

illuminare



Edition 2 - 2018



Enhancing our Spiritual Identity

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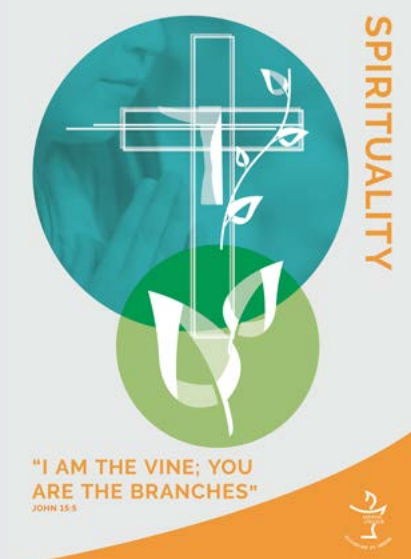
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Honouring SUCCESSFUL ALUMNI

The Aquinas College Honour Roll recognises the outstanding leadership and achievement of former Aquinas College students. The Honour Roll is a special way of acknowledging to the College community contributions that are seen to be outstanding and serve to inspire future generations of young Aquinians.

We are currently calling for nominations for the 2019 Honour Roll.

Honour Roll nominations are only for former students of the College. Nominate a potential inductee onto the Aquinas College Honour Roll for 2019.

Nominations close Friday 7th December, 2018

Use this link to make your nomination



Has it been a while since you heard the College Song?

Are you hankering to "sing out and ring out" at the top of your voice again?

The latest rendition of the Aquinas College Song has been recorded by Aquinas College music students from the last decade who gathered together, accompanied by the talented Mr Rod Meaklim.

[You can hear it using this link.](#)

From the Principal

I write at a time of joyous celebration at the College. Our graduating class of 2018 have completed the formal part of their secondary schooling with Graduation Mass and a Graduation Ceremony, followed by a School Assembly. At each of these events student representatives spoke very movingly about the strong connection they feel with Aquinas College, with their teachers, and with each other as a year level. They have also thanked their parents/guardians for the opportunities that have been afforded them through loving care and support in their home. Mr James Burston, Parent and Board Member, responded on behalf of parents/guardians and was, once again, very generous in acknowledging the fine teachers and support staff at the College. Expressing his confidence that he has always felt his children have been entrusted to good hands. We wish the students well with their exams results. The College will say a final goodbye to many families at our Valedictory Dinner on Saturday night as we have over one hundred families this year whose youngest child is graduating.

Another significant event this Term has been the blessing, by Monsignor Anthony Ireland of our new sculpture, *Chorus Luminis*. The blessing of this sculpture concludes a significant project undertaken at the College over four years as part of the Enhancing Catholic School Identity Project. During this time, the project has been nurtured by dedicated leaders in the Catholic Life Team - Mr Heinz Wolf, Mr Paul Morgan and, most recently, Mrs Tania Grace. These leaders, with great support from our Canonical Administrators and the College Board, have overseen developments which have greatly enhanced the faith dimension of our College. These include the refurbishment of the Saint Mary MacKillop Chapel; beautiful artwork by Mr Anthony Russo of Orchard Studio acknowledging the charisms of the Houses - Dominic, Rice and MacKillop - in the Middle Years Building; and the development of a Memorial Garden to remember those who sadly passed while at Aquinas College.

Parallel to these projects has been an initiative of Mrs Belinda de Guzman and Mrs Allison Stott to work with our students and staff on capturing the essence of what it means to belong to the Catholic community of Aquinas College. Both of these staff members were sponsored by the College and Catholic Education Melbourne to undertake an intensive short course at the Catholic University, Leuven, in Belgium. Each returned with great enthusiasm to tackle some of the challenges found in a school community to understand its faith differently to past generations in a world that is increasingly secular and pluralist. While Mrs Stott moved to a senior leadership position at another Catholic school of the Archdiocese shortly thereafter,

our dreams and our hearts are but young.



Mrs de Guzman maintained momentum and partnered with Hullabaloo Studios to capture aspects of our Catholic identity through art. The first outcome of this collaboration is an artwork that hangs in our Chapel which tells the story of the four seasons at Aquinas College. This beautiful piece is the result of a process of extensive input with students from all levels, each willing to share the aspects of College life that they value as a student.

At the same time as the painting was being undertaken to capture the thoughts of the students, a group of staff members met with the artist around designs for a sculpture. This second collaboration resulted in the sculpture "*Chorus Luminis*", installed in the heart of the College, our Forum. *Chorus Luminis* (loosely translated as "The Dance of Light") is composed of three flame like figures recognising the Holy Trinity and the three Houses to which students belong. It also captures the essence of our College motto "*Illuminare et Ardere*" - to light up and be on fire. Of course, the beauty of art is that each person will see something different in the sculpture. Those staff members who collaborated with the artist, Christine Sage, have seen an interpretation of their shared vision cast into bronze by the foundry. We hope that many future generations of students and staff will develop their own connection to this sculpture as a symbol of our shared story. Thank you to Mrs de Guzman and all the staff members who contributed to this fine installation. Each of these beautiful artworks are best experienced in person and I encourage you to join us on Open Day on March 17th 2019, to see them for yourself.

As this is the final edition of *Illuminare* for 2018, I would like to say thank you to our Aquinas College families and wider community for your continued support of our College. May the message of Christmas fill your life with joy and peace this Advent Season.

Darren Atkinson
Principal

Chorus Luminis

“Dance of Light”



The Monsignor spoke of *Chorus Luminis* symbolising all we do at Aquinas College to enlighten minds, give strength to hands and inspire the young. He encouraged us to “let the dance of *Chorus Luminis* continue to inspire a vision of the future filled with Gospel joy”.

