STELLA MARIS COLLEGE

52 Eurobin Ave
MANLY 2095

Phone: 9977-5144
Fax: 9976-2753

E-mail: administration@stellamaris.com.au
Principal’s Report

RE-APPOINTMENT AS PRINCIPAL - Mr Allan Coman

Mr Allan Coman has been re-appointed as Principal of Stella Maris College by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan, after a recommendation from the Board, for a further five year period commencing January 2001. The re-appointment of Mr Coman comes at an important time in the life of the College with major changes in the HSC and other curriculum changes being introduced, and the start of the rebuilding project.

The Year 2000 was a significant year in the life of the College. We joined with our church in celebrating a year of Jubilee and by the end of the year all of us had a much better understanding of its meaning. For our students a sense of forgiveness and reconciliation with others was the central theme. The College focussed on the theme of inclusiveness and the establishment of right relationships in our lives. Our College Captain and many of the Year 12 students showed real leadership by the manner in which they related to the younger students and each other. A very strong sense of collaboration and mutual support existed in our Year 12 students. Many examples of real growth through strong relationships existed among them resulting in some wonderful achievements in a variety of areas.

Our College really valued the talents and gifts of all, and so many students developed their gifts in ways that could not be imagined. This was the great gift of Jubilee for all of us. I have no doubt that the extra ordinary range of achievements in the spiritual, academic, cultural and sporting areas combined with a very high level of engagement and achievement comes from this sense of belonging, being safe, being appreciated - being loved. So many parents say the girls love coming to school and do so much when here.

The sense of the spiritual is strong in the College. The students are being taught how to pray and reflect with a formal 45 minutes in the Chapel each fortnight. This is going well and is supported by our liturgy specialist. The girls are then guided to express this spirituality through the traditions and practices of our Catholic Faith. They are then encouraged and given opportunities to ground this faith and spirituality in social justice practice.

The College staff continues to be the real strength of the College. A lot is asked of them and much is given. The diversity of age and experience is well balanced at the moment. The experience is blending well with the energy and enthusiasm of staff. Increasingly coordinators are taking on more responsibility for their areas of learning. Fortunately adequate resources are available for innovative and creative teaching and learning to occur. The strong academic tradition that is so important at Stella Maris provides a sense of security for students and parents to support moves into new areas brought about by the new HSC, SC and general trends in teaching and learning. The staff has done a significant level of in-service and formal study in 2000. The College policy of paying 50% of all costs associated with Master’s Degrees and 100% of Certificate and Diploma Courses has encouraged many to take up study again. The bulk of the staff is well aligned with the core values and mission of the College. This alignment is the constant task of the Principal and Deputy who develop this in small groups and on a one-to-one basis.

The College support staff continues to operate in a most professional manner. Each has her responsibilities and carries them out most faithfully. They are “client centred” and ensure that the needs of students, parents and staff are efficiently and thoughtfully met. An additional part-
time person was added to the support staff to assist the coordinators in the production and management of their programs and registers. These are now centrally kept in the Knowledge Management Centre and the increasing use of Information Technology is enabling easier access to information about students. We are pleased with the operation of “Admin 21” which holds all our administration details in a customised ACCESS 2000 database.

The Review of the Principal was conducted during the year and the issue of the organisational structure of the College was raised. The College has a very small executive superstructure with just the Principal and Deputy in paid position above the Coordinators. The College does not have an executive as such. The reason for this is the need for the Coordinators to be empowered to make decisions and feel responsible for their departments. As the school has grown the number of coordinators has increased and in some cases assistant coordinators appointed and departments divided. This gives a sense of “formlessness” to the college organisation. This type of organisation has enabled the College to depth its traditions in most diverse ways and creatively develop a College that meets the needs of all students much more effectively.

With increasing numbers of students, teams of teachers have responsibility for each Year Group. A Year Coordinator, who has a budget to develop the sense of team among their group of staff and increase the focus of teachers on students, leads them. Steady progress has been made in this area.

Resources within the college have been improving steadily. There are now sufficient funds to accelerate our maintenance program. By the end of 2000 the five-year cycle was almost complete, with all buildings painted outside and inside, with new furniture, whiteboards and other associated equipment in place. The staff room was renovated and better use made of available space. The Stella Maris Multimedia Factory was also set up late last year. In all, just over a million dollars was spent on resources, plant and equipment last year. While there are still some obvious needs, most curriculum areas in the college are well resourced.

A special thank you must go to John Lynas, Chairperson of the Board for his constant and loyal support. His trust and that of the Board for a type of redevelopment that depends on staff aligned with core values being given the space to use their initiative, has an element of risk associated with it, as well as a certain lack of control. However, I am sure that to date their trust in the staff has been well placed. The expertise offered by the Board has been essential for the proper development of the College.

