2015 RECONNECT

Alumni Magazine

Maranatha Christian School
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FROM THE TEAM

Principal/ CEO

The Maranatha difference is our Christ-centred curriculum that is at the heart of our partnership between school and home.

Our Christ-centred curriculum is our point of difference for parents as it means that when we teach, we help children to become Christian thinkers, and so culture shapers in our diverse society. We need more Christian leaders. A Christ-centred curriculum means encouraging children to give their best back to God – my utmost for His glory – through service, collaboration, prayer, effort, high standards, and high expectations, no matter who we are. A Christ-centred curriculum permeates the way we interact with each other and encourages us to serve – in other words to give back to God what He has given us through using our gifts and talents for Him in today’s world. Ultimately a Christ-centred curriculum helps children develop into the fine young men and women that God intends them to be.

As I reflect on all that has occurred this year, I see how the school has grown in faithfulness. The year has been full of wonderful events and tremendous successes, my personal highlight being the time spent with Year 10 students on their mission trip to Thailand. More importantly, the students have honoured God in their daily lives, in using their God-given talents and gifts for His glory or in the way the senior students from each campus have embraced each other. We also feature a number of longer serving members of staff whom no doubt will be well known to our alumni.

An enormous amount of work has been undertaken to ensure that all we offer students is of the highest quality. The school has made significant advances in ICT, including a pioneering partnership with Apple to support families. We have adjusted our approach to teaching and learning and our academic outcomes have all improved. More importantly the growth in faithfulness within and across the community has been evident, especially in the revamped service program for all students. The School is well placed for 2016 with its new structure of two Junior schools at Officer and Doveton and a single Middle and Senior school at Endeavour Hills.

Maranatha is indeed a lovely school. God is helping us grow to become a more truly professional Christian learning organisation. It is an exciting time to be part of the school and I encourage all our alumni to continue to support Maranatha as we seek to do our utmost for His glory.

Dr Roderick Crouch

Marketing, Communications & Enrolments Manager

I simply love seeing how things turn out in the end in life, how God works things out for the good of those who love Him! In many ways I’ve viewed this Reconnect Edition from that perspective.

Families who have journeyed with us since Prep is a pretty special page, you’ll love reading about the Prins family where every child attended this great school from Prep, some have gone on to meet and then marry their life partner who also attended the School.

So much good does happen in life, sometimes easy to forget, Reconnect is filled with great stories, a testament about the goodness of our Big God!

I’d like to say thank you to everyone represented in this edition, for your contribution that makes wonderful reading.

Have a safe and blessed Christmas!

Mrs Doreen Erasito
Weddings and Engagements

Update on the Trutoiuses

Anne-Marie LASCAU (Trutoiu) - Class of 2008

Anne-Marie married David Lascau in May 2012 in Atlanta Georgia, and moved back to Australia in January 2014. Their son Ezra was born on 30 June 2014.

Adeline TRUTOIU - Class of 2010

Adeline Trutoiu and David Miculescu were engaged on 15 July 2015. Their wedding will be in August 2016 in Atlanta, and they will live in Boston, MA.

Both sisters met their respective husband and fiancee while on a holiday to the States in 2009 and are thankful to the Lord God for the blessings in their lives.

Shannon PAULSEN - Class of 2013 and Bradley COOK - Class of 2006

Engaged on 16 September 2015 and planning on getting married late 2016-early 2017.

Shannon is working as a Receptionist/Accounts Clerk at First National Real Estate and Brad is a Sales Consultant at Berwick Toyota.

Shannon met Brad through her older sister, Jenna - Class of 2006. Jenna and Brad were class mates.
Emily BIVIANO (Lawes) - Class of 2006

Damian Biviano and I meet while working for Web24. Damian is a Sales Manager and I am the Office Manager/Accounts Assistant. We have been travelling quite a bit together over the past few years. Japan, Vietnam, USA and most recently Europe, when Damian proposed to me in Paris. Damian and I married almost 12 months later to the day, on 6 November this year. We have just started building our new house in Officer and look forward to the excitement of moving in next year.

