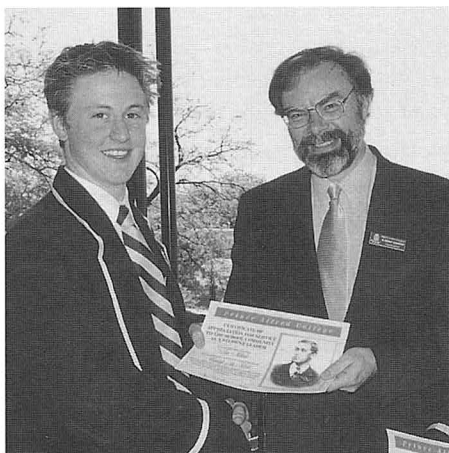


## *The Headmaster's Annual Report 2001*



“These are the best of times, these are the worst of times”. Charles Dickens wrote those words in the opening of his book *A Tale of Two Cities* to set the scene for a story set in a time of turmoil and revolution, of hope and despair, of power and opportunity. The words may seem equally applicable to the world that has emerged from the terrorist attacks on the United States in September this year. In many ways, we now face the same uncertainty that must have faced the PAC community exactly 60 years ago following the bombing of Pearl Harbour — will there be a war, will it affect our boys, what will be the shape of our world

in the years ahead? Certainly, as our troops head for Afghanistan, and the retreating Taliban regime in that country declares a *jihad*, or ‘holy war’ against Australia, the future must seem less secure than ever for our Year 12 students who are leaving the safety of our green grounds for the outside world. With the benefits of hindsight, we know where Pearl Harbour led; we do not yet have the benefit of history to illuminate our present circumstances.

And yet, we live in a world where there are strong grounds for optimism. More food is grown per person today than at any time in the history of humanity. Access to personal affluence and possessions has never been easier, and information has never been freer, cheaper or more abundant thanks to the internet. At Princes, we have a school which ranks with the very best in external examination results, where the staff to student ratio is one of the best in South Australia, where students learn in a quiet, clean, spacious environment and where care for the individual is a basic tenet of our philosophy. We have a school that is once again approaching the forefront of information technology in Australia, which is respected globally for its International Baccalaureate programmes, and which is the envy of many nearby schools for the quality and breadth of its teaching programme. We have a school that has recently been identified by *The Australian* newspaper as one of Australia’s ten best schools on the grounds of our high level of overall achievement in several areas that has been sustained over a period of time — this accolade arose due to the initiative of Lachlan Griffiths (Year 11), who wrote affectionately and enthusiastically about the school he loves. Our school is not heaven and it is not perfect, but we do have a great school with a justifiably outstanding reputation, as well as a strong commitment to make our great school even better in the future.

### ***Student Academic Successes***

I am pleased to report that the Year 12 results in 2000 were outstanding. Every student was successful in gaining his SACE or IB Diploma. Furthermore, 60% of our students earned

results that placed them in the top 20% of the state, one-third were in the top 10% of the state, while 10% of our students were in the top 1% of the state. There were 56 Merit scores, 38 among the 99 students attempting SACE and 18 among the 14 students attempting the IB Diploma. This is significant, as state-wide 2% of the SACE results were Merit scores, whereas at Prince Alfred College the equivalent figure was 6.6%. Particularly noteworthy were the results in Design Technology, where Prince Alfred College students earned 10 Merits out of the State total of 36. Other excellent performances were in Economics where PAC students earned 6 out of the State's 25 Merits and Quantitative Methods where PAC students earned 2 of the State's 3 Merits. I believe that the true measure of a school's academic effectiveness is how it can raise the results of boys in the mid-range and it is pleasing to see PAC doing so well according to that criterion.

The Dux of the School in 2000 was Iain Murchland who received a TER of 99.95 through his IB score of 42. Also coming in the top 0.1% of the state were Michael Garry and Christopher Seglenicks who studied the IB and SACE respectively.