Allan Coman
Principal
Board Report

I am pleased to report to the Members of the Company and through them to the Congregation that the year 2000 was a year of major achievement at Stella Maris. This year saw the consolidation of the changes and achievements planned over the past few years.

Academic standards have been maintained; financial difficulties have been overcome; student enrolments are at an all time high and Stella Maris continues to be highly regarded as a top class educational facility, with Australian and International recognition continuing to be given at the highest level.

The high overall standard achieved by all HSC students in 2000 is most pleasing. The College is pleased to note that most students achieved high overall scores, amassing a score higher than their trial mark and above their own expectations. This is deserving of praise for all members of staff.

Parents and their daughters are aware of the reputation held by Stella Maris for high academic standards in a caring Catholic environment following the Good Samaritan tradition. This is one of the factors contributing to the increase in student enrolments.

The growth in student enrolments, reported to Members last year, has continued into 2000 and beyond. Year 7 student numbers are at “house full” levels. Years 8 to 11 inclusive all had new student enrolments in 2000.

Vocational Education courses, including Information Technology, Childcare, Sport and Recreation, and Design courses, delivered in the former convent building, are another source of growth in student numbers, also Business Services, Tourism and Hospitality. Broadening of the student base to include Vocational Education courses is a major factor underlying the successful year at Stella.

In financial terms, the College achieved an operating surplus for the 2000 school year. Budget projections indicate that Stella Maris will operate with a surplus in the foreseeable future. Allan Coman and his staff deserve the highest commendation for a job well done.

The improvement in management information systems has given the Board of Directors and management the tools and the key information to run the College in a very efficient manner.

2000 has been a year of consolidation and of planning but in the meantime teaching spaces are almost fully occupied at Stella and planning is underway on a long-term building replacement and major refurbishment.

The Board of Directors has reported to the Trustees on proposals for major works at the College. These works include the construction of a new multi-purpose facility to replace the old 1950s hall; a new theatre seating 300; major refurbishment of existing facilities; renewal and upgrade of essential services (electricity, water, drainage and data cabling); and extensive landscaping.

The proposed works will be financed by Government grants, parents’ levy, operating surplus, and a one-off loan and Government interest subsidy. The Board is confident that the proposed works are essential for the continued success of the College and are within our capacity to pay.

This successful year at Stella Maris is the result of good hard work by many people - the directors on the Board, Allan Coman the Principal and his Staff, and the members of the Congregation who as members, directors or staff provide an inspiration and a role model for the continued success of Stella Maris. To all of these I acknowledge their contribution as part of a team. I commend them all.

*John Lynas*
Chairperson Board of Directors
Sisters of the Good Samaritan

A BENEDICTINE WAY OF LIFE
As Sisters of the Good Samaritan we follow a Benedictine Way of Life.

Seeking God
We set out on a journey, a search for God whom we wish to make the center of our lives.

In Community
We choose to live in community because we need the support of others in this search. In the community we share all things in common, support one another and endeavour to put the interests of others before our own.

Helped by a Balanced Pattern of Life
Our seeking God is helped by a creative rhythm of:
• Prayer – we want to live in mindfulness of God and are helped to do this each day by prayer together, especially the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, and prayer alone, especially through the reflective reading of the Scriptures.
• Work – Through a variety of ministries we endeavour to serve others with the compassion of the Good Samaritan.
• Leisure – We take time to relax and to enjoy the good things of creation.

Preferring Nothing to the Love of Christ
We commit ourselves to live as disciples of Christ within the community of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan, making this commitment through the public profession of the three Benedictine vows – Conversion of life, Stability and Obedience. By these vows we promise to follow Christ by living the Good Samaritan way of life and allowing it to form us in Gospel values, ready to be challenged and called forward by the Superior and the community, and to be sent out on mission in response to needs.

Some Special Benedictine Qualities
• Hospitality of heart and house.
• Appreciation of what is good in society and creation.
• Reverence and respect for people and material things.
• Readiness to challenge what is contrary to the Gospel.
• Peace and harmony in ourselves and our communities.

LAUNCH OF NEW WEBSITE
This year the Sisters of the Good Samaritan were pleased to announce the launch of their brand new, completely redesigned website, www.goodsams.org.au. This new site is bright, colourful and attractive. It is easy to read and simple to use, providing the latest information on congregation news and activities.

New features include a regular newsletter from Sr Sonia Wagner, a reflection page (Oil and Wine), a calendar and diary of events, a newsroom with press releases and stories, photographs and an interactive guest room where you can leave and read messages for congregation members. So why not log on and discover it for yourself.

Mary-Lynne Cochrane sgs
College Captain

It is amazing how time really does fly when you’re having fun! For the Year 12 Class of 2000 it has been six years of so many wonderful experiences and unforgettable memories that will be cherished for the rest of our lives. It has always given me such a great pleasure to say to people that I am a student of Stella Maris College.

