalists:
Madeline Wild ......................................... 100m Freestyle and 4 x 50m Medley Relay (Year 12)
Anna Terry .................. 4 x 50m Medley Relay (Year 12)
Sarah Martin .......... 4 x 50m Medley Relay (Year 12)
Audrey Tandiokusuma ....... 4 x 50m Medley Relay (Year 12)

Diving
The 2015 Strathcona Diving season proved to be a very successful one, with girls across all year levels forming the Diving team and achieving impressive results. The team qualified to compete in Division 2 and exceeded their own expectations when they placed first in the Junior Competition. Even more exciting, they placed first overall for the Division 2 Diving Competition. It was an incredible result from our girls and a great end to the Diving season captained by Sophie Brugliera. Jenna Healey (Year 8) qualified for the Finals evening that was held at the Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre and won the bronze medal.

Cross Country
Cross Country is always very popular and has a large group of approximately 80 committed girls who train hard throughout Terms 1 and 2. This year the Cross Country Team competed in Division 1 and placed seventh on the Championship Day held at Bundooora Park. Congratulations are offered to the following girls for their achievements: Tamsyn Lovass (Year 8) third place, Tess Plowman (Year 10) second place and Georgia Chester (Year 12) eighth place in their age group. Team Captains were Georgia Chester (Captain) and Isabella Romanella and Sophie Brugliera (Vice-Captains). Congratulations are also offered to Tess Plowman who was selected as a member of the GSV Cross Country Representative Team.

Athletics
After competing in the Preliminary Carnival, the girls were ecstatic to qualify in the prestigious Division 1 Track and Field Championships, finishing seventh overall on the day, with 26 girls going on to qualify for the Finals Evening. This was a fantastic achievement for all of the girls involved. Team captains were Sophie Brugliera (Captain) and Isabella Romanella and Georgia Chester (Vice-Captains). A special mention must go to Kate Boulter (Year 10) for breaking the Year 10 GSV Shot-Put record at the Finals evening.
Gold Medalists
Kate Boulter .......................... Gold in Shot-Put, Discus and 4 x 100m Relay (Year 10)
Tess Plowman .......................... 4 x 100m Relay (Year 10)
Alex Lotric .............................. 4 x 100m Relay (Year 10)
Clare Duyker ............................ 4 x 100m Relay (Year 10)

Silver Medalists
Tess Plowman .......................... 800m and 1,500m (Year 10)
Chelsea Mitchell ........................ 800m (Year 11)

Bronze Medalists
Kate Boulter .......................... 400m and Javelin (Year 10)
Mabry Simpson-Bull ............... 200m and 4 x 100m Relay (Year 11)
Madeline Grimsey ........................ 4 x 100m Relay (Year 11)
Chelsea Mitchell ........................ 4 x 100m Relay (Year 11)
Danielle Killick ........................ 4 x 100m Relay (Year 11)

Celebration of Sport Evening
The sporting calendar culminated with the Celebration of Sport Evening on November 12 in Featherstone Hall. Congratulations to all students who were recognised for their sporting excellence and achievement. Over 350 guests attended the evening and were inspired by the London Games. Chelsea encouraged the girls to persevere in a male-dominated industry as pathways would open and success would come. Kelly spoke inspiringly about overcoming adversity and maintaining the strength to succeed when challenges in life arise.

'These awards are presented to one girl in each year level who has represented the School across many sports.'

The nominees for Year 7 were:
- Caitlin Imeson
- Sarah O’Dwyer
- Amber Smith
- Kayla Smith
- Rachael Walker
- Lily Wright

And the winner for Year 7 was Kayla Smith

Kayla has taken up every opportunity to participate in sport this year, being a part of the three GSV carnival teams: Diving, Cross Country and Athletics. She was also a member of the Netball, Basketball, Football and Soccer Teams and has been involved in Kayaking and Triathlon earlier in the year. Kayla enjoys all aspects of her sport and has shown incredible commitment to every team she has been a part of this year, winning the Most Dedicated award for not only one but all three carnival sports: Diving, Cross Country and Athletics.

