Oakhill College under new management

Brother Peter took up his position as Principal of Oakhill at the beginning of this term, becoming the 17th De La Salle Brother to lead the College.

Born in Cowra, NSW, Brother Peter was educated at St Raphael’s School and Cowra High School and later attended the Catholic College of Education in Sydney. He currently holds a BEd from the Australian Catholic University (ACU), an MEd also from ACU and an MA from Broken Bay Institute/Sydney College of Divinity.

Brother Peter joined the De La Salle Brothers in 1982, taught for a year at St Bernadette’s School, Castle Hill, and for the past 28 years has taught in Lasallian schools in Australia and New Zealand, initially at De La Salle College, Scarborough as a classroom teacher, then Armidale and Mentone. He first came to Oakhill College in 1995 and was the inaugural Dean of Solomon when the house system was introduced in 1996. In 1998, Brother Peter moved to John Paul College, Rotorua as the Director of Religious Studies and Deputy Principal.

In 2003 he was appointed Principal of Francis Douglas Memorial College, New Plymouth, a position he held for six years before returning to Australia as Principal of LaSalle Catholic College Bankstown.

Br Peter has been involved in Lasallian Formation programs in Australia, Rome and Asia. Prior to his appointment as Principal, he was a member of the Oakhill College and Boystown Boards. He was a member of the Province Mission Council. He is currently a member of the Brothers Provincial Council.

In his first comments to the College community as Principal, Brother Peter wrote, “I feel good about coming to Oakhill, because I have little to be anxious about. In fact I have only one anxiety: the desire to maintain, and where possible, improve on what I find to be an outstanding school.”
We can all recall incidents at school where students were bullied in the playground, on the bus or on the walk home from school. Twenty, thirty, forty years ago, bullying existed but the victim always knew that at the end of the school day they could get a respite - the sanctuary of home.

Bullying in the past, as it is today, was totally unacceptable. But, unlike years ago where one could escape to the safety of home and be able to identify the bully, this is not necessarily the case for the youth of today.

Unfortunately in our digital age with the introduction of computers, mobile phones and face book, bullying now happens twenty-four seven for many of our young people. No longer is the home the safe haven it once was. Rather the bully of today’s generation infiltrates a victim’s home as the bully now hides behind technology and are relentless in their harassment. The victims of bullying in this generation have to contend with the faceless insidious bully day and night.

The long term emotional and social effects of bullying are well documented. Effects range from loss of self esteem and school refusal through to depression and suicidal thoughts. It is time that victims and bystanders took a stand.

On Friday 15 March, 2013 Oakhill College along with schools across Australia joined together to mark the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence. This day was organised through the Safe and Supportive School Communities Project. It is a day that takes place annually to provide a platform for schools to address the issue of bullying and violence in schools.

This year Oakhill College played an active role in drawing students’ attention to the issue of bullying and violence in schools and sent a strong message to all Year levels that bullying and violence by Oakhill students will not be tolerated.

The drama department organised a skit to be played over the PA system which used the characters of Bully, Victim and Bystander. The skit was played in the change over of classes and was unexpected by students. The skit had the desired effect in making students aware that bullying is unacceptable in any form and that if you are a bystander you have a moral obligation to be active in stopping bullying. Year 7 used their electronic devices with an App outlining active ways to overcome bullying, while there were posters and Homeroom contracts signed; all to heighten the awareness that bullying and violence is unacceptable at any level; be it physical, verbal, exclusion or cyber. It is also hoped in the coming weeks that various other activities will take place in the College to keep awareness at the forefront. It is hoped that Year 11 students can play big brothers and sisters to our Year 7s and 8s and discuss with them strategies to overcome bullying.

We must all take a stand - Bullying - No way!

Having grown up in the Hills District and now a dedicated real estate agent in the area, David Choy is honoured to be involved in the Oakhill College community through sponsorship and events.

A constant focus on customer service, excellence and complete satisfaction is the driving force behind David Choy and his team in assisting people with their move.

David is vastly accomplished in his field as one of the leading agents for the McGrath group and has been selling in the Hills District for 17 years.

David and his team pride themselves on their hard work, honesty, integrity and results and are the most reliable choice to handle the negotiation of your greatest asset.

