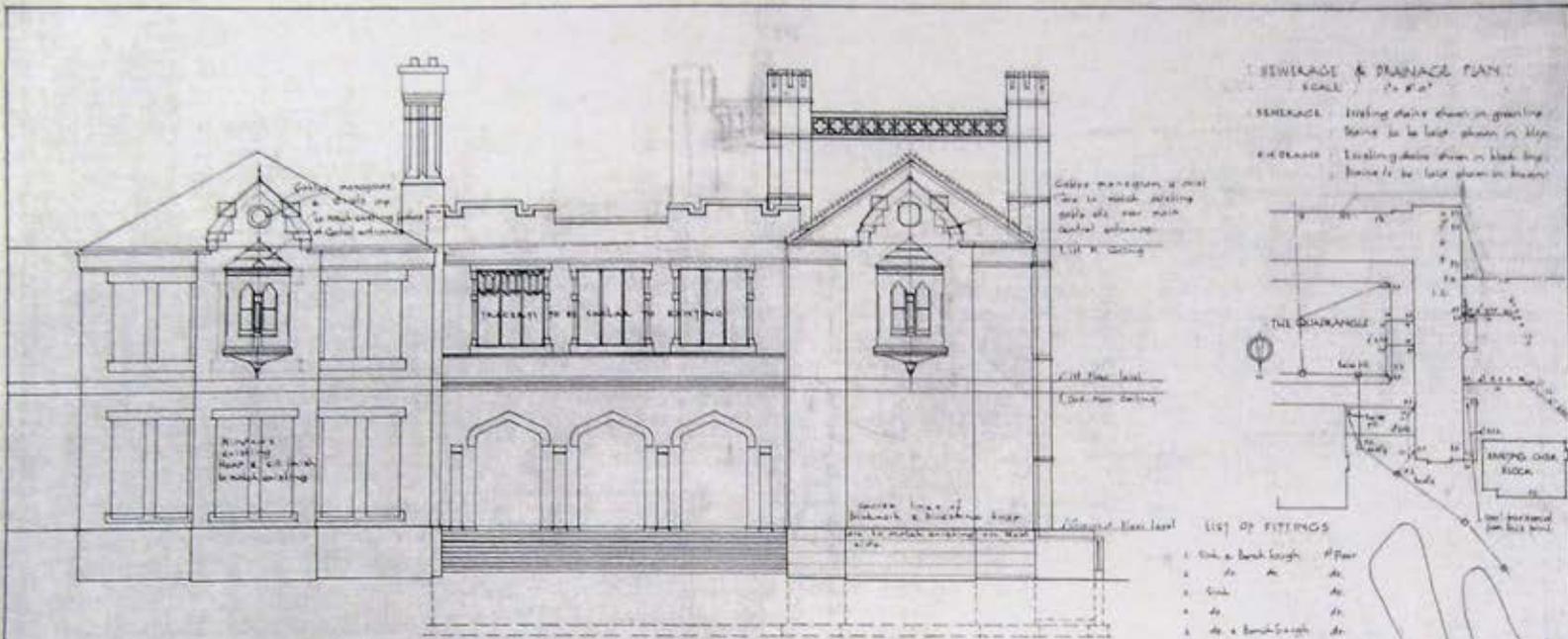


The Preparatory School

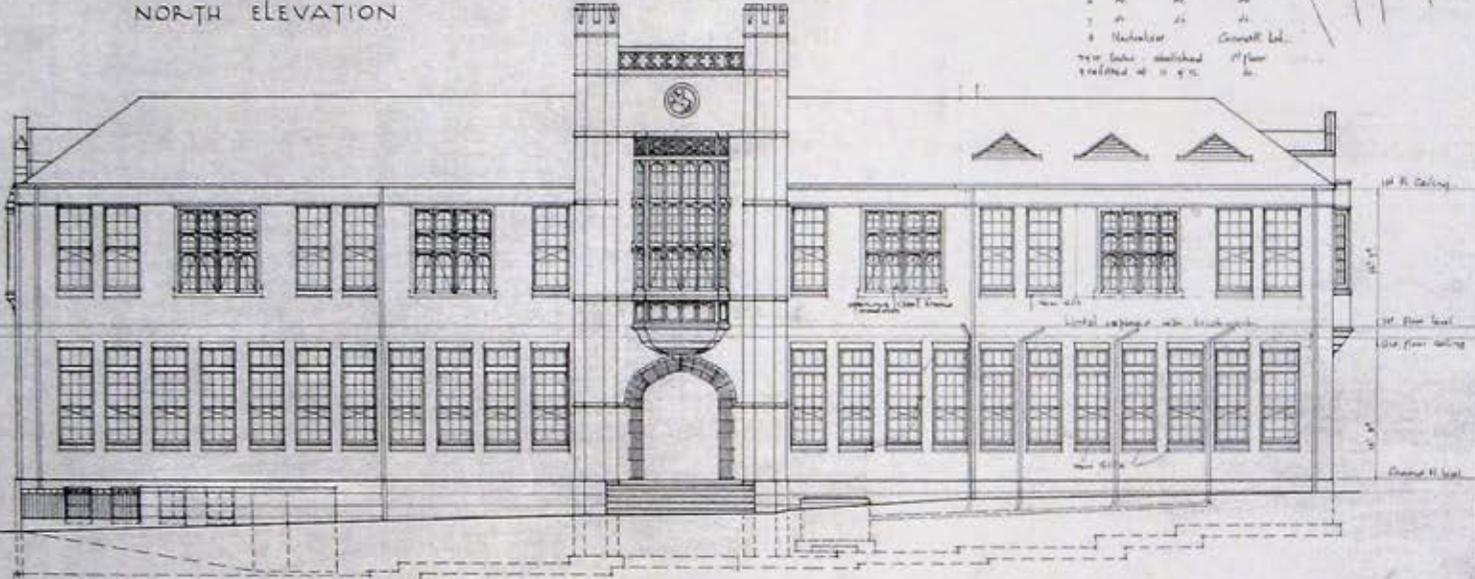
A modern and separate Preparatory School was Dr Buntine's greatest achievement – but it also caused the greatest frustration during his incumbency as Principal. Ample land south-west of Aberdeen Street and Minerva Road, overlooking the Barwon River, had been purchased from Louis Whyte, added to and set aside explicitly for the purpose of establishing a Preparatory School by 1946. Mr Whyte, long connected to the College as Old Collegian and benefactor, generously included a gift of 15 acres in the parcel of land.¹ A fear of financial debt and the inability to raise enough funds from within the College community delayed building plans throughout the 1950s, exacerbating overcrowded classrooms and causing huge waiting lists.

