Connecting the Community

ReConnect

Issue 8  1 May 2014

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A Change in Leadership
Interview with Martin & Narelle. Story pages 4-5.
Welcome

Welcome to the 8th edition of ReConnect. In preparation for writing this welcome, I looked through the last edition which came out in October 2013. In that edition was an important announcement from the Board telling us that a new Principal, Narelle, had been appointed and would commence in 2014.

Well, it is now May. First term has come and gone and we are just starting term 2. Narelle has taken up the MECS reigns with capable hands. She has settled back in well and there is a sense that she has been doing this job far longer than just one term! She is truly part of God’s plans for this school.

Recently I had the opportunity to sit down with Narelle and previous Principal Martin and listen to them chat about working together at MECS a number of years ago, Narelle’s move to Donvale Christian College, Martin’s decision not to return to MECS and the transition of leadership between them.

I felt it was a privilege to be a ‘fly on the wall’ so to speak, to sit and listen to these gifted leaders. Martin - who has spent the last 11 years of his life committed to this school, and Narelle who is just starting her journey as Principal. Both really ‘get’ MECS and have a real passion for Christian education.

I have transcribed this conversation and used it as the editorial for this edition. I hope you enjoy reading a small part of the conversation that was had that day.

We will miss Martin and Anita but we wish them well in this new stage of their lives. Martin has taken up the role of Executive Officer for Australian Association of Christian Schools. You can check out what he is doing now on their website www.aacs.net.au.

A number of past students have been letting us know what they have been doing since they left MECS, so in this edition there is a page featuring past student achievements. Please forward your story to us – we love to hear from past students and would love to put your story in the next edition.

Until next time,

Nicole, (Class of ‘90)
Community Relations Officer

con-nec-tion noun [kon-æk-shən]
: something that joins or connects two or more things
: the act of connecting two or more things or the state of being connected
: a situation in which two or more things have the same cause, origin, goal, etc.
re-prefix: again
: back to an original place, condition, etc.

When I was introduced to our bi-annual newsletter, ‘ReConnect’, some questions came to my mind: What is it that makes us want to ‘connect’ to the current MECS community, or to bother RE-connecting with a past community? What is the ‘something’ that joins us together? What is the cause or goal that we have in common? Why would past families and individuals want to stay connected to this place? As part of my orientation as the new Principal, I set myself the task to read the last two years’ worth of MECS Matters and ReConnects. They certainly gave me a ‘window-in’ to the MECS community and what is valued and talked about in this place. I enjoyed reminiscing over old times as I read through the ReConnect, enjoying photos and snippets of past students and colleagues. It was great to read how many families have now been involved in the life of the school over two generations. But I was intrigued…there must be more than just happy memories that keeps families committed to this school for over 40 years.

So what’s the ‘something’ that makes MECS so special? I found some of the answers articulated in our ‘Focus on MECS’ booklet which describes some of the key elements of MECS.

Working Together – In a culture that encourages us to be constant consumers, we invite families to share a vision and partner with us in a common purpose, that is, to seek the Kingdom of God in all aspects of education. If parents felt they were only buying a service, I wonder whether they would feel so connected. The connection is there because parents and families own, subscribe and engage with the vision of the school.

Equipping for Life – In a culture that values productivity over all else, the purpose of education can sometimes be distorted. At MECS, the purpose of education is not so our students can compete on the world market, but become disciples of Christ. As we develop the unique gifts and talents of each student they begin to see how God might use them for His purposes in bringing about His Kingdom.

Distinctively MECS – In a culture that promotes uniformity and standardisation, MECS is well known for its distinct approach to the way it does school. From an integral approach, to the way we see knowledge, to the way we cluster our students in ‘multi-age’ groupings, right through to the ‘perspective’ subjects we insist on for our senior classes; we are seeking to have a school-based curriculum which gives us the opportunity to be faithful to a Christian approach to education.

Learning Environment – In a culture that breeds cynicism, we are proud of the fact that our students love their school. From Kindergarten to Senior School, each section has its own unique space which is suited to the age and learning of that cohort, while still experiencing a sense of belonging within the one school.

Each of these elements help us to identify why families and individuals are so connected to MECS, or indeed want to re-connect with our community even when their time at MECS is finished! It’s more than just happy memories, isn’t it? MECS is a place where each individual is valued as being part of God’s family and the learning that happens here helps them to make a difference in the world.