Stella Maris has been a very important part of our lives, not only for providing us with a quality Catholic education but also for giving us the opportunity to develop true friendships. Since the beginning, many new girls have joined our year and have enriched this unique group and a number of girls have left us but have still managed to touch our lives in a special way.

The year 2000, otherwise known as ‘the New Millennium’, has been such a prominent year for so many reasons, not only because of the occurrence of the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games but also because of Stella’s active participation in various Jubilee celebrations throughout the year.

On a local scale, Stella hosted an array of events which have continued to promote and encourage a strong school spirit and have also brought us together as a College community. Two of these events included the Annual Swimming and Athletic Carnival. I must commend Tanya Lund, our Sports Captain, as well as Zoe Heffernan, Cobi Woodman, Joanna Dorrington and Claire Mulberry, our four House Captains, whose efforts have helped to make these two events a real success story.

One other memorable day, which was also full of fun and games, was ‘Stella Day’. Everything ran smoothly and the students thoroughly enjoyed themselves. This was achieved through the hard work and determination of the SRC representatives who were guided by their SRC President, Giulia Polito, as well as Mr Macallister.

For the junior members of our College community, there have been a few extra special events which were organized by the Year 12 Prefects. These included a Year 7 Netball Competition, which we hope will become a tradition. This competition was held during lunetimes. It was truly amazing to see the high level of enthusiasm amongst this bright and bubbly group of Year 7 students. Another prominent event, which we organized, was the Disco for students in Years 7 and 8. This night was definitely one to remember and all of the boys and girls who attended had a great evening filled with laughter and dancing.

As the old saying goes “success is in the journey, not the destination”. Well, we have arrived at our destination and we now need to prepare ourselves for our next journey.

There have been many people whom we sincerely thank for making our journey at Stella Maris a true success:
- The teachers - they have made so many opportunities possible for us to pursue and have made the learning experience a real joy.
- Mrs Wood - who has guided and supported us throughout our school life and has always been there for us when we needed her the most. Thank you for being such a terrific teacher and Year Co-ordinator
- Ms Ryland - the backbone of the College - without her hard work and dedication Stella Maris would probably not be the success story it is today.
• Mr Coman - who has been a truly inspirational Principal and has transformed the College into a wonderful learning environment that nurtures and encourages every student’s individuality, spirituality and initiative.

I would also like to commend the efforts of the Prefects and all of the other Year 12 students who have contributed to the activities throughout the year. They have all done a truly amazing job and their assistance is greatly appreciated. I would like to thank my Vice Captain, Candice Lopez, who has always been there to assist and support me with the honourable duty of leading the College through the year 2000.

In the not too distant future the Year 12 cohort will all be taking very different and diverse paths, for we will be the ones who will be taking the step towards making the world a better place by following our dreams and achieving our goals. So as we venture into our chosen direction, we should remember:

“Dreams can often become challenging but challenges are what we live for”.

Thank you for the memories and good bye Stella Maris.

Sacha Alagich
College Captain
Prefects and Student Representative Council

College Captain  
Sacha Alagich

College Vice Captain  
Candice Lopez

SRC President  
Gulita Polito

Sports Captain  
Tanya Lund

Head of Carmel House  
Zoe Heffernan

Head of Fatima House  
Cobi Woodman

Head of Lourdes House  
Joanna Dorrington

Head of Rosaria House  
Claire Mulberry

Charity and Fundraising  
Lauren Cheney

Communications  
Corey Robertson

Creative Arts  
Samantha House

Design and Technology  
Alisha Allan

Environment  
Jenny McIntosh

Hospitality  
Brooke Alley

Liturgy  
Joanne Beglin

Music  
Tracey Hein

Performing Arts  
Bonnie Cargill

Research and Information  
Puro Numa and Elizabeth Cohen

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Year 7  
Josie Davidson  
Laura Poole  
Josie Maruca  
Eloise Connell  
Victoria Macri  
Candice Kilduff

Year 8  
Joanne Anastasio  
Alexandra Bulgin  
Natalie Frostick  
Caitlin O'Dea  
Sarah Pervan  
Sabrina Stranges

Year 9  
Lisa Bills  
Gabrielle Bowers  
Alex Diamond  
Tessa Immens  
Kyah McMahon  
Nathania Nero  
Jamie Robertson

Year 10  
Vara Arnold  
Lauren Kavanagh  
Linda Maruca  
Katharine Turnbull  
Anne Verhoeven

Year 11  
Carly Allpress  
Kelly Bourke  
Elena Hadzellis  
Rebecca Harris  
Jasmine Khan  
Olivia Ross

Year 12  
Niki Anglicas  
Vanessa Coman  
Amanda Ellis  
Amanda Favaloro  
Juliet Francis
Marketing Report

We have had a very successful year promoting Stella Maris College to future students and families and to the wider community. We began 2000 with the launch of our new prospectus and new photographs of our students and College. We employed a very talented and professional photographer, Peter Steele, and to assist in designing our new prospectus and range of brochures, Catherine Au-Yeung from L'Attitude Designs. We hope to build upon our new photographic selection, which will enhance our historical photographic record of the College. During 1999 we selected a variety of our historical photographs for enlargement and these have been a great success on our Open Days.

