Aiming high with our green goals
Stewards of the environment
Food gardens connect community
When the final performance of a show has the entire full-house audience on their feet in a standing ovation, you know it’s a success.

That was the upshot of Pakenham campus’ production of ‘Jesus Christ Superstar’, which astonished the audience members who attended any of the five performances in July.

Written by theatre royalty Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, the interpretation saw the show set in a post-apocalyptic wasteland, resulting in some striking costumes and set designs. The performers were also backed by a full orchestra, comprising a number of professional musicians.

More than 100 students from Years 5-12 were part of the cast, crew and orchestra. For the first time, staff members also had a role on stage. Greg Wood, Sam Watson, Steve Watson, Doug Baxter and Richard Prideaux each donned a pink Mohawk wig each night for their unique — and highly entertaining — versions of ‘King Herod’.

“It was amazing to see some of our staff getting out of their comfort zone,” said director/Drama co-ordinator Amara Jensen. “They gave some great performances.”

She said one of the gratifying aspects of the College productions was seeing the friendships form between the older and younger students, who spent many hours together in rehearsals.

And after so many months of preparation, there were plenty of tears after the final performance and fond farewells to Year 12s who have been an integral part of the Performing Arts Department for so long.

But the show must go on and planning is already underway for the 2015 production — yet to be revealed.
Headmaster’s welcome

Spring has arrived and what better timing to publish a ‘green’ issue of Lux Luceat magazine.

Environmental sustainability is one of the College’s ‘Learning That Matters’ principles. We believe it is very important that students understand the importance of caring for the environment and learn to be responsible stewards.

This message is so beautifully captured in The Lorax, a wonderful children’s book written many years ago by Dr Seuss. It’s a text some of our Middle School students study.

The Lorax is a cautionary tale about human greed and environmental damage. Through the use of humour and delightful characters ‘The Once-ler’ and ‘The Lorax’, it warns us of the dangers of upsetting our ecosystem and the dire consequences of doing so.

I am proud that Beaconhills College has set the bar high in its quest to be environmental leaders. We have some very ambitious environmental targets, detailed in this issue, and have already successfully implemented many initiatives, such as our recent major solar power installations.

The College’s vegetable gardens at both campuses are flourishing and giving students a valuable opportunity to follow through the process of germinating seeds to planting then harvesting the produce. As well as the basics of permaculture, they can then see how the vegetables are put to use in our Food Technology classes, with the scraps recycled through our worm farms.

Our students understand the need to lighten our environmental footprint and even the youngest members of our community at Little Beacons Learning Centre have been instructing their parents on the need to separate waste into three bins!

I hope you enjoy learning more about the College’s environmental initiatives in this issue of Lux Luceat.

Mr Tony Sheumack
Headmaster

Chaplain’s corner

Genesis asks us to care for our earth

The creation story in the first book of the Bible, Genesis, is often misunderstood. This is primarily because we take a 21st century (AD) view of science to understand an ancient 10th century (BC) text.

What does this mean?

Well, Genesis is not a scientific document - it is more like a piece of poetry. However, it is full of meaning and truth of a different kind. It is primarily pastoral and spiritual in its content.

It is answering the question ‘why?’ rather than the question ‘how?’ Having said this, the story is full of great advice about human existence and the environment.

For example, if we look at the text it is divided into five major forms:


Whoever wrote this knew that God had some very important things to say about the environment we live in. They understood the importance of time, space, matter, force and motion being a part of balanced living.

Consequently, verse 15 asks us to be caretakers of the earth. It calls on all humankind (Adam) to take care of the earth. Adam is called to account because God saw all that had been made and “it was very good”. It was meant to stay this way.

By Chapter 3 and verse 17, Adam has forgotten all this. Care has gone from the environment with disastrous consequences. “Cursed is the ground because of you”, says God.

So it is Christian to take care of the earth. We are all called to be aware of the environment as we live out our lives on this fragile plant.

May God help us to reverse the damage that has already been done.