We deeply value these connections! It’s at the heart of who we are and what God has called us to be! I look forward to connecting (or re-connecting!) with many of you over the months and years to come. Feel free to stop by for a chat or send me an email if there are things you would like to share. Similarly, if you are an ex-student and would like to pop in and see how MECS has grown and developed over the years, I would love to show you around!

Let’s never take for granted the connections we enjoy because of being connected to the one who holds all things together, our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Page 2
In 2014 we have been witness to something that only occasionally happens at MECS – the appointment of a new Principal. In the last 40 years we have seen the Principal change only a handful of times. Perhaps this speaks of the commitment they have had to the school.

Behind the scenes, there are changes in leadership which may go unnoticed by many, the parents who serve for a period of time on the Board. In the years I have been on the board I have worked with three Board chairs all uniquely different and gifted. Similarly over this period there has been a number of board members come and go. This does not speak of a lack of commitment, rather a willingness to serve our community for the period that they are able, as we journey together seeking the Kingdom of God in education.

This year at the AGM in May, two of our longer serving board members will be retiring – Ken and Annamarie.

Ken has served the school as a board member since 2001; he took a sabbatical of 3 years, during which he continued to serve as a member of the Infrastructure Committee. Ken has had the rare privilege of being one of a few board members who have been involved in the search for two of MECS’ Principals.

Some of Ken’s highlights include his involvement in the formulation of the Infrastructure Master Plan in 2003 and seeing projects move from plans to reality. He has also been impressed by how major decisions are made and are acted on relatively quickly.

Ken says “The icing on top was of course, the building & financing of the Gym”.With Ken’s last child finishing school in 2012, he feels now is an appropriate time to pass on the baton.

Annamarie has served on the board for the last six years and capably managed various portfolios. She has also served on the CEN state council for many years. Annamarie has a long association with MECS and while she no longer has children at the school she does have 7 grandchildren attending.

When Annamarie was asked what her highlights were during her time on the Board, she said “It would have to be the kinder.” Her youngest grandchild at MECS was amongst the first group to attend in the opening year.

Both Annamarie and Ken expressed that it has been a joy and privilege to serve with a group of parents and the school executive that uphold the school in such a cohesive and professional manner equipping children for life.

For those of us remaining on the Board it sometimes seems a daunting task to replace those that we have gotten to know and value. However, the Lord has always been faithful in providing and ensures that our Board and Association stay strong. We are looking forward to working with a new group of parents who are committed to the MECS vision and have a strong desire to serve on the Board.

As we prepare to farewell both Annamarie and Ken, we give thanks for their faithful service and long standing commitment to the school, wishing them God’s blessing for the future.

Ian
Treasurer & Vice Board Chair

In Tribute
Bruce

Bruce was on the finance committee and Board at MECS for a number of years. He loved being a part of the MECS community and made some wonderful friends. Bruce really enjoyed organising the working bees and joining in school camp fun. He fought an amazing battle with Leukemia for just over 2 years. Throughout the journey God provided many blessings for Bruce, Sylvia and the family. He passed away on the 25 August 2013.

Stacey and her husband Tony welcomed a baby boy - Caden Bruce on 26 August 2013. Although it has been such a sad time for the family, Caden has brought much joy to our family.

Stacey (class of ’01) Christopher (class of ’04) Jennifer (class of ’06)

Tony & Stacy, Christopher Lauryn, Sylvia & Bruce & Jennifer.

Association for Christian Education

AGM
Thursday 22 May
7.00pm - Coffee & Supper
7.30pm - Meeting Start

We will be meeting at
Ranges TEC,
1/9 Hightech Place, Lilydale
with a delicious supper provided by their
Ranges TEC Hospitality Students

All Welcome

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Editorial - A Change in Leadership

Recently Martin and Narelle sat down and shared some of their thoughts and feelings on being the outgoing and incoming Principals of MECS. Martin and Narelle go way back, having met at MECS in 2002 when Narelle was a teacher in the SS and Martin came in as the new Principal. They share a passion for Christian education and for MECS, as well as a belief in each other. Here they share some of their reflections on their journey over the last 12 years and how they feel about the ‘passing of the Principal baton’.

Martin – I started at MECS in 2002. One of my first memories is in the old staffroom. I introduced myself and spoke about my family’s recent trip around Australia. I suggested that the staff needed to meet every morning for devotions, something like that.

