VET continues to provide a valued and interesting range of courses for senior girls of the College, with about 200 girls in Years 11 and 12 doing at least one course. All of these courses count as a full 2 Units towards the HSC, as well as giving a nationally recognised training qualification.

- Certificate II in Hospitality (Operations)
- Certificate II in Information Technology
- Certificate II in Tourism (Sales / Office)
- Certificate II in Outdoor Recreation
- Certificate II in Business Services
- Certificate II in Interactive Multimedia
- Certificate II in Design Fundamentals
- Certificate III in Community Services (Children’s Services)

During 2001, we had our first school-based trainee when Jenny Laird took up a Traineeship in Outdoor Recreation. By combining full time schooling for her HSC with a part-time traineeship, Jenny has taken a flying start into a great career area.

All VET courses have a mandatory 1 week of Work Placement each year, where students get to practice the skills they are learning and competencies they have mastered, in a real industry setting. In some industries there is hot competition for available places, and some of the girls learnt very useful lessons about forward planning, having options, handling knockbacks. All of them learnt a great deal about being part of a work team, handling the responsibilities of on-the-job training, the satisfactions of good customer service and much more.

Where to from here? New industry courses in Entertainment and Music will be available in 2003, our Multimedia Centre (trading as SMC Multimedia College) now offers qualifications through to Certificate IV level, advanced computer network training is to be implemented, the Practice Firm grows. A VET and Careers Centre has been established in the school (at the former student reception area) which pulls together administration and resources for all the vocational training happening within the school. VET is well and truly alive and buzzing at Stella.

Ross Cleary
VET Co-ordinator
Languages

The Language Department had a busy year again this year. We now have courses running in French, German, Italian and Japanese in Years 7 to 12, with Chinese also being extended this year to include classes in both Years 7 and 8. As well as this, student in Years 11 and 12 who are native speakers of Chinese Mandarin are able to take this language as part of their HSC studies at the College. These classes run on Saturdays and are open to students from other school in the area.

As always, Stella Maris girls performed well in the Australian Language Certificate tests which were held in August this year. Several of our students received Distinction passes in one or both of the Reading and Aural components of the test. All girls who sit these tests receive a certificate from the Australian Council of Education Research in Melbourne. They are an excellent guideline which allows students to measure their progress in foreign language learning.

In October this year girls in year 7 French and Italian and Years 7 and 8 German classes were treated to a ‘Leap into Language’ workshop in their chosen language. These workshops are held at the college and run by bilingual actors form the Young Australia Company. The girls are introduced to a creative approach to language learning through the use of physical and verbal games mixed with some dramatic improvisation techniques. The workshops are always greatly enjoyed, especially by the younger students.

Exchange programmes continue to thrive at Stella Maris and this year Manly Council’s scholarship to Japan went to two Year 9 girls, Carly Amber and Joanna Tsang. Carly and Joanna spent two weeks in July in Odawara, Japan living with Japanese families and attending classes there. In return, the girls hosted two Odawara students for two weeks in August. Also this year we welcomed Helen Essink, from Germany, who spent 10 weeks with us in July and August. Helen stayed with Year 11 student, Michelle Gray, who left for Germany in November to spend a similar period with Helen and her family. Becoming an exchange student is an invaluable experience for any girl. Not only do these students improve their language skills, but they develop a maturity and understanding of other cultures which is of great benefit in our multicultural world.

Next year promises to be a good one for French students at the College. We are in the process of organizing our next excursion to Noumea, New Caledonia, which will take place early in the year. This time a group of students from Years 9 to 11 French class will be spending a week on this French Pacific island.

Narelle Pilgrim
Language Co-ordinator

On the 22nd of October 2001, Signora Milazzo’s Year 7 Italian Class had an Italian Workshop with Gabriella Metzelli for the first two periods of the day.

