## WHAT’S GOING ON

### UP-COMING EVENTS

See Merici web-site for full Calender and further details

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<th>Monday 30 April</th>
<th>First Day Term 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monday – Friday 30 April – 4 May</td>
<td>Catholic Schools Week</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 1 May</td>
<td>Anzac assembly – 11.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 2 May</td>
<td>Catholic Schools Week Event – Opening of The Merici Trade Training Centre – “The Bridge” 10.00am</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Merici Science Series – Dr Russell Barrow – 3.45 to 5.00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday 7 May</td>
<td>Enrolment Period Begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 9 May</td>
<td>“Open Day” – 9.30am to 7.00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bridge Restaurant 12.30pm – bookings essential - 6243 4100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday – Friday 15 – 18 May</td>
<td>NAPLAN Years 7 &amp; 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 15 May</td>
<td>Year 7 - 2013 Information Evening 6.00 to 7.00pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Information Displays and Tours from 5.00pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday 16 May</td>
<td>Duke of Edinburgh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Parent Information Night 5.30 to 7.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday 17 May</td>
<td>Year 11 – 2013 Information Evening 6.00 to 7.00pm (Careers Expo from 4.00pm)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday – Sunday 18 – 20 May</td>
<td>Band Camp</td>
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<td>Tuesday 22 May</td>
<td>Social Justice Assembly – 11.30am to 12.30pm</td>
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<td>Thursday 24 May</td>
<td>Angela Merici Day, Mass and Lunch</td>
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<td>Friday 25 May</td>
<td>Enrolment Period Ends</td>
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<td>Saturday 26 May</td>
<td>Sorry Day</td>
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<td>National Eisteddfod – Band Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday – Sunday 27 May – 3 June</td>
<td>Reconciliation Week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 30 May</td>
<td>Bridge Restaurant 12.30pm – bookings essential - 6243 4100</td>
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<td>Thursday 31 May</td>
<td>Year 7 Immunisations</td>
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## COVER PHOTO

Cover image: Students enjoy the Swimming Carnival.

## Building Futures Editorial Team:

Year 10 Technology Class

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New Multipurpose courts in Action.
Partnerships with parents

Working in partnership with parents is crucial to enabling students to reach their full potential. However, secondary schools are not traditionally as accessible to parents as primary schools. Structures in secondary schools do not encourage “dropping in” and it is obviously more difficult for parents to develop relationships with the large number of teachers involved in their child’s education in any one year in secondary school. Correspondingly, it is also more difficult for secondary teachers with a large number of students in their care, to provide the same amount of time to parents as is possible for teachers in primary school. The independence that young people develop in all aspects of their lives during adolescence is also a factor in parents being less involved in their learning in secondary school.

Nevertheless, young people need their parents more than ever during these critical adolescent years and this applies as much to their development at school as it does to other areas of their lives. If parents can succeed in staying involved in their child’s learning during these years, it can make a great difference to their academic success.

Successful pastoral relationships

At Merici, we have always had a very strong focus on working with parents to look after the pastoral welfare of individual students. This has involved strong, successful two-way communication between parents and House Coordinator, possibly the Junior or Senior School Coordinator and often also with the PC teacher. Pastoral welfare often involves also working closely with individual teachers to ensure an individual student’s circumstances are taken into account and special consideration is given to ensure that the student can continue to experience success in their learning.

Expanding relationships further…

However, these pastoral conversations often occur only when students encounter some crisis in their lives. In recent years, we have been working hard to develop ways in which parents can have a more hands on approach to their daughter’s development at school in the normal course of events.

The development of our on-line learning platform Moodle, which offers parents access to their daughter’s academic program and assessment requirements, is a case in point. It is a very powerful tool for parents to access information in a convenient and timely fashion and to work in a positive way with their daughter to enable her to achieve her best. However, parents may often need assistance to access Moodle and to interpret the detail of what is contained there. Understanding the complexity of assessment tasks, assessment rubrics and the like is not simple.

Successful information evenings…

In recent years we have also been refining the format of our information evenings to enable parents to access information they need and to engage in meaningful dialogue with the school and with their daughter. I believe we have now found a format which works much more effectively to empower parents and their daughters to work together effectively in this way. This year, we have had some wonderful evenings which have enabled productive interaction between parents and staff, as well as between parents and their daughters. Rather than a “stand and deliver” type program, we have developed more interactive evenings where participants rotate through a series of short workshops. This enables a much more intimate environment, where parents can work together with their daughter and a member of staff to understand some of the intricacies and complexities of schools today and to productively discuss with their daughter effective approaches to her learning.

