

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a large, two-story red brick building with Gothic architectural features. The building has multiple arched windows, some with decorative tracery. A prominent balcony with intricate white ironwork spans across the middle of the building. The building is set on a green lawn with some flowering bushes in the foreground. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

# Alumni News

EDITION 1, JUNE 2022



# FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear FCJ College alums,

How wonderful it is to be engaging with all of you again! Whether you finished our time with us in 2021 or 1961, we are thrilled to be able to re-connect with all our former students and staff via this (magazine) and hopefully a range of different means in the future.

As you know, FCJ College has a rich history, and you are all a bright part of this story. As current keepers of the story, we have made it our mission to look back and engage with our past. We're hopeful this first Alumni News will reach far and wide and find its way onto the screen of former students all around the world.

I commenced my principalship of this marvellous community in July 2021 in the midst of another lockdown. There were not many students or staff onsite, so I had the pleasure of wandering around the buildings and soaking in the past, the stories and the history. Even in the short time I have been here, there have been significant changes to some of the buildings and rooms that you will be familiar with. Our Woodwork and Food Technology rooms have been refurbished, and as this is going to print, builders are upstairs in the Mitchell Wing demolishing the classrooms in readiness for a brand new learning space for our Year 8 students. However, while the buildings, students and staff may change, the culture of this place remains true.

We'd love to hear from you and learn about your adventures since you left FCJ College. Please contact Kristy Hanrahan (our Community Engagement Officer) via email [kristy.hanrahan@fcjbenalla.catholic.edu.au](mailto:kristy.hanrahan@fcjbenalla.catholic.edu.au) or call the school office on 03 5762 1222 to update us on your movements and achievements - no matter how big or small - or to arrange a visit!

Once an FCJ College student, always an FCJ College student - you are always welcome here at the College.

Go well,



FCJ College Principal









# FROM THE ARCHIVES

Since the easing of COVID restrictions, I have been able to welcome visitors to view, remember and research the FCJ College Archives. Firstly, there was Norah McClusky. Norah attended FCJ College as a boarder in the 1960s. After leaving school, she joined the FCJ Order and returned to Benalla to teach at St Joseph's Primary School. Norah also held the position as Boarding Mistress until the College ceased to have boarders in 1980, after almost 80 years as a boarding school for girls.

Norah was an fcj nun for 23 years and when she left, she went back to study and worked at TAFE in Dandenong, teaching non-English-speaking adults in the Language and Studies Department. After 17 years she took a redundancy package and in 2013 joined, and is currently working for Catholic Mission Australia. Norah has also been running a volunteer English program for adults of non-English speaking backgrounds since 2005. She wants to be part of a solution and not the problem. This free English program supports asylum seekers, migrants, refugees and new arrivals.

On her way through Benalla on a Saturday, Norah wanted to visit her old school and convent, where she had spent many years. Norah was given a tour of the College where she got to see the many changes and reminisce about her time spent at FCJ College Benalla.

I also welcomed Kay Mulcahy (Looby) who boarded at FCJ College from 1958 to 1963. She recalled how very cold the buildings were as they only had open fires to keep them warm. Given the high ceilings and brick walls, it didn't hold the warmth at all. Kay said it was the only time in her life she suffered from chilblains. Her friend, Denise Jackson (Corboy) who also attended as a boarder around the same time, reflected on her years. She was only 10 when she came to board. Being so young, she often cried herself to sleep at night. Both ladies spent time looking at photos from that era. They have since visited again and plan to revisit to once again reflect and reminisce.

I also had a visit from a lady by the name of Lynda Van Rossum who was tracing some family history. Her relatives arrived at the Benalla Migrant Centre in the fifties, and she was wanting to know whether they attended FCJ College.

*Lyn Tanner*  
FCJ College Archivist







## VALE

*Sr Maureen Martin fcj*

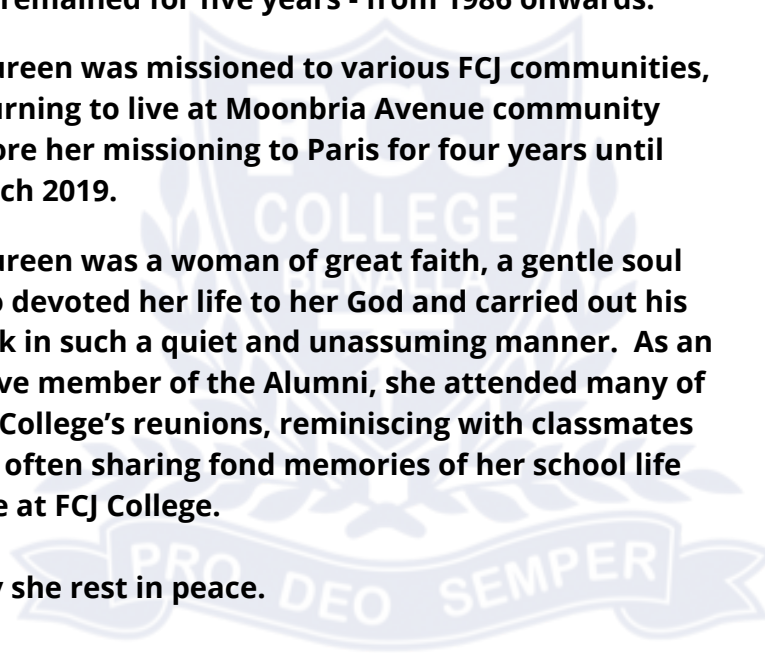
**Sr Maureen Martin grew up on the family farm in Tamleugh North via Violet Town and boarded at FCJ College Benalla (or Convent as it was known then). She was enrolled at the College on 12/02/1952 until 12/12/1956. Her three sisters - Mary, Clare and Bernadette also attended FCJ College as boarders for their entire secondary schooling.**

