



The New Sporting Facility

As you will see from the photo the new College sporting facility is progressing well and will be ready for use in early 2020. A number of sporting codes (Tennis, Hockey, Soccer and Netball) from within and outside the College are eagerly looking forward to its completion. Currently the ground is being prepared for the laying of the all-weather turf. More information and the method for making a donation to this wonderful addition can be found on the College's website.

Local Body Elections

Roncalli has its first Mayor. Former Head Boy (1994) Nigel Bowen has just been elected Mayor by an overwhelming majority. Perhaps it was destined since his time in 1993 when he performed in the school production "A Man for All Seasons". As Mayor he will have to be a man for all seasons. In 1994 he was part of the team that cycled from Greymouth to Timaru raising \$15,000 for Timaru Hospital's children's ward. He is today perhaps better known as Mine Host at the Speights Ale House. He will be assisted in his Council work by others with a Roncalli Influence. Former pupil Sally Parker has been re-elected as has former Roncalli Board Chair Peter Burt. New Councillor Stu Piddington has 3 daughters who have just left or are currently at Roncalli. Steve Wills has a son at school. He is a very popular high polling Councillor and we wish him a speedy recovery from illness. Holding the fort in Temuka are Councillor Paddy O'Reilly and Charles Scarsbrook on the Community Board who both have a strong Roncalli connection.



Former Roncalli Staff Luncheon

In recent years a number of former staff have an annual reunion, usually in Christchurch to reminisce and catch up. Here is a photo of those able to attend this year's reunion- can you identify the various staff?

Luncheon Attendees: L to R Tina Carlton. Sr Mary. Jill Woolf. Bernie Pavletich. Elizabeth Bills Jane Simmonds. Liz Hill. Stephanie Tierney. (Margaret White). Trevor White. (Ian Simmonds). Lorraine Jamison.

Three Past Pupils – Leaders

In this issue we feature the stories of three former Catholic students of St Pat's and Roncalli who grew up to be passionate fighters for Social Justice.

Laurence Michael O'Reilly, (1942-1998) and Denis O'Reilly, (1952-)

The O'Reilly brothers both attended St Pat's and both were passionate about Social Justice

Laurie O'Reilly's name featured in the news last year with the success of the Black Ferns. Their victory over the Wallaroos gave the *Laurie O'Reilly Memorial Trophy* to the Kiwi team. The trophy was named after Laurie in recognition of his support for Women's rugby over many years.

Laurie and Denis were born and raised in Timaru, part of an Irish Catholic family heavily involved in the life of the Parish and especially in social justice issues. It is then little wonder that in later life they both came to the forefront on Social Issues, though in very different ways.



Laurie (St Pat's 1955-58) in his last year at St Pat's was a Prefect, Sergeant Major in the School Cadet Company and was in both the First X1 and First XV. Laurie chose Law as a career with a particular interest in family law. From being a Barrister

and Solicitor he became in 1994 the Commissioner for Children. He launched his "Fathers Who Care: Partners in Parenting" programme in response to kids' need for fathers – and as a result of shocking research into fatherless families. Laurie was diagnosed with advanced Terminal Cancer in mid-1997 but despite this he continued to work stressing "with real urgency" the need for positive parenting strategies to get fathers truly involved as co-parents of their kids. Laurie passed away in January 1998.



His brother **Denis** (St Pat's 1966-70) was also and still is involved in social issues. At school he was an active member of Youth against Hunger and was the first editor of the school's unofficial newspaper "Patra" in 1969. In his senior school years he was

a member of the School's Public Speaking team alongside such other notables as Philip Leishman, Mark Henaghan and Phillip McGoldrick. When Denis left school he spent a year at the Marist Fathers Seminary in Napier but soon after joined Black Power. In his words: *I came to the Black Power as an act of community service. I had trained to be a priest and was imbued with the whole Paolo Friere South American liberation theology, social justice, worker-priest, servant-leader thing. When I presented myself at the door of the whare of the Black Power they accepted me unconditionally even though I am Pakeha.* He became a well-known liaison man between the Government and Black Power and in particular had a close relationship with then former Prime Minister Rob Muldoon. At Sir Robert's funeral he organised 150 Black Power members to do a farewell haka. In recent years he has acted as a liaison for Black Power trying to reduce gang use and involvement with drugs. He sees his role as carrying on the social justice attitude that he was raised with as a child. *"You don't join a gang because life's all beer and Skittles you know. It's sort of like the last resort motel. Let us deal with this poverty of spirit at a community level."*



Black Ferns captain Fiao'o Fa'amausili holds the Laurie Oreilly Cup

In Social Justice

Rebecca Elvey (nee White)



Rebecca attended Roncalli College from 1992 to 1996 having received a scholarship to attend. Rebecca was determined to attend Roncalli rather than the closer option of Waimate High. On many days Rebecca biked the 13kms to Waimate to catch

the bus to Roncalli which left at 7.45am and she would not get home until after 5.00 pm. She biked in the rain, winter frosts, howling winds and the heat of summer along State Highway 1. At the College Rebecca was a leading singer and in the 1996 Music Cup came first in Senior Singing and 1st in Ensemble with Kathleen Bell. She was also a member of the First Aid Safety Training Team which involved running sessions for Sacred Heart Primary on safety in the outdoors.

