



# St. Mark's College

## Old Scholars' Newsletter

To Enlighten & Inspire

September 2015 | Number 1

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### From the Principal



St Mark's College Principal Mr Greg Hay with the Johns Family.

St Mark's remains an extraordinary community, just as you left it. I still feel somewhat a newcomer but I am grateful to be here and I learn so much about what makes it extraordinary through past students. I come to understand this place from old scholars, many whom are parents, and many who drop in and say hello. I learn from old scholars about St Mark's appeal and graciousness, heritage and importance. I learn about welcome and care. I learn about challenges in study and families who support. This is a rich community, richer by the love old scholars have for our welfare and growth.

I welcome our Old Scholars to the achievements and memories contained in this newsletter. I hope that in reading, they are surprised by the importance of the place and its impact. There is a spirit in this community that is powerful and enduring. It is still as you experienced. We still try to inspire a love of learning and ignite potential, passion and excellence. We still want them to do their best. We still think that the playground should be full of laughter and that we teach young people to listen to their hearts. They say their prayers, daydream, hug each other and feel cared for. It's just like when you were here.

It is important to us to look at past students and see what has happened with them. Our success is measured in the people that they become. Our accomplishment is in the hundreds of old scholars who drop children off at the gate every day and live good purposeful lives. Our success is in the extraordinary achievements of those who have taken that road past Redhill and Port Wakefield and done great things.

I certainly hope to see many of the anniversary groups here at the College on Saturday, October 17 for the Reunion Night.

*Greg Hay* Principal



St Mark's is a Salesian school that prepares young people for the realities and challenges of life and our playground is a place where students have the opportunity to interact, share and build positive relationships.



Our College responds to the spiritual needs and development of young people.

# At the School

## 125 Years of the Good Samaritan Sisters



The Good Samaritan Sisters with Principal Mr Greg Hay enjoying a tour of St Mark's College.

The heritage of the College, its special legacy, was celebrated this year with the return of the Good Samaritan Sisters. The sisters travelled far to be here. We shared with them a moment of benediction with the Blessing of the Magdalen Centre. The Junior Primary building that has recently been renovated and was officially blessed as the Magdalen Centre. It's name celebrates the contribution that Sister Mary Magdalen Adamson made 125 years ago when she led the first group of Good Samaritan Sisters to Port Pirie. The Sisters made a significant effort to travel and also bring a reminder of the spirit of the College that was created when the Good Samaritan Sisters first began teaching at St Mark's. We welcomed 17 beautiful Good Samaritan Sisters who visited us for the ceremony.

The children presented a narrative about the journey of the Good Samaritan, the story of Jesus, the inspiration of St Benedict and the courage of the Good Samaritan Sisters. They were costumed and well prepared. The deft hand of the teachers meant that they sang like angels, performed with discipline, narrated with purpose and brought a sense of holiness to the room. The skill of our mums meant that we had costumes to produce a very holy looking Jesus, a battered Jewish man on the roadside, a blessed St Benedict and determined Archbishop Polding, along with seven holy nuns. Well, holy nuns with a touch of bling! Perhaps they were as cute as they were holy because the children's innocence and sincerity became something quite sacred. We played the 'cute card' a little more with the Sisters when the children ceremonially gave them a carefully crafted card and some local jams as a gift. There were glistening eyes and tears dabbed in this moment of generosity and connection. We remembered that these women had been generous servants both here at St Mark's and around Australia and we saw the enormous potential of the Magdalen Centre to create scholarship and care. We have celebrated the joy of 125 of Good Samaritan Sisters. The Magdalen Centre was blessed and we know that the generosity, prayers and spirit of the Sisters guide our future.

*Greg Hay* Principal



Benedict students performing their narrative for the Good Samaritan Sisters



Our holy Nuns with a touch of bling!



The Good Samaritan Sisters were warmly welcomed back to the College.

# School Developments

## Trades Skills Centre



## The Magdalen Centre



## McNally Farm



We continue to develop the learning opportunities at McNally Farm and our Trades Skills Centre.



At the end of Term 1 we saw the completion of the Shared Learning Space for our Foundation students with the addition of a wonderful reading space at Benedict Campus. The new "Reading Nook" gives students the opportunity to share books together in a comfortable and welcoming space. Students have fondly named it 'the caravan' because of its shape and size.

# Where are they now ?

## Jane Burns



**Old Scholar Jane Burns is a person of vision and is making a difference.**

The College is very proud of former student Jane Burns. She has been identified as an eminent past scholar of St Mark's and someone involved in extraordinary work.

Jane recently appeared on the ABC's top rating program Q and A. She spoke on questions about mental health reform among other things, and has received widespread positive feedback on her contribution. We recently contacted Jane and she humbly offered a little of her background. Our google search, however, unveiled an impressive career and a commitment to the welfare of those who experience challenges in mental health. She is a person of vision and is making a difference.

