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AVE MARIA COLLEGE She Who Belongs. She Who Thrives.

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Front Cover: 60th Anniversary Mass Back Cover: Tinadi Athukorala Photography by Amy Melleuish





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Dear Women of Ave,

Welcome to the 12th edition of *Ave Belong*. Our bi-annual alumnae magazine which aims to highlight inspiring members of our College community, both past and present, and share our stories as we continue to write the history of Ave Maria College.

I am incredibly proud to lead a College which is as rich in tradition as Ave, particularly as we come to the close of our 60th Anniversary celebrations. I would like to thank everyone who joined in our celebrations over the past 12 months and helped make it special. Whether it was for our Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral in June or our annual Ave Maria Day in August, the joint contributions of our Ave community allowed us to mark this milestone with the respect and honour it deserves.

Beyond our 60th Anniversary celebrations, 2023 was a busy year of learning and growth both in and outside of the classroom. In this edition, we will be reflecting on some of the highlights, including our Father's Day Breakfast, the Arts & Technology Festival and our Year 9 Play which, this year, was a collaboration with St Bernard's College.

We also hear from Therese Virtue (nee Gleeson), a member of Ave Maria College's very first class, who reflects on what life was like at Ave in the 1960s, as well as catch up with Natalia Lozinski (Class of 2003) and Marie Yarak (Class of 2005) to discuss their career journeys since graduating.

In our staff profiles we meet two members of the Senior Leadership Team, Director of Catholic Identity and Mission, Mr Patrick Hogan and Director of Learning and Pathways, Ms Deborah Bradshaw.

I would like to take this opportunity to dedicate this edition of Ave Belong to all who have been part of our rich history and those who continue to make it a place of empowerment for young women to grow and thrive.

May we continue to strive for truth through love.

Yours Faithfully, Tanya



The Year That Was:

60th Anniversary Reflection

Ms Tanya Hutton

As we turn a fresh page in Ave history, let us reflect on the year that was 2023. A year full of celebration as we marked 60 years of Ave Maria College.

How would you reflect on our 60th Anniversary celebrations?

I am incredibly proud of the hard work that our staff and students put into celebrating such an important milestone as 60 years. Each and every event was extremely well organised and executed, and allowed us to acknowledge our history, our faith and our many achievements across the years. It was a privilege to witness our wonderful community come together and celebrate our College with such pride.

What was a highlight from the year?

With such a busy event calendar this year, it is difficult to narrow it down to just one. However, I would say it was a particular privilege of holding our Anniversary Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral. The opportunity for our community to gather in prayer and reflection in such a sacred place allowed us to fully acknowledge our faith and our Franciscan heritage. I would like to thank Archbishop Peter Comensoli and Father Anthony Doran for leading the Eucharistic celebration with such distinction as well as those in our community who took time out of their busy schedules to join us. It was a day that will certainly be remembered fondly by staff and students alike.

How did you see the College live out our 2023 Theme?

The College theme for 2023 was 'May we treasure God's word like Mary'. As our College's namesake and the patron of one of our houses, Mary and her faith holds an important place in the College. As students and staff explored what it means to live out their faith in God, we witnessed



many discover new layers to their faith and demonstrate it through their relationships with their peers. I have also appreciated hearing some insightful discussions among our students about the strength of character Mary exhibited in her devotion to God and how her example can help them strengthen their own relationship with God.

What are your hopes for the next 60 Years of Ave?

I hope that we can continue to do what we have always done and that is provide a place where young women within our Northwest Melbourne community can belong and thrive. I hope that we continue to provide an educational experience that not only challenges our students to reach their full potential but also enhance their connection with God. We have much to be proud of from our first 60 years and I know that as a community we can continue to strive for truth through love for another 60 years.



On Thursday, 22 June, the Ave Maria College community celebrated our 60th Anniversary Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne with Archbishop Peter Comensoli leading the Eucharistic celebration along with Father Anthony Doran the College Custodian of Mission.

We were also joined by past Ave Maria College students (including the class of 1963 and 1964), families and members the MACS team including Dr Edward Simons, MACS Executive Director and Mr John Mills, Northern Region Regional General Manager. In gathering we reflected on our links to the Gospel story, our Franciscan heritage, Blessed Mary of the Passion (Helene de Chappotin) and Mary the mother of Jesus. We particularly acknowledged Mary of the Passion, the Foundress of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary and Mary the mother of Jesus after who we are named for their strength, commitment and powerful witness to their faith in God. Together we recognised who we are as a faith community, our foundation, our present and the future that awaits us.