Stella Maris College was represented in March at the Independent Schools Expo Weekend at Sydney University. This is a wonderful opportunity for our College to gain wider recognition with other independent colleges and schools, and within Sydney. I would like to thank Mrs Slater and Mr Cleary for their assistance and professionalism over the two days of the Expo. Our Madrigal Choir and our very talented violinist from Year 11, Kathryn Crossing, performed at the Expo. Kathryn certainly stopped the Expo with her performance and was asked by the organizers of the Expo would she extend her performance throughout the afternoon, as the sound of her playing flowing through the Great Hall was magnificent.

The 2000 Open Day was a resounding success. Over two thousand people attended the day and our enrolments are very healthy for the next few years. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the staff and students who worked tirelessly to present such a successful day. We will not be having an Open Day in 2001 due to the building program but we wait in anticipation for 2002 when we can proudly open our restored Convent and Stage One of the new buildings.

Amanda Whitfield  
Director of the Knowledge Management Centre and Marketing

Study Abroad Success Book

Diamond-Big Co. Ltd. have been publishing school guides since 1979 for Japanese students who are interested in studying abroad. The series runs to sixteen volumes and sells over 600,000 copies a year. Among the sixteen volumes in the series, they publish an edition for Secondary Schools titled ‘Study Abroad Success Book - Secondary Schools’. This is a comprehensive and practical guide for Japanese parents and students who are considering continuing their education overseas. The edition is revised once every two years and sells 30,000 copies at bookstores throughout Japan. This year Stella Maris College was invited to enter half a page of information in the editorial section of the guidebook as a highly recognized secondary school.
Sister Colette Egan Information Centre

In preparation for this article I reviewed the last few Yearbooks and it was amazing to see the changes that have taken place since 1997. One of the photos from that year, showing Spencer Harvey holding up a sign over a computer saying “Internet Station,” says it all. With 150 computers now, all Internet linked, and another 70 on the way, our students are well on the way to becoming “... ‘free range students’ capable of simultaneously grazing the Net and reading deeply.” (Jamie McKenzie, 1997: http://fromnowon.com).

Research today requires that students are not afraid of Information Technology - even to see if we have information in hard copy format (book, vertical file, magazine, video, etc) a student must use the computer and logon to access their desktop. Because IT usage is encouraged throughout the College, most students do feel confident and are making the most of the facilities available.

Information literacy is the current catch phrase in the College, with increasing emphasis being placed on students developing the skills necessary for gaining intellectual access to information, knowledge and understanding. These skills incorporate defining, locating, critically analysing and synthesising information in order to create an original response to a problem or task.

It is encouraging to observe the staff and students using the SCEIC so well. Our Information Centre hums with activity whilst students engage in various learning experiences. By 2001 students will be researching and doing their assignments interactively through our Intranet whilst emailing their results to their teachers. This does not imply that hard copy formats are no longer being used. They are as popular as before - there is simply more information and a greater variety of ways to obtain it!

Amazingly, given the access to technological data sources, the Information Centre’s shelves are bulging at present with wonderful new resources bought during the year. Next year we will need to weed through the collection to make more room for exciting new titles! At present, it seems that hard copy formats such as books are still the most viable format available to obtain the detailed information required in many topic areas.

For the older generations it is hard to imagine a future world where fiction or leisure reading will occur via a computer. At present fiction and wide reading in its traditional format continues to be supported and encouraged throughout the College. This year’s most popular title was, not surprisingly, “Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone” by J K Rowling. Following in hot pursuit was Marsden's “Tomorrow, When the War Began” which was borrowed 87 times. Other favourite authors included Morris Gleitzman, Tim Winton, Isobelle Carmody, Melina Marchetta, Anne Provost and Donna Jo Napoli.

The Information Centre could not be run as effectively or efficiently without the effort of its support staff, Ann Leon, Margaret Ward and Rosetta Coletta. A big thank you also to mothers, Marzia Higgs and Angelina Coletta, teacher Sister Pauline Bulluss, staff member Kath Hubbard and Antonina Coletta of Year 9.
Overall SCEIC has experienced a successful and exciting start to a new millennium dependent on Information Technology AND literacy.