A fitting backdrop for Graduation

This year, as part of the Year 12 Graduation evening, the traditional candle ceremony was held outside in the Forum. *Chorus Luminis* provided a beautiful and fitting backdrop to the ceremony as the graduating Year 12 students reflected on lighting their path for the future.

Students have embraced the new installation in the Forum, with many of them getting tactile with the texture, studying the intricacies of the design closely, and discussing and interpreting what they represent.

Next time you are at the College, remember to come to the Forum and take a closer look.

Representing our Catholic Identity

During 2017, as part of Aquinas College’s Enhancing Catholic Identity project, a team of staff gathered to plan an art piece which could represent our Catholic Identity. Led by Belinda de Guzman, the group worked with artist Christine Sage, from Hullabaloo Studios to bring to life their thoughts and ideas.

Christine and Hulabaloo Studios had previously worked with a group of students to create the student contribution to the project. The *Four Seasons* panels hanging in the Chapel is the magnificent result of this student collaboration. It is in the *Four Seasons* panels where *Chorus Luminis* is first referenced, as it appears in the *Winter* panel of the artwork.

After many months of consultation, a concept was developed and a creation arose. *Chorus Luminis* describes the connection linking the Aquinas College community and the binding value of love which brings us all together. It references the College motto, *Illuminare et Ardere*, challenging students to be beacons of light. Finally the three flames signify the spiritual connection of the three Houses within the College - Dominic, MacKillop and Rice.

Placed at the heart of the College

Over the September 2018 holiday break, *Chorus Luminis* was installed in the Forum of the College. Just like the light of Christ is central to each of us, so this sculpture is in the centre of our College. Fire, light, and warmth are often central to our being. Traditionally, the fireplace is the heart of the home, where people gather to spend time together, share stories, and quietly reflect. Installing *Chorus Luminis* in the metaphoric “heart” of the College, where people pass through, sit and reflect on a daily basis seemed a fitting place to give witness to our Catholic Identity.

Blessing of the Sculpture

On Wednesday 24th October 2018, staff and special guests, including Paul Fumei and Vicki Myers from Catholic Education Melbourne came together to acknowledge a blessing of the sculpture.

Rev. Monsignor Tony Ireland presided over the blessing of *Chorus Luminis* and invited all guests to participate.



The years stretch before us with promise unsung,

Farewell

to our Class of 2018

A message of gratitude from Year Level Leaders, Sharon Daley and Scott Buchanan

Our theme this year has been *giving thanks and showing gratitude*. So what are we grateful for?

We are grateful that we get to lead a cohort of bright and brave young people. Students that can get up and sing and perform for their peers at Retreat, Day on the Grey, Music Friday or assemblies; students who will share personal reflections and open up about their feelings and their journey; students who write their deepest thoughts onto a leaf to hang in our Year 12 area all year; students who create art works and put their heart and soul on a canvas to display to the community. Those who push themselves out of their comfort zones and audition for musicals or plays, learn languages and volunteer for outreach programs or contribute to social justice. We are grateful that students have attended this wonderful College where we proudly work and where they have been given so many opportunities.

As this chapter comes to an end, the following hopes will always ring true: We hope you always show respect. Through programs and experiences you have learnt the importance of giving due regard to those you meet. If you do this, it will mostly be returned to you.

We hope you will be open to new challenges. Don't always play to your strengths, be brave and be open to exposing your weaknesses and you will learn so much more.

We hope you will not be scared of failing. Failing keeps you modest and grounded. It is only when we fail that we truly learn. But we hope that you learn from your failures. This allows you to continue to strive and be better.



We hope you present the best of yourself at all times. You all have such a unique combination of qualities. Allow the world to see these. If you do this, you will attract the best people, gestures and behaviours from others.

We are grateful you all have the world at your feet. We know this is a cliché but how true it is. You have choices, opportunities, possibilities. TAFE, travel, employment, volunteer work, university. Whatever you do make sure that at the end of each day you can be grateful for where you are and what you are doing. Don't settle for second best. Be true to your values, your talents, your beliefs and your hopes. We wish you all the best for your future together and individually. We wish you many great adventures and experiences, filled with people who enrich your life



and we face them together as one.



“If I had to pick a defining moment from this year, it would be Day on the Grey. Firstly, the whole idea was driven by the students. They came up with the concept and they pitched it to Peter Griffin. As an activity, it says so much about this mob too because there are so many talented performers in this year level. I remember walking through a rehearsal of The Sound of Music when they were Year 7s and commenting to Phil Box how I could not wait until they were in Senior Years, to sing and dance and act up a storm! A Day on the Grey was glorious in terms of weather. There were heaps of goodies all made by students to sell, including a vegan option which sold out! The atmosphere amongst the audience was appreciative and then Ethan Freemantle who had never performed before he got up and was fantastic.”

Meredith Greenwood
Head Senior Years

Let us sing out, let it ring out, Illuminare.

Words of Wisdom

from the Class of 2018

From Alex Bazzano to his fellow graduating Class of 2018

It's scary to think that tomorrow is officially the last day of our secondary school experience. It's even scarier to think that the next chapters of our lives are beginning so soon. We are all sitting here because we have worked hard. We have pushed through all the challenges and obstacles that these past years have thrown at us. And you should all be so proud of the people you have become today.

