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Early Field Day - Before we began
Mary Van with Jonathan
Welcome to the 4th edition of ReConnect.

We are heading into an exciting time: next year MECS will celebrate its 40th Anniversary. We have 12 months of great celebrations planned - you can check out the details on page 13. Invitations will be sent out closer to each of the events.

Leading up to this year of celebrating we are updating our Past-Student Data-Base. Please make sure we have your current details and encourage any family or friends who also went to MECS to contact us.

Leading up to the 40th Anniversary I have been thinking a lot about the history of MECS. In the first edition of ReConnect we focused on 1973 – the year the school opened, but the vision of a Christian school in Mount Evelyn began long before then. The “Association of Parents for Christian Education in Mount Evelyn” was formed in 1964! A group of hard working parents, who wanted to see a Christian School in Mount Evelyn for their children (and even people who didn’t have children yet!) spent many years collecting and raising money, holding fetes, cake stalls, field days etc., and exploring and planning how to start a Christian School and how a Christian school would be distinctive from state or Catholic schools.

In our archive boxes we have many historical treasures. We have a little notebook of handwritten minutes from Mothers’ Club meetings from 1971 - 1975 written by Truus (MECS founder), and a copy of the Mothers’ Club Constitution. We have sign in sheets from Association meetings dating back to 1970. Many of the people signed in on these sheets are still involved with MECS somehow - they may have stayed on as Association Members, have children working at MECS or maybe have grandchildren in the school and they now get to come to our annual “Grandparents & Special Friends’ Day”. We have featured a few of these items on our centre photo page. This is just a small representation of the historical documents and photos we have. At the 40th Anniversary celebrations we will be having extensive history displays for everyone to enjoy.

I am really looking forward to celebrating 40 years of MECS! I hope you can come and celebrate with us too.

Nicole (Class of ’90)
Community Relations Officer

What’s Happening at MECS?

What’s happened to multi-aging?

Changes in the Middle School have meant our Year 9s are now on their own, somewhat separated off from the Year 7s and 8s. Does this mean the end of multi-aging in the MS? No. We have brought these changes, partially to bring in some fresh programming to Year 9, as they prepare to move onto Senior School, and also to respond to the National Curriculum requirements. The change has allowed us to rearrange Years 7 & 8 into two multi-age clusters – Cycle A & Cycle B. There’s much excitement in the MS about these re-invigorating adjustments.

Jennys Tree

When MECS started Jennys was one of its early Primary teachers. Jenny became sick and passed away in 1978. A beautiful red flowering gum was planted just outside the office and this tree grew into good health and provided magnificent bright red flowers and shade to the area between the office and staffroom. Late last year, within one week, the leaves turned. We called an arborist. A rescue wasn’t possible. We’ve cut the tree down and preserved the wood in order to shape something that will continue Jenny’s legacy. A new flowering gum will be planted soon.

Ranges update

Our wonderful new Trade Training Centre continues to flourish out at Lilydale with 36 full time students and 24 Wednesday VET attendees. The official opening occurred back on March 18 and the foyer was full of dignitaries, students, family and friends. The winning speech line went to one student who said, “We want from being seen as problems to being treated as people”. You could sense a collective feeling, ‘that’s why this venture just had to happen’. More of this story is on page 12.

Open Day: Saturday May 19, 2012 10am - 1pm
School@ Work
Open Day
May 22
9 - 11am

Mount Evelyn Christian School
Kindergarten to Year 12
135 York Rd Mount Evelyn 9738 6000 mecs.vic.edu.au

Mount Evelyn Christian School ReConnect - Connecting the Community
Chapter 1: How it all began

The Auction:

One Saturday, way back in early 1970, three people attended the auction with the intent of buying an eighteen and a half (eight hectare) property. They were trembling in their boots. They had never been involved in an auction like this before.

These people had been instructed to bid up to a ceiling of sixteen thousand dollars, all the money that their Association could afford. It was a lot of money in those days.

The membership, through their committee, wanted to build a school; a school for children of Christian parents who could see the need for educating their children in the training and instruction of the Lord according to scripture (Eph. 6:4). Enthusiastic people in their church had been donating ten and later fifteen shillings a month, and children had been collecting donations, even as little as two shillings or twenty cents, in working towards this venture since 1964, when “The Association of Parents for Christian Education in Mount Evelyn” was founded and even before. Margaret Merx well remembers assisting in this way by riding around on her bike from house to house to raise funds, while Danny Greenwood collected the monthly donations. Slowly and laboriously, they scraped together dollar after small dollar until finally it was felt they should look for a block of land on which to build a school.

