St Bede’s College 75th Anniversary Dinner & Old Collegians’ Roll of Honour Dinner 8th May 2013 at The Beaumaris

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Roll of Honour Inductees 2013

Father Adrian Martin

The Australian population has just passed 23,000,000, leading to an explosion of new suburbs on the outskirts of our cities. But no sooner do these suburbs spring up than new parishes emerge, centred on a new church and presbytery, and a new school. Government funding and centralised administration of the Catholic Church has taken much of the pressure off our outer suburban pioneers.

Catholics in the outer suburbs, like Mentone, were different in a number of ways in the 1930s. They were poorer for a start, but they were generous with what little they had in building the Irish, Roman Catholic edifice. They also expected strong leadership from their Parish Priests, and in Father Martin they had a leader to be admired.

Father Adrian Martin became Parish Priest of Mentone in 1928, full of enthusiasm to serve the people of a parish which extended beyond Mentone to Beaumaris, Moorabbin, Heatherton, Keysborough and Aspendale. One of the obvious needs in the area was a boys’ secondary school. Influential parishioners were keen to see one established, and Martin was automatically looked to as the man who could make it happen. He added a boys’ secondary school to his list of things that must be done.

By the mid 1930s, the post Depression economy had improved enough for Father Martin to resume the search for a suitable site for a school, and for teachers to run it. It was unimaginable then, that a school could be established, on a permanent basis, other than by a religious order. Their religious dimension was considered essential. But they were also cheap!

Jesuits and Christian Brothers were possibilities to run the school, but it was the De La Salle Brothers from Malvern who offered the best prospects for Mentone.

Br Jerome Foley, Headmaster at De La Salle, realised that his growing number of boarders required better facilities than Malvern could provide. He had discussed the matter with the Provincial, Brother Benignus, before the approach came from Father Martin. The fact that the former McCristal property, then occupied by Mentone Girls Grammar, became available, was a fortunate coincidence.

This energetic, progressive and eloquent priest was a major catalyst in bringing people together to establish St Bede’s and he remained interested in its development for the rest of his years. It is a reflection of the respect in which he was held that his eloquence and influence were once again called upon in 1963. Brother Colman, Principal at the time, had determined that there was a need for a new senior school building. The fund raising campaign was launched in the Moorabbin Town Hall and it seemed obvious to Colman that Father Martin should be invited as one of the keynote speakers.

He was pleased to give his services to the continued expansion of the College that he had done so much to establish.

It is right and fitting that Father Adrian Martin should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.

Father John Walshe, Parish Priest of Mentone, will speak in place of Father Martin.
Brother Benignus White

Amongst his varied tasks as Provincial of the De La Sale Brothers in 1937, Brother Benignus was supervising the completion of the Brothers Training College at Castle Hill, and opening Oakhill College, while thinking about how best to satisfy the requests of Father Martin and the Mentone parish. He was the sort of man who thought that if you needed a tough job done, you should do it yourself. So he moved to Mentone with a hand-picked staff, and an eye to exam results. His emphasis on scholarship led him to choose the English scholar/saint, Bede, as the patron of the school.

Many of you will be familiar with Kevin McCloud who presents the very popular ABC programme, Grand Design, in which he follows a build from planning stage to fulfilment, with all of the usual tensions and delays that occur. I can imagine McCloud chatting with Benignus in late 1937:

“So Brother, you’ve got this interesting Land Boomer house, (what is it 1880s?) a fair stretch of land and a magnificent view of the Bay. What are you going to do with it? … Four new classrooms, a new chapel and playgrounds, all painted and furnished, and the tower house refurbished by February? Good Lord!”

Benignus promises that the build will indeed be completed for the new school year. McCloud has his doubts. Benignus has none, for he has an army of obedient men at his command. All of the Brothers from Richmond and Malvern joined the Mentone community for a working holiday.

Benignus’s batteries seemed never to run down, and he expected his men to show the same energy. The Brothers worked until midnight, answered the rising bell at 5:30 am and struggled to stay awake through an hour of silent meditation each morning, before Mass.

Boarders, who arrived early were soon working shoulder to shoulder with the Brothers in the race to beat the deadline. Mornings came, and evenings, day after day, until the work of creation was done. And Benignus declared it to be satisfactory. One classroom he gave over to Grades 1 to 4 combined, and another to Grades 5 and 6. Forms 1 and 2 would be taught in one room, as would Forms 3 and 4 in another. The 7 Leaving Certificate pupils occupied a room in the McCristal building which also housed the boarders.