I am honoured to stand in front of you today and acknowledge my cohort for the last time. The community that has been developed over the past six years, is something that will never be forgotten. All 249 students here tonight have grown to be more like family instead of friends. The regular routine of getting up in the morning and going to a community where we are all united, is something I believe we all take for granted. I think we can all agree that our vision of the past year was clogged by the demands of school. The constant requirement of dealing with assessment, after assessment, after assessment, has often blinded us from appreciating those moments that mean the most to us. We were those kids in younger year levels that looked at previous Year 12s and said, *'one day, that will be us'*. That moment has come. The moment that we will get up for the last time as a year level, and celebrate the accomplishments we have made.

One thing we are going to miss is the relationships we have with the people sitting next to us today. I am sure we all fear losing these relationships, and I think that this is a fear that we can all relate to. So, take this time to really reflect and appreciate those people around you, those people who have made an impact on your life because they will no longer be around as often as you would like them to be.

I am so grateful that I was given the chance to grow and mature with this amazing group of people. You should all be so proud of what you have been able to achieve and the community that has been developed. You deserve so much in your life and I wish you all luck with your future endeavours. Congratulations on receiving your Graduation Certificates, a physical sign that we have made it. I wish you all the best and thank you.



Hand in hand now, we will stand now, et Ardere.

Natasha Tenney and Tom Deane Class of 2018



"To our parents and guardians, those that have experienced all the behind the scenes aspects of our lives. Words simply don't do justice to how appreciative we are of all that you have done for us. From your decision to send us to Aquinas College so many years ago, to the support and love you have continued to provide us with to this very day. Our parents have been there by our side during all of the highs and the lows of high school, put up with our grouchy attitudes during those high intensity SAC weeks, stayed up late quizzing us on the endless piles of study cards and consoled us when we fell short of our goals or didn't quite get the marks we were hoping for. They were always there to be a shoulder to cry on during our inevitable Year 12 breakdown, listen to our endless tirades about those 'end of the world' dramas of high school and even picked us up in the middle of the night regardless of whether it meant giving up a night of precious sleep. While some of these things may seem rather miniscule in isolation, when you put them all together, they form one of the key reasons Year 12 was as enjoyable as it was. For that we thank you so very much.

To our teachers from Year 7 through to Year 12, the ones that have instilled within us the knowledge and skills we will not only need academically, but in life after school. Every teacher has played a role in who we are today. Our teachers have been incredibly influential people in our lives during our time at the College. They've not only taught us practical skills such as how to build rafts on Years 7 and 8 camps and brew barista worthy coffees at the Cafe N9ne, but also academic skills like how to solve linear equations and write comparative essays. On top of this they have taught us to believe in ourselves and to never give up, regardless of how tough things get at times. Bit by bit, they have helped us to become the people we are today and prepare us for the next chapter in our lives, and for this, we are incredibly grateful."

Remembering

100 years of Armistice

A field of peace to commemorate Remembrance Day

The grounds of the College were filled with over 3000 handmade white poppies to remember the fallen soldiers on the 100th year anniversary of Remembrance Day. Students and staff dedicated hundreds of hours to create individual ceramic poppies, building the message of peace into each activity.

Sandi van der Niet, and her team worked tirelessly to bring the project to life. Initially inspired by the 2014 installation at the Tower of London where 888,246 red ceramic poppies filled the Tower's moat, the College commemorated ANZAC Day in 2015 with an installation of red poppies. In 2018, to mark the 100th year of Armistice, Sandi proposed a field of white poppies *"...in contrast to the red poppies of 2015, which represented and signified the bloodshed, the 2018 field will be a field of all white poppies. The white poppy represents peace and will be a solemn, symbolic visual reminder of our hope for peace in the world"*.

Aligning with the College's core value of Compassion, this creative expression was incorporated into teaching and learning activities throughout the year. Connections between the incoming Year 7 students and graduating Year 12 students grew stronger when the younger students took on the role of teacher, demonstrating their knowledge to the Year 12s in making poppies. One Year 12 student enthused *"...helping the Year 7s make poppies for peace was definitely a memorable experience. It took me back to when I was in Year 7 and I was excited to be able to pass on the knowledge we were all once given. As our years are coming to an end at Aquinas, I enjoyed spending time with the Year 7s as they start their College journey"*.

At the completion of the display and memorial service, the poppies will be donated to local Retired and Services' Leagues' and organisations, as thanks and recognition for all they do for war veterans and their families in the local community. Principal, Darren Atkinson reflected *"the College encourages the students to be global citizens, and to understand their civic responsibility. Honouring those who have fallen in times of war and on peacekeeping operations is integral to acknowledging our history"*.



and we learn from the joys and the tears.

Our Student's

Achievements

Ash Moore - Year 11

On his way to fulfilling his dream

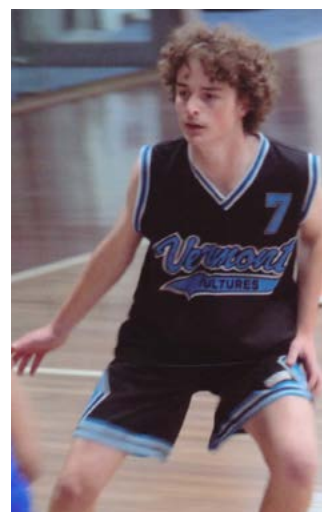


Year 11 VCAL student, Ashleigh Moore has recently been selected to represent the Vermont Vultures basketball club in their upcoming tour of the USA in November/December 2019. The Vultures are being particularly choosy about who will represent their team, and while Ash is only 177cm it was his experience, teamwork and three point shooting skills that lead to his selection as Point Guard on the team.