Narelle – I first met Martin when he came to MECS as the new Principal. I had been at MECS for a while. My first impression was that he was a bit of a ‘go-getter’. Stewart was Principal then. I loved Stewart - he was like a bit of a grandfather (he might hate me saying that!). He was the statesman so to speak, and had taken me under his wing a little bit. He always thought that I looked quite like his daughter, Sue (current Board Chair) and had taken me under his wing a little bit. I introduced myself and spoke about my family’s recent trip around Australia. I suggested that the staff needed to meet every morning for devotions, something like that.

Martin – So how long did it take before you thought I knew what I was doing?

Narelle (laughing) – You obviously came in with a great sense of confidence in what you could do. All of a sudden the school was moving in a positive direction and there were all these plans to do stuff and build things. I remember you bringing in a certain amount of energy and new direction. It was instantly impressive.

Martin – It’s interesting you say that I came in knowing what to do. I don’t know that I felt that at the start. I remember feeling somewhat intimidated coming to ‘the’ MECS, where you had Doug, Stewart, Roger, Geoff, Colin, Colin, John – some of the bigger gurus of the movement and here was this young upstart coming in to be, if you like, their boss. I felt a tad intimidated about that - but it passed.

Narelle – I don’t think that ever came across.

Martin – It didn’t take long for me to realise that leadership doesn’t mean you have to be the most intelligent, the best writer or across all the thinking.

Narelle – I felt the same. I came into this school as a young graduate in 1992 with all of those people and a strong sense of what they represented. But someone needed to step into the leadership and provide direction and I thought you were the right person to do that.

Martin – I remember in those early days the Board asked me to lay out a plan for the school for the next five years. So I sat down and wrote a document called the Educational Master Plan - far too wordy, but it helped me think through a lot about MECS. I basically did my own review of the school and then ran it past the other leaders. It became the basis for a lot of the planning back then.

In 2003 we finished developing the Infrastructure Master Plan with a list of 23 projects. It was nice last year, when I was reflecting back, to realise we did 22 out of the 23 projects and a few extras that weren’t on that list like the Kinder, the Gym and Ranges TEC.

Narelle – My impression is that your time as Principal has been a ‘boom time’. I certainly come in now thinking that a lot of the hard yards – the strategic direction, the facilities etc. are all well-established. I’ve been really impressed with that. It represents a lot of hard work and thinking that’s obviously come out of your leadership.

Martin – I warmed to you from the outset. I loved the opinionated, articulate, energetic and organised operator you were up there in the Senior School. I remember you invited me into one of your lessons to do a guest spot and afterwards you wanted a lesson outline because that’s the way you did things and I thought gee-whiz she’s organised!

Narelle – I needed to go in my nice set of curriculum folders!

Martin – You took on board some of my input and then made it your own. I just loved the enthusiasm for engaging with the educational, directional and philosophical debates that you and the Senior School staff had.

Narelle – I remember coming to you in mid-2006 - I had a sense that I needed to work at Donvale to make my family life work as single mum, but there were no jobs advertised there at the time. I had a bit of a panic. There was a sense of not wanting to leave the place that I loved, but also knowing that I needed to make this happen. You and Harry Burggraaf (Donvale Deputy at the time) made that happen for me. In hindsight I have seen that this was a good thing - going somewhere else, getting experience and seeing how another place works. You can get a bit parochial can’t you? Now I feel very blessed to have been part of two Christian schools that are doing a great job. I am very thankful for the way that all came about. You could have said fine, you want to leave, see-ya later, but you didn’t!

Martin – It was our loss but Donvale’s gain, the Kingdom’s gain!

Narelle – As a result, I was able to maintain a really good relationship with MECS and not feel that I had left this community under difficult circumstances. I could start at Donvale with a sense of being part of the bigger picture of Christian education. The ‘release’ from Donvale to come back here has been a similar journey too, although I loved it there as well. They also had a sense that coming back to MECS as Principal was a part of the bigger picture of Christian education and I was sent off with their blessing. I have been very lucky that the transition back and forth between the two schools has been so good!

Martin – I do remember one discussion we had, I can’t remember exactly when, but towards the end of your time here at MECS, I said to you something along the lines of “maybe one day you will come back here as the Principal”. Your leadership gifts were quite obvious. Do you remember that?

Narelle – Numerous people in my time at MECS and elsewhere have said that, but I was like ‘yeah, yeah’. Your own sense of what you have to offer is not always so clear. The capacity or gifts that other people see in us is often more than we see in ourselves!

