



IONA PRESENTATION COLLEGE MAGAZINE  
ISSUE 16 • AUTUMN 2018

# esprit *de corps*

# *Tona girls make a difference*

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ESPRIT DE CORPS  
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## Next issue:

Past Pupils, tell us the story of your family's Ionian adventure.

Did your Grandmother and Mother both attend Iona? Perhaps your Dad did too?

Reflect back with us and together we'll journey to the future.

What lies ahead for Iona?

*Please send all stories to Georgia Allen  
gallen@iona.wa.edu.au by  
8 October 2018*



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message from  
**THE PRINCIPAL**



Dear Ionians,

**As always, Iona is a hive of activity on many fronts with the focus for this year being on the College value of 'Love of Learning'. All learning areas are endeavouring to provide students with stimulating lessons which will broaden their outlook in given subjects.**

Joshua Brant is the Head of Performing Arts and, in the role of Director for the first time at Iona, his production of *Thoroughly Modern Millie* at the Regal Theatre was a dramatic and artistic triumph. In the grand tradition of Performing Arts at Iona, we have come to expect excellence as the norm for dramatic and musical performances. Excitement is building for IGSSA and Interhouse dance, while competitive winter sports are in full swing.

Examinations were the flavour of the month of May for Years 10, 11 and 12 students while our Year 9 students embarked on the challenging Outward Bound adventure - requiring resilience they at times didn't realise they possessed. A true test.

The Immersion experiences to India and France have been mind-expanding for many Ionians with a deepened awareness of diverse cultures as befits the development of global citizens.

2018 denotes 300 years since the birth of Venerable Nano Nagle and it marks an important development in Iona's on-going story. Iona Junior School has been re-merged with the College so Iona Presentation College is now a Pre-K to 12 school and boys will be accepted for enrolment up to Year 6. The College embraces the two campuses. Exciting times ahead!

This edition of *esprit de corps* contains the 'stories' of many Past Pupils. It is humbling indeed to read their acknowledgement of the debt they owed Iona, their alma mater. All of them are very positive contributors to their communities; certainly, they are 'making a difference', wherever in the world they happen to be. So too, are The Presentation Sisters. Formerly almost exclusively involved in education, they now embrace diverse ministries and causes and are still a vital source in society, both nationally and internationally. Iona remains dear to their hearts and past and present Ionians are regularly remembered in prayer.

IPPA, please keep in touch with the College. We love to see you and hear your 'stories'. Enjoy this edition of *esprit de corps* – it's a good read.

May our loving God bless us all.

**Anne Pitos**  
*Principal*

4 from the archives  
**STAY CONNECTED  
AND HAVE A BALL!**

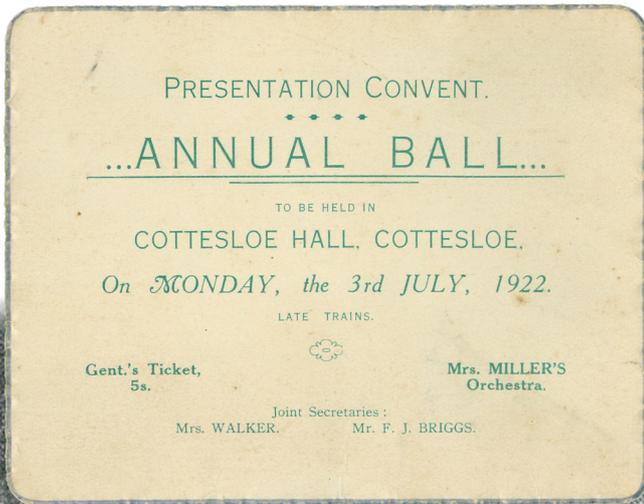
## From the Archives... Stay Connected and Have a Ball!

Iona and the Presentation Sisters have always held a special place in the hearts of Past Pupils. From the earliest years old girls came back to visit their favourite teachers and meet up with old friends.

The first formal reunion of Past Pupils took place at Iona 29 May 1938. Over 60 former students attended.

As a result of this first reunion the decision was made to create an Old Ionians' Association. Ruth Marchant James notes in her book, *Cork to Capricorn* (page 449), that 'On that day, under the guidance and inspiration of M. Alacoque Gittins and with support from the Superior M. Columba Moynihan, the Old Ionians Association was inaugurated with Archbishop Prendiville as patron.

The inaugural president was Mrs Lulu Peacock (formerly Rodda, Class of 1915). The association was created to foster



a spirit of community among Presentation Sisters and past and present students and staff of the College.

A 1939 newspaper cutting notes that the Past Pupils' Association was formed with the three-fold purpose of the Old Ionians being: to hold reunions of Past Pupils; to keep Past Pupils in touch with the Convent and each other; and to foster and cherish the tie of affection for their alma mater. The Association was very active in the early years with lots of social activities such as reunions, tennis and bridge parties, and dinner and dancing.

In the first year of the Old Ionian's Association, the inaugural Old Ionians' Ball was held at the Young Australia League (YAL) ballroom. This however, was not the first Presentation Ball. Newspaper reports note that Ionians had been celebrating their heritage and continuing connectedness at an annual ball since 1919! The Record reports on the great

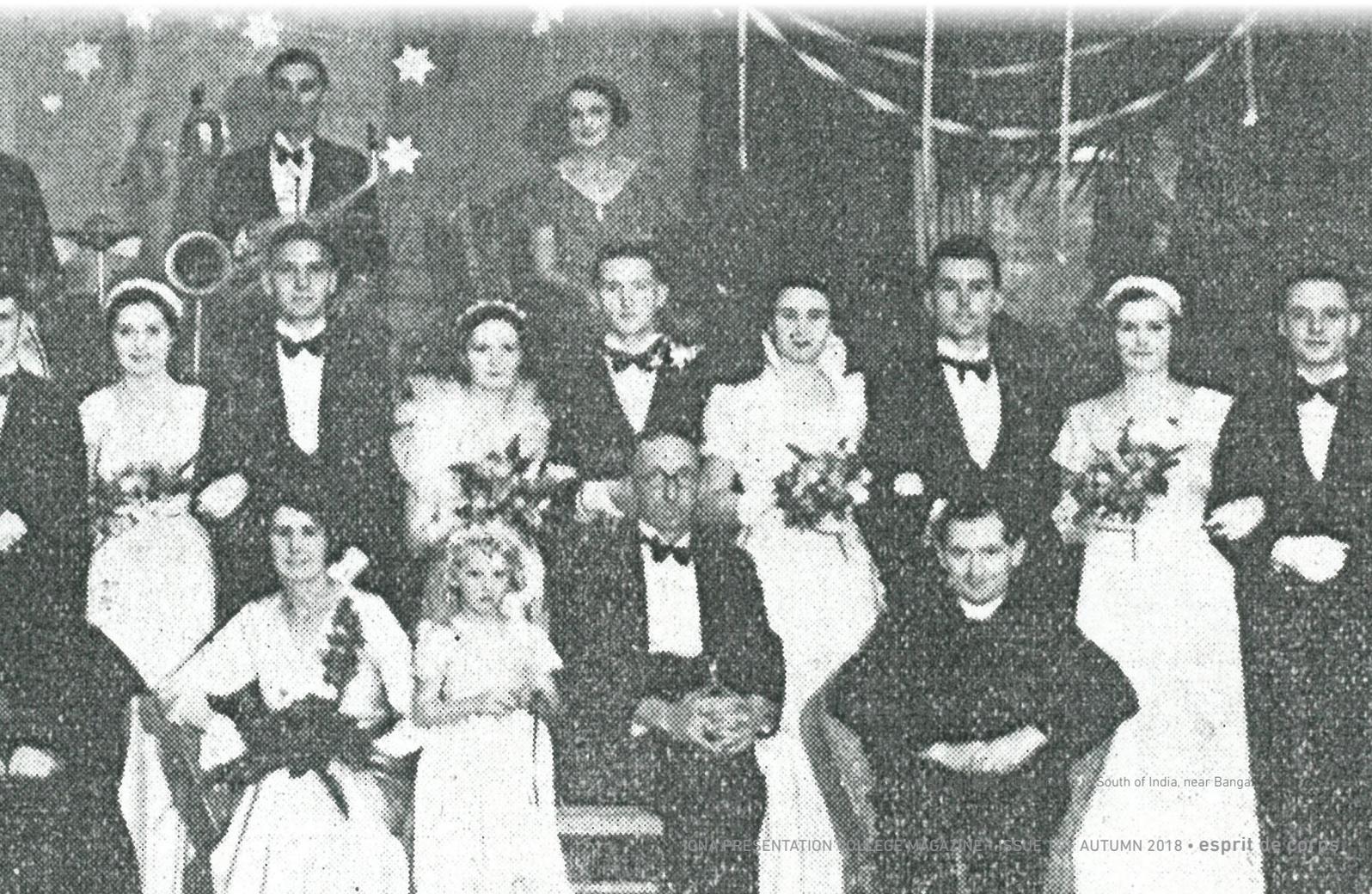
success of this ball with over 400 guests attending.

