A Visit to the Mendel Laboratory

Jack & Gemma work their way through an experiment at Melbourne University. Details pg 3.
MECS welcomes its new parents

Last Friday, on a windy, rainy night at Chirnside Park Country Club over 80 people – a combination of teachers, board members, two current students (one helping out and the other a waitress) and most importantly new parents – enjoyed a wonderful night of ‘getting to know’ each other and enjoying some good food and conversation.

As MECS Celebrates its 40th anniversary it was wonderful to meet some parents who have been in our community for years and others, as little as a couple of months. MECS has a way of drawing you into its history, and it was encouraging to welcome new families into this story.

Why do we celebrate new families?
Pursuing Christian education isn’t always an obvious choice for Christian parents. For some families, the idea that a Christian school can be protectionist from the ‘real world’ can be an issue that needs to be worked through. For others, supporting public schooling is a strong draw-card and I certainly understand this philosophy. So it is always exciting when we meet our new parents who have decided on Christian education at MECS. This journey of partnership in Christian education needs to be nurtured and cultivated and the New Parents Dinner is just one of the many ways this happens at MECS.

During the dinner, each of the School Coordinators spoke about their sections. What came out of this were the ideas of ‘journey’ and ‘discovery’ (through play and beyond), finishing with the idea of ‘pathway’, which showed the strong relationship the school and parents have of journeying ‘Christian education together’. But does it stop there, with nice food and great company? No! This is just the beginning.

So to our new parents, along with a very warm welcome, I would like to encourage all of you to consider becoming Association members. The opportunity to grow and shape the school comes from this vital group. It’s not just about ‘buying in’ but about ownership and belonging, and is a wonderful part of being a vibrant school community.

Opportunities for partnership at MECS are many and varied. For some of you, your gifts and abilities may extend to leadership and governance and may lead you on to the Board, for others it may be becoming part of the ‘Friends of MECS’ group. Others may choose to use their skills by helping in the classroom.

For now, I’m really glad that so many of our new parents came out on a cold and windy night. You have been woven into the fabric of MECS and we are simply delighted that you are with us. And so it begins!

Celebrating 40 Years

1989 - Hawkins Hut

Tucked away behind the MECS library stands a piece of history - a primitive corrugated iron structure known as ‘Hawkin’s Hut’. It’s an iconic part of MECS, and represents life on this land before the school was built. It’s been used as a backdrop for photos and movies made by students requiring period scenery as well as the inspiration for many students’ drawings. This year it was used by Cycle B to film their new endings for ‘Picnic at Hanging Rock’.

The history of the hut was largely a mystery until 1989 when a group of Year 10 students, Esther, Evonne, Andrew and Matthew conducted some research. They found that in 1838, this land was used by the Wawurung tribe, a part of the Wurundjerri clan numbering just over two hundred under their chief Baluk. They were reportedly removed not long after Melbourne was founded in 1835 to a place called Goshen, over the Black Spur north of Healesville.

From 1883, William Rutcliffe occupied virtually all the land bound by York, Swansea and Inverness Roads, Moore Avenue and probably Mountain Crescent. Bill Hawkins owned the property until it was bought by George and Grace Hannaford. They occupied it until 1947 when relatives of theirs, Doug and Dorothy Hannaford, bought it. At that time, it was surrounded by a fence made of split posts wired tightly together to protect the vegetable garden from the local fauna. Not far away were two bark sheds and a set of wooden cow bails. The Hannafords used the shack as their temporary house while they built the weatherboard house in which they lived until 1969. Many of you may remember the weatherboard house down closer to York Road, which was removed in 2006 to make room for the Junior Primary classrooms.

Over the years, a number of repairs have been made to the hut. The decayed wooden floor in the second room was replaced during a Working Bee using coach-house bricks left...continued next page...
**Year 12 Biology**

As an extension of our studies on genetics, inheritance and DNA, the Year 12 Biology class went on an excursion to Melbourne University’s Mendel Laboratory on Friday 9 August.

The day consisted of a trip on the train into the city, a personal tour of the campus by Dr Rog, and arrival at the lab. There, along with several other high school students, we were adorned in lab coats and gloves and completed a series of experiments on fruit flies (Drosophila) and manipulated E. Coli bacterial plasmids (small circular double stranded DNA). This included anaesthetising the flies and examining mutations in their wings under a microscope. By examining the offspring of several crosses of the flies, we were able to determine the dominant and recessive characteristics, giving us an insight into the practical side of what we had been studying. We were guided by a booklet with plenty of questions to complete as a school assessment and an opportunity to practice some important lab skills including pipetting DNA into gel electrophoresis plates.

Overall it was an excellent experience to take this trip with the class and learn much in such a practical environment. This was a great practical application of what we had learned in this unit.

Rose
VCE 3/4 Biology

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**New Parent Dinner**

On Friday night we held our annual New Parents Dinner, with 80 new parents, Board members and some staff. The aim of the evening is to have parents who have recently joined the MECS community with children from the Prep level upwards, to meet other families over dinner and hear some insights into other areas of the school. Sue our Board Chair, spoke about the role of the Board, Association and parent partnership. Our Section Coordinators gave an update on the Primary, Middle and Senior school and Phil the Director of Ranges TEC, spoke about the exciting things happening there.

