



# *esprit* *de corps*



IONA PRESENTATION COLLEGE MAGAZINE  
ISSUE 22 • 2021

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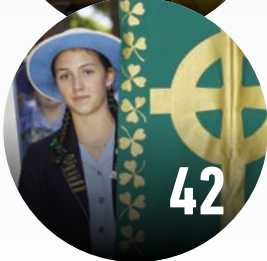
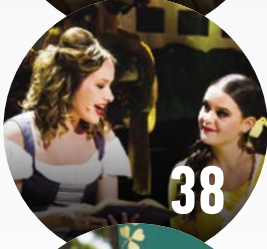
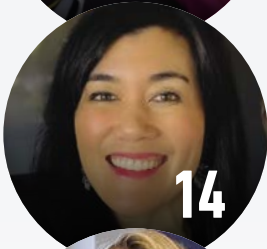
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*Making a Difference, Together*



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# message from THE PRINCIPAL

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ESPRIT DE CORPS  
ISSUE 22 2021



**After serving Kolbe Catholic College community for the past 11 years as Principal, I feel most honoured and humbled to have been appointed as Principal of Iona Presentation College.**

Soon after taking up my new role the images of all former Iona Principals were placed in the Boardroom, and it made me ponder upon the outstanding service given by these women in leading our community and the lives they have touched and shaped since those early days in 1908. John Salisbury's quote from the 12th century reminded me that, "we are like dwarves sitting on the shoulders of giants. We see more than they did, not because our sight is superior or because we are taller than they, but because they raise us up, and by their great stature add to ours." As newly appointed Principal I am acutely aware that I stand on the shoulders of all who have gone before me and that it is incumbent on me to build upon the wonderful work of these exceptional leaders. Iona students need to be afforded every opportunity so they may continue to thrive and flourish in an ever-changing world. This is my firm belief and something of which I am most committed.

Before I commenced at Iona, Sr Lucy van Kessel set me the task of reading two very thick books on the life of Venerable Nano Nagle. It was good preparatory work as I learned much about her story and one of the images that resonated for me was her notion of Lantern Work, where she served the poor, marginalised and vulnerable. I have spent much time reflecting upon how I will embrace 'lantern work' over the course of this year. That said, it has become very clear to me in my brief time at the College, that the light of Christ shines most brightly through the actions of both our staff and students.



While our vision is firmly centred on Christ, our mission is to educate and prepare our students today for a world of tomorrow. To achieve this, our students need to be agile, lifelong and curious learners. The McKinsey Report articulates that by 2030 the greatest demand in the workforce will be required to have proficient digital skills. There will also be an increase in the need for workers with finely tuned social and emotional skills, including advanced collaborative and communication skills. The other area identified as an area of growth are the higher order cognitive skills. These include creativity, critical thinking, decision making, complex problem solving and effective use of initiative. It is therefore critical that these contemporary learning skills are a focus from Pre-K to Year 12 so Iona students are equipped with the tools that will stand them in good stead in the future.

We have all heard that the nature of work has changed and will continue to change into the future. Iona is very much committed to preparing our students for the changing world and the need for them to be agile, flexible learners. It is for this reason that no matter the age all are active learners at Iona, whether staff or student. All members of our community are committed to lifelong learning. The world we live in is not stagnant and therefore the learning process is an evolving one and our staff are aware of the skills our students will require both for today and tomorrow. These skills are modelled and taught by staff across the years as students journey through our community.

Another dimension of learning is how space and the environment is used to promote learning. This is often referred to as the 'third teacher'. With the completion of the Albeus Fahey Centre, our students have quickly learned how to effectively use this world class facility to enhance their learning. At any time of the day, you can walk around the building and observe how students have tailored the space to suit their needs - when they need to work collaboratively or independently, when they need to use the space to create or design, how they can use technology to support their learning and how they can apply their learning to other environments. It is a real joy to see our students taking advantage of this space.

One of the greatest gifts we can give a child is that of resilience. If we want our students to be successful in a world of the future, they need to be resilient. It is for this reason that a special resilience program has been implemented into the Junior School and this program will form part of the Senior School. That said, we do also have a strong resilience program from Years 7 to 12. We need our students to learn how to manage

disappointments in life, when they fall over how to pick themselves up, learn from it and move forward.

The journey from Pre-K to Year 12 is very much a rewarding one and we want our students to experience a seamless transition from one year to the next; that learning will always build upon what has gone before. However, as Principal, I believe each year needs to be different and present its own challenges that students learn to work through. The one given in life is change and that we need to equip our students to manage and adapt to

changing environments, so our students become adept at dealing and coping with change. I acknowledge that it can be difficult to watch a child navigate change or hardship and there is often

a strong desire to rescue them, but it is important that our young people navigate and manage change.

'Iona Students Make a Difference'. In the short time I have been a member of this community it is most apparent that this continues to be the case today and I am committed to ensuring this will be the case tomorrow, the day after that and the day after that!

God Bless you all,

**Robyn Miller**

*B.Ed., MEd (RE), MEdL  
Principal*

**IONA STUDENTS NEED TO BE AFFORDED EVERY  
OPPORTUNITY SO THEY MAY CONTINUE TO THRIVE  
AND FLOURISH IN AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD.**

# Q & A with THE PRINCIPAL

## Where did you grow up?

I was most fortunate to grow up on a sheep farm just outside of Boyup Brook. The Blackwood River formed one of the boundaries of our farm and I have many fond memories of canoeing on the river with my sisters, often coming home with leaches on my legs! Hard work was part of everyday life, but I was able to explore and experience a sense of freedom. I believe this is where I was given the gift of resilience from my parents. I truly loved and cherished my life as a farm girl.

## Where did you go to school?

I attended Boyup Brook District High School from Years 1 to 10. I never really enjoyed school, but my best friend worked really hard, and I followed her lead. We were both fortunate to jump from Year 5 to Year 7 as there were too many students in the class. I was so delighted when I got this news as it meant I had to spend one less year at school! In Years 11 and 12 I attended Penrhos College as a boarder. I missed being away from family and would often leave the farm in the early hours of Monday morning after being at home for the weekend, to return. My poor father! He was such a wonderful man.

## Tell us about your family?

I have been married to my husband, John, for nearly 33 years and we have a son aged 22. When we were newlyweds, John was in the

Navy, and we spent many of our early years apart. This was challenging but did allow me time to focus upon work and study. He eventually received a posting to HMAS Stirling in Rockingham, and we made Rockingham our home. I never thought I would grow older living in this place, but the beautiful beaches and sunsets over Shoalwater Bay are breath taking. John is no longer in the Defence Force and now operates his own consultancy business. Our son graduated as a Mechanical Engineer at the conclusion of 2020. Journeying those senior school years and university with him has taught me a great deal of the pressures that are placed upon young people today. I was so proud when he graduated with first class honours.