The land, fronting a sealed road connecting the areas from which children could travel in shared transport, was mostly covered in stringybark trees. Close to a quarter of the block was cleared and occupied by an apple orchard and a small white weatherboard house. A tiny two room corrugated iron settler’s hut stood among the trees farther up the hill with Mount Dandenong in the background.

So here they were at the Auction. Keith was nominated to do the bidding. Slowly the price crept up! Twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, until soon the ceiling of sixteen thousand was reached with one person still bidding against them. Then seventeen thousand! What were they to do? They were convinced that the Lord wanted them to start building a school for their children now, not just for their grandchildren as they had first envisaged.

They decided they would continue to bid another three thousand dollars, putting in the extra money from their own resources. They had no idea how they were going to manage this, but nevertheless they went ahead in faith and their courage was rewarded. The opposition bidding ceased at their new limit of nineteen thousand dollars, and the land was theirs. The already active Mother’s Club later contributed two thousand dollars towards the balance.

Unbeknowns to them at the time, the opposition, whom they later found out to be a land developer, had almost reached his limit and, due to the look of absolute determination on the face of Keith, was concerned that these keen buyers would be prepared to keep bidding against him no matter how high the price, so he decided to withdraw while the going was good. The Lord provided. He does work in mysterious and wonderful ways!

They were convinced that the Lord wanted them to start building a school for their children now, not just for their grandchildren as they had first envisaged.
Recent Celebratory Moments

Wedding of Elizabeth (Class of ‘07) to Luke
Elizabeth is pictured here with her parents Paul and Karen

Alana Claire, born 16 November 2011 to Kirrily and Ben (Class of ‘98), Granddaughter for Colin & Heather, niece for Anna (Class of ‘00), Aimee & James (class of ‘03) & John (Yr 12 MECS).

Wedding of Ella (Class of ‘07) & Reuban (Class of ‘07), Sept 3, 2011

Andrew (Class of ‘03) and Stacey (Class of ‘04) married on Friday 9 March at Balgownie Estate in Yarra Glenn. Bridal party pictured from left to right, Rachel (Class of ’07), Annie, Natalie (Class of ’03), Aaron, Daniel, Burt (Class of ’02), Solomon and Micah.

Benjamin James, Son of Rachel (Class of ’92) & David, brother to Charlotte - 2 1/2 years old. Born 9 December 2011, 3.75kg, 51cm.
Keith and Helen - a Founding Family

Keith and Helen
Keith was President of the Board for many years leading up to the opening of MECS in 1973. Helen was very active in the "Mothers Club". Keith and Helen have been involved in mission work in India for the last 30 years. They are now semi-retired and still see Christian education and missions as prime values for Christians today. Their children Ken, Nick and Christa all attended MECS.

Keith & Helen
We are thrilled to see the same enthusiasm in this next generation to continue what we had nearly 40 years ago when we started MECS.

True values are worth living for and seeing them developed.

Nick’s Family
After completing HSC in 1984 and graduating from University with a teaching degree, Nick commenced teaching at Maranatha Christian School where he met his wife Kerri.

They now live in Berwick with their two children, Jonathan and Emma. Nick works as Assistant Principal and Head of Junior School at Flinders Christian Community College in Carrum Downs. Positive memories of MECS include catching cicadas and tadpoles, playing lunchtime cricket, football and soccer matches on the oval and camps to The Prom, Inverloch and Central Australia.

Such positive memories of his own schooling have greatly influenced his decision to choose teaching as a rewarding and fulfilling career.

Ken’s Family
Ken is now living in Taree, NSW, where he is Principal of a Christian School. He is married to Gayle and has 2 sons, Rory and Seb. Ken was one of 5 students in the first class to complete Year 12 at MECS, the class of 1979. His life commitment to Christian education was inspired by his experiences at MECS. Special memories include hay-rides behind a tractor at early MECS fetes, and a 2-day ‘Lord of the Flies’ simulation in the MECS bushland under the watchful eye of Dan.

Christa’s Family
Christa & Harvey, Laura, Isabell & Beck. Christa Greenwood married Harvey, and lives in Gippsland on their potato farm. Christa has worked in church missions work and has recently completed a degree in Theology through Tabor Bible College.
Schoolies in Uganda

On 26 November, 22 Year 12 students decided to go on a missions trip to Uganda for their schoolies. 10 of these students were from MECS: Rachael, Michael, Emma, Andrew, Joel, Nathan, Shannon, Rachel, Dylan and me (Tiffany). We all went with an organisation called Hope Builders. In Uganda, Hope Builders have created the ‘Village of Hope’ and over the last few years they have had teams go over and build houses. In each of these houses they have then been able to have 8 children with a Mamma. These kids are from the slums and have been given hope. We were able to have the privilege of building a house that was then for the farmer and his family. At the ‘Village of Hope’ we were also able to fix the driveway from sloppy mud to gravel and we even put in some drains.