A distinct lack of financial management hampered planning too. The College's Finance Committee met irregularly. A budget had not been prepared for some years, so Dr Buntine asked for an Annual Budget to be reintroduced soon after he was appointed in 1946.² Mr Martin, the College's loyal Bursar for many years, had a background as a banker and a somewhat old-fashioned approach to account-keeping. The appointment of Bruce Jamieson (1961–88), initially as Administrative Assistant to the Principal and then as Mr Martin's successor in 1966, coupled with the establishment of a regular Council Finance Committee in 1960, revolutionised financial management and accounting procedures which became fully integrated into the function of the College.³ As well as the rising costs of teachers' salaries, there were other demands on school finances. In keeping with long-held College principles of wide access to education, 11 per cent of College students received their education free or at greatly reduced fees, and not all were supported by fully funded scholarships. Many were sons of clergymen and admitted gratis.

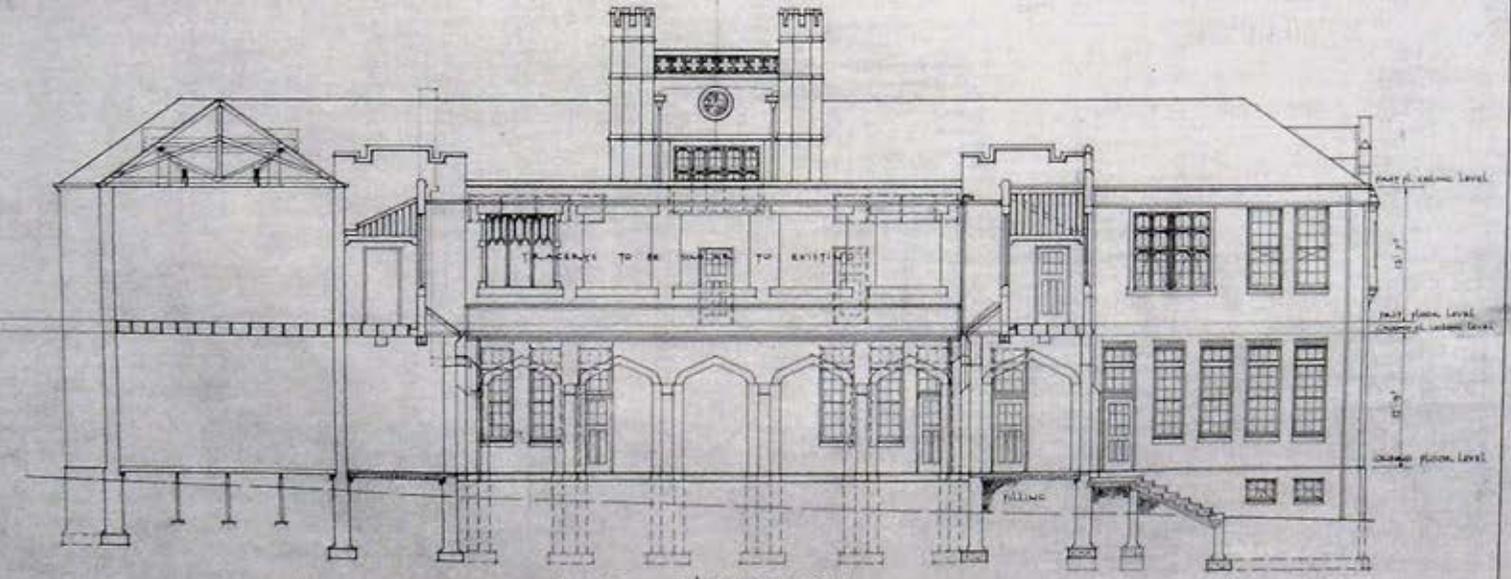
At every Speech Night, beginning in 1949, Dr Buntine appealed to the school community for additional and generous financial support, without which the new Preparatory School would not be built. In 1951, he asked that wool growers – a group so fundamentally connected to the College – consider donating at least some of the £45,000,000 returned to them as a tax refund by the government.⁴ He continually reminded the parents and the public that the



NORTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION



EAST ELEVATION

THE GEELONG COLLEGE - GEELONG - ALTERATIONS & ADDITIONS No 7 - ELEVATIONS
 PHILIP B. HUDSON F.R.I.B.A. F.R.A.I.A. ARCHITECT 4 BANK PLACE MELBOURNE SCALE 1"=8'0" JOB No 4003 SHEET No 3 18.4.40.

College did not make a profit, and that school fees were the only source of income apart from bequests and donations.