## Favourite past time?

I have many favourite past times, but I am a bit of a home body and I love being at home. Just recently I have found solace in making memory bears for families who have lost a loved one. It has brought me so much joy knowing that I have in some small way helped with the grieving process. I also enjoy keeping fit and endeavour to do some form of exercise each day.

## Go-to snack?

Every Friday night is pizza night in our home. On nights when it is cold and wintry, a block of Cadbury's Snack chocolate or a bar of Turkish Delight never goes astray!

## What is it about young people that inspires you?

I continue to be so inspired with the agility of young people. They live in such a different world to the one that I experienced, and I am in awe of their innate ability to find a solution or think of a more creative way of doing something. I know that at times technology can be a curse, but it is the future for our youth. I see it is very much my brief as Principal to help our young people use their many strengths to traverse this landscape but continue to hold true to those all-important social skills.

## What have you noticed that is unique about Iona in your short time here?

In the short time I have been at Iona, I have experienced the warmest welcome from the community. When you walk into the grounds of Iona, you feel something most special. It has such a vibrant and welcoming aura. Then you get to experience all the amazing things that happen. There is always something on, and students are always engaged from dawn to dusk and sometimes well into the night. It would be remiss of me not to mention the special place that the Presentation Sisters fulfill in the Iona community. They are such wonderful women whom I gave thanks for each day. Their sacrifices have been immense and really shaped the Iona story.



## Most memorable moment?

Perhaps the most special and challenging time in my life was becoming a mother. It was one of the hardest things I have ever done and during those early years of balancing career and parenthood I learned a great deal about myself. Being a mother is an absolute gift and one that I give thanks for each day.

## Fun Fact?

Dreaming! Most people head off to bed for a good night's sleep. Well, that is not my experience! For as long as I can remember I have had the most vivid dreams with themes that are wide and varied. As a child I recall sharing my dreams with my dad over breakfast and his disbelief of my nightly adventures. Today that continues with my family and colleagues at work!

# message from THE CHAIR OF IPPA



**Welcome to our first edition of *esprit de corps* for 2021. This edition has a focus on Excellence: creating *Everyday Excellence*, setting goals to extend and challenge us and striving for personal bests. Excellence can take on many different forms. We celebrate, that it's not always being the best, but doing your best. It is setting high standards and challenges for ourselves and aiming to reach our potentials. There are many stories and perspectives on *Everyday Excellence* from within the Iona Past Pupil (IPPA) Community, which we look forward to sharing.**

We welcome Robyn Miller, Principal of the College. Robyn brings warmth and a wealth of experience in Education and Leadership. The Albeus Fahey building is complete and an amazing facility. If you are having reunions this year, please take up the opportunity for a tour and explore the showcase of what has become a benchmark in educational

landscapes. Highly bespoke architecture is delicately balanced with contemporary collaboration spaces, providing both utilitarian functionality and inspiration.

The Past Pupil Association (IPPA) continues to strengthen and provide networking, capacity building and opportunities to engage, support and connect with each other. The launch of 'The Mentoring Program', The 'Breakfast Networking' events, 'Pilates in the Park' and 'Workshopping the Future' all rely on alumni involvement and support of these initiatives. We recently had the pleasure of Gemma Thomson, Dean of Mission and Catholic Identity, at the College and Past Pupil Class of 2006, host our Leadership Networking Breakfast at the College. We thank our panellists; Jill Dawson Class of 1983, Sarah-Jane Hobson (*née Meyer*) Class of 2006, Danicia Quinlan Class of 1989 and Caitlin Collins Class of 2005 for their expertise and authenticity in sharing their leadership stories.

On the wish list for IPPA is helping to support the financial literacy of women; the planning and collaboration of a business directory and the increased development of Young IPPA. We express our gratitude to every Past Pupil willing to give back in any capacity and hope you enjoy this edition on *Everyday Excellence*.

Warmest regards

**Jane-Mary Richardson** (*née Ellis*)  
Class of 1989  
IPPA Chair

# Everyday Excellence

In this issue we asked IPPA to nominate others for *Everyday Excellence*.

Read here how Iona Past Pupils are striving to be the best they can be, in whatever form that takes.

## THE BEST OF THEIR ABILITY

**Marie Blackburn (née Heath) Class of 1984 was nominated for demonstrating *Everyday Excellence* by fellow classmate, Melissa Haskett (née Anthony) Class of 1984. Melissa is my godmother, and I am Marie's daughter, also a Past Pupil Class of 2011.**

I am incredibly proud of my mum, who I think demonstrates excellence as a mother to myself and my two sisters and as a nan to her two granddaughters.

In addition to being an amazing mum, Marie (pictured here with students from Sacred Heart College) is an incredible Special Education teacher. Marie is the Head of Inclusion at Sacred Heart College, and her work in special education has positively impacted the lives of many students over the years.

Marie works tirelessly to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities and has a wealth of knowledge and experience in supporting students with disabilities to achieve academic, social, work, and life skill goals. She sees what students can do, and by focusing on their strengths, she creates opportunities for them to achieve to the best of their ability.

Marie goes above and beyond to ensure that every student is not just integrated into class, or on the same campus, but fully included, both socially and academically through individualised education for each and every student.

Passionate about making positive progress and facilitating change to build positive, inclusive environments within all Catholic schools, my Mum's excellence inspires me everyday.

Now, I follow in her footsteps as an Education Support teacher. I am so proud of the amazing difference that my mum has made to so many lives.

**Amber Blackburn**  
Class of 2011



## COMPANION FOR CARE

**Heather McNaught (*née Gomes*), from the Class of 1980, has been an 'everyday hero' over the 40 years since leaving Iona. Heather is now the Western Australian Coordinator, a voluntary role, of ACRATH, and back in touch with many of the Presentation Sisters who are also active in this amazing organisation.**

ACRATH works to raise awareness, advocate for change and support victims of human trafficking. Heather (pictured here with Sr Lucy van Kessel and Sr Marion Beard) not only leads an active team of fellow volunteers but has been trained as a 'companion' – to support and care for women and their children, who have been victims of human trafficking. Practically, this means being a life-long friend and supporter to that woman, and also helping to meet the needs of that family, often in practical areas such as clothing or furniture as they settle

into life after being rescued from being trafficked.

Heather organised a hugely successful Bollywood Night, amongst other fund raisers, which gave ACRATH WA the funds to step-up their work, which has now grown to include a program of school visits and presentations by the volunteers.