A feature of the 1936 ball was the presentation of debutantes. The Record reported that eight debs were presented to His Grace the Archbishop: Pat Lennard, Mary Bolton, Kath O'Reilly, Mollie Taylor, Eileen Bretherton, Vera McDonald, Mary Leunig, and Eva Lawrence.

Times change and debutante balls are a thing of the past! Ionians however, still endeavour to stay connected with their class mates, the Sisters and the College, largely through reunions and social media.

So IPPA, stay connected and come to the next Iona Ball, Optus Stadium, 1 September 2018!

**Dr Margaret Pember**  
*College Archivist/Historian*



South of India, near Bangalore

# SPECIAL FEATURE

## Where in the World are you?

When we asked our Past Pupils, 'Where in the World are you?' we were amazed, yet not surprised, with the responses we received.

From sitting on a train headed to Hamburg, to sleepless in Seattle and at home with a brand-new bundle of joy, Ionians are truly making their mark on the world and living remarkable lives as global citizens of today.



## A traveller's life, letting a dream set sail

'Where in the World are you?' seems to be an apt question for me to answer. I have lived in three different countries since graduating from Iona in 2006.

After leaving school I read law at the London School of Economics (LSE) and Political Science in the UK. I then moved to Singapore as I was offered a prestigious position at NYK, one of the oldest and largest shipping companies in the world.

Immersing myself in the commercial aspects of shipping at NYK gave me industry specific knowledge that I knew

would help with my legal career as my intention was to eventually specialise in Maritime Law.

Following my stint at NYK, I returned to Perth and completed my training at Cocks Macnish, a leading maritime practice in Australia.

Today, I currently live and work between Singapore, Malaysia and the UK.

Maintaining a good work-life balance is something that I learnt at Iona and in my free time, I indulge my passion for opera singing!

I sang a lot at the LSE and at the Inns of Court, and now I often sing Italian arias at charity concerts.

I try to travel as much as I can and sometimes I find myself in the most unexpected of places – Prague, Casablanca, Ankara, Leipzig!

I do often wish that I was in WA more often as our family home is still there and, no matter where I am, Perth still does feel like home.

**Priscilla Abishegam**  
*Class of 2006*



## The Luck of the Irish

After studying musical theatre at WAAPA I went on to sing in a string of bands, operas and musicals. I also had gigs in radio and television.

I then went on to live overseas. London was home for a year and then Canada.

Shortly after, I fell in love and married Jimmy O'Brien, an Irish country man from Tipperary, and we run a floor sanding business here in Perth.

We also have a beautiful little boy called Ethan who recently turned 5.

After a day celebrating St Patrick's Day and Jimmy's birthday, feeling exhausted due to the late stage of my pregnancy, I decided to take a relaxing bath. 20 minutes later, my daughter April Lilly O'Brien was born!

In the rush and excitement, Jimmy and I were the only ones on hand to help that night, and April was born in perfect health, 17 March 2018.

### **April Lilly O'Brien**

Born	17/3/18
Weight	2.99kg
Length	50 cm

So, 'Where in the World am I?'

At home, with my beautiful family, I couldn't be prouder.

### **Elizabeth O'Brien (née McRae)**

*Class of 1996*



## London Calling

I left Perth in 1991 bound for Paris and went on to spend several years working and dancing (Contemporary Dance) before moving to Vienna where I completed Physical Theatre Training.

From Austria I then moved on to London and in the late '90s trained as an actor at the Arts Educational School, London.

For the last 20 years I have worked in the industry as an Actor, Movement Artist, Acting Coach and Movement Director.

I married Actor/Director Will Wollen in 2000, and our sons Freddie and Amos are now 15 and 13 respectively.

As a freelancer, I can regularly be found at The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art (RADA) and Shakespeare's Globe.

An invitation from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) brought me home to Perth in 2016. Working as a Movement Specialist, this experience enabled me to spend two weeks working across several acting strands. It was an immense pleasure to be back in Perth at such an exciting Academy for training.

My closest school friend, Amanda Platt, (nèe Nenke) and I remain in close contact- she is Godmother to my son Amos, and her daughter is also called, Gabrielle!

My memories of Iona, are strong and wonderful. Iona gave me a secure foundation and stability which was pivotal not only through my school years, but in all my years since.

For me, Sr Anna and Sr Anthony (Mary) were such important and supportive teachers, and a Mathematics teacher, a novitiate, whose name I forget, helped to make sense of Maths for me.

My faith continues to be nourished by a community of Sisters. In the village, Minster, where I live, there is a Benedictine Abbey. I am a regular there when I am not in London and, having a close and continual prayer life that is strengthened by this community, has given me a sense of home.

**Gabrielle Moleta**  
*Class of 1988*



WHERE IN THE  
WORLD ARE YOU?



## Sleepless in Seattle

It was 2015 when my family and I moved to Seattle. Life in Perth for us was in a 'rut' and as neither of us was 'going anywhere', it was time for a change. My husband, Tony, is a very talented man within the IT industry, and so, after a 'straw that broke the camel's back' type of day at work, he came home to say; 'wouldn't it be funny if I applied for a tech job in another country!' 'Let's do it' I said, the words spilling from my mouth before I even knew the thoughts had formed in my head.

Clearly, I was ready for a change too. A big one.