The tragic death of Leo Boswell, drowned on the day before the College opened, overshadowed an opening which might have been celebrated as a triumph. Nonetheless, the College was up and running, and improvements to facilities continued under Benignus’s direction until he left towards the end of the year, leaving Brother Simon Staunton in charge.

There is one other important connection that Benignus had with St Bede’s. In 1935, young Bill Allman escorted Benignus to his car outside the De La Salle school in Summer St, Orange, and it was agreed that Bill would join the Brothers the next year. Bill Allman is, of course, Brother Finian.

Benignus completed his term as Provincial before returning to work, in his usual own dynamic way, in Ireland and England.

It is right and fitting that Father Brother Benignus should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.

Brother Garry, Principal of St Bede’s, will speak in place of Brother Benignus.
Louise Vaughan

One of the great strengths of St Bede’s has always been to value the work done by ancillary staff in work of the College. It is in this spirit that Louise Vaughan is inducted into the Roll of Honour.

The first St Bede’s tuck shop was run by Miss Slattery in a green shed under the pine trees, in the area which is now the junior school yard. That tiny building almost burst at the seams at every feeding time. There was no staff supervision, and the Grade 3s, who were closest to the shed, hoped against hope to be served before taller, wider, stronger students arrived to muscle them aside.

Jack Clements took over a slightly larger tuck shop in an annexe at the rear of the McCristal tower building. No doubt the food sold was of the highest nutritional value, but that didn’t stop mischievous boys from inventing the catch cry: ‘Eat a Jack Clements pie, and die!’ Louise Vaughan was Jack’s sister, and was therefore aunt to the late John Clements who was a highly respected member of the St Bede’s staff.

If Louise was still with us, she would have been 100 years old in March of this year. However, she died in 2000, but not before packing a genuine hundred years worth of experience into eighty seven.

Born in Wangaratta, she went to work in Hattam’s Clothing and Drapery stores, which will remind some of you of money and receipts whizzing through the air on cables, or zapping in cartridges suction tunnels, to a centrally placed cashier.

In eight short years, Louise rose from sales assistant, to store manager, to regional business manager. Who knows what she might have achieved in this day and age! In those days, she met and married John Vaughan in 1938, gave up work as a good woman did, and moved to 17 Levanto Street, Mentone. Eight children later, she took over the tuck shop from her brother Jack in 1958.

In 1960, two years after starting at St Bede’s, her husband died leaving Louise with five children still at school. She would remain at St Bede’s for twenty two years, by which time there was a grand new tuck shop built under the lecture theatre. There were no Grade 3s in the school any more, but lower forms and senior forms were now separated, staff members were appointed to keep order, and Brother Phillip ghosted through the premises to see that all was well.

Louise was the second of a line of worthy tuck shop ladies which includes Lena Fergus, Norma Hand, Ginny Kariotis and Iris Gleeson.

Louise bought her first car, a VW Beetle in 1979 and pottered around in that after her retirement. She tried golf just once, had a hole and one, and presumably thought that the game was too easy. Open heart surgery didn’t stop her from travelling through the UK and Europe in 1994 and 1995. Louise didn't want to slow down, even when family members insisted that it was time to stop driving. Her car keys were finally confiscated. The spare keys had to be confiscated a week later!

She died in 2000 and was buried from St Patrick’s parish, to which also she had contributed a great deal in her lifetime.

**It is right and fitting that Louise Vaughan should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.**

Tony Vaughan will speak in place of his mother.
Brother Hilary Walsh

Brother Hilary first passed through the St Bede’s gates in 1942 whereupon he was allotted a small personal space in the boarders’ quarters. At the end of the following year, he entered the Juniorate, which was situated in the grand De La Salle Training College that Benignus had built.

In 1964, after teaching in Cronulla, NSW, and Scarborough, Qld, Hilary returned to his old College, where some things had changed, and some things were much the same as they had been about twenty years earlier. The Finian building had been completed and the Brothers lived above where the office is now. The senior school building was under construction on the old tennis courts, but the boarders still lived in conditions which were much the same as they had been in the first years of the College.