### **What you did when you left school?**

I spent the first year working at the Jewellers and then moved to Adelaide to study Psychology.

### **Who were your friends when you were doing Year 11 and 12?**

My best friend was Michelle Hunt and even though we live in different states we're still friends today. In Year 12 everyone was close and I still keep in touch with people on Facebook.

### **What memories of teachers and the school do you have?**

David Nitschke was my Geography teacher in Year 11 and 12. He sadly lost his life to cancer but had such a profound effect on me.

### **What are you doing now?**

I'm the CEO of the Young and Well CRC which looks at how technologies can improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people. Every day I get to work with amazing young people and

the most brilliant minds in Australia. I've worked in suicide prevention for twenty years and I believe that we are on the cusp of great change in mental health reform.

Jane has certainly pushed research towards the cusp. She established CRC (Cooperative Research Centre) and it is a culmination of her extensive work in mental health and suicide prevention. It brings together national and international partnerships with 75+ academic, government, corporate, philanthropic, not-for-profit and community organisations. Jane is a shining example of how to make it work. Through the Cooperative Research Centres program she has leveraged cash and in-kind funding of \$100 million to pursue the investigation of how technology can be used to improve the mental health and wellbeing of our young people.

Jane completed her PhD in Medicine (Psychiatry and Epidemiology) at the University of Adelaide (1994-1996). Jane was a Victorian Finalist in the 2012 Telstra Business Women's Awards and was listed in the Financial Review and Westpac Group 100 Women of Influence in 2012. Jane has just been appointed Chair of the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service advisory Board and has a particular interest in the mental health crisis facing contemporary veterans.

Professionally, she is a leading light and one of the only women in the highest echelons of mental health research in Australia. She works closely with the likes of Professor Pat McGorry (Orygen founder and former Australian of the Year) and Professor Ian Hickie (founder of the Brain & Mind Institute, Uni of Sydney) - as Jane calls them, the 'rock stars' of mental health in this country. She is traversing the corridors of Parliament House every other week, ensuring our nation's politicians are left in no doubt about our failing mental health system and how we can work together to fix it.

As well as being an outstanding, articulate and passionate advocate for better mental health for young Australians, Jane is the mother of three young children: Angus, Holly and Harry. Jane writes about life with her beautiful son Angus, who has Autism and Down Syndrome, on her [personal blog](#). Jane has long been an advocate for technology as a means of reaching vulnerable young people, but with 8-year-old Angus' predominant form of communication via an iPad, she is now living the reality of how technology has the power to transform lives.

Despite her incredibly high-pressured job as CEO, the tragic subject matter she deals with daily and the challenges of juggling family life with three small children, one with profound disabilities, Jane remains positive and driven and fosters a keen sense of fun in everything she does. She is an energetic, inspirational person, and a new voice to be heard on the national and international stage when it comes to national mental health reform and a shining example of women in leadership in a male-dominated field.

Jane is a big thinker, a visionary, and the technology has finally caught up to where she is at. We congratulate her on the accomplishments and achievements. She has done much since she left that jeweller shop and headed to Adelaide.

# Where are they now ?

## Hayden Smart

Hayden Smart attended St Mark's for four years. After completing Year 12 in 2007, he started an electrical apprenticeship at the Port Pirie Smelter (then known as Pasmaenco) where he developed an appreciation for industrial automation and electronic control systems.

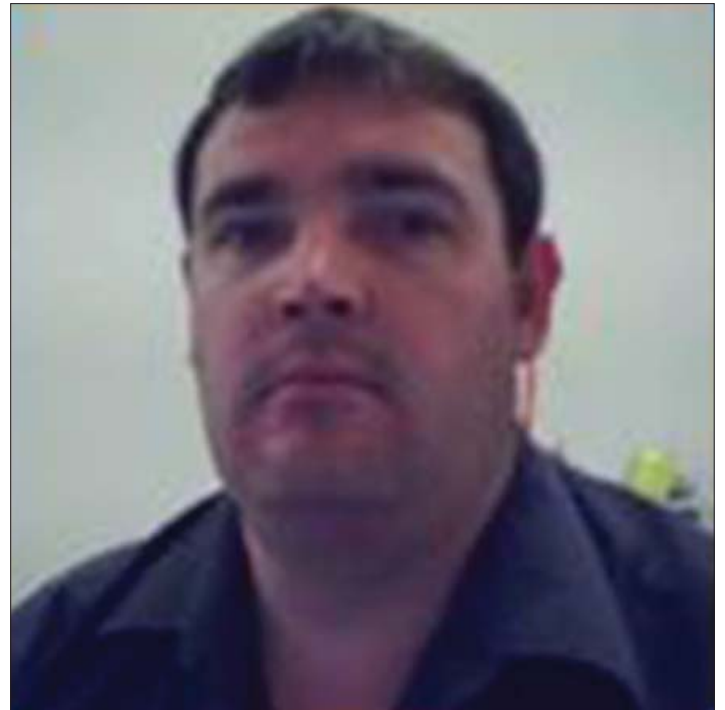
After Pasmaenco suffered from financial hardship he was under threat of losing his position and then started to pursue other opportunities. It was at this point he relocated to Adelaide.