With Tony's job security assured, my career in commercial insurance broking on hiatus, everything we owned packed into a storage container, and two toddlers in tow, we hopped on the first of three flights to Seattle.

The first month was a blur of living in a small apartment, right in the middle of the hustle and bustle of the city with two small children and a dog! It took a few weeks before the jet lag was truly gone, but slowly, slowly we ventured out into this new place and began to explore.

First, we explored the city. Pike Place Market, The Seattle Aquarium, Pioneer Square, The Mo Pop Building, The Chihuly glass gardens, a tour on Lake Union, which included seeing the 'Sleepless in Seattle Houseboat' and, of course, The Space Needle.

I like to tell my family and friends, that Seattle is Perth's opposite. Seattle is green and lush, where Perth is dry and brown. It's mountainous where Perth is mostly flat; it's often grey whereas Perth is blue skies and sunshine. Seattle has rocky, moody beaches, and Perth, perfect white sand and crystal-clear water.

After hiring a car and braving the world outside the city, we came upon a quirky little neighbourhood called 'Fremont'. Fremont dubs itself 'The Centre of the Universe', with a motto 'Delibertus Quirkus' which I am told is Latin for 'The Freedom to be peculiar', just my kind of town which we now call home.

There is much to wonder at in Fremont, but the jewel in our quirky town has to be the 'Summer Solstice Festival', a parade of naked people in body paint riding bicycles down the main street, amongst all kinds of moving and marching musical acts, bands and street performers! The hippie folks of the '60s and '70s certainly injected this part of town with a great sense of humour and it's been attracting lovers of quirk like me ever since.

Having firmly declared Fremont to be the new 'centre of my universe' we moved house to a beautiful old wooden craftsman. Built in 1915 it is everything you could dream an old wooden house to be. High ceilings, beautiful wooden beams, a large porch, large wooden sash windows, an old clawfoot bath, a steep roof, a huge basement and being such an old house, no driveway! Sitting on my big old green couch in this incredible historic home I finally felt like I had arrived.

So now, with the routine of school, playdates, and weekend activities, Tony's work, our wonderful friends, and me the 'Stay at Home Parent' gig- two and a-half-years have already passed! Our Seattle lives couldn't be better!

People ask me when we'll be back and I like to reply, 'maybe in two years', an arbitrary time frame which has not shifted even well into our third year.

We do miss Perth- our family, and my dear old school friends from my days at Iona. No friend will ever know you quite like those you grew up with, and so, if I think about those girls and their bright hearts and shiny faces, those beautiful simple days at school, my heart does sag a little.

We'll be back though, one day. Maybe in two years.

**Melinda Issakov (née Kirkwood)**

*Class of 1996*

“Being educated by the Pressies, with a strong sense of compassion and service to others, brought Pauline such joy...”

### With the Love of Family



Since 1967, the Brown girls have been Ionians through and through. Our Mum, Pauline Brown from the Class of 1967 and my twin sister, Tracey, and I were both in the Class of 1990.

So, when asked, ‘Where in the World are we?’ we, as a family decided to share our journey.

Not long after marrying Australian Shot Put champion and weightlifting record holder, Alex Brown, Pauline (née Willman) gave birth to twin daughters, Michelle and Tracey, both educated at Iona, and later another daughter, Alexie.

Working at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Pauline served as a caregiver for over 20 years. Being educated by the Pressies, with a strong sense of compassion and service to others, brought Pauline such joy and fulfilment throughout her working years. Now retired, Pauline enjoys watching her grandchildren compete in Athletics and Football.

Daughter, Tracey, is a proud Mum to 16 racehorses! She and her

partner and trainer Mike, have been involved in the racing industry for 25 years. Her sheer devotion, dedication and commitment has paid off in recent years with her horses tasting success in big group races at Ascot. As well as attending to her horses’ daily needs, which includes plenty of early morning track work, Tracey works during the day at a horse saddlery company.

And I, Michelle, am happily married with 2 children, Eijeesha, 16 and Alex, 14, and spend my days working as an Education Support Assistant at St Mark’s Anglican School.

In what seems like a strong family trait, I too, still have a great passion for Athletics, recently representing Australia at the World Masters Athletics Championships in both Shot Put, Discus and Hammer Throw.

My children also share our family’s love of athletics, with both my children also competing regularly.

So, ‘Where in the World are We?’, we are living great, busy and fulfilling lives, with our family at the heart.

**Michelle De Silva (née Brown)**  
*Class of 1990*

## A Journey of Self Discovery

Travel for me really started when I won a scholarship at Iona to study in Italy for three months between Years 11 and 12. Finishing Year 12 without a clue of what to do next, I went on to complete a Bachelor of Arts, double majoring in Italian and Indonesian, knowing that if I followed my love of languages the right opportunities would show up... and did they ever!

Since then I have travelled through 35 countries and enjoyed 14 overseas postings, thanks to embarking on a teaching career that saw me move from classroom teaching, to teacher training, curriculum development and eventually, a project management position on a 25 year long, multimillion dollar aid and development project in the Pacific.

In that time, I survived multiple organ failure, evacuation due to civil unrest, being detained as an illegal alien, blackmail, and deportation on arrival (no illegal activities or being irresponsible I might add!). I've also lived in Asia for most of my adult life being a large, white, single female (as a minority, and therefore, the butt of countless jabs, insults and teasing), and had jobs that would give the average teacher heart failure.

They say what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, and I've often said if I was any stronger I'd be forged steel, but I don't take back a second of any of the hair-raising I've experienced.

I have lived and loved to the very fullest, taken every opportunity by the horns, slept rough, eaten with Presidents, built houses with the poorest locals on the planet. In May and June 2018 I will leave my home of Bali, and venture around the globe again, adding five new countries to the list, visiting new and old friends.

Why do I love travelling? It's a constant journey of self-discovery and I could not imagine life without it.

In the words of Mark Twain: *Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness.*

**Maria Doyle**  
Class of 1995



## Flying High

After graduating Iona in 1996, my career for Qantas began!

Firstly, in the kitchen of the Qantas Club, then on to check in, then to the role of the Airport Manager's PA, Cabin Crew Administration Manager and finally into flying-all before I was even 23!

Soon after, I was promoted to onboard Cabin Crew Customer Service Manager, moving to London aged 25 as an International Cabin Crew Manager on the 747 Fleet. From here, my career shifted to a HR role, managing 400 crew.

So, where am I now? I've since returned to Melbourne where I am still flying and doing a lot of Management, Training and Facilitation for Qantas, coupled with more study too.

