

# The Spirit of Siena



SIENA  
COLLEGE  
CAMBERWELL

## Mission Statement

Siena College, a Catholic secondary school in the Dominican tradition, offers young women an education which challenges them to make intelligent and responsible use of their personal gifts and develop a lifelong love of learning.

## Vision

As a vibrant, faith filled, Catholic community we will provide exemplary and inspiring education with a commitment to justice, truth, reconciliation and compassion. In the spirit of St Catherine of Siena, by word and action, young women are nourished in faith and encouraged to spread the Good News and embrace the future with hope.

## Values

We value and live the Dominican pillars of:

- Prayer** by nurturing spirituality and celebrating as a community of Faith
- Study** by striving for excellence, thinking critically and seeking truth
- Service** by empowering young women to actively engage in local and global justice issues
- Community** by recognising God's presence in others and fostering right relationships

## Editorial Team

Tracey Grobbelaar, Susan Law,  
Liz Merrett and Amy Stubbs

## Photography

Susan Law and Matt Graham

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# Siena College

connecting girls • empowering young women





# Message from the Principal

“Our call as Dominicans, is to preach the Truth of the Gospel and our College theme for this very special year is to ‘Preach the Gospel of Mercy.’”



2016 is a significant year for our College as we celebrate an 800 year anniversary of the founding of the Dominican Order. Pope Francis’ declaration of an Extraordinary Holy Year of Mercy coincided with the 800 year Dominican Jubilee and the establishment of the Order in 1216. Our call as Dominicans, is to preach the Truth of the Gospel. Our College theme for this

special year is to ‘Preach the Gospel of Mercy’.

We opened a Siena College ‘Jubilee Door of Mercy’ as part of our celebration of the Dominican Jubilee and in response to Pope Francis’ invitation to ‘...gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we become a more effective sign of (God’s) actions in our lives’.

Members of our community, including Dominican Sisters and Friars, staff and students, processed through the Convent cloister to the Holy Door as part of the opening rite. Our College Chaplain, Fr Dominic Murphy OP, struck the door three times with a wooden staff to open it. The wooden staff reminded us of St Dominic, the itinerant preacher. We have named the door Porta Santa, ‘Holy Door’ in Italian, to reflect the beautiful Byzantine style Convent building and chapel which was designed by Italian Architect, Hamleto Agabiti, and completed in 1939.



The Holy Door tiles were made and decorated by ceramic artist, Mary-Lou Pittard and installed by tiler, Paul Craigie. The deep blue border of the tiles matches the blue dome of the Chapel and they feature Dominican symbols, the Jubilee shield, and lilies from the College crest that represent our Patron, St Catherine of Siena. The tiles also incorporate a Dominican dog with a flaming torch that was said to have been part of a dream of St Dominic’s mother, as well as flowers of a native Australian Correa to symbolise our place in Australia.

As we pass through this door over the year, we are invited to enter a new relationship with God, to reflect on God’s boundless love and compassion and on how we are called to follow the example of Jesus to offer love and forgiveness without measure.

In January of this year, Professor Nicholas Tonti-Filippini was posthumously named an Officer in the general division of the Order of Australia (AO), for distinguished service to tertiary education, particularly in the area of bioethics, through academic leadership and advisory roles to medical research. Professor Tonti-Filippini was a past parent and former Chair of the Siena College Board.



Professor Nicholas Tonti-Filippini, AO

Susan Alberti, alumna and benefactor of Siena College, was honoured with the award of a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) in the 2016 Australia Day honours list, for eminent service to the community as a fund raiser, advocate, mentor and role model. This is the highest commendation given and Susan was one of only three women to receive an AC this year. Susan Alberti has been an intrepid and courageous advocate for women on so many fronts, from leading a company in a male driven construction industry, to taking on a television channel to challenge a denigrating portrayal of women, and promoting opportunities for women in sport, particularly in Football. Susan also supports female scientists by funding research assistants to allow for projects to continue during periods of parental leave.



## Message from the Principal

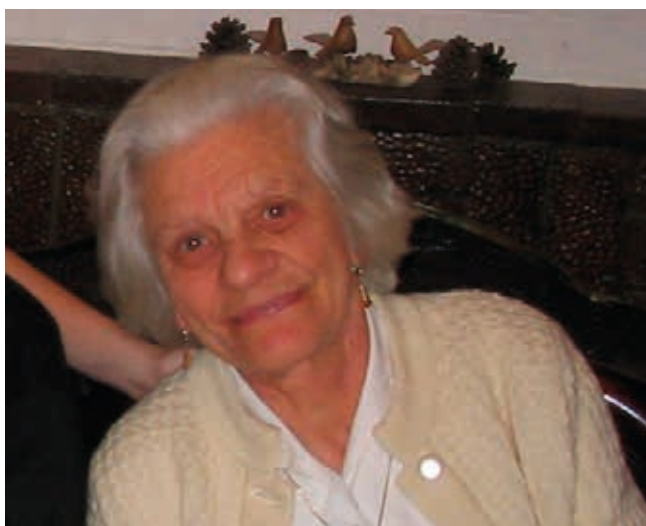
The College was proud to be represented at the inaugural 'Women in Football Charity Breakfast' hosted by Susan in partnership with the AFL Victoria, in March.

