Welcome to our 90th Birthday edition of our Alumni News, Certantes. Since its establishment back in 1927, the College has been profoundly influenced by a great many factors at both the local and on a global level, including:

- The Great Depression in the early 1930s
- The Second World in the 1940s
- Establishing Agricultural education in the 50s
- The second Vatican Council in the 60s
- The end of the Vietnam war in the 70s
- World-wide energy shortages in the 80s
- A demand for Co-education in Sunbury in the 1990s
- The explosion of mobile technologies in the 2000s
- A rapid growth in population in Sunbury in the 2010s

Each decade has brought challenges as well as new opportunities, and we are immensely proud of the way the College has responded and adapted to the changing needs of the world around us.

Although much has certainly changed, the strength of the College continues to be its strong links to its Salesian heritage and the call to educate “good Christians and honest citizens”.

We are immensely grateful to the many generations of families who have supported the College, and to the students and staff who have helped to build upon Don Bosco’s vision for preventive (progressive) education.

In this 90th edition of our Alumni magazine, you will pleased to read about the:

- 90 Year celebrative activities
- Stories from some of our Alumni from each of the decades
- Highlights of our 90th year celebrations in words and pictures

As we journey through the 10th decade of Salesian presence here in Sunbury, I pray that your journey since graduating from ‘Rupertswood’ has continued to be influenced by the Salesian spirit of friendship and understanding.

We encourage each of you to keep in touch with us by contacting our College Development Team and by viewing our many social media outlets, including our new-look College website.

Yours in Don Bosco
Mark Brockhus
College Principal

90 YEAR ALUMNI REUNION

On 25 November 2017, we held a party to celebrate our 90th birthday and to welcome our Alumni and their families.

Whether compelled by nostalgia or curiosity, attending the reunion was a chance to renew old friendships, reconnect with past classmates, network and socialise with friends and fellow alumni in a relaxed, casual atmosphere.

This day was also important to show what changes have taken place at the College over the past nine decades.

Reunions contribute to our College life, culture and tradition. They provide an opportunity for alumni and staff alike to revisit the people and places that made their time at Salesian unique.

Thank you to everyone who came along on this special day. Later this year there will be another smaller Alumni reunion held on 24 November 2018. We hope to see you there.

We are also always looking for guest speakers, mentors, and stories for our Certantes magazine.
There are not many parties that don’t involve music and our 90th birthday was no different. Throughout the year, our College courtyard was filled with tunes with thanks to our talented students.

The courtyard music events gained popularity after a successful first instalment held early in 2017. Music from the past nine decades were played in and around the College canteen area. To begin with, people cheered students in the Amann courtyard but as the weather got a little colder, students ventured inside the canteen space.

The beginning of 2017 saw the 90 Year College logo painted across one of our main ovals near the College pavilion. This was to launch the yearlong celebrations and to demonstrate just how big 2017 was going to be. It was a constant reminder to all students to be proud of the College.

In 2017 we also saw a nine-foot tree planted on College grounds to mark our 90th year as part of National Tree day. This was planted by a Year 7 and Year 12 representative, Jordan Barrett and Ethan O’Doherty along with our Acting Principal, Ms Angela Romano. The aim of this tree was to leave a lasting legacy for future generations. It will create a beautiful space for others to enjoy in years to come. As this 9-foot tree continues to grow, it will be a constant reminder to our community of our history; where we have been and the growth of the College. We cannot wait to see what the tree will look like in another nine decades!

At the 90th Year Mazzarello Feast Day, it was concluded by the Opening of a Mazzarello Well near the campus building. It was unveiled by our College Principal Mr Mark Brockhus and Mr Stephen Connelly and opened by Sister Lucy-Rose FMA - Regional Superior South Pacific Region and FMA General Councillor, Sister Edna Mary FMA - Provincial South Pacific Region.

Our students show us how they strive to be the best people in our community in many different ways. Each year we undertake Project Compassion, House Fundraising projects, St Vincent De Paul’s Winter Woolies appeal, Salesian Missions and Salesian Sisters work in the Solomon Islands. In addition to these efforts, our College wanted to undertake nine additional deeds as part of our 90th year.

In 2017 the year commenced with an ANZAC Day appeal. We were acknowledged for our efforts by the Sunbury RSL.

Four of our Year 9 students as part of their Challenge studies and nine deeds of charity, focused on the welfare of animals. They collected blankets, pet food and pet toys for Pets Haven.

In 2017 we had 50+ students volunteer on Clean Up Australia Day. They helped clean up their local environment by collecting and removing rubbish. Earlier we joined the nationwide movement to stand united against bullying and violence. We took a stand together and made stars pleading to end all forms of violence.

We raised almost $6,500 for Caritas’ Project Compassion appeal and funds were also raised by students for Joseph’s Corner. Sr. Jeanne who established the organisation kindly gave her time to speak with our students.

In the middle of winter, 23 Young Vinnies Group students from Years 7-12, and five staff members, undertook a winter sleep out. They raised $850 in aid of VincentCare Victoria and Ozanam Community Centre. As part of our nine deeds of charity, our VCAL students undertook a food drive for Foodbank Victoria. The school community donated 100kg of food.

Finally, our library staff donated old books to our local community and our maintenance team donated library shelving that were no longer needed by our College to Taralye.
Hundreds of people were taken back in time at our sold-out 90 Year Showcase event held early in 2017 at our College Stadium. This event celebrated nine decades of music, drama and dance.

Members of our Alumni, current students, teachers and staff worked together to give the audience glimpses into some of the school productions held over this time.