Heather and fellow volunteers also ran a brilliant program at the Catholic Youth Conference in 2019, where they created a bride's dress, made of tissues, symbolising the 'wedding dress of tiers' to raise awareness of the issue of forced marriage, still prevalent across Australia. The activity and final product were deeply touching and cathartic for the youth who engaged so wholeheartedly with the project.

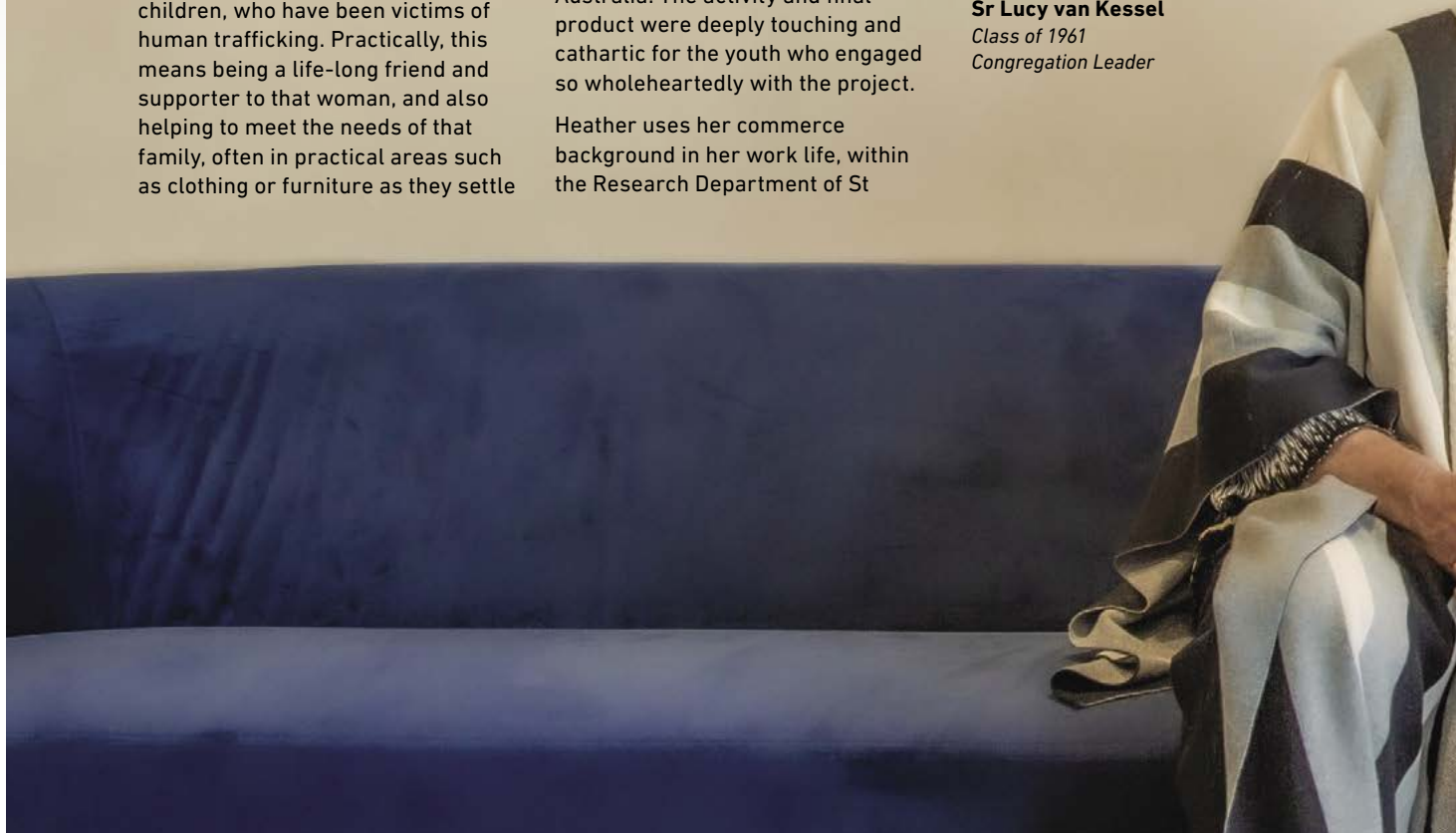
Heather uses her commerce background in her work life, within the Research Department of St

John of God Subiaco. At work, she's renowned for her kindness toward others, being a coffee buddy whenever anyone needs a confidential chat, and also for leading the music for Masses in the hospital's chapel.

Heather's husband, Keith, and adult children – Rebecca, James and Jessica – all consider her an everyday hero for being a person who constantly reaches out to people in need, whether it's visiting someone, or cooking a meal, or being that kind companion.

Nominated for  
*Everyday Excellence* by

**Sr Lucy van Kessel**  
*Class of 1961*  
*Congregation Leader*





## THERE FOR EACH OTHER

**There were 26 in the Class of 1962, many sat the Junior Certificate in 1960 and left school then to commence work. A very small class went on to finish Year 12.**

When I returned to WA in 1977 some of the class were catching up regularly and the Mosman Park girls were keeping everyone connected. More gathered in 1983 for our 21st year reunion at King's Park Restaurant.

When I tell anyone that our group have been meeting regularly three times a year for more than 20 years, they are amazed! What is special about the bonds and experiences that holds us together?





It is evident that we have all been striving to be the best we can be and some class members have been involved in the Iona Past Pupils' Association for a long time.

Significantly, afternoon is tea hosted by one of the girls in March on the Sunday nearest St Patrick's Day – now that is an Iona cultural thing! Lunch at a restaurant in July was initially to celebrate the 70th birthdays but continues to be enjoyed.

The Year 2000 prompted us to get together more often. We realized that it was 40 years since most of the girls had left school!

The first of our weekends away at River Resort recalled the boarding experience for some, but also deepened our friendships beyond being just school friends to be more like sisters.

In the following years we have stayed at Tupin House in Guilderton, Fairbridge Village in Pinjarra, SJOG sisters retreat house in Safety Bay, the old convent at New Norcia and more recently at the Presentation sisters units in Mandurah (thanks to Sr Marion).

This included long walks and laughter, Mass together on Saturday night, paddling canoes, overflowing a spa, bowls, mini golf, card games, fine food and wine and Carmel's famous cakes!

Each year our time together sharing stories of personal achievements, family joys and life's ups and downs have brought us closer together. We shared sadness at the deaths of some members of our classmates and have supported others through widowhood, loss of a child and illness.

A long time ago we gathered in a circle, clasped hands and promised to be there for each other.