Our warmest congratulations are extended to Susan Alberti and the Tonti-Fillippini family, Claire, Lucianne, Justin and John.



Susan Alberti, AC

The property at 6 Compton Street, that was previously leased to accommodate the College Counsellors, was acquired by the College in December last year. It was the home of Maria Mezei and her family and on April 13, her son Andrew and daughter Maggie, attended the Term 2 College assembly to share Maria's story with our community. Their story is one of a post war refugee family from Hungary who left their home after the 1956 uprising and the ensuing response from Stalinist forces. They left all their property and possessions behind to walk through the night with their new baby towards the Austrian border. They heard border guards nearby shooting at other refugees, and were fed by villagers before emigrating to Australia some six months later as refugees.



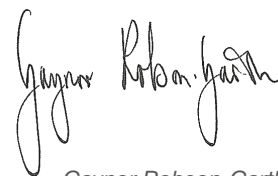
Maria Mezei in 2011

The Mezei family arrived at the refugee camp in Bonegilla in Northern Victoria, and afterwards found work and accommodation in Melbourne. Maria found a run-down commercial property in Hawthorn. Her husband, Emil, thought it was a dump, but Maria was convinced that it would make a good factory and home. They bought the place, and over the next ten years worked tirelessly to build their business and raise their children Magda and Andrew.



Maria as a child

In 1971, Emil became sick, and passed away. Maria was distraught, but managed to reorganise her life; she learned to drive, sold the factory, and bought 6 Compton St, Canterbury. Maria's touching story, now a biography, will be housed at 6 Compton Street along with photographs of the past to preserve the history of the property for generations to come. We have inherited Maria's lovely garden and the inspiration of her courage and determination. The house will be named Mezei House in her memory.



Gaynor Robson-Garth  
Principal





# Our Dominican History

## An 800 year tradition

Born in Caleruega, Spain, St Dominic de Guzman (1170-1221) founded a religious order to preach the Word of God. The Order of Preachers was approved in 1216 and so began a religious tradition that has spread across the world.

St Dominic believed in the power of education to develop well informed, articulate people whose lives, through prayer, community and service, would best reflect the life of Christ to the world.

Dominican theologians, philosophers and preachers such as St Albertus Magnus, St Thomas Aquinas, Francisco de Vitorio and Antonio de Montesinos, inspired critical thinking of the law, the role and actions of world leaders and of the Church.

Our patron, St Catherine of Siena (1347-1380), a lay Dominican whose intense spirituality inspired others around her, had considerable influence on religious thinking and on the political leaders of the day, most famously when she encouraged Pope Gregory XI to return from Avignon to Rome and take up his duties more directly.

Branches of the order spread rapidly throughout Europe with a foundation in Dublin, Ireland being established in 1224.

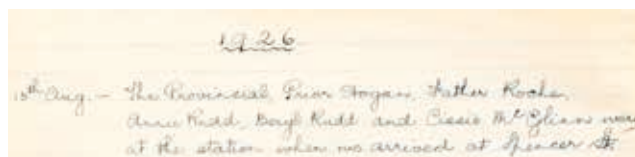
On 10 September 1867, eight Sisters from Dun Laoghaire, Ireland, arrived in Australia to settle and establish a convent at Maitland. Thus began a new chapter in the Dominican story. From Maitland, other convents were established in New South Wales.



1926 Dominican Sisters

## 90 years in Camberwell

In 1926, at the request of Archbishop Mannix, four Dominican Sisters from West Maitland came to Camberwell. On 12 August, MM Concepta O'Donoghue, SM Loreto Cockerill, SM Perpetua Hermann and SM Placid Flaherty were met at Spencer Street (Southern Cross) station by the Dominican Vicar-Provincial, Father Jordan Powell, the Prior of St Dominic's, Father Hogan, Father Rupert Roche OP, Mrs Annie Rudd, a former Maitland pupil, and her daughter and cousin.



1926 arrival of Sisters to Camberwell

A month later on 12 September, the tiny two bedroom cottage in Riversdale Road, in Camberwell, was officially opened and blessed by Archbishop Mannix.



Invitation to the Blessing of the Convent

The Sisters supported the work of the friars at St Dominic's, but soon came to realise that there was a need for a secondary school. Over the next ten years, the Sisters began the planning and development of a much larger convent that would act as both convent and school for many years.

Only in 1961, was a purpose built school building developed and opened. Since then, the College has expanded in both size and population.

While there have been many changes to the buildings, population size and curriculum, it is the Dominican tradition that underpins our Siena community and remains a constant and living presence.

May it do so for another 800 years and beyond!

Catherine Judd  
Head of Archives

# Learning and Teaching

*“Bernadette brings to Siena College a wealth of experience and a passion for education and working with young people...”*

We profile our Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching, Bernadette Donnelly



The Siena College community is delighted to welcome our new Deputy Principal Learning and Teaching, Bernadette Donnelly. Bernadette brings to Siena College a wealth of experience and a passion for education and working with young people to help influence them to make the most of their individual gifts. She has been married to her husband Ric, for thirty years and has two children. Her daughter

Rebecca is completing her final year studying Medicine and her son, Kieran is a graduate architect.