Hayden worked for several companies that broadened his experience, understanding and love for Electrical Automation. He has designed and built diesel power stations locally and abroad. Hayden's career has taken him to almost every continent, including Europe, Asia, Africa, Antarctica and of course Australasia. Countries include; Mauritania, Indonesia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Morocco, Singapore, United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Iran, Antarctica and Azerbaijan.

This experience has been the founding qualifications that lead to starting his own company in 2013. CSC&E is an abbreviation for "Control Systems Consulting & Engineering" where Hayden as the founder strives in completing quality control systems to and aspect of the automation industry.

So far Hayden's largest project was the Flames Effects used in the recent Opening Ceremony of the European Games in Azerbaijan. Viewed by millions globally in this project Hayden personally designed the entire Electrical and Automation system for the 60m tall Burning Man flame effect. This system incorporated 240 individually controlled burners that were staged on and off to create the human body cardio vascular system. He also designed the Automation system for the eclipse cauldron.

Hayden said to the College: *As you can see my Electrical Apprenticeship has opened up a whole new world of experience that anyone could imagine. When I was thinking of what to become during High School I never contemplated that a base trade would eventually have me tour the world. St Mark's and all the teachers gave me the freedom and understanding that "the sky is the limit". Encouragement and support from the School has definitely assisted in my "can do anything" attitude that I attach to every aspect of my life.*



**With his experience and a love for electrical automation Old Scholar Hayden Smart founded his own company "Control Systems Consulting and Engineering (CSC & E).**



# Where are they now ?

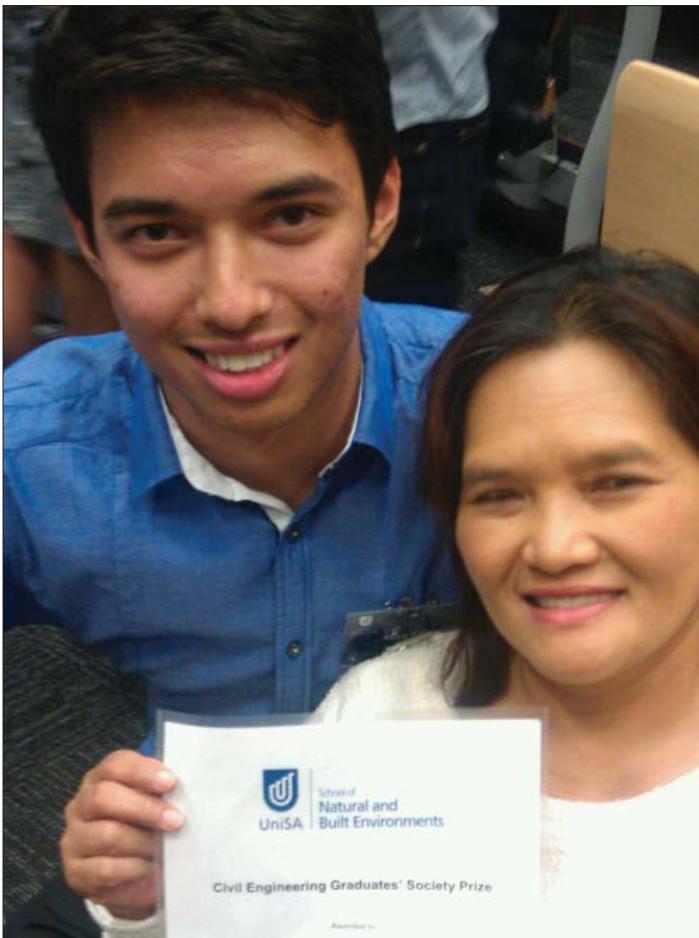
## Alby and Allen Greig



SMC Old Scholar Allen Greig who graduated with a Bachelor of Engineering is pictured above with his mother Alice and brother Alby.



SMC Old Scholar Alby Greig is pictured after receiving The Garvan Financial Planning Young Advisor of the Year Award for SA with his employer Martin Hunter from Hunter Financial Planning



Allen Greig with his proud mother Alice and his Engineering Award.