Firstly, Gabriella chose 7 people (1 assistant and 6 contestants) to have a head to head competition, “The Tigers” vs. “The Cows” with the Cows taking gold with one more point than the Tigers. Next, everyone had to join in one big circle, where we went around the circle saying our names and doing an action and then the whole circle said your name and did the action. While still in the circle, we played “Simon Says” in Italian (which was fun but after a while it got a bit confusing!) After that, we broke the circle, got into small groups where we did role-plays of a ‘restaurant scene’ and soon after that we acted out commercials. The ads were about talcum powder, perfume, lemonade, pasta and a comic book. Last, but not least, in groups, we did scenes from 2 television shows, “Home and Away” and “Survivor”.

My rating for this whole experience, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, would be 91/2 out of 10!!! Needless to say, I thoroughly enjoyed it. Overall I would say everyone in my class who went to the Workshop enjoyed it.

Deena Palethorpe 7.1

Bon Petit ... Japanese Style

If you want to practise your Japanese and eat delicious food at the same time, there is no better way to do it than to dine at a Japanese restaurant. That is exactly what the Year 10 Japanese class of 2001 chose to do. As Manly is well-known for its wide variety of Japanese restaurants - from Sushi Train Parlors to traditional style restaurants - we all had a hard time deciding which to go to.

In the end, it was unanimous that the Sushi Train Parlor was the place to dine. Not only did they offer appetizing traditional dishes that were placed on a miniature train and went around on a conveyor belt, but the prices were very reasonable allowing us to try many different foods. After settling into the Japanese atmosphere of the restaurant, we all gained the courage to put into practice our Japanese by communicating with the waitress, who was dressed in a beautiful kimono.
Everyone had a fabulous time and if it hadn’t been for the menu that was in English I could have surely believed that we were in Japan.

Jing Ren
Year 10

Tokimeki Exchange
At 7:00am, on the 12th of July 2001, twenty-five students from Stella Maris, St Paul’s, Mackellar and Balgowlah Boys High Schools were anxiously waiting to depart on a flight from Sydney to Tokyo’s Narita Airport.

After arriving in Tokyo, we got on a bus to the city we would all be living in for the following two weeks, Odawara, two hours south of Tokyo. The first night, before we went to our host families, we were to be staying in Santoku Memorial Hall, complete with futon beds, tatami floors and an Onsen public bath.

After a day of sightseeing at a temple and a traditional Japanese home, it was time to be collected by our host families, and although we were all a little unwilling to leave our friends behind, we were very curious about what our new families would be like. The first thing everyone noted was that most of use towered over them, even the fathers! We were all made to feel very welcome and were treated to delicious Japanese cuisine for dinner and played games with the children. We showed photos of our life back in Australia and gave our carefully chosen gifts.

On my first family day, I was taken shopping to a huge shopping complex, even bigger than Warringah Mall or even Chatswood, which I was very surprised to find was just one department store! After shopping, we went to meet with all the other Tokimeki school families for the opening ceremony. All the Australian students exchanged horror stories of the night before. One student had been taken to an American style steakhouse and was served raw meat, and when he went to eat what looked like mashed potatoes turned out to be white wasabi! Another was sleeping in the room of a recently deceased family member and could hardly move for the flowers and other offerings that were left there. Most of us however were happy with our host families.

We visited a local girls’ high school where we went in groups of three with about fifty Japanese girls all trying to talk to us and make us copy what they were saying in Japanese. We went outside to play games with them and found ourselves ‘in’ and everyone throwing their shoes at us! Luckily, it was lunchtime and everyone was handed out a small lunchbox of food to eat.

The following day was called ‘Chief of the Day’ and each of us went in pairs with a translator to a section of the local council to help them run it and tell them how it is different to what we do in Australia. Holly McDougall and I were allocated to ‘The Industrial Policy Section’ and were taken out for lunch and then to inspect some local craft factories. These included ‘Yosegi’ which means traditional wood mosaics and we made our
The only other aspect I found different to that of an Australian theme park was that when the people in the Disney character costumes came into the crowd, I was swept along in a tide of Japanese people screaming 'Pooh san, Pooh san!' and showing each other out of the way so that they could have their photo taken alongside the Winnie the Pooh character.