Bernadette grew up in Warragul as the only daughter and middle child of five children. She completed her schooling at the local Catholic schools in Warragul before going on to finish a Bachelor of Arts at Monash University and Diploma in Education at Christ College, now Australian Catholic University (ACU). She taught at Killester College for two and half years before taking up the opportunity of working in an indigenous community outside Katherine in the Northern Territory for a year. Living and working in the Barunga community for a year, proved to be a truly forming experience for Bernadette, deepening her passion, understanding and concern for indigenous affairs. She is greatly appreciative of the early mentoring of her Principal, Kate Bazjik. Kate was a woman of true principle, who constantly fought for the rights of indigenous students and staff under difficult circumstances. She taught Bernadette a great deal about resilience and to follow through on what you believe in, regardless of the obstacles that you may face.

On leaving the Barunga community, Bernadette and Ric travelled to Europe for six months and then over to Japan where they taught for six months. They returned home for the birth of their first child, Rebecca. Their love of Japan, the culture, food and people, drove them to return to Japan when Rebecca was five months old. Their experience in Japan played a large role in forming Bernadette's understanding of what is possible if you are prepared to take a risk and not to be fearful of the unknown. It also helped develop a love of travel and the importance of understanding other cultures. Living in a foreign country also allowed them the time and space to establish their own family unit and how they would raise their children.

Bernadette and her family returned home to Warragul for the birth of their second child, Kieran two and a half years later. They stayed in Warragul for fifteen years to raise their family in the country. While there, Bernadette taught at her old high school, Marist Sion College for ten years. She initially taught English, Religious Education and History, but went on to teach Japanese after spending another year in Japan with the whole family, when the children were four and seven years old. She decided to formalise her Japanese teaching qualifications, studying Japanese for a year at Monash University, while teaching and raising the family. Bernadette went on to hold many leadership positions at Marist Sion, encouraged

by her greatest mentor, Joan Pilgrim. Joan had taught her English and French when she was a student at school and later, worked with her as the Deputy Principal at Marist Sion College. Joan taught Bernadette many things and always encouraged her to put forward her new ideas if they were of benefit for the students. The most valuable lessons Joan taught her were that even though 'consistency is very important, it can mean different things for different cases' and that 'there aren't many problems or situations that can't be worked out'.

In 2003, Bernadette moved to St Paul's Anglican Grammar in Warragul and in 2004, was appointed as Head of the Senior School. Working at the same school that her children attended and where her husband taught was a unique, but wonderful experience. In 2008, the family returned to Melbourne and Bernadette took up the position of Director of Curriculum at Loyola College. This position was elevated to Deputy Principal Teaching and Learning and she continued in this role for a further three years. During her time, she completed her Masters of Educational Leadership. With the departure of the Foundation Principal of Loyola, who had been at the school for over twenty-seven years, coinciding with her appointment, Bernadette embraced the opportunity to implement new ideas and review teaching and learning practices. She especially loved implementing ideas that connected and reinforced the Ignatian values of conversation, academic excellence, hospitality and social justice. As a community they were able to reflect, review and implement change that ultimately provided greater opportunities for the students.



The Donnelly family





# Learning and Teaching



Bernadette and her husband, Ric, travelling in New York

Bernadette's move to Siena College was a very considered one. Despite being on the cusp of reaping the rewards of the previous eight years at Loyola, the opportunity to work with a Principal of the calibre and standing of Gaynor made the decision an easy one. Although only three months into her role, Bernadette is confident that she has made the right move and sees working at Siena College as an opportunity to continue to grow and learn in a new environment. Her recent pilgrimage following the steps of St Dominic, with other Dominican educators gave her a wonderful insight into the Dominican story and traditions.

Bernadette is passionate about learning, not only for students but for our staff and herself. For students, being able to provide pathways for those we teach, so that they will have choices in what they can do for themselves and others. For staff working together so that we can help develop their gifts and talents to serve our students. Bernadette believes in the importance of developing strong professional learning teams for everyone. She is also passionate about travelling, camping, enjoying the moment, but mostly about family, her own and those that she works with.

We are privileged to have Bernadette join the Siena College family and we look forward to many years learning with and from her.

*Susan Law*

Director of Marketing and Communications

## New Staff Profiles

### Claire Al-Noah



Claire Al-Noah joined the Siena College Community as a Visual Art Teacher. Claire grew up on a farm in North East Victoria and after finishing a Fine Arts Degree, travelled to Europe and completed further study in Wales, learning traditional stained glass and working in a studio restoring church windows and on new commissions. After returning to Australia, Claire completed a

post graduate teaching degree. In recent years, Claire has taught predominately at State schools and enjoyed a short stint at a school in Northern Thailand. Claire enjoys teaching Art as it allows the students to express themselves, explore ideas, problem solve and be practical.