Rev Chris Leadbeatter
Senior Chaplain,
Co-ordinator of Wellbeing
Good environmental stewardship is not a new idea that suddenly emerged when the world started talking about global warming.

Indigenous Australians have long recognised the importance of being good custodians of the land. Middle School students are learning some of these lessons in class, on excursions and in their Outdoor Education programs.

In a Year 5 Indigenous Unit, Berwick Campus teacher Germain Ramos discusses with his students the impact of European colonisation on Australia. Students learn what the land was like before white settlement – how Aborigines only used what they needed and how they co-existed with their environment.

He said one of the points of historical interest was learning about the Yarra River’s original 2-3m waterfall, which used to be where Queens Bridge is now located. Settlers blew the waterfall up in 1883 to allow bigger ships to berth, but forever changing the Yarra by allowing fresh water and salt water to mix.

Mr Ramos said the Unit covered other aspects of European settlement.

“We talk about how the environment changed once cattle were introduced, about over-fishing and how Aborigines only took the food they needed,” he said. “The students watch a video called ‘Early Explorers’ and we discuss the introduction of diseases from white settlers as well.”

Mr Ramos said many students were from families who enjoyed camping holidays, so they had an appreciation of the impact of fire and rubbish, but also realised how beach or forest areas could change over time with development.

The lessons are reinforced at the Year 5 Jungai Centre camp near Eildon, which students from both Pakenham and Berwick attend. The camp has a focus on Koori culture.

“The granddaughter of the local elders talks about indigenous food and plants and the reliance the Aboriginal people have on the environment,” he said.

Year 5 students Abbey R and Brooke E said the Unit taught them many things about Australian history.

Abbey said she learned about changes that happened to the land – the pollution of rivers, over-fishing and clearing of land for farm animals: “The environment that Aborigines had enjoyed for thousands of years was no more.”

Brooke said it must have been hard for the Aboriginal people: “They lost children, land and the power to do what they wanted to do.

“Also, the white people changed the environment and destroyed much of the natural beauty of this country.”

Pakenham Campus Year 5 teacher Lynette George has an Indigenous background and has co-ordinated the College’s Reconciliation Assemblies, along with this year’s very successful Reconciliation Breakfast.

She said her Year 5 students also learned about the history of the Yarra during an excursion to the city, and they thought about the use of non-indigenous plants in the area.

“For example, along Southbank all the plants are European, not indigenous,” Ms George said.

She said students studied former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd’s ‘Apology’ to the Stolen Generations and other related issues, such as displacement of people from land.

Ms George said Aboriginal people would traditionally move around from one location to another in order for the land to regenerate.

“They were good custodians of the land – and the oldest living culture.”
Frogs benefit from funding pool

The local endangered Growling Grass Frog will have a comfortable sanctuary at Beaconhills College in Pakenham thanks to a Federal Government grant for National Science Week (August 16-24).

The College received $500 to spend to help plant vegetation around the pond at the front of the school grounds.

Year 6 students have already been out installing a selection of native tubers, including saw-leaved sedge, Kangaroo grass, native violet, long-leaved mat rush and water ribbon around the pond.

Teacher Danielle Negri said it was an interesting experience for many of the students, who learned new horticultural skills.

“This will be a project that we aim to continue until we are happy with the habitat that is created for the Growling Grass Frogs,” Ms Negri said.

The College’s Middle School Science club, ‘Beacon Growlers’, has for some time done extensive work in helping monitor the health of the nearby Toomuc Creek and rehabilitating the pond for the frogs.

Beacon Growlers Co-ordinator, Anne Bellavance, said in another year students could start some sound recordings to see what was happening on the ‘frog front’.

Education the aim of student committee

Sixteen enthusiastic Middle School students and parent Kerry Schroeder meet each fortnight at the Berwick Campus to plan the best ways to educate the community about the need for environmental sustainability.

The Middle School Environment Committee is about to release some '1920s-style silent movie' videos taking a fun look at a serious topic – raising awareness on waste recycling.

Work is also underway on producing mascots to match each of the College’s three coloured bins.