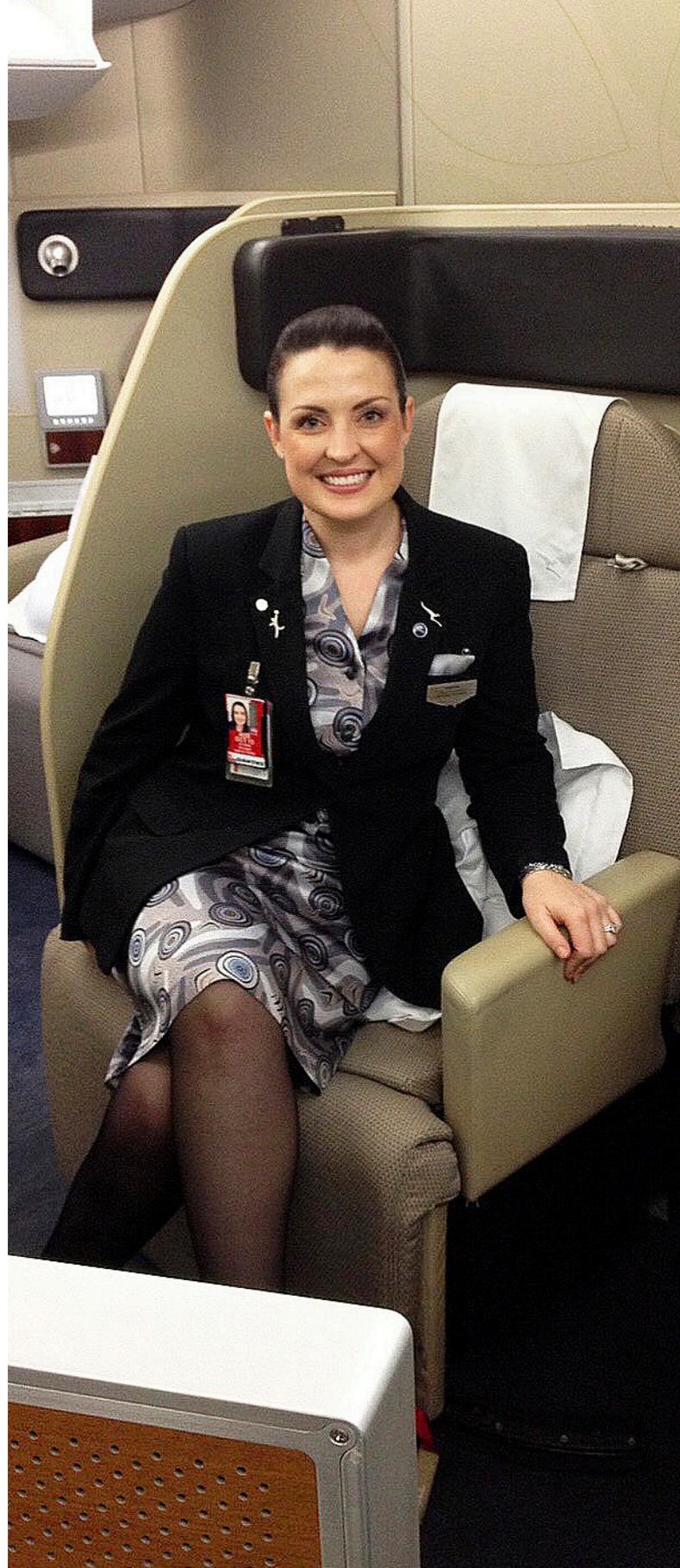
I also balance my time now as a Certified Life and Executive Coach, NLP Practitioner, trainer and mother to our beautiful two-year-old daughter, Aurelia.

Upon reflection, I know that attending Iona and participating in the INSTEP program really gave me the confidence and the foundations to walk straight from secondary school into the Airline Industry.

With the support and guidance of this program and my teachers, I attended AFTA travel College, completing my Diploma of Travel and Tourism, being offered a job with Qantas before I'd even graduated.

It had always been a dream to fly, for as long as I could remember, so where am I now? Living my dreams . . .

**Alyssa Poyner**  
*Class of 1996*



## Inspired by Hope

I have been lucky to have lived in some exciting places including Moscow, Dubai and London working as an International Disputes lawyer on cases with cross border and cross-cultural issues.

After qualifying as a barrister and solicitor in Perth I moved to London and qualified as an English lawyer. Whilst in London I had the opportunity of a Moscow secondment, a big change from my English-speaking comfort zone, however, rewarding, and the start of my interest in emerging markets.

As I did not speak Russian when I moved to Moscow I learned fast how to do basic things which we take for granted - such as ordering lunch, booking a taxi, and explaining how I wanted my hair cut in Russian. I took dance and yoga classes in Russian and I drove a car (one of the few female expats in Moscow at the time who dared drive!). I loved the endless culture - dance, music and theatre - on offer. The winters were freezing and long but I didn't mind too much - it sounds crazy but my Australian friends in Moscow at the time and I joked it was a novelty!

My husband and I married in Sydney and we headed back to Moscow. My law firm at the time, Clifford Chance, asked if I would like to go on secondment from Moscow to the Perth office. Wow, I thought. It would be great to go back home and do some WA work. I returned home to Perth and worked with a fantastic team at Clifford Chance and loved being back.

However, I was destined to hop elsewhere (plus it was time for my husband and I to live in the same city). I left my Perth comfort zone for a second time, this time for Dubai in the Middle East.

I took up a role with a top Disputes Firm in Dubai. I became a Partner running large cross border litigation and international arbitration, this time with a Middle East connection. I have had the pleasure of working on cases

involving different legal systems to ours in Australia with people of different cultures, backgrounds and religions.

I enjoy playing polo which I learned in Dubai and have been fortunate to work and play sport with local Emiratis whose vision for their country, hospitality and welcoming nature I admire.

I have been touched and inspired by the hope of others. People who cannot return home because their country is not safe, whose family home was destroyed by an earthquake, who cannot marry in their war-torn home country so they were married abroad. These are reminders of the human spirit and how lucky we are as women to have received the gift of growing up in Perth and an Iona education.

My experience living in different countries and working on cases involving the developed markets of the UK, Europe, US and Australia and emerging markets of the Middle East and Russia has been incredibly rewarding for me.

Recently I moved back to the UK with my family where I am currently based. Who knows where we'll be if my son asks about schools in Perth! We'll see...

**Melissa Quai Currie (née Quai)**  
*Class of 1993*





## One Way to USA

In 2005 I left Perth with a one-way ticket to USA with the goal to live my dream of a New York City life. I did eventually make it to NYC but it was my heart that landed me in the centre of the Rocky Mountains, Vail Colorado.

For me, Vail has provided the lifestyle, the people and the opportunities to explore and push my boundaries. Including working for a Ski Resort, joining a white-water rafting community, seeing parts of the world I had only ever read about, looking forever into the distance, finally reaching the summit of a 14,000 ft mountain at sunrise, learning languages, tasting cuisines and witnessing what makes people struggle as well as what makes them smile!

I am now the Business Development Manager for the Lodging Division of Vail Resorts in Eagle County. Each day I speak to a new guest, client or colleague and we often reminisce on where we grew up. It's in that moment, that I'm proud to say, I grew up in Perth (Fremantle) and went to school at Iona. Your home, will always remain part of your identity and your connections with others, even when you're somewhere else in the world.

I am beyond appreciative for the path life has dealt me and am very lucky to still be in close contact with many of my friends from Iona whom my partner Dustin, and I visit regularly when we're back in Perth.

The greatest value I take from being a member of the Class of 2001 is the pride of being part of such a driven, intelligent, creative, robust and accomplished group of women.

As Ionians we are all the result of a well-rounded and comprehensive education from dedicated teachers, Presentation Sisters and professionals. So, if travelling the world has taught me anything, it would be that we can never take for granted the luxury and experience of an Iona education, something that across the globe, so many never get to experience.