### Kate Broadley



Kate is a teacher with fifteen years experience having worked in various educational settings; as a secondary teacher, researcher, and higher education student. For eight years Kate was the researcher for The Alliance of Girls Schools, which fostered a passion and interest in teaching in a girls school. Kate has a Master of Education which has informed her understanding of how

relevant education research is to students and teachers in the classroom. Particular areas of interest are the emerging field of neuroeducation, and why there is female underrepresentation in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fields.

### Peta Mackintosh



Peta Mackintosh joins the Visual Arts and Technology Faculty. Prior to Siena College, Peta worked at a coeducational Catholic school for twenty-two years. Peta enjoys spending time with family and enjoys working with the students and colleagues alike.

Peta plays netball and enjoys running as part of her relaxation and visiting galleries to see diverse works of art.

### Gabrielle Mahoney



Gabby joins the Siena College staff after graduating from the College as a student with the Class of 2015. With a passion for sport, Gabby assists the Sport Department and in particular the weekly GSV sport competition, during her gap year. Gabby will begin her studies at tertiary level in 2017 and hopes to pursue similar fields of work. Gabby is looking forward to the new experiences that lie ahead.

# Learning and Teaching

## New Staff Profiles

### Charles Mathias-Coleiro



Charles Mathias-Coleiro comes to Siena College from Mount Saint Joseph Girl's College. Charles is passionate about enhancing the student's experience of mathematics and the sciences. In particular, he is interested in increasing the number of girls undertaking senior studies in Physics and Specialist Mathematics.

### Marc Nguyen



Marc joins Siena College as a graduate after receiving his Master of Teaching (Secondary) at The University of Melbourne. Previously, Marc completed a Bachelor of Science with a major in Applied Mathematics, so as expected, he has a passion for maths. Marc is teaching Years 7 - 10 Mathematics and is part of the Siena College GSV staff.

### Vanessa Pastro



Vanessa Pastro joins Siena College after eight years of teaching in Government Schools. After completing her VCE at a Catholic school in Melbourne, Vanessa studied Journalism at La Trobe University followed by Secondary Education at RMIT. She has taught English and History across all year levels from Years 7 to 12. Vanessa is a dedicated teacher committed to educating and empowering

young women. She is pleased to have joined a Catholic school with such a long standing Dominican tradition. Vanessa is currently teaching Year 7 to 10 English and Year 9 History and is involved with DAV Debating and the English Assistance Program. In her spare time Vanessa enjoys spending time with her family and friends on the Mornington Peninsula.

### Eden Phillips



Eden Phillips is in her second year as a Visual Arts Technician, having come to Siena from the country. Eden moved to Melbourne from Wangaratta during the middle of 2015 in order to study. She was fortunate to be accepted into an AFL ArtsReady program. Eden is currently undertaking a Certificate IV in Business through this program while working as a Visual Arts Technician at Siena

College. This will be the second year at Siena College for Eden, who will continue her role of working across the Visual Arts and Technology Faculty. Eden is gathering as much knowledge, skills and wisdom during her time at Siena College before continuing on to study Communication Design at university.

### Michelle Theron



Born in South Africa, Michelle's family emigrated to New Zealand before finally settling in Melbourne. Michelle has a degree in Fine Art and a Master of Education. Michelle has eleven years of teaching experience. Michelle's role at Siena College involves leading the Visual Arts and Technology Faculty as well as teaching Visual Communication and Art.

### Neil Thomas



Neil Thomas is a teacher with twenty-two years experience, sixteen of which have been teaching VCE English and Literature. Neil emigrated from South Africa with his young family in 2001 and initially taught at a large coeducational school before joining De La Salle College, Malvern in 2007. At Siena College Neil teaches English and Geography and is involved in debating. Neil is a voracious

reader and keen wilderness hiker and camper.

### Clare Timmins



Clare Timmins joins Siena College as the Head of Careers. Clare looks forward to supporting the students at Siena College as they make their transition to further education, employment and life post Siena College. Clare's fascination with all things "Careers" started in Year 10 when she was handed a copy of the *Job Guide*. I loved this treasure trove of possibilities and after completing my

Arts degree and visiting a Career Counsellor, I decided that that was what I wanted to be.

Clare has worked as a recruitment consultant, hiring staff from engineers to office temps as well as a Job Club Leader in the Community sector, and training long term unemployed in Job Search techniques. Other positions include TAFE Careers Officer, manager of an employment program and in Perth, Western Australia, Careers Coordinator in three secondary schools. On returning to Melbourne, Clare was employed by the Victorian Institute of Sport as an Athlete Career and Education Adviser.



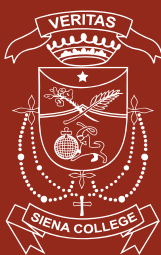


**Siena College**

connecting girls • empowering young women

# Open Mornings 2016

Friday, 17 June  
Monday, 1 August  
Friday, 9 September  
9.30am - 11.00am



**SIENA**  
**COLLEGE**  
CAMBERWELL

A CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOR YOUNG WOMEN IN  
THE DOMINICAN TRADITION, YEARS 7 TO 12

A Siena College education is about connecting girls and empowering young women through a rigorous education, enriching experiences and enduring relationships. Come and see how we could inspire a lifelong love of learning in your daughter. **Register online at [www.siena.vic.edu.au](http://www.siena.vic.edu.au) or call 9835 0200**

**[www.siena.vic.edu.au](http://www.siena.vic.edu.au)**



# Community Events

## Congratulations and thank you to the Siena Parents' Association

The Siena Parents' Association hosted two events during Term 1, the Year 12 Welcome Breakfast and the Year 7 Welcome Evening alongside the Big Sister Little Sister Pyjama Party. The events were hosted in the beautiful Convent Courtyard and provided an opportunity to engage with the Siena College community. Each year, these events are run by SPA and have proven to be a great success in strengthening friendships between students, families and the Siena College community.

