AGM TONIGHT
May 26
Come along!

Year 9 Open Village Farm Visit
Alexia holding a chicken on the Year 9 Special Week Farm visit
Known rather than knowing

“Knowledge is power. Information is liberating. Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family.” Kofi Annan

“I think, therefore I am.” Descartes

Is this the sum of human existence? Are we defined by the knowledge we hold and possess? Who are we, if for some reason knowledge of ourselves, a particular topic, or our surroundings disappears? I wonder about reflecting on this in a school setting given that the acquisition of knowledge is a fairly important pastime in this environment. I figure I’m amongst friends so why not?

My reading of scripture and personal journey tend to suggest knowing about someone or something may be less important than being known by someone. I wonder if, in being known by God, we are made human, seen in the image of God and consequently made valuable and valued.

Our faith tradition often emphasises knowing God rather than being known by God. There is no doubt we can and should pursue a deeper understanding of God, but Paul in his letter to the Galatians writes, “Earlier before you knew God personally, you were enslaved to so-called gods that had nothing of the divine about them. But now that you know the real god, or rather since God knows you, how can you possibly subject yourselves again to those paper tigers?” The primacy of being known by God is clear. Once again in his letter to the Corinthians, Paul’s thoughts appear dominated by being known by God (1 Corinthians 13:12).

This thought has become particularly important to me as I get older. I am more exposed to my own frailties but also more attuned to the emotional and physical frailties of others. This is nowhere more evident than in encounters with my ageing mother. As I watch and relate with her, it is evident her world is diminishing. The people she knows and have been known by are passing away. She can no longer undertake the activities she once did, and her memory, wit and sharp mind become less reliable each day.

This has become more obvious following her recent surgery. I have spent time sitting with her as her grip on reality fades. I have watched as her knowing of the other and herself waxes and wanes. Paradoxically, during these times I have also been keenly aware of her being known: known by her friends, her family and most emphatically by God. Through this it has become more and more evident to me that this ‘being known by God’ is the reality that grounds our existence and sense of self. It offers us the mercy and grace to relate to others with new understanding.

In seeing Mum’s journey reflected by being known by God, I am also drawn to reflect on her life and witness. I am drawn more and more to Paul’s words “We’ll see it all then, see it all as clearly as God sees us, knowing Him directly just as He knows us. But for right now, until that completion we have three things to do to lead us towards that consummation: trust steadily in God, hope unswervingly, love extravagantly” (1 Corinthians 13:12). Mum, like of all us, has struggled in much of her life but amidst the death of two husbands, nursing dying parents and living through the Great Depression she has always been known by God. Her imperfections have been seen but her reflection has so often been the one God reveals (known). Her ability to trust, hope and love are hallmarks of her life because she is known.

As I get to know students and parents at Ranges TEC, I am reminded by Mum’s witness to see that they too are known by God. I am keenly aware that their imperfections are not what God knows. I am reminded to trust he has a plan for them, to hope it will come to fruition and to love them, despite my own failings. Theirs, and my own identity are not dependent on what we know, what we think, or how much information we have and control. Rather it is dependent on being known by God and anticipating a day when we will know Him as directly (fully) as He knows us.

Phil
Director - Ranges TEC

Library Book Fair May 26-31

Just a reminder that Book Fair 2016 kicks off tomorrow in the Library (May 26 - today is viewing only). This year we are donating our commission to the Woolaning Christian School in the Northern Territory. Please consider supporting the Woolaning community by supporting the Book Fair. We will be open in the Library from 8.30am to 4.30pm tomorrow and Monday, and from 8.30am to 2pm on Tuesday. There are some great gift ideas with books, posters, diaries, pens, pencils and other items available with prices starting from $1. Come join us, we would love to see you. Eftpos and credit card facilities are available.

Fiona
Library Manager

GT Monday May 30

The next Primary GT will be on Monday May 30 run by SPGreen class (Michelle). Foundation classes will share a musical performance and we will get a glimpse into the Senior Primary Enrichment program this term. Parents are most welcome to attend.