The nominees for Year 8 were:
- Claire Boulter
- Bronte Coxhill
- Jacinta Finlayson
- Georgia Watkins
- Kate Forwood
- Lily Gemmell
- Emma Orelli
- Talana Kitchen

And the winner for Year 8 was Kate Forwood

Kate has also taken up many opportunities to represent Strathcona and participate in many sports this year. She was a member of the Diving and Athletics teams as well as participating in Indoor Cricket, Football, Netball, Water Polo and Tennis. She is also a member of the Strathcona Rhythmic Gymnastics club and the Saturday Netball team and was captain of the Junior Soccer team. Kate has also been presented with the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award for Football and Soccer this year.

The nominees for Year 9 were:
- Helaine Mather
- Ruby Pontifex
- Isabella Thom
- Caitlin Deery
- Caitleen Doyle
- Laura Jarrett

And the winner for Year 9 was Caitlin Doyle
Caitlin has participated in 11 sports throughout 2015 including Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics, as well as Tennis, Triathlon, Netball, Basketball, Soccer, Water Polo and the 5-a-side Soccer tournament. Caitlin is also a member of the Strathcona Saturday Netball team.

The nominees for Year 10 were:
- Laura Martin
- Tess Plowman
- Jessica Walsh
- Jessica Hamilton

And the winner for Year 10 was Kate Boulter

Kate has been a member of the Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics Teams this year, as well as participating in Basketball, Volleyball, Water Polo and Triathlon. She was a member of the Intermediate 8 team that competed at the Australian Open Schools Rowing Championships earlier this year. Kate overcame injury to win three gold medals and a bronze at the GSV Track and Field Finals evening and set a new GSV record in the Year 10 shot-put.

The nominees for Year 11 were:
- Eleanor Forwood
- Chelsea Mitchell
- Hannah Murphy
- Annabel Chandler
- Mabry Simpson-Bull
- Madison Sorrenti
- Emma Wild

And the winner for Year 11 was Mabry Simpson-Bull

In 2015, Mabry has been a member of the Swimming, Cross Country and Athletics teams and was presented with the Most Dedicated award for Athletics. She was also a member of the Netball and Volleyball teams, where she was awarded the MVP award, and the Basketball team that recently won the GSV Basketball Finals. Mabry was a member of the Senior Blue Quad that competed at the Australian Open Schools Rowing Championships earlier this year and plays in the Strathcona Saturday Netball competition.

The nominees at Year 12 were:
- Stephanie Thom
- Audrey Tandiokasuma
- Isabella Romanella
- Elizabeth Hodgetts
- Georgia Chester
- Sophie Brugliera
- Erica Quan
- Sarah Foster
- Olivia Newman
- Sarah Martin
- Jessica Gair

And the winner for Year 12 was Stephanie Thom

Stephanie has been able to juggle her passion for sport with her Year 12 studies this year. She was a member of the Cross Country and Athletics teams and participated in the Triathlon where her team won a bronze medal. She represented Strathcona in AFL, Netball, and Soccer and was the Captain of the Senior Basketball team that recently won the GSV Finals.

Stephanie was also a member of the Senior Blacks Quad that competed at the Australian Open Schools Rowing Championships earlier this year.

Sportswoman of the Year Mabry Simpson-Bull

‘Sportswoman of the Year’ is awarded to acknowledge Mabry’s exceptional participation in and contribution to School sport at Strathcona. This young woman has not only embraced opportunities to enrich her education but has also been an outstanding role model to her peers and the greater School community. She demonstrates integrity, teamwork and commitment and is a fine ambassador for the School.

Mabry has not only been a member of many Strathcona sport teams. She also found time to share her passion for sport and coach several teams throughout the year, including Junior GSV Netball in Term 2. Junior GSV Volleyball – where her team made the Finals and finished second – and the Mellor House Basketball team in Term 3. On an individual level, Mabry qualified for the GSV Athletics Finals evening in the 200m, winning a bronze medal, and was also a member of the Year 11 4 x 100m Relay team that won a bronze medal for the fifth year in a row. Throughout the year Mabry has demonstrated determination and motivation to improve her performances and also encouraged others to do so. She was elected by her peers to the position of Sports Captain for 2016. This a testament to the commitment and passion she has demonstrated for sport at Strathcona.