### Year 12 Breakfast



### Year 7 Welcome Evening



### Big Sister Little Sister Pyjama Party







# Celebrating International Women’s Day



This year, the theme for International Women’s Day was ‘Pledge for Parity.’ All members of the community were invited to think about what parity might look like in the workforce and at home. The annual IWD breakfast was held in the Susan Alberti Auditorium. The table placements all included statistics highlighting how far we still must journey as a society before gender

parity is reached. For example:

- Of the world’s poorest billion people, three fifths are girls and women
- Of the one hundred and thirty million children who are out of school, 70% are girls
- Each year, half a million women die and eighteen million more suffer chronic disability from preventable complications of pregnancy and childbirth
- Up to 50% of all adult women have experienced violence at the hands of their intimate partners

A focus on parity needs a collective effort. This year, students were invited to bring a significant woman or man in their life. Male members of the community attended the breakfast in pleasing numbers and were invited to sign the ‘He for She’ pledge. This UN initiative was spearheaded by Mr Martin Gibbs, Dianella

House Coordinator. The aim is for as many male members of the community as possible to pledge to:

***Commit to taking action against gender discrimination and violence in order to build a more just and equal world.***

The highlight of this year’s breakfast was our keynote speaker, Dr Stephanie Jackson. Stephanie was the Dux of the Class of 2005. She studied at Monash University and was also the Dux of Medicine Surgery. More recently, Stephanie has been practicing obstetrics and gynaecology at Mercy Hospital and has also just become a mother herself.

Stephanie has lent her incredible skills to a small village hospital in Fiji and also in remote indigenous communities. Her impact was so great that one mother in Fiji even named her baby after Stephanie. Stephanie’s vivid descriptions, contrasting the conditions that labouring mothers in Fiji experience compared to Australian mothers, was sobering. Her clear message that the audience took from her speech was to always practice kindness. This message was especially timely considering Stephanie spoke with us during our year of mercy. Stephanie embodies compassion and commitment to the alleviation of distress.

*Kate Gotlib*

Head of Student Formation and Justice Education



Guest Speaker, Rebecca Dabbs





# South African Immersion Trip 2016

## Kopanang

The Kopanang ethos begins with the statement ‘Our values are like a roadmap, guiding and directing our behaviours to achieve our desired destination.’ In keeping with this ethos, the official immersion shirts worn by each student and staff member included the phrase ‘Journeying Together.’

In its fourth year, the South African Immersion trip is designed so that each Siena student and staff member who attends Kopanang Community Trust and lives in the township of Tsakane for two weeks, can journey with the women, hear their stories, see things through their eyes and find common traits and bonds. The trip is not designed for the students to feel a weight of guilt for the privileges they have at home. The purpose of the trip is to find common bonds, explore faith, discover strength. Our hardships are so diverse, but what ties us to the women of Tsakane is that we are all sisters and daughters. Many of us are mothers. Irrespective of birthplace and we are all capable of great love and compassion.

Days were spent at Kopanang, tutoring the students who are used to being in classes of seventy, teaching the women how to use computers, working in the crèche and preparing meals. The girls also visited the shack areas of the township to hand out desperately

needed clothes and toiletries, much of which was donated by the Siena community. The students also had the opportunity to visit the Apartheid Museum and the Hector Pieterse Memorial Museum. While confronting, these museums gave valuable insight into the complex history of South Africa.

The Siena students stayed in the homes of the Kopanang women in groups of two. All the students lived the way their host mothers do. No one had hot running water, at times there were rolling blackouts and phones and iPads were non-existent. All students, nevertheless, reported feeling completely at ease in their new environments because of the immediate and binding sense that they had become members of a family.

Fundraising efforts for Kopanang will continue at the College throughout the year. The next event to be hosted by the SRC in Term 3 will be *Night of Change* with all money raised going towards a self-defence program for the women of Kopanang.

*Kate Gotlib*

Head of Student Formation and Justice Education







# The Refiloe Project

Last year, the Siena College community began sponsorship of a young South African student, Refiloe Sibisi, to attend university over the next three years. Refiloe is a member of the Kopanang community. Siena College is proud to be part of Refiloe's journey.

Dear Sponsors

The new-year has arrived carrying a whole lot of dreams and expectations for every single person, including myself. I always prepare a year plan where I jot down my visions and a few dreams I would like to attain, but a few years back I would write down all the big dreams and hopes for the future and once I have completed my year-plan (actually my long term-goals) I would go through everything and realize that the picture I have created in my mind that envisions the future is not attainable without a good education accompanying one's hopes, dreams and ambitions.