_Irith Gouiric_
Teacher Librarian

_Virginia Leonard - Year 7_
During the space of one year at Stella Maris I have used the Information Centre to produce successful assignments. The SCEIC provides everyone with the use of the Internet, magazines, books and CD-Roms for assistance in school assignments. The two seating areas near the Non-Fiction and Fiction book shelves are available to classes using the SCEIC facilities or anybody who would like to use the books while they sit down and relax. There are books for almost every subject you could need, and fiction books for all tastes. The SCEIC is always there for you if you need information and you can ask the Librarian, Mrs Gouiric, if you need help.

_Marianna Bagnato - Year 8_
The Sister Colette Egan Information Centre has been a good source of information. It has been very helpful when I need to do assignments and search for information. You can search for books on the computer in Alice Inquiry and find out straight away where to find the book. It has been extremely helpful to everyone who uses it.

_Ritika Mathur - Year 8_
The College Information Centre has been a great help with the assignments that I have received in the past two years. The Information Centre has provided computers which contain access to the Internet and software programmes such as Encarta, World Book Encyclopaedia and publishing programmes. Not only has it computers but it also supplies many books which range from fiction to History books and there is even a private area for seniors to study for examinations. I was able to stay after school and come early in the morning to do research for my assignments. Stella Maris College has really helped to get me through my school work.

_Amy Ung - Year 11_
The Sister Colette Egan Information Centre has played an important role in all students’ studies this year, providing them with a diverse range of resources like the Internet, books, magazines, media prints, computer software programmes and audio-visual material.
Careers

Careers advice is available to all levels of students of Stella Maris College and as usual we have been excitingly busy with numerous changes and updating especially with the new rules of the HSC. No longer is it necessary for students to do a subject from each KLA. The only compulsory subject is English, which leaves time for all the Vocational, Design, Dance, Drama and Creative courses to be assorted. With such a wide choice available at Stella Maris it is even more necessary to give information and guidance to the students. This is achieved in a variety of ways.

There is a Careers Corner in the Library where all the latest, updated university and other tertiary material is displayed. There is also a Careers Corner in the Newsletter to keep everyone up to date with general information and to help parents to encourage their daughter with scholarship and job applications.

In Year 10 students complete a VETAB accredited Career Planning Course which gives them a recognized certificate. As well, Year 10 are tested by Robert Allwell and Associates Pty Ltd, who help each student relate her lifestyle, hobbies, likes, dislikes and abilities in various key subjects to the type of career areas which would use the expertise and skills that the individual possesses. This is a valuable exercise and with use of the Job Guide Book and guidance from the Careers teachers and Careers Adviser forms part of the overall lead up to choosing subjects for Year 11.

The Year 10 students also have a Market Day, a full day of researching, listening to speakers and others students and collecting brochures about the large variety of courses available to them in the Senior School, to make those important decisions for the HSC subjects. Of interest in particular are the exciting new Vocational Education courses which can now be studied and counted as units for the HSC.

The senior students have their own noticeboard for all information pertaining to UAI scores, University Open Days, TAFE and private colleges as well as scholarships, job vacancies and traineeships. The Careers Adviser also interviews every Year 12 student by appointment to ensure subject choices are relevant for the tertiary courses wanted and that the ability of the students is considered in the choices.

During the year, various guest speakers have visited the College to offer advice on their particular areas of expertise. The men and women from ADFA (Australian Defense Force Academy) came in uniform and spoke about the myriad of careers in the Armed Forces. They showed a film and answered questions from a large group of extremely interested students. Francine Esterman, Dux of the College in 1998, recently visited us. She encouraged the present Year 12 students and explained the world of options to them. Mr Williams from Williams Business College spoke about the great variety of courses available as an alternative to or to complement university study. We also had a representative from Macleay College to speak about the alternatives to University and about pathways leading there from various courses they offer.

Several evenings were held for parents to help explain the rules and conditions of both the School Certificate and the new Higher School Certificate. These were very well attended as subject choices are discussed and questions can be asked of co-ordinators. These evenings provide valuable help for parents to assist their daughters to choose the most appropriate subjects.
Enquiries have also been made about the value of Student Exchange Programmes and the best times to go on these overseas adventures. Of course a great deal of thought and planning, both financially and emotionally, needs to go into such a venture but the results can provide benefits such as another ‘fluent’ language, overseas job opportunities, educational perspectives and, of course, the friendships and communication with people from another culture.

As well as exchanges, we have had the College become the base for Sports Scholarships to American universities and a guest speaker addressed students from both Stella Maris and other local schools. Students who show potential in a sport are encouraged to apply, as the USA is a wonderful place to hone these talents at very little expense.

Hopefully, students at Stella Maris have reaped the benefits of all the available information and guidance to prepare them to take their place in society.

Jeanette Ferguson
Careers Co-ordinator
Dance and Drama

2000 has been a year in which the girls from Stella Maris College have excelled in areas of Dance and Drama. We have seen performance skills of a professional standard and creativity. The girls seem to go from strength to strength, developing excellent skills as performers, with great ease.