Some old Geelong Collegians *were* giving to the school, but to other projects. During 1949, £9,000 was raised in only six months towards the War Memorial wing of classrooms which opened in 1951. Nevertheless, College Council began to take tentative steps towards the planning of a new Preparatory School. Unfortunately, road construction in Minerva Road and Layton Crescent would cost the College at least £2,500 before any building works could begin, because much of the area was still undeveloped. Desperate, Dr Buntine and Council decided that it was time to foster practical and financial support for the College beyond the Old Geelong Collegians' Association, which had already given so much. The formation of a Parents' Association was mooted, and 200 parents attended a meeting called to discuss the idea after Sports Day in 1954. The Council was completely honest: it needed a parent body to establish and promote a building fund for the Preparatory School. So, that year, the building fund was launched, with the aim of raising the £250,000 needed. By this stage, the College's waiting list comprised 700 names and enrolments stretched forward to 1968.³ The Parents' Association became the Parents' and Friends' Association in 1974 and later divided into separate groups affiliated with each campus – a Senior School Parents' Association and a Preparatory School Parents' Association. Women's Auxiliaries

School fete, 1958





Sir William Slim, Governor General, at the ceremony for laying the foundation stone of the new Preparatory School, 1959

for Campbell House, the Preparatory School and the Senior School were established during the Thwaites era, to sell used uniforms, conduct small-scale fundraising and provide a social network. From 1993, the new group Parents and Friends of the College provided social interaction across the campuses.

Dr Buntine's grand vision for the new Preparatory School had, at least, plenty of time for careful planning while funds were being amassed. It was to include accommodation for 400 in sixteen classrooms, an assembly hall, offices, a library, tuckshop, gym, music centre, hobbies space, a chapel, three ovals, tennis courts, a swimming pool, groundsman's cottage and bicycle store, as well as boarding houses, a dining hall and a hospital to cater for 200 boarders.⁶ Dr Buntine's overseas trip in 1956 to Switzerland, Sweden and Great Britain honed his planning on matters of space, colours, materials and equipment.

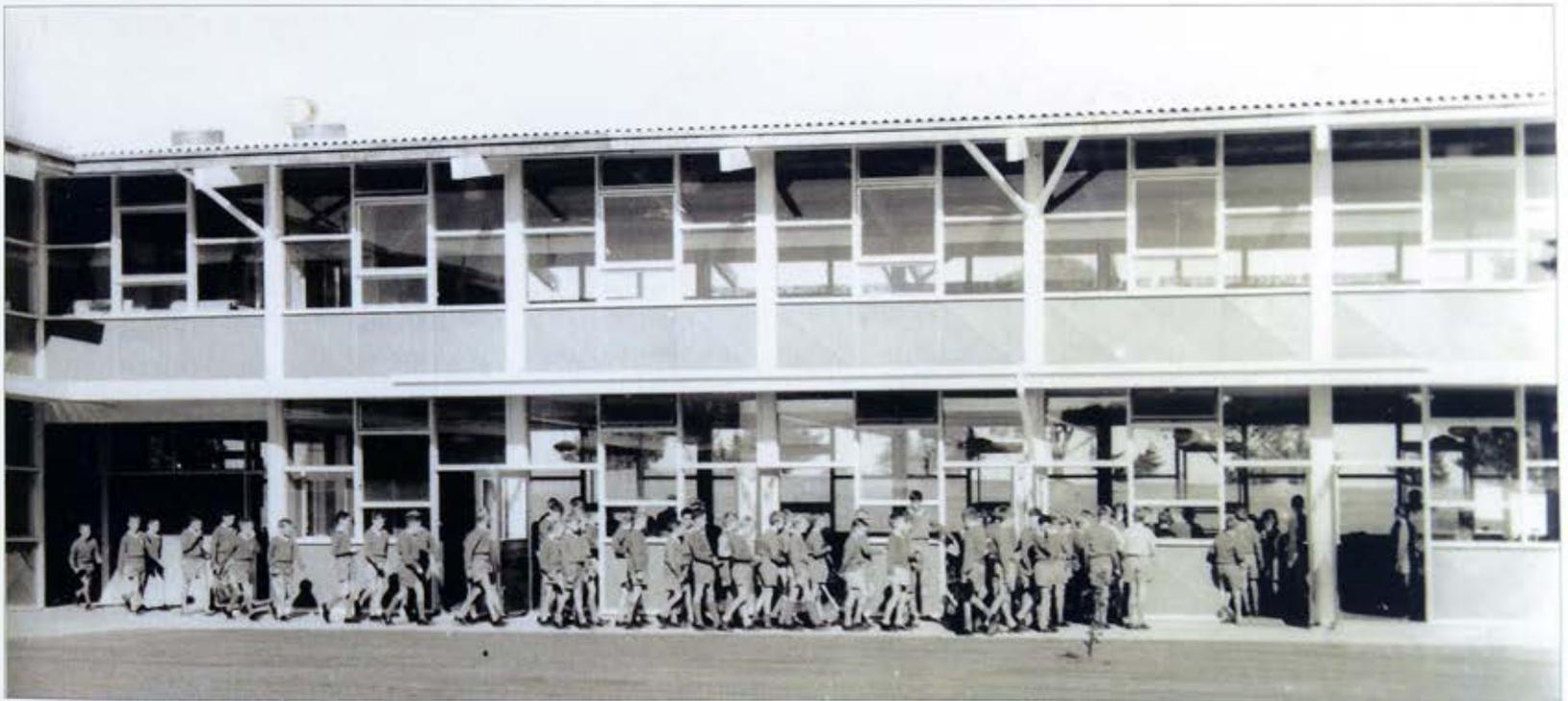
A special Gilbert and Sullivan performance was among the first fundraising activities. A successful School Fair in 1956 helped to boost the building fund to £28,000 by the end of that year. Although donations were tax deductible, the fund grew but slowly. To reduce the building budget, the option of omitting boarding accommodation from the Preparatory School facilities

was considered but opposed by Dr Buntine and Preparatory School Head L.J. Campbell, given that the greater number of advance bookings were for boarders. Instead, the number of classrooms was reduced from sixteen to twelve, to accommodate 300 rather than 400 students.⁷ By 1958 when, after much nagging and cajoling, the fund reached £60,000, the architects Mockridge, Stahle and Mitchell were at last allowed to begin their task of design. Sir George Coles, the brother of a former Council Chairman, and then a Director of the National Bank, was approached for a substantial mortgage of the balance: nearly £200,000 – then a huge sum of money. Tuition fees were increased, an entrance fee of £10 was introduced, and National Fundraising Counsel was employed to initiate another fundraising campaign in the hope that the original plan of sixteen classrooms could be achieved.⁸