While we were over there we got to experience many impacting places. One day we went to a slum where most of the kids from the ‘Village of Hope’ came from. There were hundreds of kids everywhere with their families in complete poverty. I think it hit a lot of people pretty hard just seeing the conditions these people were living in. We then did a short skit for them and blew up balloons and handed out stickers and it was crazy to see how much they treasure these items and how protective they were over them.

We also went to a male and female prison. Going there I think a few of us were not sure what to expect, but as we entered I don’t think any of us expected what we saw, all the prisoners in full praise and worship for God! I think we were all blown away! Spending time with prisoners, praying with them and playing games, it was just crazy to see the passion they had and just how happy they truly were, especially when some of them were on death row.

We also went to a HIV children’s orphanage where we were able to help around the place with cleaning and looking after kids. It was so sad to see babies as young as 3 months with HIV and how little was able to be done about it.

I’m sure we can all say Uganda changed our lives and gave us a greater perspective. God’s love was just so evident in Uganda. You could just see that through the passion that the people had for him. Also, seeing the joy that they all had even though they seemed to have so little, although truly they had so much, as they were just so passionate about God. It was an incredible experience and one I will never forget.

Tiffany (Class of ‘11)

A Girl Named Hope

In 2007 I was captivated by the story of a little girl named Hope, who was abandoned as a baby, and for the first year of her life was raised by witch doctors, prior to coming into baby Watoto where she was able to be loved and cared for. Her mum, at the time was the same age as me, 15. When I heard about Hope’s story my heart broke for this precious girl and I wrote a song for her. In my Year 11 speech I spoke about my intention to go to Uganda. A few years passed and I heard about Watoto 360 which is a discipleship program within Watoto church.

I am currently half way through a 5 month discipleship program (Watoto 360) with Watoto Church in Uganda. I was able to meet Hope, the precious girl who captivated my heart 6 years ago. It was such an incredible experience to hear about her journey and how God and the impact of Watoto has brought joy in her life. Some of the outreach opportunities include visiting families in the community affected by HIV/aids, hospital outreach, schools outreach, prison ministry, baby Watoto, sport and recreation with kids in the Watoto villages, building project, along with serving in various ministries within Watoto church and much more. Words cannot describe the impact Uganda has made in my life, I absolutely love being here! I love being able to be a part of Watoto child care ministries and the church and all that they are doing to restore the nation and raise up future leaders.

What do you have in your hands? Often, in our hearts and in our minds we want to do something, but feel as though we are unworthy, or do not have the resources, or we are simply not at the right place physically, mentally and spiritually. But will we ever be in the right place? Will we ever have enough resources? Sometimes we underestimate that which we already have. Do not undermine the small things. A smile, a word of encouragement, a hug, a listening ear, small acts of kindness and a willing heart has the power to change lives. Don’t sit around and wait till you have what you think you need to make a difference, but start with what you have. Because when we are faithful with the little things God will entrust us with more (Matthew 25:21). So what is it that you have in your hands? Your talent? Your gifts? Your qualities? Your time? What is one thing you can do to begin to make a difference? And as you give of your time, resources and energy do not grow weary and give up, for at just the right time you will reap a harvest (Galatians 6:9). Do not become disheartened if you cannot see the impact or outcome of what you are doing. Remember that in everything you do, you are planting seeds of life into others. Often the impact we have is more than we realise. Do not underestimate that which we already have. Do not undermine the small things. A smile, a word of encouragement, a hug, a listening ear, small acts of kindness and a willing heart has the power to change lives. Don’t sit around and wait till you have what you think you need to make a difference, but start with what you have. Because when we are faithful with the little things God will entrust us with more (Matthew 25:21). So what is it that you have in your hands? Your talent? Your gifts? Your qualities? Your time? What is one thing you can do to begin to make a difference? And as you give of your time, resources and energy do not grow weary and give up, for at just the right time you will reap a harvest (Galatians 6:9). Do not become disheartened if you cannot see the impact or outcome of what you are doing. Remember that in everything you do, you are planting seeds of life into others. Often the impact we have is more than we realise or will ever know. Here in Africa, the biggest impact I have made is through my smile. My smile encourages the other to smile, to be joyful, reminds them that there is hope and my smile has become contagious. To me, I never thought that my smile would make such an impact, but testimonies and words from others have been an indication just how powerful something that seems insignificant to me can be a light for those around me.