Most of my peers know just how powerful education can make them out to be, but many have given up on this powerful force because of not only the lack of funds to get a good education, but because of the limited motivation that they witness in these South African townships. Witnessing someone from a similar background as yours being able to receive this powerful force and use it to better their circumstances can give one enough inspiration to do just as much and if not so, to go beyond what your inspiration/role model has been able to achieve.

I know that you have not only helped me reach one of my most important year-plans, if not the only year-plan that is able to open up the doors for me to attain my other goals; but you have been able to add hope to the peers, elders, and the rest of the people that get the opportunity to experience my life changing through the wonderful and powerful force that I am able to receive just because of your generous contributions towards my dream of getting a good education. I am also pleased to say that 'good education' is not just a dream for me anymore but it has now become a possibility through the huge blessings that you have entrusted me with.

I will be moving to the city (Johannesburg) on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2016 because that is where my studies will take place (at the University of Johannesburg-Auckland Park campus). The Auckland Park accommodation hostels for students are very expensive but I was able to find accommodation in Doornfontein (another part of Johannesburg) next to the other University of Johannesburg campus (Doornfontein campus) where I am offered free transportation to and from my campus in Auckland Park. I will also be able to use the Doornfontein campus facilities for anything academically related; the campus is just approximately a 10 minute walk from my student accommodation hostel. The university lectures commence on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February 2016 and I am very excited to have been accepted at the university to study Bachelor of Commerce in Information Management.

I know that once I have acquired my degree in a period of three years, I will be spoilt for choice in the various career paths I will be able to venture into with this kind of qualification, most of all I look forward to being the inspiration that will change people's lives not only in my community but throughout the country.

I cannot begin to express how grateful I am for this opportunity you have given me. I promise to work up to your expectations. I truly do not plan to disappoint you, but only to make you proud throughout. Thank you very much. May the good Lord continue to bless you and your families. Thank you very very much.

Regards

Refiloe Sibisi (South Africa)



Refiloe and her mum, Joyce



Refiloe at hostel residence



Refiloe's hostel kitchen



Refiloe's hostel room

# Alumnae Association



Gayle Peggie née Davis  
(Class of 1974)



Kate Gotlib née Kelly  
(Class of 1996)

The steady growth of the Alumnae Association is reflected in the position of President this year being shared between two alumnae. Mrs Gayle Peggie (née Davis) Class of 1974 and Mrs Kate Gotlib (née Kelly) Class of 1996. The two women have much in common, having both spent the majority of their professional lives in service to the College as educators. Kate is still teaching at the College. Gayle, while retired, is often on campus assisting the PE Faculty or helping Kate run the Siena in the City program, and is still fondly referred to as the Director of Fun.

Kate and Gayle have invited all alumnae to attend as many events across the year as possible. The Community Fun Run was a huge success again this year thanks in part to the number of alumnae who brought their families out for the day. The Careers Showcase too looks like being a huge success again this year.

As the Association has grown, so has the number of past students willing to come and share their knowledge with current Siena students.

Tickets will soon be available for the Women's Networking Breakfast, another opportunity for alumnae to not only reconnect with each other but to visit the College and experience an event in the new wing of the school.

Gayle and Kate would like to remind everyone that all alumnae are welcome to the Association meetings. It is terrific to gain fresh ideas and insights. The Association's success comes from the strength of the connections formed by its members.

*Kate Gotlib*  
Co-President Alumnae Association

## SAVE THE DATE

Siena College Alumnae Association presents

## The Careers Showcase

Tuesday, 21 June 2016 | 7.00pm

## ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION MEETING DATES 2016

- Monday 16 May 2016
- Monday 18 July 2016
- Monday 5 September 2016
- Monday 10 October 2016

6.30pm - 7.30pm Conference Room

To register your attendance please visit  
[www.sienacollect.com.au](http://www.sienacollect.com.au) or call 9835 0217



**SIENA COLLEGE ALUMNAE**

Connecting Past, Present and Future

# Mother's Day Breakfast







# Where are they now?

## Bridget Mimmo

Siena College Alumna (Class of 2014) Bridget Mimmo represented Cowley College Women's Basketball (Lady Tigers) in the USA and has made two solid contributions in the semi final and grand final to share in the team's glory to win the 2016 Championship for the first time since 1989.

The semi final saw the Lady Tigers defeat Cloud County 68-44 with Freshman Bridget Mimmo leading the Lady Tigers with 17 points made up of a perfect 4 of 4 from the floor, 3 of 3 from beyond the arc, and eight rebounds. Coach Clark said "Those kids can really stretch the floor because they can shoot it."

"To win a tournament like this speaks to the character of the kids we have," Cowley head coach Todd Clark said. "Our team chemistry helped get us get over the hump."

Further to the win, Bridget was selected in the Region VI All Tournament Team which acknowledges the eleven best players of the season.

After twenty-seven years, the Lady Tigers are now at Lubbock, Texas competing in the NJCAA Division I National Tournament. What an achievement, Bridget. You make us proud.