Once building commenced, the first stage of the contemporary, two-storeyed Preparatory School building went up quickly. Students and teachers moved to the new site in 1960, and a grand opening ceremony was held on 10 February. Sir Arthur Coles gave an inspiring address, full of hope for a bright future and for the role in it that the new Preparatory School might play:

This school is much more than a group of beautiful, well equipped buildings surrounded by playing fields and staffed with masters to cater for a growing population. It is an act of Faith in the future of Australia as a virile Christian Nation whose way of life can serve as a message of hope in a world where millions of people are seeking guidance: faith in the teaching staff to give the right kind of example and inspiration to the boys, so that The Geelong College will continue to do its part towards providing leaders with Christian ideals of citizenship and personal character. This then is our dedication. To create new citizens with body beautiful, balanced and controlled, with enthusiasm undulled, with mind keen, alert, analytical, unprejudiced ... a generation clear-eyed, heroic, with intelligence, conscience and well tuned to the creation of a new and better world.⁹

The 290 boys of the Preparatory School entering the Assembly Hall for morning prayers



There is no doubt that part of the success of this section of the school was directly due to its new separateness. Although it was just down the road, the comparative isolation was liberating.



Above: Boys in the Assembly Hall, 1961

Below: A classroom in the new Preparatory School



Boys working in the library at the new Preparatory School

It was a timely opening. Geelong's population doubled after World War II, and residential development in the suburbs nearest to the new Preparatory School flourished in the 1960s and 1970s.

Dr Buntine left at the end of Term 1 and Mr Thwaites took over in Term 2, 1960. The Preparatory School had opened that year with the most basic facilities: classrooms, and the wonderfully modern Helen Mackie Library. In 1962, the Preparatory School's Assembly Hall and Art room were finished. Fundraising continued for other school needs and another major capital appeal was held in 1965, with Geoff Betts at the helm. The Reverend McLean had been promised the headship of the Preparatory School by Dr Buntine when Mr Campbell retired, but when the latter left in 1961 it was after Dr Buntine's departure, so Mr Thwaites ignored the promise and appointed Mr Watson instead, asserting his right to install whomever he liked.¹⁰

Despite the ill-feeling that this created among those loyal to the Reverend McLean, the Preparatory School under Mr Watson, flourished at its new site and became well known for offering a progressive and innovative education. That this 'magnificent experiment' worked is usually ascribed to Mr Watson's wise leadership, the high standards set by him and the fine team of teachers who followed his lead.¹¹ He knew the College inside out, as his long career at the Preparatory School began in 1939 and was interrupted only by distinguished war service in the RAAF. As a religious man, he saw the school as a Christian institution and made it a 'family school with a warm spirit of community', and he had the ability to command attention without loudly demanding it.¹² He fostered a Christian school by encouraging social service and visits from people representing groups such as the Australian Inland Mission.

There is no doubt that part of the success of this section of the school was directly due to its new separateness. Although it was just down the road, the comparative isolation was liberating.

Preparatory School Art room



Several innovative teaching methods were introduced in the 1960s. Class singing was retained, but from 1965 the Orff Schulwerk music method introduced the understanding of rhythm and melody using simple instruments and student composition. Year 4 students, for example, wrote a series of songs in 1967 about the animals and birds on the new decimal coins, and performed them publicly. Hartley Newnham (1964–71), Director of Music, took his students to the Teachers' College in 1968 to demonstrate the school's use of the Carl Orff approach. Choral work was encouraged, and all Form 1 boys studied four instruments, from which they could select a favourite to pursue.¹³ Boys even wrote and performed their own opera in 1969, using a libretto written by Helen Haenke, an Australian poet and playwright. Director of Studies Norman Rachinger was a creative and popular Art Teacher from 1962 as well as, later, Deputy Head (1986–92). When a Language laboratory, instigated by Mr Davey, opened at the Preparatory School in 1967, the College became one of the first schools in Victoria to have such a facility. A new Science syllabus in 1968 made the most of the new Science laboratory that had been built with a government grant in 1967.

Kindergarten and Sub-Primary classes operated under the direction of Joan Sweetman (1947–78). Named Campbell House in 1962 after L.J. Campbell, this section of the school was located on a separate site in Aphrasia Street until the buildings were physically moved and integrated with the new Preparatory School campus in 1969, at the bottom of the hill on Minerva Road. 'We were a happy group', Mrs Sweetman recalls. 'Our small classes enabled us to let the children advance at their own rate. We had our own Sports Days and Speech Days, separate from the rest of the Preparatory School. We combined with the higher grades, though, for events such as the Prep School Open Day, which was an annual highlight.'¹⁴ After moving in 1969, there was more integration. Preparatory School staff came to teach Music and Physical Education to the



Aerial view of the new Preparatory School, 1964.