On leaving Roncalli Rebecca set off to university in Wellington. She completed a B.A in Criminology, a Masters in Strategic Studies and Post Grad diplomas in Business administration and Psychology.

She subsequently worked for various Government bodies: the Commerce Commission (2003- 2006), the Treasury as an analyst (2006- 2010) and moved to the State Services Commission in (2010 - 2012). From there the Ministry of Education beckoned where she was the Group Manager of the Education Workforce until 2015.

From 2015 until August 2019 she was the Chief Executive at Nga Taonga Sound and Vision. She took up that position shortly after the amalgamation of the

New Zealand Film Archive Ngá Kaitiaki O Ngá Taonga Whitáhua, the Radio New Zealand Sound Archives and the Television New Zealand Archive. When she left in August this year the Chair of the Ngá Taonga Board of Trustees Simon Murdoch paid tribute to Rebecca commending her for successfully bringing the three different archives together into one audio-visual archive for New Zealanders.

Rebecca left Ngá Taonga in August to take up the position of Chief Executive of the New Zealand Human

Rights Commission and she is eager for the new challenges that this role will offer her. A short essay she wrote in her first year at Roncalli appeared in the 1992 College Magazine. An extract from that essay reads ""Perhaps I will never satisfy my curiosity, and my whakapapa is far from Maori, but I can't help but weep for the almost lost Maoriotanga. E tma, e haoa, paka." Clearly her mind was already developing for the role she has now taken up 27 years later.



Rebecca is married to Dale Elvey and they have a son Logan. She is an author of a book titled "More than This" (an inspirational work about achieving the best possible self in a broken world).

Mercy College - 50 years ago

This was the first year as Mercy College, following the renaming of Sacred Heart College. The roll was now 297 (which included 91 boarders). The College was developing a closer relationship with St Pat's by providing Latin, History, Book-keeping and Biology classes for St Pat's boys to attend and in return Chemistry, Geography and Maths were provided for the girls at St Pat's. The college had a strong drama club of 40 and put on a successful traditional Chinese Play. In 1969 there were 76 awards in Lifesaving, a new record for the school. Six new Olympia typewriters were bought for the school and a new dormitory was opened on the third storey.



1969 YCS and St Vincent De Paul Executives. Far Left: Sister M. Marguerite (aka future Mercy Principal Sister Mary Catherwood), far right Sister Diana Thomas currently running the Mercy Convent.

Cadets at St Pat's (1940 - 1964)

Cadet training at school is something most of today's younger generation will not have heard of. In secondary schools it was effectively part of the senior school curriculum for boys from the 1910s to the 1960s and St Pat's was no exception. St Pat's formed its cadet unit in 1940 and its objective was to prepare its students with basic military training and drill so that they would be more ready to serve in NZ's armed forces during the current war. The programme was seen as character-forming with its emphasis on discipline, responsibility and self-reliance.

Initially at St Pat's there were no uniforms and the parade ground was a small tar sealed tennis court where the school hall now stands. During the early years the army supplied cadet officers to instruct the cadets. 1944 saw two important changes- the introduction of military uniforms and an annual Barracks week. In addition some students began to be sent to N.C.O. camps at Burnham for training.

Despite the end of the war in 1945 most Secondary Schools continued with Cadet training seeing benefits from the discipline and training. Former students from the 1950s and 60s will remember the constant parading and

the sandpaper uniforms with perhaps less fondness but will perhaps remember the weapons training and tactical exercises with more liking.

In 1950 the school decided to have its own staff as cadet officers - members of the staff would get qualified for the King's Commission in the New Zealand Cadet Corps which made the school unit self-supporting. St Pat's was the first Marist school to do this. In the early 1950s St Pat's cadets had 60 members and the Army provided the unit 12 Bugles, 4 side-drums and one bass drum and suddenly the unit had its own band. Their initial playing caused a string of complaints from the adjoining college and sundry neighbours but after much training the band became much more proficient.

The St Pat's cadet unit, maintained a very high standard which was frequently commented on and one year Graham Kane was selected as the best Cadet in South Canterbury.

Gradually in the 1960s schools began to pull out of the programme (St Pat's had its final parade in 1964) and the 1971 Defence Act changed the NZ Cadet Force to a volunteer organisation.



Circa 1949 Drill & Weapons Training at St Pat's.



- In Memoriam -



Father John Mori passed away on July 24 this year at Taradale. Father Mori served at Roncalli from 1987 - 2003. He was a teacher of Accounting and Photography, Editor of the College magazine, Athletics Coach and the College's photographer. Since the 1880s this educational block of land had always had a member of a Religious Order and Father John, when he left in 2003 was the last.



Joan Oakley passed away on 26 October aged 92. Joan was the typing teacher at Mercy College from 1973 to 81 and for the first year of Roncalli College in 82.



Dr Frances (Fran) McGrath passed away 4 November aged 64. Fran was Head Girl and Dux at Mercy College in 1972 and later went on to be the Deputy Director of Health.