Jessica PERERA (Lawes) – Class of 2008

Sister of Emily Biviano above, married Hiran on 19 January 2012.

Gave birth to a beautiful baby boy, Josiah Alexander PERERA on 19 January 2015 at 10.47am, weighing 2.91kg and 49cm.
Babies

Zachary Tobias Hawthorne

Katy and Andrew Hawthorne (both staff members at Casey, Endeavour Hills) would like to present their baby boy, Zachary Tobias Hawthorne, born 3.52pm on 20 February 2015 at 3.17kg or about 7lbs, 52cm long.

Logan PRINS

Daniel Prins (Class of 2004) met Rahab Azoor (Class of 2004) at Maranatha and they married in March 2011. They have a gorgeous son, Logan, who turned one on 30 August.

Noah Levi Starchenko

Wally Starchenko (Class of 1997) and Rebecca Starchenko (nee Kenney - Class of 2004) welcomed the safe arrival of Noah Levi on Sunday 24 May 2015. Weighing in at 7lbs 8oz and measuring 53cm in length.
Ezekiel James DE SILVA

Jessica De Silva (Pereira) - Class of 2003 (staff member Casey Endeavour Hills, currently on maternity leave) gave birth to their second child Ezekiel on 22 June 2015. Married to husband, Gayan De Silva.

Joel is now 3.5 years old and will be starting ELC next year.
ACHIEVEMENTS - NEAR & FAR

James TAYLOR – Current Year 10 Student

James was the recipient of the prestigious Rowville Squadron Australian Air League annual award for Leadership. This award is presented to the cadet who displays excellence in initiative, support and leadership skills within the squadron, as chosen by their Commanding Officer.

Kylie CHIRUNGA – Class of 2014

Kylie was awarded first place in Fastrack Intermediate Division for 2015. Out of 600 contestants and a rigorous competition process of heats, semi-finals and the Grand Final held at Thornbury Theatre, Kylie won the competition with two original songs including “Bonnie and Clyde”. Kylie will be releasing her first single on iTunes very shortly and is in negotiations with various performing management companies.

Lauren CRAWLEY – Class of 2014

At the end of year 12, I really felt God calling me towards studying Pharmacy. He blessed me an ATAR, beyond what I felt I was capable of and I accepted an offer to study a Bachelor of Pharmacy at Monash University. I was also blessed to receive a full scholarship, which was awarded based on past leadership experience and academic achievement. In my application I was able to include many of the opportunities Maranatha afforded me, such as taking part in the Thai Awareness Tours, being part of the Senate Leadership Team and School Captain at Casey.

The scholarship has given me the opportunity to meet some prominent figures within the pharmacy world, who have been both inspiring and interesting. Even though it’s a difficult course, I’m really enjoying Pharmacy. It’s a great mix of Chemistry, Biology and even a bit of PE, subjects I enjoyed whilst studying at Maranatha. I’m excited about where Pharmacy will take me in the future. I would love to work as a hospital pharmacist upon graduation. As a pharmacist, there are also opportunities to work overseas and for aid organisations, which I am most passionate about.
FAMILIES WHO HAVE JOURNEYED WITH US SINCE PREP YEARS

Wendy PRINS (Pleiter) - Class of 1983 & Robert PRINS - Class of 1979

We have been part of the Maranatha Family since I (Wendy) started in Grade Prep and Rob (My husband) started in Grade 2 when Maranatha first began.

In 1970, both of our parents and grandparents were Pioneers of Maranatha so it was inevitable that it would always be our school.

I am still very blessed to be working in the Ed Support Department at the Doveton Campus while supporting Rob in our Concreting Company.

Our five children, Daniel, Nathan, Nicola, Haylee and Casey all attended Maranatha for all of their Primary and Secondary years and it was the end of an ‘era’ when our youngest graduated from Year 12 in 2012.