To date this year, we have held highly appreciated evenings for Year 7 parents and students, parents and students in Years 9 and 10 and parents of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their daughters. As part of our Educational Success Program, we have also met with parents of students who may be struggling academically and looked at ways that they can work with their daughters to assist them in reaching their academic potential.

Moving forward…

At the same time, we are working at school to also encourage true learning conversations between teachers and students. In 2012 our initiative of academic welfare tracking for students aims to establish these conversations between students and their pastoral care teacher, to encourage students to analyse themselves as learners, to set goals for themselves and to realistically gauge their learning progress. Eventually we aim to regularly share these conversations between students and their pastoral care teacher with parents, including relevant assessment data available at the time. Our hope is that this will strengthen the partnership with parents, providing timely and useful information, enabling them to engage in productive conversations with their daughters and in so doing, to assist them in their academic progress.

And in this edition of Building Futures, so much more…

As always, the life of the College provides many informal opportunities for parents to be involved and many of these are featured in this edition of the newsletter. We are so grateful for the involvement of parents in events such as the Swimming Carnival, the Stromlo Running Festival, the Organ Donation Walk and, most recently, the Women and Girls’ Fun Run. Your presence greatly enriches our experience of these events. Our awards ceremonies are also wonderful opportunities for parental involvement in the celebration of student effort and achievement and, as always, it was wonderful to welcome so many families to our recent ceremony.

I would greatly welcome your ideas to assist us to further strengthen our partnership in this great endeavour of the education of your daughters.

Catherine Rey
Principal
MERICI COLLEGE OPENING MASS

We celebrated the College Opening Mass on Tuesday February 28. Fr Bony Abraham, our College Chaplain for 2012 officiated at the Mass. Fr Bony is a Missionary Of God’s Love and was ordained into the priesthood only eight months ago.

Our theme this year is “Be Faithful” and this provided the basis for our choice of Readings and hymns.

In Mother Teresa’s words, “God has not called me to be successful. God has called me to be faithful.”

In the first Reading from St Paul to the Ephesians, we contemplated upon God’s love for us so that we; “ may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ”

In the psalm, On Eagle’s Wings, we were reminded that our faithfulness is our protection against all our difficulties: “His faithfulness your shield”

In the Gospel from St John; “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

All of these words are a source of inspiration and motivate each of us to deepen our faith in Christ.

Colette Davison
Liturgy Coordinator

NEW PRIEST FOR MERICI

I am originally from Kerala, South India. I am the first Indian to join the Australian order, the Missionaries of God’s Love. I finished eight years of formation with the MGLs and was ordained on 25 June 2011. It has been 9 months since I became a priest. My passion as a priest and a consecrated person is in the preaching of the Gospel, especially to young people.

In my homily at the opening mass, I encouraged the students to be open to everything that would make them better human beings, including contributing to society and to the world as a whole in their own unique way. In order to do so they have to watch and filter everything they are exposed to from the media, modern day culture and pressures, because it is what is inside us that comes out through our actions. If one fills his or her heart with rubbish, the decisions and actions of that person resemble what is in his or her heart and vice versa. Adding a personal note, in my case, I try to keep my heart filled with God, who is the source of all goodness, and His love, so that my decisions and actions may be godly. I invite the girls to do this also.

You are in my prayers. Thank you for everything you do for the Lord.

Yours in Jesus

Fr. Bony
“Relay For Life” is an overnight community event for thousands of Australians who, relay non-stop as they celebrate cancer survivors, remember those lost, and fight back against the disease by raising important funds.

For Merici participation in “Relay For Life” is one way we can represent our communities support for the Cancer Council by being a part of their biggest fundraiser event of the year. We had twenty-five energetic year 10-12 girls participate this year. As a team the girls took it in turns to keep their baton moving for the 24 hours of the relay, not even the rain could deter our girls. The event was a great success with each team completing approximately 287 laps. We would like to thank the staff and parents who donated their time to supervise. I would also like to say a big thank you to the girls involved; all your fundraising efforts are greatly appreciated as is the donation of your time.

Sarah Taylor
Social Justice Captain

This week we have been very privileged to have had two guest speakers, Brother Blazio Manobo and John Coman, share their experiences with Religious Education classes in Years 9 and 12. Both men impressed upon their audiences the importance of good food, the success of educational scholarships and the value of “bottom up” assistance, where volunteers and communities work together on what the community wants.