Ms Schroeder is a business consultant and former educator who has a keen interest in sustainability. She said the committee aimed to inspire greater engagement from the College community in environmental issues.

“The underlying philosophy is that ‘if it is good for the environment, then it is good for us’,” she said.
Goodbye winter, hello spring

Beaconhills College has set the bar high in terms of its environmental goals, but Business Manager David Young is committed to seeing the College become a more sustainable organisation.

The College’s Environment and Sustainability Plan outlines some ambitious targets - cut the College’s energy consumption that produces carbon emission by 50 per cent from 2009-2016; cut water use to seven litres per person each day by 2016; and ensure no waste goes to landfill by 2017.

Mr Young said despite the fact the College had added some 7000 square metres of buildings in the last four years, energy use had levelled off, showing tough measures were taking effect.

"With new LED lighting at the Berwick Campus and the solar system at both campuses – which will cut energy electricity consumption by 13 per cent – suddenly our targets are starting to become a reality," Mr Young said.

"The College’s Environment and Sustainability Plan outlines some ambitious targets.'

Other measures have included removing high energy water heaters and replacing them with instantaneous systems, installing timer switches and overall more clever building design.

Cutting water use was challenged by a dry summer which caused water pipes to crack, resulting in wasted water.

But Mr Young said the College now had online monitoring of water use, which meant any sudden problems could be fixed immediately. New buildings also have ‘tank to toilet’ water systems.

While the College’s six vegetable gardens are thriving and worm farms are disposing of 250kg of organic waste each week, the issue of waste disposal remains the biggest challenge of all.

"We know from audits that at least 75 per cent of material gong to landfill could be recycled, so we need to continue to educate the College community about the correct use of the three bin system," Mr Young said.

"It’s important all staff, students and parents understand the need for sustainability and our responsibilities locally and to the wider global community.”

Uni student’s helping hand

The College has welcomed a helping hand from Monash University intern Carissa Liddle, who is reviewing our sustainability practices.

Carissa, who is studying a double degree in Environmental Engineering and Science, has reviewed and updated our Environment and Sustainability Plan, looked at the data and tracking of our environmental footprint and suggested strategies to help us achieve our environmental goals.

Carissa grew up in Darwin and was part of the ‘Environmental Conservation Organisation’ at Darwin High School, which aimed to reduce the school’s energy consumption by 10 per cent.

She said one initiative was to introduce fun sticker messages near the light switches to remind people to switch off lights.

"We also ran a competition between faculties where we counted who had the most lights switched off at the end of the day," she said.

Carissa grew up in a ‘green’ family. Her father is an ecologist and she has worked with him doing plant and mammal surveys as well being involved in the Top End Native Plant Society.
Berwick Campus Year 9 teacher Tim Lake is well-known around the College for his involvement and interest in East Timor, but he has another passion – sustainable living.

His house in Langwarrin is built from Timbercrete, environmentally sustainable bricks made from timber waste products. They are also used in the Campus’ Technology and Year 9 Centres.

Mr Lake has designed the house, which he rebuilt after a house fire in 2003, with a number of other environmental features.

“It’s built around a passive solar design, with the main part of the building facing north and small windows facing west to shade from the hot sun,” he said. The windows are also double-glazed and he said the design meant there was no need for air-conditioning.

“It’s like going into a cave where the temperature stays relatively constant all year round,” he said. “The big difference is the double-glazing – the benefits are fantastic.”

Mr Lake said he and his wife primarily designed the house with the environment in mind, but the cost savings were a spin-off benefit.

“The solar hot water system means we have reduced electricity consumption for water heating by about 70 per cent,” he said (they are also on tank water). LED lighting throughout helps reduce the energy bill, too.

Mr Lake’s concern for the environment is also evident in his visits with students to East Timor and the remote Hatolia community. Last year he identified the need for students to bring home all their empty water bottles in their suitcases.

“Here we have a recycling program, but over there it is just not on their radar. We have to be sensitive about not creating a whole lot of rubbish that they don’t need”, he said.

