

**ST MARY'S COLLEGE**  *150th anniversary celebrations*  
AN ADVERTISING FEATURE

# Pride in past and present

**S**t Mary's College is celebrating 150 years of proud Catholic education inspired by empowered 18th-century humanitarian and revolutionary, Nano Nagle. The school's first pupils walked through the grand doors in 1868, when the school was known as Mount St Mary's.

St Mary's College Principal, Helen Spencer, said it is a special time for the school, which prides itself on the Presentation pillar of 'hospitality'.

"Our 150th anniversary is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the school's past, as we continue to build powerful futures for young women," Ms Spencer said.

There have been a number of changes to the College during the past century and a half, with recent additions being a new purpose-built early learning centre for the school's Kindergarten and Prep students and a fully refurbished performing arts facility.

"With 150 years of history behind us, it is also timely to honour the many people who have helped form the rich and colourful landscape of St Mary's College," Ms Spencer said.

In 1866, two years prior to the school's opening, the Mother Superior of the Catholic Presentation Order set sail from Ireland with her fellow sisters to provide spiritual guidance for the fledgling colony of Hobart.

The sisters, who founded the school, carried with them the vision of Nano Nagle — a humanitarian and foundational leader of the Presentation Sisters which is the Catholic order that guides St Mary's.

Born in 1718, Nano was best known for her courageous work secretly operating



**A PROUD TRADITION:** Three generations of St Mary's girls, current student Jade O'Brien, centre, her mum Nicole O'Brien, left, and Jade's grandmother Susan Killworth, celebrate the Hobart school's 150th milestone. PICTURE: MATT THOMPSON

schools in Ireland for deprived Catholic children for whom education was illegal at the time.

Nano's school soon turned into a network of schools and the foundations of an educational system which would inspire a number of valiant women and men to establish their own schools in the following century.

Her heart was always centred on underprivileged people and her work did not end with her efforts in education.

St Mary's was the first Presentation school in Australia and is only Catholic, all-girls' school for

## Implicit in everything that was taught was the fact that women were strong and that the world was our oyster

ST MARY'S COLLEGE ARCHIVIST MARGARET ROOTES

Kindergarten to Year 12 (Kindergarten to Year 2 for boys) in Tasmania.

From 1868, the sisters simultaneously ran St Columba's school on the same property as Mount St Mary's.

St Columba's was a co-educational school for disadvantaged students supplemented by the fees from Mount St Mary's students.

In 1898, the college changed its name to St Mary's College as it is known today.

In 1957, as the school expanded, St Columba's closed and was absorbed by St Mary's.

The College was handed over to the Archdiocese in 2011, but the Presentation Sisters continue to maintain strong links with the school

community.

As part of the school's 150th anniversary celebrations, St Mary's College Archivist, Margaret Rootes is writing a book that will highlight the school's rich history from the viewpoint of individuals.

The book will be published later this year and will feature images of and stories about 150 people who have made significant contributions to the College community.

"Those individuals are made up of students who went on to make their mark in the world, outstanding teachers at the school and amazing volunteers who gave so freely

to St Mary's College," Mrs Rootes said.

"Teachers whose stories are included speak of their love for the College and for their students and of their enjoyment in being part of the St Mary's community.

A student of St Mary's College before returning later to teach, Mrs Rootes said she has 'always been grateful for the sacrifices her parents made to send her and her sister to St Mary's College. "In retrospect, I think we received a very sound education, especially in languages, literature and history.

"Implicit in everything that was taught was the fact that women were strong and that the world was our oyster," she said.

The College celebrated 150 years of its Irish beginnings with a community fun day for St Patrick's Day on March 17.

Past and present students, teachers and parents took part in the festivities, which centred on Irish music and dancing, colonial dress-ups and old-fashioned games.

Among the many families with a long-standing connection to the College who will be also celebrating the milestone, is current student Jade O'Brien (pictured) who is a sixth-generation scholar.

A 150th anniversary Gala Dinner will be held at the Hotel Grand Chancellor on Saturday, May 12.

All members of the St Mary's College community are invited to attend the celebration dinner, which is \$89 per person and includes a three-course meal and musical entertainment.

**For more information, and/or anyone who is interested in RSVP-ing for the dinner can contact [hello@eventsphere.com.au](mailto:hello@eventsphere.com.au) or phone 0439 336 511.**

ST MARY'S COLLEGE

— 150<sup>th</sup> —

Anniversary Gala Dinner

You're invited!

Saturday 12 May 2018

5.30pm, Hotel Grand Chancellor

Tickets available online at [www.smc.tas.edu.au](http://www.smc.tas.edu.au)

For more information contact: [hello@eventsphere.com.au](mailto:hello@eventsphere.com.au) - 0439 336 511

Join us beforehand for our Anniversary Mass at 3.30pm at St Mary's Cathedral, and a tour of the College. Tours will depart every 15min from 12.30 - 2.00pm.




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