Our MCs took our audience on an unforgettable journey. Over 80 people danced, sung or acted their way through extracts of popular shows such as Annie, Grease, The Wiz and Hairspray.

Highlights included some of our Alumni performing with current students. Kayla Gonzales took on Tracy Turnblad and one of the narrator roles in Joseph and the Amazing Technicoloured Dreamcoat with Brook Lamaire.

Mikayla Pain took on the role of Motormouth Maybelle from Hairspray and Chloe Harris dazzled us with her performance as Glinda from The Wiz.

The VET Music crew also impressed the audience with hits from the decades including a rendition of The Beatles ‘Hey Jude’ and Coldplay’s ‘Yellow’.

Our night was presented beautifully by a cast of leads comprising of both senior and junior students, supported by a dedicated ensemble cast.

The energy of the students was contagious and transferred to the audience, many of which were Alumni returning to capture the excitement and to experience the same sense of pride and joy.

College Productions have always had a place within our College, even from the earlier decades. They are an occasion when all students can participate in the creative life of the College, with opportunities to display their skills in acting, music, dance, stage management or backstage organisation.
Archbishop visit and cake cutting

On Wednesday 13 September 2017, students and Alumni gathered as a whole school community with the very Reverend Archbishop Denis Hart celebrating our 90th Anniversary Thanksgiving mass. We also had the opportunity to congratulate the Archbishop on his Golden Jubilee of Priestly Ordination.

We were joined by Fr Giang Tran, Fr Will Mathews SDB, Fr Martin Tanti SDB and Fr John Papworth SDB and parish priest Fr Kevin McIntosh.

Luna Park celebrations

Do you remember celebrating Feast days whilst at Salesian College? For our College’s 90th birthday, students were spun around 90 degrees and had 90 reasons to be happy as they celebrated it at Luna Park in late 2017.

The 90 Year Feast day Luna Park event has probably remained in the hearts and minds of many.

It was something very special and was a unique experience that truly excited all in attendance.

A roller coaster of activities occurred on this very special visit. Laughter and joy were the sounds coming from every part of the park as everyone enjoyed the carnival atmosphere and the company of each other.

Small gestures undertaken on the day really made the event special.
90 YEAR NOVANTA NAMING COMPETITION

Similar to that of the past nine decades, Salesian College students continue to attend Agricultural shows.

Our first ever little Simmental bull calf required a name as part of our 90-year celebrations. We entrusted our College community to name him with something of importance.

We wanted the name to complement our 90 year anniversary, and the name ‘Novanta’ which means 90 in Italian, was given.

90 YEAR ANZAC DAY

ANZAC Day, 25 April, is one of Australia’s important national occasions. It marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War.

As part of our 90 Year milestone, we held a moving commemorative ANZAC service. Thank you to all Alumni who attended this service or helped our students in the lead up to this occasion.

As part of this service, we aimed to have 90 ANZAC poppies signed with messages of hope, peace and love for our 90th birthday. We were thrilled to surpass this goal with over 650 messages. We also had a display within our library showing nine decades of literature and met our school Water pony (Coolibah). This was the theme for our 90-year ANZAC day poetry competition.

90 YEAR ART COMPETITION

Over the decades, Art has continued to grow and be part of Salesian College. Alumni often reminisce about their experiences and works.

Many speak of their opportunities, and how they did a variety of incursions and excursions and their insights into many facets of ‘The Arts’ in society.

In 2017, entries for the 90 Year Salesian College Sunbury Arts Competition were wide and varied from our students. It encapsulated all year levels and all area of the Arts, Performance and Visual Arts.

Judging the artworks was more difficult than we had anticipated as we had so many fabulous entries. Winning artworks will be framed and placed around our College to capture this time for years to come.

90 YEAR MASS

Together at one alter

A special community celebration took place on a Saturday evening in August 2017 to mark our 90 Year anniversary.

Past Alumni along with current students joined Acting Principal, Ms Angela Romano at mass at St Anne’s Primary School in Sunbury.

This service was to celebrate Catholic schools in Sunbury (Salesian College, St Anne’s Primary School and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Primary School) as well as acknowledge our 90 years as a College.

Families came together to celebrate the Eucharist and reflect on the College’s great tradition and history. Fr Will Matthews and Fr Joe Binh Dinh assisted Fr Kevin Mckintosh in celebrating Mass.
During this decade we have seen the opening of the Savio and Mazzarello Campus, the Welcome of St Mary’s College for the Deaf, the opening of the new Student Hub and the Oswald Learning Centre. We have also had the launch of the new College brand (logo and uniform).

Salesian College Sunbury continues to be an inclusive and welcoming Catholic Faith Community in the spirit of St John Bosco. We aim to provide our community with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Within our College, we work together to build positive relationships and a safe and welcoming school environment, one where each person is free to learn and to achieve their personal best.

This decade we have already seen some of the biggest and perhaps coolest breakthroughs in science, technology and the arts. Jet packs, Driverless and Electronic cars, iPads and spray on fabric are just some of the things that are now available.

Read stories from some of our Alumni who attended our College during this decade. Make comparisons on our humble beginnings.

ASHLEY WILKINSON

Ashley Wilkinson graduated VCE at Salesian College Sunbury in 2014, completing units 3/4 of Visual Arts, Textiles and Visual Communications. She has just graduated a Bachelor of Design Arts at the Academy of Design (now LCI Melbourne). She now has a job as a Costume Assistant on a television show for Channel Ten.

