



Keep in Touch

Sisters of Charity Newsletter - Partners in Mission

Vol.3 No.4 December 2002

New Congregational Leader and Council

At our recent Chapter the delegates elected Sister Elizabeth Dodds as our Congregational Leader for the next six years. The four Councillors elected are Sisters Margaret Beirne, Maureen Delaney, Laureen Dixon and Claire Nolan. There was a Mass at St Vincent's College, Potts Point to celebrate their installation on 8th December 2002.



Sr Margaret Beirne



Sr Claire Nolan



Sr Elizabeth Dodds



Sr Maureen Delaney



Sr Laureen Dixon

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St Paul's Overseas Aid Group

Our Congratulations to **Sister Felicia McCarthy** and her hardworking friends in "The Stables" at Kew who have dispatched 696 boxes of clothing including 560 Babies' Kits to missions in countries including Papua New Guinea, Bougainville, Uganda, Nigeria and Zambia in the past twelve months.

The group has also provided \$3,160.00 in sponsorship for girls in that same period.

The group is dependent on the

generosity of schools, businesses and philanthropic organisations to provide either clothes or the where-with-all to purchase materials to make the end products and to pay postage. This year the postage costs were in excess of \$54,000.00.

Any assistance would be welcome and can be sent care of Sister Felicia McCarthy at Caritas Christi Convent, Studley Park Road, Kew 3101.



Christmas Prayer

O God,

whose mighty Son was born in Bethlehem those days long ago, lead us to that same poor place, where Mary laid her tiny Child.

And as we look on in wonder and praise, make us welcome him in all new life, see him in the poor, and care for his handiwork the earth, the sky and the sea.

O God, bless us again in your great love. We pray for this through Christ our Lord.

New Congregational Leader and Council

Elizabeth was a Congregational Councillor from 1990-1996. Her most recent ministry has been as Director, Edmund Rice Schools in the Christian Brothers Xavier Province (Queensland and Northern Territory). Prior to that she was a consultant in the Parramatta Catholic Education Office.

Elizabeth is an extremely well qualified and highly regarded educator with many years experience as a teacher and principal in secondary schools in New South Wales and Victoria including St Mary's High School, Liverpool and Sancta Sophia College, Glenroy. She has served on many local, national and international Boards and Committees. She is currently involved in furthering governance issues within a number of Religious Institutes. She has a strong interest in leadership succession planning, founding charisms, Catholic Social Teaching and eco-theology. Elizabeth was educated by the Ursuline Sisters and the Sisters of Charity.

Margaret spent many years as a teacher and Catholic secondary educator prior to her appointment as Principal of St Vincent's College 1984-1996. She is currently a member of the Council of St Ignatius' College Riverview, the Loyola Institute, Pymble and the Board of St Vincent's Clinic and the Clinic Foundation. From 1978-1981 she worked in post-school youth ministry and in 1981 as a member of the team at the Ignatian Spirituality Centre Pymble.

Margaret is a Biblical scholar who has completed her doctorate in Theology. For some years she has been teaching Biblical Studies and Spirituality at the Centre for Christian Spirituality. For the past two years she has been Principal of the Centre and deputy Chair of the Sydney College of Divinity.

Maureen was an experienced and successful teacher in secondary schools in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne. She has always had a strong interest in the area of faith development

and the spiritual life and since the early 1990's has been involved in retreat work and spiritual direction. In her Bachelor of Theology degree, she majored in Spirituality.

Maureen moved to Launceston in 1998 to be part of the team at the Emmanuel Pastoral and Spirituality Centre. Here, she has been involved in Adult Faith formation through the Diploma of Pastoral Ministry programmes, the training of Spiritual Directors, personal spiritual guidance, retreats and varied programmes in spirituality at the Centre, in Parishes and with hospital and school communities around Tasmania.

Laureen has worked in primary and secondary schools in Sydney and Melbourne, as a parish pastoral associate, in adult education and in community development and counselling.