On Friday, 11 August, the College community celebrated our extra special 60th anniversary Ave Maria Day.

In true Ave Maria Day spirit, the day was full of our usual fun and activity, our Ave Talent Quest, Mass, food trucks and the highly anticipated Spectacular! Spectacular! House Competition. It was a joy as always to watch the students celebrating their school with such pride and was fantastic to be able to mark the 60th Anniversary with a few extra additions, a birthday cake and the burial of our time capsule.

















On Friday, 21 July, our staff and broader College community commemorated the 60th Anniversary with a Gala Dinner at the Victorian Pavilion, Melbourne Showgrounds.

It was another fantastic celebration of our College as we welcomed past staff, members of MACS and the School Advisory Committee to mark the event.















Reflection from the

Class of 1963

Therese Virtue (nee Gleeson), a member of the first graduating class of Ave Maria College, reflects on life at Ave in 1960s and the recent 60 Year reunion of the Pioneer Alumnae.

Thirty plus women, congregated for Mass at Our Lady of the Nativity Church on Sunday, 8 October. They were the women who 60 years ago started Secondary Schooling at Ave Maria in Year 7 and 8.

In February 1963, a tentative anxious, excited bunch of girls from North Essendon and some of the surrounding suburbs, met in a cluster on the very new campus of Ave Maria College. We were the first intake of a new school, Years Seven and Eight, Form One and Two then, to began their Secondary schooling.

The school building was new and shiny and we felt important. I still remember sliding down the shiny new banister into the waiting arms of the Principal, Sister Clare! I can't promise that I didn't repeat the misbehaviour, but I was far more cautious.





Being such a small school gave us a sense of community. Looking back on those four years now, lots of experiences were packed into the time. Cooking in the new kitchens, helping establish the little library in a tiny room at the end of the building, working with Sister Clare to set up a demonstration volcano for displays of eruptions on open nights in the new Science Wing. We went on Retreat at the Convent next door where the nuns who taught us lived and ran retreats on a regular basis. We also learnt how to make a bed neatly in the Retreat House, hospital corners - something I still use when I make a bed! We represented the school too – general knowledge competitions, debates, and sporting competitions, lots of activity for a small cohort.

Last Sunday, there were shocks of recognition, rejoicing at the chance of renewing old friendships and explorations of what life had offered women who had not seen each other in 50 or more years. Sadly we weren't able to enter the school campus, so we made the front fence a spot for a photo op, a chance to renew acquaintances, and then moved on to lunch and an afternoon of intense reminiscences.

Inevitably, these women have taken many directions since they left the school at the end of Year 10. Many are grandmothers, most are retired, some still working. Women travelled interstate and from rural Victoria to join their peers for the important event. They remembered those who have died and those who could not join the day, and they talked and talked!

The day finished with promises of a repeat event in a 2024. Women in their seventies recognise the need to seize the moment!







Thank you for your time Therese



Our Newest Ave Alumnae Class of 2023

The final days of formal schooling for the Class of 2023 were full of celebration of their incredible journey at Ave.

Beginning with a series of fun dress up days including crazy hair, Aussie classics and alternative reality for the first three days of week 2, our Year 12 students participated in a range of activities and school events to mark their graduation and wish them well for their upcoming examinations.

On Wednesday, 11 October our Year 12 students shared a morning tea with all staff to thank them for their contribution to their Ave experience. The following day marked the beginning of more formal proceedings as we gathered together for a Whole School Assembly to farewell the cohort. Our Year 7 students participated in the ceremony, leading their sisters, cousins, friends and fellow students into Francis Hall and gifting them a prayer card to bless the students on

their journey through exams and towards their futures. We also heard from our College Captains, Madeline Piccione and Chelsea Atkins, one last time as well as welcomed our 2024 College Captains, Charlotte Rowbottom and Sienna Athaide.

Friday, 13 October, marked the students' final day on campus before their exams. Students were treated to a bagel breakfast, a photo booth, karaoke and a picnic lunch which was somewhat interrupted by patches of rain. As always, there was an emotional countdown to the final bell filled with tears and hugs as students left through the Ave gates for the final time.

The final event on the calendar was our Graduation Mass at St Therese's Church and our Valedictory Dinner at Victoria Pavillion on Monday, 16 October. As Valedictorian, Ethnie Lobo spoke on behalf of the cohort, reflecting on the highs and lows of their journey and thanking the teachers who had supported them along the way. We also celebrated Evelyn Zuccarelli who was awarded the Year 12 Spirit of Ave award during our Graduation ceremony.

