A few words from MESA President

Over the course of 2014, MESA has held a variety of events in and around Mercedes. I have detailed some of these activities in previous editions of the LINK and Alegria. You can also read about our recent events in this edition, as detailed by our Committee members.

Amongst other activities, the Committee made a conscious decision over the course of this year to actively promote MESA to existing students of Mercedes. This was primarily because we wanted a greater level of awareness of MESA amongst current students. This stemmed from the fact the Committee felt a strong sense of the need to raise awareness of MESA amongst the current students. This would then allow those students, upon graduation, to utilise MESA to develop networks and forge connections with a wide variety of past students across many year groups.

What the Committee has found over the past year is that current Mercedes students are interested in the work of MESA and the potential benefits it can deliver to them after graduation. They are heartened to discover that there is a network of women ready to encourage and support them in their future years. They are also reassured that their ability to reconnect with Mercedes over the coming years is not lost by reason of their graduation from the College.

Moving into 2015, the Committee is focused on providing more opportunities for ex-students to engage with one another in both social and networking contexts. The feedback received by the Committee is that past students would welcome additional opportunities to connect with one another, not just within their own year groups. I encourage you to visit the MESA Facebook page and ‘like’ it: ‘Victoria Square Alumni, Mercedes College’. The Facebook page is an ideal way of keeping abreast of MESA events and updates.

I would encourage any past students who have reunions fast-approaching to contact MESA through the College as we may be able to assist you in promoting your reunion. Congratulations also to all past students who have held their reunions in 2014!

I would like to thank the hardworking Committee for being so enthusiastic and driven in their desire to promote MESA and encourage its growth. They have worked tirelessly over the past year for MESA.

Finally, the Committee wishes to thank the dedication, enthusiasm and encouragement of Principal Sheena Barber. Sheena has been a constant supporter of MESA and all of its endeavours. We wish Sheen every success and blessing in her well-deserved retirement.

I look forward to seeing you at our events in 2015!

God bless,
Justine Howard (Class of 1994)

Victoria Square Alumni (VSA) Mercy Mass

On Sunday 21st September we held our second Victoria Square Alumni Mass in the chapel. We were blessed to have Monsignor Michael Keating celebrate our Mass and the Sisters of Mercy join us for this Eucharistic celebration.

Celebrating Mercy Day is a very special day as it provides the opportunity for past students of St Joseph’s Victoria Square, Our Lady’s College and Mercedes College to reflect on our time at Victoria Square and the values of Catherine McAuley that we display through our actions each day.

Monsignor Keating’s mother was an ex-student of the College who always spoke fondly of her time at Victoria Square, this was reflected in Monsignor's homily. The Sisters of Mercy play such an important role in the lives of our past and current students, living and sharing the Mercy values. Our Victoria Square Alumni events are made extra special with the Sisters of Mercy in attendance, ex-students fondly chatting with the sisters and reminiscing about their time at Victoria Square.

The Mass was followed by an afternoon tea prepared by the MESA committee. This was a great opportunity for everyone to chat and share stories of their time at Victoria Square across the generations. For those ex-students of my era we love catching-up with Sr Mollie (Assisium) who was our school principal. It was so lovely to see ex-students who currently have daughters at Mercedes, introduce Sr Mollie with such fondness.

It was a lovely to have Taylor Lloyd, her mother and grandmother attend the Mass, three generations. Taylor is in Year 11, our first MESA Year 7 Scholarship winner and has been elected as a Year 12 Prefect for 2015.
A special thank you to Sr Vedette, our altar server Taylor Lloyd, Mr Harry Oliff and the Mercedes College students who assisted us in the choir and serving afternoon tea.

Thank you to Mrs Sheena Barber, for your assistance and support with the Victoria Square Alumni Mass. Sheena has been a great support to the Victoria Square Alumni and in particular MESA in her role as school principal and ex-student. We wish Sheena and Rob all the very past as they begin a new chapter of their lives and enjoy their retirement in Tasmania.

Three generations! Taylor Lloyd with her mother and grandmother.

