



SACRED HEART
ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – STACEY HARRIS

Thank you everyone for joining us today for our rescheduled AGM. This year has been a year unlike any other for the association, with all our major events cancelled due to the ongoing health pandemic. I would like to thank everyone for your flexibility and patience as we have navigated through this challenging time.

We did consider holding off the AGM until next year or a later date, so that we could all attend in person, however trying to forecast possible dates was not a solution in respect of the Coronavirus situation. I would like to take this opportunity to update everyone on the last 12 months as well as some exciting changes that lie ahead.

I am pleased, as the current President of the Sacred Heart College Alumni Association, to present the Annual Report for 2019-2020. I serve as a spokesperson for the collaborative work of many people and all the achievements, activities and events contained within this report are a testament to the work of those collaborators.

Our Association is one of the largest female Alumni Associations in Australia. These women are spread across the globe, engaged in incredible work and we can all be proud to be part of this community. We not only provide the opportunity through the Alumni Association to reconnect women through our events, but we engage with the College to support students and families through scholarships and funding, where we can.

This year we launched our 'Sacred Heart College Alumni Association Charity Strategy' (*please see document attached*). The purpose of this strategy is to provide a framework that guides the association's activities while maintaining the mercy ethos. The strategy includes a primary focus of maintaining a strong connection to the Mercy community by supporting works of Mercy and other charitable initiatives. I will detail later in my report about the recipients of our contributions.

The Association's purpose of connecting and reconnecting, present and past students with the college is supported through our annual events and our involvement with the events of the College. This year these events have included;

- **The 2019 AGM held on 31 March 2019.**
- **Careers and Pathways Day**
SHC Alumni were invited back to the school to speak to the Year 10 students about their journey, and what path they took to get where they are now.
- **Reunions**

Again throughout the 2019-2020 year, reunions took place for 5, 10, 20, 30, 40 and 50 year classes. Over 350 alumni returned to the College to celebrate their reunion.

- **Seminar Day (Class of 2019)**

Alumni were invited back to the school to speak about 'Living mercy beyond the gates of SHC'. A panel of Alumni from different walks spoke to the graduating class of 2019, about how they are living mercy in their everyday lives.

- **Year 12 Alumni Induction Breakfast**

This was a new event that was a huge success. Our committee members represented the Alumni Association with pride and shook the hands of every student (222) to officially welcome them to the SHC Alumni Association. Peta Credlin (our Deputy President) spoke on behalf of the Alumni Association, and although I was absent, I have been told Peta's words were both inspiring and empowering. The intention is to continue the Year 12 Alumni Induction Breakfast as we feel it is a great platform to acknowledge the graduating class and welcome them as new alumni members.

- **Inspire Geelong Networking Breakfast**

This is our most significant networking opportunity and has become our flagship fundraising event. Continuing to attract more than 200 guests again this year, guest speaker Natalie O'Brien (Class of 1985), amazed everyone with her journey, her passion for food, wine and tourism and her innovative vision for the future. This year our charity partner for the breakfast was St Vincent de Paul (SVDP). A very powerful discussion between our very own Peta Credlin and Charlie Bowman from SVDP proved to be thought provoking, educational and inspiring. We kindly donate \$4,221.80 to SVDP to help support the Geelong community through their education assistance program, daily breakfast clubs, home visits and much more. The Inspire Breakfast 2019 was positively received and a testament to the hard work of our Alumni Officer, Suzie Veitch, as well as the committee.

The following 12 months were set to be just as busy and exciting. Unfortunately, we were unable to undertake any of our usual activities or events due to the Coronavirus restrictions. Nevertheless, I would still like to reference these:

- Alumni Career Day Panel - April
- 160th Alumni Anniversary Reunion Celebration Event – was planned to run all reunions on August 15th, 2020. The 2020 Reunion Celebration was for past students celebrating their 5, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 50+ reunions, borders and past boys from the Junior School – we are hopeful that we will be able to hold this extravaganza of reunions next year. Money raised or donated will support the SHC Scholarship Fund.
- Alumni Music Soiree - August
- Inspire Geelong Networking Breakfast – November

We continue to support the College and current students in many ways. For example, we participated in a very special 160th Anniversary of the Sisters of Mercy arrival in Geelong Mass, the Maguire Celebration and Discovery Day 2019. The association was also scheduled to attend the opening, blessing and naming ceremony of the STEAM building in April this year, but unfortunately it was cancelled.

As we do each year, we have provided academic and equity scholarships to current college students and continued to contribute to the building works- which will give the Alumni Association a chance to name a part of the new building.

This year we also commissioned artwork by Jacinta Leitch, an Alumni of Sacred Heart College, entitled 'Orison' -meaning prayer. The sculpture made from Barrabool sandstone and Geelong limestone was gifted to the school and is displayed in the court precinct. The location of the artwork provides a space for reflection and was to be revealed at our reunion celebration in August. Instead there was a beautiful write up and photo of the sculpture in the 2020 Maguire magazine.

The implementation of our 'Charity Strategy' has provided guidelines on how our Mercy Works funds, received through our membership fees, can be distributed. Our 'Charity Strategy' works on a three (3) year commitment to recipients of the donations.