If you’re thinking about selling and would like an appraisal on the worth of your property, please call David.
Brother Luke Coyle RIP

Excerpts from the Eulogy delivered by Brother Ambrose Payne at the Funeral for Brother Luke, 6 March, 2013

As we gather in this final farewell that celebrates the passing of a man that we have all held very close to our hearts it is important to remember him as he appears in the photo that opens the “order of service”. We know that Lukey’s last two or three years were marked by an absence of that infectious laugh, the radiance of that embracing smile and the energy and enthusiasm that buoyed so many of us when experiencing the lows rather than the highs of what it means to be human. All of us were saddened by the cross that he was asked to bear in his last years. Most of us are unaware that the cross had never been far from him. What makes Lukey all the more lovable is that he always remained a man for “others”, always worried that he might be putting himself first, always finding it hard to give himself the credit that was most certainly his due. Today is an occasion to ensure that credit is duly given and that our memories of him are the “happy” memories to use a word that was never far from his lips.

Looking to find a phrase to use in presenting some ideas and which is comprehensive enough to do just a little justice to a life so well lived has led me to use the motto “Semper Fidelis” – “Always Faithful”. Most will recognise the words as the motto of an elite military unit. Some of us will have been brought up on accounts that illustrated the depths and the strength that such a motto has evoked historically. And with Brother G Luke, as he regularly identified himself, there was always about him something of military bearing, unswerving loyalty, dedication even to the extreme.

It is possible to bring to mind many characteristics of Luke that lay the grounds for arguing that he was pre-eminently “semper fidelis”, always faithful. Chinese, Japanese and Korean astrology places a great deal of emphasis on the four pillars of destiny. It is not the intention here to explore the exact year, month, day and time that Lukey was born. Rather it is to borrow the idea that Luke’s destiny was very much concerned with four pillars around which he structured his life. I suggest that those four pillars are God, Family, Vocation and Friends. In each of these dimensions of his life he was “semper fidelis” – “always faithful”.

We can rest assured that Luke is now with that loving God who will most certainly have welcomed him with the words “good and faithful servant”.

News of Luke’s death affected many, both former students and friends. Oakhill College in particular is a most fitting place where Luke might be laid to rest among those who hold his memory so dear and where he worked for so long and so well, 1983 - 1996.

Tributes from former students have been many and all appreciative. Here are only a few.

“Brother Luke was an outstanding mentor. He helped me when I was going off the rails in Year 7 through his patience and positive approach. In each person’s life there’s probably only a small handful of key influences outside of your family and Brother Luke was one of those for me and no doubt hundreds of others.” Bryce Wilde (Class of 1989).

“It is very sad news to hear of Brother Luke’s passing. He was a terrific mentor in making sure you engaged in everything you did. Lessons that he taught on life transcend the classroom. In short, a bloody good bloke whose influence has lived with me throughout my entire adult life. I will be unable to attend the funeral, but I do hope those who are there, celebrate a life lived well and with purpose, rather than focus on the sadness of a top bloke passing.” Scott Wisemantel (Class of 1988).

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“His lessons were always a joy to be in. I can still remember many of them. The class was divided into the army, navy and air-force and we earned our positions of rank as we moved along the rows. Concert work and productions was the area that I really came to spend more time with Luke. We spent hours in rehearsals after school and on Saturdays. Luke had me in some leading roles. I am sure that is why I am so confident. I had a bad stutter in my young days, could not talk clearly at all. On the stage I was perfect. In further studies stage work was a support to confidence and overcoming stuttering. I wonder if Luke knew that.” Brother Michael McCabe.
Tiffany Davenport, (nee Farnham)  
– Class of 2003

Tiffany married Matthew Davenport in the Oakhill College Chapel. The nuptial Mass was celebrated by Bishop Julian Porteous (Class of 1967) on 7th December, 2012. Tiffany’s older sister Melissa Tallapragada was Maid of Honour and sister Sara Farnham (Class of 2005) and Corinne Beauchat were Bridesmaids. After a fun filled reception at Curzon Hall, Marsfield, the happy couple flew to Koh Samui, Thailand for a week’s honeymoon followed by two week’s snowboarding in Hakuba, Japan in February.

Tiffany completed her Bachelor of Applied Science (Medical Radiation Sciences) at Sydney University and went on to complete a Graduate Diploma in Medical Sonography at the University of South Australia. She is currently a registered Sonographer and Nuclear Medicine Technologist at Westmead Hospital. Matt works for DMG/Mori Seiki Australia as a Service/Application Engineer.

James Murphy – Class of 2006
and Jonathan Abdipranoto – Class of 2003

James and Jonathan embarked a few months ago on their journey to become “Apprapreneurs”. James writes that this is a “bit of a made up word, but encompasses what we do”. James and Jonathan have started their own app company called "Mobilation" that designs and builds apps for apple, android and windows phones and tablets.

