Beaconhills has celebrated its 20 year friendship with the Ibaraki Christian High School in Japan during a pre-Christmas student study tour. Our visiting students were part of a ceremony where leaders of both schools exchanged gifts in recognition of two decades of successful student exchanges. Headmaster Tony Sheumack presented a painting by Australian Indigenous artist Tommy Crow called ‘Sunset Dreaming’.

Beaconhills students have visited Ibaraki every year except 2011 when the devastating tsunami made visits impossible. After spending time in Ibaraki with host families, our students enjoyed visiting sites in Kyoto such as the Nijo Castle and the Imperial Palace as well as the famous Fushimi Inari Taisha Shrine (pictured), used as a location in the film ‘Memoirs of a Geisha’. They travelled by bullet train to Hiroshima where they visited the A Bomb Dome, Atomic Bomb Epicentre and Memorial Peace Museum which houses many exhibits telling the story of the rebuilding of Hiroshima.

Cover: Beaconhills College’s top 10 high achievers (Kelsy De Prada and Kaili Scarlett absent): (L-r back row) Dua Nazar (Berwick Campus Dux), Head of Senior School Pakenham Dux) Reuben, David Lorimer, Kristy Amos, Head of Senior School Berwick Alan James and Taylah Orr. (L-r front row) Hayleigh Sharman, Amy Li Ting Tung (College Dux and Pakenham Campus Dux), Elyse Willemsen and Aaron Dudley.
Congratulations Class of 2015

Welcome to our first issue of 'Lux Lucent' for 2016, celebrating our new VCE results as we prepare for another great year at Beaconhills College.

I congratulate all 272 Year 12 students from the Class of 2015 who have successfully completed their VCE. It is a wonderful achievement.

We are not a select-entry school, yet when you look at our student achievements across such a diverse range of subjects, the story is overwhelmingly positive. Nineteen students recorded ATARs (Australian Tertiary Admission Rank) in the 90s and around half of all VCE students ranked in the top third of the State.

Amy Li Ting Tung, from the Pakenham Campus, is our College Dux with an ATAR of 95.55 and Dua Nazar is the Berwick Campus Dux with 94.5. I commend these students for their outstanding efforts.

The diversity of our College certainly shines through in this issue of Lux Lucent. Not only do we have students achieving well academically, but experiencing programs such as World Challenge in Central America, visiting our sister school in Ibaraki, Japan, or even being recruited to play College basketball in the USA.

This issue also honours the many students across all sub-schools who earned awards for their academic, community, sporting and performing arts endeavours in 2015.

Beaconhills is certainly a rich tapestry of people and educational programs. I look forward to the school year and hope you enjoy this celebratory issue of 'Lux Lucent'.

Mr Tony Sheumack
Headmaster

grATAR than the ATAR

“I am the greatest.” These are the legendary words Muhammad Ali used to intimidate his opponents. Each year, magazines publish lists of the most powerful and rich people in the world. Greatness is often aligned with a sense of higher status, higher worth and therefore higher value as a person.

Yet there is a need, as we start a new year, to challenge the idea of greatness. As they concluded their studies, the class of 2015 at the Berwick Campus created a unique video - they were “grATAR than the ATAR.” It was wonderful to watch as our students expressed how they were not defined by a number.

As human beings, our lives are so much more than the sum of our wealth, our occupation or our social status. People cannot be defined so simply. As Genesis 1:27 highlights, the uniqueness of human life-being made in the ‘image of God’ means that we have creative, communicative, relational, moral and spiritual capacities. This is why we seek to have an holistic education for our students.

Jesus also challenged the idea of greatness. He said that the one who wanted to be great was not to think of themselves more highly than others but, in fact, had to become like a servant, having that attitude of service to others (Matthew 20:36; 23:11; Mark 9:35; 10:43; Luke 22:26).

Revd Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain

In 2016, we can truly hope for a great year and that it is a year marked by service, humility, care for others, striving for our best efforts and challenging ourselves.
Year 12 is an important year and VCE teachers feel an extra burden of responsibility to ensure their students do well. And they take great pride in their successes.

