

VICTORIAN BRANCH

Mary MacKillop College Walk-a-thon

The Assembly at Mary MacKillop College Leongatha, on the 14th September was a truly inspiring occasion. It was the culmination of their walkathon, where the students efforts were affirmed and celebrated and the school leaders proudly presented cheques to charities chosen as this years recipients. On behalf of the Mary MacKillop Foundation, I gratefully received a cheque for \$2000.

The walkathon is Mary MacKillop College's effort to reach out to those in need on a local, national and international level. It is an annual event, held on the feast of Mary MacKillop, where teachers, students, parents and the wider community work in the spirit of Mary MacKillop to make a difference in the lives of many who are poor.

I was inspired by the enthusiasm of the students and of their ability to show genuine concern for others. I came away feeling confident that the work of Mary MacKillop will continue in the lives of these young people.

Sr Anne Porter rsj



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

Book Launch



"A Rich Harvest, St Gertrude's Ladies' College, New Norcia" celebrates a unique piece of the history of the college as seen from the inside. Sr Anne Carter, a Loreto nun and respected historian, and Sr Elizabeth Murphy, a Josephite who taught at the college and subsequently became the National head of the order, have collaborated to write the history of St Gertrude's Ladies' College, established by the Sisters of St Joseph.

This book (history) seeks to give 'voice' to the otherwise invisible and voiceless women in a male dominated Monastic establishment by highlighting:

- the role of the Sisters of St Joseph and the College in the education of girls in rural Western Australia
- the opportunity created by the College for rural girls
- the impact that College life in New Norcia had on the future social and professional lives of the ex students
- the place that ex-students currently hold in contemporary Western Australia

By Sr Anne Carter IBVM and Sr Elizabeth Murphy rsj



Mackillop Foundation News

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FROM THE CHAIR



The Mary MacKillop Foundation Limited held its Annual General Meeting on 9 October. One important item on the agenda was the list of applications for funding of projects. Approval was given to grant a total of \$90,000 to projects – all of which are meeting very basic and human needs. They include assistance to refugees and asylum seekers arriving in Australia who often have been able to bring absolutely nothing with them. One valued type of assistance we give is with their children's assimilation into new schools by providing uniforms, books and nutritious meals.

A very personal ministry of providing support to people with HIV/Aids has been continued. It is very hurtful that people with affliction are often shunned by many in our present society. In the spirit of Mary MacKillop some Sisters are reaching out to communities of people who are in need of our support and love.

In Queensland the Foundation is supporting MacKwood Life to introduce a programme for abused children. This provides creative therapies for them, and assistance and support for their parents and carers.

Ministries providing spiritual direction and nourishment for people in isolated areas are also assisted. We often overlook just how devastated people can become in tough, isolated places when children have left home, the local priest has been withdrawn, and commercial enterprises have abandoned the community. These are our brothers and sisters who need our support, and the Sisters of St Joseph have several rural ministries. These provide time and place for reflection, and opportunities to meet people with similar values and predicaments.

On behalf of the Sisters of St Joseph and everyone engaged in promoting the values of Mary MacKillop, I thank you for your support. Without your thoughtfulness and generosity we could not help those in most need. Our calendars and our shops remind us that the feast of the Birth of Christ is now quite near. The directors of the Foundation wish you a very happy time at Christmas.



THE BILL AND PATRICIA RITCHIE FAMILY FOUNDATION

Greg Spice (a third-year Aboriginal medical student supported through the Mary MacKillop Foundation) spent four weeks this year in the Kimberley region in the far north of Western Australia. Following is a report of his work with the Derby Aboriginal Health Service (DAHS) and its Broome-based umbrella organisation the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service (KAMS):

I spent some of my youth in the Kimberley, and although it is not my country (I am from the south of WA but am very proud that my dad helped to build the Gibb River Road which is vital to the northern cattle industry). With the agreement of my medical school and KAMS I returned to spend my obligatory rural medical experience time at DAHS. I was really impressed with the provision of health services by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people in Western Australia. Controlled and staffed by Aboriginal people with some non-Aboriginal support, DAHS has been operating since 1998. As well as providing curative clinic-based treatment to our people, it emphasises all kinds of preventative and public health programs. The proactive nature of the service is reflected in improving health indicators.

