

# THE DIFFERENCE



**CORNISH**  
COLLEGE

**Winter 2023 Edition**

Strategy Story excellence award / Teaching fellowship/  
Future pathways / First Nations education / Reigniting  
international connections / A star on the rise

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#### Front cover image:

(L-R) Year 7 students Bianca Hughes, Liam Dearing, Hartley Anderson and Mya Pais

# Editorial

*We welcome a new Editor for The Difference, former staff member Nancye Banks.*

Welcome to the Winter edition of *The Difference*.

There is definitely something special about this place, you feel it as soon as you drive down the gum tree lined driveway. It is also evident by the number of alumni who work at the school and Collegians who return to Cornish in a variety of roles. As everyone says 'once a part of the Cornish community always a part'.

Over my twenty plus years at Cornish, I have seen many changes. One recent change being the wonderful new uniform. The choices offered by a 'wardrobe' and comfortable nature of the uniform, reflects a more relaxed style of dress in today's world. As student numbers have grown, so have the number of staff, with those new to Cornish bringing their own insights and enthusiasm. New exciting learning spaces have been created which support inquiry learning.

However, what has not changed, is the culture of the school – the sense of community, the pride our students have in their school.

This community magazine reflects this culture and the ways in which we celebrate the achievements of our students. The importance we place on involving students in meaningful, inquiry-based learning which inspires them to 'make a difference and be the difference' and our culture of valuing our community, past and present. In this edition, we feature two inspiring young men who continue to represent the values of our school in their post-Cornish lives.

I'm sure that you will be interested to read more about our commitment to being sustainable custodians of this land and acknowledging the traditional owners, the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation. As a community, we are also very proud to have received three awards in the Five Leaf Eco-Awards. Caring for our 100 acres recognises the importance of nature and space for our mental and physical wellbeing. This edition includes some beautiful photos of our new animal sanctuary.

The busy nature of Cornish has certainly not changed. We continue to offer a wide range of cocurricular activities and, in this edition, you can read about the recent College production, *The Witches* and the House Performing Arts competitions.

There are many stories which reflect the importance of community to Cornish. The outstanding work of the Parents Association is highlighted as is the success of the annual Business Breakfast. We are also delighted to include a story about the reigniting of our international connections. Our staff and students who travelled to Timor-Leste had an unforgettable experience, as did the French exchange students, who stayed with their Cornish host families for six weeks. As this edition went to print our Year 9 students were 'counting down' the days until the Make a Difference trip to Cambodia.

I have always been extremely proud to be a member of this community and love to read about stories from the archives. Included in this edition is part one of Mike Davis's stories about the many animals who have been part of Cornish over the years. I am sure you will enjoy reading this and the other stories about our wonderful school.

Nancye Banks  
Editor

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## Acknowledgement of Country

*We acknowledge the Traditional Owners, the Bunurong people of the Kulin Nation, as the original custodians of this land who have lived here for thousands of years. We respect their relationship with the land and are committed to caring for this place and those who come here now and in the future.*



# FROM THE PRINCIPAL

## Unearthing why at Cornish College

*Seeing our roots doesn't happen by accident. We need to unearth them.*

In their book, *Unearthing why: Stories of thinking and learning with children*, Clare Britt and Jill McLachlan write about the 'educational tree' as a metaphor for articulating and understanding why we do what we do in our schools. At Cornish College, our why is centred around education for a sustainable future. Easily articulated, it is deceptively simple.

The roots of our why have grown deep and strong over the years and remained steadfast as an important moral imperative for all that we aspire to achieve with our community. This has taken commitment and continuous learning, as we build a community of learners with the deep conceptual understandings required to make a difference today for a sustainable and thriving tomorrow.

As you look and listen at Cornish College, you gain a strong sense of what the deep roots produce. It is clear that the work we have done on building and unearthing a strong 'why' is resulting in a flourishing and richly diverse tree. I share with you below, some recent highlights that make me immensely proud of the work our community has done to ensure education at Cornish College is contributing to a more sustainable world.

Our Early Learning Centre three-year-olds and their inspiring educators and co-educators visited my office this term to present me with a copy of their book, *Our Island Rituals*. The students proudly shared their stories about learning on country and the difference this makes to their understanding of our Bunurong land and history was profoundly obvious.

*'The Bunurong people take care of the land. It's important to look after the land. We can stop throwing rubbish. We don't want the world to turn grey. We have to look after the animals.'*

*'At the island we sing The Bunurong Song. It comes from the earth. We use our hands – shooshing hands. We sing Bunurong and womindjeka. We sing Waa and Bundjil. You have to sing it because it's good and we like it.'*

Our Year 7 students were given permission by Indigenous Elder, Aunty Karen, to produce and perform their own *Wayapa Wurruk* which they presented at the recent Year 7 Inquiry Exhibition. The students wrote a stunning script and choreographed the most graceful and unifying movements to accompany the reading. They also composed a musical accompaniment for the performance. Amongst their thoughtful words about *country* and sustainability, I was struck by the beauty and wisdom of this statement from our young people:

*It is a privilege here at Cornish that we can teach the next generation of children how to nurture and sustain the land, sky and atmosphere as we have done for generations. We are taught to be thankful that we get to learn on our beautiful grounds. The children are an important part of life and we must continue to teach them to be grateful for our country.*

These young people will be the champions of environmental and socio-cultural sustainability. How rewarding it is to know that a Cornish College education is making a difference in the lives of these young people now, and in the future.

*(Unearthing why: Stories of thinking and learning with children (2nd Edition) Clare Britt and Jill McLachlan)*

**Nicola Forrest**



(L-R) Rijul Shirke (Year 8), Nicola Forrest, Jake Nuttall (Year 8) and Belle Connolly (Year 7)

# LATEST NEWS

## Strategy Story excellence award

We were absolutely delighted that our new *Cornish College Strategy Story – Toward 2030* received an excellence award at this year's Australian Education Awards and we were one of eight schools throughout Australia awarded for 'The Best Strategic Plan'. The Australian Education Awards are the biggest showcase of excellence in Australia's K-12 education profession, recognising the achievements of outstanding schools, principals and teachers.

