The past year has been a very busy one at the College. Numbers have continued to grow, minor refurbishment of some of the interior of the buildings has continued, significant new curriculum has been implemented, the changes for the new HSC have been prepared and solid teaching and learning have been taking place. In many ways 1999 has been a year of preparation for the future.

The Sisters of the Good Samaritan began their work of education on this site in 1880. Again and again this work has been renewed to meet the needs of the changing times and always their efforts have been for all the girls and young women in the area. Their purpose has been to add quality and opportunity to the lives of these young women. At the same time a spirituality that develops a sense of the presence of God in their lives and a sense of social justice for all is encouraged. For generations Stella Maris has been proud of the young women graduating and this tradition continues. We were very proud of the quality and achievements of our Year 12, 1998. They achieved the highest academic standards with almost 60% being offered places at University, another 20% gaining entry to TAFE courses and the remainder being placed in good employment, travelling overseas or going to private colleges. We were pleased with the diversity of options chosen by the students because they represent a sense of themselves and an awareness of the equal worth of all options available to them.

Our teachers are to be congratulated on the manner in which they have balanced their daily teaching and their preparation for the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate. While some disruption has been caused by the rapid introduction of the new HSC, there will be many advantages for future students. The links between school and work have been strengthened by Vocational Education and Training opportunities at school and many of these courses will now have their results counted as part of the UAI. The College has gained status as a Registered Training Organisation and is offering a wide range of courses for Year 11 in 2000. The Commonwealth Government has set a target that 80% of Year 11 students will include a VET course in their program of learning. Next year we will have approximately 70%. We are pleased with this proportion of students as, over the years of making this effort, students will have many more opportunities when leaving school. I have been especially pleased with the success of our Remedial Reading and Comprehension Programs conducted with the support of Macquarie University, as significant advances were made by all girls in the program. A special thanks to the 40 girls in Years 10 and 11 who met with these girls as peer tutors every day for 10 weeks. What a wonderful gift for life you have given to these other students.

The cultural life of the College has continued to develop. The introduction of Dance this year as a major subject in the curriculum has met a big demand. Music continues to develop and gain real depth and excellence in knowledge and performance. A number of our senior students completed Grade 8 AMEB examinations this year and are now preparing for their A.Mus A examinations in eighteen months time. Drama is flourishing with many good performances taking place and active involvement in local community activities. The Visual Arts and Design program has gone from strength to strength with the Art Exhibition displaying a quality of work representing enormous effort and concentration. The effort to finish work properly and attention given to detail are to be commended.

Our sporting life at the College has provided many opportunities for students. Numbers have been overwhelming at times and a third Physical Education Teacher has been hired for next year. In Years 9 and 10 almost 60% of students have chosen PD/H/PE as an elective subject and about 20% of students play an active sport. This is very pleasing, given that many girls stop active sport at about the age of fourteen.

A feasibility study on the redevelopment of the site to meet future needs has been completed. The
Board of Management is now proceeding with the development of schematic plans for the whole site and detailed working drawings for the refurbishment of the Convent building. The Board is determined to have the whole College redeveloped and to have the very best in buildings, furniture and equipment to provide for the curriculum of the future. Plans will be available by the middle of 2000. The whole redevelopment will cost about $7,000,000 and it is hoped to have all work completed by 2006. It is being drawn out because of the need not to disrupt the studies of students at the College and because of cash flow considerations.

The College is in a sound financial position having generated a small surplus in 1998. We expect the same this year. Because 97% of parents honoured their fee commitments in 1999 fees can continue to be kept at present levels relative to other schools. However, there will be increases each year of about 8% and this should be sufficient to meet most of the costs associated with the redevelopment, teachers’ salary increases and other usual increases in costs. It is good that teachers’ increases in salaries are greater than the CPI because it provides an opportunity for their salaries to catch up to fellow professionals. This will not only keep our teachers in the profession but attract other highly trained people to join the teaching ranks.

Minor refurbishment of the College continued in 1999. Those parts that are not to be demolished will be upgraded as part of the proposed building program. The Junior wing was repainted and provided with appropriate lighting, new carpet and furniture. The main building was also completely cabled for Information Technology and our servers are again being upgraded and will support about 130 student computers in 2000. The Eco-Garden has provided a very pleasant environment for the students and local community. The involvement of the College with the local community has been most encouraging to see and Manly Council support and cooperation has been most gratefully received.

Finally, I wish to express appreciation for the support and guidance the College has received from the Sisters, The Board of Directors, the Parents and Friends Association, the Ex-Students’ Association, the local parishes, the Catholic Schools Office, the Diocese, the Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools. Without their support and encouragement our year of progress would not have been possible.