For Year 6 Berwick Campus students, the popular children’s book The Lorax by Dr Seuss is a cautionary tale of human greed and the destruction of the environment.

Head of Middle School, Clare Tuohy, said her students were quite passionate about the topic when the book was discussed in class.

“We talk about selfishness and compare the story to what is happening around us in Berwick at the moment,” Mrs Tuohy said.

Year 7 students at Pakenham and Berwick Campuses read Tim Winton’s ‘Blueback’, a story of a young boy, Abel, who befriends a giant blue groper. When greedy fishermen threaten Blueback and his home is targeted by developers, Abel learns the value of the natural environment.

Head of Middle School English, Rosemary Russell, said the importance of caring for the environment was “almost intuitive in this beautifully written novel”.

Year 7 student Christina K said the novel taught her that, if we destroy the natural environment, then we will be destroyed.

“I believe Tim Winton wants us to understand that we need to care for the environment because, if we don’t, then the environment will change, not for the better, but for the worse,” she said.

Another text, ‘The Killing sea’, is studied by Year 8 English students to integrate with the Geography focus of the impact of natural disasters. It gives a realistic account of the Indonesian tsunami and Ms Russell said students enjoyed the “gritty realism” of the text.

Head of Berwick Campus Senior School, Alan James, said Year 12 Literature students have studied Peter Temple’s recent novel ‘The Broken Shore’, which has the environment and its preservation in the face of commercialism as a theme.

“The poetry of Seamus Heaney is also hugely influenced by the importance of the land and its historical, cultural and geographic influence on the world today,” Mr James said.
Food gardens connect community

The College's six food gardens are producing delicious vegetables, fruit and herbs for use in Science and Food Technology – and also connecting families.

Pakenham Junior School teacher Judy Rye is justifiably proud of the thriving vegetable garden which her Year 2 students enthusiastically help maintain.

College families from larger properties have donated horse and chicken manure for fertiliser and also help out with the garden maintenance.

This spring the garden is growing peas, silverbeet, cauliflower, broccoli, salad green, apricot and citrus trees.

The students take them home and watch them mature.

The produce is also put to use in classes. In the past, Year 3s have used a surplus of tomatoes to make batches of tomato sauce.

At the Berwick Campus, Food Technology teacher Anne Campbell said the Food Technology garden was currently producing silverbeet, tarragon, strawberries, spring onions, carrots, lettuce, broccoli and cauliflower.

She said the ingredients were incorporated into various recipes – for example in a unit on healthy eating, student made broccoli, feta and carrot pie from the vegetables, and Year 6s made hamburgers using the organic lettuce and herbs.

Ms Campbell said she grew up in a family where growing your own vegetables was a matter of course.

"My mum has been plaiting some of the garlic and chillies for the students, so we can hang them up in the Food Technology room at school," she said.

"The harvest is offered for sale to College families and the proceeds used to buy more seedlings."

Beaconhills Laboratory Technician Gloria Winstone has devised an ingenious method of growing seedlings for the college's vegetable gardens in her Science Laboratory greenhouse.

She has created biodegradable pots made from old newspapers. Rather than giving the seedlings root shock by removing them from tubs and replanting them, the seedlings are planted straight in the ground.

She said students loved getting into the garden and its designer, horticultural consultant Julie Weatherhead, has helped educate students about how to properly construct its layers to get the best results: “It has been a fantastic hands-on experience for students.”

Ms Rye said the learning in the garden was also integrated into Year 2 Science lessons.

“One of our units is on life-cycles, so we have been growing pea seeds, measuring the growth of roots and learning about the stages of growth.

Gloria's magic pots

Beaconhills Laboratory Technician Gloria Winstone has devised an ingenious method of growing seedlings for the College's vegetable gardens in her Science Laboratory greenhouse.

She has created biodegradable pots made from old newspapers. Rather than giving the seedlings root shock by removing them from tubs and replanting them, the seedlings are planted straight in the ground.
Captains excel

The two Berwick Campus Year 9 Captains have made their mark in very different ways.