In his first spell of eight years on the staff at St Bede’s, Brother Hilary gave his all. Indeed, he set very high standards for himself and worked harder than the most of us. If there was an extra job to be done around the school, Hil was the first to volunteer, and he was not one to delegate jobs in his own areas of responsibility. As a result, he could be carrying out the responsibilities of a class room teacher, boarding master, sports master and even middle school principal all at the one time. And tossing in a 4:00 am trip to the markets, once a week or so, to pick up food for the Boarders at cost price.

Prior to the 1960s, communication was primitive. If a message had to be conveyed to students, it was generally by means of a hand written piece of paper which was carried from class to class, usually by a responsible boy who had done his homework! Due to incredible advances in technology, however, Sports master Hilary was able to stand in on spot every Wednesday, bring all lessons to an end and solemnly announce the same information which was pinned to the sports notice board, regarding afternoon sport. There are still some staff members who can give a plausible imitation of those announcements but, in Hilary’s defence, there has never been a Golden Age of intercom announcements.

Brother Hilary returned to the St Bede’s community on two further occasions: 1994 and 2006 to 2009.

Apart from St Bede’s, he has been a valued member of staff in a variety of schools in Australia and New Zealand. He has worked on Aboriginal missions and missions in Papua New Guinea and India. From 1971 to 1988 and again from 2000 to 2005, he was Mission Secretary for Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea and he taught in the De la Salle Novitiate in 2005

It is right and fitting that Brother Hilary Walsh should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.

Jim Murphy

I remember Jim taking a mark above the likes of future AFL premiership players, Peter Russo and Michael McCarthy, at a 1970s, Year 12 camp at Mount Eliza. But it wasn’t the towering nature of the tall man’s grab that sticks with me, nor the strength of it. It was a dignified mark and the spontaneous applause of the students was met with similar dignity.

Jim, who never drove a car, walked to and from Mentone station every day, with dignity. He dressed with dignity, wearing a suit and tie long after op-shop casual had become
the teachers’ vogue. He gave lectures with dignity, sometimes with the grand arm and hand gestures of a man born to the stage.

Indeed, his contribution to theatre at St Bede’s is legendary. Year after year, he produced and directed plays like Oedipus Rex, Murder in the Cathedral, Richard II and Hamlet. It was universally agreed that these productions were of the very highest quality, consistently broadening the experience of, and appreciation for, cultural life at the College.

And Jim was loyal. When fashion dictated that trouser cuffs must be reduced to stovepipe measurements, the directive went out that St Bede’s trousers could not be less than a certain measurement. Jim rarely agreed with regulations such as these, but he loyally did his best to enforce them. In the cuff case, he fell to his knees regularly in the middle school yard, ruler in hand, to verify the legal standing a student’s trousers. An undignified pose for a dignified man.

In the early 60s, Jim was secretary of the Catholic Lay Teachers Guild in Victoria. As the proportion of lay teachers in Catholic schools increased, matters of lay staff salary and conditions were of serious concern in all Catholic schools, though there was a strong conservative view that lay teachers should simply accept the ascetic, religious-life ethos which had held Catholic schools together for more than a century. A particularly stormy general meeting of the Catholic Lay Teachers Guild in 1966 saw a good deal of vitriol directed at secretary Murphy in particular. I suspect that he received the abuse with his usual external dignity, though the way he described the event later indicated that it was an unsettling experience.

The lay staff at St Bede’s were more fortunate than others, for the Brothers were quicker to respond to a changing world than were other religious orders. Nevertheless, tensions emerged as decisions continued to be made at the Brothers’ weekly Sunday Conference, and then handed down to the rest of the staff. Jim’s thoughtful, patient and constructive contributions to deliberations over a number of years, went a long way to redefining the role of lay staff in Catholic schools.

One Friday, early in 1973, Jim Murphy, Larry McEvoy, Tom Perfect and Yours Truly repaired to the Edgewater. It was there that we celebrated what has since been referred to as Tom’s buck’s night. The conversation on that evening was of such a high calibre that those four members of staff repeated the meeting every Friday night for a long time afterwards. It has to be said that, even after a couple of hours of vigorous conversation at the Edgewater, Jim always walked to Mentone station with great dignity.

Jim was grand company, a gentleman, a fine teacher, and a loyal, thoughtful and challenging contributor to education at the College.