Ash began playing basketball at five years old, after his best friends' Dad suggested he might like to give it a go. Amazingly, Ash missed the original tryouts for the USA tour because he was on the Year 11 Kakadu trip. However his compelling cover letter expressed such passion for the

game it secured him a tentative spot on the team. The selectors then came to a game to specifically watch him w expressing *"thank goodness he can play too, because his cover letter pretty much got him the spot!"*

Playing for the NBA is Ash's dream and he is hoping the US tour will give him an opportunity to increase his skills, meet some key coaches and gain experience. As he enthused in his application cover letter *"It has always been my dream to play basketball in America and I would love to play for my Club and represent my country there. Like most basketball loving kids I would love to play professionally one day. I can't put into words what this would mean to me"*.



Abbey Walsh and Shaelee Donohue

Being a \$20 Boss

Students of the Aquinas Gifted and Learning Enhancement Program (AGiLE) were given the opportunity earlier this year to participate in the \$20 Boss program. Year 8 student Abbey Walsh and Year 7 student Shaelee Donohue jumped at the chance to be part of this entrepreneurial opportunity.

As part of the program, each student was given \$20 to form and run a business. The goal of the business was to pay back the original \$20 loan plus an additional \$1 for each student who was part of the business team before they could make a profit.

Abbey and Shaelee met in the Aquinas Resource Centre to complete the required program modules and learn about keeping

an inventory, managing a ledger, and making a profit.

After brainstorming ideas for potential businesses, selling specially selected lollies was agreed on and Awkward Pineapple Services (APS) was born.

Considering the 3 Ps outlined in the program– planet, people and profit – APS decided the donate all profits to *Lentil as Anything*, an organisation which actively prevents food waste, and passes it onto the community, through one of their "pay as you feel" restaurants or stores.

To get the ball rolling, a website listing the lolly bag combinations was created, with the value add of offering the purchaser the ability to include a personalised messages in each bag ie: Happy Birthday. Awkward Pineapple Service's first sale was at the Senior Musical where they made an amazing start to their foray into business, and were able to pay back the \$42 for the program. With their new capital, Abbey and Shaelee bought more stock to fulfil their growing online orders.

After committing many hours a week to the Awkward Pineapple business and juggling increasing homework requirements, the \$20 Boss program is now complete. Abbey and Shaelee have made a very healthy profit of over \$200 which they are looking forward to donating in person to *Lentil as Anything*.

They found the program a really rewarding experience and loved being entrepreneurs for a short time. It helped them realise that you can have a dream and actually make it happen.

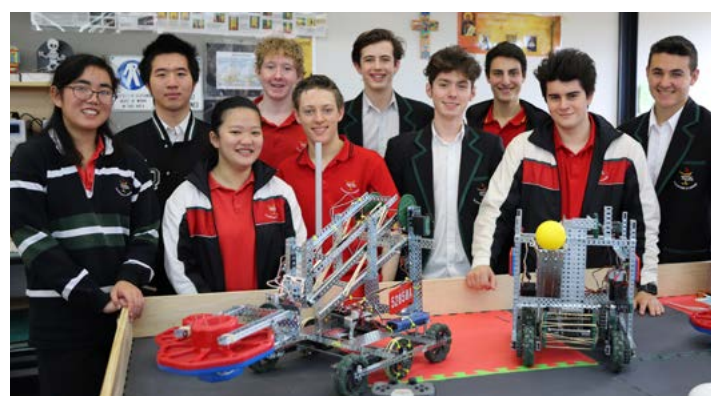
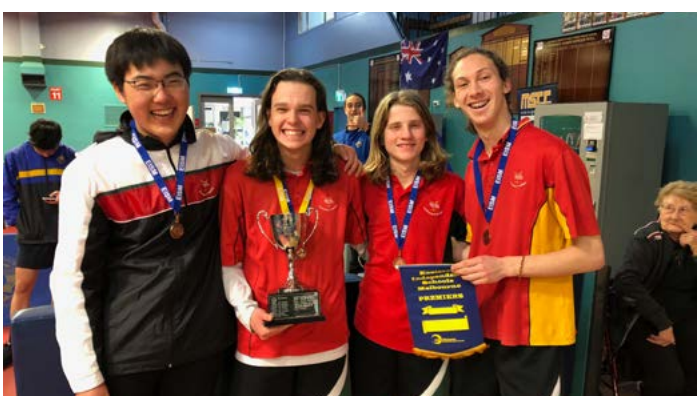
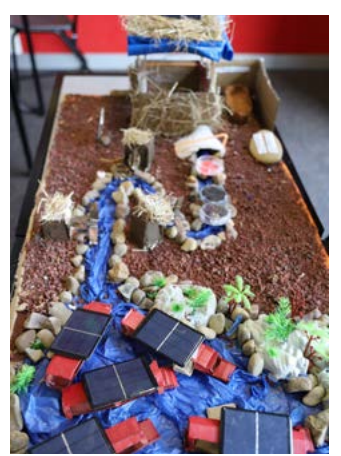


From people we've loved and from challenges met,

Snapshots of Aquinas Life



oh may we never forget.



Let us sing out, let it ring out Illuminare.

Honouring our Community

Father O'Driscoll

The story of Aquinas College cannot be told without including the story of Father William (Bill) O'Driscoll.

William Andrew O'Driscoll was born in Melbourne on the 7th January 1913 in Coburg. He was parish priest of St Edmund's parish in Croydon from its foundation in 1950, when it was divided from the parish of Mooroolbark. Much of the early work of building St Edmund's church and school was driven by Father O'Driscoll.