There were many examples this year of other student successes in the academic arena, and most of these have been detailed elsewhere in the Chronicle, in Princes Record, in weekly newsletters and on our website — Economics competitions, Chemistry quizzes, Mathematics competitions, Geography competitions. But I want to highlight just three examples here. Earlier this year there was a presentation of the gold, silver and bronze medals for South Australia's top three students in each of the sciences, Chemistry, Physics and Biology, in the Science Olympiad. Three sciences and three medals — altogether 9 medals. This year, just eight students received the medals, and three of the eight were PAC boys. More than that, two of the three gold medals went to PAC boys — we have the State's top students in both Physics and Biology and the third best in Chemistry.

At the end of second term, for the fourth year in a row, Prince Alfred College completely dominated the Australia-wide National Economics Quiz sponsored by AMP and *The Australian*. Princes boys won first and second prizes in *both* Years 11 and 12, and in fact Princes has provided the top Year 12 student in all the four years in which we have entered the competition. Princes students won every prize in the Year 11 section. Altogether there were 20 prize winners from Prince Alfred College, but only 31 prizes awarded in total, meaning that students from Princes represented about two-thirds of the prizes awarded. Remarkably, every prize awarded to a Year 11 student went to a Princes boy.

Finally, in the annual Australian Maths competition, Princes boys gained outright 1st and 2nd places in the senior division, and outright 1st, 4th and 6th places in the intermediate division. Results such as these genuinely reflect what we are doing in the school because our entry is academically non-selective.

### ***Wider School Program***

Our rowers won every regatta of the season this year, and topped it off with a spectacular heart-stopping win in the Head of the River. We won all three summer Intercols held to date this year — badminton, swimming and rowing. We went down in some of the winter intercols, but the entire Princes community was delighted when we won the football in a heart-stopping match 30 points to 26 points, playing against Saints on their home ground, in appallingly muddy and slippery conditions. Our cricketers won the Intercol at the end of last year by 8 wickets and during the July break completed an international tour of England under the leadership of Mr Peter Williams and Mr Chris McGuire, winning 7 matches with

one tie, a draw and four losses. This year, we won the South Australian State Swimming Championships for the second time in the past three years. We were unlucky to be held to a draw in the intercol chess, and even more unlucky that an outstanding performance by PAC in the intercol debating was judged as a loss in a split decision.

Music at PAC continues to progress from strength to strength under the direction of Mrs Pam Freeman. Among many highlights this year were the performance of 'Fiddler on the Roof', with an unforgettable performance by Nathan Overbeeke, and the invitation issued to our Concert Band, together with Seymour College, to perform for Her Majesty the Queen at the investiture ceremony at Government House in October.

### ***Noel Baker Centre For School Mathematics***

Earlier this year, we announced the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in Mathematics, under the leadership of Mr Anthony Harradine. The centre will be known as the *Noel Baker Centre for School Mathematics*, in honour of the achievements of the internationally renowned PAC Old Scholar, Irvine Noel Baker.

Noel Baker, who died in May this year, attended PAC in 1947 and 1948. While here, he became enthused by Mathematics under his teacher, Mr Williams, who expected his Year 12 students to spend every Saturday morning at school practising their Mathematics. He subsequently achieved international status as a mathematician, presenting ground-breaking papers at conferences across Europe as well as in China, the USA and Mexico. His main area of research, in which he wrote over 70 papers, was complex functions and fractal sets, and there is a fractal set named the Baker domains in his honour.

We are confident that under the leadership of Mr Harradine and mathematics staff, the Noel Baker Centre for School Mathematics will establish PAC's international reputation as 'an excellent place for boys to do mathematics'.