Di
Assistant Principal - Primary
Whole School Assembly

Thanks to our Primary School for leading us in such an exciting whole school assembly yesterday. It really was a grand adventure with so much involvement from our Primary students. Thanks to the whole school community for embracing these assemblies so positively. We think it is really important for our students from Foundation to Year 12 to come together in this way, appreciate what is happening in other parts of the school and celebrate what MECS is about. We look forward to the Middle School leading us next term.

Interschool Cross Country

Over the last couple of weeks, primary and secondary students represented MECS at interschool cross country events. It was great to hear how well they competed against tough competition. We love to hear about the great sportsmanship, and behaviour of our students. However, it was disappointing to hear about the number of secondary students, in particular, who didn’t turn up on the day even though they had been selected for the squad. At MECS we want to encourage all our students to pursue the opportunities that come their way and to extend and challenge themselves outside of the MECS environment. We will be chatting to our students about how we can create a more positive culture so that students are proud to represent themselves and our school at such events. Obviously to those who did participate – well done! Thanks for doing your best!

AGM

Tonight is our school Association AGM. It’s always great to see familiar faces as well as welcome new members, but more importantly it’s an opportunity to acknowledge God’s faithfulness for another year. We are certainly blessed to have such a beautiful school to enjoy and community to belong to!

The 2015 Annual Report has now been made available to Association members. I have included two extracts from my Principal’s Report here in Sketcher’s Scoop to give all members of our community an insight into one of the highlights of 2015, and one of our major goals going forward. The full Annual Report is available in the website or in printed form from the office.

Professional Learning for Staff

It is our desire not only for our teachers to develop and extend their skills in teaching, but for all our staff to be further equipped to do the tasks that God has called them to do. In 2015, our BINGO program was enthusiastically embraced by our teaching staff. Central to this program is teachers taking responsibility for their own professional development by choosing from a range of activities and experiences that they will benefit and grow from. A highlight for the leadership team throughout the year was the opportunity to meet with all teachers in professional learning conversations to listen and explore what further support or learning opportunities are needed. As teachers completed their BINGO boards, various ‘rewards’ provided an element of fun and recognition for what had been achieved. We look forward to extending and developing this program to provide a relevant, flexible and challenging platform for the professional learning of all our staff.

Teaching and Learning Plan

Last year saw exciting curriculum developments in the introduction of Indonesian to the Primary School; this program has extended to our Year 7s in 2016. We also mentioned in the Annual Report last year new appointments and priorities in our IT area. We are happy to report that these changes have also been extremely effective and we were well placed to roll out new initiatives such as the ‘Bring Your Own Device’ (BYOD) program in the Senior School at the end of 2015, and the introduction of a Learning Management System across the school this year which will enable effective delivery and assessment of our curriculum online. We are consolidating other changes made over the last couple of years in a new Teaching and Learning Master Plan which will be presented to the Board mid-year. This plan will capture our key strategic teaching and learning directions over the next three years. The plan covers areas such as the professional learning of staff, technology, curriculum, pedagogy and the future design of our classrooms and play-spaces.

Music Recital

Last Wednesday evening the school Theatre was host to the first MECS Music Recital for 2016. A wide ranging group of music performances from a variety of students across our MECS community was enjoyed by one and all.

It was fabulous to see students performing pieces such as “Ballade” by Burgmüller, Queen’s “Bohemian Rhapsody” and “The Man from Snowy River”. The students performed expressively, with skill and courage. From those at the beginning of their performance experience to the most seasoned performers, the evening was delightful and fun! A big thank you to all the students who performed and also to the parents and friends who came to listen and appreciate the musical offerings. We look forward to further recitals this year, hearing from our young emerging musicians, and thank all the Instrumental Staff for their hard work and encouragement of their students.
MECS Notes
Missing Heat Packs
We are missing many heat/wheat packs and blue cold packs from the first aid room. They are frequently used, and most make their way back to First Aid but some of them have gone missing in action. Can you please check if your child has not brought one home by mistake or that they are not lurking at the bottom of the schoolbags as they are expensive to replace. They should all be clearly labelled as belonging to MECS. Thanks in anticipation.