ALLAN COMAN
GOOD SAMARITANS

THE GOOD SAMARITANS

The Good Samaritan ethos has its basis in Benedictism. This is a philosophy that life can be lived in a wholistic dimension including developing the human potential. Some of the key elements of Benedictism are seeking God, contentment and peace in all its aspects whilst adapting to social reality. As Good Samaritans our focus is on the education of women and answering the needs of society and the church as society changes.

Every six years the Good Samaritan Order has a discernment process which overviews the lifestyle and practice of those in the Order. The administrative team was elected. This year Sonia Wagner was re-elected as Superior. Four councillors were also elected to support her. This Chapter was an international gathering. All the Sisters attended including those from Japan, Philippines and Kiribati.

SR CARMEL BAMBRIDGE
As a Good Samaritan within the Benedictine heritage one of the key directions of my life has been to seek peace and use the Rules of Benedict to achieve this. My “following of peace” has been complex and has led me into the field of Conflict Resolution in all its dimensions.

Conflict Resolution seeks to address and counteract violence so prevalent in our society. During the past year it has been a great joy to be able to share these skills with the students at Stella. Their readiness to take on another perspective of life through the experience of mediation skills has been impressive. Students recognise the destructive effect of stress on human relationships and they have tried to develop management skills in the mediation process.

I am sure something of “Peace” will go with these Stella Maris students as they move into the future.

SR. PAULINE BULLUSS
The wheel has turned full circle. Over forty years ago I graduated from Stella Maris and went forward into my future.

Now, as a Sister of the Good Samaritan Order, and after teaching in secondary schools in Queensland, NSW, Victoria and Papua New Guinea I am back at Stella Maris College, Manly.

It is interesting comparing the Stella of today with that of the past. The student body has increased five-fold and the buildings have grown along and up. The sacred sites of the “Nuns’ Garden”, courtyard and mound are now parts of the playground. Gloves and school hats are things of the past, so too is the entire full-time staff consisting of all Sisters.

What have we now? A building bulging at the seams with friendly, alert and basically confident young women whose talents and interests are being challenged, honed and expanded by a magnificent staff of dedicated lay people – and a few Sisters of the Good Samaritan. It is good to be part of such a vibrant community.

For me, the wheel has turned full circle and it has covered a lot of ground during that revolution.

SR. VERONICA McDOUGALL
Each student who comes to the College has individual gifts to be developed and needs to be supported. My role as Learning Support Teacher is to assist girls who find some aspects of learning difficult. I support teachers within classes, taking lessons, or working with individual students. I work with teachers to make modifications to courses and work expectations. I am part of the College Reading Program and Literacy Teams.

As a Good Samaritan Sister, living in the Benedictine Tradition I see my role in the College as ministering in whatever ways I can to those in need girls, staff, families as part of the Year 7 Pastoral Care Team and Religion Teacher. I encourage the girls to live a balanced lifestyle of work, leisure, prayer and study, a lifestyle modelled on the Gospel values that are at the heart of Benedict’s Rule.

Through values of reverence and respect for ourselves, others and the environment we live a life that
“In All Things God May Be Glorified”.

BOARD REPORT

We are pleased to report that academic standards have been maintained, financial difficulties have been overcome, student enrolments are at an all time high and external recognition of Stella Maris as a top class educational facility has been given at the highest international level.

The College community would be aware of the success in the HSC by the Dux of the College, Francine Esterman. Her results are most noteworthy. It is also pleasing to report that a further 18 students achieved scores in the high 90s; their results are a tribute to the students and to their teachers.

What is equally pleasing is the high overall standard achieved by all HSC students in 1998. It has been noted by the Board that many students, while not scoring high overall scores, did manage to achieve a score higher than their trial mark and above their own modest hopes. Again this is deserving of praise for all members of staff.

Vocational Education courses including Information Technology, Childcare, Sport and Recreation and Design courses, delivered in the old Convent building, are another source of growth in student numbers. These courses also add to the range of educational opportunity for Stella Maris College HSC students. Broadening of the student base to include Vocational Education courses is one of the factors underlying the successful year at Stella.

Early in the 1999/2000 school year Allan Coman was successful in attracting an offer from Microsoft Corporation to sponsor a computer education program at Stella Maris. The Microsoft offer, only offered to two schools in NSW, involves Microsoft training teachers to be fully accredited in teaching information technology courses leading to Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer designation. Students at Stella will soon be offered what is arguably the world’s best information technology training course.
1999 has been a busy yet rewarding time. Increased enrolments generate increased activity and the girls have been involved in a wide range of activities throughout the year. The sporting life of the College provided opportunities for many different pursuits and you will find evidence of these throughout this publication. Culturally the opportunities were there for Debating and Public Speaking as well as performance in Drama and Music. The Visual Arts and Design departments again provided a wonderful showcase of their achievements in the exhibition in Term 3. The staff have laboured long and hard to provide a standard in the classroom across all subjects that is as good as any that you will find and better than most. Pastorally, I believe that the Year Coordinators and their PC teams, take good care of their students. There have been formal structures built into the Religious Education Program in Year 7 that give the spiritual dimension of their lives. All of this blends together to make the College a busy place where education in the broadest sense occurs.