### ***Strategic Plan***

One of the most significant events for the school this year was the launching of our new Strategic Plan on Thursday, 15th February, following an extensive process of consultation last year. Known as *Princes Towards 2010*, the Strategic Plan has been embraced enthusiastically by the entire school community, and it has already become the central focus in shaping many activities at PAC. The Strategic Plan outlines a program to build a school where, in a world of change, everyone, not just a few, gets the chance to succeed. The Plan is centred on a Vision Statement that identifies what we wish to achieve between now and 2010. The words are ambitious but achievable:

*To provide a superior education that prepares our students to be highly ethical global citizens who think creatively, reason critically, communicate effectively and learn enthusiastically throughout life.*

The Strategic Plan places this Vision Statement within a re-stated Mission Statement that expresses the enduring purpose of Prince Alfred College:

*Prince Alfred College is dedicated to equipping its students with the abilities needed to become men of discernment who value integrity, excellence and Christian faith in all aspects of life, and who will serve in the world as confident, competent and compassionate adults.*

For the first time in PAC's long history, the Strategic Plan also defines a set of core values that are central to our identity as a Uniting Church school:

- Appreciation of Christian faith and values
- Determination to achieve excellence
- A passion for learning
- Willingness to be innovative
- Respect for oneself and others

Among the significant outcomes that have already arisen from the Strategic Plan are:

• *Teaching of Gifted and Talented Students*

A highlighted focus of the Strategic Plan is addressing as fully as possible the special needs of high ability (gifted and talented) students. To address this need, a new position of Gifted and Talented teacher has been created, to commence from the beginning of 2002. The teacher appointed, Mrs Robyn Collins, will address the needs of students in both the Preparatory and Secondary Schools in six ways:

- Assisting teachers to implement extension work and independent projects within the classroom.
- Co-ordinating academic competition and enrichment work outside the classroom.
- Establishing and maintaining an effective learning centre for gifted education.
- Organising an effective program of vacation special interest courses.
- Advising the school when certain students should be accelerated or "grade skipped".
- Investigating the establishment of a multi-graded extension class in the Preparatory School

• *Language Teaching in the Preparatory School*

To support another initiative of the Strategic Plan, an extensive review was undertaken during 2000 of the teaching of foreign languages in the Preparatory School. In order to address the significant curriculum gap that currently exists as well as to support the requirements of the Primary Years Program (PYP), from 2002 foreign language learning will begin in Reception rather than being delayed until Year 5 as at present. From that time, Chinese will be taught from Reception to year 2, and from year 3 onwards French and German will be offered as alternatives.

• *Review of the Relationship between Chaplaincy, Counselling and RAVE teaching*

These three areas are central to the identity of Prince Alfred College as a Uniting Church school and it is imperative that they are practised to the highest possible standards of excellence. An extensive survey which elicited over 700 responses was undertaken, and among the outcomes were the following:

- The purpose of RAVE in serving the mission of PAC as a Uniting Church school is to be articulated clearly.
- A priority will be placed on the recruitment of specialist RAVE teachers and the recruitment of teachers for other subject areas who have the capacity and enthusiasm to teach RAVE.
- A clear sequencing of the K to 12 program based on Peter Vardy's Five Strands approach, adapted appropriately to serve the needs of boys in a Uniting Church school, will be developed and articulated.

- A Youth Minister (Mr Peter Riggs) has been appointed, initially on a part-time basis, establishing a pioneering, ground-breaking model of co-operation between a Uniting Church school and the Church. The role involves making the challenges of the Christian faith relevant to boys' needs, pastoring our boys and young men more effectively, and accepting a special responsibility for boarders' pastoral care and chapel services for boarders and the Preparatory School.

- *Restructuring of the Tuck Shop*

When the Strategic Planning consultation was undertaken last year, one of the strongest negative perceptions from the boys towards the school concerned the inadequacy of the Tuck Shop. With the assistance of the Foundation, major renovations of the Tuck Shop have been undertaken and the management has been outsourced. Now renamed Café Princes, a self-service system is now in place and a new, much expanded menu has been made available. A sit-down area with café-style tables and chairs has been established as an informal social mixing area, and the hours have been extended from 8.00am to serve breakfast, to 4.00pm for afternoon tea. It is pleasing to note that the Tuck Shop is now making as much profit in one month as it used to make in a full year.