The New Parent Dinner is one of the highlights of the year – a lovely, fun evening for us all. If you are a new parent and were not able to attend this year, we will certainly invite you again next year.

Nicole and Amanda
Community Relations Officers

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**Reflections Continued**

Over from the building of the Senior School. The rusted roof, decrepit door and rotted fence among other things, were replaced by volunteers at a number of Working Bees, and by some restoration projects undertaken by various students. At one time, lights were made for the shack by converting kerosene wall lamps to electricity, but they were never installed, even though electric cables were laid to the hut for later connection at the same time as lights were erected on the path to the Senior School. In 2007 current MECS parent Erik made the hut lockable and secure, made the two outside doors, put two windows in, put up the verandah and made some furniture.

The hut remains a tangible link to the history of our school’s land. It is now subject to a ‘Heritage overlay’ which means that approval has to be sought for any construction which will impact on its current state.

Ken
Adapted from “21 Years Blessed” written by Ken - long term teacher at MECS
**Friends of MECS**

**Father’s Day Stall**

It’s only 2 weeks until the Father’s Day stall! The gifts have been ordered and delivered. We just need some help to run this great service for our kids and Dads!

We need help on Friday (August 30) from 9am - 2pm to help set up and run the stall.

If you can help (even for an hour or two) we would love to hear from you. Contact Nicole.

Nicolet
Community Relations Officer

**Dollarmite Banking Competition**

Win an iPad mini for yourself and a Commbank Marquee for your school, just by depositing into your school banking account between August 12 and September 13. You will be automatically entered. The more times you bank, the more chances you will have to win. For more information contact your School Banking Specialist, Kath. commbank.com.au/schoolbanking.

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**MECS Notes**

**Working Bee Requirements**

At the beginning of the year a letter was sent home reminding families that attending a yearly Working Bee is a condition of their partnership agreement with the school.

Failure to attend a Working Bee will incur a $150 fee debited to your family account.

If you haven’t yet nominated which Working Bee you would like to attend, the letter is still available via the school website. (On the website home page select ‘Notices Home’. The letter appears under the Whole School section and is called ‘Working Bee Year Start Letter’).

If you have any questions relating to Working Bees please contact Paula via the main School Office.

Christine
Office Manager

**A story about Yuli**

You can find a lovely story about Yuli (JPM) and her ward Grandparent when she has to be in hospital on the MECS website. It is under Resources in the download centre, under ‘Extra Resources’.

**Transitions Disability Forum for Parents, Carers and Students**

Come and explore the post-school options for 15-19 year olds at a forum for young people with a disability. Participating organisations include: Centrelink, TAFEs, National Disability Coordinator Officer (NDCO) and Employment Services.

Monday 2 September, 7-9pm, The Karralyka Centre, Mines Rd, Ringwood.

Booking is essential. Contact Sandy by Monday 26 August.

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**Year 7 & 8 AFL & Netball**

Wednesday 14 August was Year 7 and 8 Interschool AFL and Netball day. We managed to escape most of the rain and enjoyed playing in a friendly competition. The tide has turned for MECS football teams with our Year 7 and 8 boys coming home with the flag after winning all games. Our Year 7 Netball girls A team won and the B team came 3rd. Our Year 8 girls, with some Year 7s, came 5th overall and really showed great progression over the day. Well done.

A big thank you to Kim Jones who helped with coaching at training sessions on Thursday afternoon and also came on the day, even surviving the excited bus trip home.

Anne-Maree
Secondary Sports Coordinator

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**Ranges TEC**

**Open Campus**

**Enrol now for 2014**

**Tues 10th Sept**

4pm-7pm

Find out more about our VCAL and Trade programs in the following areas...

- Aeroskills (Aircraft Maintenance Engineering)
- Building & Construction (Carpentry)
- Electrotechnology
- Engineering
- Furniture Making
- Horticulture/Rural Operations
- Hospitality (Kitchen Operations)

**A Christian Trade Training Centre for students in Years 10, 11 & 12**

www.rangestec.vic.edu.au

1/9 Hightech Place, Lilydale 3140 Ph. 9738 7100

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**Celebrating 40 Years**

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Getting Ready for Adventure

‘Adventures in Wonderland’ rehearsals are well under way! All classes have learnt their dances and the actors are busily learning their lines. Our wonderful choir has been practising their songs since last Term and have nearly got them perfected. The choir is playing a big part in the production this year as many of the songs tell parts of the ‘Adventures in Wonderland’ story. All choir members have been giving up part of their lunch play once a week and should be congratulated for their dedication and enthusiasm. We couldn’t do the production without them!

It will be a wonderful event so do plan to get to one of the performances.

Janine
Music Teacher

MECS Notes

‘Adventures in Wonderland’

Primary Production needs help

Does anyone know of a company that we can hire to video the production? We want to get it done professionally if possible.

We are also in need of a king’s crown. If anyone has one available could you please let Natasha or Janine know.