Her course focused on both Fashion and costume, and after an internship on the set of Offspring, she decided it was something she definitely wanted to explore further.

She reflects back on her time at the College and states how much she loved textiles with Mrs Holmes.

“My favourite place to be was the Textiles room”, said Ashley. I was able to persue my interests and be shown many valuable techniques which I still use to this day.”

Whilst Ashley cannot think of any funny College stories to share, she expressed how much she enjoyed her time at Salesian. She believes it has “set her up” for a successful career.

As a member of our Alumni, Salesian College Sunbury was pleased to provide Ashley with the use of the College Mansion earlier this year as a backdrop for her fashion shoot (pictured below). She utilised this space to help highlight her portfolio. She organised the photography and the skill of the process of the shoot.
Nathan is currently the Sports Assistant at Salesian College and has worked as a staff member for two years (2017 and 2018). Prior to this, he attended the College as a student from 2011 until 2016.

His interests have always been within the sports industry. His fondest memories is playing School cricket with his College friends. This is still something he absolutely loves to do, and his closest friends today are all Alumni Salesian boys.

Nathan has excellent social skills and ability to communicate with anyone. He believes his current job has been a great stepping-stone and provided him with plenty of experiences to draw on in the future.

“One very simple tip I would like to pass onto others is don’t be afraid to give everything a go’, said Nathan. When you move into a new job, don’t be afraid to ask questions. It is far easier to ask a question than it is to cover up a mistake”.

He believes the College is a school that provides opportunities for students with any interests whether it is Music, Academics, Agriculture, Art, Dance, Drama, IT or Sport.

Nathan really enjoyed his Year 12 PE Class with Mr Messer. He felt that class had a perfect balance between getting work done and having fun.

It was only last year MacKenzie-Rose became an Alumni. She was a student at Salesian College Sunbury from 2012 until 2017. Since then she has been working as an Arts Trainee at Salesian College where she is currently completing a Certificate 3 in Business.

MacKenzie-Rose is full of passion, enthusiasm and is always energetic and happy – all the qualities we love to see around our College grounds.

She describes Salesian College Sunbury as a caring community, one that holds their care for students very high. She believes we display our College values in every interaction – with each other, our students, their families and carers, and with visitors and other customers.

Her fondest memories were created in her Drama classes with Ms. Valencich. She loved the atmosphere, the people, her teacher and the subject itself.

“It was the one subject through school where I could be myself and not be judged for being a bit different, loud or creative. It was and still is a place within the school where I feel the happiest”, said MacKenzie-Rose.

She recommends to other students (past and present) to always give everything a go even if it is outside your comfort zone.
2000

The spirit of Saint John Bosco is alive and well during this decade. Each person is sacred and unique, and treated with dignity and respect. The Salesian Family is now a worldwide movement of people committed to the service of the young. It consists of over 500,000 people who are part of 30 different organisations aligned to Don Bosco. In 2009, Salesian College Sunbury celebrated the 150th Anniversary year of the founding of the Salesian Congregation by Don Bosco with great joy and gratitude.

Life at school also incorporates constant change. The construction of new buildings, the deployment of hundreds of new computers and many other improvements take place.

JONATHON TARASCIO

Jonathon Tarascio was born in 1986, and attended Salesian College during the nineties and the decade 2000. He was the Alumni Class of 2004. He was a bright student who demonstrated flexibility, strength of will, a strong work ethic, was motivated and connected. Jonathon was supportive and understanding of others. He achieved these awards for his work in establishing the Green Button Foundation from his hospital bed. This Foundation provides immediate funds for cancer patients and their families. It endeavours to alleviate added stress from an already stressful situation.

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EMMA GRANT

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She moved to Melbourne at the start of 2018 and commenced work at Moonee Ponds Primary School as the PE Specialist Teacher.

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It was between the Years 2002 and 2008 when Stacey Attard attended Salesian College Sunbury. She lived in Sunbury and therefore was familiar with the area and of the College before coming.

At this time, Salesian College Sunbury consisted of a very open, picturesque landscape which backed onto Jacksons Creek. It also featured the Mansion, farmland and significant Indigenous sites.

Even though the College continued to evolve, it still had an incredible amount of history. She believes we seem to have always had a good academic and sporting culture.

Some of Stacey’s fondest memories during her time at the College occurred on various Outdoor Education trips and during the 2006 Kakadu Trip. She made many lasting friendships that were strengthened by the incredible experiences shared on a number of these trips.

Physical Education lessons were always a favourite subject of hers. She found the content interesting and “it was nice to be able to get out from behind a desk” whilst we practically applied what we had previously learnt.

After attending Salesian, she completed a Bachelor of Exercise Science (Human Movement)/Bachelor of Psychological Studies whilst working in various Operational roles at a couple of Leisure Centres. She loves anything and everything associated with Sport, Food and Animals.

She currently loves being able to spend time with her family and friends. She adores her nieces, nephew and cousin’s young children, and does not need any excuse to take them out to explore the great outdoors.

Stacey is currently a professional Firefighter. She considered herself to be extremely fortunate to be working in this field and wants to work in this sector in some capacity long term.

She believes her positive attitude, good sense of integrity and perseverance have most certainly helped her succeed over the years. She has also never had a problem with doing a bit of hard work!

The main experiences that she would like to pass on to others is you may never truly know what challenges or circumstances certain people are facing behind closed doors.

She states you need to be respectful and decent and one day your respect and decency may even save someone’s life.
Laughlan has always lived in Sunbury. He went to Salesian College from 2008 until 2013 and has always been heavily involved in local Basketball and Football.