Zachary V has gone through to the Victorian State Finals of the Legacy Public Speaking Awards, after winning the recent Preliminary Finals held at Legacy House in Melbourne. He delivered a five minute prepared speech on social justice and an impromptu speech, which he had only five minutes to prepare, on the topic ‘I Agree’.

Zachary said he had always enjoyed taking to the microphone and had been an MC on many occasions.

“Years ago I suffered from nerves before any event, however, thanks to the number of times I have been on stage, I no longer get nervous,” he said. He competes in the finals on 16 October.

Madison Schenk will attend the 100th anniversary of the landing of troops at Gallipoli, Turkey, after entering a State Government competition.

The Berwick Campus Captain was thrilled to be among the group of winning students announced by the Premier Denis Napthine.

Madison said she entered the competition because she had always been interested in history and she saw it as a “once in a lifetime opportunity” to connect with her heritage and Australia’s past.

Madison attended a ceremony at Parliament House with the Premier and Ted Baillieu, who is the chairman of the Victorian Anzac Centenary Committee.

She was among 80 students and 14 teacher chaperones from across the State chosen to represent Victoria at the Anzac Day Dawn Service.

Dancers strike gold again

Beaconhills College dancers have once again claimed gold at the national TFT Sports Event Management Dance Star competition, earning the national title for the Large Lyrical Secondary section.

The Berwick Campus troupe ‘Monsters’ won through preliminary and State competitions earlier this year, earning entry to the national competition on 9-10 August on the Gold Coast.

Proud Dance teacher Stephanie Borrie said the 16 students from Years 6-12 had tough competition but danced and performed to the best of their ability.

“All competitors have trained tirelessly since February this year,” she said. “The results are a true testament to their dedication, skill and passion for dance.”

In individual results, Bella A (Year 6) competed in Primary Open Solos, which was named the hardest competition of the weekend.

Japanese guests welcomed

Sister school relationships across countries are not unusual, but the 20-year-long connection between Beaconhills and Japan’s Ibaraki Christian High School has a special significance.

The Ibaraki School lies in one of prefectures affected by the devastating earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster of 2011.

Last year, for the first time since 2011, Ibaraki resumed its annual visits to Beaconhills and the College community this year hosted 16 students and two staff members from the Ibaraki school. A group of Beaconhills students will travel to Ibaraki in November.

The Ibaraki students enjoyed a range of activities and experiences during their stay, including a Zumba dance class, textiles, cooking meat pies and quiches, a day at Phillip Island and a visit to Healesville Sanctuary.

Student Nanami was thrilled to see koalas, kangaroos and emus at Healesville and also enjoyed trying an Aussie-style barbecue.

“It is my first time overseas and it is very exciting – I love Australia!” she said.

The Ibaraki students spent a day in the city visiting Federation Square, Bourke Street and the Queen Victoria Market.

Beaconhills also welcomed staff and students during August from Mito High School and Fukue High School.

As well as English classes, students visited Healesville Sanctuary and enjoyed feeding cockatoos in Sherbrooke Forest, along with an Aboriginal Cultural Program with head elder of the Wurundjeri people, Murrundindi.

Erica from Mito Senior High School meets Lizzie the Blue-tongued lizard, who lives at the Little Beacons Learning Centre.
East Timor and Vietnam

This was the second year that Year 9 students had the option of travelling to either Vietnam (Pakenham Campus) or East Timor (Berwick Campus) as an alternative to the Outdoor Education experience.

Students spent nine days in Vietnam visiting Ho Chi Minh City, the Cu Chi War Tunnels and helping with English classes, cooking and delivering meals in orphanages in the Nha Trang area.

In East Timor, students also spent nine days, with much of the time working in the Hatolia area delivering basic English classes at schools supported by Beaconhills College.

Head of Outdoor Education, Sam Maddock, said the program had been a huge success.

"Whether it’s the desert at Wyperfeld National Park as part of the Outdoor Education experience, or overseas in Vietnam or East Timor, both trips have their elements of challenge,” Mr Maddock said.