I think my favourite memories of my trip to Odawara are of the camp in San San Hills. We spent the day traveling around the Mt Fuji region and went on a really cute ferry that looked like a pirate ship across Lake Ashi. When we arrived at the camp, we moved into our rooms and got ready for an Onsen bath. An Onsen bath is the Japanese public bathhouse; it involves washing before you enter the bath and then relaxing in the extremely hot water. It also involves going in naked, which the Japanese people have no problem with but it made us Aussie kids a little nervous, so we pleaded with the chaperones to at least let us wear swimmers! Luckily for us it was OK and after the bath we spent time together watching plays and participating in our own short skits. It was soon bedtime, and in our rooms were small tea ceremony kits and the traditional yukata dress so we all had fun playing around with these and making ourselves homesick on our last precious pieces of Cadbury chocolate. The following day, we were allowed to try many different kinds of Japanese cultural activities including trying on Kimonos, Tea Ceremonies, origami, calligraphy and woodwork. After the camp, we all realized it was our last day with our family and we made the most of it, while trying to pack all our souvenirs and presents away. We had a Sayonara Party and we all said our formal thankyou and goodbyes and by the time we were all singing 'Waltzing Matilda', everyone was crying - even the boys! My family took me to light fireworks on the riverbank, but I don't think I really saw them as I kept wondering how I'd live without my new family and started to cry again.

Leaving on the bus was one of the hardest thing I have ever had to do, even though we would be seeing the students in Australia in a week or so, we would probably see our host mother or fathers again, or at least for a very long time. The bus

own coasters to take home. Also, we learnt about 'Ume Boshi', pickled plums and little pink and white jellies, which, I remembered I had eaten for breakfast that morning. I wish I hadn't asked what they were as it turned out they were jelly made out of fish!

Before bowling the next day, I went shopping with Mitchell Armstrong and his host family, at the 100yen shop, which I guess is the equivalent of our $2 shops here in Australia. We both went a little crazy and ended up buying about two hundred dollars of souvenirs each. Bowling was great as we all got to really interact with the Japanese students and afterwards, we were all taken to a place like Timezone, but filled with photosticker machines, which are extremely popular with young Japanese kids.

One day was a BBQ and I'm not sure about everyone else but by now I was really looking forward to a nice steak and sausages after all the healthy Japanese food, but we were served Yaki Soba; a mix of vegetables, including bean sprouts, pumpkin and broccoli, and instead of steaks, we had thick pieces of ham. All the ingredients were put on the BBQ and mixed together, despite this, it tasted quite nice and I definitely won't think of a BBQ in the same way again!

I was very lucky, as my host family took me to Tokyo Disneyland, which was a lot of fun. I went on all the scary rides with my host brother and sisters and on a boat ride with the theme song 'It's a small world after all' in Japanese, which travelled past moving icons and dolls from countries all over the world. I found that ride the scariest of all.
was filled with, not crying, but absolute bawling Australian students. We had settled down by the time we reached the airport (two hours later). Here we put in our very overweight baggage and stressed about whether our can of soft drinks would explode during the flight. We took our last sticker photos, bought duty free gifts and any other items we couldn’t get in Australia. We arrived in Australia on the first day of Term Three, but I don’t think anyone made it to school for about a week after because we were just so exhausted. A week later, our exchange students arrived and I hope they had just as equally a good time here as we did in Japan. I had the best time of my life and I still keep in contact with my ‘Real Family’ and the many friends I made here and in Japan.

Carly Amber
Year 9

Chinese Chopsticks Experience
At the end of 2001, my Chinese class had a final class Chinese lunch. Rhiannon, Sam, Amiee and I (Renata and Evelyn were away) sat down to enjoy the feast Miss Chang had bought for use. We ate spring rolls, noodles, pork and masses of delicious fried rice. This was a great experience with chopsticks for all of us. After living in Hong Kong for a year and a half, I already was an expert with chopsticks, but it was a great source of entertainment watching the other three girls learn. At the end of lunch, every table had either a noodle or some rice stuck to it, but that is how everyone learns. I realized that sometimes you learn more about a country when you are further away from it. We talked and ate for the whole period, I practically stuffed myself with Chinese take-away. Afterwards I discovered that I should only eat what I can, no matter how appetizing the food may look. We spoke some of our chosen language at times, but mostly in English. It was a fun reward for all of the study for our exams, and I think we deserved it.