In the 1950's there was an acute shortage of Catholic Schools for secondary school-aged boys and Father O'Driscoll turned his mind and energies to this next challenge. In 1957 he went on a three-month overseas trip during which he studied relevant facts about setting up a diocesan secondary school. He passed this information on to the Melbourne diocese on his return. Subsequently Aquinas College, Victoria's first regional secondary school was built at Ringwood in 1961 by a community of four parishes.*

Despite being a fairly introverted and private man, Father O'Driscoll would often come to the newsagency in Main Street Croydon run by



Father O'Driscoll and Bishop Knox at the opening of St Peter Julian in 1968, with Bernard McKenna carrying the crucifix, and Peter Mann behind him. Image donated by Kath and Maureen McKenna

the McKenna family. He usually came around closing time. He would buy Old Jamaica chocolate, and cigarettes, and then he would stay for a lively discussion of Catholic ethics around the kitchen table with Jim McKenna and his family.

It is believed, that kitchen behind the shop in Croydon was where the idea of naming the College after St Thomas Aquinas was first suggested. Kath McKenna proposed 'Aquinas College' and Father O'Driscoll thought it was a wonderful name.

Father O'Driscoll oversaw the purchase of land where the College now stands, and negotiated with the founding parishes for resources for the new school. He was Head of the Canonical Administrators of the College, from 1961 until 1975, and maintained a keen interest in the school

during that time.

In February 1975 Mass was celebrated to mark the Silver Jubilee of St Edmund's Parish. It was a joyous occasion for Father O'Driscoll who had seen his parish through its first 25 years. Within a few months he was directed to leave St. Edmunds and in June 1975 moved to Our Lady of Victories, in Camberwell. *

On 23rd March 1995, Father O'Driscoll suffered a stroke and died at the age of 82.

Anne Stebbings

ARC Librarian and Archivist



Hand in hand now, we will stand now, et Ardere.

*Source: * much of this information is taken from 'St Edmunds Church 1950-1993' by Heather Caswell.*

Thanks to Kath and Maureen McKenna for their assistance in compiling this article.

“lighting up”

Bradley Porcellato - Peer Year 2016

When you have a dream, do what it takes to make it happen. Former student Bradley Porcellato (PY 2016) had a dream to study in the USA and play American Football. Brad has made this happen through hard work and perseverance and is currently playing football for Samford University in Alabama in front of 80,000 people and living his dream.



Zach Nunis - Peer Year 2017

Zach Nunis secured a scholarship to the University of Idaho as part of the Track and Field/Cross Country Program. A talented young man, Zach represented Aquinas College in numerous track and field events during his time at school and is highly ranked in Australia for his Long Jump. Great to hear about our former students pursuing their dreams.

High Flying Australian Jumper Signs with the University of Idaho

by of Idaho Track & Field/Cross Country to announce the signing of Zachary Nunis, Australia. Zachary is a generalist in the horizontal jumps and sprints in the Big Sky Conference at the personal bests of 7.40m (24' 6.75") in the long jump and placing third in the 100m. Zachary also won the Australian All Stars in the long jump and placed second in the 2017 season. He won the Victorian All Stars in the long jump in 2017.

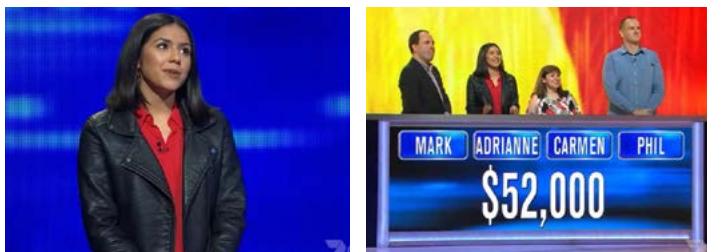
is a rounded person, who is talented in so many ways. It is great with our culture we have in a high level jumper that should come from our school. Congratulations Zachary!

Star of Track & Field/Cross Country

Zachary Nunis will study at the University of Idaho, Track & Field Cross Country Newsletter

Adrienne Kalla- Peer Year 2015

Former student Adrienne PY 2015 appeared on Channel 7's 'The Chase' earlier this year and did herself and her former school proud, walking away a winner. Congratulations Adrienne!



Anthony McAleer - Peer Year 1984

Anthony received an OAM in this years' Queens Birthday Honour List for his outstanding service to the community and to military history.

Anthony is an accomplished author, researcher and historian working at Museums Victoria and the Immigration Museum and has strong connections with both Lilydale and Mt Evelyn RSLs. This ignites his passion for Australian History.



Dr Noel Bayley - Peer Year 1971



Dr Noel Bayley, 2013 Honour Roll Inductee was recognised in this years' Queen's Birthday Honour list for 'his significant service to medicine in the field of cardiology, and to the diagnosis and treatment of heart disease in Timor-Leste.'