Vanessa (Class of ‘09)
Graham

I came to MECS late ‘81 to replace Hans who died earlier that year. Seeing a wedding photo in the last ReConnect featuring the former Wendy K as the bride’s mum brought back memories as she was in my first class!

I taught mainly Commerce in the Senior School as well as some careers advising from late ‘81 until the end of ‘86 with Cor, Geoff, Colin, Roger, Doug and co. At the end of ‘86 our family moved to the Gold Coast for 6 months. We returned mid ‘87. Peta went to MODS as there was no room at the MECS Inn and the others slotted back into their former MECS environment. Peta returned to MECS to do Years 11 and 12 (class of ‘89). Kelsey, would have been class of ‘91 but left during Year 11 in 1990. We moved to the Gold Coast again in 1992 taking Adam with us to do Years 11 and 12 at a Christian School on the Gold Coast and leaving Peta and Kelsey in the hands of my sister (and their boyfriends who later became their husbands).

Diane (my wife) and I have now been based on the Coast for almost 20 years. For most of that time (13 years) I taught at Emmanuel College before touring around Oz in late ’05 then heading up a Counselling/Support Service called Newlife Care on the Coast from ’07 to ’10. We did a stint at Tennant from October ’10 until August ’11 with me managing the Youth Development Unit and Diane managing the Women’s Art Centre. Family reasons caused us to return after Di’s dad had a stroke but I am pleased to report that our son Adam followed us out there to work and he now manages the Sport and Rec Unit (another graduate of the MECS program).

I’m back working as an interviewer for the Australian Bureau of Statistics with the possibility of some remote work on the horizon.

Graham, Past MECS Teacher

Melissa

I am a happily married mother of two boys. I do some part time work for a nursery in Monbulk and I also do some life-guarding at the Yarra Junction Pools. My family and I enjoy doing lots of travelling. My husband and I have travelled through Europe, and we, with the kids have visited many places throughout Australia. We are looking forward to a trip to Darwin in June. In February my brother (Daniel) and I had the pleasure of having a tour of our school. It was a trip down memory lane for us. It was lovely to see how the school has grown. It’s looking great! It was also nice to bump into a few familiar faces. Thanks Nicole for showing us around MECS. We hope to visit again soon.

Melissa (Class of ’94)

Reconnect!

We would love to hear from any past students wanting to reconnect.

If you would like to be on the mailing list and receive ReConnect please let us know.

You can contact the school by going to the ‘Past Student’ page on the MECS website:

www.mecs.vic.edu.au

Or e-mail Nicole

School Reunions

Contact Nicole if you would like assistance with a Class Reunion or if you would like to put your Reunion story in Reconnect. See page 11 for examples!

Thanks

Proud mother here!

I just want to say thank you to all the staff at MECS for all their support.

Zoey (Class of ‘06) graduated just before Easter from Deakin University with a Bachelor of Environmental Science (Marine Biology) with Distinction.

She also received the Aquatic Science Award, for the highest achieving student graduating in either the Bachelor of Environmental Science (Freshwater Biology and Management) or the Bachelor of Environmental Science (Marine Biology) and with a weighted average of 80%+.

She’s currently working on Moreton Island in Queensland taking tourists on snorkelling tours while she completes her scuba diving master training and is absolutely loving life.

So thank you to everyone who helped us to ‘hang in there’... you all deserve to enjoy this achievement with us!

Belinda
Before We Began

Jerry (nice shorts!), Mary, Jonathan (Class of '86) Dory & John at the Field Day held on the MECS property before the building commenced.
Before we Began

Jerry (nice shorts!), Mary, Jonathan (Class of '86) Dory & John at the Field Day

A view of the original hut

School entrance
1970s

Joanne (Class of '79)
My parents, Joan and Andrew, were MECS founders with mum being on the school board before the school was built. I remember helping raise money for the buildings by having fetes on the block of land.

I started in MECS in Year 6 when it opened in 1973 and I left at the end of Year 11 in 1978. We had teachers fresh out of university who liked to try new ways of teaching. In 1979 I did a one year secretarial course in Whitehorse College and the following year got a Customer Service/ Fulfilment job at DA Books & Journals, a library supplier of books mainly for universities. I still work there today having worked part-time, full-time and a 3 year break during the years. I really enjoy working in the book trade.

