



RADFORD COLLEGE

# RADFORD REPORT 2013

Volume 28, No.1



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THE RADFORD REPORT  
Volume 28, No 1—2013

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The Radford College Community acknowledges the traditional owners of this land, and pays its respects to Elders past and present.

## Some diary dates

### for Semester II, 2013

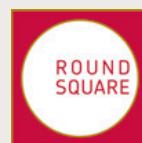
Please check dates and details in the e-Bulletin  
or in the College Calendar.

#### Term 3

Tue 27 August	Secondary Athletics Carnival
Thu 12 September	Dance Night
Tue 17 September	Netball Presentation Evening
Wed 18 September	Dance Festival begins
Thu 19 September	Radford Celebrates Music
Sat 21 September	Collegians reunion events
Thu 26 September	Official opening – new Senior School
Fri 27 September	Term 3 ends

#### Term 4

Mon 14 October	Term 4 begins
Thu 17 October	Senior Drama production begins
Mon 21 October	Collegians' Association AGM
Sat 2 November	Twilight Fete
Thu 28 November	Music Awards & BBQ Evening
Mon 2 December	Y10 Shakespeare production begins
Sun 8 December	Carols Service
Tue 10 December	Awards Night & JS Speech Night
Thu 12 December	Year 12 Graduation
Tue 17 December	Year 12 Formal





***We are unified by a common purpose – the nurture of children and young people.***



## From the Principal

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### **Mr Phillip Heath**

*BA (Hons), MA (Hons), DipEd, FACE, MACEL*

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A school like Radford College is a complex entity. We draw together a diverse range of people unified by a common purpose – the nurture of children and young people. This edition of the *Radford Report* celebrates some of the varied aspects of the College, each of which contributes to the fulfilment of our desire for outstanding educational achievement.

According to *Forbes Magazine*, great teams feature four shared components: a noble cause that ignites purpose; people who foster engagement with this cause; loyalty to the community and the cause (as opposed to the corporate rhetoric); and clear commitment to shared values. The pages that follow illustrate abundantly what an effective team we enjoy at Radford.

Our academic life remains the core work of the College. We seek to provide all students with an opportunity to fulfil, and perhaps even to exceed, their own expectations in scholastic achievement. The really satisfying feature of our success in measures such as ATARs is the outstanding performance not only of our top-level students but also of the entire senior year. It is for this reason that the College takes keen interest in the annual median ATAR score. The sustained high level of our median ATAR is a cause for celebration. It is a fitting reward for the combined efforts of students and their dedicated and gifted teachers.

It is important, too, that the Radford experience is not something that happens to students but rather something that is *lived*. Our student leaders continue to play a critical role in fostering the good climate of the College, participating in decisionmaking at both the routine and the strategic level. Our student leaders are equally as comfortable running games on Foundation Day as they are being with College Board members advising on the Radford Master Plan (2014-2040). This sense of shared purpose is part of the unifying cause that holds us all together and the students make an incalculable contribution.

Radford College continues to be mindful of our debt to the traditional custodians of the land we enjoy here in Canberra. Whenever we gather in large community events, as a matter of principle, we acknowledge this indebtedness. As part of our Foundation Day celebrations this year, we commissioned a wonderful painting by Wiradjuri artist, frequent visitor, and friend of Radford, Duncan Smith. This work recognises the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the Foundation of the College by setting our narrative into a kind of time of Christian dreaming, where the earth and human endeavour meet within a people.

Finally, schools should also be about having fun. The pages that follow are brimming with images of fun occasions that have helped to make our diversity into a wholeness of community. Long may it last!

# The Senior Executive 2013



## Jocelyn Martin

*BCom, MHospMan, MProfAcc,  
GradDipACG*

### Business Manager

Jocelyn Martin joined Radford College in 2007 as Business Manager. Her role requires oversight of all non-teaching functions of the College including Finance, Facilities and Administration. Jocelyn is also Secretary to the Board of Radford College Ltd and the Finance and IT sub-committees. Jocelyn has been in the education sector for over 20 years, having previously led a private tertiary provider. She is active in the education corporate governance sector, holding positions on the National Board of the Association of School Business Administrators, the Executive of the Association of Independent Schools (ACT) and on the Priorities Committee of the Block Grant Authority.



## Peggy Mahy

*BA (Hons), DipEd, MA, MACE,  
MACEL, MAICD*

### Deputy Principal Head of Learning and Teaching

Peggy's experience encompasses a range of independent school contexts and the higher education sector. She began her career at Penleigh and Essendon Grammar, and then moved to St Michael's Grammar School where she was a Head of House. She was later Head of English and Head of Learning at St Catherine's School. Her interest in the broader enterprise of education led her into higher education where she took up the role of Deputy Principal at Monash University's pathway college, Monash College.