**Alicia Gresley**  
*Class of 2001*

## The Power of Education

I always liked school as a child, but my world changed dramatically in 1968 when my parents bought the delicatessen in Lochee Street, Mosman Park, and I was "sent up the hill" to Iona half way through Year 8.

The Presentation Sisters opened my eyes to an entirely new world of culture and education, to the point where I was inspired to join them for part of my young adult life.

I did most of my studies at UWA and then taught at various places as a Presentation Sister. After a short stint at Iona, I taught in Corrigin, Port Hedland and Geraldton. A few years after I left the Order, I made the transition to University lecturing and research, first at Notre Dame, then Curtin University for 10 years.

For the last six years I have been Deputy Vice Chancellor Education at Deakin University, based in Victoria, working to refresh the learning experience of our 60,000 students - many learning fully online - from all across Australia, and beyond.

I am humbled that my University recently conferred on me the title Alfred Deakin Professor for distinguished contribution to higher education, particularly in the fields of graduate employability and digital education.

Even though my roles have changed over the years, my experience as a student, and as a Presentation Sister during my early adult life, have never left me: I am driven to ensure that people of all ages and stages have access to a brilliant education.

The Sisters opened my eyes and changed my outlook through education, and I have never swerved from my conviction about the power of education to change peoples' hearts, mind and lives for the better.

**Beverley Oliver**  
*Class of 1972*



“The Presentation Sisters opened my eyes to an entirely new world of culture and education...”

## From my Ireland to Home

I hadn't been living in Ireland long when I needed to get an official document sent to me. The woman on the helpline took ages to understand me when I gave her my name - 'Anne Wayne'. When the envelope arrived, it was addressed to 'N. Wine' – the best representation of my flat Aussie vowels the woman could muster. To this day, people have trouble with my name and each time it reminds me that no matter how much I've integrated I am still somehow unknown here.

I left Iona in 1989 and after doing an Arts degree at UWA got a job at Anawim Aboriginal women's refuge in Perth. I loved that job and continued to work in the Social Care field for 10 years, ending up in Ireland where I worked with refugees and met my now husband, Joe Moran.

In 2005 we married and I became a stepmother to Joe's daughter, Anna. We added to our blended family with the birth of Mairéad in 2005 and Róisín in 2008.

Now I lecture at the Waterford Institute of Technology, supporting students as they struggle, grow and flourish on the way to their degree.

When Mairéad and Róisín started at our local village school I truly integrated into Irish life. The girls began using the

language of their peers – 'sweeties' instead of 'lollies', 'lads' instead of 'guys' - started playing camogie instead of netball and brought home colourful pictures of me, titled 'My Mam'. When I became a 'Mam' instead of a 'Mum' something shifted in my relationship with Ireland and I finally thought of it as home.

However, in July 2018, we're moving to Perth. For Joe, Mairéad and Róisín it's a painful emigration leaving their home-place. I've lived much of my adult life, nearly 18 years, in Ireland so I'm also anxious. I will need to relearn Australian ways and find work and accommodation which feels daunting in middle age. But I'm so looking forward to spending time with family and reconnecting with friends. And it will be wonderful to say my name and be understood and known immediately!

**Anne Wayne**  
*Class of 1989*





## Captured by Mountain Life

After graduating from Iona in 1994, I attended UWA where I completed a Bachelor of Economics (HR/IR). After completing my degree, I spent a few years working at Blake Dawson Waldron (now Ashurst) in Perth.

In the early 2000s, I met my husband, got engaged, bought a house and in 2004 went on a solo snowboarding trip to Vancouver, Canada. Upon my return, I suggested to my husband that we should consider a 12-month working holiday in Vancouver.

In February 2005, we set off on our 12-month adventure and, now 13 years later, we still find ourselves in Canada!

We live just minutes from a shopping area, the highway and 20 minutes from downtown, where I still work in HR, yet we have a spectacular, mountainous rainforest in our backyard. It is an amazing adventure playground for our nine and six year olds who catch fish, watch horses ride by and play on rope swings.

Here we've swapped Perth's beach-life for snow-life and spend most of the winter months on the slopes of Whistler.

Our children have quickly surpassed the oldies on the ski slopes. Summers are spent hiking, wakeboarding and just generally enjoying the lush green of the North Shore mountains.

While we do kick the occasional footy with the kids, they are much more accustomed to an ice hockey stick. As for the critters, we need to teach them to be 'bear' and 'big cat' aware (black bears also share our forest oasis and recently a cougar too!) and to stay away from skunks versus spiders and snakes.

Canadians regularly ask me, "Why would you ever leave Australia?" "Will you move back?" "Don't you miss it?"

Perth will always be home, I have such fond memories of my school and university years. It is an amazing city with great people and so beautiful in its own way.

With the occasional bout of home-sickness, I do often ponder a move back, but the mountain life has captured me... for now!

**Kate Saw**  
*Class of 1994*

## My Pathway to Punmu

During my time at Iona I was never a particularly academic student. However I was luckily enough to be invited to join the INSTEP program by Mrs Easton in Year 10. This was really helpful because I'd always known I wanted to be a Primary Teacher and I knew this would help me to achieve my goal. In Year 11, I began work experience as an Education Assistant and later received a Certificate of Excellence.

I then went on to achieve my Certificate III as an Education Assistant whilst completing Year 12. Graduating Iona in 2008, I took my Certificate IV at TAFE as my pathway into university and in 2017 completed my Bachelor of Education in Primary and Early Childhood at Murdoch University. It was a long process moving out of home and working part-time but I have learnt that there are alternate pathways to achieving an ATAR score, and you can do anything if you put your mind to it.

In November last year I was recommended by an AISWA consultant to meet, the Principal of Rawa Community School. I've always been interested in Indigenous Culture and had always hoped to work with Indigenous students.

Rawa is located in the Aboriginal community of Punmu in the Great Sandy Desert about two-hours from Telfer Mine and eight hours inland from Port Hedland. We are situated on a beautiful salt-lake, Lake Dora. The school incorporates two-way learning, meaning that we learn and speak both English,

Manyjilyjarra and Martu Wonka, a traditional Martu Western desert Language. The Martu people are one of the oldest groups in Australia stretching from the Great Sandy Desert in the North to Wiluna in the south. We still have elders within the community who are greatly connected to the traditional culture and art.

I am fortunate to work as an Early Childhood Teacher teaching Pre-Kindy to Year 2.

The lives of the children are very transient, with cultural and family activities often moving between some of the most remote communities of Australia. I have between two and five students on a daily basis who speak English as a second or third language!

It is an amazing experience living in Punmu. I am learning about language and culture as well as appreciating the vast, beautiful, ever changing landscape of the desert.

In 2003, I fell in love with the film *Rabbit Proof Fence*. Little did I know that 15 years later I would be having a picnic with the elders alongside it!

**Grace Attwell**  
*Class of 2008*



## Class of 2017

As expected, it was a great morning where the girls – known by the College as the Class of 2017, yet by one other as the friends who we had shared the last six years with – were able to come together, as we all embark on the next phases of our lives.