Megan Boyd, Head of Sport
Strathcona Medal Winner 2015

Congratulations to Joanne Knight (1996), who was awarded the Strathcona Medal 2015 at Strathcona’s 92nd Annual Presentation Night on Monday 30 November.

The Strathcona Medal, awarded annually, stands alone as Strathcona’s method of recognising someone within our School community of past students who has demonstrated excellence in her chosen field and exceptional service to the wider community in the spirit of the School motto, ‘Bravely, Faithfully, Happily’.

Joanne completed her education at Strathcona in 1996, followed by honours degrees in Arts and Law at Monash University.

She is an experienced lawyer who has sought justice for refugees and disadvantaged migrants, and has led lawyers in seeking law reform for human rights and fairness. As a lawyer and then Associate, Joanne worked with Erskine Rodan & Associates leading test cases and a successful High Court challenge in migration and domestic violence law.

In seeking law reform, Joanne led teams of voluntary lawyers as Section Chair of the Administrative Law and Human Rights area of the Law Institute of Victoria, proposing legal reforms and appearing before Parliamentary Inquiries.

Joanne has also managed the Brotherhood of St Laurence’s Ecumenical Migration Centre, and governed on a number of not for profit boards, including as the founding Chairperson of Oaktree for its first six years – a youth led movement to end poverty – as Deputy Chair of the Hotham Mission Asylum Seekers Project, and as an advisory member to the Board of Mission Australia.

She is currently TEAR Australia’s National Advocacy Coordinator, campaigning on aid and climate justice. Her passion is for positive change for those facing injustice or poverty.

We are proud to name her as the 2015 recipient of the Strathcona Medal.

Mellor House Academic Pursuits and the Arts

- **Chloe Tremewan** (Year 6) won the Performing Arts Scholarship at Eisteddfod by the Bay’s 60th Anniversary.
- **Chloe Tremewan and Anna Walsh** (Year 6) competed in the finals of the Alliance Française Poetry Competition.
- **Eva Hamilton, You Jin Ahn, Nadya De Silva** (Year 6) and **Eryue Ni, Lily King and Jacinta Caruso** (Year 5) of the Mellor House Chamber Strings were awarded an Honourable Mention in the Borroodara Eisteddfod.
- The Mellor House Singers were selected to perform at the ANCA Choralfest 2015.
- **Piper Le Page** (Year 6) finished in the top 2% of students in the Year 5/6 Maths Olympiad across Australasia.
special achievements


• Romy Rendigs, Katherine Johnson, Rianna Thiele (Year 6) and Sienna Strauss and Samantha Schwarz (Year 5) represented Strathcona at the Boroondara Divisional Athletics Championships. Rianna and Katherine went on to compete at the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Athletics, where Rianna placed 3rd in the 1.500m.

• Emily Palit, Piper Le Page, Raquel Rodriguez, Rianna Thiele, Chloe Tremevuen, Anna Walsh, Talla Ciardulli, You Jin Ahn and Grace Burn (Year 6) received Minor Bursaries in the Upper Primary section of the Science Talent Search (STS) competition run by the Science Teachers Association of Victoria (STAV).

• Charlotte Buckmaster, Zoe Lee, Anjelica Dimitriou, Michaela Petroro and Jemima Close (Year 6) received Certificates of Merit in the Upper Primary section of the STS competition.

• Jemima Close (Year 6) came overall Reserve Champion in her class at the St Margaret’s and Berwick Grammar 2015 Interschool Showjumping Championships.

• The Mellor House Year 4 Basketball team – Tristen Angarano, Kayla Griffiths, Ella Maber, Bethany Moore, Milla Pitkanen, Ella Robertson-Brown, Zara Rosenberg, Isabella Tremevuen and Sophie Tremevuen – finished in the top 10 out of 214 teams in the State Final for Hoop Time Basketball.

• Lauren Joyce (Year 5) and Isabella Tremevuen, Tristen Angarano and Freya Batty (Year 4) competed in the Victorian Rhythmic Gymnastics Junior Championships, and Phoebe Sattie (Year 1) competed in the Group Rhythmic Gymnastics Victorian Championships.