Brother Blazio Manobo spoke with the girls about his work with Caritas in Zimbabwe. He talked about the importance of nourishment in fighting disease, especially HIV/Aids, noting that medicines are worthless if they are not taken with good food.

John Coman spoke of his work with the Bega Valley Advocates for Timor Leste. His pictures and stories of the isolation and poverty experienced by so many, touched the girls, calling them to action in their studies of Social Justice. Mr Coman spoke highly of the work of the Catholic teachers in Timor Leste, saying that their students have a future, because their teachers have hope.

Throughout Lent we need to remember the words of Pope Paul VI, ‘if you want peace, work for justice.’

Louise Henderson
RE Coordinator
# Swimming Carnival Results 2012

**Swimming Champions**
- Seiwa
- Tullow
- Balgo

**HOUSE SPIRIT**
- Seiwa
- Tullow
- Brescia

**AGE CHAMPIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>12yrs</th>
<th>13yrs</th>
<th>14yrs</th>
<th>15yrs</th>
<th>16yrs</th>
<th>Opens</th>
<th>Merici Marlin</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amy Sobic</td>
<td>Ebony Norris</td>
<td>Alexandra Ashley</td>
<td>Lauren Abraham</td>
<td>Paula Rusanov</td>
<td>Jessica Hargreaves</td>
<td>Ebony Norris</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brescia</td>
<td>Balgo</td>
<td>Seiwa</td>
<td>Tullow</td>
<td>Seiwa</td>
<td>Tullow</td>
<td>Balgo</td>
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**Merici Marlin**

Ebony Norris
Balgo
SWIMMING CARNIVAL
Around the World, Around the Pool
PURSUING RELEVANT, MEANINGFUL AND APPROPRIATE CURRICULUM

As the Science staff work at Merici this year to incorporate the Australian Curriculum into Years 7 and 9 as part of Phase 1 of the integration process, we are reminded that one of the key points of the College’s own Principles of Powerful Learning is ‘pursuing relevant, meaningful and appropriate curriculum’.

The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Science outlined the aims of the science curriculum to

“Foster an interest and a curiosity and willingness to speculate about and explore the world. Students should be able to engage in communication of and about science, value evidence and scepticism, and question scientific claims made by others. They should be able to identify and investigate scientific questions, draw evidence-based conclusions and make informed decisions about their own health and wellbeing. Science is a human endeavour that students should learn to appreciate and apply in their daily life.” (ACARA, 2009, p5)

Recently in a speech, The President of the United States Barack Obama said “Over the next ten years, nearly half of all jobs will require education beyond high school, many requiring proficiency in math and science….if we want to win the global competition for new jobs and industries we’ve got to win the global competition to educate our people.” (Obama 2011)

Although Barack Obama spoke these words in reference to his own country, his comment is just as pertinent to educators in Australia today.

A report prepared for the Office of the Chief Scientist into ‘The Status and Quality of Year 11 and 12 Science in Australian Schools’, posed the question: ‘Are we content that only half of our senior secondary students are studying science?’ It also stated that nationally the percentage of students enrolled in Biology, Physics and Chemistry is gradually falling.

This information poses a challenge for all science teachers. How do we engage our students in learning so that they understand science and are able to apply the concepts in a general sense but also meet the needs of students who wish to pursue a scientific career in the future?

The Australian Curriculum: Science which is organised into 3 strands endeavours to address these issues. Colloquially known as the 3 sisters, the strands are: Science for Understanding (SU), Science Investigative Skills (SIS) and Science as a Human Endeavour (SHE). While the first two strands aim to develop knowledge and skills, it is the last strand that strives to provide relevance and meaning for the students in their study of science.

These Science strands, combined with the cross curriculum priorities of Sustainability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, as well Australia’s engagement with Asia, means that Merici is well poised to offer a learning environment to our students that aligns with the Australian Curriculum. It includes dynamic and quality assessment and provides experiences for the students that enable them to see science as a lifelong human endeavour.