The year began with the Warringah Eisteddfod. Two dance pieces were entered, ‘Fame’ in the Jazz section and ‘Meetings Along the Edge’ in the Contemporary section which was awarded First Prize. The Rock Eisteddfod took place next, followed by Stella Alive, an evening that combined Visual Arts, Design, Photography and Music with Dance and Drama, showcasing the class work of the girls. ‘Rave’ was another highlight of the year, a rich, original piece of contemporary theatre performed at the Zenith Theatre.

The Year 12 Drama Night gave our Year 12 students the chance to perform before their HSC Practical Examination. A great deal of talent and creativity was apparent during the show. Year 10 Drama students were also involved in a presentation night. Inspired by Macbeth, the girls performed two plays, ‘Living with Lady Macbeth’ and ‘Macbeth Incorporated’.

The Dance and Drama staff have worked constantly with a love of their work and this, combined with the talent of the students, has produced a thriving department. We look forward to an exciting and performance filled 2001.

JUBILEE 2000
One of the highlights for Dance at Stella this year was the Jubilee performance at the Superdome. Fifty girls participated in the event. Their consistent practice in the months leading up to the performance resulted in an outstanding finale. The first of two dances, performed to the song ‘Hands’ by Jewel, was choreographed by Miss Kerl. She skilfully produced a contemporary dance in keeping with liturgical style. The second dance, ‘Joyful, Joyful’, performed together with three other schools, was a dynamic and uplifting piece. Overall, it was great for all involved to experience the celebration of religious themes through dance.

Many thanks to the Dance Captain, Year 12 student Roxanne Bollen, who enthusiastically led the students through many rehearsals and whose skills and commitment were reflected in the success of this event.

FOOTBALL GRAND FINAL
Following the girls’ spectacular effort in the Jubilee, they were asked to dance at the NRL Grand Final at Homebush Stadium. Leading up to the big event, the girls practised tirelessly for two months, giving up all their weekends. The dance was extremely professional, the girls performing very complicated and sophisticated movements with great skill to the song ‘One Moment in Time’ by the artist Joanne. Considering many of the girls who participated in the show had very little dancing experience, it was a remarkable achievement deserving much praise.
BLEDISLOE CUP

The Bledisloe Cup was truly a spectacular event. It saw forty of our students performing for a crowd of 110,000 people - the largest sporting crowd in World Rugby history! The girls put in many hours of diligent practice during their holidays and made an excellent debut on the night, performing in a spectacular show which featured fire parades, stilt walkers and ended with a fantastic fireworks finale. The dance was choreographed by Stella Maris teacher Miss Kerl, whose expertise and innovation was exhibited on this most memorable evening.

Carly Taylor
Dance/Drama Co-ordinator
English

The year 2000 has brought with it the implementation of the new HSC courses in English. We have survived the new English Extension I course in Preliminary and are ready to commence the new Extension II course in Year 12. In ‘old speak’ this means the new 3 Unit course in Year 11 and the new 4 Unit course in Year 12. Each day I am thankful for the maturity, patience and understanding of this year group who are working with us very co-operatively to make this new syllabus a successful effort for them and for us. Each new system introduced is a learning exercise for us all. The upcoming Year 11s will benefit from this experience as we streamline the system. The first HSC in 2001 will be a most interesting exercise and we have been assured by the Board of Studies that students will be looked upon more favourably than usual by markers. We have been pushed into the 21st Century rather hurriedly in NSW and we can only hope it will be to the advantage of our students.

Certainly, English as a subject has become much more wide ranging in its context with students now encouraged to use their wider knowledge and particularly their computer skills as much as possible. However, the syllabus still emphasizes the skills of language analysis and the ‘how’ of meaning. Our teachers are ever conscious of the detail in the texts as well as this new cultural studies approach to English learning. There must be a depth to the knowledge taught if students are to do well in the HSC.

The need for frequent reading is greater than ever with a syllabus in senior years that can call upon any type of writing for analysis or discussion. I encourage every year group to study at least three novels a year plus a wide reading assignment that involves both an oral and written response to their chosen books. Many of our juniors are keen readers and this can only help them in future years. For those girls who struggle with literacy, the Peer Tutoring Reading Program has been a great success. Year 11 have been very generous with their recess time in helping girls in the younger years with their reading (on a one to one basis). This program has had a big impact in the junior school and Mrs Clarke and Sr Veronica are to be commended for their persistence and enthusiasm in this area.

School Certificate English results were excellent this year, again well above the State average. Our HSC results were solid and I believe some of the girls were very pleasantly surprised by their good English marks. We hope for more of the same in 2001.

The English staff this year have spent much time at in-services gleaning ideas for creative and full programs in our subject. We are becoming more confident about this new syllabus but it has been a steep learning curve for us all. On behalf of the English students, I thank them for all their efforts and enthusiasm and look forward to a productive 2001.