He currently plays for Rupertswood Football Club and has been there since his first game in Under 9’s. He absolutely loves his sport, whether he is playing or watching it.

Laughlan remembers the opportunities available to him whilst at school with his fondest memory being school sport. He describes Salesian College Sunbury as ‘a place to lay the foundations for your career and build lifelong friendships’.

Since leaving Salesian in 2013, Laughlan began his Bachelor of Health Science and Masters of Podiatric Practice. He always wanted to be involved in health care and is now working as a Podiatrist.

He has also done a fair bit of travelling, and most recently just completed a two-month trip around South America with three friends from Salesian.

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Make sure you find a good balance between work/study and a social life. The personal qualities that has helped me succeed include excellent Organisation and Communication skills, Motivation, Flexibility and a good sense of humour'.

SHARIN MILNER

Sharin Milner attended Salesian College Rupertswood and graduated in 1998. From the time she can remember, Sharin has been around sport.

Her dad coached of various sporting teams and her mum was heavily involved in organizing and transporting Sharin and her friends to tournaments.

Sharin has travelled extensively playing basketball in Australia and all over the world. She was captain of the Bulleen Boomers in the Women’s National Basketball League for ten years and won many of the league awards. She retired as a professional basketball player in 2011.

Sharin was selected in the Australian Opals women’s squad in the lead up to the Beijing Olympics. She has played basketball in China as well as spending a year on a basketball scholarship from Troy State University in the US. Over that year, Sharin lived in a small Alabama town, lived in a student dorm, ate at the school cafeteria, attended the pep rallies for the football team, and enjoyed attending all the frat parties.

Sharin’s passion for the game of basketball was evident in her commitment to the rigorous training. Although her time spent playing and training for basketball took up around 20 hours a week.

Sharin also found time to undertake a myriad of other pursuits including completing a Bachelor of Business from RMIT University, starting her own business called Bumblebee Sports - a sports apparel company that provided branded sports clothes and operating a basketball players union that helped promote the rights of women basketball players.

Sharin’s passion for encouraging women’s rights comes from being a second generation Australian as her parents were born in India. It also comes from her experience of being a professional sportsperson in a predominantly male sporting landscape and growing up in multicultural Broadmeadows.

‘The first mouse for computers was sold, the World Wide Web and DVD’s created this era and by the mid-’90s it was clear that videogames were here to stay!’

Salesian College decided in 1992 to change the face of the College forever and girls were admitted. As a result, 21 girls took dance as a subject. By 1997, the school became fully co-educational and had ceased student boarding.

A new group of staff including Mrs Pam Ogilvie, Mr Sam Scollo and Mr Brendan Ennis, adapted a number of musicals for the school including Docs and Mocs, A Cabaret Night, One Last Kiss – an adaption of Bye Bye Birdie, Children of the Revolution, Charades and Mask.

What does the 90’s remind you of? Read the stories of some Alumni who attended the College during this decade.
Stephen celebrates over 20 years of empowering students. He has been a dedicated teacher at Salesian College Sunbury since 1995 and has held a variety of roles over this time.

Stephen progressively acquired increased responsibilities over the past two decades where he is now the Director of Faith and Mission.

“I always wanted to work in this sector in some capacity as I have a strong passion for young people and their futures”, said Stephen.

“Salesian College Sunbury is where I have spent almost half my life. It is a place I treasure fondly in my heart, and the place that is part of who I am, the place that is my home - I would not want to be anywhere else.”

His fondest memories is the young people he has met over the years, the camps and trips overseas, the people he has worked with and the joy of seeing the wonderful changes over time.

His strong work ethic has helped him succeed. He is passionate for young people’s education, passionate about Don Bosco, and passionate about faith education.

“To succeed you need a reason to get up in the morning. For me it is called my homeroom, my students, my colleagues, my vocation. Accept your shortcomings, work hard, be generous and helpful to others”.

Stephen is a remarkably dedicated employee who views his job as part of his extended family. He is one of the first to arrive early each morning, and has been instrumental in fostering a friendly, interactive and collaborative work environment.
Ryan continues to pop into Salesian College on a regular basis as the Account and Business Development Manager of Noones Imagewear, Salesian College’s uniform supplier.

He attended Salesian College between the years 1996 and 2001 from Bulla. He describes the College as ‘a very unique school where students have a great opportunity to prosper in a broad range of areas’.

Ryan is still close with many of his high school friends. His fondest memories are hanging out with them and playing sport at every opportunity they had. His favourite subject was Physical Education/Sport. He enjoyed the freedom that came with being out of the classroom.

Ryan is a passionate person who loves to make people happy. He enjoys working in a team environment, the pressure of performing for other people and helping bring the best out of them.

He is extremely proud of the great people that he has been able to surround himself with throughout his journey. He currently enjoys being a parent and husband, socialising and playing basketball.

Ryan initially worked in sports administration though changed careers to challenge himself and broaden his skill base. He recommends everyone at sometime to focus on areas that are considered to be a weakness and work on these to make them a strength.

Ryan has always been himself, regardless of the challenges that he has faced. He has maintained really good relationships with people, is loyal and fun.

During this decade, we acknowledged the Bicentenary of white settlement on this continent. While ‘Rupertswood’ shared enthusiastically in the celebrations, it was an opportunity to reflect on our own identity.

Similar to that of our 90 Year celebrations, our school looked at who we have been, and are as a Catholic School founded on the educational principles and spirit of St. John Bosco.