Pakenham Campus Literature and English teacher Marianne Del Papa and Berwick Campus Media teachers Nick Zomer and Deborah Spilsbury have extra reasons to be proud this year. Their subjects were among the top performers, with Berwick Campus Dux Dua Nazar scoring an impressive 46 out of 50 in Media.

At the time of printing, the Berwick Media teaching team had four students shortlisted for VCE Season of Excellence awards.
Top 10 high achievers

Amy Li Ting Tung
(College and Pakenham Campus Dux)
95.55

Elyse Willemsen - 94.65

Dua Nazar
(Berwick Campus Dux)
94.5

David Lorimer - 94.5

Kelsy De Prada - 94.45

Kristy Amos - 94.35

Taylah Orr - 93.7

Aaron Dudley - 93.5

Hayleigh Sharman - 93.4

Kaili Scarlett - 92.8

Ms Spilsbury, whose class produced the ‘grATAR than the ATAR’ video, attributed the success of Media to “passion, hard work and an amazing group of students”.

“I think Nick (Zomer) and I work really hard together, so we’re a good team, and the students’ energy has been incredible,” she said.

Ms Del Papa said the teaching team’s strategy was to “motivate students into having ambition”.

“We want them to realise that the higher the score, the better the opportunity,” she said. “We make them believe they can achieve.”

Ms Del Papa’s four Literature and English students were among the College’s top 10 high achievers, but she said it was all about good old-fashioned effort.

“Those students were the hardest workers – they were very proactive with their learning,” she said.
Jungles, waterfalls, volcanoes, white-water rafting and beautiful Spanish colonial towns were among the amazing experiences of Beaconhills students visiting Costa Rica and Nicaragua in December for World Challenge.

Beaconhills participates in World Challenge every two years and students must raise funds and complete a community service element as part of the trip.

This year students planted indigenous trees near Santa Maria de Dota in Costa Rica and provided unskilled labour in a Nicaraguan community.

They tackled some exciting treks, such as the Monteverde cloud forest and Zona Santos, where they saw canyons, jungles, rivers and waterfalls.

Students Madison M and Renee J said the experience was unforgettable and, while the trekking was physically challenging, it was “very rewarding and worthwhile”.

Central American adventure
Mark Tory seemed an unlikely choice to teach Systems Engineering when he took the job at the Pakenham Campus in 1999. Along with his teaching qualification, he had a Bachelor of Science majoring in geology and geophysics and cheerfully admits that - at the time - he didn’t know one end of a resistor from another. But 14 VCE Season of Excellence Top Designs and eight Premier’s Awards later, nobody can argue that Mr. Tory knows his stuff.

The Technology Department has certainly progressed dramatically since 1999. "I started in a building near the toilets where you could just squeeze in 20 Year 7s," Mr. Tory remembers. "We had some dodgy soldering irons and a few old rusty resistors lying around – and you could hear the toilet flush through the wall."

He credits colleagues Derek Birch and Anthony Greaves with helping improve his knowledge of Systems Engineering, but there is no doubt he was a quick learner and a gifted teacher. The incredible line-up of projects his students have produced under his tutelage have included a remote-controlled beer fridge, a full sized air hockey table, pinball machine, automatic dog feeder, a laser harp, simulated airplane wing, an automated punching bag, robotic hand, home security system and even a car crash simulator. Perhaps it’s Mr. Tory’s own form of reverse psychology which has led to the department’s outstanding success.

"When students are choosing their projects to build, I actually try to direct them away from going for Top Designs because it is a lot of work and can impact on their other studies," he said. "But then I say ‘I’m willing to be persuaded – if you can keep up your studies, then go for it!’"

Staff profile Mark Tory

Meet our new College captains

We ask our 2016 Senior School captains and vice-captains: ‘What is something about yourself that people may not know?’

**Berwick Campus** (from left to right)

Mitchell H (captain): After I finish school I hope to go abroad to study drama at one of the top drama universities in the world.

Paige R (captain): On first meeting I think I seem pretty quiet and shy but once you get to know me I’m the complete opposite.

Gabrielle D (vice-captain): I love to go up to the river, waterski and play netball.

Liam C (vice-captain): I thoroughly enjoy all sporting activities as well as getting away from the stresses of the modern world...whether just camping by a river, going four-wheel driving or doing some hunting.