If you have any of the items below and wouldn’t mind lending them to the school for the production, let Janine or Carmen know ASAP. Thanks.

- A feather quill and ink pot
- Pictures in old fashioned frames
- Glass bottles - assorted shapes/sizes
- Small glass bottle with cork
- Gloves - white - adult and child sizes
- Bubble blower shaped like a pipe
- Old fashioned pepper mill
- A trumpet - real or toy
- A judge’s wig
- A handheld fan
- Blue fabric in a long roll
- A hedgehog stuffed toy or similar
- Fake cupcakes
- Fob watch
- Small old fashioned writing desk
- Tea set
- A golden staff or something similar

Research Help Needed

I am a Christian student currently completing a Masters in Clinical Psychology at Australian Catholic University. I am conducting research with 6-12 year old children looking at the relationship between adverse experiences (childhood trauma) and sleep problems and daytime behaviour problems. I am looking for more children who have not experienced any significant trauma prior to age 5 years to compare with children who have.

What is involved? - I need one parent to complete a 15 minute questionnaire relating to your child’s behaviour and a 2nd 5 min questionnaire relating to your child’s sleep. This form would be mailed in a reply paid envelope to myself. There is also one 5 minute questionnaire for your child about how they feel they are sleeping.

All information shared is confidential and will be de-identified and stored as group data. If you are interested I can post you a copy of the study’s findings when it is completed.

I would be grateful for assistance with this research. For more information please send an email with the subject heading INTEREST IN RESEARCH to bethany. I will then email you an information letter with more details. This study is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw at any point.

Bethany

Primary Choir

Celebrating 40 Years
Celebrating 40 Years

100 Days of School

On Friday 16 August the Preps celebrated their 100th day at school in colourful style!

They came dressed as all sorts of characters and animals roaring, curtseying, twirling and playing their parts. There was even a 100 year old man!! Sam told a great pirate joke with his parrot on his shoulder.

"Why are pirates pirates?" “Because they ARRRR!”

The children did lots of counting and problem solving to 100. They guessed if the jelly beans in the jar were more or less than 100 and a few of the children cleverly changed their guess as they saw that the first 50 only took up 1/4 of the jar.

100 candles were placed on the cake, lit and blown out to a large shout of “Hooray!” Hundreds and thousands were sprinkled on fairy bread and the cake was very yummy!

Jan & Bec
Prep Teachers

MP Celebrations

In Middle Primary Core Studies we have been learning about ‘Celebrations’ and how they may be similar and different around the world. On Monday we had the exciting opportunity to have Jahleel, from the group Celebrate Messiah, visit us and talk our students through the Jewish celebration of Passover. What made it really special was hearing about the symbolism behind each item in the celebration and how they point towards Jesus as the Messiah. There were lots of discussion points and questions at the end that we look forward to exploring further in our devotions.

Ali
MP Teacher
Instrumental Recital

It was such a privilege to hear such high quality pieces and such diversity of repertoire from our students throughout our school community last Thursday evening. We were entertained and inspired by our students from our Senior School and those with surnames between E and M throughout the school.

Our hosts, Isaac and Bethany did a wonderful job of keeping the night flowing and providing a relaxed and fun-filled atmosphere for our performers and audience. Some highlights from the program were the original pieces composed by Luke, Katie and Nick that showcased some real musicality and creativity from our students. It was also great to hear final performances from some of our Year 12 students who will be leaving us early next term. Tom, Tim and Zac all performed with skill, excellence and professionalism which was wonderful for our younger growing performers to see and be inspired by.

A special thank you to all Instrumental Staff and Karen for all your help and support with the running of the night. We look forward to seeing what our final Recital coming up in December will hold for our students with surnames from N-Z.

Annora
Music Performance Coordinator
Playgroup Vacancies
Busy Bees Playgroup has a couple of vacancies in the Monday 9-11am group. Sessions are held in our beautiful new Kindergarten building in the Gumtree Room. Fees are $40 per family per term. To apply for a position please download a form from the website or pop into the office to collect one.

Amanda
Community Relations Officer

Home for Rent
A four-bedroom family home is available for rent in Mount Evelyn during 2014. Five minutes to shops and school.
Contact Wayne or Carolyn.

Lyndale on Yarra Weekend Retreat
A beautiful, peaceful two bedroom fully self contained cottage on the river in Warburton East. A unique place to relax and to see what Warburton has to offer. For more information please contact Lynda.

‘Small Birds’ An Art Exhibition
Gabby is having her solo art exhibition from 23 August - 22 September at the Knox Community Arts Centre, Cnr Scoresby Rd & Mountain Hwy, Bayswater. Join us on the opening night for celebrations – Friday 23 August from 6-8pm. There will be small to large artworks on paper, framed pieces, mobiles and mixed media artworks for sale. Boutique, hand made stationary by Vanessa Marijanovic will also be available on the opening night. Entry is free. Hope to see you there!
To view some of Gabby’s artworks, look for ‘Gabby Willmott’s Art Page’ on Facebook or visit www.gabbywillmott.com.