*Once an Ionian, always an Ionian!*

**Kerry Hardwick** (*née Roberts*)  
Class of 1962



## A REMARKABLE CONTRIBUTION

Abbie Durtanovich (*née Robson*), Class of 1994 represents the epitome of *Everyday Excellence* and always displays the spirit of Iona in its fullest form. Many Past Pupils and current community members will instantly identify with Abbie's 'can do' attitude and with so much respect for the countless voluntary hours committed each year as the Friends of Junior School Coordinator and as a member of IPPA. Quite simply her contribution to the Iona community is both remarkable and without question.





As a Past Pupil, the College values live on strongly through Abbie. She is proud of her time at Iona, remembers it fondly and wants the same positive school experience for her own children.

Always one to look for an opportunity to innovate, Abbie brings to the community an enormous work ethic that so many of us have benefitted from. Her welcoming smile and inherent knowledge of Iona instantly draws others in, makes them feel at ease and part of the community from the outset.

She always shows great compassion and discretely helps those in our community that may need it. Her sense of fairness and social justice is most obvious and unquestioned by all those who come in contact with Abbie.

It is however, probably the value of Courage and Integrity that shine through the greatest. There is no one more genuine or true to herself as Abbie, what you see is what you get and lucky for the Iona community, this is a person of

great humour, honour, conviction and commitment.

It is because of people like Abbie that our student and parent communities can fully embrace their time at Iona and build on our traditions and proud history.

A successful school requires a positive correlation between the school administration, family and the community at large, Abbie has, and continues to be such an important contributor to the community piece and for that, we should all be forever grateful.

Excellence comes in many forms and often, the everyday contributions of people like Abbie go unnoticed. The opportunity to recognise Abbie's *Everyday Excellence* will be humbly received by one of the truly great people in our Iona Community.

We thank you Abbie for all that you do.

**Lana King** (*née Johnson*)  
*Class of 1994*



## HEART OF GOLD

Sarah Blackman (*née Conlan*) Class of 1998 was nominated for demonstrating *Everyday Excellence* by fellow classmate, Larisa Khoury (*née Locke*). I was asked by Larisa to write this piece about Sarah and I feel very honoured to share Sarah's story with you.





I have known Sarah for over 35 years, meeting in a playgroup prior to attending Iona for 12 years together. Over the duration of our friendship, we have experienced many good times together along with some extremely difficult times, including the passing of Sarah's father.

I was very excited to hear that Sarah and her husband Kane were expecting their first child in 2014, however their parenthood journey has not been the one they expected.

Their firstborn son, Finn was born in August 2014. They were overjoyed with the arrival of their little man however, issues began to develop not long after his birth. After seeing many different specialists for feeding, digestive, speech, neurological and other issues, at two years of age, Finn was finally diagnosed with a rare genetic disorder, Angelman Syndrome. This is characterised by a happy demeanour, frequent smiling, very limited or absent speech and stiff jerky movements. There is no medical treatment for Angelman Syndrome but there is a lot of research happening at the moment.

Now, Finn is nearly seven. He is a very happy and bright boy with good receptive language skills. He has a handful of spoken words and uses a device or signs to communicate. He has seizures and apraxia.

Sarah and Kane are the biggest advocates for Finn and the Angelman's Community. They are always on the search for new research that might help Finn and do their utmost to seek out the best therapies and schools for him. They have the same hopes and dreams as other parents. They hope for a cure.

In an interview with Kidspot last year, Sarah reported that 'my dream is one day Finn will have the power of speech. I want Finn to reach his full potential, be happy, healthy, have a rich life of experiences and relationships with others, and to be strongly connected as part of his local community.'

Sarah and Kane do not put limits on Finn's abilities, instead believing in him and watching him smash goals time and time again with a big smile on his face.

I personally believe that these special children are given to their parents for a reason and they will teach their parents many things. Sarah is one amazing woman with a heart of gold who has built incredible resilience and learnt a lot about herself since becoming a mother. Along with caring for Finn and ensuring all of his needs are met, she is also mother to two-year-old James.

Finn requires approximately eight hours of therapy sessions a week and additional time to implement these programs and strategies at home. Sarah also spends time teaching sign language to others around Finn and teaching the children how to interact and connect with one another. She continues to spend many hours advocating for the Angelman's Community as well as for Finn himself.

Sarah continues to work as a physiotherapist and participates in many community activities. She finds the time to check in with her family and friends whilst continuing to find time to ensure that her own needs are met so that in the long run, she will be there to take good care of Finn and James.

In my opinion Sarah definitely demonstrates *Everyday Excellence*.

**Jacinta Filliponi** (née Purnell)  
Class 1998



## FOREVER LEARNING

Jessie's story is one of resilience and perseverance and in our minds **Everyday Excellence**. Jessie works in our business and as such, my husband Andrew and I felt it was pertinent to nominate her for this very special feature as there are many different pathways to achieving success.

We asked Jessie to put down in her own words, her story.

We hope it inspires many an Ionian to look beyond traditional pathways and to continue to strive to be the best version of yourself.

Look how far she's come and what can be achieved - isn't it just brilliant how things turn out!

**Danielle Sullivan**  
Class of 1989

### **Isn't it funny - and annoying and brilliant - how things can turn out to be nothing like you thought they would?**

As a senior at Iona, I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. I loved school and thanks to my father Lindsey, filled my free time working. A successful jockey and trainer, he raised me with an acute hunger for learning, strong work ethic and positive outlook. My time at Iona reinforced this, with *Everyday Excellence* always front of mind.

Dad taught me it's never too early to start working. At 16, I had two jobs and every Sunday morning at 4.00am, would beg him to take myself and the horses down to the beach. There I would coerce them into the ocean and taking their tails, allow them to drag me through the icy water. It was exhilarating. I still beg him to take me to the stables and I'm nearly 34 years-old!

In my senior years, we lived on a hectare in Casuarina. The daily trek to Iona was long. It took me two buses, a train and a very long walk every morning and afternoon to get there, yet it never phased me. I adored my time at school.

I completed secondary graduation (similar to the Instep program today) with good grades but unlike my friends had no clear direction. Unlike hairdressing, administration, medicine or law, property management just wasn't an option and at 16, you don't think outside the box unless it is presented to you. If only I had recognised what I do now - my passion and aptitude for property, sales and legislation.

After graduating, I worked in dangerous cargo and exports at Mediterranean Shipping Company, and then, with a single suitcase in tow, headed to Melbourne in search of more opportunities. Whilst dipping my toe in retail, my aunt alerted me to a position advertised at a local property office. I was an avid viewer of *Better Homes and Gardens*, and the prospect of working in real estate was exciting. I applied immediately and was successful. After three weeks on reception and a lot of hard work, I got my Real Estate Agent's Representative Certificate and my very first property to sell. I couldn't believe it - I was on my way!