Peggy came to Radford College in 2009 as Deputy Principal, Head of Learning and Teaching. Her passion continues to be in the area of leading learning and teaching, business management in an educational context, engaging and developing students and in assuring whole school improvement. She is a member of the ACT Executive for the Australian Council for Educational Leadership.

**NEWS FLASH:** *Peggy has just been appointed Principal of The Scots School Albury from 1/1/14.*



## Paul Southwell

*BEd, DipT, GradDipEd (Admin)*

### Deputy Principal Head of Junior School

Paul's first teaching position was at St Edmund's College, before selection as a member of the Australian Rugby Team (Wallabies). On his return from tour, he taught Physical Education and History at Brisbane State High School, and then taught at Toowoomba Preparatory Day and Boarding School, while undertaking postgraduate studies. Paul was Foundation Head of Junior Schools at The Glennie School and Toowoomba Grammar School, before returning to Canberra. Paul was Principal of Lyneham Primary and then Curtin Primary before his appointment in 2007 as Foundation Head of the Radford Junior School.

Paul's education and leadership interests revolve around 21st century education approaches, International Baccalaureate, digital differentiation, and, most importantly, the building of a common culture and relationships with students, staff and community.





## Allan Shaw

*AssocDipArt, GrDipEd, MEd,  
FACEL*

### **Deputy Principal Head of Senior School**

Allan has nearly 30 years' experience in schools across all three school sectors. He has taught Visual Arts and Design and Technology, and has been a Head of Department and Director of Staff Development and Education Technology. The basis of his Master's degree was ICT in schools. In 1999, Allan became Foundation Principal at Peter Moyes Anglican Community School (coeducational), and he led its development to a school of nearly 1000 students, PreK to Year 12, with over 90 staff.

Allan was Chief Executive of the Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia (AHISA) from 2005 until 2012, and a member of the board of Australian Institute of Teaching and School Leadership from 2010-2012. In 2012, Allan returned to the practice of his prime professional focus, learning and school leadership, as Deputy Principal, Head of Senior School at Radford College.



## Peter Dodd

*BSc, MEd, DipEd, MACE*

### **Deputy Principal Head of High School**

Peter joined Radford in its second year, teaching High School Science and senior Physics and Chemistry. He became Head of Science in 1988 and was Senior School Coordinator for 10 years. He was Director of Studies for Years 7 to 10 before being appointed as Head of High School. He is the Director of the Radford College Institute, which aims to promote excellence in educational practice.

Peter has seen the school from many different perspectives. His three children attended Radford and he recognizes the huge, positive influence the school still has on their lives. He coordinated the Year 7 and Year 9 camp programs for a number of years, and is proud that they are integral parts of the Radford experience. Peter has coached a range of sports (including soccer, basketball, rugby and softball) and really appreciates the genuine relationships formed through the cocurricular program. Peter loves his present role, working closely with the High School students, and with the pastoral and academic teams, to deliver a dynamic program for Years 9 and 10.



## Claire Melloy

*BEd*

### **Deputy Principal Head of Middle Years**

Claire graduated with a university medal and worked overseas before teaching Year 7-12 Humanities at Pittwater House in Sydney. After a period travelling around Australia, Claire settled in Perth, teaching Geography/History at St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls, where she was also a year coordinator.

Claire then moved to Northern NSW and taught sociology at Southern Cross University (SCU). She became involved in teaching a Middle Years Course for teachers, the first course of its kind in Australia. She also supervised pre-service teachers, became involved in local politics, and ran a small business. Claire subsequently moved to Canberra with her family. She worked in the teacher education program at the University of Canberra, before coming to Radford as a foundation staff member of the Middle School in 2004. While at Radford, she has had a variety of leadership roles including Head of Department, prior to her current appointment. She has studied and continues to study Philosophy, an area of particular interest.