On the sporting field, the College consistently had outstanding achievements in swimming, athletics and basketball, table tennis and cricket.

In education, Rupertswood had regularly enjoyed debating, music and drama, language, mathematics and science competitions.

It was in this decade building improvement works took place in the Year 9 wing, staff room, R.E. Resource Centre, Audio-Visual room, Graphics/Photography Complex and Automotive/Electrical.

In 1983, it was also a new era for Rupertswood with the coming of computer technology. The year saw the ‘Computer Awareness Course’ commence and an ever increasing number of computer fanatics delved into programming and became masters of the BBC Microcomputer.

Our first College Open Day was held in 1985 when hundreds of people from the wider community were welcomed into the College to enjoy farm and mansion tours, barbeque, bingo, concert and old-fashioned Rupertswood warmth and hospitality.
Brendan Ennis is an outstanding educator who is a true leader who has exemplified our College values for the past 30 years. He commenced work at Salesian College Sunbury in January 1987 and continues to work with the College currently as a Teacher.

Fr. Greg Chambers offered him his original position and over the past 30 years, Brendan has worked as a Year 7 Coordinator, Year 8 Coordinator, Inaugural Mackillop House Leader and English Learning Area Leader.

Currently he is the Naughton 5 Home Group Leader. His main teaching passion is English and he has taught English (and other subjects) to hundreds of students.

“My favourite memories, of which there are many, mostly come out of the ‘extra’ activities he has been involved in”, said Brendan. I have been on three Kakadu Trips, a Japan trip and twenty-one College Productions.

“Some unusual memories are my classes being interrupted by a blue tongue lizard, a snake, a possum, a cow and a flock of ducks. This reminds me we are certainly very close to nature at Salesian which makes our College unique and special”.

“I sometimes kick myself when I take our amazing environment for granted and I think the modernising of buildings and facilities over the last twelve years or so is very exciting”.

Brendan has always been impressed by the calibre of the staff at the College over the past 30 years. “Both non-teaching and teaching, they continue to be wonderful friends and inspiring colleagues”. He is grateful to these people who educated his own children between 1995 to 2006.

Brendan states although it makes him feel old, he gets a buzz from meeting past students and having their children turn up in his classes. It is a great endorsement for what the College has to offer.

Thirty years of being committed to a job is clearly something you only do when you are truly passionate about something.
Since Joseph Haber was at Salesian College Rupertswood between 1972 to 1978, the College has continued to evolve. Joseph originally was a local who lived in Sunbury so travelling to school did not take him too long compared to some other students in the seventies. He describes Salesian School Rupertswood as a place of learning, fun to be at, with a real community and supportive spirit. His fondest memories was getting to school early so he could have the trampoline all to himself. He also reflected on participating at the pancake stall on Fete Day, his biology lessons with Mr Oswald, history with Mr Kloss and attending his favourite lesson woodwork – making something with his hands!

Joseph has always been described as a “diligent, conscientious student” with a social conscience, usually sitting in the top 5 academically. He preferred Chess to sport (captained the Chess Club for a couple of years). Joseph loved the College surrounds – the Mansion, gardens and walking to the High School to catch the bus each day. He now enjoys work, travel, the countryside and exploring Melbourne. He is the Manager of Product Development for Nestle Confectionery – all the technical stuff involved in taking a product from an idea, to a concept, industrialization and launch. He co-ordinates input from Sales, Marketing, Manufacturing, Consumer Research and Nestle’s Swiss Head Office. He was always interested in food. Started out in the Dairy Industry manufacturing cheese and yoghurt initially then transitioned to confectionery. Joseph encourages everyone to network, even if you are a little shy! Travel to appreciate what you have and see how you can assist those that have less. Perseverance and diligence has helped him succeed.

DELLA OSWALD
(Former Teacher, 1974-1994)

Born Delyse Doutre in Northern India, Della Oswald has enjoyed teaching all of her life. She commenced at the College in 1974 after arriving in Australia from India in 1973 with her husband Allan and their three young children. She has lived in Sunbury for over 40 years and still remembers the township of Sunbury with its small population of 500 people. Initially, Della divided her time between the library and classroom at the College, but went to teaching full time taking English, History, Geography, Religion and Special education classes. Della was a much loved Form Mistress of 7 Blue for 14 years. ‘Both Allan and I walked the road that the Salesians paved for us…and how blessed we have been’, said Della.

Salesians are “family” and that she credits part of her getting to 80 years old to them, especially after her husband, Allan passed almost sixteen years ago. She feels Sunbury is her “safety net” full of “family” – this includes her children, grandchildren, and the parents, students, and colleagues from her time here. She is constantly feeling grateful and special when she re-meets someone that was maybe a student or a parent and can hear about their life today.

During her long tenure at the College, Della helped organise activities including running the debating club with former teacher Joe Kloss, attending College camp at Dromana over a 10-year period, organizing the three feast days at the College, travelling to country Victoria to perform parent-teacher interviews and initiating the vital learning centre concept.

Today, the Oswald Learning Centre at the College stands as testament to Della Oswald’s exemplary education skills who loved and guided each and every one of her students. She was also inducted into the College Hall of Fame in 2014.
Bernie Rankin attended Salesian College Rupertswood in the Years 1969 to 1971, completing what was then HSC (Year 12). He grew up on a dairy farm in a place called Fumina, about 50 kilometres north of Warragul in Gippsland. He was one of 12 children.

Like many children, his first day at the school was daunting. He recalls it as being a place that encouraged its students to strive to reach their goals, and provided the support and infrastructure to allow one to get there.