It is right and fitting that Mr James Murphy should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.

Paul Murphy will speak in place of his father.

Brother Peter McIntosh

Brother Peter descended upon us from Sydney in 1967 at a time when the role and status of lay teachers in the school needed to be clarified. Brother Peter was already receptive to change, and was even ahead of the game. The Wyndham Scheme, the 1960s version of the Last Word in Educational Reform, had caused a shake-up at De La Salle Ashfield where Peter had been principal. Perhaps more significantly, the General Chapter of the Brothers in 1967, following Vatican II, stressed the need for renewal in the religious life and called for
Staff were pleasantly surprised by Peter’s new broom approach. He quickly set out to improve pay scales and conditions, though this was complicated by the fact that a large number of staff were underqualified, even though they were strong and effective teachers.

The chattering classes in the lunch room were also delighted that Brother Peter took a keen interest in educational reform. Out went the three term year and in came the semester. In came lectures and tutorials in the senior school. In came greater flexibility in the time table though, in the absence of computers, time tables were worked out by a primitive, though ingenious, system of cards and knitting needles. Report books were out and report sheets were in, while a whole range of new subjects was in at most levels.

Students revelled in new freedoms. Hair lengthened, and even Murph, the Cuff Policeman, sported greying locks down to his shoulders. But he wore them with dignity! Parents complained about a lack of discipline and old boys complained about a lack of emphasis on sport. Undaunted, Brother Peter dismissed doubts with a characteristic wave of his hand.

Kevin McCloud, architecture critic, might have commented on Brother Peter’s most lasting legacy in this way:

“So Brother Peter … you’ve knocked down all of the buildings that Brother Benignus put up, and the tower house as well. (There were tears shed over that, I’m sure) Now let’s see … a new library, lecture theatre and tuck shop, a hall in the place of the tower house, science blocks, a chapel, boarders’ dining room, kitchen and laundry, and a rather comfortable Brothers’ house where they can live out their vow of poverty. You’ve been busy haven’t you? And look at all of these walkways. Good Lord! How many bricks did you use … a million? It was very ambitious. But, you know, I think you got it right, and your build has set the tone of the place for quite a long time.”

Indeed Brother Peter did get it right. He made a huge difference to the school, and won many admirers in doing so.

**It is right and fitting that Brother Peter McIntosh should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.**

Jan Kellas

Once upon a time, in a land that is very hard to imagine these days, Brother Finian ran the College, virtually by himself, from an office that was, reputedly, not especially tidy.

Jan Kellas has lived through various stages of untidiness at St Bede’s, though none of her own making. There must have been a sense of “Here we go again!” as headmasters revealed still more plans for extension or renovation of the administration space. It was probably exciting the first time!
And Jan has had to adapt from Pittman’s Shorthand and Olivetti typewriters to computers with more capacity than necessary; and from spirit duplicators and Gestetner wax sheets to multifunction printer, scanner, copier and fax machines.

Jan has seen all of that.

She has also seen people come and go. Marvellous contributors to the College like: Ina Cuffley, Serena Harrison, Judy Hayes, Karen Stuart, Kelly Allen and more ... Oh! And Tom Velten and his mates too!

In putting together the morning briefing sheets, Jan has saved us from the intercom. She has also lifted us up with countless prayers and thoughts for the day. She has recorded the fortunes of more sporting teams that she would care to remember, and reminded staff or students of meeting after meeting. Yearly calendars, mass booklets and the like were her domain, so that, in a real sense, she was the axle around which the wheels of the College kept turning.

Jan has trained up five headmasters. In her role as personal secretary to the headmaster, she has been privy to a great deal of correspondence between the College, various authorities, external bodies and parents. And we haven’t heard a word of it. In a world which loves gossip, Jan has been a model of discretion, and we shouldn’t take that for granted.

Jan’s love for cats is legendary. She loves them in the live form, but also in statuettes, fluffy toys and on greeting cards. On the other hand, she has a soft spot for birds. I know not how or when it began, but students came to know that if they found an injured bird in the school grounds, they should take it to the lady in the office where she would treat it with the same gentle care that she used in training up five headmasters to do their job properly.

Jan has been a model of patience, adaptability, discretion, kindness, and a fine team worker.

It is therefore right and fitting that Jan Kellas should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.

Brother Michael McCabe will speak in place of Jan.