Main School Academic Pursuits and the Arts

• Ashlea Coxhill (Year 12) 2014, received the Jean Lovegrove Award for Dux of Strathcona. She was offered a position in the Chancellor’s Scholars Program in Biomedicine at the University of Melbourne.

• Jamie Yeung (Year 12) 2014, was awarded the Barbara Green Memorial Art Award.

• Vivian Cben (Year 12) 2014, was awarded the Buxton Award for Contribution to Classical Music.

• The following Year 12 2014 students received Premier’s Awards:
  o Joyce Lim (English)
  o Michelle Benington (Geography)
  o Tessa Pietsch (French)

• Isabelle Winiarski (Year 12) was invited to audition for Top Class VCE Dance, following a perfect score for her Technique Solo in the 2014 examination.

• Stephanie Thom (Year 12) received a guaranteed offer into the course of her choice (Paramedicine) at ACU through the Early Achievers Program (EAP).

• Erica Quan (Year 12) won the Senior Division of the School’s Public Speaking Competition.

• Erica Quan (Year 12) was selected to exhibit her Year 11 Food Technology folio at the Melbourne Museum as part of the ‘VCE Season of Excellence’ exhibition.

• Shania Killick (Year 12) was shortlisted for the Melbourne Museum’s ‘VCE Season of Excellence’ exhibition with her folio ‘Fusion Fashion’s Ready To Wear Launch at the Four Seasons Restaurant’.

• Hannah Brown (Year 12) was awarded Runner-Up at the Regional Finals for the VCAA Plain English Speaking Competition.

• Audrey Tandiokusuma (Year 12) was short-listed for the prize of Outstanding Youth Award Leader at The Duke of Edinburgh’s International Award (DoEIA) Excellence and Innovation Awards.

• Isabella Romanella (Year 12) was awarded third place in the Dante Alighieri Italian Discourse Competition.

• Charlotte Pannier (Year 11) was selected as a Kwong Lee Dow Scholar at the University of Melbourne.

• Eleanor Forwood, Kiren Sandhu and Olivia Lucarelli (Year 11) were selected for the Monash Young Scholars program.
The Year 10 Division 3 Coxed Quad Scull won Gold medals at the Head of School Girls Regatta.

- Isabelle Rossidis (Year 11) was invited to audition her Drama Examination monologue for Top Class Drama.
- Erin Dempsey (Year 11) had her lino print selected for the prestigious printmakers competition – the 2015 Silk Cut award. Her work was exhibited in the student section at the Glen Eira Gallery, Caulfield.
- Eleanor Forwood (Year 11) was awarded a semi-finalist’s prize in the BHP Billiton Science and Engineering Awards 2015. She has been selected for entry into the 2016 BHP Billiton Science and Engineering Awards. She also achieved a Credit in the highly competitive Australian Physics Olympiad.
- Alexandra Linehan (Year 11) was presented with the Swannie Award for Best Speaker B Grade (Year 11) 2015, in the Camberwell region, by the Inter School Debating Association of Victoria.
- Eleanor Forwood (Year 11) was the Senior Division (Year 11/12) winner of the Margaret Fendley Writing Competition.
- Samantha Sheppard (Year 11) won the Senior Encouragement Award & Perpetual Trophy at Eisteddfod by the Bay’s 60th Anniversary.
- Isabella Hunt (Year 10) won the Intermediate Division of the School’s Public Speaking Competition.
- Isabella Hunt, and Siobhan Roberts (Year 10) were awarded first and second place respectively for cake decorating at the Royal Melbourne Show.
- Siobhan Roberts, Kelly Bradley, Georgetta Napier and Louise Blair-West (Year 10) competed in the State Constitutional Convention. Georgetta was chosen to give one of the 10 opening addresses.
- Emily Clegg (Year 9) won a State Excellence Award in the National History Challenge.
- Eloise Bryce and Alisha Sandhu (Year 9) won the Australia’s Heritage prize in the National History Challenge for their joint project.
- Nicci-Marie Dimatos, Emma Scales and Jessica Humphrey (Year 9) were together awarded a Victorian State prize (Year 9) in the National History Challenge.
- Yvonne Song (Year 9) gained a High Distinction in the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) Science Competition.
- Eloise Bryce (Year 9) was the Intermediate Division (Year 9/10) winner of the Margaret Fendley Writing Competition.
- Sian Fazio (Year 9) won the Canterbury Council of Churches’ logo competition. Sian’s logo will now go to a graphic designer to be replicated professionally and used by the Council.
- Bianca Vains (Year 8) won the Middle School Division of the School’s Public Speaking Competition.
• Tamsyn Lovass, Maya Weston and Anna Zeng (Year 8) gained a High Distinction in the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) Science Competition.