Judith Coman
English Co-ordinator
Debating

In spite of changes of coaches mid year, the debaters at Stella Maris have continued enthusiastically. Every Friday night during the Debating season they have dutifully appeared and participated well. They have been friendly towards their opposition teams whether they were hosting or visiting the other schools.

We entered two competitions, the ISDN (Independent Schools Debating Network) and the SDN (Schools Debating Network). Both of these competitions involve well-established schools such as Riverview and PLC who have long traditions of debating. It is an interesting experience for our girls to meet these other students and to visit their schools.

The primary school who joins with us in these competitions, St John’s Narrabeena, won the Primary Division in 2000. It was a most prestigious win and we are hoping for a similar result in 2001.

Judith Coman
Debating Co-ordinator
History

The Open Day display this year indicated that despite the many curriculum changes in both Junior and Senior History, our students are as usual producing work that is both creative and of a high standard.

Year 7 are all Egyptologists. Stella is full of model cat mummies, pyramids and all manner of fake artifacts. In Semester 1 a couple of creative groups wrote and performed their own script while one group later in the year made their own wigs, costumes and paraded as priests and princesses.

World History continues in Year 8 where the girls have studied the Middle Ages in Europe and Japan. Many castles have been made and our talented group made a very entertaining and professional video of their play set in the Middle Ages.

Years 9 and 10 studied Australian History which will be publicly examined as part of the School Certificate for the first time in 2002. Many Year 10 students did extremely well in an oral History task which required them to interview older members of the community to find out about life during the Great Depression. Connie Galati and Emma Pearce are to be particularly commended for their efforts as they found new friends among the Aged who enjoyed the company as well as an opportunity to share the past. Emma’s taped interview will be a useful resource for future students.

The new Senior History courses are proving an exciting challenge and a small group of Year 11 students are about to embark on the new Extension Course which will be examined for the first time in 2001. A major part of this course is a research project which is worth 80% of their assessment mark.

Anne Coyte
History Co-ordinator
Languages

This year over 300 students in the College studied one of the four foreign languages on offer. They had a busy year. As an integral part of their studies, we had various lunches where they contributed and tried selections of food to familiarise themselves with the “cuisine” of other countries.

Once again, Stella Maris students performed well in the Australian Language Certificate tests in August, with several students receiving Distinction passes in each of the four languages.

In October, students in Years 7 and 8 studying French, German or Italian, were able to take part in a dynamic workshop in their chosen language. These ‘Leap into Language’ Workshops were presented by a bilingual actor from the Young Australia Company, who demonstrated a creative approach to language learning through the use of physical and verbal games with dramatic improvisation. This was the first time we have tried out these workshops and they proved to be a great success.

Also in October the Year 8 Japanese class was treated to a performance of the play “Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes” at the Glen Street Theatre. This was presented by the Bell Shakespeare Company and was a most enjoyable experience for the students.

Exchange Programmes continue to be an excellent way for the girls to experience first hand, life in another country with a host family. In July this year, four of our students, Jing Ren from Year 9, Felicity Simpson and Victoria Whyte from Year 10 and Elena Hadzellis from Year 11, were awarded scholarships by Manly Council to spend two weeks in Japan. The girls attended school there and experienced life in a Japanese family. In November, two Year 10 girls, Katie Bissell and Lauren Roebuck, headed off to Europe on Exchange Programmes. Katie is spending ten weeks in Germany and Lauren has gone to France for six weeks. These are truly invaluable experiences for the girls.

As Australia becomes a more multicultural society and technology brings the world into our homes through the Internet, it is increasingly obvious that we do not live in isolation from the rest of the world. The advantages of knowing another language were brought home to us even more so this year through the Olympic Games which brought so many visitors to Sydney. Australian students need to be aware of the limitations of a mainly monolingual society in a world where communication with and understanding of, other cultures is vital. Learning to be proficient in another language is not easy but the rewards are enormous.

Narelle Pilgrim
Language Co-ordinator

Leap Into Language Workshop Impression - Christie Lawrence - Year 7

We started to have fun
When we had only just begun
We played some games
And learnt some names
She acted out a play
It was so good, we shouted “Hooray”
We all embarrassed ourselves
In our acting skills and French as well
But it all ended without delay
With a short French script from “Home and Away”

FRENCH
Lunch - Haylee Rockliff - Year 8
On Friday June 2, the Year 8 French class enjoyed an appetising French lunch. Each group had

to find a French food that every member of our class would enjoy. The fact that we had the
choice of every French food available had a lot to do with the exceptional menu we selected
as a class.