## Siena College students receive university scholarships

Two students from the Class of 2015 have been awarded scholarships at Swinburne and Monash Universities. Congratulations to Sage Wilson-Short and Danielle Gilmartin on their achievements

**Danielle Gilmartin** was awarded the Dean's Outstanding Scholarship at Swinburne University of Technology where she is studying Engineering.

**Sage Wilson-Short** was awarded a Monash University Scholarship Award where she is studying Law (Honours) / Arts.

The Siena College community congratulates them on their wonderful achievements.

## Barbara Shea

Barbara Shea was the seventy-seventh student enrolled at Siena College. She came to the College in February 1944 in Year 9 and left in December 1945. While she came back to visit some of the students and Sisters in the late 1940s, she did not return again until 2013, over sixty years later. Since then, Barbara has reconnected with Siena and is happy to share her memories.



Barbara remembers with great fondness those who taught her, especially Sr Norbert (Book-keeping), Sr Domenica (Maths), Sr Genevieve (Science), Sr Margaret Mary (English) and Rev M Mary Gonsalvo (English and French). The only lay teacher at the College was Miss Nancy Healy who looked after sports.

Mother Gonsalvo's classroom was next to the Chapel and there were only six students in the French class. There were no desks in the room only a table made from an old door, still with its door handle holes.

When the students got bored they would put a pencil into one of the holes and then lever the door-table slightly on an angle and by magic, everyone's pens would roll to the other side and then roll back! The noise would startle Mother Gonsalvo and the girls would all say that something must be happening outside and rush to the window to check! Anything to make the class go faster! Such naughtiness!!

Barbara also remembers chasing after the rounders ball and sometimes going after it when it was on top of the laundry. She enjoyed herself immensely when pinetree climbing along Wattle Valley Road, all memories from a very happy time at Siena College.

Having left Siena, Barbara looked after her ill mother for some time and then embarked on a kindergarten course, followed by mothercraft nursing. She also began to consider how else she might live out her faith in a meaningful way.

In 1957, she was one of a small group of lay people who decided to make an apostolic commitment in lay life and so established the Mariana Secular Institute. Barbara led the group for many years and helped train people who were going to work with indigenous people in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. She worked at Pallotti College, Millgrove near Warburton for over thirty years and eventually retired to Berwick.

Her connection to Siena College continues. One of her grandnieces, Emma Hancock, was in the Class of 2008 while another joined Siena College in 2015.

Barbara is very proud of her time at the College and when she last visited Siena, remarked that "even though I wasn't a good student, I really, really enjoyed myself! The atmosphere was great!"

Her return to Siena has been equally positive. "I felt then and feel now, a strong connection to Siena. I am part of a wonderful community."

*Catherine Judd*  
Head of Archives

# Where are they now?

## Three generations...

Former student, Ruth Puchlenko (née Cecil), visited Siena College recently and shared memories of her time spent at the College and of her aunt, Shirley Lodge (née Cecil) who was the third student enrolled at the College in 1940.

As St Dominic's Primary School ran classes up to Year 8, a number of our early students came to Siena College in Year 9. Shirley Cecil was one of them.



Shirley Cecil, 1940s

Shirley was Head Prefect in both 1940 and 1941. In those days, the Sisters chose the Head Prefect. It was clear that she was very well regarded in her time at Siena. Shirley was taught elocution at Siena and received medals of distinction. She left Siena at the end of Year 10 and took up a secretarial position at radio station 3DB.

Within a very short time, she became a radio announcer and took part in pioneering black and white television programs. These included *For Women Only*, *The Country Hour*, *Junior Talent Time* and many others. Shirley quickly became an instantly recognisable face and voice for Melbournians.

In 1945, Shirley met the love of her life, Mike Lodge, on a hike with St Kevin's Old Boys and Siena past students.

During the early years of Siena College, there were only two Houses, the Calerogans and Aquins. Sports Days always had a marching event that had practices run by one of the Sisters and was treated very seriously. For many years, there was only one Sports Day trophy for the overall winner of the day's events. It was this original trophy that was at some stage engraved 'Shirley Lodge (née Cecil) Marching Trophy', an indication of the respect and affection in which Shirley was held.

Shirley died in September 2010.

While Shirley didn't have children, she was godmother to her niece, Ruth Cecil, who came to Siena College in 1957.



Mike and Shirley Lodge née Cecil

Ruth was the 437<sup>th</sup> student enrolled at Siena! She remembers Siena fondly and especially the fun times getting up to typical teenage mischief. Ruth especially remembered the time when a number of her classmates and she, brought a lit cigarette into the classroom and surreptitiously snuck puffs of it before handing it to the next person. As windows were generally open, even in winter, they waved the smoke away saying that Melbourne's fog was to blame!

Ruth left Siena to take up a hairdressing apprenticeship and continued to work and teach hairdressing for many years.

Her daughter, Tarnia Puchlenko, was a student at Siena in the 1980s and was a member of the Class of 1990. She eventually went to university and completed a business and marketing degree. Tarnia worked for many years in the superannuation industry. Tarnia and her partner are now living in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, where her partner is working for the United Nations.

In this year of jubilee, it was lovely to hear about the lives of three generations of the extended Cecil family and to appreciate the strong connections that each had to the Siena College community.