Melinda
First Aid Officer

Introductions...
This article on Lance continues Brit’s interview series to help us get to know some of the teachers at MECS.

Introducing Lance
This tall, annoying, father like man is... mostly a joy to be around. I say mostly because he can be very cheeky and loves to pull your leg. Me for example; as I am not very tall he likes to take advantage of that. Although a lot of people do that! Never mind, he’s great fun.

What is your favourite book or book series?
I really love Bryce Courtenay’s series that started with ‘The Potato Factory’.

Do you have a pet? If yes, what is their name?
I do have a pet dog. His name is Rommy; he’s a labrador.

If you were stranded on a deserted island, what are the three things you could not live without? You cannot say anything that can get you off the island.
Fresh food supply and water - maybe seafood or something.
Some kind of musical instrument.
Some other people.

Have you ever pranked someone?
Oh yes. When I was little I would always jump out and scare my sister. I did something recently. Olivia had some crackers with cashew spread. I talked to her about it, she said it was her yummy breakfast. She turned around to talk to someone else, and I was standing waiting for my cuppa to brew. I picked it up and pretended to eat it. At school photos there was this girl standing behind me and I kept putting my head in front of her so she couldn’t be seen by the camera. This might have been Brit. SEE! I won’t be surprised if you can’t see me in the class photo.

By Brit, Year 9

Friends of MECS

Mother’s Day Stall Update
At our recent Mother's Day stall we sold some goods that had been donated to the school by John and Ruth from the Possibilities shop in Mount Evelyn. The money raised from these items was $257.90.

This money will be donated to Vision Sisters which is part of World Vision. A group of MECS Mums are working hard to raise $1000 (or more!) to give to Vision Sisters who support expecting Mums in the world's poorest countries by providing birthing kits, and help train community health workers so women and children can access maternal, newborn and child health services.

There are more details on page 8 if you would like to make a donation.

Nicole
Community Relations

Entertainment Book
The 2016/2017 Entertainment Books are now available. Your current Entertainment Book will expire on Wednesday 1 June so don’t miss out on buying the new one. There are many things you can save money on throughout the year:

• Woolworths Wish Cards - save 5% on your groceries/petrol all year
• Big W gift cards - save instore 5% all year
• Dinner vouchers for many local and not so local restaurants
• Coffee vouchers and much more.

You can either purchase a book or a digital membership which you can have on your phone everywhere you go. To order, please fill in the flyer (or collect one from the office) or go online to: www.entbook.com.au/193695

20% from every Entertainment Book sold contributes to supporting our school.

Evelyn

Year 8 Inspiring Girls Camp
On May 10 - 13, I, along with Anne-Maree, Sue and Natasha had the privilege of taking 33 girls to Candlebark Farm for the annual ‘Inspiring Girls Camp’. It was such a pleasure to interact with the girls and get to know them a little better, to watch them take on challenges, and to grow in their understanding of themselves through a greater understanding of how God sees them.

Speaking of challenges; ever thought of hanging upside down in a harness suspended 20 metres in the air, whilst travelling for 500m at a speed of up to 60km/h? Well some very brave year 8 girls did. All the girls took on the challenge of the ‘Super Swooper’, but for some, the challenge needed to be taken up a notch.

Karissa
Assistant Principal - Secondary
I liked the Super Swooper.

Olivia
I really enjoyed the food.

Eleanor
The low ropes course was fun, and I won a prize!

Hollie
I enjoyed learning to knit.