This year Old Scholar Allen Greig graduated from University with a Bachelor of Engineering (Civil and Structural). The whole way through University he received various awards and scholarships. Recently Allen was awarded the Bob Mierisch Memorial Prize in Civil and Structural Engineering which is awarded to the student with the highest aggregate grade for the final year of the Bachelor of Engineering (Civil and Structural) program.

Alby has also been very successful. Alby entered the profession of Financial Planning in order to help people and make a difference in people's lives. It is a noble and important response. All of us need a Financial Planner of integrity. Alby has been with Hunter Financial Services since 2004. You'll find Alby on LinkedIn where he writes: *I will work with you and provide consultation, guidance and clarity in the complex and ever changing financial environment. My guarantee is that I will do this to the best of my ability and always consider what is important to you and what you want to achieve.*

As a Financial Planner, Alby last year was awarded The Garvan Financial Planning Young Advisor of the Year Award for SA. He is pictured with Allen and his employer, St Mark's father Martin Hunter of Hunter Financial Planning.

# Where are they now ?

## Karleigh Smith



SMC Old Scholar Karleigh Smith on the job at Woman's Day Magazine.

Back when I was a Year 11 student at St Mark's, if someone suggested that in 2014, I'd be chasing the British royals around Australia as a journalist, my teachers and my parents would have been the first ones to laugh. I would've joined in. Despite everyone's best efforts (I'm sorry, Mr Penfold, Mr Boyle, Ms McCullogh... actually pretty much the entire faculty) I wasn't the easiest person to teach. But while my grades suggested otherwise, I actually learnt more than even I realised at school. Especially how to tell stories with conviction - something I'm convinced started with Miss Hunt's persuasive writing lessons in Year 9 English. When my "why Port is better than the Crows" essay somehow won the debate even though at that point Port hadn't even won a premiership, a small lightbulb flickered that I might actually have found my calling.

The best thing I ever did was taking up work experience at The Recorder, resulting in the offer of a journalism cadetship, mentored by Greg Mayfield, Bruce Bennetts, Des Parker and Grant Hanlon. Leaving school at the end of Year 11 was enough to give my parents a conniption but I don't think I was cut out for another year of school plus four years at least of university ("Duh" - the entire St Mark's teaching staff).

After more than three years of working at the paper in various journalism, copy-editing and layout roles in news and sport, I moved to New Zealand where I accidentally landed in the world of celebrity magazines - a vastly different path than my imagined career of investigative reporting at the Melbourne Age, a few Walkleys on the mantlepiece, etc.

But it turned out I enjoyed working in celeb journalism more than sitting in a Canberra press gallery. I've worked for NZ New Idea, was editor of NZ Girlfriend, and then moved to Sydney where I became

Hollywood and Royal Editor at Woman's Day Magazine. I've gone on a royal tour following the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge around Australia, created souvenir issues of the births of their children Prince George and Princess Charlotte, and written huge celebrity stories including George Clooney's wedding Australian exclusive, Tom Cruise and Katie Holmes' divorce, and the many antics of Russell Crowe - a career highlight is the filthy looks I copped from him at the Sydney premiere of his Superman movie. Last month I made the big shift from print to online, and am now the Digital Managing Editor of Woman's Day's new website (blatant plug: womansday.com.au). All of this has meant some amazing travel opportunities and life in Sydney is a whirlwind of a good time - especially when I hang out with another former St Markian and now Sydneysider Brodie Kenny-Bell - but there's nothing like coming back home to Port Pirie to see my family and school friends. It's fair to say the class of 2005 produced some dead-set legends. I love chilling with Lia Haskett and her gorgeous kids, having a "thermie" cocktail or two with Courtney Wade, the occasional beer with Captain Brian Bearman when he's in Sydney on army duties, and heading to the footy with Rebecca Slade - in fact, I'll be catching up with Sladey in her new digs in Cambodia later this year. Bring it on!

*Karleigh Smith*

SMC Old Scholar 2001 to 2004

## Patrick Munday



Patrick Munday being presented his award for most outstanding student in the final year of Bachelor of Engineering.

Old Scholar Patrick Munday (Class of 2000) recently received the Sir William Goodman Mechanical Engineering Prize. It is awarded to the most outstanding student in the final year of Bachelor of Engineering. Patrick completed a Bachelor of Engineering: Mechanical and Mechatronics with First Class Honours in 2014. It was presented by Senior Lecturer of the School of Engineering, Uni SA Professor Romeo Marian. Patrick is currently working as a Graduate Mechanical Engineer at Nyrstar, Port Pirie.