From 1999-2001 Laureen was the administrator for the Parish of Kensington (NSW). This year, following a four months' renewal in New Mexico, Laureen completed her Masters of Theology Degree. Laureen's special interest area is pastoral theology.

Her areas of interest include faith formation, spirituality and liturgy.

Claire has ministered as a nurse within the health services of the Sisters of Charity for over 30 years. She holds undergraduate and postgraduate studies in nursing and education. Over the past twelve years Claire has been the Director of Mission in several facilities and regions of the Sisters of Charity Health Service.

For the past three years Claire has been the National Director of Mission. In this role Claire was responsible for areas of mission, ministry and social accountability throughout the health and aged care facilities under the care of the Sisters of Charity.



SISTERS OF CHARITY

25th Congregational Chapter



CARITAS CHRISTI ARGUET NOS



To be sisters called to love walking in trust alive with hope



Thank You to

Sister Annette Cunliffe and her Council
Sisters Maria Cunningham,
Elizabeth Costigan, Leone Wittmack,
and Linda Ferrington



Thank you most sincerely for your six years of leadership of the Congregation. It has been a period marked by your personal support and encouragement of each member of the Congregation; for new initiatives in ministry, and commitment to the wider church and justice issues.

Those attending the Chapter joined in a small celebration to acknowledge and thank Annette and Council. Sister St Jude Doyle spoke on

behalf of all those present and those unable to be there on the evening. She addressed each member of the Leadership team and highlighted eloquently and aptly the personal contribution each had made to the Congregation and its members during her term of office.

Well done good and faithful servants! May each of you now enjoy a period of renewal and re-energising before taking up the challenges involved in your new ministries.



Editorial



On Sunday 8th December, Sister Elizabeth Dodds was installed as the Sisters of Charity Congregational Leader for the next six years along with Council - Sisters Margaret Beirne, Maureen Delaney, Laureen Dixon and Claire Nolan. We wish them well and assure them of our loyalty and prayers as they assume their new roles.

We also pay tribute to Sister Annette Cunliffe and her Council - Sisters Maria Cunningham, Elizabeth Costigan, Linda Ferrington and Leone Wittmack for their leadership over the past six years.

Included in this issue of KIT is a short obituary for each of the four Sisters of Charity who have died recently. Our prayers and thoughts are with their communities and families at this time.

I thank all those who have contributed articles for KIT during the year and all who have assisted in the typing, proof reading and printing of the publication. In particular I would like to thank Melinda Gutierrez for scanning of photos, setting out the material, organising the printing and its distribution. Also, my special thanks to Sister Claudia Doyle and Sr Sarah Ryan for their assistance in proofreading the material.

At Christmas, the promise of peace on earth was proclaimed; may we be lovers of peace and demonstrate this love by the way we live our lives, share joy with others and bring hope and love to those who are burdened. May you and your loved ones have Peace, Joy and Happiness this Christmas and all through the New Year.

Maria Wheel ABC

Sister Kathleen Higgs, RSC, RTP



Kathleen was born in Bathurst on the 28th May 1938. She was one of four children born to Jack and Madge Higgs who predeceased her. Her sister Margaret, and her brother, Michael, and their families still live in Bathurst and her younger sister, Terri, and her family live in Canberra. Kathleen's family are with us today to celebrate her life.

Kathleen spent her childhood years in Bathurst and commenced her nursing training at St Vincent's Hospital Sydney where she came in contact with the Sisters of Charity. Following her training she worked in several hospitals in country New South Wales. These experiences developed in her a tremendous compassion for all those who needed her care.

Kathleen entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity in the early 1960's. Her ministries in health care within the Congregation included intensive care nursing, nursing administration and hospital management. Kathleen had a deep commitment to the nursing profession and was instrumental in introducing many innovative practices into the profession. Many of these innovations continue today. Her commitment to nursing was recognized by her admission to fellowship of the Royal College of Nursing (Australia). She was overjoyed with this privilege.