Kasey

On Girls’ Camp we were learning about our body image. We learnt to see ourselves in God’s eyes, not the way society thinks we should look. We enjoyed excellent food and spectacular activities. There was a low ropes course (with prizes for the people who stayed off the ground the longest), a giant flying fox called ‘The Super Swooper’, which was 500m long and went up to 60km an hour. We learnt how to knit, and we made journals. I really liked getting to know everyone better and I loved the talent show. We came 2nd! Overall it was an amazing camp, and we would love to thank the teachers, the cooks, Candlebark Farm staff and everyone else who made this camp possible.

Scarlett

This tall, annoying, father like man is…

Introducing Lance
This tall, annoying, father like man is… mostly a joy to be around. I say mostly because he can be very cheeky and loves to pull your leg. Me for example; as I am not very tall he likes to take advantage of that. Although a lot of people do that! Never mind, he’s great fun.

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By Brit, Year 9
Primary Interschool Cross Country

On Friday March 20 we attended the Montrose District inter-school cross country event at Lillydale Lake. We took 42 students to compete and all of them did such a good job running a very long and tiring race.

We had 5 students finish in the top 10 in their age group and will be going through to the Division cross country event on June 7: Julia, Jet, Sophie, Kyan, Pierre.

Thanks to the parents who helped around the track and to those who came to cheer on the students as they ran.

Jason
Primary Sport Coordinator

Restorative Practice

Restorative Practice at MECS Primary

Discipline. It’s a frowned on word by students but a lot of it happens in schools and it’s hard work to get it right. How do we make sure we’re doing it effectively? MECS Primary uses a Restorative approach. Not only because it is effective but also because we believe it is a faithful response to what God wants from us in the area of discipline.

In Restorative Practice, students are guided to be active in the discipline process, rather than a passive receiver of discipline. The emphasis is on the student’s responsibility for their actions, the impact of what’s happened and their responsibility to try and ‘fix up’ or ‘restore’ what they have done. It is about relationships, rather than just the breaking of rules. The students are guided through the following leading questions:

1. What happened?
   This allows students on both sides of the altercation to share their side of the story and to feel heard.

2. Who has been affected?
   The student is asked not told, to allow them to think broadly about how others and themselves have been affected. Students need guidance in learning to identify the impact of their actions, but it is far more powerful when they can see it for themselves. The students learn empathy and remorse, which allows for ownership of their actions.

3. How can I make this right?
   In this we discuss our need for forgiveness and God’s provision of forgiveness for us. It calls for responsibility in actively restoring the situation. The student thinks about what they can do. The teacher guides and modifies the consequences suggested by the student if needed.

4. What can I do to make sure this doesn’t happen again?
   Often at this stage a formal commitment is made and, if appropriate, accountability is built into the agreement.

Consequences are necessary when trust has been broken but it is how they are formed and delivered which sets Restorative Practice apart from other discipline based approaches.

Restorative Practice is empowering and effective. It reduces resistance to authority by eliminating the ‘us against them’ mentality and reduces the student’s perception of a misuse of power by the teacher. One student summed up Restorative Practice like this: ‘At the end you don’t feel angry at the teacher. It feels fair’. The belief the teacher holds in the student’s ability to do better is strongly affected, and the student receives the message that by choosing this behaviour they are not reflecting the person that God created them to be. God has created each one of us in His image, with His grace and goodness in our very being. Yes, each one is also sinful and will make mistakes, but God’s way is the way of forgiveness and new beginnings. We talk about God’s desire for us to become what He created us to be and the help and prompting to do this provided by the Holy Spirit.

Through this approach we generally see students gain a stronger understanding of what they have done and the impact that it has had on those affected, as well as when moving forward the positive steps they make, helping to ensure that it doesn’t happen again.