- *School Uniform Review*

In the Strategic Planning survey forms received last year, considerable concern was expressed at the somewhat dull and dated nature of our uniform and the lack of pride with which it was sometimes worn in public. A Committee comprising school teaching and non-teaching staff, parents, P&F representatives, and Princes Parade staff spent almost a year reviewing the uniforms, proposing changes which were then circulated for wide consultation in the school community, and then recommending several subtle changes. The principal changes, which have applied since the beginning of term 4, will see the eventual replacement of the blue and white striped shirts with white shirts, the replacement of the school grey trousers and shorts with a dark charcoal colour, the replacement of the grey striped jumper with maroon jumpers from Reception to Year 12, and some changed tie designs incorporating the PAC logo. Other elements of the uniform, including the blazer, will remain unchanged. A phase-in period of two years and one term (9 terms in total) will be allowed.

- *Three Schools Proposal*

One of the major strategies of the Strategic Plan was that an investigation be undertaken into the desirability of introducing a Three Schools structure (Junior, Middle and Senior Schools) to replace the current two schools (Preparatory and Secondary Schools). Extensive research and discussions were undertaken resulting in a recommendation to the School Council in June this year that the Three Schools model be adopted from the earliest practicable time. Significant educational and pastoral care benefits arise from this restructuring and discussions among the staff have generated considerable enthusiasm for the proposal. For the restructuring to work, however, significant rebuilding of classroom, library, computing and secondary facilities will be required. Much of this rebuilding is necessary in any case due to the ageing nature of many of our facilities. The School Council is currently investigating ways in which the refurbishment of facilities could be financed, and we are hoping for a decision on this early next year. The rebuilding required by the Three Schools proposal should provide the framework required to develop an overall site Master Plan which is another key strategy in the Strategic Plan.

- *Review of Administrative Structures*

A review of the priorities and structures of the non-teaching areas of the school was conducted and the results have been communicated to the non-teaching staff. The Business Director, Mr David Stewart, is guiding the implementation of the revised structures which are intended to make the non-teaching areas of the school more efficient, more customer responsive, more market focused and to ensure the non-teaching areas of the school support the core values, mission and vision statement of PAC. An immediate outcome of the restructuring has been the incorporation of Enrolments and Marketing into the one team, and fruitful results are already emerging from this initiative.

- *Management of the Strategic Plan in the School*

In order to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan at the level of school management, two steering groups have been established which replace the former Executive group. Overall management of the Strategic Plan is under the auspices of the Strategic Plan Steering Group, the members of which are:

Dr Stephen Codrington, Headmaster  
 Mr Kevin Tutt, Deputy Headmaster  
 Mr Grant Nalder, Head of the Preparatory School  
 Mr David Stewart, Business Director  
 Mr Andrew Fergusson, Information Technology Manager  
 Mrs Karin Dunsford, Director of Development

Educational matters within the school are managed by the Education Steering Group, the members of which are:

Dr Stephen Codrington, Headmaster  
 Mr Kevin Tutt, Deputy Headmaster  
 Mr Grant Nalder, Head of the Preparatory School  
 Mr Ken Watson, Director of Student Services  
 Mr Andrew Buxton, Director of Studies  
 The Rev Dr Adrian Brown, Chaplain  
 Mr Grant Davis, Head of Boarding  
 Miss Linda Douglas, Deputy Head of the Preparatory School

Each of these groups meets fortnightly on alternate Thursdays.

### ***Capital Improvements***

A number of significant capital improvements have been undertaken in the school this year.

- In order to accommodate the increasing demand for boarding places, a major upgrading of Bayly Wing was undertaken including complete repainting, major electrical work, new carpet, new furniture and installation of air-conditioning on the top floor.
- The Preparatory School Computing Laboratory received a new suite of iMac computers and has been completely upgraded with new furnishings, arranged in a more appropriate layout, new carpet and repainting.
- The computer network was extended significantly and a radio link was installed between the school and its internet services provider, increasing band width to two megabytes.