# Where are they now ?

## Olivia Hill (nee Thorpe)



**Olivia and her husband Stuart on their wedding day.**

I completed Year 12 in 2006. It was a very influential year that I was lucky enough to share with some great teachers and friends. Some of my best friends and supports during Year 12 were Jayne Paterson, Natina Clarke (nee Pisani), Jenna Anderson, Yasmina Wicht, Amanda Morgan, Adriana Roberts (nee Porcelli) and Monique Holze. Not only were these my friends during my schooling years but have become lifelong friends.

In 2007, after completing Year 12 and receiving an offer to University I moved to Adelaide to start a Bachelor of Health Sciences degree at The University of South Australia (UniSA). For the first three years of living and studying in Adelaide I lived with many of my St Mark's College classmates at St Ann's College, a boarding college for University students.

After completing my bachelor degree in 2009 I was successful in both an application for further study and a job application to be a research assistant at The International Centre for Allied Health Evidence situated at the UniSA. During this time, while out celebrating finishing my Health Sciences degree I met my now husband Stuart Hill.

In 2010 I started my first year of full time employment and studied a Graduate Diploma in Environmental Health Practice externally through Flinders University. I continued to work at UniSA as a research assistant while studying and in 2012 completed my Honours in Health Sciences, which focussed on the barriers and enablers to participating in physical activity for people with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) following a hospital admission. After a busy day at work in October 2013 my partner Stuart surprised me with a romantic dinner and proposal. So far, 2015 has been a busy year for me both personally and professionally. Professionally, although dropping back to part time I continue in my role as a research assistant at UniSA with the addition of undertaking a PhD which involves research aiming to protect adolescent musculoskeletal health in students transitioning from

primary to secondary school. My personal life has been much the same (busy) with after many months of planning the wedding finally arrived in February this year. My husband Stuart and I then enjoyed a month honeymooning in London and around Europe (we even visited Africa!). Now that we are back home we are filling our weekends with football, home renovations and our two gorgeous cocker spaniels Lola and Essie and of course visits back home to Port Pirie to see family and friends.

I could say the same about memories and teachers – it would be hard to choose a favourite. I have so many fond memories from my time at St Mark's it would be difficult to even narrow it to a few. Some obvious stand outs event wise would have to be the school musical, sports days, family nights, dance rave competition just to name a few. One of my most influential teachers was in Year 7 – Mr DePalma who really showed me that with a little extra time and effort you really can do anything you put your mind to. He helped me a lot with my math studies, which I wasn't going so well with in year 7 and set the foundations for my future studies and I went on to study math studies in Year 12! This led to my favourite math teachers – Mr Fantinel and Mr Ford and Chemistry teacher Mr Mullin. I had so many great teachers over my years at the College but special mention to Ms McKeough my care group teacher throughout high school – a teacher who also taught my father at school!

My younger brother, godson and goddaughter currently attend St Mark's and I am now beginning to see my school friend's children commencing their schooling at the College. This connection has given me the good fortune of continuing to enjoy SMC events even after completing school as I witness their special school occasions. I try to keep up to date with what is happening at the College through the website and Old Scholar newsletters.

*Olivia Hill (nee Thorpe)*  
**SMC Old Scholar - Class of 2006**

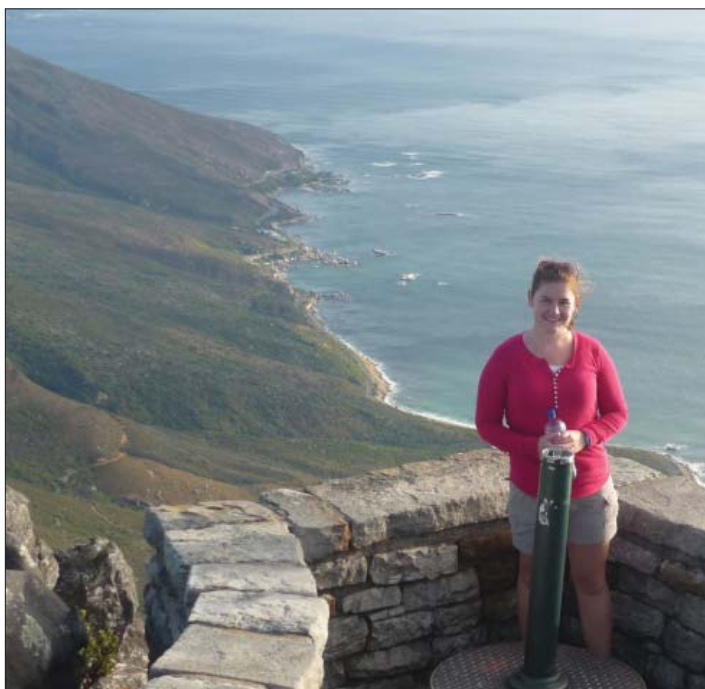


**Olivia with her bridesmaids Natina Pisani (Class of 2006), Jenna Anderson (Class of 2006), Elisha Jones, Adrianna Porcelli (Class of 2006), Sheridan Raftery (Class of 2012) and Ella Camporeale (Class of 2006).**