My twenties saw me work tirelessly as I climbed the property management ladder, and then at 31, I landed my dream job - Senior Property Manager. Rental Management Australia (RMA) bought the company I was working for, and my whole life changed.

In February last year, RMA CEO Andrew Graham (whose wife and daughters all went to Iona in 1989, 2019 and 2022 respectively) made me Officer in Effective Control in Werribee, Victoria. I'm a leader by nature, but with two children under three years-of-age, my personal life was hectic to say the

very least. Despite this, Andrew demonstrated unwavering faith in me, and the support and flexibility he and RMA offer me every single day is extraordinary.

Property doesn't tend to be a career choice - most of us simply fall into it. Like many of my colleagues, I wish I had known it was a career option at school and I hope other hard-working senior students reading my story consider it seriously.

My career at RMA is an opportunity I don't take for granted. Working in property means I am forever learning, and always rewarded. My career path is solid, exciting and on the fly. To me, success is not about BEING the best, it's about doing YOUR best.

**Jessie Bailey-Smith** (*née Bailey*)

*Class of 2005*



## FASHION LEADERS

**Chermaine Leo Class of 2012, Kayla Fallace Class of 2012 and Lauren Fallace Class of 2015 are three Iona women who embody *Everyday Excellence* as successful entrepreneurs and business-owners in a dynamic landscape. Not long after finishing their time at Iona and attending university, these three Ionians decided to create Bāmba Swim, an 80's-inspired swimwear label which is today recognised, modelled and celebrated by leaders in the fashion industry.**

The founders of Bāmba Swim credit Iona for enabling them to discover their talents and interests and for fostering teamwork and strong communication skills. In the ever-changing and evolving landscape that is the fashion industry of the 21st Century, these three remarkable women draw on their experiences at Iona, their families and faith to guide them to overcome the challenges involved in running a business.

Bāmba Swim has been showcased on some of the world's top supermodels and the brand has built a strong and loyal following. All three women take pride in each of their designs and are extremely grateful for the success that they have achieved, and grateful to be able to follow their passion on a daily basis. The team from Bāmba Swim display *Everyday Excellence* in the day-to-day operations of their business. As successful businesswomen, Chermaine, Kayla and Lauren are courageous and

demonstrate conviction with their adherence to their business's philosophy and style.

In addition to building a successful brand, all three women believe in 'giving back' and believe that service is absolutely integral to their business. As such, Bāmba Swim regularly donate to various charities and to ensure that Bāmba Swim reduces its carbon footprint, their swimwear is produced from regenerated nylon.

Excellence is not easily determined or measured, however, Chermaine, Kayla and Lauren are three women who have worked together to build a brand based on passion, determination and hard-work.

Together, they reflect on their time at Iona and believe in taking risks and working hard to develop what they love – showcasing *Everyday Excellence*.

**Grace Rompotes**  
*Class of 2012*



*Pictured here are models from a recent Bāmba Collection.*

## AT THE HEART

**Lesley Baker (née Race) Class of 1974 epitomises what it means to be a true Presentation person.**

Her lantern work has spanned across decades in her roles, as both as a Past Pupil, mother of Past Pupils (Hannah Baker, *Class of 2000*, Gabrielle Trinca née Baker, *Class of 2006* and Martha Ercole née Baker, *Class of 2009*) and staff member of the Junior School.

She speaks fondly and with great love for how the Presentation Sisters have influenced and supported her throughout life's journey.

Lesley's passion for 'making Jesus real' for our younger students is quite special to see in action. Her Religious Education lessons are creative, inspiring a sense of wonder and awe. Lesley's modelling of Christian witness to students, staff and the Iona community is anchoring for those who encounter her.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta said, "we can do no great things, only small things with great love". Selfless by nature, Lesley's commitment to encouraging faith, promoting service and 'making a difference' through the Junior School Missions activities is exceptional.

She has mentored many groups of students over the years, taking them on pastoral excursions to deliver donations, organising guest speakers and always ensures that students are educated about where their donations are going as they strive to *make a difference*.

Beyond the walls of Iona, Lesley is active in service to her family, the local community, her fellow educators and friends. An innately pastoral person, students' past, present and future are so fortunate to learn from a teacher who holds human dignity and Gospel values, and a 'can-do' Presentation attitude at the heart of her vocation.

**Gemma Thomson**  
*Class of 2006*



## EVERYDAY EXCELLENCE AT IONA - WHAT MADE YOU COME BACK?

20

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ISSUE 22 2021

### SABINA BIELSKI-NAPRAWSKI

#### What is your role?

Science and Chemistry teacher in the Senior School

#### Graduated?

Class of 2011

#### What made you want to come back?

During my time at Iona, I witnessed teachers and students making a difference every day. It's nice to be back in a familiar place where I can make a difference too.

#### What do you believe makes Iona Excellent?

Iona does common things in an uncommon way.

#### Anything else?

I often get asked by my students what House I was in. I'm currently in Kildare House but have a secret allegiance to O'Dowling.

### FELICITY MCLEAN

#### What is your role?

Head of Technology and Applied Studies

#### Graduated?

Class of 1995

#### What made you want to come back?

A desire to continue to make the students of Iona have a similar joyful experience as I did in my new role as a mentor and teacher.

#### What do you believe makes Iona Excellent?

Compassion and care are at the forefront before all else. There is a tone to daily life here that calls on students and staff to look beyond self and to always strive for personal excellence.

#### Anything else?

The smell of a squashed Morten Bay fig, I will always associate with Iona, I no longer get them stuck in my Doc Marten's but the smell certainly brings back many memories!

## SHONTEL LICARI

### What is your role?

Temporary Year 4 Teacher

### Graduated?

Class of 2013

### What made you want to come back?

Fond memories, working at Iona has always been a dream of mine.

### What do you believe makes Iona Excellent?

Iona fosters a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone feels important and like they belong. We have always been taught at Iona to try our hardest and to always reach for our goals.

### Anything else?

Since leaving Iona in 2013, I successfully completed a four-year Bachelor of Education Degree in Primary Education and have since had the privilege of working as a teacher from Perth to Pemberton, Parmelia to the UK.

## DANIELA MORSELLA

### What is your role?

Year 4 Teacher

### Graduated?

Class of 2013

### What made you want to come back?

The sense of community. It's so nice to see the interaction amongst everyone, you certainly do feel at 'home'.