The Year 13 Breakfast was held on the College Green Wednesday 7 February. We were treated with delicious food and drinks served by Year 12 students, and warmly welcomed by Past Pupil, Victoria Loughnan (Class of 2006).

Victoria shared her journey to success, encouraging us to not micromanage every step of our future career paths at this moment in time, because the path to achieving your goals is often convoluted and challenging- and that's part of the fun.

It was a strange feeling attending our first event as Iona Past Pupils, yet Mrs Pitos reminded us that we all now will forever have the support of the College and our alumni behind us, through IPPA (Iona Past Pupils' Association).

It was great to see the girls again to share our summer break stories and plans for the future, and I would like to thank the College, on behalf of the Class of 2017, for organising such a lovely morning for us.

### Lauren Fleming

*Class of 2017*







“The afternoon was delightful, and with so much to catch up on, we continued way into the night.”

## Class of 2013

**On 17 February, the Class of 2013 gathered at the Cottesloe Beach Hotel for our 5 Year Reunion. Whilst it felt as if we'd just finished school days ago, the years sure have flown by.**

After five years we are all at different stages of life. Some have completed their first university degree, with others still in the midst of their studies and some are now working full time.

It was fantastic to catch up and discuss how life has lead us on these different and interesting paths, many of which we did not think we would take some five years ago. We are however, excited for our futures, which are all looking very bright.

We had a lovely afternoon laughing and reminiscing about our years at Iona, specifically about our final year which we all speak fondly about and the fun we had whilst getting through a challenging and demanding year.

The afternoon was delightful, and with so much to catch up on, we continued way into the night.

On behalf of the ladies that attended, I would like to thank Mrs Anne Pitos for spending the afternoon with us. Mrs Pitos and the Class of 2013 started at Iona in 2009, so it was lovely to hear about Iona's exciting future.

To Mrs Lucy Sabatini, Miss Gemma Beekink and Miss Meghan O'Leary, thank you for joining us, it was lovely to see you all too.

Finally, thank you to Georgia Allen for all her efforts in organising the reunion.

We have all grown to be such beautiful women, which Iona had a huge part in shaping.

Now we look forward to our 10 Year Reunion, and to opening our time capsules, which will be sure to bring many fond memories, awkward moments, laughs and smiles.

**Grace Peris**  
*Class of 2013*



## Class of 2008

**It is so hard to believe how fast 10 years have flown by. It was such a fantastic opportunity to catch up with so many beautiful young ladies after such a long time.**

I would personally like to thank Mrs Pitos and the staff at Iona for taking the time to organise and make the reunion possible. It was lovely that former Principal Ms Herley could attend the event and addressed the group with some laughs and her own kind words of wisdom.

We were fortunate to have some of the teachers that taught us during our time at Iona including Sr Mary, Sr Flora and Mrs Pettigrew also attended the night.

The greatest part of the evening was reconnecting with familiar faces and chatting about all the different life journeys and career paths that have lead us to where we are today. I personally enjoyed reminiscing about our fondest high school memories and the time we spent at Iona.

I am so grateful to be a part of this community and for all the endless opportunities that have evolved from being educated at Iona.

I can't wait to see what the next 10 years hold for us all!

**Rita Annese**

*Class of 2008*







“...we were transported back to the '90's with images from our College Annual and various other photos projected onto the wall”

## Class of 1993

**On Saturday 7 April 2018, members of the Class of '93 gathered in the College Sports Centre to celebrate our 25-Year Reunion. It was wonderful to catch up on old times with fellow students.**

It was also such a delight that Sr Mary and Sr Terri were able to grace us with their presence. As we caught up on what had happened since our last reunion, we were transported back to the '90s with images from our College Annual and various other photos projected onto the wall. This certainly made us muse on how much we have (or have not!) changed!!

Special thanks to Georgia Allen for the time and effort spent in organising the evening and to Karen Canalini and the Year 12 helpers, ensuring we were well-fed and our thirsts, quenched.

We look forward to catching up again at our next reunion. I'm sure that the next five years will just fly by.

**Christie Stipinovic (née Valente)**

*Class of 1993*





“Always special to feel that bond with old school friends even when you may only see each other at these occasions.”

## Class of 1988

**Great work Class of '88 on a fantastic turn out to our 30-Year Reunion at the school and afterwards at Elba in Cottesloe!**

It was lovely to see the years disappear with laughter...it never feels like as long as it's been! Always special to feel that bond with old school friends even when you may only see each other at these occasions. I certainly always come away reminded of a group of people out there in the world for whom I wish all the love, luck and laughter in the world and whom I know wish me the same.

Thanks to Iona and to Georgia Allen for organising a lovely evening and to Sr Consuela, Sr Anthony and Principal, Anne Pitos for joining us. A special thanks to the two Year 8 students who set the scene so beautifully with background music and to the Head Girl and Deputy for giving up their evening to feed us!

I thoroughly enjoyed the evening and am so looking forward to the next. Safe travels 'til then.

**Cate Seghezzi (née Engelbrecht)**  
*Class of 1988*





## Lauren Fleming awarded the John Curtin Undergraduate Scholarship

**Lauren Fleming, 2017 Iona Presentation College Head Girl, has recently been awarded the John Curtin Undergraduate Scholarship.**

The Scholarship values how students have contributed to their community in service, and how they have excelled in a range of different areas. It emphasises the qualities of vision, leadership and community service that John Curtin demonstrated.

“Throughout my time at Iona, I was involved in the College in many different capacities and have always made the most of any opportunities available; whether it be sports teams, service groups, volunteer trips, or

leadership positions - in particular, in my role as Head Girl.

“A major component of the application was focussed on a written piece on social justice in our community. I felt that my time at Iona and involvement in their service program equipped me to respond in an authentic and realistic way.”

“I am undertaking a Bachelor of Science (Human Biology Preclinical) at Curtin University, with the hope of pursuing Medicine in the future.

“At the moment, I am staying fairly open-minded, yet looking forward to hopefully combining my future work with travel.”

The John Curtin Scholarship offers a HECS-free tuition, an annual stipend, as well as funding towards an international study experience.

## Jessica skates her way to success

**After graduating Iona in 2017, Jessica Spence, now a student of Curtin University studying a double major of Literary and Cultural Studies and Theatre Arts- has also achieved recent and significant success in her field of figure skating.**

In 2017 alone, Jessica not only completed Year 12 but made the podium at all the five events she

entered. Finishing the year with a 1st in the State Championships\Spring Challenge and a 1st at the WA Club Championships.

Despite it only being Jessica’s third year of skating, she was recently invited to attend a four-day camp run by the ISA. This intensive training course conducted by the Canadian Olympic gold, silver and bronze medallists was the most amazing experience for Jessica.



“Cemented in the Presentation ethos of all Ionians is the notion of giving back and being of service to others.”

## Past Pupil Launches Scholarship

**In celebration of International Women's Day, Lisa Stewart (née Podger) from the Class of 1977 spoke to students and staff at the Senior School Assembly.**

Lisa's Iona Story was a moving one. You may remember it from Issue 15 of the *esprit de corps*.

When Lisa arrived at Iona, she was a wayward and slightly rebellious teenager, with a bad attitude towards school and a tendency to either arrive late or perhaps, not at all. But, the Presentation Sisters of the time, would not take this from someone they believed to have great potential.