Pakenham Campus student Taylah S said visiting Vietnam made her realise how “happy and content” the people were although they didn’t have a lot of possessions.

“Something I will take away from this experience to Vietnam is the sense of belonging within the community and how they all get behind each other and help out,” she said.

Berwick’s Lily and Michala said the East Timor experience gave them great insight into what the Beaconhills College fundraising went towards.

“The school buildings and library that our school built have a massive impact on the learning opportunities that the Hatolia school kids can access,” they said.

“The money raised by Beaconhills will help the communities gain simple things we take for granted such as school books and pens.”

Karate trio success at nationals

Daniel T (Year 11), Matthew T (Year 8) and Mitchell T (Year 7) are a family force to be reckoned with.

The trio, from the Pakenham Campus, recently had great success competing in the Australian Karate Federation’s national titles held in Perth last term.

Daniel came home with two gold medals and one bronze, Matthew with a silver medal and Mitchell placed fourth.

The three brothers train at the Shukokai Karate dojo in Dandenong and all started learning martial arts when they were 7 or 8 years old.

Daniel has since also represented Australia in Fiji’s Oceania Championship in September.

He said martial arts had helped build his strength as a person, given him confidence and a good work ethic.

“I am more likely to work hard at tasks I am assigned due to the discipline I have learnt through karate,” Daniel said.

“I have also learnt how to be ‘street smart’ and have the ability to confidently protect myself and those around me.”

Love of Japanese leads to award

Inspirational Japanese teachers and love of learning languages has led Year 5 Pakenham Campus student Elliot P to an award in a Japanese speech competition.

Elliot was one of many students from schools across Melbourne to compete in the Japanese Language Teachers’ Association of Victoria’s Junior Speech Competition, held on 24 August at Wesley College.

His impressive skills in delivering both a recited and original prepared speech earned him the first prize in the Years 5 and 6 section.

Elliot P (with Campus Principal Richard Prideaux and teacher Junji Sakamoto).
Sustainable living is not a new concept at Little Beacons Learning Centre – it has been incorporated into the design of its programs, buildings and furniture since it first opened.

Little Beacons children are not just the future custodians of the environment, they already have a better understanding of the importance of sustainability than many adults.

Head of Little Beacons, Vicki Reid, said the three bin system to separate waste had been embraced by the children and supported by families at home.

She said awareness about the need to recycle correctly was also evident during mealtimes at the centre.

“We try and make it part of everyday practice,” Ms Reid said. “When they are eating, children think about wastage and take only the food they need before going back for more.”

On a more fundamental level, Ms Reid said the centre had always placed a high value on children having a connection with the outdoor environment. The benefits of the centre’s Early Explorers program, where children are able to explore and learn in a bushland area near the Year 9 centre, are already clear.

Aside from the joys of ‘getting back to nature’, children are also able to learn and reinforce knowledge from the classroom in the outdoor setting. Specially-designed overalls have allowed the children to explore freely without worrying about their clothes.

“There is no such thing as inappropriate weather, only inappropriate clothing!” Ms Reid said.

Children will also have plenty of opportunities to get their hands dirty in the large kitchen gardens recently installed at the centre.

“The five-year-olds already have a great crop of lettuce,” Ms Reid said. “We are also discussing other issues to do with food, such as how it is packaged.”

The centre will continue to improve the outdoor areas with passionfruit creepers planted along with large trees to help create shade (and oxygen).

Two and three-year-olds are now enjoying their new play space which includes features such as a digging patch, dinosaur rock terrain and paths.

The next stage will involve establishing a butterfly garden in the hope it will attract caterpillars.

'Aside from the joys of ‘getting back to nature’, children are also able to learn and reinforce knowledge from the classroom in the outdoor setting.'
Grant Kassell was consistently one of the best academic students throughout his six years at Beaconhills from 1988 to 1993, culminating in his achievement as Dux of Beaconhills College in 1993. He was also House Captain of Rich House in 1993.