Daniel (class of 2004) met Rahab Azoor (class of 2004) at Maranatha and they married in March 2011. They have a gorgeous son, Logan, who turned one on 30 August. Daniel works at Skill Invest and Rae part time at the Immigration Department.

Nathan (class of 2006) married Tatum Geyer in January 2012, he works for Advance Concrete Company.

Nicola (class of 2007) married Tim Westwood in December 2013. Nicola is a PE teacher at Flinders College and they are expecting their first baby early May.

Haylee (class of 2010) works in childcare and is dating Jonathan Chicas (class of 2012).

Kasey (class of 2012) and Michael Giarratana who have been together for the last 5 years is studying a Double Bachelor of Health Science and Social work at Monash.
Joanne PRINS (Cook) and Chris PRINS - Class of 1984

Chris and I have been a part of Maranatha since we were both in Prep together. I (Joanne) moved back to the Netherlands to live in 1977 so my schooling at Maranatha ended in Grade 5. I returned to Australia in 1980 and was not able to attend Maranatha because there was a waiting list at that time.

Chris continued on to high school until he left to start work.

Chris’ grandparents were pioneers of the school and, therefore, we were both determined that our children also go to Maranatha. There were times when we did not know if we could afford to do so but God has always provided for us and we have been so blessed with being able to send our children to this wonderful school.

I currently work in the office at the Doveton Campus and Chris is the machine operator for the family concrete company.

All four of our children have attended Maranatha from Prep.

Joshua graduated Year 10 in 2007 to start an Electrical apprenticeship and has since then joined the family concrete company. He is engaged to Hayley and they hope to get married in 2017.

Matt (Class of 2011) is currently a swimming teacher.

Sarah (Class of 2013) is also currently a swimming teacher.

Micah (Class of 2015) is the last Prins of this generation to graduate from Maranatha and is continuing her studies in Outdoor Education next year. This was an emotional realisation for us as parents and also for the grandparents who saw all their children and grandchildren attend Maranatha.

As parents we feel Maranatha has been a wonderful environment for our children to be in for their entire schooling.
Delon RANASINGHE

I’ve been at Maranatha since Prep; that’s 13 years at one school! I’ve seen the school go through many changes over the years. Some of my best memories at Maranatha have been the people I met along the way. I have made life-long friendships. The most memorable times have been all the excursions, extra-curricular activities and camps. Extra-curricular activities such as community service in Year 9 and the environment programs we did in Grade 4 helped us to join the wider community as a cohort and gave us a more caring and compassionate outlook on our world.

Maranatha has really influenced me to do more for the community and to serve God. The extensive outreaches to Thailand and Indonesia and even the newly introduced service missions have given me a more giving heart. The school definitely promotes Christian ideals and characteristics, ones that will stay with me long after I leave. The teachers have been some of the greatest influences on me. Most of the teachers at Maranatha are especially caring and considerate. I’ve gotten close to many teachers and they have really helped me not only in my studies but in my faith as well.

I look forward to hearing the great things about the school after I leave!
Nadia FORREST

Being a student who has resided at the same school for the past thirteen years has definitely been beneficial for me. Maranatha has been an environment in which I’ve been able to grow, come to know like a second home and has taught me to always remain who I am in Christ. Starting in prep at the Doveton campus I immediately received the care and attention from my devoted teacher, Mrs. Anouchka Clark, who provided a safe place for me to learn, as I was very anxious to let go of my mum the first day. I admit I’ve had my struggles along the years, especially when hitting high school, as I struggled with a low self esteem and would be very anxious about what people thought of me. However, when I was in grade five, moving to the Officer campus was one of the best moves I have ever made, as I would not be the same person as I am today. The community there provided a strong foundation of friendships for me, which I still have today with the same people. Originating from Maranatha has built a connection that will always remain with me throughout the rest of my life. I have a history here which I will always cherish. Throughout all the years I’ve imagined myself on the final day of school, which is finally upon us and I cannot believe how fast it has gone.