Brother William Firman

Unfortunately, Brother Bill’s reconstructed hip prevents him from being with us tonight and, since he will not be able to reply in person, I feel I should tone down the force and number of my quotations. For Bill ushered in the era of the quotation at St Bede’s.

His love affair with the quotation began when studying English by correspondence at New England University. His essays quoted the Shakespearean expert A.C. Bradley much more often than they quoted the Bard himself. Since his results were excellent, Bill thought he was onto a good thing.

He may have thought otherwise if he had read the words of Aristotle who said:

“It is unbecoming for young men to utter maxims.”

Having been reared in a strongly entrepreneurial family, there is little doubt that Bill could have become a successful businessman. Nevertheless, he gave up that possibility and joined the religious life, thus sharing the aspirations of Marilyn Monroe who said:

“I don’t want to make money, I just want to be wonderful.”
Bill came to us after teaching at Ashfield and Malvern, and his arrival may have reminded some of the words of Mae West:

“A man can be short and dumpy and getting bald but if he has fire, women will like him.”

Of course, Bill did have fire, like a blacksmith’s forge, and we all liked him from the start.

At age 31, he took over a school of 1200 students and 100 staff, and though much had been set right during Peter’s regime, the goal posts were still changing. Further action was required and in this, Bill shared the sentiments of George W Bush who said:

“When I take action, I’m not going to fire a $2 million missile at a $10 empty tent and hit a camel in the butt. It’s going to be decisive.”

Bill was certainly decisive.

The administrative structure was dramatically changed. Three parts of the school became two, with co-ordinators at each year level. Deputy head, vice-principals, senior masters, and faculty heads were appointed, with salary scales to suit. In a much appreciated gesture, long service leave was granted to stalwarts of the college, though they had no legal entitlement to it. Staff were briefed every morning. Staff and student handbooks were written, along with a yearly calendar.

And then there were staff meetings at all levels. Indeed some staff members who complained that they had not had enough say in the running of the school, now complained that there were too many meetings. As to Bill’s methods of running a meeting, he understood the spirit of Seymour Cray’s statement:

"If you were plowing a field, which would you rather use? Two strong oxen or 1024 chickens?"

The chickens were always listened to, but Bill preferred meetings which produced predictable results. As a consequence, his regime was one of clear direction and efficient communication.

Kevin McCloud’s was impressed by Brother Bill’s building programme

“What I do like, Brother, is that you’ve kept the feel of Brother Peter’s build: the red brick, the slate roofing … that sort of thing. You’ve achieved a lot haven’t you: Creative Arts Block, extensions to the senior building, sports pavilion, and the boarding facilities especially are magnificent … you have a soft spot for the Boarders, don’t you? … junior school building with maintenance shed, and all of that bluestone work around the oval. Good Lord! Where did the money come from? What’s that? Ask Tom Velten?”

Bill had a great memory for names, and remained calm, cheerful and available to all, applying common sense to everyday problems.

After leaving St Bede’s, Bill became an energetic provincial of the Brothers and later principal of Boys’ Town and Malvern, followed by his present volunteer work in the Sudan. He has achieved so much already but, despite recent setbacks, he shares the forward looking view of Elizabeth Taylor who said:

“When people say, 'She's got everything', I've got one answer - I haven't had tomorrow yet.”

Bill is looking forward to that tomorrow when he can return to the Sudan.

It is right and fitting that Brother William Firman should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.

Brother Michael McCabe will speak in place of Brother Bill.
Mr Larry McEvoy

Before coming to St Bede’s, Larry McEvoy had trained for the religious life as a Marist brother, and spent the years from 1950 to 1955 in schools in Broken Hill, Glenelg and Griffith. Two further years were spent at Power Coaching College before he came to St Bede’s in 1958.

Larry began at St Bede’s in an era when salary scales were not as generous as they are now. For much of his teaching career, he had to supplement his income with after-school and holiday jobs. He worked at the Moorabbin pub where he got to know a few of the local police, whose skills rubbed off on him, or was it vice versa. Discipline was never a problem in his classes, though it was for the novice John Rhoden in his first year at St Bede’s. Larry was always on hand with advice, and sometimes he might have to enter JR’s room to glare at the boys. Nothing much said. The glare was usually enough.