### What do you believe makes Iona Excellent?

The community and the passionate teachers! We always put our students first to ensure they become the best version of themselves.

### Anything else?

Gabrielle Groves who taught me in Year 6, is now my teaching partner in Year 4!

## KENDAL PRICE

### What is your role?

Year 6 Teacher and Early Career Teachers Mentor

### Graduated?

Class of 2007

### What made you want to come back?

Giving back to the school that gave me so much joy as a student, was an opportunity I could not miss.

### What do you believe makes Iona Excellent?

The wonderful staff and students are what truly makes Iona an excellent community- it takes a village to raise a child, and we have the best!

### Anything else?

Throughout my studies I took time off to backpack through North and South America, before returning to Australia where I took up my first teaching position. I have now worked across three schools, and am currently studying my Masters of Positive Psychology.

## MATILDA SHAND

### What is your role?

Education Assistant in Pre-Primary

### Graduated?

Class of 2020

### What made you want to come back?

In a COVID-19 world, I decided to begin 'life after school' in an environment and community so familiar and in which I could trust.

### What do you believe makes Iona Excellent?

As a College, Iona has always wanted the best for each person, whether a student, Past Pupil or staff member.



A young girl with dark, curly hair is smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a light blue short-sleeved school shirt with yellow trim on the collar and cuffs, and a blue apron. She is sitting at a desk in a classroom, with other students and classroom furniture visible in the blurred background. The text "Your gift," is overlaid in white serif font on the lower right portion of the image.

Your gift,



# her future

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Compassionate educators, the Presentation Sisters have devoted their lives to education. Their generous gifts over more than 100 years have had an enduring impact and have been the life-changing difference to so many.

In honour of this spirit of giving, we now invite you to help continue the mission of Nano Nagle.

**Give back to our Scholarship Fund and your donation will assist future Ionians to unlock their full potential.**

Your thoughtful gift will assist in providing an Ionian education and opportunities, which may otherwise be unattainable.

Create your long-lasting connection to Iona today.

## IPPA PILOT MENTORING PROGRAM LAUNCH

**IPPA recently launched its newest initiative - The IPPA Pilot Mentoring Program**

Welcomed into the pilot program are 15 pairs of Past Pupils all from different walks of life, industries and experiences. We even have those who will be working with us virtually - either interstate or internationally!

With the support of the IPPA Mentoring Sub-Committee, all volunteers and some of whom are working Mum's (see photos), matches were made based on career, aspirations and goals.



The program aims to provide unique opportunities for IPPA to expand their network, make connections, tap into skills of more experienced Ionians and gain insights with a view to making a meaningful impact.

The six-month program was launched over breakfast right here at Iona in the beautiful surrounds of the newly built, Albeus Fahey Building.

We look forward to seeing how this pilot program unfolds and how we can continue to grow our IPPA community, now and well into the future. A wonderful example of Iona girls, truly making a difference and of *Everyday Excellence*.

To find out more or to volunteer, please contact Georgia Allen in the Community Relations and Development Team: [georgia.allen@iona.wa.edu.au](mailto:georgia.allen@iona.wa.edu.au)



## Leadership, stories of resilience and *Everyday Excellence*

More than 50 IPPA Members ranging from the Class of 2018 to 1967 were recently welcomed back to the College for our latest IPPA Networking Event.

Hosted by Gemma Thomson *Class of 2006*, Dean of Mission and Catholic Identity, Iona Presentation College, and supported by a terrific panel; Caitlin Collins *Class of 2005*, Member for Hillarys, Sarah-Jane Hobson (*née Meyer*) *Class of 2006*, Deputy Head of Physiotherapy Fiona Stanley Hospital, Jill Dawson (*née Noonan*) *Class of 1983*, President Perth Rotary Club and Danicia Quinlan *Class of 1989*, CEO Fremantle Chamber of Commerce, guests were treated to thoughtful discussion on the topic of Leadership.

Each panellists' story was rich with diversity, insight and experience. The common threads- to be genuine, kind and courageous leaders. A sumptuous breakfast and opportunity to chat then followed with the event finally topped off by a tour of our wonderful new Learning Centre, the Albeus Fahey Building.



'Be kind, the sun will always come up tomorrow.' Jill Dawson (*Panellist*)



## IPPA NETWORKING BREAKFAST

To view more photos from the event, please check out our Photo Gallery here:

<https://ippa.iona.wa.edu.au/#photoboard>

Huge thanks to all who attended and the IPPA committee for their wonderful support of this great event.

Please keep an eye out for our next IPPA Networking Event, 28 October 2021 on the topic of Iona-entrepreneurs. Contact Georgia Allen at the College if you'd like to host the next event in your place of business or be a panellist: [georgia.allen@iona.wa.edu.au](mailto:georgia.allen@iona.wa.edu.au)





## BETTER LATE THAN NEVER!

**The College hosted a combined Reunion for the Classes 2016, 2000, 1995, 1990 and 1980 recently. This was a very special occasion for all of our guests.**

On the balcony of our new Staff Community Room and overlooking the river in the magnificent Albeus Fahey Building, this event provided ample opportunity and a generous space for classes to gather and reunite.

IPPA were provided with their own area in which to meet, enabling each group to feel special and relaxed amongst 'old' friends. Coloured name tags and balloons made this even easier!

Robyn Miller, College Principal welcomed all of our guests at her very first IPPA reunion- claiming to have walked into 'school heaven' and already feeling very much at home amongst the Iona community.

IPPA Chair, Jane-Mary Richardson (*née Ellis*) Class of 1989, provided a terrific run down of all things IPPA- plans, initiatives, successes, goals and just how to be involved.

A huge thanks to all Past Pupils for coming along and for the support of IPPA Committee Representatives (and friends) and of course College Staff.









## YEAR 13 BREAKFAST

Earlier in the year, 11 February, the Class of 2020 returned to Iona for the highly anticipated Year 13 Breakfast. It was a wonderful morning for the girls to spend time with each other and the teachers who were with them for their schooling years. The atmosphere was filled with chatter about what everyone had been up to since graduation.

The morning began with our first official welcome into IPPA, the beginning of our lifelong membership into the Iona Past Pupils' Association.

Milla Harris *Class of 2018* spoke to us about Young IPPA, a fantastic initiative established to involve recent graduates and provide opportunities to remain involved in the school community, plus give back where we can.

We also all had the opportunity to meet the new College Principal, Ms Robyn Miller, who was very welcoming. Mrs Pitso also returned for the event, which was lovely.

We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Ms Miller, Georgia Allen, the IPPA committee and the Community Relations and Development Team for hosting us and coordinating the event. The Class of 2020 also thanks the staff who attended and the SLC who assisted in the running of the event.