They started the company after researching how to build apps and how the whole process works. Neither James nor Jonathan have a background in computing; they are both diagnostic radiographers at a private hospital in Sydney.

Their very first app "PayWatch" has been published on the iTunes store and has already received some favourable reviews from users. It is designed to help shift workers and people who work overtime, weekends and get allowances, monitor and track their incomes on a day to day basis. The app would also be of benefit to school students with multiple jobs. The app can be found by typing “iTunes paywatch” into your internet search engine.
Tony Hourigan – Class of 1988

Tony writes, “Following our family tradition with Oakhill College our son Kane has begun his journey through high school. I have many great memories from my time at Oakhill. I was the youngest in our family with my brother Gray (Class of 1981) and sisters Linda (Class of 1979) and Lisa (Class of 1984) all attending the College.

It is nice to see the school evolve with first class facilities on offer for the students to enjoy. It is also good to see some of the Brothers and teachers still there after such a long time. Since leaving school I have worked in real estate whilst studying to gain a real estate licence. I work locally being the Principal at Starr Partners Kellyville and we also reside in Castle Hill only a stones throw from school.

I am certain Kane will have as good a time as I did, especially as he is a keen sportsman. Our daughter Mia will also attend Oakhill when the time comes.”

Amanda Bowles (nee Maguire) – Class of 1992

Amanda was named the inaugural Woman of the Year by Body and Soul Magazine in December 2012. Amanda won the award for her work in co-founding the charity, Bears of Hope, which supports families who have lost a baby.

Amanda describes herself as a mother of “three living children and one angel”. She knows how it feels to lose a baby before you can take him home. Her second child, son Jesse, was stillborn at 21 weeks. “The depth of grief I felt cannot be explained,” she says. “I felt that unless you have experienced such loss it can be difficult to comprehend. Does a parent grieve for a child any less because they only knew them a few minutes or lost that baby before they were born? The impact it has on you, your partner and your family, then and later, is profound. I wanted to help these families and educate the community not to judge others who are going through this grief or expect them to just get over it.”

While she started Bears of Hope just a few months after losing Jesse, Amanda’s grieving lasted a long time. “I struggled to get myself out of bed and found it difficult to look after my toddler. I couldn’t just get on with life and get over my grief,” she says. “On Jesse’s fifth birthday I realised I was okay. I was finally coping.”

For more information on Bears of Hope or to make a donation, go to www.bearsofhope.org.au

Andrew Urquhart – Class of 1989

Andrew’s oldest son (he has three boys) commenced at the College this year. Andrew writes, “I work in the property industry and am still very good friends and keep in regular contact with mates I went through Oakhill with. I hope Josh gets to have the same experiences and builds the same friendships as I did at Oakhill.”
Ashley Hopfe, (nee Ryan) – Class of 2005
Ashley married Craig Hopfe in the Oakhill Chapel on the 3rd November 2012. The wedding ceremony was conducted by Father John Crothers, the priest who married Ashley's parents 27 years ago!
Ashley was given away by her father John Ryan (Class of 1972) and the second reading was read by her brother Mark Ryan (Class of 2008). Ashley and Craig enjoyed a very relaxing honeymoon in The Cook Islands and returned to the home they bought a week before they got engaged!
Since leaving Oakhill, Ashley has completed a Bachelor of Applied Science (Speech Pathology) at Sydney University and has worked for the last three years as a Speech Pathologist for Lifestart Cooperative which provides early intervention for children with disabilities. Craig completed a Bachelor of Engineering at UTS and currently works for Hawkesbury City Council.

Daryl Vella – Class of 1988
Daryl writes, “I started at Oakhill in the last Year 6 class in 1982 and finished up as Class of 1988. After graduation I did a Bachelor of Economics Degree with accounting and finance majors at Macquarie University. I joined PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) as a graduate in 1993. I married Kristen in 1996. She is currently the PE head at St Agathas Primary School at Pennant Hills. I worked for PwC in London for two years and returned to Australia in 2000 for the birth of William. We have three children, William, Thomas 10 and Holly, who is 3.
I currently work as the Chief Financial Officer for an International Insurance Company.
I represented Oakhill in Australian Rules Football for 4 years and the school team was undefeated champions in 1987 and 1988. After school, I went on to play 12 years of senior football in the Sydney Football League for Pennant Hills and the East Coast Eagles clubs.”
William Vella commenced at the College this year.