Eloise Andrews
Year 7
An Overseas Student's Response to September 11
On Tuesday night, I was sitting in front of my computer, and chatting with my friends. And one of my best friends, Karen, had just woken up because she lives in America. She told me she would take a shower and then she went to work. About 40 minutes later, she was at work. It was late at night in Sydney. There was one other friend who got on line and told me the terrible news: the World Trade Center in New York was hit by an airplane.

I felt so surprised and worried. Karen was working near Washington. I was chatting to her at this time. She told me the Pentagon was hit a few minutes later. She said she could see the smoke from the Pentagon and she said she couldn't work. She was so worried because her two brothers were working near the Pentagon. Cell phones wouldn't work because everyone was trying to call - the network was jammed.

We were both trying to get on the CNN website but we couldn't. We got on the Washington Post website and checked every news bulletin. We couldn't talk when we were watching video and pictures, it was too sad.

Finally, Karen and her brother were allowed to go home. I felt much more relaxed. It was already 3 o'clock in the morning here. I went to sleep.

Three days later, Karen still does not feel well. She told me the plane which hit the Pentagon took off from the airport near her workplace. I have been watching the TV for a few days. It is sad to look at it. Lots of my friends in China feel happy about this because America threw their bombs on the Chinese Embassy in Yugoslavia. I just can't understand why. I argued with my friends. There are too many people this time. The lives of ordinary people who have nothing to do with politics. They are not supposed to die. They have children, parents, wives and husbands. Lots of people need them. There are so many visitors to these buildings. When the firefighters and ambulances went to the building and tried to save people, the building collapsed. It is so cruel to watch the news, to look at people's lives fly out the window like a piece of paper.

Shu Qin Wang
Year 12

Australian/German Student Exchange Scheme
In 2001 I participated in the Australia/German Student Exchange Scheme. In June my family and I collected a girl named Helen Essink, aged 17 years, from a Youth Hostel located in the city. She spent ten weeks living with us and during her time here we showed her all the famous attractions Sydney has to offer and much more.

As part of the exchange Helen went to school during her stay. She came to school with me and engaged in several subjects. She had to wear a school uniform for the first time - they don't wear uniforms in Germany! At school here she made many good friends. My family and I got along well with Helen and we all enjoyed every minute with her. Helen spoke very good English. Her time with us went really quickly and before we knew it we were driving her to the International Airport at the end of August to say goodbye to her.

In November 2001 it was my turn to go to Germany and experience the German lifestyle and adapt to their culture and weather. After a two day orientation camp at a youth hostel in Dusseldorf I was greeted by Helen and her family. I lived in their beautiful house in Rheda-Wiedenbruck (2 hours drive north of Dusseldorf) with her parents, sister and her little brother. They were the kindest family and I was so happy staying with them. I went to school in

Visiting Chinese parents of overseas students attending Stella.
Germany and we were dismissed at about 1:30pm. The main meal of the day is eaten at lunchtime in Germany and for dinner in the evening we usually had breads with different varieties of cheeses and condiments.

I made many good friends and went to many parties with them. Helen's family took me to the Netherlands and Munich. Helen and I caught the train to Berlin and we stayed there with her uncle. I was in Germany for Christmas and New Year's Eve. Christmas is traditionally celebrated on December 24 and the Christmas tree is put up normally on December 22 or 23 and they decorate it with real candles. I was lucky enough to have a White Christmas and they had the most snow then for many years! Every day the temperature ranged from 5 degrees to -6 degrees. My German improved so much as did Helen's English when she was here. From not knowing anything about her, she became one of my best friends.

Overall it was a wonderful experience which I will remember forever.

Michelle Gray
Year 11
Term Four of 2000 marked the beginning of an amazing journey that over one hundred Stella Maris girls were to experience during the next year. Rock Eisteddfod fever was in the air, and rehearsals had begun. Our chosen theme for this year was "Off With Her Head" - a modern version of the well known storybook, 'Alice in Wonderland'. The key organizers for the event, for producing the theme, soundtrack, choreography, costumes and set design were Miss Taylor, Mr Wong and Miss Hall.