• Tamsyn Lovass (Year 8) was the Middle Division (Year 7/8) winner of the Margaret Fendley Writing Competition.

• Bronte Coxhill, Maya Weston, Jasmine Fehring, Anna Zeng and Tamsyn Lovass (Year 8) have been selected for entry into the 2016 BHP Billiton Science and Engineering Awards.

• Anna Zeng (Year 8) finished in the top 2% of students in the Year 7/8 Maths Olympiad across Australasia.

• Hillary Halford (Year 7) was presented with the ANZCA (Australia and New Zealand Cultural Arts) Encouragement Award at a special ceremony at MLC for outstanding results in her 2014 Singing Examinations. Hilary completed her Preparatory and Preliminary grade levels in the same year and was awarded 100% for each examination.

• Natasha Looi and Jessica Parris (Year 7) gained a High Distinction in the International Competitions and Assessments for Schools (ICAS) Science Competition.

Sport

• Tess Plowman (Year 10) was selected as a member of the Girls Sport Victoria (GSV) Representative Team and competed on August 8 at Jells Park. She was also a part of the Under 18 Big V Junior Cross Country Team and competed at the Australian Cross Country Championships on August 29 at Moonee Valley Racecourse.

• Pippi Mitchell (Year 10) competed at the Georgina Hope Foundation Australian Age Swimming Championships held at SOPAC from 13 – 18 April.

• Taegen Coxhill (Year 10) competed at the Georgina Hope Foundation Australian Age Swimming Championships held at the Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre (SOPAC) from 13 – 18 April. Taegen qualified to compete in seven events for this meet. In addition to her individual events, she swam in both freestyle and medley relay teams for her club.

• Kate Boulter (Year 10) competed in the Little Athletics Championships held in Perth as a member of the Victorian Team and competed in the multi-event.

• Eliza O’Farrell (Year 10) was a Ballkid at the last four Australian Opens. She was a Ballkid Leader in 2015 and was a net Ballkid for the Women’s Final between Serena Williams and Maria Sharapova. She also helped at the Men’s Doubles Final. Eliza will be a Ballkid at the Brisbane International held from 3 – 11 January at the Queensland Tennis Centre – Pat Rafter Arena.

• Kate Tanner and Madeline Phillips (Year 9) were selected in the National Intensive Training Program for Basketball in the Under 18 age group. It is a scholarship for players they have identified as potentially playing for Australia in the future to train with top coaches.

• Jenna Healy (Year 8) competed in the All Schools Diving Competition representing Strathcona on May 9 and came third. She also represented Strathcona at the Pacific School Games Trials and came third on 3m and fourth on 1m. Jenna was also selected in the Victorian Pacific Games Team and will compete at the Pacific School Games 21 – 29 November in Adelaide. She won first place on 1m at the Victoria Age Qualifying Championships in August 2015. Jenna was also selected for the Victorian team for Australia Age Championships Sydney in April 2016 on 1m and 3m.

• Tamsyn Lovass (Year 8) competed in the Australian Junior Athletics Championships in Sydney. She came eleventh in the final of the Under 15 Women 1,500m and sixteenth in the Under 15 Women 800m. She competed as a member of the Victoria Team at the Athletics Championships held in Perth. She finished fourth in the 1,500m and ninth in the 800m. The Under 13 Victorian team finished second. Tamsyn was also a member of the School Sport Victoria Cross Country team and competed at the Australian Cross Country Championships on Saturday 29 August at Moonee Valley Racecourse. Tamsyn recently received a Local Sporting Champions grant from the Federal Government.

