Term 3, No 2

Tuesday 6 September 2011

Message from the Head of Senior Years

It takes having your own children to really understand what your parents experienced when you were a child. I must say I thought finishing Year 12 was a huge achievement. Almost a generation later, with my own children in school, this achievement seems all the more significant. Congratulations Year 12 parents, it has been a long journey!

Feedback from the parent drinks at the Lord Dudley on Friday 5 August has been terrific. Everyone had a good time and I would recommend making yourselves available for next year’s event. Aligning the drinks with the sample boarding weekend and Old Boys weekend seemed to work well. The new President of the Boarder Parent Association, Megan Donnelley, will confirm this date for the 2012 calendar in later correspondence. I must thank Megan and her already hard working team for the feedback they have provided to date. We meet this Friday 9 August with the Catering Manager to discuss key issues in relation to food and nutrition. Megan and her executive team have also been instrumental in providing feedback regarding The Highlander e-newsletter. It is our intention to alter the focus in the coming additions to meet these recommendations and I encourage you to pass on further suggestions at any time.

The Dean of Boarding Mr Phil Cooney and his team have been working toward standardising boarding procedures and expectations across all Houses throughout 2011. This has culminated in the redrafting of a number of procedures and protocols; leave permissions being one of them. The redrafting of a “Boarders’ Handbook” has been part and parcel of this process as it is vital this document represent the routines and expectations that are lived out each day across the Houses. I am pleased to acknowledge that the revision of publication is now in progress. Thank you for your patience.

As we await the final response from tendering companies and the College Council, I look forward to communicating again in the near future regarding the Aspinall House Renovation. Should you have any questions in the mean time please do not hesitate to contact me.

Mr Tim Browning
Head of Senior Years and Director of Admissions

Message from the Dean of Boarding

As we approach the end of Term 3 the pace of life within our boarding community never slackens. It has been a packed term so far, with all year groups working steadily towards final exams and assessment blocks. Year 12 has completed their trial exams and it is pleasing to note the excellent results that are emerging. These results are testament to the effort the boys have collectively put in. In the coming weeks Year 10 and 11 will undertake their final exams and assessments. It is worth reminding boys that many academic supports are available to our boarders and are well worth pursuing during this time.

During the last week of Term 3 (commencing 19 September) all boys in Years 8 to 11 will be involved in co-curricular camps and activities. Many boys will be engaged offsite but will return by lunch time Thursday 22 September for end of term departure. Boys are free to leave after this time with Country Link bus and train services departing as normal on the Friday. Bookings have already been confirmed with Country Link and ticketing/timetables has been promised by the Monday of that week. As a reminder, Years 8 to 11 boarders are due back by 9:00pm on Monday 10 October. Boys departing to Glengarry will do so the next day at 9:00am. Any Year 9 boarders returning to Glengarry are most welcome to stay
overnight in their boarding house to make this departure easier. Please communicate this to your Housemaster as required.

As Year 12 ready themselves for their final weeks, it has been stressed the need to finish with integrity. The traditional time for muck up days etc. has long since passed, with inappropriate behaviour and breach of recognised policy no longer seen as a rite of passage, nor tolerated. Any boy who commits a significant breach of this nature will call into question his placement in boarding for any remaining time. These young men have established a solid reputation within the College and we are committed to seeing them depart in a dignified and positive fashion. We will celebrate their achievements with Year 12 parents, boys and staff on the evening of Wednesday 21 September in the College dining room. Details of this have been sent in separate invitations. The final day for Year 12 will be Thursday 22 September with a Chapel service and farewell assembly. As is normal, Year 12 will return to the boarding environment for the completion of their HSC exams. I would ask that if arrangements are to change that this be communicated with the relevant Housemaster. It is expected that during this time normal leave procedures etc will apply. Once their exams are complete, boys will have 48 hours to pack and clean their cubes ready for departure. As always, it is an exciting but sometime uncertain and stressful period for the boys as they begin to separate from, what has largely been their home for in some cases in excess of six years. If you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact your son’s Housemaster directly.

I wish you all well and look forward to seeing many of you around the College.

Mr Phil Cooney
Dean of Boarding

Father’s Day at Scots

For the boarders remaining at the College for Father’s Day, an early 6:30am start saw Mr Atkinson and Mr Dawson of Kirkland House take 23 keen anglers from all five houses down to Rose bay for a day of exciting action. The Rose Bay trawl stood no chance against a delectable platter of prawn, squid, mullet, pilchard and striped tuna on the end of our lines.

With the boys divided into respective houses, pride was on the line in the ultimate test of patience and outdoor nous. Royle House’s Lewis Mcmahon struck the early blow with a 31cm parrot fish before Aspinall hit back with an equally monstrous trevally, landed by Joseph Kerin, measured at 44cm. Fairfax was then in on the action with a 26cm flounder thanks to the efforts of Hamish Dunbar. The rest of the day saw an impressive assortment of snapper and a large numb ray, part of the shark family which packs a powerful electric punch, up to 220 volts, a danger not foreseen in the predicted risk assessment. Mr Atkinson’s Kirkland House floundered under the pressure of expectation all day, ending fishless, while Macintyre too failing to trouble the top scorers.