The Kindergarten building, c1955-58



Sub-Primary students and Headmaster Watson, 'a genuine family man', visited the Sub-Primary section regularly.¹⁵

In the higher years, an emphasis on experiential learning was actively fostered through excursions to local sites such as the Batesford Quarry, and the Museum in Melbourne. From the early 1960s, boys in Forms 1 and 2 went on tours to Ivanhoe in New South Wales and Harrierville. Trips to Tasmania began in 1972, while Year 6 boys began going to Anglesea for a week from about 1973, and Form 1 to the Gippsland Lakes from 1975. New activities included fencing and canoeing. In 1976, Mr Harbison first taught Environmental Science outside, and in 1977 began to create the Environment Centre by building cages to keep ducks, hens, rabbits and guinea pigs. Parents donated the animals and the profits from vegetables grown by the children and sold in the car park on Fridays were used to buy feed for the animals. Children learnt to appreciate the beauty and reality of nature and the importance of ecological balance and environmental responsibility. There was plenty of room for plots of land to be planted, and the first purpose-built classroom emerged in the heart of the centre in 1982.¹⁶

Sporting life also flourished in this period, particularly after Leslie Hatton (1962-2001) returned from two years of teaching in England to be the Sportsmaster in 1969. Associated Public Schools fixtures did not dominate the Preparatory School week until much later, and so boys enjoyed baseball, basketball, cricket, hockey, football, tennis and swimming. The latter was boosted from 1970 with the opening of the Stuart Laidlaw Memorial Swimming Pool – a facility greatly envied by Senior School boys. Soccer began to be played by boys at recess and lunchtime in 1972 and soon became an official school team sport. Canoeing began in the late 1970s and was a popular weekend activity. Boys were rewarded for contributions to every aspect of school life – not just sport, and Mr Watson stated the school's aims at every opportunity: to develop well-rounded boys intellectually, socially, physically and aesthetically.

After fifteen years of fostering these educational ideals, the time came for Mr Watson to retire. His contribution was permanently commemorated when the Ian Watson Gymnasium opened

Boys were rewarded for contributions to every aspect of school life – not just sport, and Mr Watson stated the school's aims at every opportunity: to develop well-rounded boys intellectually, socially, physically and aesthetically.

in 1981. Competition for his successor was fierce and Old Geelong Collegian Ian Macmillan (1954) was selected as the new Head (1977–86). He had a broad range of teaching experience at primary, secondary and tertiary levels, outstanding qualifications, and particular expertise in Special Education, for which he had established a post-graduate course at the Burwood State College.¹⁷ The important place of the Preparatory School within the College structure was officially recognised when, in 1977, the Preparatory School Head attended College Council meetings at the request of the Principal. Although Mr Macmillan worked closely with Peter Gebhardt, the eighth Principal, and held similar educational philosophies, the Preparatory School staff remained immune from the divisions that occurred in the Senior School, largely because of the physical separation of the campuses. The Preparatory School remained a discrete unit within the College, and successive generations of students enjoyed the environment: 'It was a little village in its own bubble. There was an air of mystique and excitement when you made the transition to Senior School.'¹⁸

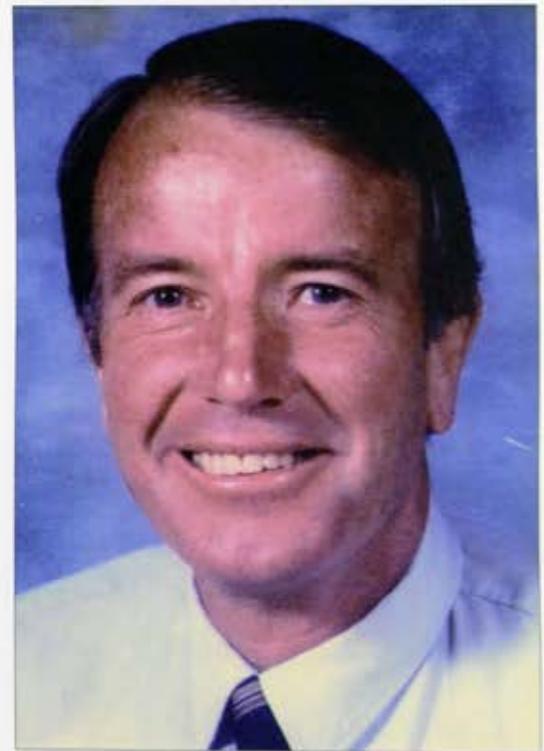
One of the first things that Mr Macmillan did in the ongoing quest for modern teaching methods and materials was to commission a team of educators from Burwood State College to evaluate the way Literacy was taught at the Preparatory School. The unfavourable results provided ample justification for change, and with philosophical and financial support from the Principal and Bursar, the Preparatory School was physically and educationally modernised. Similarly, in 1979, a Mathematics educator from the Toorak Teachers' College evaluated the Numeracy program. It was a shock for some who were used to a self-sufficient, internal approach and some staff left when they found the change too much to absorb. Most staff responded positively, however, and became a thriving, close-knit community, enjoying collegiality that paid dividends in the classroom. Under Mr Macmillan, 'education was turned on its ear' and the Preparatory School became 'very much a junior school, with a child-centred curriculum, and very forward thinking'.¹⁹ Head of House, Mr Hatton, also remembers that when boarders left Rolland House for good, dormitories became classrooms, 'so numbers really built, principally because of the introduction of girls'.²⁰ It was an exciting time for most of the staff, and teachers from other schools visited to see the developments.

Libby Russell, who arrived as a new Art Teacher in 1980, immediately noticed the vibrant staff room, and the way Mr Macmillan's leadership encouraged good human relationships, reflective teaching practices, and passion for one's discipline.²¹ Mr Macmillan's child-centred approach led him to refurbish classrooms, including the installation of carpet, establish an Environment Centre in an area that had previously been 'out-of-bounds', abolish prefects and house captains in favour of student committee groups, remove the flagpole from the middle of the courtyard in a bid to soften the somewhat rigid authoritarian atmosphere, introduce methods such as Kodály with the Music staff, and encourage the teaching of languages other than English from Preparatory to Year 8.²² Parents and students who were unhappy with this approach, and with the newly adopted co-educational policy, left. 'The Preparatory School has an air, an ethos, of liveliness and life. It is not a dead-weight institution. Curiosity and enquiry are kept alive and nurtured. There is no static complacency. Such attitudes arise from the outstanding direction provided by the Headmaster and his staff.'²³