**Pakenham Campus** (from left to right)

Jackson C (vice-captain): I’m an avid sports fan - both playing and watching all sports. I love to eat chicken nuggets.

Gemma S (captain): I have named all of my pets after Harry Potter characters and I would like to be an occupational therapist when I leave school.

Nicholas G (captain): I happen to have an obsession with Cold Chisel.

Eliza A (vice-captain): When I’m feeling stressed from study I often resort to gardening. I am a keen gardener who simply has the desire to give back to nature.
Presentations

1. Mikaela D (Pierre de Coubertin awardee)
2. Evie H (Little Beacons)
3. Nicholas S and Shae W, Pakenham Campus Captains
4. Mary Z (Year 9 - Community Service awardee)
5. Sophie P (Junior School)
6. Daniel T (Senior School)
7. Year 5 student Kasumi O (Middle School)

1. Being

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.
Beaconhills College’s combined campus girls’ basketball team has won the silver medal at the Australian Schools Championships in Canberra.

The Under 17 girls’ Division 2 team had a spectacular week of basketball at the AIS Basketball and Netball Centre to win through to the finals against Ballarat’s Loreto College. The final score was 46-58.

Coaches Colin and Kerry Burns said the girls played to the best of their abilities.

“It was a well-deserved win after a full year of strong commitment and hard work for the first truly combined College squad,” Mrs Burns said.

In other results, the Under 17 boys’ Division 3 placed tenth and Under 17 Boys’ Division 2 placed seventh – an amazing week-long effort from every student.

The finals team included Kate B, Kyra E, Vanessa F, Ashley G, Bryannen G, Mady H, Madelyn J, Stephanie K and Briana S. Paige C was unable to play.

Joy of gardening

Middle School students (L-r) Alexandra A and Jenna H have learned about permaculture this year in the Berwick Campus’ Year 9 kitchen garden – planting, weeding, propagating, striking cuttings and harvesting produce.

Prestigious ‘Excellent’ rating for Little Beacons

Little Beacons Learning Centre has achieved an ‘Excellent’ rating by the Australian Children’s Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA).

Little Beacons is the first early learning centre in Cardinia Shire to earn the prestigious rating and the second in Victoria amongst independent schools. It is the highest rating a service can achieve under the National Quality Framework.

Silver medal for national basketballers

Regan C has placed second against the best middle years’ chess players in the country at the National Interschool Chess Championships held from 30 November to 1 December.

Regan came second in the ‘individual performance’ category by winning six out of seven games (five wins and two draws). He missed the championship title by just half a point.

Regan also played in a warm-up tournament winning all seven games. On the day he received a ‘Junior Master’ certificate recognising his outstanding achievements in chess, presented by International Master and former Australian Chess Champion, Robert Jamieson.

Civics in action

Year 4 students from the Pakenham Campus had a taste of life in local government last term when they visited the Cardinia Shire Council chambers for a mock council meeting.

It was all part of their studies in civics and citizenship.

Chess master does it again

Middle School students (L-r) Alexandra A and Jenna H have learned about permaculture this year in the Berwick Campus’ Year 9 kitchen garden – planting, weeding, propagating, striking cuttings and harvesting produce.
Farmyard favourites came to the Berwick Campus Junior School last term when students presented a two-part stage show.

Years 2-4 students performed Honk! - an adaptation of the famous tale of ‘The Ugly Duckling’ by Hans Christian Andersen, while Prep and Year 1 students presented a selection of songs; Dingle Dangle Scarecrow, Old MacDonald, Gummy Bears, Hot Potato, Five Little Monkeys and BINGO.

**HONK! to farmyard friends**

Berwick Campus graduate student Mason Peatling has earned a place in USA’s Eastern Washington University basketball program. The talented 6’8” (200cm) basketballer has played the last two years for the Dandenong Rangers in the South East Australian Basketball League and was chosen to represent Victoria Metro at the Under-20 Australian Junior Basketball Championships.

Mason will travel back to the States in June to prepare for the 2016/17 NCAA season with the Eastern Washington University ‘Eagles’.