**Maureen entered as a postulant with the FCJ Sisters in 1957, completed her studies (in French) at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland, taught for two years in the United States and returned to Australia in 1967 where she taught at Benalla for three months. In 1968, she then moved to Genazzano where she taught for the next four years. The next return to Genazzano was in 1980 as Director of the newly established St Raphael's Nursing Home (formerly on the site of the Madeleine Centre) where she remained for five years - from 1986 onwards.**

**Maureen was missioned to various FCJ communities, returning to live at Moonbria Avenue community before her missioning to Paris for four years until March 2019.**

**Maureen was a woman of great faith, a gentle soul who devoted her life to her God and carried out his work in such a quiet and unassuming manner. As an active member of the Alumni, she attended many of the College's reunions, reminiscing with classmates and often sharing fond memories of her school life here at FCJ College.**

**May she rest in peace.**





# FCJ COLLEGE ALUMNI (1979-1982)

## Professor Robyn Murphy



**Robyn attended FCJ College from 1979-1982, back when students finished at Year 10 before moving elsewhere for Years 11 and 12. Robyn was the FCJ College School Captain in 1982, ironically with the unrelated John Murphy. Robyn completed her final schooling at Galen College, Wangaratta in 1984. After completing her HSC (VCE equivalent), she spent 5-years away from studying, filling this time with gaining valuable work experience which included working for Westpac in Melbourne, undertaking a 12-month working holiday to Queensland and working as a sales representative for a computer supply company.**

**The list of jobs was extensive, and through these experiences, Robyn was well positioned to put herself through University. She then attained her Bachelor of Science in Chemistry with Honours in 1993 (Victoria University). After another stint away from studying, which was spent travelling internationally for 18-months and working in hospitality, she returned and completed her PhD, a 4-year commitment to undertaking research. She was 7 months pregnant with her first child, Poppy, when she graduated with her PhD in Exercise Biochemistry in 2003 (Deakin University).**

**Robyn continued research as a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Zoology, La Trobe University, and was awarded a prestigious National Health and Medical Research Council Peter Doherty Early Career Research Fellowship.**



Those years essentially meant that she was able to work solely on her research, an important step in establishing herself as a scientist and gaining national and international reputations. During this time, Robyn had her second child, Kosta, in 2006. In 2010, Robyn began her academic career as a Senior Lecturer at La Trobe University where she still works today, albeit in a different capacity. She held Teaching and Research academic positions in both Dept of Zoology and Dept of Biochemistry, progressing to Head of Department of Biochemistry and Genetics in 2017 and in 2018 she became a full Professor.

Since 2020, Robyn has held senior leadership positions and today is the Deputy Dean and Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching in the newly formed School of Agriculture, Biomedicine and Environment. Her leadership style involves transparency, accountability, and strong communication skills. Listening, empathy, drive and enthusiasm are combined in how she leads. Robyn declares to have learnt a lot about leadership and management by working in hospitality. She was the manager of a very busy and popular café on Brunswick St, Fitzroy, where keeping your cool regardless of the seeming chaos around you were the best attributes for success.

It hasn't all been work since being an academic, and in 2014 Robyn took 4.5 months long service leave and travelled around Australia with her family. Truly memorable and a treat to see so much of this amazing country. As this article goes to press, Robyn is travelling with her partner, Mark and daughter, Poppy around Canada, USA and Europe, on a holiday intermingled with work by way of delivering scientific talks.

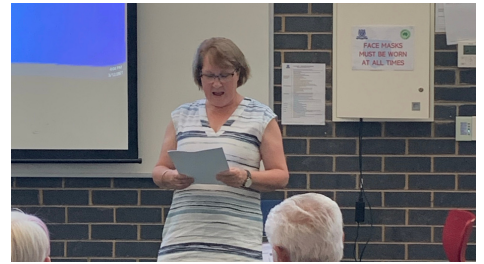
Robyn has a long history contributing to the administration and organisation of the Australian Physiological Society and has been the recipient of the two highest awards of the Society. She is the current President of the Society, allowing her to represent physiology nationally and internationally, for example she will travel to Kyoto, Japan in March 2023 by invitation of the Japanese Physiological Society to both present her scientific research and to attend a gala event representing Australian physiology as Japan celebrates their 100-year anniversary of their Society.