The most important thing to me now that I’m leaving school, is that I remain strong in my Christianity and keeping the long-term relationships I’ve made with people. Of course academics is important also, but I think that the friendships that you build at Maranatha will remain with you for the rest of your life. The big change that occurred this year, for my last year at school, has certainly affected my learning. I’ve realized though that change will always be a part of everyone’s life and it’s the friendships around you which will provide the steady ground to fall back on. The pressure is on for all students who are finishing school, but I’ve learnt that no matter what you shouldn’t let your ATAR score define your life, you are who you choose to be and God will continue to carry you and plant you in the position you are destined for.

I’d like to thank all the teachers that have treasured and valued me as a student and the love and support my parents have given me all these years.
Cindy TAN (Remo) -  
Class of 1995  
Director and Founder of VIVE GROUP - 
Marketing and Communications

With over 15 years of managing several advertising and design agencies, Cindy founded Vive Group in 2007. Having had experience working with clients across a variety of industries from property, infrastructure, packaging, to retail clients, Cindy has the unique quality of converting corporate objectives into creative genius, both in strategy and design. Married to husband Chen Tan.

Sean de KRETSER -  
Class of 1996  
Account Manager - VIVE

With over a decade of experience working in the National Brand Management team of a large corporate company, Sean helped strengthen their brand in a competitive financial advisory market place. Sean also enjoys running a small freelance design business, coaching and counselling young people as a part-time Youth Worker as well as being the Head Coach at a large local cricket club.

Maranatha Christian School has left a strong in print on my life. I will never forget the teachers that went above and beyond throughout the journey there.

Reflecting a little more on the journey at MCS, what made the greatest impact apart from the practical help received, was the genuine faith in Jesus that they all seemed to have. I watched intently on how that would be lived out in their vocations as teachers. They were unbelievable! I saw first hand their ‘word’ and ‘deed’ working seamlessly together.

I made life-long friendships at Maranatha which is one of the reasons my wife and I enrolled our son into MCS. By God’s grace, we can only hope he develops life-long friendships too.

I’m currently blessed to be part of the leadership team in a Church Plant called Pakenham Christian Community Church (PC3). Also part of the team here is Chris Span and David Barrot; both ex-MCS students and both integral members of a team committed to reaching out into our community for Jesus! I can’t speak on Chris and Dave’s part, but our school motto, ‘Our utmost for His glory’ does keep ringing true for me in everyday life, but importantly in this leadership capacity at PC3.
Annica ROBERTSON - Class of 2009

I remember starting at Maranatha back in 2004 as a scared Year 7 who had never before been to a new school and was quickly welcomed by both staff and students alike. Throughout the four years I attended Maranatha I made strong friendships, many of which I still hold today, and will never forget the strong sense of family and community that Maranatha provided.

With my younger brother, Sam and sister Melissa both attending Maranatha after me, I continued to participate in numerous Thailand team fundraisers and trivia nights and enjoyed returning to the school to reminisce on old memories. Since leaving Maranatha, I have gone on to complete a degree and now hold a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Public Relations at Monash University.

I am currently working as an Account Executive for public relations agency Papermill Media and we look after media relations for Maranatha. Having attended the school myself, I am extremely excited to be working to promote Maranatha to the wider community and hope to continue to keep the relationships I have developed in Year 7 and over the years for many more years to come.

Luay KREISH – Class of 2001

Owner CreditSelect

Luay is a graduate of Maranatha Christian School. He graduated from Victoria University and was awarded a PhD on 15 October 2014 and launched his own company CreditSelect.

Luay is married to Seta and have been blessed with two children, Christian-Atif (5 years old) and Yasmeen (2 years old).
20 YEAR REUNION
Amanda OTTEN (Piening) - Class of 1995

After high school Amanda completed a Bachelor of Commerce at Monash University, following which she started as graduate accountant at a medium sized accounting firm. Amanda has qualified as a Chartered Accountant and now works as the Finance Manager at Arrow Leadership, which is the premier Christian provider of training, in the non-tertiary sector, for emerging and mature leaders.

Amanda married Justin in 1999 and they have three children - Laura (7), Sarah (6) and Liam (3).