Our award is a great testament to all those in the Cornish College community who contributed to the development of the Strategy Story and we are so proud of this fantastic achievement and the national recognition for our wonderful school.



## Teaching fellowship



Darren Thresher chats with Prep students

The College is thrilled to congratulate one of our primary teachers and Academic Care Leader, Darren Thresher, who has been awarded a Teaching Innovation Fellowship by the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership. He is a graduate of their Teaching Excellence program.

Darren is one of 30 teachers from 26 government and non-government schools across Victoria to receive a Fellowship to enable and support excellent teachers to be agents of change in their schools and across the education system.

Each Fellowship provides funding, professional learning and mentoring to design and implement a 12-month innovation project at their schools. Darren's project at Cornish will focus on mathematical problem-solving and developing mathematical vocabulary for Years 5 and 6 students.

# FEATURES

## Future pathways



Cooper Sampson joins Lainey Foster, Communications Manager, in the College Marketing Department as part of the work experience program

Now more than ever, students need to understand the variety of pathways available for future studies and careers. Traditionally if a school did provide career

education, it would commence in Year 9 with the major focus on Years 11 and 12. This is still the case in many schools, however, current best practice is to embed career education in the teaching and learning program across both primary and secondary.

Recently Year 3 students had the opportunity to learn about career options through their art class. With support from their teacher, Bex Hinton, they were able to showcase their work in the 2023 Career Allsorts Exhibition at Docklands. Independent Schools Victoria developed the concept of this art exhibition to support career education, broaden students' horizons and spark their curiosity. It was also about challenging gender stereotypes and giving students access to a range of career role models and Cornish was extremely proud to be one of only six participating schools.



For our 2022 graduates, their successful post-secondary choices reflects the work that all our staff, with particular support from Student Futures and Pathways leader, Emily Hall, have done in counselling and advising the students and their families as they made their Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre choices. These choices were based on a deep understanding by our staff about each of the students and the high level of agency our students developed to understand themselves and make realistic choices about the courses that they were best suited to.

Our Year 10 work experience program also offers students the chance to explore potential career choices and this year our students chose a wide variety of professions including flying, charity stores, marketing and hair styling.

We are proud of the work that Emily, together with all our staff, provide our students and highlights our strong model of Academic Care and the quality student-teacher relationships of which we are so proud.



Charles Gunter and Emily Hall



(L-R) Year 10 students Heather Anderson, Ruby Lacey and Eamon Pring

## First Nations education



Cornish College's longstanding commitment to educating about the First Peoples of Australia is well-documented in the College's *Reconciliation Action Plan* and the implementation of this plan is evident in all areas throughout the school.

One example is the beautiful book created recently by our three-year-old group at the Early Learning Centre. The book is titled *Our Island Ritual-Our Connection to Place and Bunurong Land*.



Three-year-old children from the Early Learning Centre visit the island

Each week the children visit the island, which is part of our wetlands, for *Dhumba-dha Biik* which means *Talk Country*. On these visits they are asked to think about the following - what do we do on the island to remind us this is Bunurong land and how do we look after land, water and each other?

The book contains photos of the children engaging within nature on the land and their thoughts on those two questions. As always, we have a great deal to learn

from the wisdom of our children and, although they had only been at the school for a short time the children's statements clearly reflect their understanding of the importance of being custodians of the land and their connection to place.

By spending uninterrupted periods of time on the island, the children have not only learnt about the philosophies of First Nations People, but also have the opportunity to physically 'practise' caring for country. The comments made by the children in the book reflect their love of going to the island, enjoying the experience of a

campfire, delighting in wading through the lake and viewing all the wildlife.

The children developed understandings and respect for the First Peoples and the ritual of coming together and singing *The Bunurong Song* further supports their growing understandings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, acknowledging Boon Wurrung language and the important meaning and understanding of these words.

This book has provided a beautiful memento for the children and their families.

## Reigniting international connections

### Timor IMPACCT

*Over the Term 2 holiday break eleven students and four staff travelled to Timor-Leste, as part of the Timor IMPACCT program. This was the first time that we had been able to visit in four years, so there was a great deal of excitement and anticipation about the visit. One of the staff, Claire Dawe, reflects on the experience.*

It is difficult to sum up two weeks' immersion in a different place and culture in just a few paragraphs. Basically, three words come to mind and relate to both the Timorese people and our students – resilience, gratitude and forgiveness.

The people of Timor-Leste have experienced great hardship, but they are focused on rebuilding their nation despite, at times, torrential rain, landslides and the subsequent loss of life and infrastructure.

Cornish students provided English language lessons at the school and supported the English Language Centre using resources they took with them, including books created by our Year 2 students. They made a difference in the lives of the students and families through their skills and hard work, but the people of Timor-Leste made a difference in our lives too, offering us different perspectives and opportunities to rise to new challenges.

One night in Gleno, we were having dinner in the restaurant of a student's family from the Fatuquero School. The electricity went out so we were without lights, so the family brought out candles and continued cooking on the wood fire, our driver turned on his headlights, and the teachers took out their phones and turned on the torches. It created a great mood for having dinner but I am sure it was a huge challenge in the kitchen, however, they didn't miss a beat and the food came out of the kitchen without any fuss or complaint.

When it was time to say goodbye, the Timorese people said 'if we have offended you in any way then please forgive us'. I really like this as it focuses us on our own behaviour. We are all guilty of offending others in a



Timor IMPACCT Team 2023



Cornish students help in the Fatuquero School classroom

casual way and not giving it much thought. We also made an effort to bring back as much of our rubbish as we could as they don't have the infrastructure to deal with it as we do in Australia. In the same way, I felt a renewed accountability for my behaviour, choices and actions – another powerful lesson.

We learnt lessons in resilience, gratitude and forgiveness which we will all carry with us.