Robyn has published over 100 peer-reviewed research articles. The overall research interest of the Murphy laboratory is in the area of skeletal muscle in health and disease, from a muscle biochemistry perspective, where they aim to understand proteins important for metabolic and overall muscle health. Their work contributes to understanding the processes that happen at a cellular level by which exercise exerts its beneficial effects. They are also interested in contributing to understanding how muscle works, and what goes wrong when it doesn't work as well as others.

It is clear that Robyn meandered in life between school, working, studying, travelling, working and more studying. She states that she has never been afraid of having nothing to do, and her broad interest in so many things maintained a certain level of confidence that she would always have a job. She always vowed that if she didn't love her job, she would move on. Life is too short to not enjoy the work one does.



# FAREWELL LINDA DUBE



Linda began teaching at FCJ College in 1980. Linda recalls that one of the most memorable occasions of teaching at FCJ College was being part of the Cooina 'Let's Find our Voice Program' for nine consecutive years. FCJ College and Cooina Aged Care have a partnership in an annual (pre-COVID and hopefully post-COVID) program where the Year 7 students meet the seniors and together they learn to sing a range of songs, which culminates in a public concert. Linda identified this as one of her most fulfilling and enjoyable experiences during her years at FCJ College.

Linda also enjoyed leading the Year 7 camp for many years in her role as Year 7 Learning Leader, formally known as Year 7 Coordinator.

Linda also reminisced that one of the moments of absolute joy in her teaching career was the moment when the 'lightbulb' was 'turned on' and the student understood what Linda had been trying to teach them, especially if that student had a former self-belief that this was not possible.

Linda is to be highly commended for over 40 years of service to FCJ College Benalla. We will miss her cheery and calming presence at school but we will always remember with deep gratitude her commitment and love of learning. She leaves behind her a legacy of wisdom, service and dedication. We extend to her our very best wishes for a healthy and fun-filled retirement.

Linda will always be loved and treasured at FCJ College Benalla.



# INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY BREAKFAST



**This year we celebrated International Women's Day (IWD) at FCJ College. We began with a IWD breakfast hosted by our two female student leaders, Tilly Berry and Ella Ogden. These young women simply shone. They led the attendees through their own reflections on why International Women's Day is so important, then presented our two guest speakers, ex-FCJ College students, Professor Robyn Murphy and Dr Elizabeth Chacko, and led them through a Q&A session with the audience.**

**Seeing our current students on stage alongside our former students, supported by an audience of family, staff and Sr Liz Brown fcj, Pauline Fisher, Chair of the College Council, there was a sense that something powerful was happening; possibilities were being presented and connections were being made.**

**Finally, staff were moved by how many students (male and female) took the opportunity to wear a 'touch of purple' with their uniform in solidarity with women around the world fighting for respect, equity, and safety. The purple socks, hair-ribbons, or headbands connected our students in a cause much bigger than us, bigger than our school, but one we must all be aware of, understand, and stand-up for now, and into the future.**

**We look forward to seeing this event become a major item on our College calendar in the coming years.**



# ALUMNI WEDDINGS



## *Patrick Dube & Chloe Bennett*

Patrick and Chloe both attended FCJ College from Year 7-12, completing their studies in 2010. The tie to FCJ College does not stop there, Patrick's mum is Linda Dube, a former FCJ College teacher and Chloe's mum is Leonie Irwin, teacher and former Deputy Principal of FCJ College.

Patrick and Chloe were married at Mitchelton Winery in Nagambie on 29 April 2022.

Patrick is a Disability Support Worker and Chloe is a Team Leader in Youth Homelessness. They currently reside in Melbourne.

## *Damian O'Brien & Mariah Harrahan*

Damian & Mariah were married on 25 February 2022 at the The Peak in Lorne.

Damian & Mariah both attended FCJ College from Year 7-12, completing their studies in 2012 & 2013 respectively. Damian also has another FCJ College tie as he is the son of former teacher Paul O'Brien.

Damian is a Youth Development Officer at the Surf Coast Shire and Mariah is the Customer Operations Manager at the Geelong Football Club. They currently reside in Geelong.





# REUNIONS

## CLASS OF 2000, 2001 & 2002 REUNION

**Saturday 15th October 2022**

**4.30pm Tour of FCJ College  
followed by  
Drinks, finger food & music at  
Zeus from 6pm**

**123 Bridge Street E, Benalla**

**\$50 per head, plus 1's welcome!**

**Please RSVP by 1st October 2022**

Please contact Natalie Wellard or Sally Currie  
via email [natalie.wellard@gmail.com](mailto:natalie.wellard@gmail.com), [sally\\_1210@hotmail.com](mailto:sally_1210@hotmail.com)





**If you have suggestions for news articles within this publication  
or to organise a reunion, please contact  
Kristy Hanrahan - Community Engagement Officer.**

Keep updated with the latest FCJ College news - follow us on social media



**Kristy Hanrahan | Community Engagement Officer**

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*Embracing hope for a better world FCJ College Benalla promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children and young people*