# Where are they now ?

## Rebecca Slade



**SMC Old Scholar Rebecca Slade at Table Mountain in South Africa.**

I attended St Mark's College from 1992 to 2005. We were lucky to have a great group in our year and I have so many good memories from school, from sports days at Fatima (go Echidnas) to Year 12 Retreat, with many laughs and lessons crammed in between. Ms McKeough had an incredible ability to keep us all entertained and learn so much all at once; an amazing skill that allowed a room full of teenagers to thoroughly enjoy English. I also still remember every important date from Australian History, taught by Miss Hackett, who incidentally also introduced me to coffee. The sheer brilliance of this timely correlation occurred to me years later.

After school I attended St Ann's College in Adelaide and completed a Bachelor of Health Science and a Bachelor of Social Science. After Uni I worked in public health in rural South Australia, then volunteered overseas working in infectious disease control and maternal health in Zambia and Indonesia. I then returned to Adelaide to study Law and a Master of Public Health, and now enjoy living in rural Cambodia, working for a European NGO that specializes in Humanitarian Aid and Human Rights.

Life in Cambodia comes with challenges, but it's an amazing place with lovely people who teach me something new every day. As always, it makes you realize how lucky we are to have grown up in such a great school and town; one which I always love to return home to.

*Rebecca Slade*  
**SMC Old Scholar 1992 to 2005**

## Hayley Wickham



**St Mark's Old Scholars from Class of 2004 (pictured left to right) Lauren Nayda, Antonia Makkar (nee Bellifemini), Hayley Jennings (nee Cliff), Brooke Hanlon, the gorgeous bride (now known as Hayley Burt), Rebecca Keane, Lisa McMahon, Kirby Livingstone & Shylie Brewster (nee Casson.) The only friend missing was Kirsten Saracino (nee Fraser) who was unable to attend due to being pregnant with her 3rd child.**

SMC Old scholar Hayley Wickham from Class of 2004, who is now a teacher, married her long time English boyfriend in January on the beautiful island of Koh Samui, Thailand.

Many of her long time school friends made the journey to celebrate this special occasion with her.

## Class of 1974 Reunion



**Members of the Class of 1974 caught up to plan their Reunion.**

Members of the Class of 1974 Reunion Planning Committee caught up earlier this year for some reminiscing, chatting and lots of laughing as well as some list making and a little planning for their Reunion.

Pictured above are Sharon O'Neil, Therese Hicks, Denise Rohrsheim, Cathy Parker, and Ann Spadavecchia. (Absent were Tony Spadavecchia, Beth Arbon and Maurie Capurso)

# Our SMC Family

## Andrew Sheridan



Teacher Andrew Sheridan with students at St Mark's College.

### Andrew Sheridan spoke recently at a Salesian gathering about the impact of the priests and the Salesian spirit in the school.

As you are no doubt all aware, Don Bosco realised that young people need an educational environment that created different “windows” and opportunities to experience the world and to learn. In a general sense if we looked into these windows in any Salesian school what would we expect to see? The Charter for Salesians schools outlined these in Melbourne in 2003.

A Salesian school is a **School** that prepares young people for the realities and challenges of life. It is a **Home** that welcomes by cultivating rich relationships based on mutual respect and affection. It is a **Playground** where students and staff have opportunities to interact, share and build positive, inclusive relationships and a **Parish** that responds to the spiritual need and development of young people and staff.

So this is the challenge that Don Bosco presented to us as educators and administrators of Salesian schools. At St Mark's I believe the Salesian Charism is reflected across both campuses in what I would describe as a very practical spirituality.

The Foundation for this practical response to Salesian spirituality in education was laid by the Salesian Fathers and brothers and the Good Samaritan sisters who founded the College over 50 years ago.

The Salesians modelled this practical spirituality, which reflected the belief of Don Bosco that education is largely a matter of conversion of the heart that leads young people to know that they are loved and valued.

Religious such as Fr Lawrie Moate, Fr Dennis Handley, Fr Ray Cau, Fr Jim Hoe and Fr Joe Lee, Brother John Larkins, Sisters Monica, Claire and Maureen, just to name a few, reminded us that through our vocations as educators and administrators of SMC we are called to Holiness and challenged to do the ordinary “passionately well.” The religious instilled in the staff the importance of being “present” to the students, not just in the classroom but out in the yard, on the oval and sporting fields, in the chapel and down the street.