## Uniting cultures through language

Our 2023 French Language Leaders, Mia Spence, Kayla Benson-Arcoraci, Maddie Hare and Lydia Radov, reflect on the importance of our international language exchange with Institute Mongazon in Angers.

*Bonjour tout le monde!* Recently Cornish had the great pleasure of hosting seven French exchange students who joined our Years 11 and 12 cohort for Term 3. The students from our sister school Institute Mongazon were Ambre Mallegol, Anaïs Manceau, Azélie Vincelot, Lilian Baviera, Candice Alliot, Rose Bréheret and Adam Manni.

A highlight for them was experiencing the difference in cultures and education between our two countries. They said that they were drawn to this trip by the opportunity to travel to Australia and to show our students their country. While here, the French exchange students made many friends, attending sports games, including AFL and the women's soccer. Some of them even had the opportunity to travel interstate with their host families.

At Cornish, there are two exchange programs – an individual and group exchange. The group exchange has not been offered since 2020 and so we are very excited to be sending eight Cornish students and eleven students from Kingswood College in March 2024. The group exchange will be for approximately three weeks and the students will be staying with host families near Lyon. They will spend half of their time with their host families and the other half travelling in France and Switzerland. The individual exchange is for Year 11s and is for six weeks, with students staying with a host family in Angers and attending school at the Institute Mongazon.

These study tours are a gateway to a world of discovery and growth for our students, expanding their horizons as they explore vibrant cities like Lyon and Paris, and



(L-R) Adam Manni, Candice Alliot, Rose Bréheret, Lilian Baviera, Anaïs Manceau and Ambre Mallegol. Azélie Vincelot (absent)



Rose Bréheret gets acquainted with a College chook

immersing themselves in the charm of Angers, which is nestled in the beautiful region of the Pays de la Loire. These trips improve our students' language skills, give them a second family on the other side of the world, helps them to make international friendships and give them the opportunity to experience the French culture first-hand. As the French say *Les voyages forment la jeunesse* (travel shapes youth).

## A star on the rise



We are extremely proud of our talented and unassuming Year 12 student Orlando Schwerdt. Orlando, who has been at Cornish since Year 7, has already made a name for himself within the film industry as a versatile actor with an impressive resume. He is best known for his role in the 2019 film *True History of the Kelly Gang*, where he played the younger version of the notorious

Australian outlaw, Ned Kelly. He has also appeared in several other notable projects, including the 2018 short film *Incubator*, where he played the lead role, and the 2020 horror film *Children of the Corn*.

In his latest film the *White Bird: A Wonder Story* he had the opportunity to work alongside Helen Mirren and

Gillian Anderson. The movie, to be released later this year, is a war drama feature, a spin-off, prequel and 'companion piece' to the feature *Wonder* is set in Nazi-occupied France and Orlando plays the part of Julien.

Orlando spent four months in Prague in 2021 filming the movie. It was his first time in Europe and he said it was an incredible experience. He was able to enjoy the city in relative peace as it was during COVID and there were no tourists. Orlando said he had no trouble readjusting after living and working in Prague because he loves being at Cornish with his friends and his focus is now on finishing his Year 12 studies.

Although he has worked on big budget films, Orlando still enthusiastically involves himself in all the drama opportunities at Cornish. One of Orlando's fondest memories from this year was working with the Murnmut House Captains to create their winning House performance.

Orlando says his parents made the decision to send him to Cornish after a discussion with former principal Vicki Steer. When she explained that a major focus of the school was providing high quality and motivated teachers rather than just lavish buildings the family knew this was the school for them. He says one of the things which makes Cornish special is the relationship staff develop with the students. This was reinforced recently when a French exchange student, staying with his family, commented on the helpfulness and friendliness of the staff.

Although Orlando is a talented actor he says he is equally passionate about his studies. He recognises that acting is a very fickle business, so his plan is to study at Melbourne University and be involved in films which inspire him. He has listened to the advice of directors and other actors and is extremely appreciative of the experiences he has had and prefers to think of acting as a 'creative hobby'.

Despite this Orlando has been noted as 'one to watch' and, as he takes on new roles and further develops his skills, he will likely continue to gain further recognition and success.

## House performing arts

One of the highlights of the year are the House Performing Arts events, and as anticipated, this year's didn't disappoint! These spectacular student-led events showcase a culmination of singing, dance, drama and instrumental items. Congratulations to Murnmut House for a very successful campaign this year, winning both primary and secondary House Performing Arts events!



*Primary Murnmut House during their winning performance*



*Winnery House perform at the secondary House Performing Arts event*



*Secondary students showcase their musical talents*

## New animal sanctuary

There was great excitement among our Year 3 students at the recent opening of our new animal sanctuary. Part of the construction involved students painting decorative panels for the façade which were inspired by First Nations' artists. The sanctuary allows students

from all year levels to view our reptiles as they enjoy their life at Cornish. The sanctuary also provides 'creature comforts', to keep them warm and comfortable all year round.



*Year 3 students create artwork for the new animal sanctuary, inspired by First Nations art*



*Principal Nicola Forrest officially opens the new animal sanctuary*



## Science in action

At Cornish we search for ways to involve our students in real life projects. In particular, projects which involve the wider community and some form of sustainability. So when the opportunity arose to be involved in the River Detectives Program we were excited. This program is an initiative of Catchment Management Authorities, which inspires teachers and students to understand, appreciate and care for their local waterway through engaging, cross-curricular, citizen-science activities. Students learn how water, land, plants, animals, people and communities are all integrally linked and we were provided with equipment, training and teaching resources. Once accepted into the program the teachers involved undertook some specialist training before our Year 5 students began testing at two locations along the Patterson River. Our two testing locations were registered on the Waterwatch site, where all data can be viewed. The students tested temperature (air and water), pH, electrical conductivity, reactive phosphorous and turbidity. In addition, they also conducted a habitat assessment.

Lots of maths, science, geography and literacy all rolled into our fabulous Outdoor Classroom!