One of the highlights of Kathleen's life was the nine months she spent in Vietnam as a member of the medical team from St Vincent's Hospital Sydney. This experience deeply influenced her concern for the poor and the sick in third world countries, especially those torn by war.

In the midst of her busy nursing life she had the desire to study comparative religions and for this reason she completed a Bachelor of Arts Degree at Sydney University. Her main interest was Celtic Spirituality. She chose to master the Welsh language and took great delight in meeting and communicating with Welsh people in their native language. Kathleen also attained post graduate qualifications in health administration.

Kathleen's spirituality was influenced by the Celtic tradition and by the writings of the mediaeval mystics of the Church including Hildegard of Bingen and Julian of Norwich. It was Kathleen who selected the hymns for today's liturgy. She believed they would bring comfort and peace to her family and friends. I commend them to you for further reflection.

Kathleen loved her friends and had many. These included friends from childhood, her nursing days and many others. She would be so happy that many were able to come to her celebration today. Loyalty was a feature of her friendships in both good times and in bad. Her life was a full

and happy one. She loved meeting people and walking with them on life's journey. Kathleen had diverse interests including lapidary, ceramics and photography. In her middle years she learned to play the flute and this gift gave her and her friends many enjoyable hours. She was a gifted painter and especially loved painting landscapes and still life. She took great delight in painting candles for many Sisters and their families at times of weddings, baptisms and other celebrations.

When diagnosed with cancer last year Kathleen faced her illness with her usual courage and faith. As a nurse Kathleen knew what the probable outcome would be. Regardless of this she undertook her treatment with hope. It was her deep faith that sustained her during this time. Towards the end of her illness, Kathleen was anxious to say her goodbyes to loved ones and this she did with her usual dignity. Our liturgy today expresses our belief that Kathleen is now enjoying the peace we all seek.

Last Saturday I enjoyed a re-run of Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit", a play which was made into a movie in 1945. Those familiar with the work will know that much to his horror Rex Harrison's first wife came to haunt him.

At one stage she asked him "do you still love me"? He responded - "I love the memory of you." She said in no uncertain terms- "I am not a memory".

Kathleen is not a memory for us - her spirit is with us today and will be until our journey in life is complete.

I believe that this idea is captured in the words of St Thomas More when he said: Pray for me, as I will for thee, that we may merrily meet in heaven.

Let us affirm Kathleen's life with acclamation.

**Eulogy for Sr Kathleen
by Sr Paulina Pilkington RSC
28th November 2002**

Sister Mary Gerard Majella Purcell, RSC, RNP



Prior to her entering the Sisters of Charity, Kathleen was educated by the Sisters of Mercy at Red Hill and then became a third year teacher there. There are still people in Red Hill and Ashgrove who speak fondly of her.

Gerard entered the Sisters of Charity on 2nd February 1929 and being older than the other novices that would have presented a few difficulties I'm sure. However, Gerard had a good sense of humour and Sr Jean, who is with us here today, and who was in the Novitiate with Gerard, certainly has a few stories to tell.

Following her Profession in 1931, she was sent to Melbourne to do her nursing training. During this time she made her Final Profession in 1934 and completed her nursing training in 1937.

Her ability to organize and manage was well recognized for, from the time she completed her training, she was asked to take on positions of responsibility in our hospitals. She was in charge or held Administrative positions in St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne, St Joseph's Hospital Auburn, St Vincent's Hospital Lismore, Caritas Christi Hospice Kew, St Vincent's Hospital Launceston, St Vincent's Hospital Darlinghurst, Prague House (for homeless men) in Kew and lastly here at Mt Olivet in 1980 where she took charge of caring for the Chapel, a ministry that she really cherished, where there was never a thing out of place and the seasons of the Church calendar were observed to the letter of the law.

Gerard went wherever she was asked, even though at times it may have been for only six months or a year. Wherever she did go, she always left her mark, whether this was in a serious or humorous way. Did you know that Gerard was one of the first Sisters to get her Driver's Licence and managed to obtain the first car owned by our Congregation, a FJ Holden I'm told. There are many funny stories about Gerard and her driving. She had a good deal of lead in her boot, and in fact, on one occasion, when the police were sent to find her and stop her from going to the Airport in Lismore, which was one of the things police did in those days, they were unable to catch her and so let her go without delivering the message.