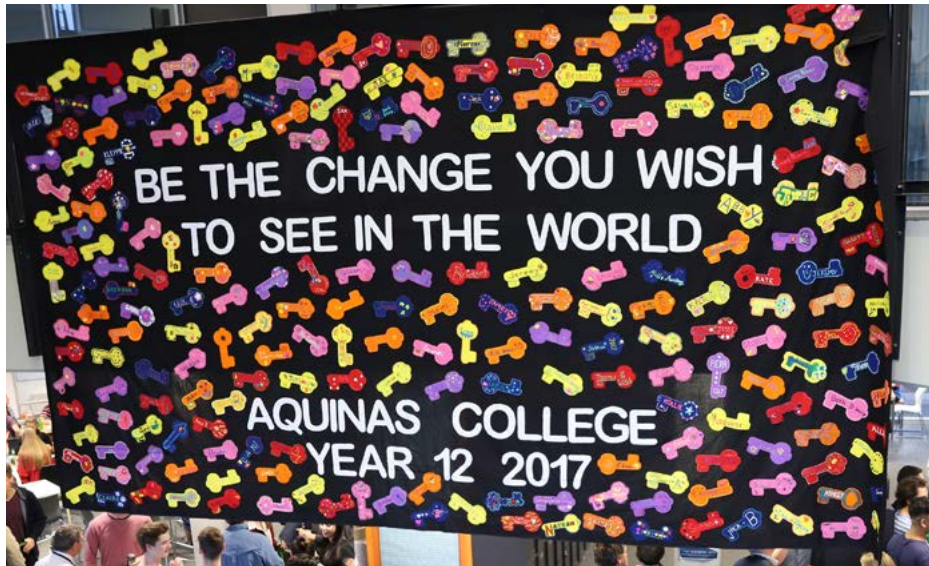
Meg Dean - Peer Year 2016

The 2018 Stawell Gift saw a talented athlete Meg Deane win the Women's 400m final. Meg's name now appears on the same perpetual trophy as that of Cathy Freeman. Meg also came second in the women's 800m race and as a result, was awarded the Best Middle Distance Athlete award for the entire Stawell carnival including both men and women.



Class of 2017

Reunion



Welcoming back our newest alumni

In early November we had the pleasure of welcoming back the Class of 2017 as we celebrated their first year as Aquinas College alumni.

It was a great opportunity for the cohort to catch up with friends and classmates they may not have seen in twelve months, as well as a chance to see their College Mentors and other staff.

It was a great night, with lots of laughter, exchanging of stories, and a rousing rendition of the Aquinas College song..

"It was such a great chance to rekindle old friendships - people we had lost contact with. The opportunity for past students to reconnect with staff who had taught them or had a presence in their schooling life brought much joy to both the class of 2017 and the staff. The excitement of being back in our old Year 12 area made us feel as if we'd never left! I think everyone felt blessed to still feel a part of the Aquinas College community beyond our Year 12. Being able to share a meal with our year level and the staff who guided us through our high school experience made us remember that no matter where life takes us, we will always have the Aquinas College community and the class of 2017 with us."

Georgia Redfern
Class of 2017



standing strong as the years fall away.

Class of 1988

30 year reunion

Celebrating 30 years as a cohort

An unofficial reunion of the Class of 1988 was held at The Firehouse, Ringwood in mid November. It signified 30 years since many had seen each other. Some people were recognised instantly and others it took a bit longer to recognise.

While there was a lot of reminiscing (long into the night), thirty years in between catch ups meant nobody really asked, 'so what have you been up to?'. It was a great night of chats with good friends about what they were doing now.

Thank you to Gemma Donnellan and Tania Mills (nee Dinnie) for organising the evening. Everyone agreed the next catch up should not be so big a gap.



Where are they now?

Our Alumni



Alumni, and ex College Captain, James Sheppard

In May this year James underwent heart transplant surgery, and a mere five months later he was participating in the “Around the Bay” bike ride.

After graduating from Aquinas College in 2004, James completed a Bachelor of Business majoring in Tourism at La Trobe University. For the next ten years he worked his way up through Flight Centre, and then moved to Stage & Screen Corporate Travel.

About five years ago, James started to get heart palpitations. After an unrelated operation, the nurse picked up that his heart was out of rhythm. This unsteady heart beat would reverberate loudly throughout his body *“like a drummer playing an off beat”*, described James.

Over the next twelve months, James tried different medications to correct the arrhythmia, and even underwent electric shocks on his heart. After a blood clot was found, open heart surgery was the only solution. This operation sent his heart into a downward spiral, and after a biopsy of the heart tissue, he was diagnosed with an even greater problem - cardiac amyloidosis - making James ineligible for a heart transplant.

With no genetic history of cardiac amyloidosis and all other blood tests for the disorder coming back negative, James spent the next three months having a barrage of gene tests, and blood tests to diagnose his localised cardiac amyloidosis. As the tests continued James deteriorated with his heart stopping twice in that period.

Despite months of tests, the specialists admitted *“we don’t think you have cardiac amyloidosis, but we don’t really know what is going on”*. While at a different hospital, a new Cardiologist decided it was his goal to diagnose what was going on. He came to James and exclaimed *“I stayed up until 4am reading journals, and I’ve found it is possible to have cardiac amyloidosis in the left ventricle only.”*

At last, James was eligible for a heart transplant. So began the physical and mental process of being on the transplant list. The thought of relying on the pain and loss of another family for your family to have so much joy was the real challenge.

After eight long months James finally got the call that a heart was available.

the new day has only begun.



One of the first things James noticed after receiving a new heart was warm hands and feet. For years his heart had struggled to pump blood to his extremities. He also can’t believe how quiet it is to have a heart that beats to the right rhythm and doesn’t drum around your body, rattling your every thought.

Five months later, James took on a 20km bike ride at the Around the Bay in a Day event. Riding bikes has always been part of his family and he bought a bike six weeks after his transplant to stay fit.

He saw the Around the Bay in a Day as a great first milestone to challenge himself, and raise money for worthwhile cause. With friends and family joining him on the ride, he almost found it “too easy”, but felt a tremendous sense of achievement.

James’ next challenge...a 200km bike ride with many of his Aquinas College friends along the Silo Art Trail, to raise awareness for [Donate Life](#).