Through the many hours of after-school, and weekend rehearsals we were preparing for the night we had been waiting for, the third Sydney Heat for the Rock Eisteddfod Challenge 2001!

It was a day and night of wonders, everyone performing to the best of their ability, most importantly, in a drug-free atmosphere. No one was expecting the news that we later received - WE MADE IT TO THE FINALS - where we would perform in a month's time at the Sydney Entertainment Centre.

The day arrived and the Stella Maris girls paraded out of the bus with excitement and many nerves. However we stood out from the swarm of performers in our unique cowgirl hats and outfits "Let's Get Loud! Let's Get Loud, 'cos Stella Maris is in the Crowd!"

The day was jam-packed with rehearsals, lighting, design, costumes, make-up, cheering, making new friends, meeting popstars, and glitter, glitter, glitter!

The night soon arrived and we added our final touches and prepared to entertain the huge roaring crowds awaiting us beyond the dressing room. We were the debut performance. We were true entertainers, who performed to the maximum. It was the greatest feeling being up there representing our school and ourselves. It will have a place in our hearts forever.

Special thanks to Mr Mellis, Ms Silburn who helped out on the days and night, the parents for supporting us, and most importantly the wonderful Ms Hall, Mr Wong and Ms Taylor who made it possible and fulfilled our dreams.

Christina Chiarella
Kate Bedwell
Ally Bulgin
Year 9
“Once you have learned how to ask relevant and appropriate questions, you have learned how to learn and no one can keep you from learning whatever you want or need to know.”
Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner (1969): Teaching as a Subversive Activity

The above quote has come to mind as I step back from the busy and vibrant environment of the Information Centre to reflect on this past year.

Changes in curriculum have emphasized the need for developing research skills and powerful questioning abilities and staff have responded with increased research based learning using stimulating questioning styles and a variety of technologies.

In the Centre we have been encouraging students to be aware of the different technologies and to have the ability to recognize and question the appropriateness of a resource, be it in book (hard copy) or IT format.

Just about every assignment has had an accompanying “Search Strategy” sheet attached guiding students towards questioning why certain resources or formats are better than others and how to validate a source of information.

“Powerful questioning leads to Information Power - the ability to fashion solutions, decisions and plans that are original, cogent and effective... Without strong questioning skills, you are just a passenger on someone else’s tour bus. You may be on the highway, but someone else is doing the driving. Without strong questioning skills, you are unlikely to exercise profitable search strategies that allow you to cut past the Info-Glut, Info-Garbage and Info-Blitz that all too often impede the search for Insight.”
Jamie McKenzie (2000) Beyond Technology - Questioning, Research and the Information Literate School

At Stella Maris College we are supporting Jamie McKenzie’s idea that questioning may be the most powerful technology of all.

A variety of research skills have also been successfully targeted this year in the Centre and will continue to be expanded. They include some in-depth work on notetaking in year 7, to reinforcing the information skills of Planning, Locating, Searching, Selecting, Organizing and Evaluating in years 11 and 12.

Whilst research and technologies have been greatly emphasized this year, reading has not been forgotten and it continues to flourish. A Fiction Review Competition held for Years 7 to 10 met with an enthusiastic response and the quality of the entries was excellent, making it very difficult to choose. Our winners, with a prize each of a $20 voucher, were Nathania Nero, Abigail Marwick and Caris Bizzaca. Runners up were Carly White, Jing Jing Ren, Sarah Smith, Sarung McLachlan, Emma Higgs, Poppy Gorton, Jessica Harris and Samantha Lock. Congratulations to all students who entered. Reading is vital in this post modern world of ours, and fortunately there is a strong reading culture in the College.
The Information Centre has run smoothly this year with the effort of its capable and dedicated staff. For the first two terms we had Siobhan Betts as Teacher Librarian with Rosetta Coletta, Linda Ash and Lucia Coletta assisting. In terms three and four Helene Gourier joined Lucia in the hectic day to day running of the Centre and Book Hire. Ann Leon, who has been with the College for over 25 years, has continued her superb work in running our Audio-visual area and processing ALL resources in the school! We could not have survived this year without our invaluable Technology Support team, Karen Rolls and John James. Our wonderful mums Angelina Coletta and Bernadette McEachlan have come in all year to help us with covering and repairs and we are most appreciative. Thanks also to Antonina Coletta in year 10 who has helped tremendously in keeping the Information Centre looking great.