Macca was sometimes referred to as the crumpled crime fighter, a reference to a popular detective series on TV around 1980. Indeed one of the factors which led to his achieving legendary status was his unequalled ability to discover the whereabouts of stray calculators and sums of money, or to be at Mentone station on the very afternoon that a physical contretemps was about to occur.

His experiences at the Moorabbin pub were the source of what many of categorised as pub yarns. Stories of Melbourne’s underworld figures; information from the jockey on why the favourite was never going to win; and his own heroic deeds in leaping the bar to prevent patrons from doing damage to one another. Many a time we could have interrupted with the old cry; “Stop me if you’ve heard this one,” but half the fun was to listen for minor variations to the story. Another part of the folklore of St Bede’s was the escapades of the famous comedy duo, Larry and Derek, as in Derek Counsel. These included the unfulfilled Counsel scheme to paint flagpoles on the top of city buildings during the Christmas holidays.

Larry was a fine football coach and strong teacher. There is a photograph, in Leo Gamble’s history, of Larry in charge of 4C in 1961. Larry was seen as the obvious man to take charge of the more difficult classes, and he did so effectively. Always up for an argument, Larry particularly enjoyed teaching senior Politics with Tom Perfect. His real strength as a teacher derived from strong people skills. He rose to the rank of Deputy Headmaster because he was calm, cheerful, diplomatic and just, and he was a good link man between Brothers and lay staff.

He conducted morning briefings with an easy authority that helped settle many staff members into the routine of the day. One morning briefing, which some here this evening will recall, was that on his 64th birthday when the staff interrupted him with a lively version of When I'm 64. It was sung with a warmth that reflected the genuine staff camaraderie at St Bede’s, to which he had contributed a great deal.

It is right and fitting that Mr Larry McEvoy should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.
Larry McEvoy Junior will speak in place of his father.

Br Quentin

Henry O’Halloran was given the name Quentin when he joined the De La Salle Brothers. He is not named after a jail in California, but after a third century martyr from Gaul
who refused to give up his faith under torture, and so was decapitated and his head thrown into the marshes of the Somme near Amiens. So the head was lost, but was miraculously found some years later. It was lost again, but once more it was miraculously found. Someone must have known something, for Brother Quentin has twice been lost to St Bede’s, but twice has been returned to us.

Brothers Quentin and Owen arrived at St Bede’s in 1955, the first teaching appointment for both of them. BQ taught at all levels from 7 – 12, while studying Arts and Education at Melbourne University at night.

One of the truisms passed on to students training to be teachers, and one of the most frequently ignored, is that a quiet teacher will have a quiet class, and a noisy teacher will have a noisy class. Brother Quentin had his students leaning forward in their seats, straining to hear, from Day One. Boys being boys, they would quickly have given up if the whisperer had not had something useful to say. But he did then, and he still has. In those early years, BQ showed all of the qualities of an excellent classroom teacher who understood his subject matter, but who was also keenly interested in the welfare of his students.

As Boarding Master from 1959 to 1963, Quentin experienced at first hand the higgledy-piggledy nature of the buildings and facilities in that phase of St Bede’s history, though by 1966, the senior school building had been completed to cope with ever increasing numbers.

When Brother Quentin returned to St Bede’s in 1989, he was a man of considerable experience. He had been Director of the Cronulla community, spent a year overseas, been Principal at Bankstown, and then Provincial of the Brothers from 1974 – 1980. Following that, he was principal at both Bankstown and Oakhill before returning to St Bede’s as Principal in 1989.

I can imagine Brother Bill sending BQ a letter of congratulations on his new posting, and including the words of Heraclitus in the 5th century BC ...

No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it’s not the same river and he’s not the same man.

The physical nature of the River of St Bede had obviously changed, and so had incidentals like retention rates and expectations of what a school should provide. And the man who was a gifted classroom teacher had returned in the form of an administrator. It is an intriguing feature of education that the very best teachers are often plucked from the classroom and given ‘superior’ roles. It has been Brother Quentin’s desire, even though headmaster, to take one or two classes of English or RE, and perhaps that says something about his personal priorities.

Wisdom and gentleness were the characteristics of BQ time as principal of St Bede’s. He was a living example of the image he constantly held up to the students: “Be your own man!”

And he was principal during the YOA years, which required a sense of humour. BQ was happy to play himself, or the YOA team’s version of him, in various riotous televised revues of the academic year. (In fact, he was even happy to allow Matthew Klock to take over as headmaster in one production.)