In real terms, what is most important to me as a Deputy Principal, is that the College is a happy place for the students. It is an environment where they feel cared for and safe, and a community that operates on the Gospel value of justice for all within the Benedictine tradition which welcomes and respects the dignity of everyone.

MARY RYLAND
On behalf of the P & F Committee I would like to thank the community of Stella Maris for the support offered throughout 1998/9. This Committee was elected in February 1998 and ran through until August 1999.

No doubt the highlight of each year has been the hectic start when we helped coordinate the class dinners and cocktail parties. It all happened very quickly as soon as school resumed. These evenings are only successful because of the excellent planning by staff and the willingness of parents to help on the nights. The attendance at each of these functions was very impressive!

The only fundraising done during this time was the Twilight Fair in 1998. Every member of the Committee threw their support behind Sr. Bernadette’s organisational skills and the very capable and enthusiastic band of parents and teachers who made such a success of the event.

Our General Meetings have provided very informal opportunities for parents to have queries dealt with, as well as, in many cases having their eyes opened, with regard to what goes on at Stella. Our guest speakers, Mr Macallister, Mrs Gouric and Mrs Ferguson, have all been very generous with their time. Each of their presentations was most impressive and greatly appreciated.

Mr Coman and Miss Ryland always make themselves available for our meetings and their presence and ability to offer solutions to matters raised are invaluable. Attendance at these meetings peaked in early ’99 with a very large crowd, including quite a number of Year 7 parents, many of whom have been enthusiastic helpers at dinners and then again on Open Day, running the bar-b-que and serving afternoon tea.

I have enjoyed my role as President and there are many people I should thank. That however is an impossible task. Special thanks should go to Mrs Marcia Cunningham, Secretary and Mrs Louise Woolford, Treasurer (for several years). Louise’s formal association with Stella now comes to an end as her daughter, Renee is finishing Year 12 this year. I wish Mrs Trudi McFadden great success over what is shaping up to be a busy year going into 2000.

LISA BROWN
The Year 12 Class of 1999 will definitely agree that the last six years have flown by. The nervous, quiet and unsure Year Sevens have changed into confident, loud and outgoing Year Twelves. Over the years we have experienced many events that have made us fully, part of Stella Maris College.

Year 12 has taken part in six swimming and athletics carnivals (not counting the representative competitions), six Stella Days, countless liturgies and presentations. 1999 was no different for Year 12. We threw all our energy into ensuring both the Swimming Carnival and Athletics Carnival were major successes. Dressed as Cheerleaders, Year 12 marshalled like professionals and of course we had to take part in our own ‘novelty’ race. Armed with inflatable everything, we pushed each other into the pool and made a nuisance of ourselves. Of course, the best part of the day was when Rosaria won the war cries under the direction of House Captain, Alana Butler. The real victory went to Fatima and House Captain, Emily Perkins and Sports Captain, Belinda Cotter.

The Athletics Carnival was also a complete success. Year 12 in the past has controlled the marshalling and the distribution of coloured sashes for the runners each year. This year was no different. Year 12 showed they could be responsible when they wanted to be and the day ran smoothly, of course. Miss Molloy and the PE department deserve thanks as well as the House Captains, Alana Butler, Jasmine Rulli, Emily Perkins and Gemma Clark.

One day in the Stella calendar that is always looked forward to is “Stella Day”. With the resurrection of the Talent Quest, Year 12 took on a subject particularly close to their hearts, “Mr Macallister”. Mr Mac was serenaded by Zola Abrahams and her back up dancers were made up of a host of Britney Spears ‘wannabes’. The standout performance missed a prize, narrowly, but we were well represented by Louise Doman, Clare Perkins, Remila Leimena and the Supremes. The day showed that Year 12 can come together at any time, even if it is to make a fool of themselves. The day was wonderfully organised by the SRC President, Bianca Amato.

The Year 12 Retreat was also a special time for us to reflect on our friends and our years at Stella. As has become somewhat a tradition at our Retreats, Nicole Haraldson showed off her talented guitar skills and Martina McCarvel gave an amazing rendition of “Twist and Shout”. The day, of course, would not be the same without Sara Lee cake and a game of soccer on the Netball courts at lunchtime. A big thank you must go to Mrs Slater, the Year 12 teachers and Miss Charles for giving us a memorable day.

As the time for studying draws nearer and the time for leaving school looms closer on the horizon, Year 12 has become a close group. We have been a part of an incredible school community that has welcomed each of us in our different ways. As College Captains we would not have been able to fulfill our duties without the help of the 1999 Prefect Body and Mrs Slater. However, it was the support of Year 12 that enabled us to undertake our roles. Thank you and Good Luck.

ALEXANDRA CUNNINGHAM
LYDIA PROTICH