Rather than punish this slightly reckless behaviour they began the guidance and support that Lisa so desperately craved. It was this sheer determination and kindness of the Sisters, that saved her from academic failure.

In 1977, Lisa graduated from Iona and gained admission to the University of Western Australia.

Lisa Stewart is now a qualified lawyer currently working as a Magistrate in the Family Court of Western Australia- at the time of her appointment, she was the youngest female Magistrate appointed in the State of Western Australia.

Cemented in the Presentation ethos of all Ionians is the notion of giving back and being of service to others.

And so, we are proud to announce that Lisa Stewart, a proud Ionian is offering, the 'Antoinette Podger Scholarship'.

To honour and uphold the legacy and dedication of Antoinette Podger, this scholarship has been awarded to a Year 11 student to assist her to complete her Senior School studies at Iona by contributing to the cost of Tuition Fees.

Antoinette Podger, a dedicated mother, strongly valued a Catholic Education for her children. Daughter, Lisa Stewart (née Podger), certainly benefitted from this firmly held belief and now, as a successful Magistrate, offers this scholarship in her mother's honour.



*in loving memory***Jenni Oliver**

**29 August 1989 - 15 February 2018**  
**Class of 2006**

Our beautiful daughter passed away after a long battle with the ravages of depression. The depth of her suffering has been difficult to comprehend. We have so many wonderful memories of Jenni and her many accomplishments.

Her early years and time at Iona where she was involved in a wide range of Co-curricular activities, were likely the happiest of her life. She graduated Dux in 2006. Academically, she was a gifted

person who seemingly sailed through her studies; in practice she was a diligent student, not afraid of hard work and willingly applying her natural talents to achieve the best she could.

Her penchant for problem solving was a particular strength that was at times outstanding. She declined the offer of Medicine and selected Engineering at UWA as her preferred career path. However, the uni life was not to her satisfaction. At various times Jenni deferred her studies before completing a Science degree. She travelled widely, visiting all six of the non-polar continents of the world. She worked in Banff, Canada for the ski season and later travelled extensively through South America before living in Bogota, Columbia for six months where she taught English as a second language.

She spent the last year working as a travel agent, a role she particularly enjoyed.

Losing Jenni to depression has had a significant impact on our family, friends and the wider community. Our three daughters in particular enjoyed a close and loving relationship, reinforced growing up in Borneo during their early developmental years.

Jenni, you will forever live in our hearts.

**John and Dianne Oliver and Family**

**Elizabeth McLaughlin**

**27 January 1988 - 22 November 2017**  
**Class of 2005**

Elizabeth (Liz or Lizzie) had a small melanoma appear on her shoulder in 2011. She had it removed and was given the all clear and continued life with no further symptoms. However, seven months after giving birth to her beautiful baby daughter, Ivy, she was diagnosed with stage four metastatic melanoma. In November last year, after a four month battle that was tumultuous and heart breaking, Liz passed away.

Liz was an amazing mother, partner, daughter, sister, aunty, granddaughter, niece and friend to everyone that knew her. Her family are all extremely proud

of the short life Liz lived. Liz was fortunate enough to have travelled the world and live abroad, work in a field that she was both talented in and loved, and for a cause that she was extremely passionate about - Event Coordinator for Heart Kids, an organisation she held dear, which supports children, teens and adults affected by congenital and childhood heart disease.

Liz was fortunate enough to meet the love of her life, be a Mum to her amazing step children, and give life to her own child. Liz was all about living life to the full, with love and positivity.

In the short four months that Liz battled melanoma she was a massive advocate and worked to spread awareness of this horrific and aggressive disease. She gave up her own privacy and promoted prevention, screening and treatment for those with melanoma, and the need to keep up the regime of regular checks.

And we, her family, are continuing to do this in her honour, supporting the work done to prevent and fight melanoma.

My sister's journey has touched many different people and has been extremely difficult for myself, my family, her partner and children.

Liz, we will forever love you and hold you close.

**Beverly Dewar (née McLaughlin) and Family**

## We really should catch up...

### 2018 UPCOMING REUNIONS

(Dates correct at time of print)

#### 40 YEAR REUNION

(CLASS OF 1978)

Saturday 25 August 2018

#### GOLDEN GIRLS MASS AND REUNION

(CLASS OF 1968 AND PRIOR)

Friday 14 September 2018

#### 20 YEAR REUNION

(CLASS OF 1998)

Saturday 10 November 2018

#### SPECIAL BOARDERS' REUNION

(ALL PAST BOARDERS INVITED)

Saturday 24 November 2018

For further information regarding these Reunions, or to update your details, please contact Georgia Allen, [gallen@iona.wa.edu.au](mailto:gallen@iona.wa.edu.au)

Keep up to date with Reunion news, visit our website: [www.iona.wa.edu.au](http://www.iona.wa.edu.au) and follow us on Facebook.

A young boy in a light blue school shirt and grey shorts is smiling and being welcomed by a group of older students in a hallway. The older students are wearing light blue shirts and dark jackets, and they are reaching out to high-five the boy. The scene is set in a brightly lit hallway with brick flooring and white walls.

# IONA WELCOMES THE JUNIOR SCHOOL ONCE MORE!

## Junior School Update

In a magnificent display of cheer, fun and... confetti, the Iona Junior School was welcomed once more into the Iona Community to now become a Pre-K to Year 12 College. This exciting re-amalgamation has brought on such a 'buzz' for our Community and the events that have flowed on, especially in the Junior School have been inspiring.

Commencing the year was an event that brought all families together. Celebrating the dawn of this new era, families got together for a Sundowner where they welcomed in 2018!

Shortly after we began the new chapter of our journey, we celebrated with a Junior School Music Fair. There were musical instruments and excited students everywhere! Strings, Woodwind, Brass, Piano, Guitars and Percussion! All of the instruments offered as part of the Iona Music Program were there to be tried and explored.

Waterslide Day, a staple in the Junior School calendar, was another wonderful community event, that saw even the most intrepid sliders take the plunge down gigantic blow up water slides! Even Mr Rose, our new Head of Junior School gave it a whirl! We wonder who had the most fun?

Some say, it takes a village to raise a child, and the grandparents in our community play an especially integral role. So, in an afternoon of fun, our grandparents were invited into our Pre-Primary class for games, laughs and a look back in time. They shared their stories, showed photographs, letters and books and helped our students to see how much has changed, but how one thing remains the same, the value and love of family.

Innovation and technology continues to be a foremost priority for our students at Iona, with students participating in integrated STEM related activities and learning experiences as part of the everyday curriculum. Year 3 students recently worked on a LEGO WeDO 2.0 Robotics and Science project designing, building and programming robotic animals to communicate in some way.

We look forward to discovering what the future holds for Iona and working as a Pre K-12 College, making a difference, together.



## Finding Wellbeing in the Great Outdoors

**Our Years 11 and 12 Physical Recreation Program students have recently had the opportunity to give Stand Up Paddle boarding (SUP'ing) a go.**

Learning in the outdoor classroom provides our students with the

opportunity to get involved, breaking out from their daily school schedules, learning life skills and taking advantage of our idyllic College location here in Mosman Park- so vital for healthy wellbeing, especially in the senior years.