As a result of this program, we were asked by Deakin University to be involved in their pesticide Watch Project, which involves collecting a filtered water sample. Once collected, the sample is frozen and stored until ready to be mailed to the university's laboratory at Burwood, where it is analysed for about 800 pesticides

with very high sensitivity.

A pesticide monitoring project of this scale is the first of its kind in Australia and it is expected to grow in the future. Currently the network extends from Central Queensland down to Southern Tasmania, with monthly sampling having begun in April and will conclude in September. Our research will go towards building a map which identifies where pesticide residues are located in Australian streams.

We are really pleased to be involved in cutting-edge science that will make a real difference to our local waterways!



## Dads and kids weekend

Our 100 acres was in its finest glory the night of the dads and kids sleep over. We had a magnificent sunset over a very still wetlands, clear night skies filled with native birds going about their business, the fire crackling to cook our homemade damper and marshmallows and a delicious BBQ. More significantly we had a wonderful and engaging group of dads and kids, willing to embrace the comfort and ease of time together and connection, truly embodying authentic wellbeing.

The program was structured loosely, allowing time for dads and dads, dads and kids and kids and kids to bond naturally. There was also golf on our Par 3 course,

cricket, walks and after dark explorations of our land. There is something very special about an event such as this, taking time away from busy lives and the chance to get to know one another a little better.

Our time concluded with the Garbage Bag Lunch, a special Nicola Forrest recipe of all Mexican ingredients in a garbage bag, twirled around vigorously and served on pita bread.

Thanks to all those involved in our weekend and we look forward to our next one in 2024.



Campbell Zerger-Daddow (Year 7) and his dad, Michael



Summer Newton (Year 7) with her dad, Ben

## Celebrating students' work

At Cornish College we value students work and believe they should not just be involved in 'busy work' but that their work should be visible and celebrated. In order to achieve this, exhibitions of students' work are held throughout the year.

One such exhibition was the Year 7 Beneath the Surface Inquiry Showcase. This showcase provided an opportunity for students to share their thinking and understanding of the hidden truths that existed 'Beneath the Surface' of their Term 2 interdisciplinary inquiry. It involved investigating a system they believed had truths that needed to be revealed. They examined their area of interest through the concepts of *sustainability*, *systems* and *truth*. The generalisation which guided their inquiry was 'Understanding systems enables us to uncover truths for a sustainable world.' The exhibition was greatly enjoyed by primary students and the Year 7 students and their families.

Another wonderful exhibition held in July was the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) exhibition. Throughout the year, students from Prep to Year 6 have investigated how visual artists use STEAM to express their ideas. At this special event, the culmination and celebration of work done throughout Semester 1, parents and students had the opportunity to view and participate in a variety of displays, hands-on activities and interactive STEAM displays.

All year levels have been engaged in a wide variety of STEAM inquiries and their work has been displayed in different ways. For example, the Year 6s worked on a unit of inquiry about energy. This included learning about energy, renewable energy, electricity and circuits and energy poverty. The students were proud to help with the work of SolarBuddy, a self-sustaining charity which hopes to contribute to a change in the way charities do business, shifting away from competition and towards collaboration. The students collaborated to assemble solar lights and then wrote letters to the families who would receive them.

This was a fantastic project as it not only taught the students about the enormous problem of energy poverty, but was also yet another chance for our student to 'Make a difference and be the difference'.



Year 6 students Elliot Lovis, Eden Griffin and Xavier Walmsley at the STEAM exhibition

# SUSTAINABILITY

## Five Leaf Eco-Awards

Cornish College is very proud to have been recognised by the Five Leaf Eco-Awards National Ecumenical Environmental Awards program. Jessica Morthorpe, who founded this program in 2008 for Australian churches, schools and religious organisations, is a consultant with the Uniting Church of Australia and who has travelled all around Australia visiting churches and schools to see their environmental actions.

In her speech at the award ceremony, Jessica said it was her deep honour to officially recognise Cornish College's environmental achievements with the presentation of three prestigious awards; the Basic certificate award,

the Eco-Worship award and the Eco Outreach award. Jessica said the College's application was a delight to read.

Even more exciting for the College is that if we can complete a few more criteria, Cornish College may become the first school in Australia to complete the complete Five Leaf Award, the pinnacle of the program.

Being a recipient of these awards has connected us to a network of churches, schools and religious organisations around Australia working to care for the environment and create a better future for us all.

## Transforming our uniform for good

The launch of our new uniform has been a great success. While both students and staff have proudly embraced the new Cornish College wardrobe, a hidden story has been unfolding behind the scenes - the legacy of the retired Cornish uniform.

In collaboration with the Parents Association and with the support of Year 12 student Amy Longmuir, we gathered, sorted, and distributed the old uniform items based on their condition. Many items in good condition were taken on the recent Timor IMPACCT trip for students of the Fatuquero School in Timor-Leste.

Meanwhile, a remarkable 414kg of our old uniform has found new life with a textile recycling company. As a result, approximately 1,449kg of harmful greenhouse gases have been averted from polluting our atmosphere.

We're not stopping here. Plans are underway for some of the remaining uniform to go to a school in Ghana - more about that will be in the summer edition of *The Difference* - stay tuned!

As our students and staff proudly don the new Cornish uniform, know that, as a community, we're making a difference.



# FROM THE ARCHIVES

## Animal stories - part one

*Over the years the school has been the home for a wide variety of animal friends. Mike Davis, a teacher who lived on the school with his family for many years as the caretaker, shared memories of a few of those animal friends.*

### Thumper

In 1987 there was still a great deal of land works going on around the school which involved digging drains, as the school was built on what was once swamp land. One morning a large workman appeared at my classroom door with something furry nestled in his arms – a baby rabbit – as the excavator had dug up the rabbit hole. “Do you want a rabbit?” he asked.

The class, all 13 of them, excitedly replied “Yes” and before I knew it we were the proud custodians of Thumper. Thumper lived in the classroom and had free run of the room. It was not unusual for the children to be working and have Thumper appear on their table to look at what they were doing and often start to nibble on their work.