I was privileged to help conduct clinics in some of the remote communities that are accessible by road or by the Royal Flying Doctor Service. South of Broome is Bidyadanga, a large community with no permanent doctor and currently dependent on weekly visits from KAMS. Jarlmadangah Buru, where Aboriginal people in their own country run a well-organised and dignified community, is set in a range of hills north-east of Derby.

The clinic is run by a community elder, and physical and mental health indicators are extremely good. Going with the Flying Doctor Service to Dodnum, I met one of the elders, Maisie, a wonderful carer whom I think of most days: you can see thousands of years of our story in her eyes.

Memories of my youth in the Kimberley have remained with me, and my recent medical experience there has now affirmed my motivation to return to live and work with our people when I graduate from medical school.

Greg Spice

YOU CAN ALSO DONATE THROUGH OUR WEBSITE: www.mackillopfoundation.org.au

Here is my gift of: \$250 \$100 \$50 \$25 Other \$ _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

I have a particular concern for:

- People in Rural and Isolated Areas People with Mental Illness or Disabilities People without a Country
 Partnerships with Aboriginal Australians People in Times of Distress Other Josephite works

I wish to pay by:

- Cheque payable to The Mary MacKillop Foundation
 Visa Mastercard Bankcard Credit Card No. _____

Cardholder Name: _____ Signature: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name: _____ Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

I would like to:

- Become a Friend of the Foundation
 Make a Bequest (Information Booklet will be sent)



Donations of \$2 or more to The Mary MacKillop Foundation are tax deductible within Australia

www.mackillopfoundation.org.au

WORKS OF THE FOUNDATION *Examples of projects funded in 2005*

Reclaiming Kurna Funeral Protocols



Funerals sadly, are the events that bring Kurna people together more often than any other occasion. They are thus a key opportunity for linguistic and cultural renewal and survival.

Kurna Warra Pintyandi has produced a booklet of funeral protocols titled 'Kurna Palti Wonga' with accompanying CD and a series of six sympathy cards. Written in the Kurna language, the resources are being distributed throughout the Kurna community and placed in public libraries and Aboriginal organizations such as Tauondi College.

The project was launched at the Living Kurna Cultural Centre, Warriparinga, SA. Nelson Kartammeru Varcoe, an Indigenous man and Lutheran community care worker, is one of the main forces behind the project. From time to time, he conducts funerals, counsels grieving relatives and visits Aboriginal patients in hospital. "To be able to bring language and culture back to the community is a very wonderful and powerful thing," he said.

Launching the book, Ngarpadla Alitya Wallara Rigney said, "burial ceremonies are just so important and significant... now we have choices." Georgina Yambo Williams spoke of the spiritual significance of Warriparinga for grieving in terms of 'coming home'. The launch concluded with hymns sung by a small choir, accompanied by the beautiful guitar of Nelson Varcoe.

The project will enable Kurna people to conduct a funeral in their own language. It supports and strengthens the leadership of Ngarpadla Alitja Rigney and Lewis Kartammeru O'Brien of the Kurna language movement through Kurna Warra Pintyandi. We are grateful to the Mary MacKillop Foundation for its support. 'Ngaityo yakkanandalya!' is how the Kurna people express notions of thanks (when addressed to females).

Dr Rob Amery

Kurna Warra Pintyandi Committee.

School Assistance for Refugee Children

"Love Your Neighbour as Yourself" is the aptly-named project conducted by St Peter Chanel School in Deer Park, Melbourne, Victoria. It provided for the needs of recently arrived refugee children and for students living in emergency accommodation. The children were aged from 5 to 12. The grant provided them with school uniforms and shoes and access to school programs such as excursions, camps and swimming activities.