While this may be farewell for the Class of 2023, it is most certainly not goodbye as we look forward to seeing where their path takes them as they begin the rest of their lives. We wish them all the very best and hope to see them all again soon.

























On Tuesday, 10 October before the Arts and Technology Festival, we warmly welcomed back the Class of 2022 graduates for their One Year On Reunion.

After an exciting year in 'the big wide world' of university, travel, work, and adulthood, it was wonderful to reunite with almost 60 of last year's graduates and reflect on their time at the College along with the time passed.

We look forward to keeping in touch with the Class of 2022 through our Alumnae network as they continue their journey beyond the College gates.









On Thursday, 31 August the College was proud to host our annual Father's Day Breakfast in Francis Hall to recognise and appreciate the special men in the lives of our students.

Students and their fathers and father-like figures enjoyed a delicious bagel and pastries for breakfast before hearing from Psychologist Dr David Collins who spoke about the importance of father figures in our young people's lives and how our parents can better understand the needs of their teenage daughters.

We were also touched by a fabulous speech from our College Captains, Chelsea Atkins and Madeline Piccione who spoke about their relationships with their own fathers and enjoyed performances from Alisa Villani (Year 10) and the Year 10 Music class. Thank you to all who helped make the day special for our dads and students.













After months of preparation, we were proud to open our doors to the College community for the 2023 Arts and Technology Festival: She Who Creates on Tuesday, 10 October.

It was a wonderful showcase of our student's work from across our Art, Media, Textiles, Visual Communication Design, Drama, Music and STEM subjects to a captive audience of supportive friends, family and peers.

Thank you to all the staff who worked behind the scenes to put this event together and to all who came along to celebrate our students.

Well done to all student on all their hard work this year creating such amazing art, we hope you were proud to see your work on display!















With the opening of St Bernard's College's Year 9 Resurrection House Campus, we have been privileged to further develop our relationship with SBC through a number of collaborative programs.

Our Year 9 Play has been one such joint endeavour which students from both schools worked together on throughout Term 3 and early Term 4.

The play, 'The Curse of Macbeth' was a fun challenge for the students as they were able to take on Shakespearean dialogue within a familiar context, a high school drama club. From a mean girl clique to basketball bros, our students embodied a variety of characters with passion and dedication to present a hilarious show for both College communities to enjoy.

Congratulations to our cast and crew for putting together such a wonderful production. A special mention to the incredible creative team of Katie Houghton, Cassandra Hutchinson and Brittany Crane and student team, Mia White, Mia Meskovski and Anna Nguyen for their hard work and dedication to the project.















Liverpool Football Club International Academy Australia

In Term 3, Ave Maria College made history becoming the home of Liverpool Football Club International Academy Australia's first All Girls Academy. A high-performance program which will provide students with access to the incredible wealth of knowledge of Liverpool Football Club as a world-class soccer club.

As part of our commitment to provide pathways for every student to grow and thrive, we are always actively seeking new opportunities to broaden our programs and offerings for students. Strategic partnerships play a vital role in this as they allow us to cater to each and every student to

ensure that they receive a well-rounded holistic education grounded in the Franciscan tradition. In partnering with LFC International Academy Australia, Ave Maria College has become LFC's first All Girls Academy in Victoria, allowing our athletes access to exclusive high performance training programs available only to a small number of schools.

With a focus on belonging, growth and engagement, the program will provide another dimension to the College's Health and Physical Education Curriculum, exposing students to the Liverpool methodology for the acquisition of soccer knowledge, skill and understanding. The vision for this new high-performance soccer program will see our combined resources used to create an environment that mirrors the one experienced by players on a high-performance pathway in the UK. Students will not only be able to develop their skills as players technically, tactically





and physically but also have access to a variety of programs and resources for their social and mental development to enhance important life skills such as communication, teamwork, and leadership.

But why LFC? One of the most important things that we look for in a strategic partnership is a partner that aligns with our values and goals as a College. As we seek to support our students in all their endeavours, whether it be academic, sporting, or artistic, creating opportunities that allow them to reach their full potential is paramount to us as educators. LFC International Academy's track record of developing successful footballers combined with their eagerness to empower our female athletes has made for a perfect partnership and a momentous opportunity for us.

However, our partnership is not restricted to the soccer pitch. With ties to the Australian College of Physical Education, our partnership will also provide students with the opportunity to explore study in sports management, physical education, sports business, health allowing us to expand our offerings beyond our own Health and Physical Education curriculum.