His name came from the rabbit’s warning thump. Thumper would do this whenever anything in the room seemed out of the ordinary, much to the amusement of the students.

Overnight Thumper would sleep in the classroom, quite often in the shelves under the student’s desks. When students arrived in the morning it was a challenge to find where he was. Often the first hint was a squeal from someone who reached under their desk to get a book only to get a friendly nip from Thumper. This usually followed with pulling out the exercise book to find Thumper had spent the night gnawing around the edges!

### Nicky

Nicky was a labrador/staffy cross that we acquired in 1991. She was jet black and, as great St Kilda supporters, my family named her after a great St Kilda footballer, Nicky Winmar. Nicky would wander around the school during the day and could often be found sleeping on the principal’s (Mr Bolger) chair. In those days his office was upstairs above the main entrance to the school. Mr Bolger’s chair would get the lovely mid-morning sun. It was not unusual for Kerry to arrive with prospective new parents and have to evict Nicky from his office.

Nicky would also wander into assemblies – in those days all students would sit on the floor. Nicky would often make her way up and down the rows, receiving a pat from students as she went past. If a student did not give her a pat she would stop and glare at them until the issue was sorted!



### Peacocks



The school acquired three peacocks in the early 1990s from a farm in Kyneton. They certainly added some colour to the school and in spring the students enjoyed collecting their tail feathers as the birds dropped them

around the school. They would roost in the framework above the decks which could have its dangers when they decided to drop a ‘deposit’. Eventually we had to bid them farewell as they tended to leave quite a mess on the decks each morning.

### Gabby

Gabby was a goat who wandered around the school during the day. In those days the playground consisted of a couple of large concrete pipes and some climbing frames. Gabby would often bounce onto the pipes which were around 170cm high and then try to stop anyone else climbing up. It was a great source of entertainment for the students to see who could manage to make it on top. Once up there Gabby would lose interest.



She also decided that the front deck of the caretaker’s house was her home. Whenever we came home we would have the same battle with her to get inside as she defended her deck. She often had to be removed from students’ school bags when she smelt something she liked inside.

Eventually she took to jumping up onto car bonnets in the carpark, much to the chagrin of the parents waiting for their children at the end of the day. She was initially moved to the paddock by the chooks, but she just jumped the fence and came back to the school. Various other options were tried but Gabby still found a way out and eventually she was relocated to a nearby goat farm.



## Design of House logos

Louise Berger (CC2010) designed the Cornish House logos as part of her Visual Communication & Design elective, in collaboration with Andrew Goodman. Cornish wanted some fresh House banner designs with a uniquely Cornish flavour that embodied nature and sustainability. Several different design directions were discussed with the final choice representing the four House colours as natural elements in simple, organic shapes. Green-earth, red-fire, blue-water and yellow for air.

Louise remembers that it was a wonderful and exciting opportunity for her, as a Year 9 student, to contribute to the school in such a personal way, and a valuable learning experience to practice working to a real creative brief and preparing a design for print production.

On a recent visit back to Cornish she was humbled and deeply moved to see that those designs have endured, and are still embraced by the Cornish community some 15 years later.



*Editor's note: When our new uniform was introduced in 2023, the House logos were also added to the House polo shirts.*

# A CULTURE OF GIVING

Our culture of giving is defined by gifts and care from many sources and in many forms—some are time, some are expertise, some are donations.

Throughout this issue of *The Difference* you can read about how people support Cornish College in diverse ways. In particular, the stories that follow, beautifully illustrate three different ways in which members of the Cornish community have supported the College, and others, this year with generosity, empathy and compassion.

From the Ration Challenge and Winter Sleepout to individual generosity in donating musical instruments, this support says so much about how we, as a community, support Cornish, one another and those who are experiencing hardship.

## Website update

We have recently launched a Giving page on the Cornish College website [www.cornishcollege.vic.edu.au/giving/](http://www.cornishcollege.vic.edu.au/giving/)

We are very proud of this new page, which gives detailed information about the many ways in which you can support the College. If you have any questions about giving at Cornish, please contact the Director of Community Relations, Dennis Freeman [dennis.freeman@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au](mailto:dennis.freeman@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au) or call him on 9781 9014.

## Annual Giving

Thank you very much to all those who supported our 2023 Annual Giving program. Your support is valued and appreciated by us all at Cornish.



## STEM Centre

Final planning for our new \$3.79 million STEM Centre is being undertaken and we look forward to construction beginning before the end of the year.

We are delighted that this building project assists us in making a significant impact for student learning and futures in line with the goals of our *Strategy Story – Toward 2030* and of our *Building Master Plan* launched in 2017.



## Ration Challenge

We congratulate members of our Cornish community who helped to make a difference in the lives of refugees by taking part in the Ration Challenge at the end of Term 2. It is the 6th year of the Challenge and, in that time, more than 620 members of the Cornish community have raised over \$50,000.

Our challenge is based on the Act for Peace Ration Challenge, where participants consume the same rations as a Syrian refugee living in a camp in Jordan. At Cornish

we have made some changes to allow access to a more balanced diet. We shortened the challenge duration and encouraged participants to change the rules to facilitate their participation in a way that suits their family's needs, health and wellbeing.

Being involved in the challenge provides a wonderful opportunity to teach their children about empathy and compassion.



(L-R) Year 6 students Dustin Raven, Rafael Morin Dill, Lucas Cassar and Alysara Fong completed the Ration Challenge

## Violin donation

It was a pleasure to welcome back to Cornish College Geoff and Fiona Triplow, pictured at right, the parents of Leighton Triplow (CC2010). Leighton is an accomplished musician and, whilst at school had learnt the violin, however, as he no longer plays the instruments, decided to donate them to the school.

Leighton's generosity in supporting our performing arts program is so much appreciated and we know that there will be students who will benefit enormously from this donation.



## Winter Sleepout

Students, staff and alumni recently joined forces for Cornish College's annual Winter Sleepout. This great cause sheds light on homelessness and raises money for the Backpack Bed for Homeless sleeping bag program.