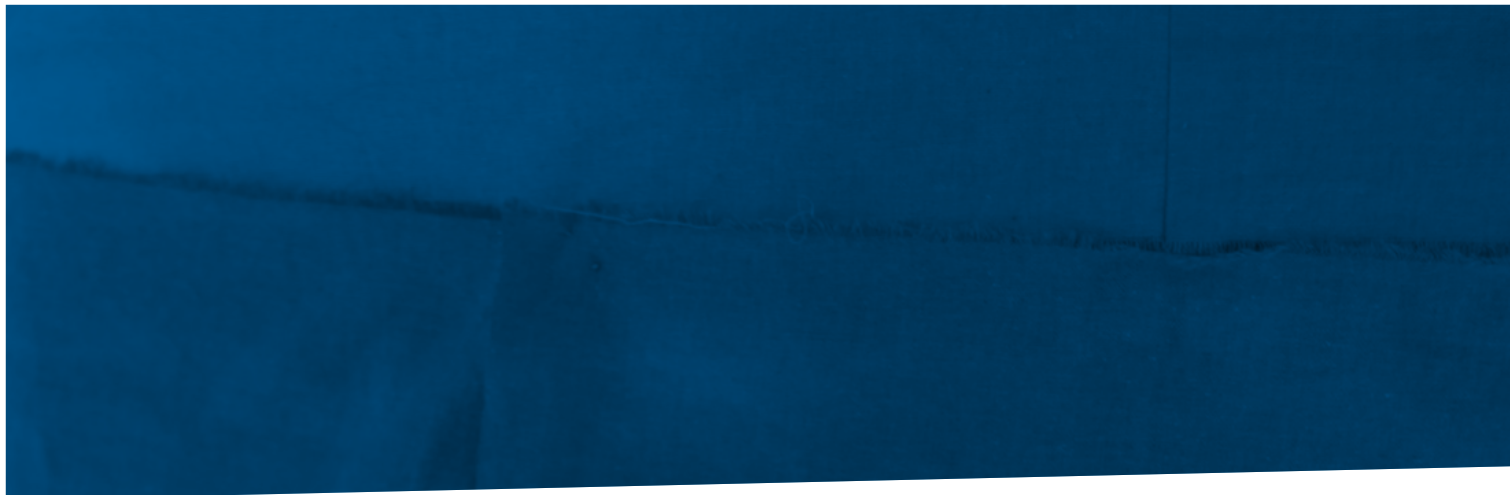
# Student Leaders 2013



David Tilley, Katherine Overton-Clarke, Mr Allan Shaw, Mr Phillip Heath (Principal), Daniel Ergas, Meg Haynes

College Captains		College Vice Captains	
Katherine Overton-Clarke	Daniel Ergas	Meg Haynes	David Tilley
College Prefects			
Megan Brocklehurst	Alice McGowan	Alexander Cardew-Hall	Declan Pratt
Anna Brooks	Anna Philip	Anthony Chen	Reilly Shaw
Lauren Farley	Emma Roff	Morgan Groves	Nicholas Sofoulis
Sally Foster	Jinhee Schneider	Mitchell Krewaz	Michael Spitzkowsky
Kate Goodman	Laura Shevlin	Riley Krewaz	Douglas Wang
Lauren Kaye	Maliwaan Walker	Carl Mossop	Brendan Wright





2013 Secondary House Captains

## House Leaders 2013

### Secondary School

House	Captain	Captain	Vice Captain	Vice Captain
<b>Acacia</b>	Isaac Dugdale	Sorrel Fuller	James McColl	Amelia Kennedy
<b>Banksia</b>	Nicholas Crawford	Georgia Sloan	Liam Braithwaite	Eloise Gordon
<b>Boronia</b>	George Liao	Sophia Bouzas	Alisdair Robertson	Julia Lonsdale
<b>Huon</b>	Joshua Maynard	Nicole Fung	James Carman	Shannon Webeck
<b>Jarrah</b>	Oliver Grieves	Celia Brown	David Wang	Rachel Cooper
<b>Karri</b>	James Janissen	Cordelia Rentsch	Patrick Hassall	Marni Mount
<b>Kurrajong</b>	Brendan Swan	Sarah Davis	James Graham	Jessica Wallace
<b>Wandoo</b>	Kris Erb	Fiona Lieu	Henry Miller	Akansha Sharma

### Junior School

House	Captain	Captain	House	Captain	Captain
<b>Acacia</b>	Lachlan Baker	Anjelica Nikias	<b>Jarrah</b>	Jay Macdonald	Rosanna Joshua
<b>Banksia</b>	James Ewens	Lucinda Jagers	<b>Karri</b>	Ewan Richter	Sophie Groves
<b>Boronia</b>	Cooper Alexander	Zara Dobson-Harper	<b>Kurrajong</b>	David Lafferty	Bobbi Sayers
<b>Huon</b>	Iain Conlon	Anna Wilford	<b>Wandoo</b>	Flynn Lardner	Skye Sutton

## Year 12, 2012 academic achievements

The College congratulates the Class of 2012 on achieving outstanding results, including a median Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) score of 89.15. All students in this year group achieved the ACT Year 12 Certificate, and 160 were awarded an ATAR. 71% of the class of 2012 received an ATAR greater than 80, a wonderful achievement at a nonselective school.