Martin – It’s not something I’ve said to many people - not that I was even in a position to influence that decision, but you understood MECS; you had credibility here; you had runs on the board as a teacher. Even though you didn’t get to do that much as a leader at MECS, your ability to assess, review, critique and offer insightful commentary were the characteristics of leadership. Few people have got the gumption to come in and challenge things. Your challenges were offered in a way that those who were on the receiving end were not belittled or disrespected but they saw there was a bigger goal in what you were trying to do. They listened.

Narelle – When you’ve been around Christian schools like MECS for a long time, with its servant leader type of approach, you get really surprised by people’s reactions about being a principal. They often have this hierarchical understanding of leadership. People go “oooh, gee,” as if that’s something important. I’m still adapting to that.
A candid chat with Martin and Narelle

Martin – Even though I don’t agree with the hierarchical view, I’d have to admit that there have been times I have liked that. I think I’ve been used to leadership all my life but I don’t mind some of the respect that comes with that. The counter balance is that I don’t take myself too seriously.

Narelle – Where as I’m still getting used to that!

Martin – Leadership just comes because that’s the task you have been charged with and others know you can do it and deep down you know you can do it also. It doesn’t make you a better or more capable person; it’s just what you’re called to do. The hierarchical model makes out as if you’re better, but that’s rubbish. I know my own weaknesses, even if I’m not hanging them out for everyone to see.

Narelle – People ask me if I have always wanted to be a principal but no, I’m not a principal now because I want to be a principal – I’m a principal because I feel I can make a contribution. This is a place I have a lot of affection for and God has opened the way for me to do this job.

Martin – The opportunity came, the door was opened and you went for it. It wasn’t that you were following an ambitious hierarchical path to the top.

Narelle – And you have to leave that word ambition at the door, don’t you? In that sense I’ve never been ambitious. You end up where you end up because of all those contributions and encouragements from people along the way.

Martin – The hierarchical understanding of leadership has so many whiskers - suggesting you’re after the status - the power. The MECS language is different. It’s about finding a good niche, a place where your gifts are well used, and out of that comes a lot of job satisfaction.

Narelle – I’m finding that. Were you worried about ‘releasing’ something as big as this to someone else?

Martin – Yeah, I didn’t know what I was going to do, but you know you have to let go and trust God that he has it all in hand. I wanted to ring the Board when they started looking for a new principal. I was tempted but I was glad I didn’t make those phone calls or get involved. It was right to trust the Board. I’m very confident in their decision.

A lot of people say they would never be a principal because you get all the complaints and stress. Well you do get some of that but every job has its strains. You wouldn’t do it if you didn’t have reasonable coping mechanisms. If there is a disaster or something goes wrong - your challenge is to work out how to resolve it. I admit I get a buzz out of that.

Narelle – I agree. I find the challenges quite energising. Why didn’t you come back after your sabbatical year in 2012?

Martin – Not coming back was really difficult.

Narelle – Was it tempting though? Would it have been easier?

Martin – For sure! This is a delightful community. It’s got its challenges and areas of hard work but I never wanted to leave! I enjoyed being the Principal here. However, my time away helped me see I needed to move onto a new challenge, as hard as that was. By deciding fairly early in 2012, it gave the Board a good period of time to seek out who was going to be the next Principal, and that’s where you came along.

Narelle – I think it has been a win-win for everybody involved. I sense for you that there are new opportunities, new ways to grow, that this is a good thing for you. Yes, we’ve left good things that we enjoyed behind and there is always sadness about leaving those things, but I don’t feel like anyone has lost out. Do you feel like you have lost out in any way?

Martin – I was worried that would be the case. My new role of advocating for Christian schools in the federal arena isn’t the communal, fun space that MECS is. Even so the excitement of taking on a new challenge means there’s too much to learn to be thinking about what I’ve lost.

Narelle – I had the same sort of thing. I thought I was going to miss Donvale a lot – the last few years have been a great period of my life. But the reality is you get into the new thing and love it and just move on.

Narelle – Are you satisfied with where you left MECS? I feel like I am coming into a well-oiled, functioning place, and with all respect to Paul, that is your legacy.