It was a very enjoyable morning for everyone and was an exciting insight into not only what the future holds for us, but also the welcoming and supportive community that is supporting us as we move forward.

**Kate Hassett**  
*Class of 2020*



## CLASS OF 2011- 10 YEAR REUNION

**The 10 Year Reunion for the Class of 2011 was enjoyed at a stunning location, between river and sea, on Level 7 of the new Albeus Fahey Building at Iona.**

The setting sun was a beautiful backdrop as old friends enjoyed an afternoon of reminiscing and catching up, as we all shared the amazing progress in each of our lives. Some have travelled the globe, some have thrived in their careers, some have started families, and some have explored all of the above!

We extend a special thank you to Mrs Pitos, Sister Mary, Mr Ciccarelli, and Mrs Canalini for enjoying a

champagne and a catch up with us. It was wonderful to hear tales of our year group, remembered fondly. We also had the delightful opportunity to meet Ms Miller, the incoming Principal at Iona, who shared many kind words as we looked back over the past decade and how the world has changed.

As our exceptional Lucy Davidson (Head Girl- Class of 2011) was saving lives (in her career as a doctor), I was invited to extend a welcome to our attendees. It truly felt like no time had passed as we all laughed, remembering the 'good old days', expressing envy over the new facilities, and how much we miss wearing a school uniform.

We certainly did not want the evening to end, and in an unprecedented turn of events, politely requested that we be permitted to stay longer at school to continue our reunion. This is a testament to the organising committee, and particularly Georgia Allen, who planned a wonderful evening for which we are incredibly grateful.

There is no doubt that we're all looking forward to our next reunion in 15 years, where there will undoubtedly be many more exciting stories to share!

**Caitlin Liddelow**  
*Class of 2011*





## CLASS OF 1996 – 25 YEAR REUNION

**Thank you to all the 1996 Iona Past Pupils who attended the 25 Year Reunion on Saturday 15 May.**

A small group of us toured the amazing Albeus Fahey Building before the event and witnessed Co-curricular opportunities available to Iona girls today, that we would've killed for in the 90s!

Around 40 of us gathered for the Reunion and reconnected with many friends and caught up on news, transformations and life. Thanks to all the girls who travelled so far to be at the Reunion, from as far as Sydney and Melbourne.

It was an absolute pleasure to meet and hear from Ms Robyn Miller, the newly appointed Principal in 2021. More importantly, our favourite

Principal from 1996 Ms Margaret Herley and Deputy Principal from 1996 Mrs Anne Pitos attended and spoke from the heart about the memories and impact of the 1996 school year, thank you!

Amazing also to see Sister Mary in all her glory and catching up on all the news from the Presentation Sisters.

As the Former Head Boarder, I was asked to speak to the group as our Head Girl Peta Millard couldn't get to Perth for the event. I spoke about the Iona Past Pupil Association (IPPA) and how to get involved, there is certainly much on offer for all Iona graduates.

Thank you also girls for a wonderful dinner afterwards at the old Albion Hotel!

**Kristen Chiera** (*née Graham*)  
*Class of 1996*





## WE REALLY SHOULD CATCH UP...

### REUNIONS 2021

Reunions will be held for the following classes in 2021. Please keep an eye out for information!

<b>Class of 1981 – 40 YEAR REUNION</b>	Saturday 7 August
<b>Golden Girls' Reunion</b>	Friday 10 September
<b>Class of 2001 – 20 YEAR REUNION</b>	Saturday 13 November

### IPPA EVENTS 2021

Join us at an event - Engage/ Connect/ Support/ Inspire!

<b>IPPA Workshopping the Future</b>	Tuesday 27 July
<b>IPPA Networking Breakfast</b>	Thursday 28 October

## IPPA, HAVE YOU UPDATED YOUR CONTACT DETAILS RECENTLY?

Please visit [ippa.iona.wa.edu.au](http://ippa.iona.wa.edu.au)

## SHARE YOUR STORY, WORKSHOP THEIR FUTURE

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- ☒ Media & Journalism
- ☒ Medicine & Nursing
- ☒ Physiotherapy & Exercise Physiology
- ☒ Teaching

Past Pupils, do you have some great tips to share, experience and advice?

### Join us for Workshopping the Future | 27 July 2021

These friendly workshops provide a wonderful opportunity for Past Pupils to impart their knowledge and experience with current Year 10 students. Students gain tips into study options that will eventually lead them on their path to their chosen careers.

*'The event, Workshopping the Future was so helpful. After speaking with IPPA Member Gloria de Jesus last year, I decided that Journalism is definitely what I want to do. Gloria provided great ideas, suggestions on what courses to study in Senior School and which scholarships to look out for. I am so grateful to her for her help.'* Sarah (Year 11)

If you would like to be involved and give back to this event, or would like to know more, please contact Georgia Allen | [georgia.allen@iona.wa.edu.au](mailto:georgia.allen@iona.wa.edu.au)

## PAST PUPILS - COMPETE IN OUR 2022 IGSSA TEAMS!

Be involved in the annual IGSSA Golf and/or Tennis Tournaments for 2022

### TENNIS

New opportunity for 2022

For more information please contact Jane-Mary Richardson [jane\\_maryr@hotmail.com](mailto:jane_maryr@hotmail.com)

### GOLF

Held in September/October

For more information please contact Kerry Hardwick [rapier769@gmail.com](mailto:rapier769@gmail.com)

## ONCE AN IONIAN, ALWAYS AN IONIAN

**Cy Williams has a special connection with Iona Presentation College. Her mum is a Past Pupil; she lives a hop-skip-and-a-jump from the Junior School; she has been teaching at the Iona since 2002; and her daughter now attends.**

Maria Ceccarelli also has a special connection with Iona. Maria attended from Kindergarten through to Year 12 and now works in the Music Department as a piano teacher. Maria was one of Cy's students in 2007 and in a lovely twist of fate, Maria is now teaching Cy's six year old daughter, Ivy.

"I feel honoured to be able to pass on my musical knowledge to a student whose mother has had such a positive influence on my educational experience at Iona," Maria said.

"Cy was always supportive and knew how to motivate the class and build our confidence. Her teaching style instilled a desire in me to learn more each day and for that, I am truly grateful," she said.

Cy says she remembers Maria's cheeky grin, her endless amounts of energy and her enthusiasm to have a chat.

"She always had lots of questions and was slightly mischievous!" she said.

"I have memories of Maria leaving the classroom for piano lessons as a Year 4 student and I think it is fantastic that she has followed through with her gift and done so well."