Elements of the program will also be available to the wider Ave Maria College community, with skill development workshops and clinics operating at various stages throughout next year.

We are honoured to be leading this new era of women's soccer in Australia and hope that it will allow our athletes to achieve their full potential, and most importantly, support their development as confident young women ready to make a positive contribution to their community.

Find out more about our program













Meet the MR PATRICE

In his 6th year of teaching at Ave Maria College, Patrick Hogan stepped into the role of Director of Catholic Identity and Mission in 2023. Hailing originally from Queensland, Patrick came to Melbourne to study theology at Catholic Theological College to become a priest. However, after deciding that priesthood wasn't his true calling, he worked several jobs, including running a house for otherwise homeless men in Fitzroy, before studying teaching at the Australian Catholic University. Patrick predominately teaches Religious Education, however, also enjoys teaching Humanities and Science.

What inspired you to become a teacher?

I left school after Year 12 with no intention of every returning to a school environment. I was fortunate to have a range of experiences and tried a few different career options, however, I gradually realised how much I enjoy helping others learn new skills and grasp new concepts. I became involved with visiting schools as a guest speaker on several occasions and realised schools are places of great potential and opportunity. I was also inspired by my wife who is an excellent teacher.

What is your favourite aspect of being a teacher?

The relationships you build and the chance to make a difference in the lives of others. I very much enjoy helping others understand the goodness in the world and how they might contribute further to this. I like discussing with students interesting questions and exploring what it means to be on a spiritual journey.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

Reading, gardening, staying fit while trying not to eat too much chocolate, watching movies, listening to interesting podcasts, barracking for Collingwood, but most of all spending time with my family, including our three dogs.

Best advice for our younger self?

You will never have all the answers. It's the journey that matters most. Recognise the gift in each moment and cherish every day and every encounter. Be yourself.



Thank you for your time Patrick.



Meet the

MS DEBORAH BRADSHAW

Deborah Bradshaw joined the Ave Maria College community at the start of 2023 and took no time at all settling into her position as Director of Learning and Pathways. Deborah has a wealth of experience in catholic education having served in curriculum and learning leadership positions at Kolbe Catholic College. She has Master of Education from Australian Catholic University and experience in teaching Health and Human Development, Food Studies and STEM.

What inspired you to become a teacher?

I became a teacher because I wanted an opportunity to make a positive impact on the lives of students. I think there is something very rewarding about helping shape our future by educating and guiding the next generation so they can make a difference.

What is your favourite aspect of being a teacher?

I really enjoy witnessing students' progress. Whether it's mastering a new concept, improving their skills, or achieving their goals no matter how big or small, I love being a part of the learning journey and helping them along the way. I enjoy finding opportunities to connect the learning and teaching to real world opportunities.

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I love cooking all types of cuisines, trying different restaurants, I enjoy spending time with my family and friends and travelling to anywhere that with hot weather and the occasional infinity pool.

Best advice for our younger self?

Be yourself. Don't be afraid to try new things. Don't be afraid to fail. Travel and experience as much of the world as you can. Don't compare yourself to others.



Thank you for your time Deborah.

Alumnae Profile: Business and Engineering

At Ave Maria College, we are proud to boast a diversity of subject offerings and pathways which are individually tailored to their skills, interests, and aspirations of our students. As a result, our graduates have access to a wide variety of tertiary study, apprenticeship and employment opportunities that allow them to pursue their true passions. No job or career pathway is out of reach for Ave Alumnae which is highlighted by Natalia Lozinski and Marie Yarak who have both made strides in predominately male dominated industries.

"Embrace every opportunity as a learning experience."



NATALIA LOZINSKI (NEE KOWALCZYK) (CLASS OF 2003) Business

How would you describe your path after graduating from the College?

After graduating in 2003, I studied a Bachelor of Business in Marketing at RMIT where I was fortunate to participate in a global study tour in Vietnam. My third year was when I was first introduced to Ford as I completed a yearlong co-operative placement which led to a part time position during my fourth year. Upon graduating I was accepted into the Ford Graduate Program and am still here – 16 years later!

What is your current role at Ford?

Although I've only recently returned from maternity leave after having my second child, I currently hold a Business Strategy and Transformation role, reporting directly to the CEO. The role involves the formation and driving of the strategic business priorities and then communicating these cross functionally with our partners and global teams. I also lead transformational initiatives that will ensure the future success of Ford.