Prior to this, Grant achieved a Silver Award in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, was the Club Winner and Regional Finalist in the Lions Club Youth of the Year Competition and won a Major Bursary Award in the Open Computers Division of the Science Talent Search in 1992.

After leaving Beaconhills in 1993, Grant completed a Bachelor of Computer Science & Engineering (1st class Honours) at Monash University, Clayton and, later, a Graduate Certificate of Management (Technology Management) APESMA & Latrobe University;

In 1997, Grant chose to apply for a position with a small innovative environmental engineering and research company, ECOTECH, rather than accept offers from a number of major corporations, where he was appointed initially as a computer systems engineer.

Ecotech has grown into a world-renowned company which is regularly contracted by overseas government departments and companies to design and manufacture a wide range of environmental measuring equipment.

In 1999, he was promoted to Software Research & Development Manager, overseeing the development of all Ecotech software and firmware projects.

In 2001, he was promoted again, this time to the position of Research & Development Manager in Ecotech, responsible for the development of new air quality monitoring products for the international market.

In 2004, he was promoted to the senior management team at the age of 29, now overseeing the engineering as well the Research & Development Departments of Ecotech.

Grant’s new role was to assess technologies and develop the company’s engineering resources to ensure quality production of their inventions. As a consequence, he has had to travel overseas extensively, responding to international requests for their equipment.

In 2014, Grant is now more involved in the management side of the company, overseeing staff progress and setting priorities, developing the company’s strategic goals and managing the sales requirements for their developmental projects.

He recently attended the Term 3 Pakenham Campus Lux Luceat Society Dinner, where he gave a comprehensive report on his work and the environmental challenges facing us, and shared the enormous personal benefits that have accrued since taking the risk of joining a small and relatively new company which has grown over his 17 years with them into one of the world’s leading designers of highly sensitive equipment for measuring matter in the environment.
Bigger fish to fry

A love of fishing and the great outdoors has developed into a future career for Berwick Campus alumnus Laurent Campbell (Class of 2012).

He is now doing a Bachelor of Environmental Science (Environmental Management and Sustainability) at Deakin University.

Growing up in walking distance to the Cardinia Creek meant Laurent spent many happy hours there attempting to catch fish and freshwater crayfish.

When it came time to choose a ‘Common Good’ project in Year 9, something with an environmental theme was his natural choice.

“I asked if we could do some surveys on what types of species were in the creek, because Melbourne Water were doing water surveying, but not really looking at the creek’s ecology,” Laurent said.

He and his classmates set up some small nets in the creek near the Beaconsfield train station and what they found was surprising — a number of native species of fish, some of which were threatened.

The list included the threatened Southern Pygmy Perch, freshwater crayfish, Mountain Galaxias and Common Galaxias, Gippsland Freshwater Spiny Crayfish and Brown Trout.

“It was surprising that those fish are there, near the train station, as it is not a particularly good environment,” Laurent said.

“I don’t think people realise these species are here, but it is important to preserve those food webs and food chains.”

“Fish increase the water quality and help stop the imbalance in the population of other things.”

Now he is at university, Laurent has returned to the creek to do another study on macroinvertebrates (animals which have no backbone), as their absence or presence indicates the quality of the water. The study also looks at the urban/rural impacts on waterways.

Laurent said his course involved plenty of fieldwork and he hoped eventually to work in the sustainability area, perhaps with the Department of Primary Industries.

“What I think is really interesting is how development impacts on the environment,” he said.

Stephanie Cox nee-Lord (Class of 1996)

Over the past three years, an Emerald Community Girls Night In has been held at the Emerald Performing Arts Centre, giving local women the chance to enjoy a great night out with friends while raising money for the Cancer Council.

The first event was attended by over 200 women and raised over $10,000 and the second was attended by 200 plus women and raised about $12,000, growing in the third year to in excess of 220 raising almost $13,000, which over the last three years has donated over $35,000 to the Cancer Council.