Throughout the evening, everyone engaged in various activities such as night golf, peer-led discussions, gathering around a campfire, enjoying a BBQ dinner, and assembling Blessing Bags (packs of essential care items with a handwritten note of hope and positivity for those experiencing homelessness and/or disadvantage). By sleeping outdoors in cardboard boxes, they also gained valuable insight into the hardships faced by those without homes.

We were thrilled to raise an astounding \$20,421, setting a new Australian record. This is the 12th year that Cornish has offered the Winter Sleepout and, in that time, have raised over \$130,000 for those experiencing hardship.



Year 6 students Hayley Melton and Tahlia Ling at the Winter sleepout

# STUDENT SUCCESS



The State Interschool Equestrian Championships were held at Werribee over the Easter break. Both **Chelsea O'Leary and Maddison Graham** of Year 8 proudly represented the College at the championships. Both girls performed well with Maddie achieving the reserve champion award for the Intermediate Preliminary Dressage, making her a reserve for the Victorian national team.

Following success in high jump, long jump, 100m and discus, **Yani Melemenis**, Year 10, has continued to succeed in 2023 in high jump and won second place in the Victorian Track and Field State Championships, qualifying him for the Nationals.



Congratulations to **Lea Maher**, Year 3, who represented Victoria in the Australian Calisthenics championships recently. She was extremely excited when her team were runners up in the Sub-Juniors section. Lea travelled to Queensland for the championships with the twenty other girls and she

had an amazing time and came home on a real high.

Lea trains for four to six hours every Sunday and her dedication was rewarded when she was selected for the State team in November 2022.

At this year's 97th Annual Bendigo Music Eisteddfod, **Damien Gordon**, Year 12, was awarded a place in three sections. The VCE (Units 3 & 4) own choice solo, 21st century composer solo and the 18 and under film or musical solo.



He has been playing piano for 10 years and has passed all nine AMEB Examination Grades and will undertake an AMusA examination qualification next year.

**Dylan Edwards**, Year 9, is to be congratulated on being placed 6th out of a field of 117 in the Under 16 Athletics Victoria All Schools Cross Country Championship. His time for the 4km course was 12.32 and, as he was placed in the top 10, he gained automatic selection for the Victorian team to compete in the National Championship in Canberra.

Year 1 student **Alex Hewson** won the 5 - 7 aged category of the Kingston City Council annual writing competition. The competition was open to schoolchildren between the ages of 5 - 18 and there were over 500 entries.

Alex was inspired to write his story *The Surprising Success of Tram Boy* after attending the Melbourne Tram Museum to celebrate



the launch of the Nicolson Models tram exhibit. The 20 little trams were built over decades by Alexander's late great-grandfather Richard Nicolson.

Alex worked over a number of weeks, drafting and refining his story, with his beloved Pa helping him with the spelling and



punctuation. It was quite a task to get it down to 500 words but they managed it in the end!

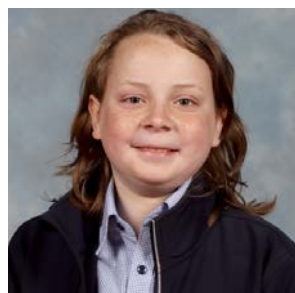
Year 9 student **Dion Gordon** will be representing Victoria in the boys 15 year old freestyle and butterfly events at the upcoming School Sport Australia National Championship at Sydney Olympic Park. We wish him all the best.

Although **Jack Brunialti Sykes**, Year 7, only started his musical education in 2019, his incredible talent on the piano is already obvious and he has completed his



Grade 7 AMEB Classical Piano exam, achieving a High Distinction.

Jack won his first award in the 2020 Eisteddfod 'By the Bay' competition and continued with his selection for the Victorian State Schools Spectacular Orchestra in 2021 and 2022 and gave his first solo piano recital in 2022.



In May he accompanied the Daryl McKenzie Jazz Orchestra as they performed one of his compositions, which he also orchestrated.

**Mitch Denny** of Year 12 was a member of the Baseball Victoria Performance Pathway Prospects/Select Program team, which won bronze at the 2023 School Sport Australia Championship.





## Reconnecting with Cornish and beyond



Cooper with Naoko, the mother of his host student Soma, in the lobby of the Fukuyama New Castle Hotel

Since graduating from Cornish, **Cooper Maher (CC2020)** has been incredibly busy. He completed his Bachelor of Science (Applied Mathematics and Statistics) in two and half years by taking extra subjects, is currently undertaking an Honours year at RMIT University and plans to complete a PhD after that.

As well as enjoying academic study, he is also a talented athlete

and started playing gridiron while in Year 9. He has represented Victoria at State level and is now playing flag football, a 'touch' version of gridiron. With the possible recognition of flag football as an Olympic sport in 2028, Cooper's dream would be to represent Australia.

Cooper greatly valued his time at Cornish. He enjoyed the real sense of community and feels that Cornish provided a strong 'grounding' for his future, as he involved himself in a wide variety of educational and recreational experiences. One of his fondest memories was working with a group of students in Design Technology to build a playground. He also appreciated the many cocurricular opportunities available at school, entering school-wide competitions such as the Australian Mathematics competition, which really encouraged his interest in this area.

Another special memory was his involvement in two international tours. One with the Year 9 Make a Difference Experience to Thailand and the other the language trip to Japan. He says that both trips provided him with incredibly valuable experiences that he could not have had without being part of a school group.

His love of travel has continued and he visited Japan for two weeks earlier this year, and the highlight was reconnecting with his host family from his Cornish trip in 2018.

Cooper loves to hear news about Cornish College and he will always feel a part of the Cornish community.

## A calling to the great outdoors

**Tom Rodgers (CC2011)** has a strong family connection to Cornish as his three siblings also attended the College. During his time at the Cornish campus of St Leonard's he was involved in many different areas of the College such as mudlarks, athletics, swimming and public speaking.