I married Rob in the 80s and our 3 children, Trevor, Marella and Amber all went to MECS. Trevor and his partner Ange have 3 girls – Jasmine (3), Dusty (2) and Elysha (4 months). Trevor (Class of ’99) does directional drilling & boring for Yarra Valley water, Marella (Class of ’05) works in hospitality and Amber (Class of ’09) works in retail.

I have fond memories of my time at MECS, as being small class sizes we were all quite close and I still keep in touch with some of my classmates today.

1980s

Steve (Class of ’85)
I left school at the end of Year 10 (’83) and started a carpentry apprenticeship with my Dad (Martin). We worked together for 25 years doing both commercial and industrial work. I have enjoyed a lot of overseas travel.

In January 2000 I met Robyn and by September we were married. Robyn came with the bonus of 2 sons, Chris (Class of ’04) and Tim (Class of ’08.)

In 2008 I was employed as the MECS maintenance and groundsman. It was weird, now being a parent and a staff member at MECS and dealing with teachers like Colin who taught me History in Year 9! I’m very happy in my job at MECS.

2000s

Aaron (Class of ’09)
The last 2 and bit years have been a time of discovery. Not really knowing what I wanted to do after I graduated from MECS, I enrolled at La Trobe University undertaking a Bachelor of Arts/Health Science Double Degree. However, part way through second year (early 2011) I decided the course wasn’t for me, so I went with my gut and took the year off to ‘re-evaluate’ and pray about my options. Last year I worked at Boronia Metro Cinemas and still work there happily today as a projectionist (come drop in and I’ll show you all there is to see behind the scenes of the cinema business).

I am so glad I took the year off! I looked into Social work as a career option and I fell in love with the work it involves, the places and people I would work around as a professional. So, as of 2012 I am now an RMIT student, completing a Bachelor of Social Work. This is without a doubt the most confident I’ve felt about an occupation before. It took me a few years to find out what it was but I am glad that I managed to find a passion to keep me motivated and looking forward to the future :)

2010s

Brandon (Class of ’11)
I left MECS at the end of Year 10 because I was keen to work on engines. I did work experience at Valley Force Husaberg in Lilydale during Year 10 and as a result they offered me an apprenticeship for the start of 2010. I was very excited and found it was a great working environment in which I learnt many new skills & gained lots of mechanical knowledge. Although Trade School taught me a lot of theory, the majority of my learning happened in the workshop with senior mechanic Richie (Class of ’88). I am in a band called Leeroy’s Giants. Tim (Class of ’08) is our drummer, Grant is the bass player, I write songs, play lead guitar and do vocals. We are planning to release our EP by the middle of this year. My favourite teacher was Michael and a highlight of my time at MECS was the Year 9 City Camp in Tim’s group.
Class of ‘91

In attendance were Samantha (Hunter), Bronwyn, Angela, Lisa, Kylie, Leanne, Andrew, Glen, Wes, Jason, teachers - Roger and Jeanette, Colin and Andy.

This small group gathered in the Middle School staff room in October 2011 for a roast dinner and lots of laughs. There was a tour of the Senior School where Sam and Bron tried to re-enact a few troublesome moments from their days in the Senior School. It was an awesome evening of catching up with friends and teachers.

Sam

Class Reunions

Class of ‘92

In March this year the Class of ‘92 had their 20 year reunion. It was organised by Jodyann and held in the MECS theaterette.

The people attending were: Tiffany, Jodyann, Joanne, Narissa, Suzanne, Stan, Gaille and husband Dale, Ralph and wife Kerry, Nicole and husband Andy, Jamie, Stephen, Daniel, Rachel, Tim, Rog, Colin and son John.

No scandalous goings on, but a few complaints about grey hairs, mainly from the men as we women seem to be better at covering our greys! We decided another 10 years would be appropriate to see who has any hair left at all by that age!

Of these people who came: Tiffany came from WA, Jamie came from Sydney. Stan was an exchange student from Kenya who joined us for 6 months in Year 10 and after travelling around the world now lives in Geelong. He and his wife rearranged her birthday plans so he could come. Chris is a firey in Numurkah and had to work late. Kerry lives in Canada and just had a baby last week. Geoff lives in the US. Lee lives in WA and had a baby girl about 2 weeks ago.

Apologies were also received from; Nikki, Chris, Daniel, Rebecca, Camilla, Ben, Craig, Nigel, Steven, Tracy, Lee, Kerry, Rose and Katrina.

Jodyann
MECS Kindergarten 2013

We are making lots of exciting and important progress on our brand new MECS Kindergarten – we now have a great big hole in the ground ready for a brand new building.