The College also recognises the contribution of the hard-working teaching staff, and Year Coordinators Ms Janelle Stacey and Mr Nicholas Moss, the Senior School Director of Studies Ms Suzanne van Strien, and Head of Senior School Mr Allan Shaw. Their guidance and practical support of our students was invaluable.



**JA Mackinnon  
Dux of 2012 was  
Alyssa Hunt, with  
an ATAR of 99.90,  
of a possible  
99.95.**

### *ATAR results 2012 - by percentage of the Radford cohort*

ATAR > 99 Top 1% ACT/NSW	ATAR > 95 Top 5% ACT/NSW	ATAR > 90 Top 10% ACT/NSW	Median ATAR
7%	31%	46%	89.15

### **The following students achieved an ATAR of 99.00 or greater.**



Nisha Nangrani



Qian-Ao Chen



Genevieve Aisbett



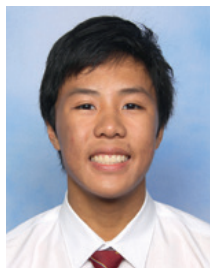
Aaron Nguyen



Helen Huang



Matthew Smith



Martin Tran



Monika Fridgant



Ruth Parsons



Rachel Kirk





*L to R: Ms Peggy Mahy (Head of Learning and Teaching) Ms Carole Browne, the Immediate Past President of the CDAA, Mr Phillip Heath (Principal) and Ms Suzanne Rentsch (Head of Student Pathways)*



## CDAA Employer of the Year



The Career Development Association of Australia (CDAA) is Australia's largest national organisation of professionals who work in the career development industry, delivering services in industry, government, education, employment programs and community organisations. The 2013 CDAA Excellence Award winners were announced at the 2013 CDAA National Conference in Sydney in March.

Radford College was proud to receive an 'Employer of the Year' Award from the CDAA in the policy category, for excellence in the development, implementation and promotion of organisational policies and initiatives that support career development principles and practices.

The awards are presented on the basis of performance in three areas: knowledge, capabilities and behaviours. The citation for Radford's award, as noted on the CDAA website, was as follows:

- » Whole of organisation approach to career development, involving both students and staff
- » Programs go beyond an employment focus, and reinforce a whole-of-organisation career development culture
- » Policies include mandatory participation in career development activities for all teachers, and optional participation for support staff
- » Funding policies ensure equity and access to programs and activities
- » Induction program for staff establishes mentoring and supervisory relationships to support ongoing career development
- » Learning and development planning is integrated with organisational goals.

**Ms Suzanne Rentsch**  
**Head of Student Pathways**





## Foundation Day Concert

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This year's Foundation Day Concert was a very special event, marking the College's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In addition to a wonderful program of music, the audience enjoyed reminiscences about the beginnings and progress of Music at Radford throughout the years. Speakers were Peter Dodd, Richard Wardman and long-serving former Head of Music, Ms Chris Smith. Also in attendance, and acknowledged by the speakers, was Ms Valerie Smith, the first employee of Radford. Her grandson, Huw Smith, was one of the performers.

The concert was held on 9 April 2013 at Wesley Uniting Church in Barton. The church was full to capacity, and the program (at right) gave the audience a real sense of the depth and diversity of Music at Radford. The evening concluded with the magnificent choral piece *Gloria RV589* by Vivaldi, a suitably celebratory work.

**Ms Leanne McKean**  
**Head of Music**

## Program

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### *James Horsley - Organ*

*Prelude* by Cesar Frank

*Vater unser in Himmelreich* by Carl Bohm

### *Bernstein Symphonic Wind Orchestra*

*With My Swag* by Sean Thorne

*Spitfire* by Gary P Gilroy

Conductor - Joel Copeland

### *Corelli String Orchestra*

*Theme and Variations in G Minor* by Alexander Glazunov

Conductor - Kirsten Knight

### *Camerata Choir with Radford Chorale*

*Gloria RV589* by Vivaldi

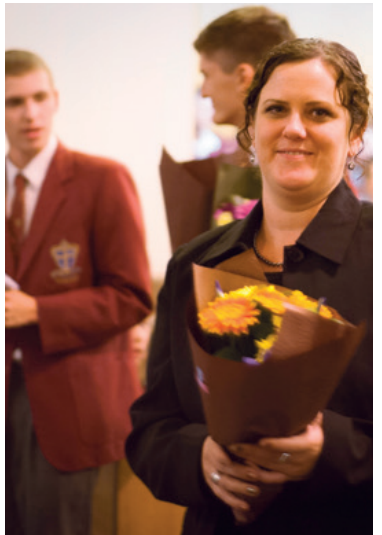
Soloists: Soprano - Taylor Carty, Claudia Lyons