**Mason to play USA College basketball**

Berwick Campus Middle School student Dylan Beaumont, 12, has published and launched a unique interactive ebook called BallSports which reflects his passion for all things sport.

Now available on iTunes, BallSports includes slideshows, video footage, instructional guides and ‘wow’ moments, as well as exclusive interviews with some of Australia’s leading sports commentators.

Well-known commentator Sandy Roberts was one of the identities Dylan approached for an interview. He made a guest appearance at Berwick’s Middle School Assembly last term, when Dylan interviewed him live on stage as part of the ebook launch.

BallSports is on the iBooks Store for only $2.99.

**Year 6 student launches ebook**
For many children, the move from Early Years education into Prep may seem daunting. But Little Beacons children are ready to take the change in their stride. That's because of the groundwork put in place from the moment children join Little Beacons. Head of Little Beacons, Vicki Reid, said that—particularly for children who joined the centre from a young age—the shift to Prep was virtually seamless. "Our aim is that once children start at Little Beacons, there is no transition," Ms Reid said. "Children have so many opportunities each year to be familiarised with the whole College, whether it is singing in front of Middle and Senior School students, watching performances, sporting or church events or being part of other community celebrations."

But underpinning preparedness for Prep is each child's resilience, which educators work hard to support and encourage as children grow and develop.

"Resilience means that children should be able to adapt when things go wrong without falling apart, to learn to succeed but also to fail— but pick themselves up and keep trying."

She said the Early Explorers Program, where four and five year olds go to the "outdoor classroom" in a bush setting on the College grounds, was a wonderful way to help build resilience. "We are now introducing Early Explorers to three year olds because it has been so successful," she said. "Sometimes in the classroom, children can feel that when they fail at something, everyone is watching, but it's these children who will often be the leaders when they are in an outdoor setting. And that helps build confidence."

By the time children start Prep, they should not only be resilient but have developed the ability for collaborative relationships, feel they are a member of a community and can apply their skills in a variety of different settings, whether inside or outdoors.

At the end of the year, Little Beacons held a Presentation Ceremony where children received various community and achievement awards and crossed a bridge to shake hands with Headmaster Tony Sheumack, symbolising their welcome to Prep for 2016.
Don Laughton
Musician extraordinaire (Beaconhills College 1990-2016)

It was a sad day for Beaconhills College when Don Laughton finally put his baton down and retired.

It followed 24 extraordinary years as the founder of the College band and instrumental music program at both campuses — from 1990 to 2002 at the Pakenham Campus, and from 2003 to 2014 at the Berwick Campus.

In both situations, Don was responsible for building the whole band and instrumental music program from scratch, providing hundreds of students with their first experience of learning a musical instrument and creating music in a band or an ensemble.

Perhaps the most lasting aspect of Don’s legacy has been the impact he had on his band members. They have left the College with a great love of music and many have gone on to become professional musicians or music teachers. It is clear from their feedback that all were clearly blessed to have come under the influence of a man with vast musical experience, wisdom and great humour.

In 2007, Adam Messenger (Class of 1995) reflected on Don’s influence on his own life: “Something happened in my first term at Beaconhills which was very pivotal in my schooling experience – I began learning the saxophone with Mr Laughton. He didn’t just teach me the saxophone or songs, but he modelled something that I have never let go of – music is wonderful, it’s to be enjoyed, and it is fun! I learnt so much from him – how to relate to others, how to engage students (I’m a teacher myself now), how to laugh at myself, and how to encourage others. His sincere personality and his great sense of humour influenced me, and many others, for the rest of our lives.”

Don’s achievements at Beaconhills have to also be put in the context of very limited facilities for music during much of his time at the College – converted toilets and cupboards as practice rooms, performances in corridors, rooms without windows and so on. For Don, none of this was an impediment to pushing his students to perform to a very high standard on all occasions.

For the band students themselves, the highlights of their time with Don will no doubt be the many band trips – Alice Springs, Tasmania, Inverloch, Gippsland, Gold Coast and the Mount Gambier Jazz Festival (many times). Don was always seeking out opportunities for his bands to perform publicly as well as ensuring the College Concert Band was the flagship for all formal College occasions, especially for the Presentation Nights at the Robert Blackwood Hall.