"Hearing that Maria was going to be Ivy's teacher bought an immediate smile to my face. I'm sure she'll bring lots of positive and fun energy to her piano lessons."

When Cy mentioned the connection she had with Maria Ceccarelli, Ivy said: "That must have been a long, long time ago! I'm happy that she's going to be my teacher."

Iona's strong link to IPPA continues to grow with a vast and interconnecting network.

"I have many fond memories of Iona and today, more than ever, I am grateful to have met the loveliest

friends and teachers who I am still in contact with today," Maria commented.

"What I love about Iona is the sense of community amongst both staff and students. It is what makes every day a pleasure to come to work and what continues to inspire me to try and instil the same love of learning and enthusiasm that was given to me."



## BEAUTY AND THE BEAST - A SPECTACULAR PERFORMANCE

After an 18-month rehearsal and preparation process, Iona hosted the long-awaited season of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* at the Regal Theatre from 25 - 28 March. Playing to packed audiences over five shows, the hugely successful production wowed the crowds with its professionalism, creativity and standard of quality.

A company of approximately 50 students were involved in the cast, crews and orchestra, joined by a numbers of professional and amateur performers and musicians. A dedicated team of designers, builders and technicians brought to life the lighting, set and sound, allowing for a seamless run of shows. The costumes, designed and created by Mrs Michelle Ward, were superbly dazzling and rich with detail. The choreography, created by Mrs Coby Brant, was exciting, creative and professional.

Thank you to all participants involved in this wonderful production – we couldn't do it without the support of Team Iona!







## YEAR 7 FOR A DAY!

**There was much excitement at Iona recently with the arrival of more than 50 Year 4 visitors.**

Students, from all over Perth and a myriad of schools, spent the day with their Year 8 buddies learning all about life at Iona!

In what was a really fun experience, students were 'Year 7s for a day'. Together they explored the Senior School campus and participated in a range of engaging 'big school' activities. From cooking, to robotics, art and using our new Canteen, Café 33 for recess and lunch- students had a taste of just what life in 'high school' is really like.

Alongside our College Open Mornings, this new event is a wonderful opportunity for Year 4 students to experience Iona, familiarise themselves with the campus, meet teachers and other students and start getting excited for their next chapter.

To go on a Waiting List for our next 'Year 7 for a Day' in 2022 please contact College Registrar, Mrs Theresa Loughnan [theresa.loughnan@iona.wa.edu.au](mailto:theresa.loughnan@iona.wa.edu.au)



## IONA TEACHER AWARD - ALEX COULTER

**Alex Coulter, Engineer Design and Digital Technologies Teacher at Iona, was recently awarded Secondary Teacher of the Year 2020 from the Design and Technology Teachers Association.**

Throughout 2020, Mr Coulter was tasked with designing and teaching two new Year 9 and 10 Engineering courses. He worked with Iona's Design and Technology (D&T) team, community contacts and universities to create an engaging and relevant engineering course with a particular focus on promoting women in engineering.

"It's so important to push the focus on women in engineering because more diversity means fresh ideas and new perspectives on problems and issues. As has been quoted several times, 'the engineering profession in Australia has left half the team on the bench.' We need that half of the team in order to stay global leaders in engineering," Mr Coulter said.

"The courses are designed to introduce students to the engineering design process and prepare them for engineering at university, as well as provide them with some idea of what engineering looks like as a profession," he said.

In addition to designing inspired new courses, Mr Coulter incorporated the D&T IsoTech Challenge so students could collaborate with schools around the world and create solutions to problems that worsened due to COVID-19, such as mental health issues resulting from loneliness and isolation, or physical health issues resulting from an inability to exercise. He also partnered with Oceanworks and UWA's Girls in Engineering program to participate in the Emerging Engineers Competition, researching and designing a solution to 'biofouling'.

"In all my years of teaching, I have never worked with a graduate teacher with more potential than Alex Coulter," commented Anna Davila, former Director of Information and Learning Technologies at Iona.





## ST PAT'S DAY



**Saint Patrick's Day is a highlight of the Iona calendar; not just because it honours St Patrick, the patron Saint of Ireland, the birthplace of many of our Presentation Sisters, but also because it is day in which you can truly experience the essence of 'what makes Iona, Iona'.**

We begin the day with a very special Mass.

Held outdoors under the trees of Memorial Park, this beautiful Mass, provides our community with a wonderful opportunity to come together. Forming the congregation is staff and students, and our very special guests; the Presentation Sisters, treasured Past Pupils, parents and friends of Iona. The musical talent of student musicians and choristers brings life and joy to the Mass and really helps to contribute to the overall spirit of our wonderful College.

Following Mass, special guests are then treated to another wonderful display of musical talent, in the form of a special afternoon tea and concert. Again, bringing our community together, are our generous Parent volunteers who assist with the event.

Then the fun really begins!

Senior School students participate in the much-loved 'House Fair'. An afternoon of novelty games, an animal fair, photo booth, sumo suits, footy darts and a silent disco. There's even an opportunity to 'dunk' their favourite teacher! Bellies are filled by the myriad of 'food trucks' on offer- from sausage sizzles, pizzas, sushi, hot chips, krispy kremes and our traditional O'Dowling bake stall. All coordinated by the Houses, with money raised going to Catholic Missions.

Students at the Junior School celebrate St Patrick's Day in their own way- an afternoon of fun activities followed by Waterslide Day! An afternoon of slipping and sliding down huge waterslides, again organised by the Iona Parent Council.





## EXCITING NEWS! PARENT COUNCIL TO HEAT THE POOL!

**The Iona Parent Council is so pleased to announce that as a result of the generous contributions by Parents in the form of Parent Council levies and other initiatives, we will now be able to assist the College in the ongoing heating and refurbishment of the College pool.**

Further fundraising in 2021 to complete the project will be in the form of the Welcome Sundowner, the annual Tuition Raffle and RockWiz, 28 August. Please support Parent Council events and initiatives where possible and make life-long friends as you do.

The College pool is used by all students and staff on campus. From swim squad, to swimming lessons, water aerobics, the Junior School swimming carnival and more- this wonderful contribution from the Parent Council now means there will be even more capacity in which the pool can be utilised!

Heated all year round, we now look forward to growing the pool's usage in the future, developing an Iona Swim Club and who knows there maybe even a possibility of one for IPPA too.





## Open Mornings 2021

We look forward to welcoming you!

Senior Campus  
Junior Campus

Thursday 2 September  
Wednesday 15 September

**BOOK NOW**

[iona.wa.edu.au/openmornings](https://iona.wa.edu.au/openmornings)



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