Joanne Aboud
Science Coordinator

<table>
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<th>Up Coming Events in Science</th>
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<td>Official handover of the Merici Glasshouse</td>
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<td>Merici Science Series – Dr Russell Barrow</td>
<td>2nd May</td>
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<td>Physics Excursion Senior Students</td>
<td>4th May</td>
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<td>Merici Science Series – Dr Asaph Widmer-Cooper</td>
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<td>Rio Tinto Big Science Competition</td>
<td>23rd May</td>
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<td>ICAS Science Competition</td>
<td>6th June</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nobel Laureate Professor Elizabeth Blackburn Lecture</td>
<td>21st June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 8 Brain Day</td>
<td>27th June</td>
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VISITING JOURNALIST

Canberra Times journalist, Claire Low, was a welcome visitor to the Merici College Writers’ Club on February 28. Claire fielded a wide range of questions about her work as a journalist and about her favourite novels. Not surprisingly, club members found they had many interests in common with Claire, including an aspiration to publish a novel. Claire was very encouraging and provided useful writing tips, recommending Stephen King’s book, *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*, as a source of valuable ideas to improve our writing. Claire’s wide ranging conversation, along with an excellent chocolate cake provided by a club member, made for a very enjoyable meeting. Samara Carroll made the original suggestion to contact Claire and we would like to thank her for this inspiration.

The Writers’ Club meets each Tuesday in Room 112 and the format alternates between a formal meeting where one of the club members takes the chair, and an informal meeting where students bring their own work and continue with their creative writing. A teacher is present and available to assist students with free writing or other assessment tasks. All students are welcome to attend.

Mrs Curran and Mrs Richardson

C1 AND C2 FLEXIBLE LEARNING SPACE AND THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY

This semester, three Geography classes are located in the new flexible learning space, where the canteen was previously located. This space facilitates individual, small group and large group activities. For example, in preparing for the Year 9 field trip to Kosciuszko National Park we will use this flexible space to introduce the field trip to the classes. The Interactive White Board and the flexible layout of the room will enable students to complete different tasks at a variety of stations. Each student will then complete individual research on the fragile nature of the national park.

The flexible nature of the learning space is conducive to collaborative teaching and learning. It allows an exchange of ideas between students and between students and staff. The opportunity to work collaboratively with fellow staff allows teachers to plan, teach and reflect together on the best way to use this space productively, whilst enhancing the learning opportunities of each student. The placement of computers around the space allows the smooth integration of ICT into everyday activities.

In its broadest sense, Geography enables an education for life and helps us all to be informed, responsible citizens and more socially and environmentally sensitive. The use of this flexible space allows for a variety of teaching styles and its easy connection to the indigenous garden and outdoor areas of the College further enhance this area of learning.

Mrs Curran and Mrs Richardson

NEW WAYS FOR KNOWLEDGE

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Janell Jones
Writers’ Club Facilitator
Year 11 Conference
“Being a helper was very rewarding and showed me what a great group of girls the 2012 Year sevens are.”
Wednesday morning on March 19, I got on a bus with the Year 7s and three other helpers for a six hour long trip to Tathra. Our job as helpers, or “seniors” as we were often called, was to help the Year 7s make friends and encourage them to join in games and activities. They did need a little encouragement to cross the lagoon on our bush walk, but they didn’t need any help making friends.

My friend Harriet and I are in Year 10 but we were commonly mistaken for Year 7s, which wasn’t very flattering. There were many dramas during the camp, such as when the girls stayed up late checking their hair for ticks and leeches. There was always something to do whether it was raft building, hiking, telling stories in front of the campfire, swimming at the beach or making giant sand castles. Being a helper was very rewarding and showed me what a great group of girls the 2012 Year 7s are.

Lauren Abraham
Year 10 student
Merici College entered both the Stromlo Running Festival and the Women and Girls’ Fun Run/Walk, during the first term of 2012. The Stromlo Running festival was very successful this year, with around 60 Merici students, teachers, parents and friends completing 345 km in the 30 minutes available. The participants were also treated to a massive storm whilst enjoying the annual BBQ.

At the Women and Girls’ Fun Run/Walk, Merici had a surprisingly high participant rate with around 40 students, mothers, daughters, aunts, and teachers coming to complete the 5 km bridge to bridge walk, beginning at Stage 88, Commonwealth Park. Merici came second to rivals St Clare’s by an amazing 5% and I would like to congratulate everyone who participated. Maybe we will get them next year girls!

Jessica Hargreaves
Sports Captain

On March 6, the Merici Year 7-10 water polo team played in the ACT School Championship. This is a competition we have been continually involved in since 1987 with great success. The participation from other schools was down this year due to short notice on a change in dates from the usual date in November and only 5 teams played instead of the usual 12. Despite this, the normal powerhouse teams from Merici, Girls Grammar and St Clare’s were present along with last year’s champions Daramalan.