She also had a very dry sense of humour and one would never know if she was joking or not until you saw the twinkle in the eye and you then knew that all was well. On the wall in her room in Lilian Cooper she had two sayings which were pretty true of Gerard. They read:

"Please God give me Patience and make it snappy" and "I am as well as can be expected under these very trying circumstances"

One of Gerard's great talents was her tating. She taught many people to tat, including Rosemary, her niece, and she produced some really beautiful work. Many of our Convents and Chapels have samples of Gerard's handiwork.

However, underpinning all of this, Gerard was a woman of prayer and commitment. She had a great devotion to our Lady, the Rosary and her favourite prayer the Memorare. In Lismore, where she is still fondly remembered as Mother Gerard, she founded the Sodality of the Children of Mary amongst the nursing staff. She also had a great love for the Eucharist and Benediction.

Gerard was a solid, no frills person whose reason for getting up in the morning was to serve her God in prayer and through the people she met in her daily ministry. There was no "poor me" attitude with Gerard. She just got on with it. She was a true Sister of Charity and daughter of Mary Aikenhead and an inspiration to many people and had a wonderful capacity to make friends. She loved the Sisters and her family. The nurses who worked with her saw her as a very capable woman, always kind and thoughtful. She was always interested in the staff, their welfare and that of their families.

She was always grateful for what was given to her or done for her. The nurses in Lilian Cooper say that even in these last years and days she would always say 'thank you' when they had finished caring for her.

Go in peace Gerard, with our love and thanks. Until we meet again.

**Eulogy for Sr M. Gerard
by Sr Leone Wittmack RSC
26th November 2002**

It is indeed a privilege for me to pay tribute to **Sr M. Gerard Majella** who for 73 years lived her life as a Sister of Charity true to the motto she took on her Profession day, *"Not my will O Lord but Thine be done"*. This was the prayer that underpinned all that Gerard did. It was her daily goal.

Born Kathleen Purcell to Thomas and Mary, farmers in the Enoggera district on the 15th July 1899 in Waterworks Road Enoggera, her life has spanned three centuries.

Rosemary, one of Gerard's great nieces, has spoken of Gerard's place in their family and the wonderful sister and aunt she has been to all of them. I will attempt to reflect on her life in the family of the Sisters of Charity. How does one fit 103 years of life, which includes 73 years of religious life, into a few minutes.

Sister Phil Maher, RSC, RQP



Pilomena Anastasia Maher was born in Sydney on 15th January 1925, one of three daughters of Philip and Elizabeth Maher. She died on Sunday 1st December 2002. Phil is survived by her sister Cath, her numerous nieces and nephews and their children and grandchildren.

Phil was buried from Sacred Heart Church Darlinghurst on Thursday 5th December. Concelebrants were Fathers Brian Egan PP and Laurie Christie, Hospital Chaplain, both of whom paid tribute to Phil's outstanding generosity and commitment as 'Sister', 'community builder', 'friend', 'parishioner' and 'pastoral worker'.

In her eulogy Sister Eleanor Macris said:

"Phil was my friend from school days. Outwardly we were diametrically opposite characters but inwardly there was a deep seated bond. In our teen years I used to tease her about her bobby socks and wedged heeled shoes, while I was nearly always in school uniform. Phil always respected that I was a loner and did not expect much from me. We met up at holiday time. We were planning our next holiday.

"Phil was a most generous, obliging and hard working Sister of Charity for over fifty years. Nothing was a trouble, if it was possible and sometimes impossible she would be there. She loved all her friends and acquaintances. She had more moves than the figures on a chess board.

She was a fine teacher in Sydney, Melbourne and Tasmania until she transferred to Pastoral Care work; where she was devoted to the dying at Sacred Heart Hospice Sydney and Mount Olivet Brisbane. It was fitting that she died in her beloved Sacred Heart Hospice where she helped so many to die peacefully. To her family she was a treasure."