I would like to finish off with another powerful quote:

"I believe that what distinguishes us as a species is not our technological prowess, but rather our extraordinary ability to confer meaning on our experience and to search for clues about our purpose from the world around us...."  

Irith Gourier
Teacher Librarian
FIRST IMPRESSIONS

I arrived to my first day of High School on the 143 from Beacon Hill. I walked into the huge grounds with my friend Kathleen. Our exact thoughts were, “How on earth are we going to find our way around this place!”

That morning we were given information and shown around the school. Everything didn’t seem quite so bad anymore. We found out what classes we were in. I wasn’t put in any classes (not even one!) with any of my friends (no-one!). I looked like a bit of a loner for the first day in class because everyone else had friends from their primary school except me and a few other people. Now (two weeks since beginning High School) I have made lots of friends in my class, and in other classes.

It’s a big change from primary school where you only have one teacher, and a lot less students. In a way I miss primary school. Like the fact that I used to know just about every student in the school, now, I wouldn’t have a clue who everyone else is and I used to live right across the road from school, so I could sleep in and still make it to school in time. But I’m also excited about getting a bus pass for the first time in my life! I used it for the first time the other day. It’s so fun, it sort of eats your pass and then it shoots up again. I also like all the clubs, teams and groups you can join at High School.

I thought the work would be hard, because everyone said it would be, but it’s not. They haven’t laid off the homework though!

Bonnie Manchee

When I came to high school I found out it was going to be different to Primary School. There were going to be more challenges and much more homework. Here at high school they treat you more like an adult and you are relied on to be self confident. We have gone from being the oldest to the youngest of the school, which is really weird and the workload is heavier compared to Year 6. I also have a lot more opportunities in expressing myself and there is a larger variety of sport than before. I think that my years at Stella Maris will broaden my opportunities to do things in my future life that will enable me to become successful.

Danielle Mered

I was so terrified on the first day of school, My mum said “Don’t worry dear it will be cool.” I ate as much breakfast as I could, but not really the amount I should. Then when it was time to go I said, “Mum I don’t want to get on with the show!” “Now don’t be silly,” my mum replied, “You don’t want to be like your Uncle Clyde.”

When we arrived, I was even more terrified. I tried to look for someone I knew, but everyone looked clean and brand new. Finally I saw some friends, then guess who went by, yes the Year 10’s! They were really 10 feet tall!

I quickly turned to my friends and said “See that girl against that wall She’s so big she can touch the basketball ring” BRRRNNGGG!!!!

My first lesson was about to start, I felt like I want to part.

I wondered what the teachers would hide, I heard some Year 12’s say, “Have a good time!” But now to end my story I’d like to say, I’d come to school with a smile any day.

Jemma Kerameas

When I first came to Stella Maris I was quite nervous but excited. I had one girl coming with me from my old school which made me feel less nervous about my first day. As soon as I walked into the school the first thing I noticed was that the school was looking SOOOO big that day and there were lots of people around. I didn’t know where I was going or what I was doing. All the people seemed friendly and the seniors were most willing to help out, which helped me to get to know my way around.

I thought that the Taste of High was great because I go to know some people before the BIG DAY came around. I also think that the school is in a really good position right near the beach and I can’t wait until sport when we can go rollerblading along Manly Beach.

Now that I am settled into the school, making more and more friends each day, I am getting used to the work and the system and the school doesn’t seem so big. I feel as though I belong to
Stella Maris College which just a couple of weeks ago was 'the new school'.

Gabrielle Rothwell

My first impressions of Stella Maris was how nice the older students are to me and my friends and how helpful everyone is. The senior students are happy to tell you anything you do not know, all you have to do is ask. I am very surprised how big the school is compared with my old primary school. The buildings are bigger and two stories. There are a lot more students and they seem bigger because I am one of the young ones now.

Some of the other things that impressed me were moving classes so many times during the day, going to places like the Science Lab for example. I had never seen a Science Lab at a school before Stella. The teachers all seem so nice and it is new for me to have more than one teacher all day.