Ben
Assistant Primary Coordinator and Senior Primary Coordinator
Last week the Year 9 Open Village had our Special Week, with a focus on food, topography and farming. On Monday and Tuesday we had rotational seminars to teach us about topography and healthy living. On Wednesday we visited Tom’s Paddock farm, and learned about stackable livestock and sustainable farming that is good for animals and us. On Thursday, Year 9 split up and half of us went over to Ranges TEC to cook lunch for our entire year level. We had an amazing experience cooking many different dishes in the fantastic kitchen at Ranges, and of course, everybody loved the food! On Friday we went for a hike at Mt Dandenong, where we struggled up the steep hills and observed the beautiful landscape around us. Overall, the week was a great experience that we all learned a lot from, and I would like to thank the amazing Open Village teachers for organising such a wonderfully delicious adventure for us!

Lwendyl
Year 9 Open Village Student
How do you turn a group of 26 boys into men? The answer? Man Camp! On May 10-13 the Year 8 MECS boys got the opportunity to go to Gilwell Park to experience a camp of a lifetime. The boys trudged through mud and mire enduring ‘The Gauntlet’ obstacle course, set up campfires and made damper, ate weet-bix with wasabi and got to spend quality time with their dads. They tackled the key issues of manhood in our society today and took steps towards growing in their identity as men of God. It was an eventful and insightful week and no doubt whilst they didn’t come back instantaneously transformed into men, they may have grown a little taller, a little wiser and a little more manly.

Duc
MS Teacher

The Year 8 Boys A Team was quietly confident as they travelled on the extensive bus ride all the way to Mount Evelyn. They had a very strong side and were looking forward to the challenge of the day. They progressed through the round robin winning almost every game 3-1. This put them in the final, pitted against Bayside. It was a brilliant game, with Jack scoring a levelling goal, from his position as goalkeeper. The game went into extra-time, golden goal (which means that the first team to score wins). Unfortunately for us Bayside found the back of the net first. Every teacher I talked to said that we deserved to win, being the better team on the day - but alas that didn’t eventuate.

What I was most proud of however was the boys’ exceptional sportsmanship and teamwork. They played well together and represented the school most admirably. Well done boys on an outstanding day!

Tim
MS Teacher

The Year 8 & 9 Interschool Futsal

The Year 8 Boys A Team was quietly confident as they travelled on the extensive bus ride all the way to Mount Evelyn. They had a very strong side and were looking forward to the challenge of the day. They progressed through the round robin winning almost every game 3-1. This put them in the final, pitted against Bayside. It was a brilliant game, with Jack scoring a levelling goal, from his position as goalkeeper. The game went into extra-time, golden goal (which means that the first team to score wins). Unfortunately for us Bayside found the back of the net first. Every teacher I talked to said that we deserved to win, being the better team on the day - but alas that didn’t eventuate.

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Tristan
Year 8 Student

Last Tuesday Luke and I took an enthusiastic group of Year 9 students to the Futsal tournament. We had one girls’ team which due to their impressive abilities and effort in training, were put into the A side. We were able to fill an A side and a B side with the number of boys that attended.

It was a fabulous day with MECS competing strongly with the other teams. The girls won two and lost two, with the losses being only by one or two goals. In the end they only missed out on playing for 1st place by percentage points. They came third overall. We had a couple of girls who play soccer on the weekends, who formed the backbone of the team, and a number of others who don’t but showed significant skill and fitness. One notable stand out in the latter category was Chenei. All girls exhibited excellent team work, persistence and sportsmanship throughout the event which, for me, was the highlight of the day.

Amelia
Year 9/10 Sports Teacher

The boys’ competition was also very close. The A team just missed out on the final, also, coming third. The B team did make it to the final! They played extremely well but ended up coming a very respectable second overall for the tournament. Asher was outstanding in his goal keeping. The level of energy and determination from the boys was wonderful to see, as was their conduct both on and off the court throughout the day.

It was a fantastic opportunity for some of our students to shine and contribute some excellent skills to their teams. A special mention to Luke for organising the event and stepping in to run it on the day when the nominated school couldn’t. He did a fantastic job administrating the event and ensuring that it ran smoothly.