100 Year Birthday Celebration of Ex-Students

On the 14th May MESA committee members Gina Romeo (nee Spano’90) and Rita Mola (nee Romeo ’84) were invited to share in the 100th Birthday celebrations of ex-students Sheelah Rudman (nee Taylor) and Kathleen Lawrence (nee Eastcott) at a morning tea held at the College.

It was an honour and a pleasure to meet these two wonderful past students, along with their families and to hear their life stories including their time at Victoria Square.

Mercedes College Open Day 18th May

This year’s Open Day was once again a great opportunity for the MESA committee to meet future students and families of the College. It was also a wonderful occasion to reconnect with past students who hadn’t been back to Victoria Square since they left the College. During the day we were kept amused with stories of past students reminiscing of their time at the College and many shared their amazement at the transformation of the College sports and learning facilities.

Mercedes College Year 12 Mentors Breakfast

The Year 12 students enjoyed breakfast in the company of professional young women, including MESA committee members Justine Howard (’94) and Lucy Fitzgerald (’08), who gave an insight into the students prospective career area, at the annual Mentors Breakfast.
Bogan Bingo
On Friday 26 July Mercedes College hosted a Bogan Bingo event to raise funds for new school buses. The school hall was awash with ugg boots, tattoos, mullet hair styles and more black jeans than you could poke a stick at. We at MESA had our own bogan table and thoroughly enjoyed the hilarity and hijinks. Mark Readings, Channel Nine news presenter was the MC for the evening and had us reaching into the annals of our memory banks to the days of Countdown, Monaro’s and Torana’s, The Little River Band and many more. The evening was a great success and raising approximately $7,000. Thanks to all the wonderful college staff involved for organising such a wonderful evening.

Year 12 MESA Morning Tea
On Friday 29 August all Year 12 students gathered in the school hall for what we hope will be the first of many MESA morning tea events with Mercedes College students. The purpose of the morning was to share how MESA supports and assists the college, past and present students currently and to discuss the increasing role it hopes to play in the life of the college community in the future.

Our President, Justine Howard welcomed the students and talked about MESA membership and the opportunities it presents to ex-students to support and remain involved with the College. Justine then introduced our guest speaker for the morning, Ms Jessica Patterson who graduated from the college in 1994. After leaving Mercedes, Jessica studied Law and is a currently a Special Counsel with Lavan Legal. Jessica talked about her years at university following her graduation from Mercedes and the demands that studies and paying her way through university placed on her during that period. For Jessica, the support and friendship of girls she met at Mercedes was pivotal to her successfully navigating her way through the university years and those friendships remain strong and are a blessing many years on. Jessica joined the MESA Committee earlier this year as a way of supporting and giving back to the College and its ex-students for the wonderful opportunities that were provided to her.

Each of the Year 12 students enjoyed a beautifully presented cupcake and keychain as a small thank you for attending what was an informative and fun morning. We wish all of the 2014 leaving students every success in their very bright futures.
MESA Year 7 Scholarship

2014 Year 7 Scholarship Recipients
MESA is proud to offer a scholarship to two incoming Year 7 students who are the daughters or granddaughters of a MESA member. In continuing a tradition of education at Victoria Square we are pleased to announce

The Year 7 Scholarship recipients for 2015 are Lila Gharbi and Madeline Roberts. The girls were awarded their scholarships at the Mercedes College Presentation Evening on Friday 24 October.

Year 7 MESA scholarship recipients breakfast
The year 7 MESA scholarship recipients met at Carmen’s Café with MESA committee members Justine Howard ‘94 and Rita Mola (nee Romeo) ’84 for their annual get together.

It was very pleasing to hear how enthusiastic and positive the girls are about their time at the College so far. The morning was a great opportunity for MESA and these very special current students of the College to connect and form a stronger bond leading into the future. It was also a wonderful occasion to celebrate and congratulate the inaugural MESA Year 7 scholarship recipient, Taylor Lloyd, on being elected Year 12 Prefect for 2015. Congratulations and well done Taylor!

‘Living the Mercy Values’ Year 12 Award’

2014 Award Winner
Sara Girmay was presented with the ‘Living the Mercy Values’ Year 12 Award for 2014 by Justine Howard.

This award acknowledges a Year 12 student who is recognised by her peers and endorsed by teachers and members of the school executive, as contributing selflessly during her time at Mercedes.