His fondest memories was playing football against other school teams, including in Tasmania against Salesian College Hobart (this included his first flight on a commercial airline). Bernie also remembers cross country runs and the great friends he made there and is still in touch with some students once a year to celebrate friendship that has endured for nearly 50 years.

Bernie’s favourite educational lesson was Economics, but the best life lesson he learnt at Rupertswood was loyalty, and that means loyalty to your family, friends, colleagues, school and your employer.

Any group that sticks together to achieve it’s goals will generally get there in the long term. If a friend or colleague falls by the way side, give them a helping hand, you never know what life is going to dish up to you.

After leaving school, Bernie spent a couple of years at University, then joined the Victorian Police at the age of 20 years. He loved his career, and spent 43 years in policing. He has seen human beings at their best and their worst. As a senior police officer, he has had the privilege of managing the homicide squad, the armed offenders squad, and the major collision investigation unit. He also had the honour of participating in an overseas peace keeping mission.

“You get back in life what you put in, said Bernie. ‘It doesn’t matter if it is your school, your career or your family. You have to strive for the things that are important, remain true to your values, and work hard’.

“Celebrate your victories, and do not dwell too much on your failures, but learn from them. Never forget your family, they will be there to support you when you need someone around you.”
DENIS RYAN

Denis Ryan commenced his studies at Rupertswood as a boarder in 1962, just prior to the assassination of JFK. A most horrifying experience for a young 13 year old, especially considering he was the first catholic president of the United States. He found boarding school quite challenging at first, as he was used to the confinement of his rather large family of nine. He found his way eventually when he studied Agriculture under the guidance of Father Jimmy Carroll. He believes the education he received whilst at Rupertswood did give him a great amount of general understanding, and although he did not continue in farming, it greatly influenced the rest of his life, and skilled him to turn his hand to most anything he wanted.

"Fr. Jim was rather influential in my life, and with two particular statements set my course forward, and in some ways put a pause in it"," said Denis.

"The first statement I remember listening to was, It is our intention here to make you a Jack of all trades, and if possible a master of the lot. The second statement was, With the level of skills you have obtained here, you will have employers looking to take you up on almost everywhere.

"I liked the feel of his remarks, and solidly took them on board. I become quite skilled (and knowledgeable) and I did very well theoretically in agriculture;" said Denis.

"I went off target with his second declaration, when after leaving College, I waited around for these enthusiastic employers who were going to come flocking to my door, just to let me know that the job I had been wanting was waiting there for me to take command as soon as I was ready. Well we live and learn."

Over the years Denis had worked in a variety of areas, including a period of employment with the Commonwealth in Canberra, working in the Papua New Guinea Superannuation Board, putting into use his bookkeeping skills (learned at Rupertswood) and eventually returning to Victoria to work for the then State Rivers and Water Supply Commission, becoming a Water Bailiff. He finished out his career in this field until retirement.

Denis states the skills obtained at Rupertswood helped forward his career onward. He considers himself a blessed man.

God has pulled him through some pretty tough times, saved his life on more occasions than he cares to think about, and kept him out of trouble from many of the deliberate wrongs he ventured into.

He owes all that he has to HIM, and in no small part to the Salesian order, who gave their lives to the education of rough-cut young lads.

1960

It was in 1961 when the school turned into a College. The name Salesian College Rupertswood replaced Salesian School Rupertswood. The uniform was changed to blue blazers instead of grey suits. The College motto remained the same, Certantes in Vita (Striving in Life).

The swinging 60’s was a decade of revolution, irresponsible excess, flamboyance, and the decay of the social order. How did this decade look however at Salesian College Rupertswood? Hear from our Alumni as they recall their journey.

PETER MCPHEEE

Returning home from school during Year 9, one Tuesday in June 1960, Peter McPhee and his brother Gerard were told by their aunt “Go back to school and get your books as you are going to boarding school tomorrow”. They went to Rupertswood by taxi the next morning to be greeted.

They both stayed at the school during the holidays as their Mum was ill and Dad was in Heidelberg Repatriation hospital suffering from war injuries. Gerard lasted that year and a bit of the next before he became ill and went home. Fortunately for the Christmas of 1960, Peter was invited to go with another boarder, Kevin Ryan, to his place for the summer holidays. They became close friends and he still values this friendship today.

Peter often regales about the food, sleeping on the mansion verandah, farming, the cheese factory in the shearing shed, cannon guilty and the half battery. Peter left in 1962 to start work to support the family. He got a job at the Country Roads Board (now VicRoads) in the Estates Section and then completed Leaving (Year 11) and part of matriculation at night school. He won a State Bank Scholarship and was the first student to wear the new blazer at the presentation in the early sixties.

After leaving school, Peter got involved with the Rupertswood Old Boys Association. This started a 25-year association with the ROBA and then the National Past Pupils Association. The culmination was being Chairman of the 4th Asia Australian Past Pupils Congress in 1988. In his time with the old boys they presented a perpetual sporting trophy to the College for the best sporting house. They also built our own club room in the bottom corner of the main field (where the now boat shed is located). He along with a number of old boys were also very involved on the Eucharistic Festival committee for years.

Peter joined the Jaycees (Junior Chamber of Commerce) in Australia, ending up as National President and being awarded a Certificate of Merit in the Category “Outstanding National President of the World”. In his travels around the state he met several old boys who held leadership positions. He had the chance to meet Presidents, Princes, Prime Ministers and world luminaries including the Emperor of Japan and Neil Armstrong. During his travels he visited Salesian schools in San Francisco and Cartagena, Colombia.