Eleanor finished the eulogy by quoting an apt verse from Edward J Wright.

*As long as I can say
I took a little of my time
To do a little favour
Share the blessings that are mine*

*As long as I can say
I tried to show how much I care
And when my help was needed
I was willing to be there*

*A long as I can truly say
That even in the smallest way
I brightened up another's day
My day has been worthwhile.*

Sister Mary Marius Lucas, RSC, RTP



Sr M Marius died on 14th November, 2002, at St Vincent De Paul Nursing Home at Box Hill, very peacefully in the presence of her nieces, Elizabeth and Maria.

Marius was one of a large family from the Western District of Victoria. She entered the novitiate of the Sisters of Charity in 1938 and was professed in January 1941. In January last year Marius celebrated her Diamond Jubilee at Caritas Christi, Kew in the presence of a large number of Sisters and family members, many of whom travelled from the country to celebrate the occasion with her.

During her sixty-one years as a Sister of Charity she worked in various ministries; teaching infants and primary school children in Sydney, Shellharbour, Melbourne and Tasmania, and was involved in child care both in Sydney and Tasmania. Marius is remembered very fondly by those whom she cared for in the Orphanage at Liverpool and in the Emergency Care centres at Edgecliff and Hobart. Her gentle administrative skills as Principal and Superior were evident on many occasions throughout her active years.

In the 1980's Marius assisted Sr Denise Hannebery in preparing material for the "Journey Programme". In 1999, she moved to Caritas Christi Hostel Community, where she enjoyed her involvement in many activities.

On 20th November, Marius' funeral Mass was held at Sacred Heart Church, Kew, celebrated by Fr Malcolm Crawford PP. Fr Crawford in his homily spoke of Marius' gentleness expressed in her living, her ministries and her dying. At all times, Marius' sense of humour was evident and her quick wit was appreciated by all who lived and ministered with her.

Marius's four sisters and her many nieces and nephews were involved in the preparation and participation in the Liturgy. Many Sisters of Charity, friends and colleagues were present at the Mass, and many returned to the Hostel at Kew, where happy memories of Marius were shared by all.

Sister Chris Jorgensen writes from East Timor

After many, many years of either Portuguese colonization and then Indonesian occupation East Timor is now standing alone and trying to build a whole infrastructure for itself within a very complex world at present. There are so many issues confronting the Government, some very complicated issues requiring specialist knowledge such as the negotiations for the Gap Treaty, setting up a juridical system. There are other issues that are less complex such as traffic control, local tax system but if not addressed will make a great difference to the future of this country.

The issue of improving health care is begging attention. At the end of last year the International NGO's ceased clinical responsibilities for all districts and the government established a whole new health sector with very limited resources. As Karidade Health wanted to continue in Health care we put forward a proposal a year ago to work in the area of community based health promotion in Dili District as well as plans for establishing a Social/Pastoral/Palliative service for Dili National Hospital. The Sisters of Charity Foundation as well as Cordaid, a Dutch Catholic NGO, has made funding available to carry out work in health promotion. These two projects have continued throughout this year.

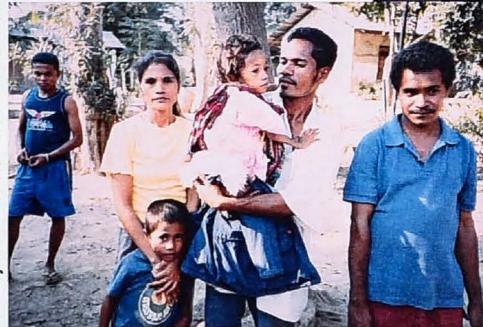
Health promotion and education are absolutely vital if this country is to move forward and really address the poor health conditions. The newborn and maternal death

rate remains very high, newborn between 85 and 135 per 1,000 live births and the maternal about 890 per 100,000 live births. The under five mortality rate is 125 per 1000 children which is exceedingly high. The main causes of death are respiratory infections, malaria, malnutrition, diarrhea and tuberculosis. Malaria is the main cause of death in this age group. Many of the health problems are curable through simple measures.