- Three new suites of high performance computers were installed in the Secondary School, and ten networked computers were installed in the boarding house.
- Major upgrading of the corridor from the Memorial Wing to the Centenary Building was undertaken to create the 'Our Princes Men' gallery. The gallery features panels that celebrate the contributions made by over 80 past students in many areas. The display is a rotating one, and the idea is that new panels will be added, and others moved about, in the years ahead. Our concept is to provide a challenge to our current students, who walk through the gallery on a daily basis, to rise to the same heights of excellence as those former students who walked along those same corridors. The Gallery was opened on Thursday, 6th September by the Governor, Sir Eric Neal. The occasion of the opening certainly made an impact on everyone present — how could it not when 28 of the 40 men who are still alive joined us on the day, including Sir Donald Dunstan, Ian and Greg Chappell, Duncan Chesell, Sir Harold Young, Bob Francis, Reg French, Bob Piper, Rex Jory, John Menadue, Scott Dolling, John West, David Evans and David Prest? I am very grateful to the Prince Alfred Old Collegian's Association for their partial financial support of the project.
- A translucent canopy was erected to provide wet weather cover and shade over the Preparatory School courtyard. This canopy was made possible by a generous donation from the Foundation.
- A new Adventure Playground for students in Years 2 and 3 was constructed with a generous donation from the Preparatory School Parents and Friends.
- The Assembly Hall floor was sanded and repolished, significantly improving the appearance of this very public area of the school.
- A new Ropes Course was installed at Scotts Creek Field Centre, which together with significant maintenance and improvements undertaken under the direction of Mr Dale Hobbs, has enhanced considerably the attractiveness of the site both to our own students and to outside groups.
- In response to the Foundation's Annual Giving Program, several rooms of the school have been air conditioned, and it is hoped to have all general learning classrooms in the school air conditioned by the beginning of the 2002 academic year in February.
- The upgrading of the school's gardens has continued in an attempt to make the grounds softer and more aesthetically pleasing. Among the notable improvements were the new formal rose garden, modelled on the school crest, in front of our main building.

### ***Enrolments***

With the reinvigoration of the Council's Marketing Committee, the school has adopted a higher profile in marketing. This, combined with the merging of the Enrolments and Marketing Departments of the school and the appointment of Mrs Meg Craven as Director of Admissions, has resulted in a pleasing increase in the numbers of students placing their names on our enrolment lists for future years.

Since March this year, the number of future bookings for places (2002 to 2010) has increased from 801 to 892. Bookings for the Preparatory School have increased from 310 to 345 while the increase in demand for Secondary School places has been from 491 to 547. At present, our boarding house is almost full, and we almost filled every place for 2002.

Current enrolments in the school comprise 946 boys compared with 942 boys at this time last year and 928 boys at the end of 1999. The 946 students comprise 328 in the Preparatory

School (compared with 324 at the end of last year, and 298 at the end of 1999), and 618 in the Secondary School (the same as the end of 2000, and compared with 630 at the end of 1999).

Reflecting overwhelming academic research that supports acceleration as a strategy to meet the needs of students with high intellectual ability, the first students entered PAC under the Einstein Program at the beginning of 2001. The Einstein Program is designed to facilitate acceleration of qualifying students from Year 6 directly into Year 8. The program's name celebrates the close links between PAC and Einstein through Old Scholar Henry Brose, who was Einstein's close friend and translator. This link was developed further during the year as PAC helped sponsor the "Einstein — Man of the Century" exhibition at the SA Museum, and the Einstein Lectures held in the Prince Philip Theatre. The school's links with Einstein through Henry Brose were perhaps the most significant element of the Museum's display in terms of the relationship between South Australia and Einstein.