I could not believe how many people had to get their locks cut off their lockers, it is still happening now! I am so glad I am not one of those kids. We have lots and lots of homework.

The best part about high school so far is the chance to meet new people and make some new friends.

Rhiannon Tonner

CAMP

The weather was sunny,
At Camp Yarramundi.
The food was great,
But nobody ate!

Bushwalking in the pouring rain,
Thunder, lightning, what a pain!
They told us to crouch down so we wouldn't get hit,
No-one liked it, not one little bit.

Looking down from the abseiling wall,
We all thought we were going to trip and fall.
When we buckled up getting ready to jump,
In our throats there was a lump.

Alpine rescue was a blast,
On some things we went slow and others fast.
If you fell off it would mean,
A point will be taken off your team.

The activities were really great,
There must have been at least eight.
At Camp Yarramundi we had fun with our friends,
We were really sorry to see it end.

Jemma and Jodi
Camp... well what can I say?
A new thrill everyday.
My new friends which I made,
Played activities in and out of the shade.

Yeah the bush walk was great,
At least it was until we reached a terrible fate.
Rain... it did that quite a bit,
Rain coat, I’m glad I brought it.
At nighttime the cabins were cold.
Mrs McKew had her birthday but she’s not that old.
Under and over we did the high ropes,
Not only that we did games to see who were dopes.
Dances, skits and singing fun
I hope next time you’ll be able to come.

Mikaela Read
RETREAT

At the Retreat on Monday we had a priest who's name was Father Kevin. We went with 7.1, 7.4 and 7.6. At the Curl Curl Sports Centre we learnt about how to be good friends. We played games at the start which helped us to work together.

By the end of the day we had a great time and made posters and created plays. I thought it was pretty fun and the Mass and Father Kevin were cool.

Vessa Rockliff
7.1

We began our day at 8.45 on Curl Curl Netball Courts, ready for an exciting day ahead of us.

While Father Kevin Bates prepared for the days' activities, we were entertained with a few group games, like Under Over, Captain Ball etc. But I think everyone enjoyed the last game which was played by standing in a row with your team and passing a lifesaver from toothpick to toothpick by your mouth.

Finally Father Bates was ready to begin. We were all introduced to Father and spent the rest of the morning getting to know each other. We did this by including girls from other groups into your own. After a successful introduction with our new peers we were all ready for recess. We were provided with morning tea, which consisted of cake and cordial. The cake was very popular amongst the group (especially the chocolate) and after we'd all taken our slice we left Mr Daley, Mrs Christensen

Hannah Myers
7.2

On the 21st of August all of Year Seven went on their first Retreat as Stella students. The Retreat was held at Curl Curl Sports Centre, with all of Year Seven attending on one of two days.

Rebecca Harrod
7.3

Our day began playing different games like Under and Over, and Tunnel Ball using a balloon. Father Kevin then spoke to us all about a lot of things such as caring for each other and loving everyone in the world no matter who they are or where they come from. He also spoke of how we should all try our best in life and give of our best. He said we should never take the easy way out, but should strive to give of our best always.

Father Kevin also spoke to us about friendship. He told us not to be nasty to our peers, but to be kind and friendly to one another. He told us to always do the right thing and to trust good people.

Through the day, we had breaks and had plenty of time to get to know one another better. It was a really fun day where we all learnt a lot about friendships and being better friends to each other. We also sang songs together with Father Kevin, while he played his guitar. We all enjoyed the day very much and will look forward to other Retreats while we are at Stella.
Stella Maris again participated successfully in the Peer Support Program. This program is aimed to assist Year 7 students when they can be vulnerable by providing a safe environment where positive ideas can be explored and nurtured.

The Peer Support Program provides students with the opportunity to develop social skills, enhance self-esteem and assist them to successfully deal with negative peer pressure. The program also assists them in making appropriate decisions regarding unhealthy behaviour. In their groups students are free to discuss issues openly with their peers and leaders. Students learn to care for one another and during this process assist in creating a caring world.