A lot of time is being spent on the significant amount of work required to establish a kindergarten. Wendy Mason, one of our current Prep teachers, will be dedicating one day per week for the remainder of this year establishing the 3 and 4 year old program and policies, and meeting the licencing requirements, so that we will be all set for a 2013 start.

Our current plan is:

- 4 Year old - 4 sessions - 15 1/4 hours per week
- 3 Year old - 2 sessions - 6 1/2 hours per week
- Playgroup - 2 sessions per week

As well as these programs, there will be additional transition options into Prep, based on each child’s individual development. Having a purpose built building located right next to the Prep classrooms is going to facilitate this beautifully.

The Kindergarten even has its own Facebook Page. If you use Facebook, please ‘like’ our page so you can get regular Facebook updates. www.facebook.com/MECSKindergarten.

We are excited by the number of official ‘Expressions of Interest’ we have for both the 3 and 4 year old programs. If you’re interested in Kindergarten for 2013, please drop past the office and pick up a form, or phone in and we can send you one. We really encourage you to promote the MECS Kindergarten to your friends and family with preschool aged children.

Ranges TEC Official Opening

On Sunday 18 March Ranges TEC was officially opened. The main campus overflowed with well over 150 students, families, friends, dignitaries and those who’d worked so hard to bring about this occasion.

Dignitaries included Laura, MP for Latrobe, on behalf of the Minister for School Education, Early Childhood and Youth Peter, Tim, Councillor for Billanook ward on behalf of Yarra Ranges Council and Peter, Deputy CEO of Chisholm Institute representing his institution (with whom Ranges TEC has an auspicing relationship at this time).

Celebrations began with a welcome from Ellen, Director of Ranges TEC. Adam, one of the students, read from Psalm 100. The Principal of Mountain District Christian School, Chris, led the gathering in a prayer of thanksgiving. Martin, Principal of Mount Evelyn Christian School, spoke about the history of the development of the vision for Ranges TEC. Ross, Principal of Donvale Christian College, then unfolded the development of the project and the way in which we observed God’s timing in so many facets. The story of the approval of the $4.43 million grant from DEEWR’s Trade Training Centres in school program was woven through these two addresses; from initial application failure in 2008, through to approval in principle on 5 November 2009, to the signing of the funding agreement on 25 May 2010.

Laura unveiled the plaque acknowledging the contribution of the Commonwealth government. Three parents, spoke of their thankfulness and the positive impact Ranges TEC was having on their children and family. Possibly the highlight of the ceremony were the responses by four students (out of the 37 students). Among their heartfelt responses was one expression that captures the impact of Ranges TEC, “I went from being a problem to be managed to being treated as a real person.” You could feel the collective unspoken ‘yes’ at that statement.

Gerry, Administration Manager of Mount Evelyn Christian School, then led the gathering in a prayer dedicating the facilities, students, staff, and governing working group to God. Ellen finished up by thanking the three founding schools and sending the gathering out with a blessing.

The formalities over, afternoon tea, prepared and served by the Ranges TEC students, began. Tours around the facility then proceeded with students explaining what they had been doing.

There is now a senior secondary vocational trade college that seeks to serve the Lord in all that it does. The afternoon was a special moment – to say thank you to the big team who had so faithfully contributed to this vision and its realisation; and to recognise that we serve a great God who has provided bountifully and gifted every student in their own unique way.

Martin, Principal MECS
Gerry, Administration Manager MECS
We will kick off with a Ball for the current school community. (Details will be in the newsletter in coming months.)

20 October 2012
We will be celebrating and acknowledging our pioneers, founders, early staff and board members with a re-enactment of the MECS Opening Ceremony and a formal dinner in the evening. (Invitations will be sent out in 2012.)

March 16 2013
We will be celebrating and acknowledging our pioneers, founders, early staff and board members with a re-enactment of the MECS Opening Ceremony and a formal dinner in the evening. (Invitations will be sent out in 2012.)

26 October 2013
Reunion / Festival Day
All past students and staff are invited to come back for the day and celebrate together.
Dear ReConnectors

Welcome to another edition of ReConnect. The anticipation about what we might find between the pages of this lovely magazine builds with each edition.

I often wonder why we humans seem so keen to see what others are doing with their lives. Through our curiosity about this, many magazines are sold purely on the basis of who is on the cover. Other magazines are sold for the peek they provide into the lives of the rich and famous. Today, many magazines are sold purely on the basis of who this, many magazines are sold purely on the basis of who

I think that it is a desire to connect with one another; to belong and be a part of the life of other human beings and their experiences; to be part of community. In some respects, our society seems to have lost the ability to be community. We have so many useful tools that communicate on our behalf that people contact is diminishing.