We took pleasure in feasting on cuisine that included delicious chocolate croissants, mouth
watering French pastries and scrumptious profiteroles. We also took pleasure in consuming
crepes (extremely thin pancakes) that were topped with an assortment of fillings. The
remainder of the menu consisted of a variety of quiches that had salmon and cheese, ham and
cheese (Lorraine) and an onion and cream centre. A combination of cheese with biscuits were
also devoured by the ‘starving’ class. We also consumed some freshly baked baguettes and
drank hot chocolate and orange juice. Our French lunch was a major success in and out of the
class. We all thoroughly enjoyed it and hope to experience another one in the near future and
would live (and eat) the French way any day.

JAPANESE
Sadako and the 1000 Paper Cranes - Kate Bedwell and Ally Bulgin - Year 8
On Thursday October 12 all of the Years 7 and 8 Japanese classes were very excited. We were
going on our Japanese excursion to see a production at the Glen Street Theatre. It was called
“Sadako and the 1000 Paper Cranes”. The theatre was packed with many different schools, all
anxious to see the play.

Suddenly, the lights were dimmed and the crowd hushed. A lady appeared with two sticks. She
knelt down in front of a drum and began to play it, and so began the story of Sadako.

Sadako was a young girl who lived in Hiroshima, Japan. She was a lively and happy girl and
enjoyed life to the full. She was also an excellent runner, and pursued her brother to train her
every spare minute of the day! No-one would have expected her to be struck down with
leukemia. Sadako was only a tiny baby when a nuclear bomb was dropped on Hiroshima
where she lived during World War II. Many people died or were poisoned by the radiation. Her
family was sure that she was fine, but they were proven wrong when, at the age of 13, Sadako
was hospitalised with leukemia. She grew very sick and had to stay in bed all day. She started
to lose hope when her best friend told her about a specific myth. It was said that if you were
to make 1000 paper cranes, the gods would answer your wish. Sadako started making many
paper cranes but she died at the age of 13, just after she finished 644 cranes. She touched many
people’s hearts around Japan and a special memorial was built for her, which the people of
Japan covered with thousands of paper cranes and flowers.

We were very impressed with the production, especially the special effects and the inventive
backdrops, which could be used in many different ways. The overall effect was fantastic and
everyone had great fun. It was a very successful excursion and something that every one of us
will remember.
ITALIAN
Looking for Alibrandi - Teresa Milazzo
Meeting Melina Marchetta and Pia Miranda at the Panel Discussion on ‘Looking for Alibrandi’, was indeed a memorable occasion. A crowded auditorium listened intently as Ms Marchetta and Ms Miranda answered a variety of questions centering on the writing of the book and movie.

Ms Marchetta outlined the reasons for writing the book and subsequent screenplay. She began writing the book at age 22, reminiscing her own teenage years growing up in Haberfield and attending a Catholic College in Five Dock. She reminisced her anguish and her annoyance at having every move monitored by the family’s community spies. They would report with detailed accuracy time, event, happenings, greeting, fashion sense and new acquaintances. “Telecom wouldn’t be what it is today, if it weren’t for the Italians” she quoted with glee!

Ms Marchetta made reference to “the tomato sauce making day”, which was filmed at her grandmother’s house in Haberfield. It’s the annual event that opens and concludes the story and film. It marks the beginning of Josie’s acceptance of her own identity.

When Ms Marchetta was writing the book she was informed that it would appeal to only her innermost Sydney community. Ms Marchetta thought about it and still thought it was worthwhile to go ahead and write the book. She was delighted and astonished at the remarkable success of the book and then embarked on the onerous task of writing the screenplay for the film.

A mature aged woman spoke up during the discussion to thank Melina for writing a book that meant so much to her. Although she wasn’t from an Italian background, she identified so much with Katia’s dilemma because it was exactly her scenario, when she came to Australia. The appeal to the wider community was also apparent when many people shared with Ms Marchetta the magic of the scenario which crossed ethnic barriers and enabled them to identify with the many sub-plots in the book.

Needless to say the book had an enormous appeal to the younger generation. One young man couldn’t contain himself any longer and just had to tell Ms Marchetta what the book meant to him. He attended a boys’ school where there were few boys from his ethnic background at the school. He identified with the racial discrimination that Josie was subjected to and announced with relief that “Finalmente c’è qualcuno che capisce!” (Finally there is someone who understands!)

Pia Miranda elaborated on how she was cast for the role of Josie. She was merrily strolling down the street when she encountered a very forlorn man who had just auditioned for the role of Jacob. He was anxiously awaiting the outcome of his audition and at that stage Ms Miranda hadn’t even heard of the book but he suggested she try out for the role of Josie. When Pia returned home, her agent rang her to request that she go and audition for this role of Josie. Ms Miranda reluctantly agreed and she was number 2000 to audition. She was immediately given the part.

The casting of the “nonna” was also an amazing story. A suitable actress could not be found in Australia, so the team went to Rome to find a suitable “Katia”, who learnt all her lines “parrot fashion” because she could speak no English!

Ciao a tutti