Tom also formed strong connections with staff whilst at

Cornish seeing them as mentors and role models. During his final years at Cornish, he particularly noted his form teacher Mark Byrne and his Physical Education teacher Andrew Goodman. He says staff were always helpful and would always go 'above and beyond'. The running skills taught by Mike Davis initially led Tom to compete as a professional triathlete after leaving school and spent 3-4 years competing as a professional triathlete, while also working as a triathlon coach.

Tom eventually joined the Victoria Police when he was 22. His interest in the outdoors naturally led him towards the Victoria Police Search and Rescue team and he applied to join them at the end of 2021. There are only 24 people in the squad so there is a selection process only once every five years.

This process involved numerous in water and on land fitness, psychological, medical and mechanical tests. After being selected for the final round of testing, he undertook a 4-day selection camp involving a range of skills whilst on limited food and sleep. This part of the process resulted in many participants dropping out. He then had to undertake panel interviews and a 12-week initial training course including commercial diving, vertical rescue training and bush navigation skills. After passing this final testing he was selected as one of four new members of Victoria Police's Search and Rescue team.



He continues to be part of the Search and Rescue team at Victoria Police where his role includes diving for evidence such as firearms or knives used in crimes, body recovery, high angle rescue from cliffs or trees, protester extraction from trees or high places, alpine rescue, swift water rescue, search coordination and dive fatality investigation. He spends 2-3 months each year in training to maintain the skills required of his role.

Tom continues to use many of the skills he learnt at Cornish. One of these skills is public speaking which has been a large part of his job. He also remembers learning how to tie a bowline many years ago – a knot he now uses on a daily basis as a lifeline when diving in dirty water or when conducting high angle rescues in trees.

## Births



### Vousden

To Jess (current staff) and Adam, on 6 April 2023, a daughter, Hannah Lauren Vousden and granddaughter to proud grandfather Tim Lake (former staff).



### Cashion-Banks

To Taylor Banks (CC2008) and Emily Cashion, on 5 August 2023, a son Miles Cashion-Banks and grandson to proud grandmother Nancye Banks (former staff).



### Watts

To Jess Hird (CC2008) and Chris Watts, on 3 February 2023, a son, Sonny Terence Hird Watts, a sister for Lola, a nephew for Matthew Hird (CC2006) and grandson to proud grandmother Jennie Hird (former staff).

## Death notice



### Rees

Roberta (OC1964) on 22 July 2023. Roberta, an Architect and Landscape Architect, was a passionate supporter of Cornish and was heavily involved in the early designs for the Cornish Campus. She was commissioned with many landscape plans during the early years,

including the courtyard near Reception with its bisecting riverbed, and the avenue of native gumtrees down the main driveway.

Her daughter Ceridwen is a staff member at Cornish and granddaughters Pemley and Clelia are current students.

## Updates

We would love to hear your latest news so that we can share it with our Cornish community. If you're about to start an exciting job, undertake further study, or have recently become engaged or married, please let us know!

Please contact the Community Relations team via [alumni@cornishcollegevic.edu.au](mailto:alumni@cornishcollegevic.edu.au) to share your updates.

### Follow Us

To find out more about Cornish College alumni, follow us on Facebook and Instagram



@CornishCollegeAlumni



@CornishCollegeAlumni

### Priority enrolment

We welcome children of alumni to the College and recommend that you register your application for enrolment as early as possible. Applications are prioritised based on the date of receipt and many families apply shortly after their child is born. As valued members of the community, the application fee for children of Cornish Collegians is waived. Applications can be completed via [www.cornishcollege.vic.edu.au/enrolment/enrolment-information/](http://www.cornishcollege.vic.edu.au/enrolment/enrolment-information/)

## Important Dates

### Cornish Campus Reunion

Friday 1 September  
6.30pm - 9.00pm  
Sunny Boy Beach Club,  
Mordialloc

### Class of 2022 One Year Reunion

Friday 10 November  
6.00pm - 8.00pm  
Strike Bowling Bayside

### Former Staff BBQ

Sunday 19 November  
12.00pm - 3.00pm  
Cornish College



## 2023 Cornish Collegians Management Committee

**President:** Josette Mulcahy (CC2016)

**Vice President:** Louise Berger (CC2010)

**Secretary:** Dennis Freeman (Co-opted for 12 months)

**Treasurer:** Rick Mleczko (CC2015)

**Past staff representative:** Kerry Bolger (Former Principal)

**Committee:** Kath Kiddell (CC2015), Catherine Payton (CC2019), Alannah Hayes (CC2016), Robbie Boag (CC2015), Leighton Triplow (CC2010), Nick Kiss von Soly (CC1997), and Mark Byrne (Former staff)



# COMMUNITY NEWS

## Fun Run/Walk

The inaugural Cornish College Fun Run/Walk took place on our beautiful school grounds in May. Despite unpredictable weather, the sun came out and the event was a great success!

It was wonderful to see so many families participating, either choosing to walk or run together and also keen to explore our 100-acre parklands, as a family.

Congratulations to all who participated, and congratulations to those who were the first to cross the line in each category (pictured right) – Lachlan McDonald, Alice Stoessiger, Cleo and Angela Newton. They each received a beautiful handwoven Cornish tais from Timor-Leste.

All funds raised were donated to the Fatuquero School in Timor-Leste, where we continue to make a difference in the lives of the students and their families.



(L-R) Kate Kenny, Emelyn Davies, Luke Lineham

term between February and September. Typically each session will last for approximately two hours and will take place on a weekday, most likely after school drop off in the morning – all are welcome.

To find out more please email Dennis Freeman, Director of Community Relations [dennis.freeman@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au](mailto:dennis.freeman@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au) or Tom Humphreys, Property Manager [tom.humphreys@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au](mailto:tom.humphreys@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au)

## A tree to remember

The College was delighted that the Year 12 parent community from 2022 donated a Silky Oak tree to the College to acknowledge the contribution of Cornish to the lives of their children. The tree has been planted at the end of the Sustainability Centre towards the large cross and, as the parents have said 'it will be great to watch it thrive in the Cornish grounds, as our children did/do'.