Great examples of the preventative system of education were watching Fr Ray outside of the canteen at recess or lunch every day, leaning on the little table having a quiet word or a joke with the students as they waited in line, quite often with the more boisterous and rowdy boys who may have been making life a little difficult for some teachers. He would often tease the girls and tell them “oh you are so ugly”- It sounds a bit odd now, but in the context it showed the remarkable rapport and relationship he had with all students and he genuinely cared about all of them, and the staff.

Brother John would also use the preventative method very effectively as he cut the hair of the boarding house boys or took students to sport or appointments. There are no religious on staff at St Mark's now, we often reflect on how much they are missed, but we see this foundation of Salesian practical spirituality reflected in the College in many tangible ways across both campuses.

At SMC we have combined Feast days, Retreats, St Bosco anniversary celebrations, year level and combined Masses, celebrations of anniversaries of former Salesian staff, The Dennis Handley Cup – (a day which reminds us of unique bonds between Salesian Colleges and Fr. Dennis's fierce sense of competitiveness) There are School reunions and Masses each year, the Salesian Bulletin, photos of past salesians in staff rooms, Fr Ray's bench near the canteen, Lawrie Moate gates at Benedict, old scholars returning to work and teach at the College and the list goes on. Clearly, The Salesians are not forgotten at St Mark's.

The foundation role of the religious at St Mark's helped form the staff members who worked and socialised with them. The staff over the last 50 years have retained and at times reinvented this practical Salesian spirituality and have passed it on to newer staff members.

Lay Principals Kerron Gillen and Greg Hay have carried on the tradition of past Salesian Principals. They have engaged with the whole school community and as Don Bosco did, they have the welfare of the students as their core motivation.

What else do we see at SMC that reflects the Salesian tradition and Charism?

- Our admin staff, often the first contact point for many parents, are welcoming and supportive, many of them mum's and dads of students past and present. Maintenance and building staff commit to tasks above and beyond the call of duty.
- Our teaching approach; being relational, getting to know the students and their families, getting out in the yard and oval at recess and lunch. Grandparents Day, weekend sport organised and run by staff and parents.
- Acknowledging that young people have different needs, aspirations and pathway choices and responding to that through reading programs, special education programs, The Rite journey, Ag and Trades Skills Centre initiatives.
- Musicals, drama performances, concerts and staff and parents giving generously of their time and talents to bring out the best in young people
- Our charity work and social justice initiatives
- A vertical care group system that creates a family atmosphere and allows senior students to support and guide younger students, starting and finishing each day with prayer.
- A Salesian boarding house offering accommodation for rural students in a caring, homely environment
- The physical environment environment of the College reflects spaces designed for contemplation and prayer, play, learning and community involvement.

I think that if Don Bosco wandered around the school yard and playgrounds and looked in through the windows of the classrooms and chapels, offices, workshops and specialty areas at St Marks on any school day - he would approve.

*Andrew Sheridan*

SMC Teacher 1992 to current

# Our SMC Family

## The Wells Family



**The Wells Family (front) Henry, Harrison and Millie (back) Michael, Gen, Jessica with baby Charlie and Joe Koch.**

### **Gen Wells the matriarch of a wonderful St Mark's family writes:**

Living in Crystal Brook and being a Catholic family the decision to send our children to St Mark's College was an easy one. However, it is a big transition catching and travelling on a bus 27kms and starting Year 8 in a group of students who may already have attended primary school together.

Our first child to attend St Mark's was Jessica in 2002. We made it rather difficult for Jess by taking her out of school for much of the second part of her first year when we travelled around Australia for eight months, however, she picked up well returning in Year 9 and went on to become the first female to complete Year 12 Agriculture with Mr Lacey. Jess tells us she has fond memories of Mrs Congdon's Art Classes, Ms McKeough's English classes and although she hated Maths, loved chatting about the trots with Sir Cronin. She also gave Mr Mullin a nasty fright with an explosion in her one and only term of Chemistry. Dance Rave was very popular during her years at St Mark's. With a strong interest in animals and agriculture Jess went on to complete a Bachelor of Agriculture at Roseworthy College. After completing her agriculture degree her passion for educating young people about agriculture encouraged her to study for a Graduate Diploma in teaching and she was fortunate enough to do all of her practical teaching at St Mark's College. This included assisting with the cattle and goat show team. Following completion of her study she started work as an Agronomist with Quality Rural in Jamestown before transitioning to Pringles Ag Plus Crouch Rural in Crystal Brook as a Precision Ag specialist. Jess married farmer Joe Koch from Booleroo Centre in 2013 and he helps out on their farm in several roles. In December Jess and Joe welcomed their first child - Charlie Gus into their family.