For many people, school is the first experience of belonging to a community. School is where we began our journey of learning about others outside our family unit; how they played, interacted, dealt with conflict, disagreed, celebrated, shared, loved, painted, dressed, thought, built, ticked, etc. It is for this reason that I think ReConnect is so exciting. It reminds us of a special time in our lives when we were part of a face-to-face community as we learned how we fit into this world.

Each person that once belonged to the MECS community still belongs. Every parent, every student, every teacher is indelibly marked in the history of our school. Some community members have gone through their school years like steam trains while some others we may have trouble remembering. However, each person has contributed and shaped the MECS community and character.

As a past student, while reading ReConnect, I reflect that one of the ways MECS shaped me was by providing a safe environment for me to ask hard questions; an environment where I could explore who I was as a young woman in God’s world. It was a blessing to have teachers that encouraged me to think discerningly about my world view. I learned to critique what society told me that I ought to believe about the world and about myself.

Looking back provides me with the opportunity to recognise and acknowledge God’s faithfulness to this community. God’s faithfulness in the provision of founders, in the provision of faithful parents, in the provision of facilities and in His provision of a critical thinkers whose vision to see children educated to be discerning participants of society has been blessed by God through many years of faithful work.

So, as you flip through or absorb the pages of this edition, I encourage you to acknowledge God’s faithfulness to us over many years. I also encourage you to celebrate as you consider what part you have played in the MECS community, how you helped to shape MECS culture and how it helped shape you.

Have fun.

Sue (Class of ’83)
Board Chair

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A Trip Down Memory Lane

I started at MECS in 1975, when I was in Grade 3 and completed my HSC in 1984. In the ensuing years, I married, had 2 children, completed a Bachelor of Business and then a Post Graduate Diploma in Information Management (Librarianship). In 2000, I joined the ranks of ex-students who have become staff members, by joining the Library team as the Library Technician. In the same year, I also became a MECS parent.

Every day for me working at MECS, has the potential to be a trip down memory lane. Come, take a little walk with me... I’ve returned to school this year after the holidays, to discover the flowering gum in the garden beside the office has been cut down (after unfortunately dying last year). I’m instantly transported back to that day, 36 years earlier, when the entire school solemnly gathered to watch that tree being planted by the family of our Primary School Teacher, Jenny following her untimely death. Speaking of the office, it wasn’t always the office, you know. It used to be my Grade 3 classroom, with Mr Ken as my teacher. Now I’m recalling getting into trouble for calling him Mr McInsquash (hey, we were 8 and it wasn’t meant for his ears). Now I’m poking my head into the staff workroom beside our lovely big staff room and remembering that in the early days, this used to be the staff room. Imagine fitting all our staff into that tiny room now!

I’ve made my way up to the oval, gazing across at the green embankment, remembering when it wasn’t green at all, but totally bare, in fact. We would sit up on the ‘bank’, watching sports matches between the classes or even between MECS and our rival schools, Donvale or Maranatha. Now I’m blushing as I’m remembering almost losing my knickers in a tackle playing British Bulldog on the oval in our lunch break. I think it was later banned in schools due to its violence (or maybe it was because too many kids lost their underpants!). Now I’m remembering my final year, when some of my classmates lined the oval with a huge “HSC ’84” on our muck-up day. Hey, there’s the Hut, up behind the library. More blushes as I remember kissing the boys in the shed behind the Hut. (It wasn’t just me!). Oh, there’s the bell ringing. You know, it wasn’t always electronic. I remember when it was the responsibility of the Grade 6 students to walk up and down the upper corridor, clanging the bell and making sure it was rung on time.

Ah, the list goes on, but the bell has also rung on my reminiscing. Despite all the changes, the essence of MECS; its’ spirit of community, remains unchanged. What a wonderful privilege to be able to recall hundreds of fond memories, just by walking around my own workplace.

Fiona (Class of ’84)
Mount Evelyn Christian School ReConnect - Connecting the Community

70's

MECS

All of life belongs to God

God centred education

The Opening 1973

Mothers Club

Selling house lots

The Heritage

1970's
dutch croquettes

centre trip starts

1970's

digging the oval

Digging the oval

Hawkins Road

Parents

Parents

Field Days

Field Days

Growing into Secondary

Growing into Secondary

long socks and sandals

long socks and sandals

Mechielsens

Mechielsens

Whitlam Gov't funds Ind. schools

Whitlam Gov't funds Ind. schools

education

teachers

connected

connected

Association

Association

Senior school commences

Senior school commences

families

families

students

students
**Drama for Everyday Life**

This program commences Thursday April 26. There are 9 sessions for Term 2, not 10 as initially indicated. If you would like your child to participate in this program and need to confirm for Term 2, please do so ASAP. Groups are being confirmed on Monday April 23.