Martin – Thanks. I left feeling that MECS was in a pretty good place, though you’ve got to be careful you don’t think you’ve arrived. There were some decent facilities and infrastructure built. That was good. I think Ranges TEC is a fantastic project. The Kinder is great. You realise that you are a player in a bigger community. There are things I wanted to do better in. I would have loved to have given more resources to the outdoor ed, music and arts programs – I don’t feel I gave them as much support as I should have. I would have liked to given Jo Miller more resources to establish her visionary Education support and wellness centre - buy a house along Hawkins Road and be quite innovative. It’s hard to sit at budget meetings and carve up the pie. There’s never enough money to do it all. However, MECS wouldn’t be what it is today if we’d stuck to all the ‘safe’ decisions.

Narelle – That sort of thinking will be a challenge for me. I believe I have good managerial and leadership skills, but you have to allow the leadership bit of your brain to override the management side which just wants efficiency.

Martin – If you have a leader who is too visionary, the teaching crew are not always willing to go along with the vision – I had a bit of that. Some of the teachers were like “Oh here we go again, one of Martin’s hair-brained ideas.” On one hand they liked it; but on the other hand they were the ones who had to do the grind. Leaders have to be careful they look after those who make it happen.

Narelle – Thanks. I left feeling that MECS was a well-oiled, functioning place, and with all respect to Paul, that is your legacy.

Martin – That’s where you had flair. It’s already interesting when people make comparisons, although I don’t think I am without flair! In hindsight people talk about those things very fondly. Remember when we did this; remember Martin’s crazy idea for that. That’s the stuff that is the story of the school. The challenge for me is to bring my own flair and flavour.

Martin – They were only, like, 2% of the school life.

Narelle – Yeah, but that’s what people remember.

Martin – So many fond memories, which is nice. I tend to forget the hard stuff - there was lots of that I know, and I also made my share of blunders along the way. But it’s good to go out feeling good about a season of work that was very satisfying. I think I feel a bit like Stewart did when I started – pleased to let go, but knowing that what you’ve worked on will continue on under God’s good hand.

Narelle – I agree. I can see that this change in leadership has been part of God’s plan for this place. The positive transition is a good reminder of God’s ongoing faithfulness to MECS over the last 40 years.
Our first group of Kindergarten Students

Bluebirds 2013 (3 year old group)

Koalas 2013 (4 year old group)

Possums 2013 (4 year old group)

What an amazing blessing! These beautiful children are our very first group of kindergarten students at MECS. The long-time dream of having a kinder at MECS became a reality in 2013 – praise God!

Natasha
School Services Manager
The Year 12 Class of 2013: Possible Destinations in 2014*

Since December 16, 2013 when many an anxious MECS Year 12 student waited for the SMS bearing his or her results to arrive right at 7am, much has happened. These results, in particular the ATAR (Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank) were used by VTAC (Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre) to place students in tertiary courses. Last year 41 Year 12 students studied for the VCE at MECS and all successfully achieved their certificates. Here is the list of all of their destinations this year.

We are grateful to God for His ongoing provision for the class of 2013. We encourage you to pray for these young people as they face the new challenges of work and tertiary study.

Dr Roger F
VCE Coordinator
*Some students have deferred their tertiary course and are working as part of a gap year.

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1980s

**Lance, class of ‘80 & ‘81**

I started at MECS in 1979 in Year 11. I did Year 11 and 12 over 3 years. I got to graduate twice! Before MECS I had been at Upwey high and spent a year in Canada.

One of my favourite memories is a Year 12 English class in 1981, Doug was the teacher. It was the start of the year, so there was a lot of new faces. Doug was running a few minutes late and when he walked in we had a good wrestle on the floor before class started (as we often did) but I will never forget looking up at the gobsmacked faces of the new students! I also remember some great nights at Doug Blomberg’s place listening to Beatles music.

My favourite camp was Year 11 Biology with Cor. There were 19 girls and me in the class. I was just back from Canada and had a Canadian licence, so I ended up driving the class down to Point Leo in my parents Combi! It was a great camp. I also remember running bush dances in the corridors with Lionel.

The day after Graduation I flew to Canada and stayed for a year. My first job was as a carpenter/staircase builder. I worked as a lumberjack in my early 20’s, married Colleen in the 80’s, in the early 90’s I studied to become a teacher and then taught at MECS for a year. I worked in the car trade repairing interiors, then did my Masters of Divinity and worked as a pastor for 10 years. I am now back at MECS teaching. Through all this I have always been passionate about and enjoy music, and do a lot of singing and song writing. Colleen and I have 3 great kids aged between 14 and 22 years old.