After a real estate career, Peter was appointed to assist with running an RSL. Later becoming General Manager of a semi rural Sub Branch and awarded membership of the Victorian RSL Hall of Fame. Rotary and Junior Chamber have both awarded him their world honour: Having retired from Real Estate Valuations and Club Management, Peter has developed his public speaking. He has made presentations as an expert in fields such as Australian History, Italian cooking, Scottish Lord, International Olympic Committee member, Microbiology, Anthropology and others. He also speaks seriously on Kokoda (where he contracted Malaria), Lost souls of the Battle of Fromelles and Australian History.

He enjoyed his time both whilst at Rupertswood and with the old boys later to become past pupils. He is proud of the College and his children have fond memories of their many visits to the school.
Martin attended the College from 1961 to 1966 having completed matriculation. The reason why he came to Rupertswood was because he lived in Narbethong, near Marysville, and his parents felt that travelling to High school in Alexandra was too much. They also had a passion to provide their boys with the best education they could afford and Rupertswood at the time was universally considered one of the best educational standards in Victoria. Rupertswood was a relatively small place in a small country town of Sunbury. It was at the time quite isolated and focused on farming. Sport was a very big part of the College; football, cricket, athletics, cross-country running, with other sports including a riding club with less focus. We were part of a wider Catholic College network of sports and he remember trips to Olympic Park and Bendigo for sports carnivals. He became good at Cross Country running progressively, loved it, and used to run most days of the week 6 – 10 miles.

Initially most of the students at Rupertswood were boarders, with few “day boys” from local towns such as Gisborne. Soon this changed and “day boys” came in larger numbers on the train to Rupertswood station from Sunshine and surrounding suburbs. The boarders were still a unique group and Martin made some lifelong friends particularly Michael Collins and John Knorr (recently deceased).

Martin remembers the discipline as quite tough but students managed to adapt to the rigours and have fun and often get around the rules. They were up at around 6.30am for study before breakfast and went to bed at 9pm. Sport was always at 4.30pm with no excuses even in the cold miserable weather they often had or the scorching heat. Students swam in the creek below the rail bridge or 2 to 3 hundred metres further up the creek.

Martin remembers being allowed to have family visits only once a month and pocket money was limited to two pounds per month. He went home for school holidays in May, September and December. His parents wrote to him every day and mail was a very important aspect of life for everyone at the College. There were many great activities including many religious feast day holidays with special activities, great walks around the property, model plane flying and movies in the hall most Saturday nights.

In Year 9 or Intermediate, Martin became the Sacristan and kept this position until he left the College. This meant being up early to serve mass in the chapel for all the priests each day. He also got to organise all the religious people for the outdoor mass of the Eucharistic Festival.

“I had some career options when I left the College, an apprentice Chef at Hotel Australia; bank clerk or study to be an accountant. What I really wanted to do was to become a Rock Star with our school band “the Bunyips”, said Martin.

“I chose to be an Accountant and through College contacts went to a Chartered Accountancy firm in Collins Street. I decided rather than university I would do night school and complete qualification via the Institute of Chartered Accountants exam system. The advantage of this system (no longer available) was that you received on the job training and experience and a very high standard academically. He has a solid and successful career.

“I believe the College gave me a great education and provided the opportunity and encouragement to be independent and instilled a great sense of ethics in me”, said Martin.

“The personal qualities which have helped me succeed are hard work, solid planning and a clear view of what I want to achieve”. 
Quentin Lehane attended Salesian School Rupertswood between 1957 and 1961 when it was an all-boys school. He remembers it as a good school though it was no substitute for family life. It fulfilled the function of an ‘alternative family’ because of the peer group and there was never any favouritism.

His favourite lesson at Rupertswood was probably science but geography scored well. There was a future out there and it seemed amazing. He remembers the extremes in weather was very uncomfortable for students. In the warmer months though, students were allowed to ride Shetland ponies around the oval! The Wednesday afternoon walks was also much-loved.

Some of the favourite activities in the fifties also included stilts and skates. Everyone could get involved in these two common free sports. The skates did not have ball bearings so there was not too much risk of injuries. Eucharist day was also a bonus, as there were girls there.

Technology as we know it did not exist in the 1950’s. Transistor radios at the time became the most popular electronic communication device and Transistor radios at the time became the most popular electronic communication device and

Food in these times wasn’t gourmet (like the College canteen is today). Quentin describes the porridge as “thick glutinous muck, which would be served and often make boys choke”.

German sausages was also on the menu, standard meat issue. Cherry ripe was apparently the bitcoin of the day. Getting an afternoon sandwich, (any extra food was a bonus) and wheeties on Sunday was a favourite memory.

College life was busy and there little time to be mischievous. Students would be doing activities from 6am till 9pm. For example students could grow vegetables, as long as it was radish or silverbeet. The kitchen would cook it up, something every student looked forward to. The weekends were almost totally free, except for the multiple church services.

Escapes from the boarding rooms, well apparently they did happen on a rare occasion. Quentin remembers sneaking out and winding his way under the rail bridge where he rode a bike to a local mental hospital to raid his mum’s fridge in the nurse’s quarters. Mid-term snacks were unknown and having a tin of sweetened condensed milk was a gem though now, it seems disgusting.

Within the school library, Quentin remembers loving to read every Biggles book, great escapism and even Ivanhoe, though he finds the language too heavy now. When movies were played, he also remembers the lens would be blocked if there was a kissing scene so that the boys would not be corrupted.