Not surprisingly, James has a new perspective on life. He has learnt to take nothing for granted, and focus on what is really important in life, *“if the Bombers don’t make the finals, it’s not the end of the world”*, says James *“I feel really lucky to have gone through what I went through because it has given me a reset of what’s important, as well as a new lease on life”*.

One day James hopes to contact the generous donor family, but at the moment he is struggling with what to say, *“thank you is not enough for what they have given up. It is an amazing gift that they have left”*.

Learn more about organ donation at [DonateLife](#)



Alumni Memories

Few people contributed so significantly to Aquinas College that we named a building after them. Peter Box made such a contribution.

Peter Box was a contributing member of St John's Parish, Mitcham and joined the Aquinas Parents and Friends Association when his eldest daughter Jennifer started at Aquinas College in 1975. The College then was pretty much clay and mud. As Treasurer, he worked hard with people like Leo Horton, Barry Cuskelly, Kevin Cotton and Frank Halle to concrete, landscape and put stairs in around the College, stabilising places that were just muddy embankments and bushland so the girls could get access to netball courts and ovals.

In 1980, Peter Box was appointed as the first Bursar of the College, "because it was getting too much for Margaret McCuskey (school secretary) to do all the books and the fees." The students nicknamed him "Cash Box."

In this role, Peter was well known for going above and beyond his responsibilities and you'd sometimes see him at the end of the day picking up papers around the College. If you asked "why are you picking up papers?", he would answer "Well, it shows that I have pride in the place that I work and in the College and in the surrounds. If I didn't pick it up then what does that say about me, and what does that say about the College?"

An extremely talented sportsperson, Peter was on the sports honour boards at Parade College for three years in a row, he was also good academically. His philosophy was that you needed to be well rounded.



He coached the seconds in football and in cricket because there weren't enough staff to do it and because if he didn't "all these other boys are going to miss out."

He used to bring home footy jumper's to wash, even though he had no sons. They were full of sand and mud and sometimes the family would be putting them on the clothes line and then literally hosing them down before washing them.

Aquinas College teams played against many other schools including Whitefriars and Marcellin, Xavier and St Kevin's, which all boasted great sporting facilities. Aquinas College didn't have this quality of facilities. Peter went around to see what the other schools had and then considered what we could do and what we could afford. He carefully planned what would be the best solution to build for the College. Peter bought the gym plans home to show his family because he was so proud of them. This became his mission to get the money to build the gym, and he got everybody on board.

Peter was an extremely friendly, social man and had lots of connections. He had friends from his time at Parade College and from Mitcham parish. He was a former taxation office inspector, and he also had friends in the racing fraternity. He made friends wherever he went. Cottons, Crows, Haggertys, Sheehans, Cuskellys, Considines, Boxes, everybody. He called upon all his connections to raise the money for the gym.

Fundraising included social nights with different sorts of music and very simple food and families just came. There were art shows and the sale of Aquinas College label bottled wine.

Aquinas College had an Old Boys Footballs Association, which had already started up, had no rooms. They just had a piece of shelter down on the bottom oval and no facilities. Peter suggested that the Old Boys could use part of the facilities for the weekend when they play their games, which they still do.



From a health perspective, Peter's hip gave him trouble. When he used to go and watch and the football he'd have what they called a shooting stick, which would open up and he'd sit on it. It had a spike on the end and that's what he'd pick papers up with.

In February 1985, Peter went into hospital for a hip replacement operation. At that time it was major surgery - there was the danger of bone chips and it involved being in plaster to the knee. Shockingly, Peter died in hospital eight days after surgery due to a blood clot. He was 50, due to turn 51 in April.

The College was in shock. Jennifer remembers calling the Principal at the time, John Mahon *"and I thought I delivered it quite gently I could just hear this breathing on the end of the phone and then he just hung up on me. He was just so shocked, and then he rang back about a half hour later and said 'I'm sorry. I just I can't believe it'"*.

The College closed for half a day for the funeral which was held at St John's Mitcham. Father Dillon, new to the Parish, had only met Peter the week before and was joined by several other priests to conduct the ceremony. Enough people attended that police were required for crowd control

"After dad died they didn't use his room for anything, they just left it. French teacher Catherine Forster used to put a flower - a rose or something like that - on his desk once a week and then it stayed there for the week and then she would put another one on."

He was very giving. Wherever he could help

- whether it was pouring concrete, picking up papers, or saying hello to somebody, or driving the bus, or anything like that, he'd just do it. There were a few teachers that worked at the College who were South African and he gave them tax and financial advice, as well as advice on how to help get their relatives out of South Africa during apartheid.

The Aquinas gymnasium, which also houses the Old Boys club rooms, the Mahon theatre and the food technology kitchens is central to Aquinas life. The next time you see the name *"Peter Box Gymnasium"* you will know who it refers to, a generous, thoughtful and caring person who helped make Aquinas College what it is today

Anne Stebbing

ARC Librarian and Archivist

Thank you to Peter's wife Shirley and his daughters Jenny Box [Aquinas College 1975 - 1981] and Janine Piper [Aquinas College 1981 - 1986].



the 90's

One of the most significant decades for changes in Aquinas College history

1992 was the first year of fully coeducational classes at Aquinas College. Previously there was a separate Boys' school and Girls' school. The Girls' school became the Years 7 and 8 campus, while the Boy's school became the Years 9 and 10 campus.

In 1993 the remodeling of the Years 9 and 10 Campus quadrangle was completed. Transformed from a bare asphalt square with seating, shelter and garden beds, this was a big improvement in the student environment.

The Celebration and Proclamation of the College's Mission Statement took place in 1995 after much consultation with students, staff, and the College community. The blessing ceremony took place at St. Patrick's Cathedral presided over by Bishop Hilton Deakin.