156 Year 7 students commenced at the beginning of the year, one of the largest intakes of Year 7 students in the history of Stella Maris College. These students were guided by 29 Year 10 students who were trained to:

- Model behaviour which represents appropriate leadership
- Enjoy themselves
- Develop behaviour that represents appropriate leadership
- Contribute positively to the school community
- Play an active role in the welfare of the new Year 7 students

The guidance given to the Year 7 students by the Year 10 leaders was invaluable, assisting them in a smooth transition into their new school environment which was filled with new challenges.

Peta Bird
Margaret Heraghty
The Manly Voice, Volume 1, Issue 1, November, 2001

Youth Survives Khmer Rouge

Vithy recently turned 12. He currently attends St. Paul’s High School in Manly and lives with his older brother, Mang, and Betty and Frank, his adopted parents. Very few people know the truth about this seemingly ordinary boy’s life. Very few people know that Vithy really grew up in the war-torn country Cambodia during the Vietnam War.

Vithy ventured alone across the country in search of his older brother, Mang. He travelled through peril and despair, tough times and good, through days and nights of painful endurance and constant fear. “I always had to watch my back,” he explained in a private interview last week. “I never felt I was in total safety. It felt as though there was a constant dark cloud hovering over my shoulders.”

Vithy’s story is one of adventure and love. After the Khmer Rouge first attacked his home and drove his family into despair and separation, Vithy only had his older brother, Mang. Mang and Vithy spent a long time living in a Khmer Rouge concentration camp, the Big Paddy.

After learning of his mother and father’s death, he was then to discover his sister had been killed when she demonstrated the ability to read and write. Mang was Vithy’s only living relative.

The two brothers were separated when they fled the camp into the woods. Mang, with great courage, distracted the soldiers in order to save his little brother’s life. Vithy didn’t see his brother for a long time after this.

Fortunately, in the end, Vithy and Mang were re-united. These two boys are examples of the few, the very lucky few. Only on very rare occasions does a family end up re-united after situations like these. The C.R.C. (Children’s Re-uniting Centre) is re-uniting children with lost family members all across the world.

You can help. Give a donation and make it possible for a child, like Vithy, to find his family and fill the hole in his heart. Support the centre and give thousands of other stories, just like Vithy’s, a happy ending. Every donation is appreciated, accepted and helpful.

Catheryn Goss
7.1

The Manly Voice, Saturday, November 30, 1979

Escape to a new life

Two weeks ago Muong Vithy, a young Cambodian boy, arrived here in Manly after fleeing from the way in his own country. He, along with very few, was one of the lucky ones who has a chance to start a new life away from his war-torn homeland.

This extraordinary 11 year old’s life began in Sambor, a small town in Cambodia close to the Vietnamese border, where he lived with his family.

“They took my father away”, Vithy said with a mixture of pain and revenge. His whole family was separated by the Khmer Rouge soldiers and they were sent to work in slavery picking rice in the fields.

Vithy described these Khmer Rouge soldiers as young boys (14 to 15) only a few years older than himself. The pain and sufferings of Vithy’s experiences are too tragic for many of us to understand. Days of endless torture; starvation; walking for miles; the shots and screams and, most of all, the agony of suspense. Vithy sees moving to Australia as one of the best decisions in his life. His journey half way across the world has found him a long lost brother and they are both elated.

Vithy’s life is one of new beginning and hope. He has the opportunity to start school and live again in a warm, loving house with an amazing Australian woman, Dr. Betty Harris.

Dr. Harris is one of many doctors, nurses and other medical advisers who have travelled to the third world countries to provide medical help. One thing is for sure, they have accomplished more than this, they have found a place in their hearts for these young, hurt, abandoned children and have put these feelings into action. Dr. Harris has saved Muong Vithy’s life.

You too, like Dr. Harris can help these children. All you have to do is pick up the phone and call the “Refugee Children’s Fund” on 1800 637 2901, and place a donation. Any small donations will help and will definitely be worth it because everyone deserves a fair chance in life.

Gabby Rothwell
7.1
Mayor Jean Hay, the Environment and Heritage, and many attended by Senator Bob Hill, Minister for the Environment, Stirling Reuse Project Launch at Many.

Stella Mares College Choir performed at Many.