The Mary MacKillop Foundation grant allowed families to accept help from the school in a very gracious and dignified way. It also empowered the parents by knowing that the school was being supported. The delight in the children's faces as each new event unfolded, as each item of clothing became their own, revealed the hope they had in a new future.

"Love Your Neighbour as Yourself" has enabled the parents of refugee children to concentrate on setting up a home and meeting the daily needs of their families. The funding has taken a burden off our resources.

Thank you on behalf of St Peter Chanel School Community.

Anne Garvey, - Principal



Resource Centre for Nimmitabel

St Andrew's Faith Community has established a Mary MacKillop Resource Centre in Nimmitabel, a NSW rural community. The aim of the project is to provide access for all in the community to information and inspiration in the vital area of faith development. We believe strongly in the statement: "It is union with the Lord that will gradually transform us and our world". (Article 14, Constitutions Sisters of St Joseph).

With the nearest resource centre based in Canberra, the Nimmitabel Centre was established to overcome isolation in all its many forms. There is a need for spiritual nourishment across all denominations and the Centre encourages the sharing of faith and family life.

The Centre is based in the old St Joseph's Catholic School and provides a venue to gather for faith education and prayer as well as a warm place to read or view resources. The Centre is used regularly by our trained volunteers who teach Religious Education in our State School and by members of the Nimmitabel Community involved in faith education. The Centre is also available for those who simply come for a 'cuppa' and a chat – especially parents who borrow family or children's resources such as books, videos, CDs and journals. Technology is available to access the resources.

The Resource Centre was opened and blessed by our two ministers of religion: Fr Peter Gannon and Rev. Jenni Roberts. The Community participated in the prayer and ceremony followed by the country hospitality of a 'cuppa'.

We are most grateful for the Mary MacKillop Foundation grant. Without it our Resource Centre would not have been possible.

St Andrew's Faith Community, Nimmitabel.

Westnet Video Project

Due to the grant received from the Mary MacKillop Foundation, small communities in the Central and Eastern Wheatbelt of WA were once again able to enjoy stimulating adult faith programmes on the Synoptic Gospels in 2006.

Many small groups gathered in the telecentres in their respective towns while others discovered they could enjoy the input by tuning their satellite boxes to channel 23. We even had callers from the eastern states this year!

Fr Brian Limbourn, a member of the St Charles Seminary staff, accepted to lead the three one-hour sessions and we called the series "The One-Eyed Gospels". Prior to the final programme, Fr Brian visited several of the rural centres and met with the viewers.

In the discussions that followed, it was clear a good rapport had been established and this was affirmed in the final session.

Some of the telecentres tape the programme for the groups and use them at a later date to do further work on the material.

To satisfy those who like to know if the project was successful we contacted the centres to ask for comment about the helpfulness or otherwise of the method and matter of the programmes over these two years.

The results affirmed the initiative and our hope is to run this type of programme for at least another year with the funds we made at a fete held earlier in 2006.

Please be assured that those who have taken part have appreciated the involvement.

**Sr Leonie Mayne
MacKillop Rural Network WA**

ROCKING HORSE COMMITTEE

The Rocking Horse Committee of the Mary MacKillop Foundation recently hosted its 9th Race Day Luncheon continuing its four years of fundraising and support for St Anthony's Special Pre-School at Croydon, NSW. Committee President, Shirley Hay hosted the event at Royal Randwick and Tim Webster, the Guest of Honour, ensured that a wonderful day was had by all, despite less than perfect weather and track conditions.

St Anthony's cares for children with physical and intellectual disabilities and the support from fundraising efforts such as the Race Day provides some relief

from the effects of the physical and emotional distress faced by the families who attend the school and the staff who are challenged by limited resources.

On a sad note, Committee Member Lyn Bova passed away on 14 October. Lyn joined the Sr Anne Bryne rsj Memorial Committee when it was formed in 1998 and was elected the Treasurer, a role she held until 2005. Lyn was a friend of Sr Anne and worked for many years on the St Margaret's Hospital Social Committee working tirelessly at many functions. The Rocking Horse Committee has lost a dedicated member.