### ***Effort Awards***

One of the frequent themes of newspaper articles on education is the alleged attitude among boys that it is "not cool" to work hard and make an effort. Like all schools, our prizes and incentives have traditionally only appealed to the top four or five percent of boys because they were based on achievement. Therefore, early last year, we introduced a system of certificates to recognise the efforts shown by boys. The concept was that regardless of the marks they obtained, boys who worked to their personal best and who received straight '1's for their effort grade, ought to be recognised. Having said that, the big incentive for some boys may not have been the certificates, but the afternoon tea put on after the Assembly to which they and their parents were invited.

At the most recent Awards presentation, 198 boys in the Secondary School earned these Effort Certificates compared with only 64 last year when the system was first introduced. This represents 32% of the Secondary School, compared with less than 10% when the system was first introduced last year. This is a most pleasing improvement, as effort grades are awarded according to strict criteria to ensure that there is no "grade inflation". The system of rewarding effort has been particularly embraced by boys in Year 8 and Year 10, where the percentages of boys receiving awards were 46% and 38% respectively. It is now generally recognised that the Effort Awards system has resulted in a fundamental change in the learning culture of the Secondary School and has overcome much of the "tall poppy syndrome" that afflicts adolescent boys in most schools. This benefits not only the boys who receive awards, but the entire class because of the improvement in the tone of the classroom. With 32% of our students making maximum effort, we have "mainstreamed" academic effort, and the achievers can no longer be dismissed as a marginal fringe.

### ***Links With Overseas Schools***

The new link with Datong High School in Shanghai is proving very fruitful and gives substance to our claim to educate young men for a global future. During the first half of this year, one of our Year 12 2000 students (Sean Filmer) studied Chinese language at Datong High School, subsequently working in a summer camp program for children at Guangya School, Dujiangyan in Sichuan Province. I was privileged to attend the opening of Datong High School's new buildings, constructed at a cost of 40 million Australian dollars in May this year, as a guest of the school, which used the opportunity to ask me to present a keynote speech at a symposium on "Education in the 21st Century", held at the school to

coincide with the opening. PAC subsequently welcomed five young teachers from Datong High School to visit PAC for a period of five weeks to observe and emulate the exemplary teaching practice of our teachers in the areas of Mathematics, Science and Computing. While with us, the teachers lived with several members of our teaching staff. In October, three members of the PAC staff, Mr Andrew Buxton, Mrs Karen Manton and Miss Linda Douglas, visited Datong High School during their attendance at the IBAP regional meeting in Shanghai, further strengthening the bridge of friendship between our schools.

### ***Staff Changes***

One of the sad aspects about the end of each school year is that we farewell highly regarded colleagues. At the end of this year, two highly respected members of our staff will retire — Mr Ian Freney, who has been at PAC since 1972 and is thus our longest serving member, and Mrs Jane Nelson, our Head of English who has been at PAC since 1984. After a national search, Mr Rob Andrew, from our own staff and an Old Scholar, was appointed to the position of English Head of Department from the beginning of 2002. Mr Andrew's teaching role will be replaced by Mr Ken Grady, an enthusiastic, gifted and highly experienced English teacher who has worked for the past twelve years at Wesley College's Prahran Campus in Melbourne. Mr Freney will be replaced by Mr Peter Karamoshos from Coomeallah High School.

The school community was saddened to learn of the sudden death of Mr Peter Layton early in October. Mr Layton had served the Princes community as a Laboratory Assistant since 1986, and was known to many of our boys through his enthusiastic work as a coach of cricket and rugby. Mr Layton's funeral was held in the College Chapel on Thursday evening, 1st November.

Miss Linda Douglas, Deputy Head of the Preparatory School since 1998, will leave PAC at the end of this year to take up the new position of Director of Curriculum Development at Walford Anglican School for Girls. In her short time at PAC, Miss Douglas won a place in the hearts of many of our Prep boys, and she will be missed greatly.

In August this year, Mr Roger Marshman, who has been at PAC since 1974, began a period of almost 2½ years leave until the beginning of 2004 to accept the newly-created position of Regional Middle Years Program (MYP) Coordinator with the International Baccalaureate Organisation in Singapore. In order to accept this position, he has relinquished his roles as Director of Studies and IB Coordinator, and after another national search, Mr Andrew Buxton from PAC was appointed to fill these positions.

