2012 Annual Report

Through its activities and events, the Monte Parents & Friends Association Inc (P&F) aims to create an inclusive, vibrant parent community, providing opportunities for all parents to be involved in College life.

In addition to the above aims, the P&F identified a number of goals for the 2012 including:

• Increasing opportunities to inform and educate parents for the benefit of the wellbeing of their teenage daughters.
• Increasing parent engagement across all year groups, especially targeting fathers
• Ensuring the P&F Raffle is financial
• Working towards a “new” 2nd Hand book sale
• Establishing a Parent Pastoral Care Coordinator
• Reviewing the P&F Constitution to ensure it complies with the Associations Incorporation Act 2009.

The P&F Executive worked hard in 2012 to achieve these goals. Parent engagement was high on the list of priorities and to this end, a number of successful parent forums were held during the year. These forums provided information on the College’s academic results, the Monte sports program, the re-development of the school website and the parent satisfaction survey. The highlight was a presentation by author and educator, Dannielle Miller on ‘navigating girl world”. This forum was well received with nearly 300 parents, friends and staff in attendance on the night.

The P&F ensures parents are informed about educational issues beyond the College gates with representation on the Council of Catholic School Parents NSW/ACT and the NSW Parent Council. This representation was particularly crucial in 2012 with the release of the Gonski Report into Commonwealth government school funding and the State government’s subsequent decision to freeze funding for Independent and Catholic schools.

The P&F’s work involves an element of fundraising each year which directly benefits students currently at the College. Funds are raised via the P&F term raffle and the Annual Trivia Night (end of year parent function).

In 2012, a strategy was developed to reverse a drop in revenue from the P&F raffle (an unintended consequence of a re-design of the school fee invoice). In consultation with the P&F, the Business Office amended the school fee invoice to make it easier for parents to ‘opt in’ to the raffle. The P&F also changed the raffle prize from a year’s tuition to a more realistic term’s tuition and to continue to draw the raffle each term. A letter outlining the changes was sent to all Monte parents and news items were placed in Monte Matters. While the P&F continued to draw the raffle at each P&F general meeting a decision was made to announce the winner each term in Monte Matters. These efforts, supported by Principal, Catherine Alcock, resulted in a healthy return financially with much stronger participation rates.

As a result, in 2012, the P&F was pleased to provide $15,000 for the College Bursary Program. In addition $80,000 was allocated for the redevelopment of the College website in 2012 and the McQuoin Centre Audio Visual upgrade.
Each school year, many members of the Monte parent community provide much-needed support and assistance to families in need within the College community. This support is provided in the true Mercy spirit that forms the foundation of the objectives of the Monte Parent & Friends Association. In a bid to further coordinate these efforts, the P&F has been working with the College to develop guidelines for a P&F Pastoral Care Coordinator. While there are still some important issues that need to be worked through before this position can be finalised (such as ensuring family anonymity and confidentiality) the P&F remains committed to working with the College to progress this position.

In a bid to create an online alternative to the traditional ‘schoolyard’ second hand text book sale, the P&F has been considering an online trading system for parents. The P&F, College Executive and staff invested considerable time and energy working through the challenges and intricacies of digital copyright and e-textbooks. In late 2012, the College signed up with the Sustainable School Shop, an online system that allowed parents to buy and sell second hand books. Parents were provided with a Fact Sheet explaining how the new online system worked and the different publishers’ terms & conditions (relating to the resale of textbooks with digital content). Parents were also given the opportunity to sign up without fee for the first 12 months, with this offer to expire in August 2013. After this time, parents will pay a small annual fee to join the Sustainable School Shop and a percentage of this fee will be allocated back to the College. The P&F has requested that these funds be allocated the College Bursary program.

In 2012, the P&F finalised an extensive review of the Constitution governing the parent body. The aim of the review was to ensure the Constitution was complied with the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* and also accurately reflected the current aims and objectives of the P&F, the roles and responsibilities of the Executive Committee and requirements and expectations of the parent community. A revised Constitution was passed by special resolution at the 2012 Annual P&F General Meeting. The revisions will now go to the College Board for endorsement.

With the support of its extensive parent network, Parent Year Coordinators and Class Parents, a number of successful parent events were held in 2012 including the Welcome Drinks, year cocktail functions and morning teas, class dinners and the Melbourne Cup Day Luncheon. The P&F would like to thank all those parents who have, this year, volunteered to be Class Parents, Year Coordinators or to help with the various P&F activities during 2012.

Two new events were also introduced this year aimed specifically at providing opportunities to involve Monte Dads in parent activities. This resulted in the creation of the inaugural Father & Daughter ‘Under the Stars’ Move Night for all year groups in February and the resurrection of the P&F Golf Day in term 4. The success of both events has guaranteed they will be included in the Monte School Calender for 2013.

Monte parents also provided an important element of support to College events including the Annual Open Day, the Rugby Lunch, Mothers’ Day Liturgy and the Blue & Blue Luncheon.

The achievements of 2012 would not have been possible without the P&F Executive Committee, who dedicated so much time and commitment to representing the Monte parent community in 2012. Their involvement has often extended far beyond the scope of their roles and
responsibilities. The same can be said for the year coordinators, class parents and parent volunteers who have contributed so much, in so many ways.

In concluding, the P&F would also like to acknowledge the Principal, Catherine Alcock for her ongoing support and engagement in 2012. Thank you to the Director of Development, Karen Gair who along with Pat Clarke and Ann Buchanan provided much-needed assistance, support and advice to the Monte P&F.

Sue Boudakin, Matthew Hamra
2011/2012 Monte P&F Presidents.