- *As I outline the specifics, please refer to the final page of my report.*

In summary, over the last twelve months we have mercifully supported the following charities and worthy causes:

- Pastoral Healthcare Network Australia
- St Vincent de Paul
- Scholarships and the College

In line with our 'Charity Strategy' over the next twelve months we will also commit to supporting the following:

- **Mercy Works Charity/Project 1**

This was to be a joint project between St Thomas Aquinas and Sacred Heart College. Our hope is that this project will connect the children and families of St Thomas Aquinas (who find themselves in a demographic that places them in the top 2% of disadvantage in Australia) and Sacred Heart College. The project was to involve collaboration between SHC Year 10 students and St Thomas students on sustainability and the environment. Unfortunately, this project was unable to be run this year, but funds have been put aside to contribute to this program next year.

Alumni Officer, Suzie Veitch continued to manage our social media platforms, ensuring that our presence was up to date, relevant and engaging. Our social media presence is integral, as we create more ways to connect with all our Alumni and bring our newest Alumni members into the fold, using mediums they are comfortable engaging with.

The 2019 Maguire Magazine was another great success and how wonderful that the 2020 Maguire magazine went ahead, despite most of our cancelled events. The time, dedication and consideration put in behind the scenes to pull the whole magazine together is enormous and I would like to thank Suzie, Catherine and all involved in making this happen.

This year, we said goodbye to two committee members, Jo Nelson and Jemma Wayth. I would like to convey my most sincere thanks to Jo and Jemma for volunteering their time and support for the Alumni Association. On a personal note, thank you to Jemma, I have appreciated your support, kindness, words of wisdom and input over the four years we have

been on the committee together. In great appreciation, a stunning Maguire Rose will be delivered to you.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our reunion team – Katrina De Grandi, Di Spence and Laura Doherty. These ladies continued to support and lend a helping hand at the reunions that were held in 2019 where ever possible and we are grateful for your dedication.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to the committee. This year has been an extraordinary one, and I appreciate your understanding and patience, the Alumni Association would not have had such a successful 2019 without the work of each committee member. They all lead busy lives but still find time to volunteer, attend meetings and help at events, support school functions and more. Thank you for everything you do.

I am very proud of all the people who have made the Alumni Association achievements this year possible. In particular, I wish to express the gratitude of the Committee to Suzie Veitch, our dedicated Alumni Officer, Catherine Middlemiss and Anna Negro for their constant support of the Alumni Association. You provide us with vision, knowledge and opportunities to be involved and connected to the school in ways that we feel we can make a difference. We value and really appreciate your commitment to the Alumni Association.

So, what's next?

The Alumni Association is dedicated to moving forward, ensuring that we continue to honour the past. With its solid foundation, the Association is well placed to enter its next phase of development as we look to 2021 and beyond. This year's restrictions have created a unique opportunity for the Committee to establish a dedicated working party to plan for the future. The strategy is currently a work in progress and I look forward to the official launch and presenting the final strategy later in 2021. Please know that our intention for the year ahead is to carry on upholding the Mercy ethos, while continuing to provide opportunities for our Alumni to connect. As always, we will continue to support worthy causes and those in need. We will also continue to provide as much support as possible to the College and current students.

In conclusion, I reiterate all the thanks expressed across this report and especially acknowledge that my role as President has been a privilege, made not only manageable, but enjoyable and rewarding, thanks to the amazing people who make up this team, who I am blessed to be part of and proud to represent.

SHC Alumni Association Charity Strategy 2019-2021

Purpose

To demonstrate and promote the Mercy ethos and social justice throughout all association activities and maintain a strong connection to the Mercy community by supporting works of Mercy and other charitable initiatives.

Strategy

'Charity Strategy' will align with and come under the Community Pillar of the Sacred Heart College Alumni Association Strategy. The Charity Strategy will follow the recommended guidelines of supporting two (2) Mercy works charities/projects, over a three (3) year commitment and one (1) Mercy Works Business/Charity or Scholarship EACH year for three (3) years. *(Please see breakdown below).*

Mercy Works Charity/Project 1 - Liaise with Christina Symons who is SHC's Catholic Identity and Mission Integration Leader to determine one Mercy Works Charity partner/project within the School's Mercy Works Circle – Project Compassion in need of extra support that we can commit to supporting.

Mercy Works Charity/Project 2 - Commit to supporting one Mercy Works Charity/Project that a local Sister of Mercy has directly been a part of/involved with or at their request.

Mercy Works Business/Charity or Scholarship - Commit to fundraising in support of one business/charity making a difference within our local community or scholarship at our Inspire Breakfast. *Changed annually over the three (3) year strategy.*

Mercy Works Contribution

From annual membership fees received, 7.5% is allocated to the Mercy Works balance within the Cash Manager bank account -

- 75% of the annual allocation to the Mercy Works balance will be committed to supporting Mercy Works Charity/Project 1
- 25% will be committed to supporting Mercy Works Charity/Project 2.

Any monies fundraised at the annual Inspire Breakfast will be committed to supporting a Mercy Works Business/Charity or Scholarship agreed upon by the committee.