1990s

**Melanie, class of ‘94**

It’s amazing how quickly time goes by. I left MECS at the end of Year 10 (1992) and went on to Lilydale High School for Year 11. Unfortunately at the time I didn’t complete my VCE and went straight into working full time at the Fruit Shop at Chirnside Park Shopping Centre (before the renovations). I have worked for Blockbuster Video, Suzanne Grae, Westpac Banking Corporation and now I am working part time at Woolworths.

I got married in 2005 to Shane who I met through mutual friends. We have a daughter Emma who is 7 years old and a son Matthew who is 4 years old. We have just recently sold our house in Kilsyth and are currently renting in Croydon while our new house is being built (in Kilsyth).

Last year I was very lucky to be able to go overseas on a ‘Girls’ Trip’ with my best friend. We went to Los Angeles, Las Vegas & New York. It was amazing and a dream come true. Looking forward to taking the whole family in a few years when the kids are old enough to appreciate it all. I also decided to return to studying through Open University Australia. As I didn’t complete my VCE, I am required to complete 4 units to then be eligible to apply for Bachelor of Nursing with Midwifery. I am really enjoying it & I am able to study around work, family & other activities.

I keep in touch with my fellow classmates on Facebook and love seeing what everyone else is up to. Melissa has organised a reunion for 3 May for people who were in Years 10, 11 & 12 in 1994, or, if you were in my class, you would be more than welcome also. If anyone is interested please contact Melissa or myself (Mel) on Facebook and we will be more than happy to pass on the details to you. Looking forward to catching up with everyone on the night.

2000s

**Laura, class of ‘06**

Since graduating in 2006 life has been interesting. I graduated with the idea that I would study and become a nurse, and life would be easy. Well, after one semester I realised nursing was not the career for me. I took some time out to work as a support worker with people with disabilities and for the most part I really enjoyed it. It was in this time that I figured out what I wanted to do career wise. I am now in my second year of studying my Bachelor of Social Work (honors) at RMIT, and absolutely loving it. I can’t wait to finish my degree and pursue doing something I love, working with people. However this year I have been blessed with the opportunity to work as a youth worker in a remote Indigenous community in Western Australia, so have taken some time off from the studies. Perhaps Centre Trip can drop by my house this year!

2010s

**Tiffany, class of ‘11**

For 9 years I had the privilege of being part of MECS. ‘Space’ in Year 5/6, Cycle A production, The game ‘knock’ and Centre Trip were all great highlights of my memorable time at MECS. I was also fortunate to graduate in 2011 with probably the best year level ever! But the best part of my time at MECS would definitely have to be being encouraged in my faith and having it completely incorporated in my education.

Since leaving MECS I took a gap year involving work, CRE teaching, mentoring Year 9 students and being a part of Kids Hope. Through this year, God really showed me how much I really enjoyed working with children and showing the love of Jesus to them in a world that can at times be really demanding and where a lot of children and teenagers can struggle to find their identity.

Therefore I decided to study to become a teacher and am currently in my second year at ACU. I’m absolutely loving it but really just want to get out and teach! Later in life after some experience, I would love to get involved in chaplaincy.

We’d love more articles like these! Feel free to drop us a line with your news and a photo for the next ReConnect.
Past Student Achievements

Natalie, class of ‘04

Natalie was awarded her PhD at the University of Melbourne for her research, where she designed a novel approach for investigating drug interactions at receptor proteins. She used this technique to investigate the mechanism by which the peptide hormone relaxin switches on its receptor. This has implications for the treatment of acute heart failure where this receptor is emerging as a significant therapeutic target.

Nicole
Community Relations Officer

Robert, class of ‘99

Robert graduated with a D.Phil. in Political Philosophy from Oxford University late last year. His thesis was on “Hate Speech Laws”. Following his graduation, Robert was able to secure a prized lectureship in the Philosophy Department at Monash University and has been working there since July 2013. Prior to his study at Oxford, Robert worked as a sessional tutor in Philosophy at Monash in the years 2007-2008.

His research interests are primarily in social and political philosophy; they include: free speech, hate speech, the analysis of speech-harm, attributions of responsibility in law, the moral limits of the criminal law, the ethics of human enhancement, the epistemology of disagreement, and philosophical issues around religious conflict. His teaching at present is in human rights theory and philosophy of language.

We are thrilled with his appointment and offer him our warmest congratulations.