The Karidade Health team has been visiting villages on a daily basis working with the local nurses in trying to address poor health practices in the community.

Over the year we have learnt that the message needs to be very clear and simple with frequent repetitions. Our focus at present is to try and make clear the message that when a child or adult is sick with diarrhea they need supplementary fluids. Currently we are preparing a poster with information about making oral dehydration fluid in the home. This involves ensuring that a small spoon, cup, salt and sugar are attainable. Prior to giving the posters mini workshops are given and people are asked to demonstrate the making of the fluid. We are also writing a song that can be sung in the schools and preparing a program for children so that they can assist in the family.



ST VINCENT'S HOSPITAL LAUNCESTON STAFF GIVE CHANDU NEW HOPE

Chandu, a 14 years old Sri Lankan boy, suffered severe burns to his upper body about 2 years ago and as a result had little hope of using his hands again. The Rotary Overseas Medical Mission programme flew Chandu to Launceston where plastic and reconstructive surgeon, Gary Kode, volunteered his time to operate on Chandu's left arm and hand at St Vincent's in late October. Other SVHL staff volunteered their time to assist with the surgery.

Chandu is now attending St Patrick's College part time and will remain there until he has the wires and splint removed. Further surgery is also a possibility, however the prospects of his regaining movement in his fingers and elbow are considered good.

Photo printed with permission of the Launceston "Examiner"



THUMBS UP: Host parents David and Sally Jackson with Chandu Wijeratne after a successful operation.
Picture: PAUL SCAMBLER

SPRED *the Word*



Sister Colleen Noonan is the current facilitator in the Toowoomba diocese for SPRED, a special religious education for people with intellectual disability. A recent article in the Toowoomba Chronicle spoke about the work being done by SPRED in the diocese to provide faith education and to integrate those with intellectual disability into parish life. Currently eight groups meeting regularly with each adult having a volunteer catechist who companions her/him through each session.

Great work Colleen!



LtoR: Sr Kerry Barras, Peter Barry (St Vincent, Bourke), Bro James (Lidcombe Catholic Club), Greg Kearins (General Manager)



Trinity College Auburn supports people affected by drought in the Wilcannia Forbes Diocese

It was Sister Kerry Barras' inspiration, enthusiasm and initiative that led to the drought victims in western New South Wales benefiting from a very successful Melbourne Cup Day Luncheon at the Lidcombe Catholic Club that raised over \$15,000.00.

The fundraiser was boosted by \$800 from Trinity College and support from the Catholic Club and local businesses. A cheque for \$16,000 was presented to the president of the St Vincent de Paul society, Bourke at the Luncheon.

A wonderful day and at the end of the day a great result.

Two students from Trinity College, Auburn who presented the cheque for \$800

PRIVACY STATEMENT

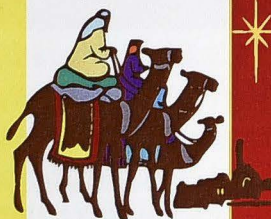
The Sisters of Charity have a Privacy Policy Statement detailing the handling of personal information pursuant to the Privacy Act 1988 and the Privacy Amendment (Private Sector) Act 2000.

Those receiving this Newsletter have their names on our database.

The list is not used for any other purpose and will not be given to another organisation.

If anyone would like to have his/her name removed from the list please let me know.