*(The majority of the information for this article was provided by Ruth Puchlenko on March 23, 2016)*

*Catherine Judd*  
Head of Archives



Ruth Cecil in the Class of 1959





# We Remember

## May they rest in peace

**Phillip McLaughlin** passed away on 8 December 2015. Father of past parents Vincent and Maureen, and current parent Mary McLaughlin, and grandfather of past students Alannah (2008), Grace (2013), Rosie (2015) and current student Claire (Year 9).

**Julie Paterson**, fondly known as "Mrs P" was a much loved member of the Siena community during her time in the Administration Department in the 1970's. Julie passed away in September 2015.



Julie Paterson

## Marriages



**Sarah Alder** (Class of 2002) married Chris Bignoux in January 2016.

In January 2016, **Kristy Biggs** (Class of 2000) married Peter Mutton at Rippon Lea Estate and Quat Quatta. Their matron of honour was **Emily Douglas** (past student of St Dominic's and Siena College).



Our long association with the Gagliardi family continues with a family wedding in December 2015 at St Dominic's followed by photos in the convent at Siena. **Belinda Marraffa** (nèe Gagliardi, Class of 2004) was bridesmaid at her brother's wedding. Congratulations to Danny and Carla Gagliardi.

**Emily Douglas** (Class of 2002) married Dave Hatherly in November 2015 at South Melbourne.



**Claire Peoples** (Class of 2008) married Andrew Wight at St Dominic's on 3 April 2016.



## Engagements

**Sally Brooks** (Class of 2006) and Chris Shaw have announced their engagement.

## Congratulations

Ben Robson and **Millie Holmes** (Class of 2006) welcome the safe arrival of Daisy Elizabeth Robson. Daisy was born 26 November 2015.



Rebecca Dabbs (Class of 2000) and Ed Redman welcome Matilda Ann, a little sister for Henry. Matilda was born on 16 February 2016.



Isabella Elizabeth Findlay was born on 1 March 2016. Isabella's parents are **Vanessa Barcellona** (Class of 2001) and Glenn Findlay.



**Krislyn De Lorenzo** (Staff member) welcomes the arrival of Levi Matteo born on 26 February 2016. A little brother for Scarlett.

*Liz Merrett*  
Marketing and Development Secretary



# Siena College Fun Run



On Sunday, 6 March, over seven hundred runners donned their runners and headed to Wattle Park for the annual Siena College Fun Run. The event catered for the serious runners, which included the Marcellin College Cross Country Team and Siena College athletes, as well those who just wanted to get out on a beautiful morning for a pleasant walk. Events included a timed 4km Race and a 4km Colour Run.

Charlotte Taylor took the honours as the first female student across the line for the 4km Run, while Scott McKenzie from Marcellin College took the male student honours. In the open category, Carolyn Fox and Steve Kelly took the honours. Victoria Puntareri was the first alumna across the line.

Close on six hundred participants braved the Colour Run, which was almost as much fun for those throwing the colour as it was for the runners. Bianca Shepherd and Max Morby took the student honours, with Lisa Higgins and Brett Shepherd taking the open category honours. 'Big Sister', Rachel Smith and her 'Little Sister' Sophia Saunders, were the first Big Sister Little Sister team to finish the Colour Run.

The Shepherd family were well represented in the top colour runners with daughter, Bianca and dad, Brett taking first position for their categories and brother Luke taking third place in the male student's category.

The Siena Parents' Association created a wonderful café environment with a variety of food stalls, a coffee van and cake stalls available for participants and supporters. Members of the Rotary Club of Templestowe volunteered as marshals for the event and assisted in ensuring the events ran smoothly.

In addition to the participants, many students and staff and their families volunteered to help at water stations, colour stations, registration, baking delectable goodies for the cake stall and a variety of other critical tasks on the day. Our thanks go to all who participated and volunteered and contributed to making this such a wonderful community event.

*Susan Law*  
Director Marketing and Communication





# Siena College

connecting girls • empowering young women

# Open Day 2016

Join us to see how Siena College connects girls  
and empowers young women

**Saturday, 15 October**  
**2.00pm - 4.30pm**

Register at [www.siena.vic.edu.au](http://www.siena.vic.edu.au)



**SIENA**  
**COLLEGE**  
CAMBERWELL

A CATHOLIC SCHOOL FOR YOUNG WOMEN IN  
THE DOMINICAN TRADITION, YEARS 7 TO 12



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**SIENA COLLEGE ALUMNAE**  
Connecting Past, Present and Future

Stay connected...

**Women's Networking  
Breakfast**

Friday, 12 August 2016  
7.00am – 8.30am  
Siena College  
Susan Alberti Auditorium

**Class of 40's, 50's, 60's  
High Tea**

Saturday, 15 October 2016  
2.30pm – 4.00pm  
Siena College Convent

**Decade Reunions  
1976, 1986, 1996, 2006**

Saturday, 15 October 2016  
4.30pm – 6.30pm  
Siena College Hall

Register online [www.sienacollect.com.au/events](http://www.sienacollect.com.au/events)

*Connecting girls, empowering young women  
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