The organiser of this wonderful fundraising event was Stephanie Cox nee-Lord (Class of 1996), daughter of longtime College Board member Roger Lord. Her work was so successful that their efforts were honoured by a research award being named after them, “The Emerald Community Research Award”, as well as the opportunity to nominate which clinical trial was to receive the grant.

Stephanie decided to hold the event after her mum was diagnosed with breast cancer.

“I felt so helpless and wanted to do something. I saw the campaign for the Girls Night In and realised that this was something I could do to help,” she said.

“I originally planned to have a few of girlfriends over at my place, but my little idea had wings and with the help of friends and heaps of donations, grew each year into a community girl’s night.”

Lorraine has since been given the all clear for breast cancer, enjoying her post cancer, healthy life. She is currently a Dandenong Council’s ‘Health Champion’, an initiative run by the council to encourage healthy lifestyles.

Postscript: Apart from being an alumnus and daughter of one of our Board members, Stephanie married fellow alumni Chris Cox (Class of 1993). In fact, all three Cox boys married Beaconhills girls! Matthew Cox (Class of 2000) is married to Amy White (Class of 2000) and Tim Cox (Class of 1995) is married to Bronwyn George (Class of 1995).
The Beaconhills Alumni Association took an important step in its progress at the recent 2014 AGM when, for the first time, all leadership positions were filled by alumni. Former Deputy-Headmaster, Howard Brown, stood down as the Chairman after his commitment over the past three years since 2011 to establish our alumni association.

The new Chairman is Kimberley Andrews nee-Bulka (Class of 2001), the Secretary is Bethany Thearle nee - Kemp-Esmore (Class of 1997), the Treasurer is Jacqui Heydon (Class of 1996), the Deputy-Chairman is Nigel Boltwin (Class of 2000) and a new committee member is Belinda Malcolm (Class of 2000)

We will introduce you to the executive members and their career paths since school in the next issue of Lux Luceat.

If you would like to contact any members of the committee, send an email to alumni@beaconhills.vic.edu.au

Rick Tudor (Beaconhills Headmaster 1989-1997) has been a regular visitor to the College of late. Now retired from Trinity Grammar School after 15 years as their Headmaster, Rick has taken three opportunities to visit us recently, initially to be taken on an extensive tour by Tony Sheumack to see our recent developments, then to have lunch with our foundation staff and finally to be interviewed on video at length by the College Archivist/Historian about his time as our Headmaster.

Rick and Liz Tudor are now based in an apartment in South Yarra near the Botanical Gardens, though they still have their property at Moorooduc, and Liz continues to teach at the Veterinary Science School at Melbourne University.

For those of you who may like to catch up with Rick Tudor in person, he has agreed to attend a Beaconhills alumni event in 2015 as the guest speaker. Details of this event will be publicised in a future issue of Lux Luceat.

David Moseley (Class of 1995)

David Moseley was the guest speaker at the Term 3 Lux Luceat Society Dinner at the Berwick Campus. David is currently employed by the Victorian Dept of Health to work in the City of Casey as a psychologist, where he now leads a team of over 20 specialists providing support for local families and young people in crisis.

Many of our budding psychologists plied him with questions about his work and the practical measures required to cope with the burdens of other people’s lives.

David was the College Captain in 1995, after being one of the leading lights in the performing arts during its pioneer years at the College, including the role of Barnum in the 1994 musical ‘Barnum’, where his wife-to-be, Fiona Pearson, played alongside him as Jenny Lind.

David had a desire to become a psychologist from when he was in Year 10, and he shared with us his delight in being able to undertake in-depth studies into his chosen career over many years (he has a PhD) and to develop his skills as a practising psychologist for all of his working life. "I know many of my peers have had many changes of directions and many different jobs, but I have thoroughly enjoyed pursuing a single path."

David recently stood as a candidate for the College Board and, with one child at the Berwick Campus and another to join her soon, it would not surprise us to see David once more very involved in Beaconhills College.
Inset: Eva R from Little Beacons enjoying painting.

Grace W, Ashton R and Xavier D in one of the Junior School gardens.