Mr Mike Millard, who has been at PAC since 1989 and who is an Old Scholar, left in June to take up a position as Deputy Headmaster at Fraser Coast Anglican College in Queensland. Mr Millard's role as Head of Stanton House has been filled by Dr Adrian Johnson; his position as Geography Co-ordinator was also filled in an acting capacity by Dr Adrian Johnson, although from the beginning of 2002, this will be taken over by Mr Michael Vickery, who joined us from Canberra Grammar School at the time of Mr Millard's departure.

Mr Paul Hodgins, who has been a teacher in the Preparatory School since 1993, left us at the end of Term 3 to take up a position at Pulteney Grammar School. He was replaced by Mr Bert Schafranek, who will continue with us next year.

Mrs Marilyn Mosel, a teacher in the Preparatory School since 1982, will leave at the end of this year for family reasons, although it is hoped she will return from time to time as a relief teacher.

Mr Andrew Reed, who has been on leave this year, has indicated his intention not to return to PAC next year and will remain working with Speakman and Associates. As a consequence, Mr Chris Nicholls, who has been working at PAC on a contract basis, will remain with us.

Mrs Kristin Oxenberry, a teacher of Reception in the Preparatory School on contract since July 2001, will leave at the end of this year as she is expecting her first child in early 2002. Mrs Oxenberry will be replaced by Mrs Pamela Martin, a PAC parent who currently teaches at Loreto College Junior School.

Mrs Katie Carey, who teaches Music, will leave at the end of this year, having accepted the position of Head of Music at St John's Grammar School, Belair. She will be replaced by Mrs Carolyn Gutteres. Mrs Candice Kruger, who teaches Music in the Preparatory School, has taken maternity leave that will continue into next year, and while on leave she will be replaced by Mrs Jenny Chapman, who comes to us from Fulham Gardens Primary School.

Mr David DeBoer, who came to PAC at the beginning of 2000, will leave PAC at the end of this year to take up a teaching position at Pedare Christian College. He will be replaced by Mr Gary Jenkinson, a highly regarded teacher at St Peter's College.

Ms Leisa Moore, our part-time Art teacher in the Preparatory School since 1983, will take extended leave during 2002 to pursue her own artistic endeavours.

We were sorry to lose Miss Miranda Pallett in August when she returned to her native England. We were very fortunate in having Mr Brian Kennelly work with us until the end of this year to replace her, as Mr Kennelly arrived from Amman International School in Jordan prior to taking up his position of Head of the Senior School at Westminster School at the beginning of 2002. Mr Kennelly has made a deep impression on his students during his short stay. He will be replaced by Mr Eric McDonald, who is a young and enthusiastic teacher, currently working as Mathematics Co-ordinator at Kildare College.

After a productive and enjoyable year with us, Mr David Freeman will return to Walford Anglican School for Girls at the beginning of 2002, being replaced by Mr Alastair Lupton, another young and enthusiastic teacher who currently teaches at Scotch College.

### ***Concluding Remarks***

In a school with the wonderful traditions of PAC, it is sometimes too easy to focus on the past rather than the future. We face an important challenge in positioning ourselves strategically and educationally for the years ahead, which is why our new Strategic Plan is so significant for us. I want to conclude by focussing on our future, and to do so, I would like us to think well beyond the boundaries of our own school grounds.

Now that PAC has embraced all three programs of the International Baccalaureate, one of only 33 schools in the world to have done so, we have become an integral part of a worldwide community of education. A few years ago, there was a conference of IB Diploma students held in Tanzania. At that conference, the students met in small groups. At the end of the conference they released a statement pleading that education around the world should do three things better than it does at present. As the collective thoughts of hundreds

of young people — dare I say, tomorrow's leaders — from about 60 countries, their ideas should not be ignored.