Despite this, an enjoyable day was had by all. Thanks must go to Mr Atkinson for the provision of equipment and much needed tactical advice, as well as Mr Dawson for giving of his Sunday morning and his much needed encouragement.

Fishing Awards:
Largest fish: Joseph Kerin (44cm trevalley)
Champion Angler: Lewis Mcmahon (three fish)
Champion House: Royle (three fish totalling 61cms)

Lewis McMahon
Royle House, Year 12
From the Scots Boys

Deux mois en France
Almost a year ago I went on a French cultural exchange. After touring with the Pipes and Drums in Holland, I made my way to a small French town called Linselles, in the north of France, near Lille. I went to a French school for a term with Oliver Pestalozzi. The school we attended was called Lycée de la Croix blanche (School of the White Cross). We were both hosted by families and became immersed in the French way of life. The experience was definitely the most challenging of my life, although definitely rewarding (pardon the cliché). There was no mistaking that I was on the other side of the world, with the many cultural differences, though I was surprised at some of the similarities to Australia.

My main goal during the exchange was to improve my French. Even though I had taken French lessons for four years prior to this trip, the first few weeks were incredibly difficult. I struggled to understand the most basic of questions and words, which made for some awkward conversations. It was difficult for everyone to persist with speaking to me in French, as they were quite able to converse fluently in English. I gradually improved, understanding more and more as the weeks went on. After the first month I was able to have a one on one conversation with ease, although I still struggled in groups even at the end of my exchange. In just two months my French improved dramatically. Living in a foreign country, immersed in the language, really is the best way to properly learn a language.

I enjoyed the food in France, polishing off half a baguette each morning, having another for lunch and then some more to accompany dinner, sided with a variety of cheeses. Even though it was only a small village, there were three or four bakeries, each filled with baguettes, croissants and petit pain au chocolate, my favourite. However, I missed the milk in Australia, instead of fresh milk; it was all long life, which didn't need to be refrigerated. Perhaps this could be accounted for by the weather, in the first week of winter it had already dropped to -8 degrees. This did however bring snow. Going to school and having a snowball fight at recess and lunch was certainly an experience... and one that wouldn't be had at Scots.

School was probably the aspect of my exchange that I found most different. Especially at Scots, school is more of a community where you have extracurricular activities, sport and other opportunities and you get to know people outside your classes. In France I found that school was just classes and all other things were done outside school. I hosted Valentin, the boy who I stayed with in France at the start of this term. This also taught me a lot about myself and gave me an opportunity to continue to improve my French. The thing that probably shocked him the most was the school spirit, and how we would give up our weekend to support the sports teams. You really gain an appreciation as to how special Scots is.

I would recommend the exchange program to everyone, especially if it is to further develop a language skill. The best advice that I would give to anyone is to make the most of every opportunity, speak the language as much as possible and involve yourself in all the activities. The two months passed so quickly and whilst I did a lot, there was a lot that I wished I had been able to do. I returned from my exchange with a language, great friends and a lot of good memories.

Henry Hamilton
Royle House, Year 11

A Family of Boarders
2011 has been as year of great change for the Swan family. For Mum and Dad, it was their first year with an “empty nest”, as our younger brother Sam following us to board at The Scots College. It was also a very different year for my twin, Jock and I, because we had made the decision to experience Glengarry in separate intakes – and therefore be away from each other for the longest period of our lives.
I look back to the start of the year and remember the agonizing wait and the excitement of going to Glengarry. I was nervous, but nevertheless excited. So was Jock. He was excited to be able to start back at school. To get stuck into Year 9 with the addition of electives and was looking forward to his role as one of the Drum Majors at Anzac Day and the Parade of Remembrance. We were more excited to head back to school than we had ever been before.

The most significant change Jock and I experienced in the last six months was our time apart. As twins, we had decided that it would be a good opportunity to spend some time apart. A year where we were recognised as individuals instead of “Jock and Barney”.

It was an interesting experiment. The Glengarry journey requires some planning and new equipment and as we embarked on this adventure separately, the logistics were far more simple than usual. We were both keen on doing the mountain biking and looked forward to the hikes. For the first time in our lives, we did not have to buy two sets of everything.

I have finished Glengarry now and Jock is down there with Intake 2. He loves it as I did and the ‘experiment’ of being apart has been a huge success. We do not regret our decision and are happy we made it. We are just as much individuals as we are twins. This has also been beneficial in our relationship, as brothers and as friends.

Barney Swan
Royle House, Year 9

Key Dates for Boarder Parents

Thursday 22 September – Last day Term 3

Friday 23 September – Boarder Travel Day

Tuesday 11 October – First day Term 4

Other News

Dining Hall Menus

The Trippas White Group continues to provide the College with high quality, nutritious meals. See the coming week’s menus below.

Week 7 Menu
Week 8 Menu
Week 9 Menu
Week 10 Menu