Michael Catabay – Class of 2002 and Krishia Catabay, (nee Garganera) – Class of 2005
After graduating from Oakhill College, Michael completed a Media degree at Macquarie University, and now works for the same University's Learning & Teaching Centre. After her graduation, Krishia completed a Business degree at the University of Technology, Sydney, and is now working for Ausgrid.
Michael and Krishia were married at the De La Salle Chapel on the 7th of March 2010, joined by groomsmen Tim Sathananthan (Class of 2002), Joseph Schulze (Class of 2002), Michael Garganera (Class of 2008) and Ivan Catabay (Class of 2006). Michael and Krishia now have two sons, Jacob and Noah.
Kate Hogan – Class of 1993

Kate has travelled extensively over the past ten years, living in locations as diverse as Shanghai, Kuala Lumpur, Mumbai and Hong Kong, and now resides in London.

Fellow alumni may recall Kate as the Captain of the Oakhill Swim Team. In recent years Kate has switched her focus from swimming to running. In 2008 she participated in the Hong Kong Oxfam Trailwalker event. 2009 was, as Kate puts it, the “year of the broken foot” with two calcaneal stress fractures and a broken toe.

In 2010 Kate competed in the Sahara Race. In 2011 she raced in three ultra marathons (250 kilometres each) - Atacama in March, Gobi in June and Antarctica in November. In doing so, Kate is only the third Australian female athlete to have finished all four races in the Racing the Planet 4 Deserts Series (www.4deserts.com), and of only 125 people worldwide. Kate’s brother Michael (Class of 1996) and her fiance, Fergus, joined her in the Gobi race.

Paul Orrock – Class of 1987

Paul writes, “Since leaving school I have been involved in the information Technology Industry. Working with major industry leaders in data networking. I am now based in Hong Kong and have established my own business concentrating on Wireless / WiFi Communications.

I was once a committed Wallaby supporter but that commitment diminished as the style of rugby displayed by the Wallabies became akin to watching paint dry. I have fond memories of Oakhill College and am delighted that Flynn is also undertaking that arduous trek up the oak lined drive each morning as I did. Flynn has lots of Oakhill blood in him, five of his Uncles attended the school in addition to myself.”
Scott Morrison – Class of 1983

Scott writes, “On leaving Oakhill in 1982, I commenced an apprenticeship in Plumbing, graduating in 1992 after completing a Diploma in Advanced Hydraulics & Gas Design, then running my own plumbing business for a short while. Deciding that being on the tools wasn’t a lifetime goal I moved in to the sales side of plumbing working for market leaders such as Caroma and Hilti, whilst also completing a Marketing Diploma in 1998.

I have been the NSW Sales Manager for Deks for a couple of years now and enjoy the challenge and variety this role offers. I have lived in Baulkham Hills since 1974 and have been married, to Una, for 20 years. We have two daughters, Alexandra, aged 18 who is about to commence a Bachelor of Health degree at Sydney Uni and Brittany, aged 16, who started in Year 11 with Oakhill this year.

All our ‘spare’ time is spent travelling to hockey grounds around the state and the country having returned last month from Launceston where Alex represented NSW in the U18 women’s indoor team at the Nationals. We’re off to Tamworth this weekend where Brittany is in the 2013 Hockey NSW U17 City team, competing in the annual City Vs Country tournament and I’m coaching the U13 Boys City team.

Una plays Masters Hockey for the Parramatta Hockey Association and I have represented NSW for the past six years now and am excited to be representing Australia in the Masters, O45’s, at the Tri Series in Auckland this May. As a family we also coach, at local club, school and state level, umpire and manage teams throughout the year in both field and indoor hockey.”

The Hagerty Family

The Hagerty family have enjoyed a long and continuing association with the College. Brother Paschal Hagerty, as a teacher-trainee, taught Third Form Science at Oakhill in 1953. From 1968 to 1973 he was the Year 11 Boarding Master and Secondary Teacher.

In 1974, Brother Paschal’s nephew, Anthony Hagerty, began at the College in Form 1. Later, Anthony’s brother, John, and sister Margaret were students. Margaret passed away of cancer while she was a student at Oakhill.

Danny Hagerty, their cousin (who is pictured with Brother Paschal and Danny’s son, Kieran, currently in Year 8) started at the College in 1982, beginning in 6th Class and graduating in 1988. After leaving Oakhill Danny commenced a cadetship with building contractor W. McNamara Pty Ltd which involved completing a part-time Bachelor of Building (Construction Economics) degree at UTS, which he completed in 1994. Since then Danny has worked for a number of large construction companies and been involved in many large building and engineering projects (including shopping centres, hotels, airports, bridges, ports and roads in NSW, QLD and overseas.