The early 1980s were notable for a range of other innovations. Computer Studies was introduced for Years 3 to 6 in 1983, and extended to Year 7 in 1984. Jean Hobbs (1977–2007) coordinated the Community and Religious Education (CARE) program as part of the Social Science curriculum. As well as her many other roles in the Preparatory School, Mrs Hobbs was a role model for students and staff in the expression of the school's religious life. Mr Hatton's emphasis on local social service and citizenship outside the classroom also instilled key values



Trampolining at the Preparatory School, 1967.
Photo: Bert Keith Album



Ian Macmillan



Preparatory School staff, 1995. Back row: L. Hatton, B. Jennings, J. Ryan, M. Panckridge, M. Irwin, M. Cheatley, A. Swaney, S. Walker, S. McCallum, M. Rowe, M. O'Donnell; Fourth row: H. Harris, M. Dickinson, A. McKie, A. Juros, H. McLean, B. Carlson, R. Sullivan, D. Rolfe, B. Edwards, M. Torpey, D. Parker, D. Wade, I. Henricus, A. Wightman, M. Oates; Third row: B. Murrells, S. Scott, C. Turner, J. Thompson, S. Lea-Wood, J. Hobbs, V. Chakir, R. Bowyer, L. Russell, C. Ogston, Carole Mallett, Libby Russell, D. Connoley, I. Budge, D. Elms; Second row: A. Forrest, L. Lee, M. Driscoll, M. Berney, B. Dickie, M. Lambert, C. Hazell, P. Hughes (Head of Preparatory School), D. Bourke, L. Ord, J. Hendry, H. Roberts, K. Rixon, J. Thompkins; Front row: K. Jacobs, E. Boal, C. Spencer, S. Buchan, R. Millen, E. Davis, A. Murrells, C. Fisher, P. McCallum

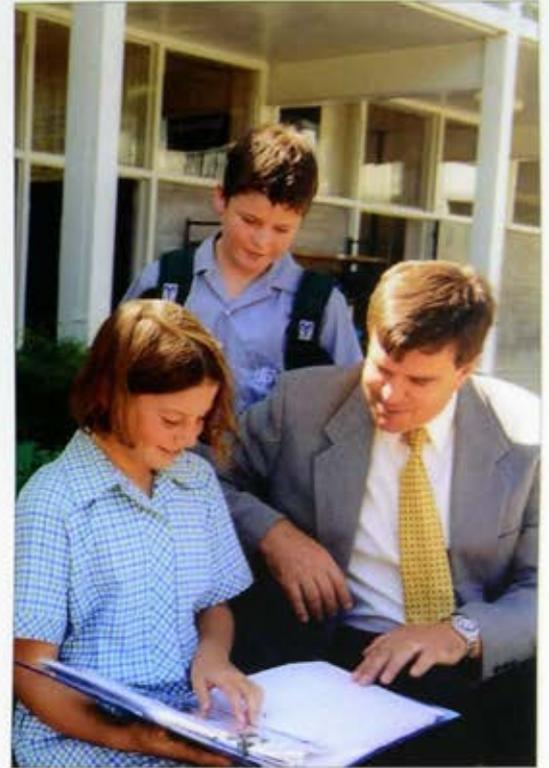
in Preparatory School students. 'My class would sponsor five families in the Geelong program, "Adopt a Family for Christmas". We also raised money for the Geelong Hospital.'²⁴ Several other specialist teachers were also employed: Mrs Russell, to teach Art; Carole Mallett (1987–2005), to develop a vibrant and challenging Drama curriculum; and Sue Scott (1988–2003), as Special Education Teacher, among many other things; as well as teachers for Music, Science and French. French was extended below Years 7 and 8 in 1984. The Outward Bound camp at the Otways, in Year 8, crowned a thriving Outdoor Education program that began at Year 3 in 1978 and that was particularly fostered by Mr Hatton and one of the Preparatory School's longest serving teachers, Bill Jennings (1970–2004). Ultimately, the Preparatory School's philosophy was to foster curiosity, imagination, individuality and initiative.²⁵

Mr Macmillan's involvement in social justice issues, particularly his interest in the desperate Aboriginal situation in Central Australia, led to the introduction of an Indigenous Education program. It taught the children about Aboriginal history, culture and languages, as well as the present-day issues. Its impact was immediate: in 1985, Year 8 students organised a moving ceremony at the local Wathaurong Co-operative in Geelong to return important Aboriginal artefacts that had been presented to the school by Old Collegians and kept in a glass case near the Art room. Among skull caps and emu feather shoes for stalking, the collection included *churingas*, which are sacred totemic symbols meant to be seen only by Indigenous Australian community elders. 'The students began to ask, "Why are they here? Why don't we give them back?"'²⁶ In 1987, Mr Hatton led a tour of Year 8 students to Stradbroke Island where they spent time with Oodgeroo Noonuccal (Kath Walker) writing and discussing poems that reflected issues around relationships between Aboriginal peoples and white Australians.²⁷ In 1988, students swapped letters with Aboriginal children in Epenarra and raised money for the community to purchase a satellite dish.²⁸