Sister Maria Wheeler RSC (02) 9367 1211



CONTRIBUTOR

*Sr Kerry Barass
Sr Maureen Delaney
Sr Patricia Grantham
Sr Chris Jorgensen
Sr Eleanor Macris
Mrs Rosemary Mann
Ms Therese McDermott
Sr Claire Nolan
Sr Colleen Noonan
Sr Paulina Pilkington
Sr Leone Wittmack*

Mount Carmel College Sandy Bay Celebrates 60 years

On Friday 30th August the Mount Carmel Community celebrated the College's 60 years. During the day the students celebrated with special activities including hearing stories from Old Scholars about the "old days" of Mount Carmel. In the evening the Archbishop of Hobart, the Most Rev Adrian Doyle, was principal celebrant at a Mass of Thanksgiving in the Cathedral. The homilist was the distinguished "old boy", Monsignor Philip Green, and he used the analogy of the diamond to describe the precious nature of the College community and the richness of its story. Present at the Mass were staff, students, old scholars, Board members and special guests included the Congregational Leader, Sister Annette Cunliffe, Sisters Linda Ferrington and Leone Wittmack, three former principals and several former teachers.

The Mass was followed by a gala dinner at Wrest Point Casino. The Principal, Mrs Bobby Court, warmly welcomed the guests and in introducing each of the speakers reflected on that person's influence

on the history of the College.

Much of what the College is about is summed up in the following reflection Therese McDevitt, a former student and now a teacher at Mount Carmel College, shared with the guests:

"Any similarity between real persons and the persons described in this speech is purely coincidental. All events have been exaggerated and any insightful comments are quite accidental.



I have decided to give you some snapshots of my memories as a student at Mount Carmel. I started in Prep at Mount Carmel in 1968.

Mrs Yates was my teacher, my big sister, Mary, was in 3rd Year (or Yr. 9) and my brothers, Tim and Joe, had gone on to St Peter's after completing their infant years at Mount Carmel. Mum and her four sisters had gone to St Joseph's College during the 1930s and 40s. I felt right at home.

I loved my primary years. I recall my first day at school quite clearly and still have the school case that carried my brown raincoat, my plastic hat cover, my vegemite sandwiches, my beautifully covered exercise books (thanks to Dad) and the new colouring in pencils, which had a lovely and important smell.

I remember the excitement of

making my First Communion in Grade 1 and was terribly proud to wear the commemorative medallion and the certificate signed by Father Hanlon, the Parish Priest of Sandy Bay, was prominently displayed in a frame in my bedroom for many years. It featured Sr Martha's superb calligraphy.

I remember the thrill of dancing at the School Fair and marching at the Primary and Independent School Athletic Carnivals.

As well as the special occasions, I recall a great deal of the nitty gritty of learning in primary school. We learned to spell in a fascinating way. Each letter was given a particular colour and black plastic charts featuring these were prominently displayed in the classroom. Sr Melania would point to the colour, we would name each one and then say the word. In fairly recent years my good friends, the Chaperon girls, revealed to me that they used to express their love for their mother by saying, "I love you tangerine, yellow, tangerine!"

Being taught by a very groovy Moya Belcher in Grade 4, was a highlight. She had long blonde hair, wore minis and boots and always had matching earrings, shoes and handbag. Of course, she was very, very young! She is now Mount Carmel's longest serving staff member.

The excitement of the move into Secondary School was tempered by the collapse of the Tasman Bridge in January 1975. After the initial shock, the Eastern Shore girls settled into a pretty good lifestyle. Elizabeth Pier and the ferries were great places for socialising. There seemed to be an abundance of boys, especially on the 4:16 Lady Wakehurst. It was the place to be!



Some of the vivid memories I have of Secondary School are of events such as inaugural Night! The gifted Elizabeth Eden would conduct the choir while the extraordinary Sr Martha would do the same for the orchestra. The princely Archbishop Young would address us ...at length.

There were some moments during our secondary years when we were puzzled by the questions and possibilities that confronted us: "Would Mary chew gum?". Fortunately no one was bold enough to answer the question. The non-wearing of slippers at Mount Carmel was a burning issue, especially when we were in our Summer uniform, which also featured very practical white gloves. This shocking absence of a slipper would all end in tears, we were told. If we continued to do this it would inevitably mean that we would abandon our nine-month old baby!