Danny married Jane in 1995 and they have two children - Kieran and Madelyn. The family spent four years between 2001 and 2005 overseas in Georgia (ex USSR) and Bahrain. Since returning in 2005 Danny has been employed by Boulderstone Pty and is currently the NSW Commercial Manager.

Danny’s mother, Mary and his sister Ann, worked at La Salle House during the 1980s. Brother Paschal currently lives in the Brothers Community at Oakhill College. He has enjoyed popping up to the College to watch Kieran’s basketball home games over the summer season.

Kieran attending Oakhill continues a long association between the Hagerty family and Oakhill started by Brother Paschal Hagerty.

Mick Dover – Class of 1986

Mick writes, “Since leaving school I have been enjoying myself with friends and family. With my wife Peta and children Declan, Molly and Sam (who commenced at Oakhill this year) we have lived in the Hills all this time. As a family we enjoy the snow and water skiing. I love watching the kid’s winter sports: Rugby League, Rugby Union and Netball taking up most of the weekend.

I still keep in touch on a regular basis with quite a few Oakhill ex-students and am excited by being back involved with the school as a parent.

I have been working in The Plumbing Supply Industry for 25 years and loving it.”
Renee Flood – Class of 1995

Renee writes, “After finishing Oakhill in 1995, I studied Banking and Finance at the University of Canberra. I was with Deutsche Bank AG before deciding to travel to the USA in 2001 including being in New York City for September 11. I returned home and gained my dream job as a Day Trader with St George Bank where I met my future husband, who was a Relationship Manager with St George Corporate & Business Banking. I decided to resign from the Banking Industry in 2007 and returned to University to undertake a Law Degree. Our relationship withstood the pressures of Law School as well as The College of Laws and was admitted as a Solicitor in the NSW Supreme Court in February 2012. We were married two months later at the Oakhill Chapel followed by a reception with 100 family and friends at Old Government House, Parramatta Park.

We moved from our family and friends for a new lease on life, and now live in Armidale, rural NSW where I practice as a Solicitor and Gary as a Relationship Manager with CBA’s Rural and Business Banking.”

Renee’s family have a very long association with the College and the De La Salle Brothers. Her father, Brian, attended the College as a boarder from 1960 to 1963 and now resides in Queensland. Her great-great Uncle was Brother Anthony Flood. Brother Anthony was born in Rathangan, Kildare, Ireland on 3rd September 1858. From 1893 until 1908 he was the provincial of the English-Irish district.

More than once he volunteered to go to the new Australian district. Of Brother Anthony, a Canon Coyne of Keady said, ‘I am old and I can truly say that I have never known a man possessing finer qualities of mind and heart’.

Co-incidentally, Brother Anthony was in Armidale from 5 August 1905 until 17th February 1906. During this period he supervised the preparation of the former Patrician Brothers College (now O’Connor Catholic High School) with the help of two French Brothers and then five Irish and seven French Brothers.

Brother Anthony left Armidale 17th February to return to Ireland via South Africa to visit communities there. On 22nd December 1908 he died of typhoid fever in Dublin hospital and is buried at Castletown.

Michael Bugden – Class of 2004

Michael and Anvara were married in the Oakhill College Chapel by Father Geoff Bugden on 2nd February 2013. Michael’s brother Ryan (Class of 2000) and cousin Mark Bugden (Class of 2009) were his groomsmen. Michael and Anvara enjoyed an elegant wedding reception at the Hills Lodge Hotel, Castle Hill.

After finishing at Oakhill, Michael went on to graduate from a Bachelor of Business and Commerce (majoring in Accounting and sub-majoring in Finance, Finance Law and Financial Planning). Whilst at university he held office as the Treasurer and President of the UWS Chapter of the Golden Key International Honour Society. Michael is a Chartered Accountant currently working for a boutique firm in the Sydney CBD and Anvara works for Spotless Services as a Contract Administrator. Michael proposed to Anvara on Valentine’s Day 2012 in front of the Governor Phillip fountain at the Royal Botanical Gardens.

Mark Emanuel – Class of 1975

Mark commenced at Oakhill in 1967 and continued to completion of Year 12 in 1975. During 1975 Mark was Captain of Solomon House.

Mark has been employed in Animal Health Research and Teaching for twenty nine years. For the past twenty three years, he has been employed by the University of Western Sydney as a Professional Officer in the Animal Science and Zoology undergraduate teaching and research program.

Mark writes, “It goes without saying, that seeing my youngest daughter Zoe attending Oakhill in Year 11 and 12 is a very proud moment for me”.