Our second child Millie started at St Mark's in 2004, where she also enjoyed being involved in Dance Rave, and competing in cross-country. She had a strong interest in maths and science, and appreciated the encouragement of Mr Scavarelli, Miss Russack, Mr Ford and Ms Atkinson during Year 11 and 12. Millie started her tertiary studies in Adelaide whilst living at Aquinas College, where she enjoyed many fantastic experiences and making life-long friends

during her three years there. She was thrilled to transfer into medicine in 2010, and now five years in, Millie is spending the year in Port Lincoln gaining experience in many facets of rural health. With a keen interest for travel, she is planning some overseas electives in her final year of study, hoping to later train as a rural GP and work in the country. She has kept in close contact with many friends from St Marks; a number who also lived at Aquinas with her.

Harrison commenced at St Mark's in 2006 and again was fortunate to have several friends from Crystal Brook start with him in Year 8. Having a more hands-on interest in subjects at the end of Year 9 he decided to take part in the Aviation course at Mid North Christian College during Year 10 and Year 11. By the end of the first year Harrison was flying the small Jabiru aircraft with an instructor and at the end of the second year had progressed to flying solo. After working at Grainflow following Year 12 and with a keen interest in mining and shotfiring Harrison approached Exact mining in Adelaide and asked if he could undertake some work experience. He was thrilled to be offered an apprenticeship in Diesel Fitting in the first week. After 12 months in Adelaide he was sent to sites at Cairn Hill near Coober Pedy, the Granites in NT and Jacinth Ambrosia NW of Ceduna working fly in fly out - 2 weeks on 1 week off. He was fortunate to be signed off last year and is now fully qualified. Unfortunately his interest in motorbikes caused him quite a bit of time off work last year breaking his foot and then his lower leg in two separate incidents. The bike has been put aside for the time being and he is back at work and looking forward to building a home on his recently purchased 3 acre block near Crystal Brook.

Youngest family member Henry started at St Mark's in 2010. Adjusting to catching the bus and getting out of bed earlier was a big challenge and a few rushed trips to Pirie for Mum or Dad was not uncommon! Being quite social Henry and the other Crystal Brook boys enjoyed meeting new mates from Port Pirie. Most of these young lads seemed to grow about 2 feet from Year 8 to Year 12. We know they gave their teachers (Mr Gibson, Mr Beattie, Mr Carey, Sir and several more) some headaches during their time at school!! Thank goodness for their patience and managing to keep them on track. Whilst being apprehensive about University he applied for a place at Aquinas Residential College and was accepted. He gained a place in a Bachelor of Business (Innovation and Entrepreneurship). Moving to Adelaide in February this year was a huge change but he has made many friends and loves the lifestyle (and social life!). Some of his friends from St Mark's have also moved with him and this made the transition much easier. Fortunately they do get time for study amongst all the fun and he has just completed his first 4 subjects. A few business ideas are forming and it will be exciting to see what the future has in store for him when he finishes.

Whilst it was a big change for us as parents having our youngest leave the nest, we are fortunate to have them all home very often and are extremely grateful for the formation of their lives through their time at St Mark's. They all keep in touch with their friends and also the teachers at the school as they all had a marked impact on who they have become and what they have done. We feel very blessed for the opportunities they have created and been given.

## Class of 76/77



Old Scholars from the Class of 76/77 caught up this year in Port Pirie and enjoyed a tour of both the Primary and Secondary Campus as well as a lovely dinner.

We are a group of classmates from the Class of 76/77 - back in the day when finishing Year 11 was the goal. Some of us went on to be students in the second ever Year 12 class of St Mark's College. Over the years we have remained friends despite not seeing each other regularly but through the wonders of Facebook (yes, there are positives to FB!) we started to reconnect more closely with each other. We try to meet once or twice a year. This year we met in Port Pirie, had a lovely dinner with Merrill Reichelt and John Mullin (past teachers), and toasted absent friends. On the Sunday it was time for a bit of nostalgic fun as we toured the Benedict and Bosco Campuses. Of course, the girls were impressed, a little jealous of the facilities today but, mostly, they had a sense of pride and love for their old school and the memories it provided. It was another wonderful gathering, not just with old school mates, but friends.

*Angela Jordan*

SMC Old Scholar - Class of 76



## **ATTENTION ALL PAST STUDENTS of St Mark's College Port Pirie**

**You are invited  
to a**

## **SCHOOL REUNION**

**on  
Saturday  
17 October  
2015**

**Celebrating Anniversaries for  
Graduating Classes of  
1975, 1985, 1995 and 2005.**

**3.30pm Tour of College**

**4.30pm Mass**

**Followed by drinks & nibbles in the  
Bishop Gallagher Centre**

**A great opportunity to stay  
connected, renew school  
friendships and relive memories  
made during your school years.**

**To register your interest  
please contact  
Maryann on 86 33-8800.  
Keep up to date with news and  
events via Facebook.**