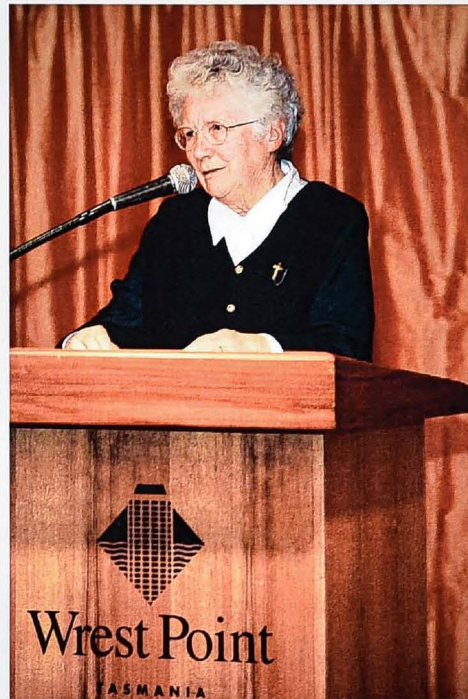
Despite some ups and downs through the Secondary years, I loved and valued the education I received. I'm sure that my ex teachers and principals would know that door slamming, eye rolling and sneering were (and still are) a special teenage way of showing affection and appreciation!

As a student and certainly as an adult, I have always considered our beloved Sisters of Charity to be groovy nuns! By groovy, I mean they were intelligent, practical, strong and very much of "this world" in the way they expressed their faith.

On several occasions during my years as a student at Mount Carmel, certain (possibly all) Sisters of Charity were heard to describe us girls as being "Bold as brass." I would like to put to you tonight that we, in fact, had no choice in this. I think it was our constant exposure to the boldness of the Sisters of Charity that made us this way!

The story of the boldness of the first three sisters of Charity and their work in the squalor and poverty of Hobart Town after 1847 may not be

enough to convince you of this theory.



I shall tell you about another Sister of Charity, Sr Elizabeth Dwyer. She was very active in changing dress regulations in the convent and relaxing other rules associated with convent life during the early 70's. Sr Maria Wheeler, who employed me as a Primary Teacher in 1987, continued to be a role model in boldness for the students and staff. Following another dreadful September in the 1990s, Sr Maria proceeded to play the North Melbourne football song over the PA for most of the day after an emphatic Premiership victory by her beloved team. "Immodest" is one of the words used to describe the term "bold" in the Oxford Dictionary. Once again, the girls had a fine role model. As a Sister of Charity and being ever ready to forgive, I am sure that if Sr Maria had been in charge at the Kangaroos in recent

months, she would have boldly kept Wayne at the club despite his friendship problems.

Sr Eileen Kean was yet another bold principal. Her support of boldness is clear in this final story. My friend, Gerardine Power, (who is here tonight from Melbourne) and I were in Year 12. Having been to the pictures one Saturday night we decided to visit the popular cocktail bar, Beaujangles. While sipping on our Brandy Alexanders (as one did in 1980) and smoking a very fashionable St Moritz cigarette, who should walk in the door right next to the table at which we were sitting, but Sr Eileen and Sr Maria Therese. It was one of those moments when really nothing can be done to rescue the situation, it didn't seem possible to swallow all the smoke, the drink and have a conversation with the Principal at the same time.

The two sisters didn't bat an eyelid but rather seemed to enjoy a lengthy conversation with us before sitting at another table. It may have been the constant modelling of boldness or the Brandy Alexanders, but Gerardine and I decided to have another cigarette.

On Sunday night I started to feel a bit anxious and began to think we would be asked to pack our bags and go. In truly bold style, Sr Eileen went out of her way to greet Gerardine and me on Monday morning. After seeing my life at Mount Carmel flash before me, Sr Eileen told us how pleased she was that we had been upfront, open and confident...



I could tell you stories about the boldness of Sr Eileen and countless other Sisters of Charity, as well as their devoted students, but I think it's your turn now.

Thank you very much for listening to my reminiscences; thank you Mount Carmel and Happy Birthday!"