Are there any projects that you have worked on that you are particularly proud of?

In 2021, I was involved with the launch of the FordPass app which allows drivers to connect with their vehicle remotely. It was a major development for Ford and I was very proud to be involved.

How do you look back on your time at the College?

I always look back at my experience at Ave as positive, enriching and foundational for where I am today. My interest in Business began whilst in began to be able to choose subjects. My 2 week work experience in a marketing research firm cemented my passion for Marketing and Customers and led me down the path of my tertiary studies. My early experiences in leadership roles such as House captain and later SRC captain in year 12 helped develop my ability to present confidently and take a hands-on approach to solving problems. I have no doubt my experience at Ave has

shaped me into the individual I am and

success I have enjoyed.

high school around Year 10 when we



Thank you for your time Natalia.

"The moment you doubt your ability to fly is the exact moment you will fall"



MARIE YARAK (CLASS OF 2005) Engineering

How would you describe your path after graduating from the College?

After graduating in 2005, I went on to study Automotive Engineering at RMIT. It was a 4 year degree which I extended to 5 years as I completed a year of work experience in my second last year at GM Holden.

I graduated with first class honours from RMIT in 2010, where I was the only female in the majority of my classes. Coming from Ave, this was a challenge for me as I was used to being one of many girls in a room. The transition to an engineering degree was difficult at first but also an experience that helped me grow as a person. I developed lifelong relationships, a diverse outlook, an ability to hold difficult conversations and resilience.

After graduating from RMIT I joined Ford. My role at Ford was typical of what you would expect in a design type engineering position I could sit at my desk for an entire week without having to talk to anyone. I quickly realised desk engineering was not for me. I had to find a job that involved teamwork.

I spent a large amount of time researching the right organisation for

me, I wanted something challenging, innovative, global and a company that believed in corporate and individual growth. I landed on Boeing. I have been fortunate to have worked at Boeing since around 2012. I have held many roles including: Industrial Engineer, Business Analyst, Project Manager and Supply Chain Leader/Manager at different levels.

What is your current role at Boeing?

For the past year and a half I have had the opportunity to sit a secondment as Acting General Manager Supply Chain. In this role I oversee the entire Boeing Melbourne supply chain team of approximately 54 employees, I have 4 direct reports and as a team we are responsible for managing all purchasing, warehousing, supply chain performance, long range supply chain strategy and contracts.

Are there any projects that you have worked on that you are particularly proud of?

I am especially proud of leading the supply chain team at Boeing in Melbourne, we continue to strive towards functional excellence and being best in class.

How do you look back on your time at the College?

My time at Ave really provided me with the foundation I needed to kick start my career. I would encourage anyone reading this to take on the challenges through high school, don't shy away from what may seem too difficult, the resilience and perseverance you learn through taking these on will make the challenges life throws at you after high school a lot easier to navigate as you will learn the skills you need to navigate them and that foundational skill does not change regardless of the challenge!



Thank you for your time Marie.





Academic and Community

Awards Might

On Tuesday, 5 December, the College held our annual Academic and Community Awards (ACAN) to recognize and celebrate achievements in our community.

It was wonderful to be able to acknowledge the hard work and achievements of students in their co-curricular, community and academic endeavours this year in front of their teachers, families and peers.

A full list of award recipients will be published in the final newsletter for 2023, however, we acknowledge the following major winners.

Helene de Chappotin Student Award Jocelyn O'Keefe (Year 10)

St Francis Staff Service AwardGarry Whicker

House All-Rounder Tessa Kendall (Year 8)









UPCOMING *Events*

Term One Dates 2024

Thursday, 1 February 2024 - Wednesday 27 March 2024 (Year 7, 11 and 12)

Friday, 2 February 2024 - Wednesday 27 March 2024 (Year 8 - 10)

Back to Ave Day (Reunion of Class of 1964, 1974, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2014, 2018)

Sunday, 17 March 2024

Term Two Dates 2024

Monday, 14 April 2024 - Thursday 27 June 2024

For all magazine enquiries contact media@avemaria.vic.edu.au

· To contribute a story and photo

For all alumnae enquiries please email alumnae@avemaria.vic.edu.au

- Change of contact details
- · To register for alumnae communications
- · To contribute to alumnae events

"The teachers and subjects offered at Ave Maria College led me to discover my passions and supported me to pursue them."

- Majella, Class of 2022



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Join Ave Belong to reconnect with classmates, expand your professional network and give back to the College community.