• Charlotte Murray (Year 7) represented Victoria at the Under 13 Indoor Hockey competition in Canberra in January (over the Australia Day weekend) this year.

Australian Open Schools Rowing Championships 2015

• Senior Blacks - Stephanie Thom, Julia Battistella, Chelsea Mitchell and Eliza Sammells, coxed by Ally Legge.

• Senior Blues – Mabry Simpson-Bull, Rebecca Gill, Bronte Hough and Sarah Martin, coxed by Emma Olorenshaw.

• Intermediate Blacks - Sarah Van der Hock, Tess Plowman, Clare Dayker, Elise O’Keefe, Kate Boulter, Jess Walsh, Pheobe Soumprou and Bridget Newman, coxed by Claire Boulter.
Board members 2015:

Chair: Mrs Laurinda Gardner, B.A. (Hons)
Deputy Chair: Ms Sonia Rendigs, B.Public Relations and Organisational Communication (NY) (Marketing)
Secretary: Ms Trudy Skilbeck, B.Sc., LLB
Chief Financial Officer: Mrs Julie Zammit, B.Bus. (Accounting)
Property Chair: Mr Ivan Andolfatto, B.A., LLB, MLIV, ASBL
Marketing Chair: Ms Sonia Rendigs, B.Public Relations and Organisational Communication (NY) (Marketing)
Baptist Union: Mrs Judy McMaster, B.Theol., TPTC
Community Groups rep.: Mrs Jocelyn Furlan, B.Com., LLB., MAICD, FIPA
Old Strathconians Association rep.: Mrs Libbie Smith, Dip Arts (Fashion Design)
Ex Officio: Mrs Marise McConaghy BA., Dip Ed., ASDA, MACE, FAIM
Year 12 Students

Row 7:
Morgan Macleod-Finke
Georgia Glen
Lucy Arrowsmith
Madeleine Brown
Marlena Halkas
Isabelle Van Ryn
Georgia Norsworthy
Tea-Isabella Italiano
Olivia Glen

Row 6:
Chloe Van Nierop
Nikki Ladgrove
Katherine Holloway
Hannah McLean
Alexandra Crocker
Stephanie Thom
Molly Paterson
Olivia Glen

Row 5:
Madeleine Bowden
Belle Pollard
Marnie Oblak
Row 5:
Amelia McKay
Alexandra Macafee
Olivia Newman
Lauren Walsh
Holly Hunt
Madeline Wild
Lily Sawers
Lauren Mohammed
Rebecca Gill
Tess Hewitt
Jasmine Rossidis
Jaimie Olorenshaw
Emma Davies

Row 4:
Anna Terry
Mikaela Kellaway
Laura Birks
Victoria Pittendrigh
Sarah Abrahams
Rebecca Binfield
Nicole Philp
Jaimie Watling-Norbury
Audrey Tandikusuma
Anna Doyle
Sarah Martin
Kate Osborne

Row 3:
Xiaobing (Bella) Liu
Sophie Homes-Smith
Shania Killick
Jasmine Clegg
Claire Watson
Tess Exinger
Elizabeth Hodgetts
Sarah Foster
Tayla Eddy
Madeleine Saligari
Yingfen (Lily) Zhang
Yanting (Miranda) Zhang
Madison Herft

Row 2:
Isabelle Winiarski
Peiyuan (Annie) Luo
Eliza Barry
Jacinta Zhu
Stephanie Lee
Jamie Yeung
Vivian Chen
Paris Balla
Amelia Cronin
Edwina Blake
Weibo (Alisa) Yang
Wenjing (Julia) Zhu

Row 1:
Tayla Moss
Louisa Chiam
Erica Quan

Sophia Harrison
Isabella Romanella
Julia Tanton
Cora Sheridan
Georgia Chester
Can (Adriana) Wang
Hannah Brown
Alice Kirby
Emily-Rose Blake
Olivia Staffieri
Ella Hunter

Year 12 Coordinator:
Mr David Bradshaw

Absent:
Jessica Gair
Jessica He
Manon Merakis
Sarah Milne