Mark and Zoe Emanuel.
Patrick Houlcroft – Class of 1974

Patrick writes, “I attended Oakhill from 4th Class to what we called 6th form (Year 12). My six brothers also attended Oakhill. My final year, in 1974, was also the final year of boarders at Oakhill, and also then Oakhill had yet to take in girls. There were only 4 house teams; Mutien, La Salle, Benildus and Solomon. Rugby and cricket dominated the sporting activities. And we had odd house team ‘war cries’ that we sang at sporting carnivals. The outdoor pool was in use in my time at Oakhill. About 50% of teachers were Brothers. The strap and cane were still employed as part of ‘performance management’ by some teachers in this period.

Since leaving school I have been in the horticulture industry, and worked and trained for 18 years at Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney. I have qualifications in horticulture, arboriculture, bush regeneration and land care, and am fascinated and enjoy dealing with plants. I now work for City of Sydney (Council) as Parks Contract Coordinator.

I keep in touch with and have great friendships with a good number of my class mates from 40 years ago. I really enjoyed my time at Oakhill, was school vice-captain and was active in all aspects of school life. It makes me happy and proud that our daughter Grace has continued the Houlcroft Oakhill tradition.

Father John Wilcken – Class of 1943

Father John Wilcken is Emeritus Professor of Theology at Jesuit Theological College, Melbourne. For many years he taught in an ecumenical faculty, the United Faculty of Theology, Parkville. His doctoral work was done on the writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Lutheran pastor and theologian executed by the Nazis at the end of World War II. He taught Systematic Theology for forty years, working in a number of areas, especially Ecclesiology and the Theology of the Human Person.

As well as contributing articles to various periodicals, John has published the following books: Religious Life Today (1974), The Priest Today (1976), The Gospel and the Church’s Teaching Role (1977), Jesus Christ: Yesterday and Today (1984), and God in Our World (1992). He has also taught in the area of the relationship between Christian theology and Australian Aboriginal religions. Other special interests have been Liberation Theology, Feminist Theology, and a Theological Approach to Ecology.

John has also been extensively involved in retreat-giving and spiritual direction. An important area of pastoral concern has been work among homeless people, and for many years he was Superior of a Jesuit Community living with homeless, alcoholic and emotionally disturbed men at Greenvale, a suburb on the outskirts of Melbourne. This is Corpus Christi Community, founded in the 1970s by Mother Teresa’s congregation of Sisters, the Missionary Sisters of Charity. John still lives at Corpus Christi, as a Chaplain to the community.

John writes, “I was taught by the De La Salle Brothers, who made a great impact on me. One thing that especially impressed me was that they seemed to enjoy one another’s company: there was a joyful spirit of community there. I found within me the desire to be a De La Salle Brother.

When I finished school, I wanted to join the Brothers, but my parents - wisely, as I now think - were strongly opposed to my doing so at that time. I was, indeed, young (just 16) and immature. So I did an Arts degree at Sydney University, with honours in English literature. Already at school a Brother had introduced me to the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, and further study of Hopkins was part of my university course. I was deeply moved by the spirituality of the poems.

When my four years at the university were finished, I spent a year in the Commonwealth Public Service, mainly in Canberra, as a very junior member of the Prime Minister’s Department. I turned 21 during that year, and resolved that I would apply to join the Jesuits. I had never met a Jesuit at that stage. The first Jesuit I met was Father Austin Kelly, the Provincial. Then there were the interviews with various Jesuit priests. Apparently their verdict was favourable, because I was told I could begin at Watsonia on 1st February the following year, i.e., 1952. So began my life as a Jesuit.”

Ian Woodward – Class of 1989

Ian writes, “This year, my twin sons Johnathon and Nathan started Year 7 at Oakhill. They were excited to start high school, as was I when I started my own Year 7 school year at Oakhill in 1984. After leaving Oakhill, at the end of Year 12, I went to Sydney University where I studied Science and then postgraduate study in Town Planning. While studying at Sydney University, I met Sandra and we married in 1996.

Initially, we both lived and worked around North Sydney, but then moved back to the Hills a few years later. A teaching position soon opened up at Oakhill and Sandra has been a teacher at the College for the past fourteen years. After graduating from University, I started work as a town planner in private industry. I am now the Manager of Town Planning at Bankstown City Council, where I have been for the past thirteen years.