His appointment makes him the fourth ex-MECS student to secure employment as a lecturer at a University. The other three are: Dr Robyn A (MECS class of ’83), Associate Professor - Central Australia Remote Health Education, Flinders University; Dr Daniel P (MECS class of ’85), head of the Dan Peet Laboratory – Centre for the Molecular Genetics of Development, The University of Adelaide and Dr Rowan W (MECS class of ’86), Senior lecturer in the Life and Social Sciences faculty, Swinburne University of Technology.

Dr Roger F
VCE Coordinator

Sam, class of ‘91

I started my sewing business in 2011 just making art smocks and library bags for friends and family. In 2012 one of my twin boys was diagnosed with High Functioning Autism, along with Sensory Processing Disorder. Even on the hottest of hot nights he needed to have multiple blankets piled on top of him. I looked into it for some more information as to what I could do to help him and came across a story about Weighted Blankets. Trying to source the ‘weights’ was proving to be a problem and the cost of purchasing a blanket was beyond my means at the time. Yvonne and Mick heard about my problem and a week later I received a wonderful gift from them – a weighted blanket, needless to say I was totally blown away. I was determined to make an affordable blanket that would sell well and help other parents like myself that were surviving on 4 hours sleep a night.

After much research I was able to find the ‘weights’ required for the blankets. Business has taken off like a rocket now. I am now listed as a preferred seller of weighted products here in Australia on a website that averages 20,000 hits a week along with a facebook page that reaches over a million people per week. I love hearing from families that are now getting a full night’s sleep again.

Sam
My webpage is www.acornstreads.com

Jared, class of ‘09

We wish to congratulate Jared on being selected into a doctoral studies (PhD) program at Deakin University. Jared will be investigating ways of better assessing thermal stress in Atlantic Salmon (through gene expression) raised in captivity in our aquaculture industry. He joins Eugene Chua (class of ’05) undertaking PhD studies in the field of molecular biology (nuclear RNA) and Laura (class of ’06) undertaking PhD studies in speech pathology. It is wonderful that God has so gifted these ex-students with the tools to handle post-graduate studies. What is even more wonderful is that all three of these young people seek to honour King Jesus. Let us uphold them in prayer as they continue to serve God in their tertiary institutions.

Dr Roger F
VCE Coordinator

Marita, class of ’06

We would like to congratulate Marita who has been awarded the 2013 John Storey Scholarship ($5,000) by The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University. John Storey (Jnr) was a young man full of drive and energy who studied Mechanical Engineering at RMIT. As an undergraduate he helped found the Student Representative Council, acted as its first President, and lobbied for the establishment of a central library. His studies were cut short when he was diagnosed with leukaemia and he died in 1947, aged just 22. His father, industrialist Sir John Storey, left a sizeable bequest to RMIT for the establishment of a scholarship fund to commemorate his son’s life.

In order to qualify for the scholarship, candidates must:

• have been accepted into the RMIT overseas student Exchange Program.
• have achieved the required grade point average in their studies.
• be involved in community service activities
• have extra-curricular interests.

As well as performing exceptionally well academically, Marita has been a TEAR Australia volunteer for 3 years, volunteered in South Africa with Youth for Christ for 6 months and is a regular volunteer with Surrender and Soul Survivor. She will be using the scholarship to continue her study for a Bachelor of Social Work degree (second year) for one semester at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland.

Dr Roger F
VCE Coordinator
Look who came to visit
James Gashumba

In February Dr James G (PhD University of London) dropped in for a brief visit. James taught at MECS for 13 years, leaving us at the end of 2011 to take up the key leadership role at a very large Rwandan Tertiary Institution (around 4000 students). He was visiting Australia for the birth of his first grandchild and returned to Rwanda a few weeks later. There were hugs all round because in Rwanda you don’t handshackle you hug! It was great to see him again.

Heather
Newsletter Editor
Anna, MECS student from Prep to Year 12 (class of ’00) married Cameron on March 1, 2014. Colin and Heather are the proud parents of the bride. Heather taught at MECS from 1976 to 1979. Colin still teaches at MECS in the Senior School.

Simone class of ’98 and Dave recently welcomed Elijah Johan. Little brother to Macy and Jesiah.

Anna, MECS student from Prep to Year 12 (class of ’00) married Cameron on March 1, 2014. Colin and Heather are the proud parents of the bride. Heather taught at MECS from 1976 to 1979. Colin still teaches at MECS in the Senior School.