**Jo**

**Education Support Coordinator**

**Parents & Friends**

**P&F Meeting**

Our next meeting is this Monday 23 April at 9.10am in the conference room. Everyone is welcome. It’s a great way to meet new people and help in fundraising for the school. Morning tea is provided.

**Entertainment Books are Here!**

It is not too late to place an order. An Entertainment Book is on display in the main office to look at if you are unsure of what it is about. Everyone who ordered books before the end of Term 1 will have received theirs this week. If you would like to order one please fill out your order form from last term or you can order securely online: www.entertainmentbook.com.au/orderbooks/1936965. Don’t forget to ask your family and friends. Remember the more we sell the more fundraising money we make. If you have any questions please contact me.

**Senior Primary Chicken Tee shirts Sale Cancelled**

Sadly due to production difficulties, our Tee shirt sale advertised last term will not take place. But watch this space for further fundraisers for Hope Schools Cambodia happening later in the year.

**Ali**

**SP Teacher**

**MECS Kitchen open for business!**

The new MECS kitchen is now operating. In with the New Menu – out with the Old!

Check out the new products. It’s on the web too.

**AASC Term 2**

The Active After-school Communities (AASC) program is a major component of the Australian Government’s package ‘Building a Healthy, Active Australia’ that aims to improve the health and well-being of Australian children. In Term 2 activities to be offered are:

- **Monday 3:45pm – 4:45pm: Ball Sports (soccer, cricket, basketball and volleyball)**
- **Thursday 3:45pm – 4:45pm: Mini Olympics (fun and fitness activities)**

The program will run for 7 weeks beginning 23 April 2012. Children attending will be offered fruit for afternoon tea prior to the activities commencing. Please ensure that your child brings a refillable water bottle to each session.

If you would like your child to participate in this program, please complete a parental form (available from the office) and return this to the office by: Friday 20 April. This is a free program and places are limited. For further information, contact the office.

**NOTICES SENT HOME THIS WEEK**

(can also be downloaded from website)

- AASC Permission & Information Forms
- Naplan Letter Year 3 & 5
- Ali Coffey Absence Letter
- Year 9 Drama Excursion 2012

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**NOTES**

- **Term 2 Begins**
- **Mother’s Day Stall**
- **Association AGM**
- **Primary Cross Country**
- **Term 1 Week 5 2012**
- **Entertainment Books**
- **Prep Parent and Child Evening – Pump Room**
- **MECS Kindergarten:**
  - **has a facebook page, with weekly photo updates. Check it out.**
- **MECS Website**
  - See the MECS Website for notices home, colour newsletter pages, calendars and lots of other useful information.
  - www.mecs.vic.edu.au

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**2012 Term 2 Week 1 15 APR - 21 APR**

**Mon 16 Apr**

Term 2 Begins

**Sat 21 Apr**

P&P Vision Portraits, Pump Room

**2012 Term 2 Week 2 22 APR - 28 APR**

**Mon 23 Apr**

Parent Seminar A in the Staffroom 7pm

**Tues 24 Apr**

Cross Country - Secondary Students

**Wed 25 Apr**

ANZAC Day Public Holiday - School Closed

**2012 Term 2 Week 3 29 APR - 5 MAY**

**Wed 3 May**

Student Leadership Training Day
Year 9 Drama Excursion

**2012 Term 2 Week 4 6 MAY - 12 MAY**

**Tues 8 May**

VCE Drama Excursion

**Wed 9 May**

Prep Parent and Child Evening - Pump Room 7pm

**Thurs 10 May**

Mother’s Day Stall
Primary Cross Country
Association AGM Staff Room 7pm

**Fri 11 May**

Mother’s Day Stall
Yr 7/8 Soccer
Yr 7 Girls’ Immunisation

**Sat 12 May**

Working Bee 8am to 1pm

**2012 Term 2 Week 5 13 MAY - 19 MAY**

**Sun 13 May**

Mother’s Day

**Association AGM**

Thursday May 10
MECS Staff Room 7pm
All Welcome

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**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

11am Tuesday on published week. Email articles (images attach as jpg) to the Newsletter Office

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**MECS COMMUNITY NOTICES**

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