Alto - Rena Li, Nicole Fung

Conductor - Leanne McKean

Organist - Bronwyn Brown









## Dirrum Dirrum and the Scar Tree

Wiradjuri man, teacher and performer, Duncan Smith, is a regular visitor and friend of Radford College.

As well as teaching students about indigenous culture with his *Wiradjuri Echoes* program ([www.wiradjuriechoes.com](http://www.wiradjuriechoes.com)), he has played an important role in recent years in the College's Foundation Day ceremony *The Telling of Yungbali*.

Duncan is also a professional artist, well known for his traditional and contemporary art.

To mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foundation of Radford College, the College commissioned Duncan to create a painting based on *The Telling*. On Foundation Day 2013, members of the Radford community with connections

to its past and present had their handprints recorded on the painting, to form a unique memento of the College's history so far.

This amazing painting, called *Dirrum Dirrum and the Scar Tree*, is hanging in the Radford College Chapel.

***The artist, Duncan, urges us to listen to the picture with our eyes, so we can connect with, and become part of the songlines of country, of the Yungbali tale and of the College story.***





## Handprints on the painting

**Jock Mackinnon, AM**  
Foundation Principal of Radford

**Cecilia Millar-Rakisits**  
Granddaughter of TB Millar, Foundation Chairman

**Ben Garratt**  
Grandson of Graeme Wigg, third Principal

**Richard Wardman, Peter Dodd, Boyd Gibson and Brenda Lander**  
Long-term staff members

**Dylan Mordike**  
Former student, long-term staff member, present at the laying of the Foundation stone

**Aminda Weerasooriya**  
The youngest student in the College (aged 3)

**Branko Zec**  
Facilities staff member, chosen by the College Captains

**Mary Pollard**  
Mother of former student Christopher Pollard, who is commemorated by the College processional cross

**Duncan, Dylan and Bevan Smith**  
The artist and his sons

## Symbols in the painting

**The Cross**  
depicted as a Scar Tree

**The Sun, Moon and Earth**  
yellow, white and red spirals

**The Southern Cross in the night sky**  
around the Scar Tree Cross

**The wedge-tailed eagle**  
the wind from the Yungbali story, raising a cloud of red dust 'whirly birds' with the beating of her wings

**Representatives of all living creatures**  
man (as a hunter, with a boomerang), a pregnant woman (with a coolamon, symbolising birth), kangaroo (land creatures), emu (birds), platypus (water creatures), dragonfly (insects)

**The yellow earth**  
with corroboree/gathering place symbols









## The Musical *Back to the 80s*

This year Radford Drama looked back to the beginning of Radford for inspiration for the 2013 Musical *Back to the 80s*.

As we look towards the next thirty years of Radford, the Musical went back to the music and the fashion of the 80s: a time of big hair, bright clothes, exciting music and futuristic technology.

The biggest challenge for this musical was not the acting, singing, dancing or music, but explaining why jokes older than the students were funny.

This year's cast presented a dynamic and energetic performance of kids in America, growing up and dealing with similar issues teenagers deal with today. A bizarre love triangle between The Jock, Michael Feldman (Mark Wilson), The Girl Next Door, Tiffany Houston (Amelia Kennedy) and the Geeky Friend, Cory Palmer (James Krause). The new student Eileen

Reagan (Becky Mount) trying to fit in, and a host of relationship and friendship issues, trying to be cool and popular, and who to take to the prom, and enough angst for you to want to have a day off.

This could not have been achieved without the talented production team of Susan Davenport, Joel Copeland, Leanne McKeane and Daniel Ferri taking their favourite parts of the 80s and recreating the characters and music we all remember.

A special mention and thanks to the Captains - Technical Crew Sorrel Fuller and Ken Loh, Musical Theatre Natasha Anderson and Eleanor Smith; Musical Dance Narissa Bungbrakearti and Nakiya Xyrakis, and to Choreographer Mali Walker. Beautiful dances, nostalgic set and great lighting!

**Mr Nick Akhurst**  
**Head of Co-curricular Drama**





# Cross Country Carnival

On Friday 3 May, Radford held its annual Cross Country Carnival. In a major departure from previous years, this event became a whole school event, and the changes implemented transformed it from purely a distance-running event into a gala day of fun and activity.