We also have a daughter, Angelina, who is six years old. I have many happy memories of my time at the College, the strong friendships I formed and which still remain today, and the sense of community that existed when I was there. I feel fortunate that, through Sandra’s continued involvement with Oakhill, not only do I still feel a strong connection with the College, but so too does our entire family. I value my time at the College as a student, and Sandra and I are excited and proud to see Johnathon and Nathan now be part of this community.”
Michael & Felicity Pupo – Class of 2003

Michael & Felicity were married on the 21st July 2012 in the College Chapel with a reception to follow at Miramare Gardens at Terrey Hills, then honeymooned in Hawaii.

Michael’s brothers Chris (Class of 2005) and Sam (Class of 1999) and cousin Dominic Nati (Class of 2003) were his groomsmen.

After graduating in Year 10 Michael completed his apprenticeship as a Cabinet Maker and now works as a Tradesman with Karisma Joinery.

Paul Clancy – Class of 2000

Paul writes, “Louise and I were married at Oakhill chapel on the 30 July 2011. The wedding was a blend of my Oakhill traditions and Louise’s family rural roots. The day was shared with family and friends from all over Australia. I was joined by friends Adam Rodwell and Mick Vickers (both class of 2000) and Mathew Tosolini. Louise was helped by friends Lisa Douglas, Isabelle Butler and Kate Clancy. Our flower girl and page boy for the day were our beautiful daughter Charlotte and my godson Riley. Everyone enjoyed a country themed reception at Belgenny Farm Camden afterwards.

Louise and I meet in 2006 during my birthday celebrations at the Castle Hill Tavern. Together we have travelled through Europe, Britain and Ireland, as well as Australia, and honeymooned in Fiji, before settling in the Hawkesbury area.

I’ve been working for the last 6 years for the department of Juvenile Justice at the Cobham Juvenile detention centre. The job provides more than its fair share of challenges dealing with young people awaiting the courts. While Louise is an Early Child Educator at Norwest.

I still keep in contact with many friends from my days at Oakhill, and I also enjoy following the College rugby club on their facebook page.
Manda Webber – Class of 1993

Manda graduated with an Advanced Diploma in Design for Theatre, Events and Live Production from Adelaide College of the Arts in 2012. She has designed set and costumes for several productions in Adelaide including As You Like It, Richard III, Motortown, Little Shop of Horrors, One for the Ugly Girls and Window World. She was also Event Designer for the 2011 Shorts Film Festival.

Manda was Assistant Designer on a recent production of Pornography, directed by Daniel Clarke for the State Theatre Company, and Associate Designer on a remount of The Share, directed by Corey McMahon for Five.point.one at The Seymour Centre in Sydney. For the 2013 Adelaide Fringe Festival, she converted part of an abandoned department store into a theatre space for award winning production, One For The Ugly Girls.

Manda is also a Producer and Production Designer for film and television. Her award winning short film, A Tale of Obsession, has screened at prestigious festivals across Australia, made its international festival debut in London and recently aired nationally on SBS Television. She has been both Production Designer and Costume Designer for several short films and television commercials, and is currently producing a comedy Web TV Series.

Mark Bonnichsen – Class of 2005

Mark writes, “After I left my great home of Oakhill College I started at UNSW studying for a degree of bachelor of Medical Science and Bachelor of Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery over seven years. I really enjoyed my time at university and was well prepared by my time at Oakhill.

In 2008, I won the School of Medical Sciences prize for Pathology. In 2009 I undertook my BMedSc Honours project in Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (smoking related lung disease) and Ashima. I published four peer reviewed journal articles and presented my work at the Thoracic Society of Australia and New Zealand (TSANZ) conference in Brisbane. Most of my undergraduate medical student placements were at St. Vincent's Hospital in Darlinghurst but took me as far as Long Bay Jail (Psychiatry) as well as Kempsey and Coffs Harbour on the NSW north coast.

In 2012, I undertook my elective term at the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio, rated the fourth best hospital in the United States. There I undertook a Sports Orthopaedics placement with the professional sports teams of Cleveland, the Cavaliers (NBA), Indians (MLB) and Browns (NFL). For a basketball tragic it was an unbelievable experience sitting courtside at the NBA home games behind the bench!

I recently graduated last December receiving first class honours for my honours project and MBBS. I am off to Gosford hospital for the next two years to fulfill my commitments with NSW health as a resident medical officer.”

Mark with his family at his graduation in 2012.

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Brother Ken Ormerod

Members of the College community would probably have expected that after spending six years as Principal of Oakhill - and prior to that, eight years as Principal of St Bede’s College in Mentone - that Brother Ken would take a well deserved holiday. In fact on Boxing Day 2012, Brother travelled to South Sudan to work with Brother Bill Firman (previously Principal of De La Salle College, Malvern).