Students attending the College in the fifties were from various suburbs. This scattering made ongoing friendships difficult. Quentin however by chance recently met Gil Lalanne as well as Johny Famechon at his family home.

Quentin qualified as a civil engineer and as a commercial pilot in the same year. Retired now but does a minor amount of consultancy in sustainability type works. He also worked in PNG (on two different occasions) and the last hydro station in Tasmania. He enjoys building, though feels as though he is getting a bit past it, so loves travel and music.
Johnny Famechon attended Salesian School Rupertswood from 1956 to 1958 and endeared himself to the Salesians, in particular to Bro. Hamilton who was an avid supporter and fan. Those who taught Johnny, remember him as a happy little fellow who got on well with his schoolmates, was a good footballer and a real champion on roller skates.

Johnny’s French father, the Lightweight Champion of France, gave his son a pair of boxing gloves while he was at Rupertswood, and of course the rest is history.

Johnny was famous in the boxing ring after becoming the new featherweight boxing champion of the world in London on 21 January 1969 and won the hearts of Australians and people across the world.

Johnny was inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame in 1985. In 1991, Johnny was badly injured when a car hit him while he jogged outside Sydney’s Warwick Farm Racecourse, which resulted in horrific injuries.

Johnny was inducted into the World Boxing Hall of Fame in Los Angeles in 1997. He was inducted in the Salesian College Hall of Fame in 2013.

Dennis Jarvis attended Salesian School Rupertswood in the fifties and though was not an “Aggi Student” or “Farm Boy”, sometimes worked with them during school holidays, particularly for milking and seasonal cropping work of lucerne, oats and barley planting, harvesting, haymaking and silage production.

His farm memories include:

- Twice a day, 7 days a week, students and Bro Reg, herding many relaxed looking cows between milking and lush paddocks beyond the railway bridge.
- The 1957 Royal Melbourne Show Grand Champion Cow, Carnation, had what it seemed dozens of prize winning ribbons displayed on the dairy wall.
- In 1954, working for Bro Gleisner in his chook yard up the hill from swimming pool, feeding, collecting eggs etc., and being attacked by one.
- Stooking oat sheafs and later pitch-forking them to a trailer and eventual barn storage.
- As hay bales were dropped from the baler to the ground, without any mechanical assistance, heaving them on to the accompanying tractor towed trailer which when reaching the barn, had to be stacked, again with muscle only.
- The dogs of my time were Tiger, Robbie, Butch and Rusty. Unlike the others who were serious sheep working dogs, Rusty was a non-working pet who enjoyed the run of the whole school and who upset the leashed others whenever they saw him. He knew them all very well as somehow he found himself responsible for feeding them from kitchen scraps.
- Falling head and all into the sheep dip, full of foul smelling green Cooper’s sheep treatment chemical in 1953.

‘Rupertswood’ was my home for about four years and I greatly value the direction of my life given to me by all Salesians. The memories are still vivid and clear.

Terry Gabbedy (Class of 1953)
Throughout our history, our College has educated students to contribute to a society based on Christian principles. We strive to be examples of St John Bosco’s living charism, fostering the growth of the whole person in an atmosphere of reasonableness and kindness.

Can you imagine the children of today living in a world without electronics and the constant bombardment of digital stimulation? Students at Salesian School Rupertswood of the 1940s had no such options for entertainment.

Day students who needed to get to and from Rupertswood, utilised Rupertswood Station from the late 1940s. This station was used for school traffic only. This took place until the platform closed for the Regional Fast Rail Project.

During the 1930’s, the population of Sunbury was around 2,500 people. Big bands and swing music were popular, toys included Monopoly, Yo-Yos, wooden wagons, pick-up sticks and bolo bats, which are wooden paddles with rubber balls attached by an elastic string.

Salesian School Rupertswood was still helping young men with their education journey. Students enjoyed many forms of entertainment, particularly if they could do so inexpensively.

In the early 1930’s, the School ‘Drill Hall’ (which had been used as a hay shed up until then), had been emptied and a stage was built for the College Drill Hall Theatre Production.

This apparently was one of the highlights of those male students attending the school in this era.
Our College journey started in 1927 when it was established by the Salesian Society. Rupertswood Mansion, and its grounds were purchased from the estate of industrialist H. V. McKay.

Eight Missionary Priests and Brothers arrived in Sunbury to takeover Rupertswood, the former home of Sir William Clarke.

Salesian School Rupertswood became a registered Victorian school in 1929. We are the oldest Salesian educational foundation in Australia.

At this time, the school was an all-boys boarding school. The Salesian order’s charism meant that “under-privileged” boys were included as boarders. It was a place of learning for the poor and disadvantaged children of Melbourne and the surrounding suburbs.

Classes began at Rupertswood on 11 February 1929 with seven boys from St Aidan’s Orphanage, Bendigo.

Despite their best efforts, the first few months were very difficult as they had to overcome financial difficulty and a shortage of basic supplies. However, the Salesians recognised there were people in need and, with courage and determination, they laid the foundation for the unique educational community we have become today.

During this decade, a new dormitory building was available. Half of this space included 80-90 beds and lockers, the other had a ‘study hall’ where boys did their homework along with two classrooms.

Although the world of 1927 is a vastly different one to that of 2017, Salesian College Sunbury continues to be inspired by the vision of St John Bosco as we strive to provide the best Catholic education possible to all those who wish to make the journey with us.

From small beginnings in 1927, we are now a proud Catholic school, forever young.