In glorious sunshine, our 1600+ students each ran one of 28 separate Cross Country race events over 4 different courses. As well as the running races, students played games together on both top and bottom ovals. These games involved one secondary year level and one junior year level for each House playing together. Thus Acacia Year 12 joined with Acacia Year 6 to play against Banksia Year 12 and Year 6. 2013 is the second year that the Junior School students have belonged to the same House groups as the secondary students, and the new format helped foster a sense of House unity across the College, with the older students helping and supporting their younger House members over the day. Combined Year 1 to 12 House chants gave every child ownership of their House.

## *Some of the statistics of the day are worth reflecting on:*

- » 28 separate races from Pre K to Year 12 with 1600 runners running 4 different courses.
- » 3 different rotational games for each year group, with 4 games at each station – a total of 72 small games happening over the afternoon.
- » 3000 sausages were served to 1600 students.
- » There were over 50 fantastic Year 12 volunteers assisting.
- » 119 staff members all contributed in many different ways.

The stars of the secondary school Musical performed hits from *Back to the 80s*, and a number of other talented musicians had the chance to perform in front of the whole school, adding to the festive air of the day. The 2013 Cross Country was, indeed, a memorable and thoroughly enjoyable day. For the record, the overall winner of the carnival was Banksia House.

Students from both the junior and secondary squads then combined to represent Radford at the ACT XC Championships at Stromlo on Monday 3 June. The following students were ranked in the top 3 for their age group at the ACT Carnival:

<b>9 Years Girls</b>	Laura Burns	3rd
<b>11 Years Boys</b>	Spencer Burns	1st
<b>13 Years Boys</b>	Callum Burns	2nd
<b>16 Years Boys</b>	Ben Watson	1st
<b>17 Years Girls</b>	Hannah McClusky	3rd

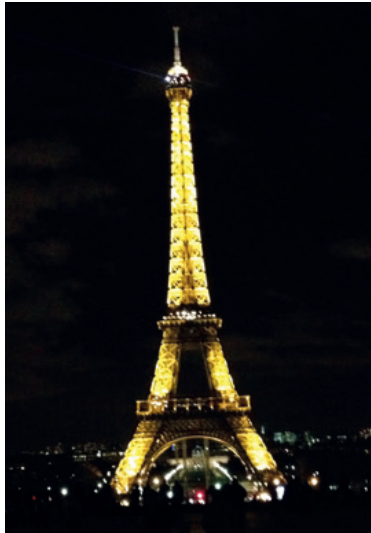
**Mr P Haynes**  
**Head of Sport**









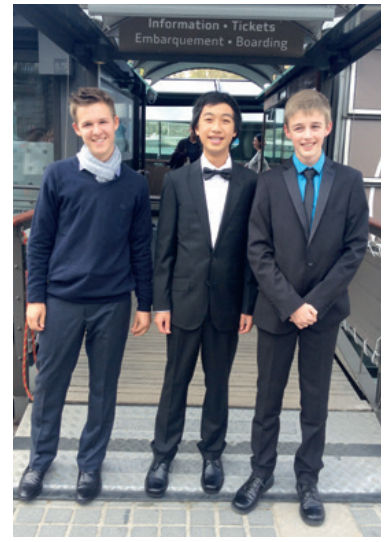


## French Study Tour

Our annual study tour to France took on an extra dimension this year, especially for one of the accompanying teachers, Mme Pajot. We had been looking for a second exchange school to alternate visits with our friends from the Lycée Notre Dame in Le Mans. The fact that Mme Pajot's former Lycée, the Lycée Blaise Pascal in Segré, had contacted us about setting up electronic links between our students was an opportunity that we pursued. This resulted in twenty-three Y10 students, accompanied by Mr Heath, Mme Bateman and Mme Pajot, spending ten days at the school.

We arrived very bedraggled, after a long journey and very heavy rain, but the warmth of the welcome we received could not have contrasted more with the temperatures outside. After receiving some light refreshments, our students left with their partners to begin their first experience of living with a French family. For the next ten days, students went to classes with their partners and walked in the shoes of typical French students. There were some surprises! Some found the didactic nature of teaching difficult to adjust to. However, the size and quality of the school lunches were appreciated by everyone, as was the





kindness that was shown to all of us during our time at the school. The French families went out of their way to ensure that our students had a wonderful time and were introduced to many unique experiences, not least of all sampling authentic French cuisine. Our arrival in the area did not go unnoticed, and we appeared in three local newspapers, as well as giving interviews for the local radio station.