In addition, from the very earliest days of the band, all school productions used a live band, led by Don Laughton, rather than a recorded soundtrack. This started with The Wizard of Oz in 1992 when the band was only in its second year.

Don Laughton will never be forgotten. He was a charismatic, demanding, wholly professional and incredibly supportive bandmaster who inspired a generation of pioneer musicians at both campuses and who has left the College and hundreds of its music students with a lifelong musical legacy.
The guest speaker at the third Beaconhills Alumni Association Dinner for 2015, held in Term 3 at Viale’s in Pakenham, was Mr Howard Brown, the College’s first Deputy-Headmaster from 1991 to 1999.

Over 40 past students, staff and parents were there to hear Howard recount the ‘behind the scenes’ stories of life at Beaconhills in the 1990s. His stories included the sleepless nights at school each year for himself and the Headmaster, Rick Tudor, prior to ‘muck up day’ for the Year 12s; finding creative solutions when there were limited resources (including chairs and desks); and supporting the many successful co-curricular programs just starting at the College at the time – kayaking, sailing, Cadets, bands, Field Naturalists, local history projects, and so on.

Everyone enjoyed reminiscing with Howard about an era in the College’s life which was exciting and challenging as the College developed a fine reputation in the local community and across the state.

The next exciting Beaconhills Alumni Association Dinner is on March 18, 2016, when we will thank and farewell the College ‘band supremo’ for 24 years, Don Laughton. All former members of the Concert Band, Jazz Band and ensembles are invited to join us at the Global Beacons Centre at the Pakenham Campus from 7pm onwards.
Welcome to 2016. I hope that you and your family had a wonderful festive season.

A new year often starts off with new goals or personal desires which you wish to achieve throughout the coming year. I hope that we can inspire you to make one of your goals to reconnect with Beaconhills. We would love to hear from you and have you join our Alumni Association. Memberships are available through the College Shop.

We have a very exciting year planned with two main events - a reunion with Mr Don Laughton and a trivia night. The Alumni Association Committee always welcomes new members to help run these events and if you’re interested please don’t hesitate to contact me on 0438 558 893 for further information.

I hope that 2016 brings you and your family good health and happiness. I look forward to hearing from you soon and seeing you at our events this year.

Ms Kimberley Bulka
President Beaconhills Alumni Association

Class of 1995 20 year reunion

Thanks to the efforts of Ros Saul, the Class of 1995 held a very successful 20 year reunion at the Beaconsfield Hotel on Saturday 24 October. Over half of the Class of 1995 attended and all enjoyed the opportunity to catch up again, share accounts of their misdemeanours at school and chuckle over the hundreds of old school photos on display. Callum White, a current Beaconhills parent, did a splendid job as the MC for the night. A small group also took the opportunity to go on a guided tour of the school beforehand.

Lauren Ayton – bionic eye pioneer

Our Class of 2000 Dux, Lauren Ayton, was very much in the news during 2015, featuring on ABC radio on many occasions as well as other radio stations and even appearing in television documentaries presenting the latest developments in bionic eye research.

As a result, we invited Lauren in Term 4, 2015 to return to the school to again be the guest speaker at a Pakenham Campus Lux Lucent Society Dinner and to update us on her work.

Lauren is becoming well-known in media circles as an excellent communicator of scientific research and breakthroughs, and she illustrated this wonderfully with the students with her overview of current research into eyesight restoration, including the bionic eye project.

It was also pleasing to hear that Lauren’s former science teachers have listened to her speak at various public presentations this year, including her Biology teacher, Les Glasgow, who helped her significantly along her career path when she was at school.

Lauren continues to work part-time as an optometrist ‘to keep her hand in’, but her growing passion is for science education, a talent for which we can attest along with many others in the media. We will continue to follow Lauren’s career with great interest, and we thank her for her ongoing interest in the College.

Cleo Bachelor of the Year

Congratulations to Matt Buntine (Class of 2011) who is not only a successful AFL footballer but can now add the Cleo Bachelor of the Year title to his CV.

The Greater Western Sydney player was crowned Bachelor of the Year at Cleo’s awards night in November last year in Darlinghurst, Sydney.

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