The government of South Sudan has made English the country’s official language. Brothers Ken and Bill, together with members of other religious congregations, are educating young Sudanese teachers in how to teach English. This is truly an example of the Brothers working to assist the poor and disadvantaged.

Brother Oliver O’Leary – a century of service

Brother Oliver served at the College from the late 1930's until 1971, mainly in managing the farm, which was a substantial undertaking in those years. Brother will turn 100 in May this year. Some of his fellow De La Salle Brothers are putting together a book about his life and experiences to mark the occasion.

If you have any anecdotes or information about Brother Oliver from your own time at Oakhill we would be delighted to receive them.

If you are able to assist in this regard, please contact either myself at smolloy@oakhill.nsw.edu.au or Mrs Heather Muirhead on 9634 0810 or email hmuirhead@oakhill.nsw.edu.au

Gift of the Gab

St. Gabriel’s School’s favourite night of the year is on again, the Gift of the Gab – celebrating giving the gift of communication to generations of children with special needs.

featuring

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Paul Wade OAM

The boys from Bondi Rescue

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Camp La Salle

At the beginning of the Christmas holidays, the Lasallian Youth Ministry ran their annual "Camp La Salle" at Summerland Point. Camp La Salle is run for students from the eight Lasallian schools in Sydney and is a fantastic opportunity for young people to socialise with other Lasallians in our district and to develop new skills through a range of fun activities, such as sports and team building activities. Oakhill College sent Nicholas Byrnes of Year 8.

I would like to congratulate Nick on representing the college with a true Lasallian spirit! He really lived out what it means to be Lasallian, getting involved, being enthusiastic even through tough tasks and looking out for his fellow Lasallians.

Jenny Goonan - Lasallian Youth Minister

Maddie Barrow (Class of 2010), Shaun Kavanagh (Class of 2009), Henry Jones (Class of 2010), Nicholas Byrnes, Laura Sutherland (Class of 2011), Jake Giordano (Class of 2012).

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Can you identify the people in this photo?

A prize will be awarded to the person who is the first to correctly name them.
Send entries to Steve Molloy at the College or email drive@oakhill.nsw.edu.au

There were quite a number of correct entries for the competition in volume 25. They included: Chris Franklin (Class of 1964), Marc Brookhouse (Class of 1965), Col Moylan (Class of 1964), Peter Leotta (Class of 1964), Robert Templeton (Class of 1964), Viviane Mylott (Parent) and Brother Benildus.

(NB: College staff are ineligible to enter this competition!)
"Follow the yellow brick road.....follow the yellow brick road" ......and we did...all the way to Parramatta Riverside Theatre...and we were enchanted with a wonderful musical and an 'Oz' filled with Oakhill talent.

Packemin Productions is run by Neil Gooding and his wife, former Oakhill Drama teacher, Katrina Gooding. To remount a classic as famous as "The Wizard of Oz" takes a lot skill and a lot of courage! Embracing the thunderous applause, looking at the packed houses and hearing the delight in children's voices in the audience as they gasped "There's the wicked witch!" and "Look at all the Munchkins" endorsed both the skill, courage and creative talent of the production team.

As the Performing Arts Co-ordinator of the College I was thrilled to see so many past and present students on the "Wizard of Oz" stage. First and foremost was the consummate performance of one of Oakhill's amazing Drama staff - Zoe Tidemann as the Wicked Witch.

Complete with an evil cackle, superb physical skills and an ability to fly! We gave her a standing ovation!

Past students, now professionals, in lead roles - Laura Murphy (Class of 2006) as Dorothy and Luke Joslin (Class of 1997) as the Tin Man were captivating along with our past students in the Ensemble cast - Stephen Charles (Class of 2012), Darcy Green (Class of 2011), Andrew Griscti (Class of 2008) , Ashli Marin (Class of 2010), Emma Mylott (Class of 2012), Carolyn Reed (Class of 2006), Emma Scarlis (Class of 2010), Anthony Severino (Class of 2012) and Brooke Shelley (Class of 2012) plus current students from the school, Ben de Pagter, Ben Anderson and Thomas Ryan!

It is a delight to see past and present students embrace performance, support the arts and continue the tradition of 'telling a story' through music and acting. It is a delight to see that Musical Theatre is alive and well in the Hills! It is a delight to see that the Performing Arts programs in Drama and Music at the College produce such wonderful performers!

Who knows..."Somewhere over the rainbow" government funding for the arts will increase.... in the meantime we congratulate all the performers of this great production who entertained us, told us a story and took us to worlds beyond our own!

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