All too soon this unforgettable experience came to an end and, after a very tearful farewell, we left Segré for the next stage of our trip. Our first stop was Tours, the capital of 'le Jardin de la France' and from there we visited two of the famous chateaux, and Le Clos Lucé, Leonardo da Vinci's home. We then travelled north, via Bayeux and a visit to the amazing tapestry, to the Normandy beaches, and spent some quiet

time together walking and reflecting on the terrible events of the past. After an overnight stay in Caen, we travelled to the beautiful port of Honfleur, before visiting Monet's house and garden in Giverny.

Our final journey was to Paris, where we explored the city with a determination to leave no monument unseen! After three full days there, the highlight of which must have been our lunch cruise on the Seine, we made our way to Charles de Gaulle Airport for our flight home, our heads spinning with memories of how much we had done and seen, how much our French had improved and how many good friends we had made. This was a life-changing experience for us all and we felt privileged to have benefitted from so many opportunities and experiences, the memories of which will remain with us for a very long time.

**Mme Jen Bateman**





## Earth & Environmental Science Tour

*In April 2013, Mrs Bec Cashmere and Mr Tim Robards accompanied a group of fifteen Y10-Y12 students to New Zealand on the inaugural Earth and Environmental Science tour.*

We flew into Auckland airport in the early afternoon to be met by our bus driver, Dave, and our guide, Michele, who would be travelling with us through the North Island.

In the eleven days spent touring New Zealand's North Island, we were able to see and experience so many different things, from investigating the geology of the Taupo Volcanic Zone, going to a traditional Maori *hangi* (dinner) and hearing many stories of Maori culture, to extreme activities such as white-water and black-water rafting, bungy jumping and zorbing.

As we journeyed through the Taupo Volcanic Zone, we had the opportunity to investigate several geothermal parks, swim in hot pools and even do some chemical testing of hot springs in downtown Rotorua. It was also very interesting to learn



about the impact the geology has on the people who live in the region today, as well as from a historical point of view.

The two main highlights of this trip were the White Island day trip and Tongariro Crossing. The White Island day trip started with a ninety-minute boat trip across to New Zealand's most active volcano, followed by a walk around the island, where gas masks and hard hats were supplied, due to the volatile environment. The walk around the island was an amazing experience. The smell of sulphur was stronger than in Rotorua,





and you could actually feel the heat coming out of the steam vents, which were less than a metre from the path we walked on in some places. Due to the highly acidic environment we had to rinse off our shoes before boarding the boat again.

The Tongariro Crossing expedition was one of the longest days of the trip. After an early start on a not-so-sunny day, we started our hike up the mountain from the Mangatepopo car park. Our guide for the day told us that the weather could change dramatically by the time we reached to top.

This motivated us enough to try and get to the top. By the time we stopped for a food break, our visibility was less than 50 metres in front of us because the fog was so thick. Unfortunately the fog did not clear up as we reached the summit of Tongariro. We didn't stay at the top for too long before venturing back down the mountain, which had nothing to do with Mr Robards' fear of 'being up high'.

A visit to Waitomo Caves allowed us to learn about New Zealand's karst landscapes, which, at 35 million years old, are relatively young, compared to the limestone formations around Canberra. While some of the group took a more leisurely walking tour through the glow worm caves, others chose the more adventurous black-water rafting option.

The tour culminated with attending the ANZAC Day Dawn Service at Auckland's Domain, before spending the morning exploring the Auckland CBD and taking in the views from the Skytower.

Even though it rained on most days of the trip, everyone was still in high spirits when it was time for the flight home and many of the students didn't want to leave. The Earth and Environmental Science tour was definitely a highlight of the year and an experience which none of us will ever forget.

**Mrs Bec Cashmere**



# Creative Writing

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## Henry Miller Y10, 2012

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The winner of the 2012 Year 10 Creative Writing competition was Henry Miller for his story entitled *The Luck of the Draw*. It was inspired by the poem *In the Park*, by Australian poet Gwen Harwood.