Brother Quentin completed his time at St Bede’s in 1998, whereupon he became Director of the Brothers’ community at Malvern, though once again he involved himself regularly in the classroom. In 2007, he was deservedly awarded the Order of Australia Medal for his services to education.

Having returned to St Bede’s once more, BQ now has an office in the Library where he is always available for boys who need extra tuition.

St Quentin of Amiens is the patron of bombardiers, chaplains, locksmiths, porters, tailors, and surgeons and is invoked against coughs, sneezes, and dropsy. But Brother Quentin of Mentone is a truly worthy role model for classroom teachers and administrators.
It is right and fitting that Brother Quentin O’Halloran should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.

Mr John Rhoden

John Rhoden was a student at St Bede’s from 1946 – 1956. He represented the college in cricket and football, but his greatest disappointment was in boxing. By his own account of a Year 7 elimination bout against the formidable Greg Burley, he was ahead on points when his knee gave way and he fell to the canvas. A dislocated patella ruined his chances of ever becoming a contender, denied the Navy Blues another Soapy Vallence and restricted his cricketing career to legend status in the Federal League. To this day, he is the only person I have seen who has demanded a runner in back yard cricket.

In his final year at school, John was appointed School Captain and was equal Dux. His take on the school captaincy was that the Brothers were looking for a nice boy who would do what he was told. As it happened, however, they got John!

And then came the Gap Years where John studied Science at Melbourne University, but after four years of that, he decided that he was missing St Bede’s too much, so he asked Br Colman for a job.

With the help of Larry McEvoy in particular, he survived a traumatic first year and went on to become a methodical and inspiring teacher of Physics, Chemistry and Mathematics. He was particularly methodical in keeping past exam papers on wax sheets, which was a special skill in itself. Leo Gamble couldn’t be bothered with all that, so he just kept one Economics paper, and changed the answers every year!

John was also a well organised and inspiring coach of football and cricket teams. The presence of his champion Under 14 team tonight indicates that developing team spirit was one of his strengths. He coached so many winning ACC cricket teams that he wondered how he was ever going to get out of the job.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, John was one of the ringleaders of the Christian Living Camps. Such camps might begin with seeming inanities like: Hello! I’m John and I’m a jelly bean … but the programme gently moved on to have a profound effect on the lives of many young people, and they resulted in lifelong friendships with and between some of the students involved in them.

Some of the camp activities flowed over into the teaching of Yr 12 Religion, in which Wally Wintle and Rhoden did their routine on the Solomon boys for many years. There were annual highlights like the Fathers Day lesson, Eric Bogle on Anzac Day, the Robin Hood conundrum and Star Power. These may not have been the kind of religion lessons that Brother Benignus envisaged in the 1930s, but they touched the hearts of students of later years.

John woke to a loud banging on his Cheltenham door in the small hours of a weekday morning. “Do you know anything about horses?” demanded the knocker when John opened the door. John would have been able to help if the poor man had wanted a tip, but he was a milkman and his horse lay injured in a tangled mess with the milk cart. It is a well known fact that John is totally useless when it comes to practical things like saving a stricken horse, repairing a washer, or removing the glad wrap from a casserole before cooking it. However,
Divine Providence and his dicky knee led him to Toni, so that there is at least one man about the house!

John has also played a major role in training up a long series of headmasters of St Bede’s. One of his techniques for expressing his displeasure with a headmasterly decision was to enter the Brother’s office, toss his keys on the table and declare: “If that’s the way it’s going to be, then I resign!”

Fortunately, John was never taken at his word and he soldiered on as Assistant to the Principal until 1999. His work in that area, with special responsibility for the time table, was outstanding. We had come a long way from the 1930s, when the whole school did RE in period 1, English in period 2, and so on. We had advanced through the knitting needles era, to a very complicated world. Sometimes, these complications led to John taking his work home and locking himself in the bathroom during last term, for he prided himself on having the time table ready before the end of the year. And then there were the extras. The manner in which these were dealt out was universally applauded for its efficiency and fairness.

In so many areas, John set his own standards of excellence and he lived up to them. In doing so, he inspired staff and students alike to do likewise.

It is right and fitting that Mr John Rhoden should be added to the St Bede’s College Roll of Honour.