The first thing they said was that students needed better training in information technology and information analysis. The impact of the world wide web, internet forums and electronic information transfer is only just beginning. Ten years ago the World Wide Web did not exist. At the beginning of 1996, there were 5 million sites on the World Wide Web; by the end of that year there were over 12 million. At the start of this year, there were 4 billion web pages, and today there are about 6.2 billion — every day, 7.3 million new pages are added to the world wide web, which was the total size of the web just five years ago. We have made ICT a priority this year at Princes, and we are doing so again next year as we upgrade and expand facilities and introduce a virtual private network under the direction of Mr Andrew Fergusson. The internet effectively expands the boundaries of our school to the ends of the planet, and if managed properly, our thinking should expand with it.

However, it is important to remember that many issues must be considered beyond simply increasing access to information. We have passed the days when getting the information was the problem. We are now entering an era when we can get so much information that we need to develop the skills of discerning between useful and useless information, and discriminating between use of the internet that enhances the quality of our thoughts and actions, and that which does not. The great need that is emerging is the ability to differentiate between truth and consensus. As the Greek philosopher Socrates said almost 2500 years ago, 'you are only truly educated when you understand how little you know'.

And that leads to the second point made by the I.B. students in Tanzania. Education should develop skills of critical thinking. Students should learn how to learn. Students should be equipped with life-long skills of learning and understanding, in contrast to what happens in many schools where students are forced to memorise by rote facts and figures which are likely to be out-of-date just a few years after they leave school. The students said they wanted to be taught the art of compromise and the art of diplomacy, because the alternative is the reality of war. It was once easy for us here in Australia to ignore comments such as these as being alarmist, but some of students at the conference came from countries such as Kuwait, Slovenia and Croatia for whom war has been a daily reality. With recent world events, the point made by the students begins to sound prophetic to us also.

At PAC, the introduction of the PYP in Kindergarten to Year 5, and the MYP in Years 6 to 10, has placed us in an excellent position to rise to this challenge. I know that many of our teachers are now developing skills of critical thinking with their students, often in innovative and creative ways. It is important to remember that teaching thinking skills can benefit every student, but it benefits especially those who struggle academically. Next year, with the appointment of Mrs Robyn Collins, we will be in an even better position to equip all our teachers with the skills to address individual boys' needs effectively.

The third point raised by the students in Tanzania follows on from this point. It was that students need to be taught tolerance and understanding. They might have expressed it just as well in Jesus' command to us — 'Love one another'. They felt it was important that everyone is taught the skill of understanding other people's priorities and needs. It is an important point that brings the dangers of conflict down to a personal level. I made the point at several school assemblies this year that the true measure of the strength of our

school community is the way we treat our weakest members. Harassment and bullying may be less widespread here than at other schools, but even one instance is far too many. The two highly successful visits by Professor Michael Carr-Gregg this year resulted in much greater awareness of harassment in our school community, a greater understanding of the need to abandon the infamous 'code of silence' when reporting instances of harassment, and several initiatives to address the issue, including the creation of the electronic bully board. Next year, the staff and the prefects will be working together in an effort to eliminate entirely the insidious impact of bullying and harassment from this school.

So in each of the three areas that the international group of students in Tanzania identified, it seems that Princes is already acting. I would expect nothing less, given our enviable reputation for a willingness to innovate, our clear sense of purpose, our energy, our concern for others, and above all our Christian heart. These things all flow from our mission and vision, and they define our identity — they distinguish PAC from any other school. We are fortunate that in our Strategic Plan, we now have a pathway into a future that is relevant for us, metaphorically carved in stone, so that the vision of our founders, who back in the 1860s dreamt of the ways this great school would transform young lives in the years ahead, can stand undiluted in the years to come.

There is a real sense in which Prince Alfred College is moving confidently into the future as a school which is dedicated to "transforming young boys into exceptional men". I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the wonderful staff of the College and to the School Council for their energy, wisdom and support in helping to make PAC the wonderful school that it is.