Congratulations Sara! All the best for your current and future studies as well as for you personally.
Wanted - Missing College Annuals
Mercedes College is missing some Annuals from their collection: 1970, 1971, 1972, 1977, 1978, 1981, 1993. If any ex-student is willing to donate an annual from these years to the College library it would be very much appreciated. Please contact Mrs Marg Ryan at the Mercedes College Library on 9323 1359. Thank you to all those who have contacted the Mercedes Ex-Students Association in relation to lending your annuals for scanning. We will be in touch with you shortly.

The Esther Foundation Donation
Every year MESA makes a monetary contribution to a local charity. This year, MESA on behalf of its members made a donation to ‘The Esther Foundation’, which facilitates an extensive and award winning residential young women's health, development and leadership program through ten residential premises based around South Perth, housing more than forty five women and their children. This is a wonderful opportunity for MESA to give back to the community and support ‘The Esther Foundation Program for Young Women’ which is designed to enrich, empower, educate and encourage young women out of difficult circumstances. The program is full-time and offers intensive support and assistance to young women in a safe and structured environment.
http://www.estherfoundation.org.au/

Notices

Reunions

Class of 84’
On Saturday 15th Nov, 60 girls from the class of '84 shared wonderful memories and had a great time catching up at their 30 year reunion.
2015 Reunions

CLASS of ‘95
This Year the leaving class of 1995 celebrates there 20th Anniversary. We are looking forward to planning a wonderful reunion and welcome contact details of any past students from the Class of ’85. If you would like to assist with the organising of the reunion please contact Pippa Doyle - pippa.doyle@fairfaxmedia.com.au or Renee Stanton-Home - rstantonhome@mercedes.wa.edu.au / 9323 1366

CLASS OF ‘85
This year the Leaving Class of 1985 celebrates their 30th Anniversary. We are looking forward to planning a wonderful reunion and welcome contact details of any past students from the Class of ’85. If you would like to assist with the organising of the reunion please contact Rita Panebianco (Lombardi) – 0419 905 922 or Renee Stanton-Home - rstantonhome@mercedes.wa.edu.au / 9323 1366

‘Roll Call for 2015 Mercedes Reunions’
‘Are you planning a class reunion this year?’ If you would like assistance from MESA, such as promoting your event, you can also email us on: mesa@mercedes.wa.edu.au.

2015 Events and Dates for your Diary

MESA AGM
Wednesday 11 February / 6.15pm / Mercedes College Staffroom
All MESA members are welcome to attend, after 2015 MESA AGM: MESA is open to all students who have attended any of the Colleges at Victoria Square (St Joseph's College, Our Lady's College and Mercedes College).

Being a member of MESA allows you to remain an integral part of the College community, providing opportunities for you to reconnect with old friends at Alumni and special College events and reunions, assist in planning these events and involvement in guiding association decision-making.

It is also a way to give back to the College and its students through mentor programs and scholarships. The committee is voted in annually at the AGM and all members are welcome at meetings throughout the year (You don’t have to be a committee member to attend meetings).

We encourage and welcome anyone who has a spare hour to join us at the next MESA AGM, Wednesday 11th February 2015 at 6.15pm in the Mercedes College Staffroom: Please express your interest to attend to MESA secretary Dani Wares chicken72@iprimus.com.au.

Mercedes College Open Day
Sunday 17 May/ 11.00am - 1.30pm

MESA 2015 Meetings Dates/ 6.15pm / Mercedes College Staffroom
Wednesdays 25 March, 22 April, 13 May, 24 July, 12 August, 16 September, 21 October, and 2 December.

All years sundowner and networking breakfast - dates and venues to be advised.

For MESA information and events please visit http://www.mercedes.wa.edu.au/index.php/our-community/victoria-square-alumni/mesa-information-a-events

Like us on facebook ‘Victoria Square Alumni, Mercedes College for Alumni Events and Updates.

News stories, reunion updates, photos or contact detail updates can be emailed to mesa@mercedes.wa.edu.au.

‘May God preserve and bless you and grant you all the graces and precious gifts reserved for this holy season.’
- Catherine McAuley
Letter to Frances Warde December 23, 1837