Merici had some preparation under Melissa Taylor, our Year 12 National water polo representative, at Civic pool and brought in two new Year 7 players to play along with a fairly experienced group of Merici girls. It was a thrilling day and we made it through to our 7th consecutive grand final against St Clare’s but lost 10-8 in a pulsating game. The team was ably led by our state representatives, Taylor Gallagher and Natalie Taylor with the rest of the team being Rachel Albertson-Kill, Merryn McAlister, Gabrielle Walker, Kristyn Horrocks and Phoebe Harwood.

Merici Volleyball has received further great news recently with the naming of the A.C.T. Representative sides for 2012. Emily Kalthofen, Sophia Caputo and Lillian Cossetto were named in the Under 15 teams that will play in championships in Albury. Special mention must be made of Lillian’s achievement – this is the third sport in which she will represent the A.C.T. following on from hockey and softball.

Emma Turner, Isabella Aroub, Gabrielle Kalthofen, Annie Parnell, Carla Zedde, Tegan Hedington and Celia Cossetto were all named in the Under 17 teams for the National Championships which will be held in Canberra later in the year.

Merici College has more representatives in these teams than ever before as we continue to grow not only in our participation but also our skill levels. We currently have 11 teams playing in the ACT Open Women’s competition on Tuesday nights and our top players are preparing to take on the big guns in the Capital Volleyball League – Volleyball ACT’s highest level of competition.
Our first sight of Italian exchange student, Francesca Alfieri, was at the Canberra airport one evening. She looked like a scared little girl and did not understand what we were saying, as we tend to speak too quickly, especially when we are excited.

Over the weeks we watched Francesca blossom into the bubbly, bouncy young lady that she is when in her home town of Cerignola, Italy. She grew more confident, dug a place into our hearts and became a true member of our family, a daughter.

When Francesca flew back to Italy we all experienced such a wrench. Then and there we decided that we had to start planning a family holiday to Italy to be with our beautiful ‘daughter’ again and meet her family. The perfect time was over the Christmas/New Year holidays. We arrived in Cerignola (South eastern Italy - the ‘ankle’ of the boot) on the 21 December 2011 and stayed with Francesca and her family for a week of celebrations. We learned how to cook authentic Italian food and discovered how good Italian coffee tastes. We also picked up some Italian words while sharing our Aussie lingo.

Experiencing Christmas with our Italian family was an amazing experience. They were the most generous, loving people and we have now adopted each others families. I can see our relationship growing over the years as we watch our lovely girls grow into well-rounded and successful women.

Entering into the Merici Italian exchange program was one of the best decisions our family has ever made.

Thank you Merici

Joy McGahey
Mother of Audrey McGahey Year 11

Every year the Alliance Française holds the French Film Festival (AFFFF) which runs for five weeks over March and April. This year, we were fortunate enough to secure screenings for the year 8-12 French students.

The Year 8 students saw a hilarious family comedy called Ducoboo. It’s about the worst possible student imaginable – with a nice twist at the end! The Year 9 and 10 students saw War of the Buttons. This was a fantastic remake of a classic from the 1960s. The Year 11 and 12 students saw a beautiful film called The Well-digger’s Daughter, another remake of a classic, made in 1940.

The students and teachers thoroughly enjoyed the excursion and look forward to seeing what the AFFFF brings to our screens next year.

Pip Hoermann
Languages Teacher

Having attended Merici College as a student from year 7-12, I am delighted to be back, teaching Dance, Drama and Religion. I am also enjoying being a PC teacher in my old house, Seiwa. After graduating from the college I took myself off on a gap year to England where I spent time working in a boarding school and travelling throughout Europe, an experience I found invaluable. Following my year abroad, I commenced study at The University of New South Wales in Sydney, and gained a Bachelor of Arts (Dance) and a Bachelor of Education. For the past three years I have been teaching Dance and Drama at Kingscliff High School, located on the Far North Coast of NSW. I thoroughly enjoyed my time up there however, I am very happy to be home and am looking forward to a great year at Merici!

Hannah Carey

In 2011, I completed a Bachelor of Teaching (Secondary) at Charles Sturt University. I also hold a Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Economics from ANU. I have over ten years’ experience in the Banking and Finance industry, having worked in both Sydney and Canberra. My role as a Business Banking Manager expanded my business knowledge and developed my skills in client services, financial analysis and banking practices. I have always been drawn to teaching and was a volunteer tutor for six years before embarking on my new career. I completed my secondary teaching prac at Merici College mid last year and am thrilled to be on staff, teaching Year 9 Geography and Year 9/10 Consumer Education this year.

Alison Steven

Pip Hoermann
Languages Teacher

European Connections
MERICI MOMENTS
Awards Ceremony