Succeeding Mr Macmillan, Peter Hughes (1987–97) was a dignified Head who led the Preparatory School during an era of considerable financial difficulty. Numbers peaked at 560 in 1989 but dropped by a hundred during the following three years as the local economy suffered through the Pyramid Building Society crash and subsequent deeper economic recession. Nevertheless, this was an exciting period for students and staff: the new Robertson Hall and Music Centre opened in 1990, the Art Centre opened in 1995 and the new Library in 1996. The College Challenge, an idea brought back to the school by Mark Torpey (1984–present) after a teaching exchange in the United Kingdom, was introduced in 1994 by teacher Michael Panckridge (1990–present) and proved to be one of the great innovations of this period. It was a Geelong schools' community event held at the College Preparatory School, in which local primary schools competed to participate in a weekend of indoor and outdoor team games and problem-solving events. It grew to become an annual highlight, as well as a superb way to open the College's doors to the community. Mr Panckridge also had great presence as a classroom teacher, and is remembered as being able to excite students' imaginations, particularly when he would periodically transport himself to a nineteenth-century classroom as 'Mr Black'.²⁹ Maxine Driscoll (1990–99) is remembered as a bubbly teacher with a deep love of learning, who, in 1997, won a National Excellence in Teaching Award.³⁰ Amanda Swaney (1987–2000), also the recipient of an award, for Excellence in Education in 1993, was a vibrant and imaginative English Teacher, Curriculum Coordinator, and author of teacher reference books. Coral Turner, Deputy Head–Welfare since 2000, has been at the Preparatory School since she arrived to teach Art in 1986. Since 1987, Harry Roberts has taught English and Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) subjects and was Deputy Head–Administration until 2008. Marion Lambert also began teaching at the Preparatory School in 1987 and among her many roles was Coordinator of Curriculum and Staff Development until her retirement in 1999. Carole Hazell (1986–2000) began as a Teacher of French and English. Her natural leadership skills made her a practical and wise Deputy Head.

Campbell House, under Diane Bourke's leadership (1982–96) and in consort with Mr Macmillan, continued to thrive. Mr Gebhardt understood the importance of imagination and creativity in early childhood development, and admired the way Campbell House fostered children's individuality. An Early Learning Centre for pre-school children opened in 1994 under the direction of Andrée Fitzgerald (1994–2006) and provided an important enrolment stream for the Preparatory School. Mrs Bourke's parting gift to the College was the investigation and introduction, with Mrs Fitzgerald, of the Reggio Emilia approach to early years learning, in 1996. The approach emerged from municipal infant–toddler centres and pre-schools of Reggio Emilia in Italy, and emphasises children's expression, often in small groups, through many different 'languages' – including music, movement, drawing, painting, sculpture, collage and drama – all being explored in stimulating, beautiful spaces.³¹

When Mrs Russell was appointed Head of Campbell House in 1997, she initiated a range of teaching and learning techniques that have put this Early Primary section of the College at the forefront of educational innovation in Geelong. The Reggio Emilia approach was the starting point, but the educational philosophy now encompasses the 'Understanding by Design' model, developed by Harvard University, which 'required deep thinking and the development of intellectual character in our students'.³² A focus on professional development has created a strong team of teachers who have embraced other innovations at Campbell House. An emphasis on the 'physical environment as the third teacher' was introduced through the gradual



Chris Lawson, 2002

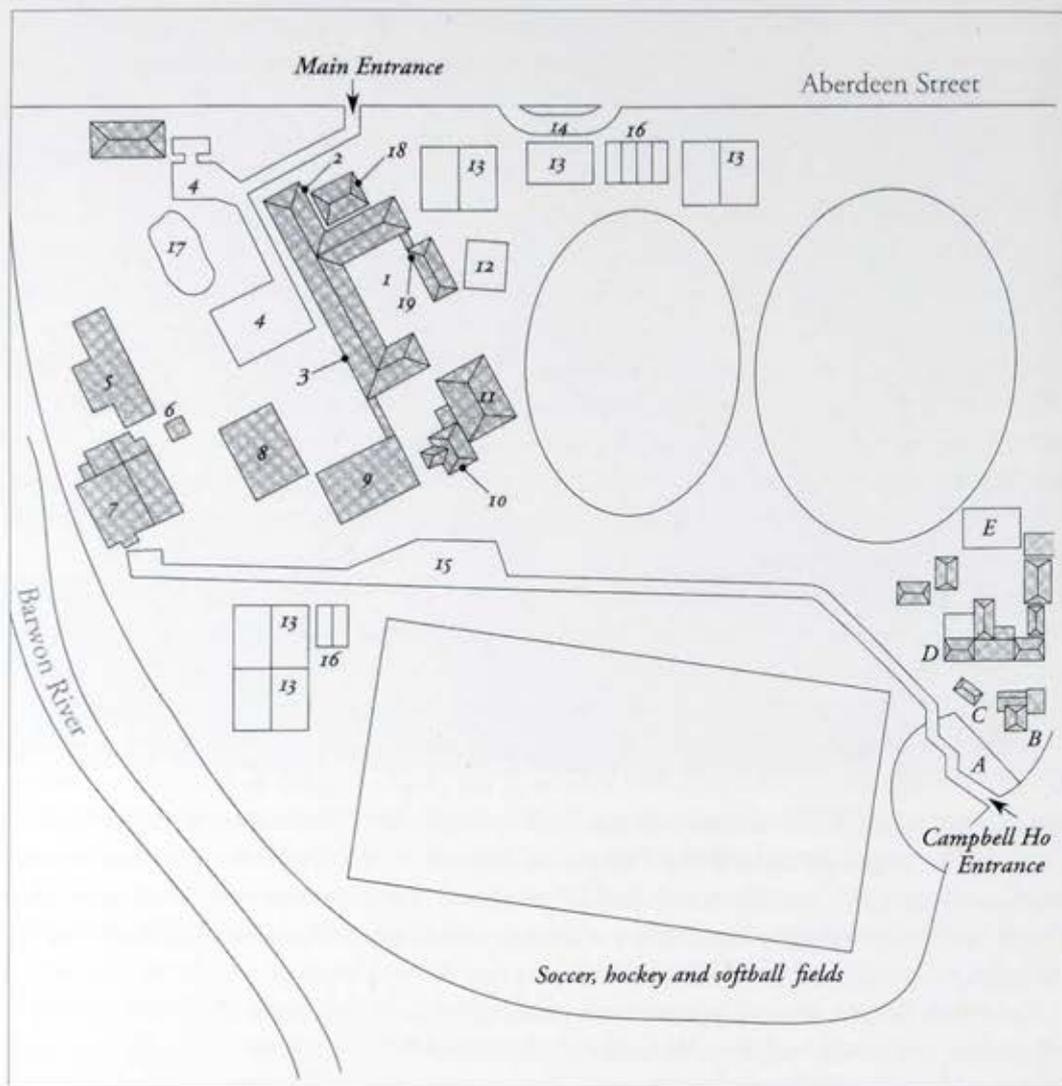


Hugo Steinfort and Ebony Westman (Year 4) raking leaves in the Environment Centre, 2003