Amelia
Year 9/10 Sports Teacher
MECS Mums’ Community with a Cause

Due to unsterile conditions and lack of support there are over 30,000 deaths each year during childbirth in countries such as Uganda. “MECS Mums’ Community with a Cause” have joined Vision Sisters to help raise awareness, funds and clean birthing kits for Ugandan mums-to-be.

We need your help: our aim is to raise $1000 so that we can provide clean birthing kits and increase birth support services in Uganda. We are looking for 200 people to donate $5 or more to help us get to our $1000. Here is the link to our web page to donate. https://visionsisters.everydayhero.com/au/mt-2016-christian-school.

You can also help by sharing this via social media. The more we raise the more we can do.

We also invite all of our MECS mums to get involved on our packing day. There will be further information about this soon. Any questions, please speak to Ali Maultby or mistakenly taken home it belongs to a tethered astronaut. Size 7. If seen, please bring it to the office before 10.30am on Friday May 27. The more we raise the more we can do. We also invite all of our MECS mums to get involved on our packing day. There will be further information about this soon. Any questions, please speak to Ali Maultby (Parent JP Badicoot & MP Green) or Simone Fraser (Parent MP Green) or mistakenly taken home it belongs to a tethered astronaut. Size 7. If seen, please bring it to the office before 10.30am on Friday May 27.

Assorted Items for Sale

Women’s ‘Skins’ A200 full length compression tights. Worn only twice! Size XS - $60.

2x Handcrafted wooden vintage cars with detailing. A few nicks and scratches. Approx. 40x15cm $10 each.

Tapestry travel bag (duffle style) with matching toiletries case. Floral pattern with dark green straps/detailsing. $50 for set.

‘Wedgits’ open-ended educational construction toy. 27 pieces (none missing) with 3 clear plastic stands. Instructions not included, but available online. $35 for set.

Large rubber-backed road/town floor mat. Much loved; good condition. Great for board games. Measures 2x1.4m. $40.

Wooden rocket-ship mobile. As new! Dark blue, light blue, red and lime green in colour. Not suitable for over a crib. $20.

Kids plush alligator costume (green) Size 5-6. Perfect condition. $45.

Handmade dinosaur costume (red with yellow spots). Includes full body-suit with tail, hood and claws for hands and feet. Size 8-10. $50.

For all queries please call Heidi on 0403 573 792. Photos can be emailed on request.

Research Project

I’m involved in a research project about children’s thinking styles, exploring if thinking styles and personality are related. It’s new and exciting, not been done before, and it would be fabulous to get as many families and children between ages of 9 – 12 years old involved. Please follow the link and complete the survey, if you are interested, and also feel free to pass this on to your friends! Only available for one more week. http://tinyurl.com/CWOT2016

Jo Miller
Secondary Education Support Coordinator

Massive Garage Sale

This Saturday May 28, 8-2pm, 133 Maroondah Highway Croydon.

• Huge DVD collection
• Toys galore, including... prams, kitchen, doll house babies, puzzles, games etc
• Furniture including high chair, bassinet, table & chairs, entertainment cabinet (very solid!) 1.4m x 2.25m x 55cm (H x W x D), pictures, microwave, bookcase
• African artifacts
• Camping gear
• Weights
• Baby/ toddler bike seats
• Bike trailer (for tow ing kids in!)
• Child Car Seat

Parent Seminar


White Card Training

Do you need to get a White Card (Construction Induction Training)? Ranges TEC offers short courses open to the public!

White Card training on Tuesday, May 31, 4pm - 8pm. Register now! 9738 7100.

Apple Man

The Apple Man is coming tomorrow - Friday May 27 and the following varieties will be available: Granny Smiths, Fujis, Royal Galas Pink Ladies and Green Pears. Apples $10 a bag, Pears $6. Please put the correct money in an envelope with your order written on the front, and hand it in to the office before 10.30am on Friday May 27.