## 100 Acre Club

The Cornish College 100 Acre Club is dedicated to caring for and maintaining the 100-acre parkland that serves as the classroom for Cornish College and it has been great to reconvene the group after an abeyance of 3 years.

From planting native species to mulching and much more, members of the club are making a real difference in protecting and preserving the natural resources that surround us. Since recommencing in July, there has been significant planting and propagating undertaken.

The 100 Acre Club meets once a month during the school



Tom Humphreys planting the tree



(L-R) Nancye Banks, Louise Connolly, Natasha Tikhomirova

## Cornish Book Club

It was 10 years ago that a group of literacy loving parents and teachers came together to form the Cornish Book Club. For quite a few years they met in the CLIC at Cornish College and, more recently, have moved to meeting at either a restaurant or at a member's house. Over the years membership of the club has changed, although there has been a core group throughout.

The Book Club meets every 5 or 6 weeks and they are always pleased to see new members. It is a very relaxed club where members can choose to go to all the meetings, or just those where there's a particularly interesting book to be discussed. Not only have they covered a wide range of different book genres, but have also attended theatre productions and book launches.

It is a truly wonderful club, as it brings together people with all different types of interests and perspectives and the discussions are always robust and insightful. They are currently working on a way to celebrate their tenth year.

## Business Breakfast

Our Annual Cornish College Business Breakfast was held on 28 July in the beautiful Peninsula Room at the Frankston Arts Centre. It was a fabulous opportunity to hear from two guest speakers, Martine Letts, Group CEO of Asialink and former CEO of the Committee for Melbourne and Dr Bev Menner, Executive Director at pharmaceutical company CSL and Chair of the Cornish College Board of Directors.

As part of their presentation a stimulating discussion was held on the many opportunities and challenges for Australian businesses in Asia and the need for Australian schools to incorporate Asian studies as part of their curriculum.

This is the second year the breakfast has been held and it was an opportunity to connect and share ideas with members of the Cornish Business Directory, sponsors, suppliers, friends, parents, staff, students and business communities.

We were delighted to welcome 50 guests, including students from the VCE Business Studies class, who were welcomed by Jack Brunialti Sykes from Year 7, with beautiful piano playing.

It was a wonderful and engaging event to begin the day and end the week. We were also most grateful for the support of KISS Print Solutions in presenting the breakfast.



Martine Letts



Jessica Dean



Jess Pratt

## Parents Association

The annual Cornish College Parents Association Ladies Luncheon was held in June at the Frankston Arts Centre. This is always a highly-anticipated event and this year's event was a great success with more than 130 guests. The theme was *Unite, Inspire and Celebrate*, which is a perfect summary of what transpired.

Guests received canapes on arrival and were treated to a delicious two-course meal, beverages, a silent auction with over 40 items donated by businesses and individuals, table prizes, 'under the chair' prizes and door prizes donated by small businesses. A bespoke market with local small business stall holders enticed, with a large display of luxurious items including jewellery, candles, skincare, soap and many other handmade items.

Inspirational guest speaker Dr Jessica Dean talked about 'Reaching your potential' and comedian Jess Pratt brought many laughs to the occasion. The ability to dress up, chat with new and old friends and listen to thought-provoking and entertaining speakers and a comedian in a relaxed atmosphere, were what made this year's Ladies Luncheon one to remember.

Coming together with purpose and good humour is what we like to do at Cornish and this year's Ladies Luncheon was another example of this. Events like these keep the bonds of our community strong and enable us to reinforce our shared values.





## Golf Day

**When: Friday 24 November**

**Lunch at 11.00am, shot-gun start at 12.30pm**

**Where: Southern Golf Club**

This is a fantastic opportunity for community members to enjoy a round of golf while raising money to support the Cornish College Building Fund.

Golfers will enjoy an 18-hole Ambrose competition with a shot-gun start, with a range of prizes on offer

## Lifblood Team



One in three Australians will need blood at some point in their lives. This could be a parent, child, friend or even you.

We want to make a difference and help support other communities by 'rolling up our sleeves' and giving blood, so we've established our own Cornish College Lifblood Team and we invite all members of the Cornish community to get involved.

You may be already be a donor or perhaps thinking about it. Either way, by linking your donations to the Cornish College Lifblood Team when you make your next booking, we are collectively 'making a difference'.

We are encouraging our community to donate to support other communities across Australia – every donation counts!

## Supporting our community businesses

Our Cornish College Business Directory showcases a range of businesses from our parent and alumni communities. We encourage all members of the Cornish community to support these businesses.

If you are interested in having your business listed, do not hesitate to get in touch at **communications@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au** or on **(03) 9781 9000**.

**<http://businessdirectory.cornishcollegevic.edu.au/>**



## Cornish Shop

Check out our new online Cornish Shop for branded memorabilia and other goods.

On sale now are recycled cardboard pens, KeepCup glass coffee cups, umbrellas, and our publication, *A Celebration of Courage*, telling the story of Cornish College over the first ten years. A must read for everyone passionate about Cornish!

Please visit **[www.cornishcollegevic.edu.au/shop](http://www.cornishcollegevic.edu.au/shop)**

## Upcoming School Tours

Discover why Cornish College offers an education of a different kind. Join us for one of our upcoming school tours:

**Saturday 7 October**  
**9.30am – 11.00am**

**Wednesday 15 November**  
**6.00pm – 8.00pm**

Book online via **[www.cornishcollege.vic.edu.au/enrolments/tours](http://www.cornishcollege.vic.edu.au/enrolments/tours)**

For further information, please contact Admissions on **9781 9008** or via **[admission@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au](mailto:admission@cornishcollege.vic.edu.au)**

## College Fair, Summer Showcase Festival and Art Walk - Save The Date

This exciting College event will be held on **Friday 17 November from 4.00pm - 8.00pm!**

Come and enjoy wonderful music, art, rides, food, markets and a whole lot more.