## In The Park

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by Gwen Harwood

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*She sits in the park. Her clothes are out of date.  
Two children whine and bicker, tug her skirt.  
A third draws aimless patterns in the dirt  
Someone she loved once passed by – too late*

*to feign indifference to that casual nod.  
“How nice” et cetera. “Time holds great surprises.”  
From his neat head unquestionably rises  
a small balloon... “but for the grace of God...”*

*They stand a while in flickering light, rehearsing  
the children’s names and birthdays. “It’s so sweet  
to hear their chatter, watch them grow and thrive,”  
she says to his departing smile. Then, nursing  
the youngest child, sits staring at her feet.  
To the wind she says, “They have eaten me alive.”*

## The Luck of the Draw

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by Henry Miller

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It’s a spring day. He sits there, digging for syringes in the dirt, getting his clothes filthy. As much as I would like to say that he will be washing them, I know it will be me. ‘She sits in the park, her clothes are out of date’. I don’t feel bad about it. They leech of my bank account too much as it is and denim overalls are appropriate enough for an eleven year old girl. There is a flower – a daisy I think – on the front, meaning they classify as girl’s clothing. Her name is Gayle and his is Adrian. Don’t ask me why those names, I wouldn’t know, their father insisted on them before he realised what he had got himself into and never came back. I don’t know why I felt obliged to look after them back then. It was the single worst mistake of my life; I should have got out when I had the chance. I hate those kids. I really do.

I’m 27; I’m in the prime of my life. I should have a successful career. Instead I have them. I should at least have better things to do with my weekends than take whiny kids to the park. My one hobby is playing the word games in the paper – especially the crosswords, and even then I’m not very good at them.

I have tried deserting them at the park numerous times. The first time it was an accident, but since then it has been in the hope something will happen and they won’t come back. However, so far I have been unsuccessful. There seems to be only kind strangers in the world today. Every time those kids have arrived back on my doorstep, accompanied by an old lady, or another mother from the park. Hell, a big bearded man with tattoos even brought them back one time and told me to take better care of my children. I took his advice for about a week before I just couldn’t take it any longer once again. I would have to be the luckiest parent in history. If I had loved my kids and left them at the park, they would have been hit by a car or a psychopath would have swept them up or something. One thing is for sure, they wouldn’t have arrived back on my doorstep.



"MUUM!" I've been interrupted and it's coming from the swing set. I know that it's Adrian getting bullied by his older sister but I don't want to know. I just keep doing my crossword. When I'm thinking I suck on my pen. It's a habit that I just can't shake. I don't know how many times I have sucked all the ink into my mouth and yet I still haven't learnt. My mind wanders into weighing up the pros and cons of killing them versus killing myself. I don't get very far before I'm interrupted once again.

"MUUUUM! Gayle won't give me a turn!" he yells in a more piercing tone this time almost as if he's trying to get me wild. You see this is just one reason why I hate them. There is never any peace - just constant bickering. I wonder why over all these years, not once have they been hurt playing at this park. I hear of kids smacking their heads on the flying fox platform or choking on lollipop sticks all the time, not to mention the rusted metal and syringes at this particular park. I let them play on the equipment with lollipops hanging out of their mouths regularly. Maybe it's god's idea of punishing me for not looking after my kids. All I know is that I hate them.

"Don't you two make me come over there!" I yell at the top of my lungs in the most intimidating voice I can muster. I say that regularly, I don't know what I would do if I ever did go over there, it is a pretty public place to beat them to death that's for sure. Adrian looks at me longingly while Gayle just smiles smugly as she continues to swing back and forth. If only her little neck would get wrapped around that rope, half of my problems would be solved. Another reason why I hate those kids - they are so needy. I go back to sucking on my pen and attempting the crossword.

And then he started crying. There is nothing I hate more than that sound. Gayle is still on the swings, going faster than ever. Creak, creak. Creak, creak. Just seeing her so happy makes my blood boil. I feel the anger well up inside of me. I fold my newspaper, and pick up my handbag, ready to make a dash for the car. I know they will end up on my doorstep but it's worth it for the few hours of peace I will get. I stand up and turn around, and less than ten metres away from me are a pair of policeman.

"Are you going to attend to your children, Ma'am," says one of the men. I really wanted to tell him he can have them if he cares so much about them, but rationally I still somehow know it won't get me anywhere. By this time all the people in the park are watching, concerned as to the cause of the wailing and what was being done about it. If they knew what those kids were like they wouldn't be judging me like this.

In light of this, I turn and walk hurriedly towards the swing set. Before I can reach Adrian, I am struck from the side by Gayle on the swings, and the pen which hasn't left my mouth slips down my throat. I try to cough it up but it doesn't work and now I can't get any more air into my lungs. Only minutes before I would have thought it lucky to leave them like this, but strangely in these final moments I felt as though I was the most unlucky parent in history. Maybe this was god's master plan for punishing me, make me suffer under 'luck' and then die 'unlucky'.

I fall to the tanbark. They just stand there, watching.





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