Preparatory School enrolments, 1960–2005

Year	Campbell House	Other Preparatory School Years	Total
1960	52 (K-2)	244 (Y3-7)	296
1965	46 (K-2)	290 (Y3-8)	336
1970	53 (K-3)	250 (Y4-8)	303
1975	90 (K-3)	251 (Y4-8)	341
1980	93 (K-3)	376 (Y4-8)	469
1985	97 (K-3)	386 (Y4-8)	483
1990	99 (K-3)	447 (Y4-8)	546
1995	122 (ELC-3)	417 (Y4-8)	539
2000	126 (ELC-3)	347 (Y4-8)	473
2005	146 (ELC-3)	408 (Y4-8)	554

Sources: *Pegasus*, Council Minutes, Principals' Reports



Right: Map of the Preparatory School, 2009

transformation of classrooms into more flexible learning spaces. Special furniture was designed; clotheslines for displays of work banned in favour of less cluttered classrooms; teachers' desks and teaching paraphernalia moved into a purpose-built bulk store. A balanced approach to teaching Literacy was emphasised that combined opportunities for explicit teaching and enquiry. Teacher consistency was increased with the adoption of THRASS (Teaching Handwriting, Reading and Spelling Skills), designed by Denise Ritchie, which taught the forty-four phonics of the English language and their associated spelling choices.³³

While the Preparatory School's expansive isolation from the Senior School has always been an attractive feature, one of Dr Turner's first concerns as the new Principal in 1996 was to re-introduce a whole-school approach to teaching, policy and ethos. To improve communication between the Preparatory and Senior Schools she introduced teacher transfers, which were of particular benefit to Year 7 and 8 teachers. She taught French to Year 8 students, attended Preparatory School Assemblies, staff meetings and other events. Two new Student Representative Council (SRC) bodies – one for Upper Primary and one for Lower Secondary – represented the students' views in a more formal way. Chris Lawson, Head of the Preparatory School (1997–

2006), proved to be a key part of Dr Turner's leadership team. He was able to foster school unity, be a real role model for his colleagues during some highly innovative educational changes, and remain intuitively understanding of children's needs.³⁴

Building on the existing Environment Centre and its use, particularly since 1983 by Year 7 students when Environmental Science was introduced, the Year 4 Enviro Year began in 2001. Classrooms and other facilities were added to the original centre to provide a permanent home for the Year 4 students. Water tanks were installed, new garden beds were hand watered and some water is trapped from the Library's roof. A billabong was created, harvesting water from the teachers' top car park, and is used to test water quality. While English and Mathematics remained discrete, the rest of the Year 4 curriculum became a program of integrated studies with the environment at its core. Native and natural environments were preferred, so native fish and frogs replaced rabbits, and native shrubs and grasses were planted. The program, devised by teachers Paul Jeffreys and Doug Wade (1987–present), took a long-term view, aiming to teach about the natural environment and responsible living, with daily hands-on experience of environmental care and management, to create responsible students and, later, responsible adults.³⁵ The important work that had begun in 2000, on the development of a corridor of vegetation on the escarpment that leads up from the Barwon River to the Preparatory School, was incorporated into the Enviro Year program.³⁶ In 2006, the College was recognised for its promotion of Environmental Education over a period of thirty years with a World Environment Day Award from the City of Greater Geelong. The Enviro Year now attracts enrolments to the College: 'It has given Year 4 an identity and made it a real point of entry into the school', reflects Dr Turner.³⁷ Meanwhile, the Year 7 program continued to use the Environment Centre and emphasise environmental aims and in 2007 their project won the national Sustainable Living Challenge run by the University of New South Wales.³⁸

Following the success of the Year 4 program, the concept of a unifying focus for Year 6 seemed like a logical progression. In 2006, the themed Multimedia Year began for Year 6, with a purpose-built Multimedia Centre at the hub of the educational experience. The program is divided, on rotation, into three sections: film, radio and newspaper. Students develop design skills and information and communication technology (ICT) know-how to run their own radio station, write and present radio plays, create videos and newspapers, and go on excursions to relevant media organisations, such as *The Age*. Under current Head, Julian Carroll (2007–present), an innovative future for the growing Preparatory School community seems assured.

Since 1962, with the permanent transfer of Form 2 from the Senior School, many College graduates spent two-thirds of their school life at the Preparatory School (Preparatory to Year 8). Now for some it is even longer, if they begin at the Early Learning Centre. It is hardly surprising, then, that many retain a deep loyalty to and affection for the Preparatory School and, unlike many other independent schools' preparatory schools that finish at Year 6, the College's Preparatory School is not a poor cousin of the Senior campus but holds an important place and plays a significant role in the College's operations. Enrolments have almost doubled since it moved to its new site in 1960 (see table). Children thrive in the large open spaces and among the quintessentially Australian environment of modern post-war buildings, native trees and informal grounds, all of which provide 'a beautiful pastoral environment for the children to grow up in'.³⁹ By the end of Year 8, however, there is a palpable sense of progression, and students seem ready for the more mature, formal grandeur of the English-collegiate buildings at the Senior School, and for all the historical traditions embodied in them.



Ian Watson and Joan Sweetman, Open Day, 1972.
Reproduced with permission from Joan Sweetman



SIC ITUR AD ASTRA