Major building developments continued throughout the 1990's. In 1996 the College's Performing Arts Centre was officially opened and named the Mahon Theatre after former Principal, John Mahon. In 1996 the new Technology and Staff Centre was opened, with new equipment for manual arts subjects, and provided a central meeting and workspace for all Aquinas College teaching staff.

The Aquinas College alumni community gathered strength. A major reunion took place in 1994, at which more than 1500 parents, staff and former students were present. In 1998 several previous Principals returned to Aquinas College to celebrate their contribution to the life and history of the College.

The decade culminated in the announcement by Pope John Paul II of three years of preparation for a Great Jubilee in December 1999, to welcome the third Millennium.



Anne Stebbing
ARC Librarian and Archivist



Aquinas Old Collegians Football Club

“The Bloods”

“The Bloods” celebrate a year of achievements

After the success of the dual Senior and Reserves premierships in 2017 it was always going to be interesting to see how the club adjusted with the rise to Division 3 for season 2018. The excitement was palpable early in the pre season with the announcement of our first ever Women’s Team. The U19s were also building up to something special.

The Seniors started the year very slowly and early injuries and a couple of close losses put our season in jeopardy by the half way mark. A stirring back end of the season and some big late wins meant we snuck into 4th position. Unfortunately, it wasn’t to be as we went down to Old Westbourne in a tightly fought 1st semifinal. The Reserves also made finals before ultimately failing in the preliminary final.

There were two major highlights of season 2018. The inaugural Women’s Team brought unbridled enthusiasm and enjoyment to the club. 38 young women pulled on the red, black and green for the first time and they continued to make the club proud for the entire season. Narrowly missing finals they are already gearing up for a massive 2019 season and have been training hard for a number of weeks already.

The other highlight was the breakthrough premiership win of the U19 team under the coaching of Craig Glennie. Featuring 26 Aquinas College alumni from the 2017 peer year it showed what a great mix of talent, hard work and mateship was assembled. We can’t wait to see what these boys can do in the years to come. Congratulations to the Young Bloods.

The Aquinas OCFC have gained a reputation in the local community as an enjoyable place to play footy with your mates whilst also being very serious about on field success. The past two seasons have seen



United our hearts will remain.



Join the Club

If you are considering becoming involved with a progressive, family oriented Local Suburban Football Club, please contact one of the following club officials.

Terry McEvoy

President

president@aquinas.com.au

0424 187 861

Jack McDonald

Secretary

secretary@aquinas.com.au

0430 130 520



three premierships and plenty of good times. With some particularly strong off season recruitment for all four teams and the continued development of our young players, there is no reason to believe there won’t be more success in the years to come as we strive to climb up the grades of the VAFA, the largest senior football competition in Australia.

We are always on the lookout for quality players and just as importantly quality people, so if you fit the bill feel free to come down to training at the College Monday and Wednesday nights over pre season. You will be made to feel at home immediately in a relaxed, enjoyable and successful environment.

We are also on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram if you’d like to keep on top of club news or on www.aquinas.edu.com.au

Go Bloods

Jack McDonald

Aquinas OCFC Secretary

 **BarryPlant**

Heathmont 9722 7166

Ringwood 9870 5555



Lumina

Theatre Co.

In early September, Lumina Theatre Company opened their third musical Legally Blonde: The Musical

After months of rehearsals and preparation, 28 cast members, 13 musicians, crew members, lighting, sound, set, costumes and some very adorable canines came together to present an astounding show. Featuring talent from all over Melbourne's eastern suburbs, the show was a tremendous success. "Theatre is a group exercise; it takes a village to put on a show. We would like to thank everyone involved in the show, Aquinas College for their continued support and everyone who came to the theatre. Theatre can only exist with an audience so thank you to everyone who attended".

Lumina Theatre Company is currently in the process of deciding on our show for next year. For more information on their upcoming shows, updates and information on how to get involved follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat @Luminatheatreco. We hope you can see them at the next event, or you can become part of the Lumina family in 2019.



Share your news

We would love to hear from our Aquinas College Alumni. Share your news about births, engagements, marriages, in memoriam or outstanding achievements to feature in upcoming editions of Illuminare.

If you have any historical information for our archives, we would love to take copies for our archives.

Email your news, photos and information with your contact details to: illuminate@aquinas.vic.edu.au



Thanks...

A big thank you to all of our alumni who responded with information on how "The Bloods" got their name. Here are some of the insights:

Pete Spiess (PY 1985) spoke to his brother, Bernhard, who was a player in the first year of the club. He said "I believe the first President of the old boys Barry Cuskelly coined the phrase as our footy socks were red. Those were the days when you wore your socks high and they were noticeable. This came about quarter way through the first season. I have a vague memory of us discussing what we wanted to be called."

Pat McCafferty (PY 1980) explained: "It's because the school football jumper in the 1970s was a green jumper with red V, which was similar to the old South Melbourne Football Club. South Melbourne were known as "The Bloods" due to the red on the jumper, and that just carried through to Aquinas College." He added "the current tri-panel jumper was designed by a group of Year 12 students (including me) in 1980 as we relaunched a competitive school football team in the EIS Association."

illuminate

If you have any information about past students, in particular: births, engagements, marriages, in memoriam or outstanding achievements, we would love to hear from you.

Please email them to illuminate@aquinas.vic.edu.au with your contact details.

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Our Website

www.aquinas.vic.edu.au

Would you like to be added to the mailing list to ensure you get every future copy of Illuminate?

Register on the [Alumni section](#) of the College website.

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