This term the girls have also participated in Aquatics, River Ramble, and Run Club Loop and will continue to explore other recreational opportunities too.



## Thoroughly Modern Millie

**This year's College Production, *Thoroughly Modern Millie* was once again a 'knock out' performance.**

Spectacularly directed by Mr Josh Brant and supported by College staff, Iona students performed to swelling

crowds at The Regal Theatre, wowing audiences with talents and skills way beyond what is usually expected for an average high school production.

Performers in *Thoroughly Modern Millie* will be remembered for their sharp and

polished delivery, superb dancing and incredibly talented acting.

We cannot wait to see what lies ahead for Iona's next College Production, Regal Theatre, March 2019.



## Immersed in India

Every two years, Senior Iona students are offered the opportunity to participate in a Cultural Immersion abroad. In January this year Iona took 14 students on a Presentation Immersion to India. Students and staff had the opportunity to 'unplug' from their daily lifestyle and interact with Indian people, culture and ways of life. Students were exposed to relevant global issues, encouraging them to compare and contrast with their privileged Western Australian home life. Additionally, students witnessed the tireless work of the Presentation Sisters and other organisations that carry out a vocation in these areas, as well as recognising causes of poverty and the impact of social stratification in these countries.

Students were given the chance to interact with the local communities. They spent time in a home for disabled Children, a slum school and visited Presentation schools. This time was invaluable as students began to understand their own good fortune and the many opportunities they have here, in Australia. India certainly taught the girls how to exist harmoniously and respectfully and to be grateful for all that they have- be it running water, electricity or clean clothes.

Students were pushed outside of their 'comfort zone', which encouraged them to foster grit and determination, perseverance, trust and teamwork; and important life skills that will assist them as they 'carry their lantern' beyond the Iona classroom.





## STEM Fosters Partnership

**Iona Presentation College and CBC Fremantle are partnering in an innovative STEM program, which encourages teamwork, creative thinking and holistic responses to social issues.**

Gifted and Talented Coordinator, Mrs Louise Ormesher, working together with CBC's Academic Excellence Program coordinator, Ms Marilyn Schmidt, said the program extends students outside of the normal classroom environment.

"It's about teaching skills, not subjects," she said.

"With most subjects, you need a lot of knowledge before you can apply it to problems.

"The skills we're teaching apply across all disciplines and all areas of life. It is a true cross-genre enterprise with Heads from all learning areas being involved."

The STEM program equips students with what are widely known as '21st century skills', including negotiation, cognitive flexibility and critical thinking.

Students in Years 8 - 10 from both schools are now working in small teams to solve a range of global problems, opportunities and challenges they have identified, and believe they can do something about – all using STEM principles.

With projects ranging from infectious diseases to renewable energy, the possibilities are endless with the group of 60 energetic and adventurous young people seeking the best and most innovative solutions.

Over the coming weeks they'll work together using an online platform to share ideas and delegate responsibility, working towards the goal of presenting a portfolio of their finished work next term.

Mrs Ormesher said that by introducing students to new ways of generating ideas, it is hoped they can focus on making the impossible possible.

"As always, we encourage our girls to be the best they can be, regardless of the outcome of the project; and in this project they are having fun at the same time!"

"We're encouraging our students to try new things, and those ideas might not always work," Mrs Ormesher said.

"By helping students learn from their failures, we're setting them up for even greater successes in the future."



EDUCATION  
ways to improve

Group 2

# Iona 2018 Ball

**YOU ARE INVITED**

We warmly invite the Iona Community, past and present, to this very special event, celebrating 110 years of Iona Presentation College.

**Saturday 1 September 2018**  
**Optus Stadium, 6.30pm - Midnight**  
**\$200 per person**

Tickets can be purchased at [community.iona.wa.edu.au](http://community.iona.wa.edu.au)

Proudly presented by the Iona Parent Council

Ticket Sales must close end of July

## Key Dates 2018

EVENT	DATE	DETAILS
Iona Ball	Saturday 1 September	6.30pm - 12.00am, Optus Stadium
Open Morning	Monday 10 September	9.30am - 11.30am, Iona Sports Centre To register your attendance please visit <a href="http://www.iona.wa.edu.au">www.iona.wa.edu.au</a>
CREATE - Creative Arts Exhibition	Friday 9 November - Sunday 11 November	Please visit <a href="http://www.iona.wa.edu.au">www.iona.wa.edu.au</a> closer to the date for more information
Carols on the Green	Friday 30 November	Please visit <a href="http://www.iona.wa.edu.au">www.iona.wa.edu.au</a> closer to the date for more information

# Annual Giving: You can make a difference

## From the Principal

We are proud of our long and rich history of service at Iona, established by the Presentation Sisters in the example of our foundress, Nano Nagle.

The Presentation Sisters, who have given so much to each of us, have been for more than one hundred years a living example of generosity within our community. It is this spirit of giving passed on to generations of students that resounds most prominently with our graduates and stays with Ionians long after they have left the College gates for the last time.

Through our Annual Giving Program, we invite you to contribute to the education of future Ionians by supporting one of our future funds; Building, Library or Scholarships. These funds, allow the growth of Iona beyond what can be supported solely by fee income. All donations through this Annual Giving Program are tax deductible.

Your contribution, whatever the size, will help continue the Iona tradition of providing an education that will empower our students to be discerning, self-reliant, technologically savvy leaders who are able to make positive contributions to the lives of others.

To make a contribution, please visit our website:  
<https://www.iona.wa.edu.au/view/our-community/annual-giving>

**Anne Pitos**

*Principal*

## Donors

Iona Presentation College would sincerely like to thank the following families who have generously donated in 2018.

Helen Benninger	Gay & Rob Branchi
Coral Dendroff	Matthew Leach
Patricia Pettigrew	Sharon Schubert
Lisa Stewart	Jessica Thompson

As well as our many anonymous donors.

Thank you kindly for your support

## Scholarship Fund- Nano Nagle Bursaries

Nano Nagle has inspired generations to reach out to those who are less fortunate and this continues to be an essential part of our vision for Iona. By continuing this legacy and supporting Iona in the form of a financial donation to our Scholarship Fund, you can assist us to provide an Iona education to a student that might otherwise not be in a position to receive it.

## Building Fund- Nagle Hall Refurbishment

The Iona campus, founded more than one hundred years ago has grown beyond imagining and in coming years, there is much to do to improve Iona's facilities in line with our Capital Development Plan.

With your generosity, we hope to refurbish and transform Nagle Hall into a multipurpose performance and teaching space for future Ionians.

## Library- iCentre Resources

The Library or iCentre as its known, is a vital resource centre and learning space designed to provide a technologically rich environment for our students .

Your donation to our Library Fund will help provide resources to ensure Ionians will continue to graduate with a well-rounded education, confident to embrace technological opportunities well into the future.



**A Catholic School, Pre K-12.**  
**Boys and Girls Pre K-6 | All Girls 7-12.**  
**Established in 1907 by the Congregation of Presentation Sisters (W.A.) Inc.**



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PRESENTATION COLLEGE

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