Anna, MECS student from Prep to Year 12 (class of ’00) married Cameron on March 1, 2014. Colin and Heather are the proud parents of the bride. Heather taught at MECS from 1976 to 1979. Colin still teaches at MECS in the Senior School.

Send your celebratory news to us!

Nick and Katie (class of ’01) welcomed another son, Jesse Jo on October 6, 2013.

Hannah class of ’06 married Ryan (past student of MDCS) on January 17, 2014. Diane is the MECS Primary Coordinator.

Hannah, MECS student from Prep to Year 12 (class of ’00) married Cameron on March 1, 2014. Colin and Heather are the proud parents of the bride. Heather taught at MECS from 1976 to 1979. Colin still teaches at MECS in the Senior School.

Hannah class of ’06 married Ryan (past student of MDCS) on January 17, 2014. Diane is the MECS Primary Coordinator.
MECS COMMUNITY NOTICES
MECS does not endorse the products or services of any private advertiser. No responsibility is accepted by Mount Evelyn Christian School for the accuracy of information contained in advertisements or claims made by them.

Working Bee!
This Saturday 3 May
8.00am-1pm

Not too late to return forms tomorrow

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

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MECS Open Day
Sat May 10, 10am -1pm
If you have family or friends who are interested in Christian education, you are most welcome to take them on a personal tour on Open Day or encourage them to come along. We have quite a few activities happening around the school on the day.

We would appreciate some volunteers, parents and student leaders to help with:
- Welcoming Team
- Making sandwiches
- Serving Devonshire Tea
- Supervising our jumping castles or cup cake decorating
- Face painting
- Tour Guides
- Helping in the classrooms
- BBQ Cooking

If you are available to help us (even for an hour), we would appreciate it. Please phone Amanda or Nicole, or email us.

If you have a busy day, then please just drop in to school when and if you can.

Thank you for your support.

Amanda & Nicole

Think Global and Local
Mothers Day Stall, Fri 9 May
This is the theme for this year’s Mothers Day stall. Friends of MECS have an exciting range of ‘Fair Trade’ and locally produced gifts for the Mother’s and Father’s day stalls. Sales will be supporting OS communities in Uganda, Thailand, Cambodia and Africa.

Let your children know that the range of gifts will be different to past stalls and may be a little more expensive, but the money is being used to support people who do not have the same opportunities as we do in Australia.

Primary students will be taken by their class teacher to purchase their gifts. Please have your child’s money in a named envelope. Middle School students will have opportunity to buy at lunchtime in the PUMP Room.

Amanda
Community Relations Officer

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Drama for Everyday Life
Drama for Everyday life has a 6 week program this term. Forms can be obtained from the main office.

Shirley

Active After-school Communities (AASC)
The free Term 2 program for Primary students begins on 5 May, at MECS for 7 weeks, Monday and Thursday afternoons from 3:45pm to 4:45pm.

Monday - Badminton
Thursday - Lawn Bowls
For information and permission forms please contact the main office. Places are limited.

Apple Man
The Apple man will be doing a fruit delivery on, Friday 9 May, so orders will need to be handed in to the Main Office by then.

All one price now: $10. The following varieties are available: Gala apples, Granny Smith apples, Golden Delicious apples, Brown/Green pears 5-6 kg each.

Dollarmite Banking
Just a reminder that Wednesday is banking day each week.

Entertainment Books
Available now. Put your order in so you don’t miss out.

For Lease
Near school - 40 Hawkins Rd. 3 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, ample parking space, fully fenced rear yard, ducted heating & air-conditioning, dishwasher, carport to be constructed, pets welcome. $370 per week (includes front garden maintenance). Contact L J Hooker on 9725 8811.

Discovery Craft Group
Wed 10am to 12 noon, Discovery Church, 89 Monbulk Rd, Mount Evelyn. Enjoy patchwork, folk art, embroidery, papercraft etc. Beginners to experienced crafters welcome.

Term 2 starts May 7, 2014. Free creche is available. For more details contact Cathy or Cynthia.

www.discoverychurch.com.au

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Notices sent home this week and on Website

- AASC Information
- JPR Show and Tell Program
- Primary Cross Country
- Cycle A Term 2 newsletter
- Yr 11 Science works excursion
- SS Careers newsletter 29 April
- VCE History excursion note
- Prep Pipeline newsletter
- JP Term 2 newsletter
- MP Term 2 newsletter
- SP Term 2 newsletter