



**ST CATHERINE'S**  
COLLEGE

Edition 1 | December 2017

THE

# BANKSIA

MAGAZINE FOR OUR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS



— The Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence  
reflects on her time at  
St Catherine's

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— Profiles - what are  
our Alumni up to?

8

— Recent reunions  
- 1980s and 1960s

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# Welcome

St Catherine's College is undergoing a modern-day renaissance and 2017 has been a spectacular year filled with exciting developments, academic achievements, personal successes of our residents and the ongoing progress made by our alumni.

## Three highlights come to mind:

- Securing State and Federal funding of \$12.8 million to provide a new 54 bed accommodation building designed to support our Indigenous students.
- Significant academic achievements for our residents with over 50% obtaining a distinction average (or above).
- A very successful year on the sports field – St Catherine's won a clean sweep of the Men's Cup, the Women's Cup, the Overall Cup and the Spirit Cup.

*The College rejuvenates each year with about 150 new residents and they inform and contribute to our future. However, in looking forward, we constantly ensure that the legacy of our rich and passionate past is renewed and remains relevant to our future planning and to our residents.*

This new edition of *The Banksia* shines a light on our talented Alumni. From personal profiles of alumni to reunions and the impact alumni are having in their communities and at the College.

You are St Catherine's, so we hope you enjoy this new publication and we welcome your feedback.



Fiona Crowe with College dogs, Ollie and Bridie

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Cover image: The Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence



# The Hon Dr Carmen Lawrence

STUDIED: Bachelor of Psychology (Honours)

YEARS STUDIED: 1965 – 1968, PhD 1983

BEFORE ST CATHERINE'S: Dongara, Regional WA

Remarkable former resident, Dr Carmen Lawrence, first became aware of her desire to advance social equality and the status of women during her years at St Catherine's.

She and Robert French (Chief Justice of the High Court of Australia and newly appointed Chancellor of UWA) had shared top place in the State School leaving examination and her parents, who farmed at Gutha, north of Perth, thought an all-girls' college would be a protective environment for their young daughter. She arrived at College at the age of 16 in 1965. "My parents thought I would be protected from the temptations and pressures of university life at St Catherine's - there were very few women studying at the UWA campus in the '60s, and the College provided me and other young women with additional support, including tutoring."

Neither she nor the nuns at Santa Maria Convent where she had completed her schooling had any idea about what she should study. She considered medicine, but her subject choices at school had not included chemistry, physics and mathematics. So, Carmen chose topics that interested her, English literature, Italian, Economics and Psychology, a field new to her.

*"I had the privilege of meeting many wonderful people, including academics, such as Allan Richardson, a psychologist based at UWA. He introduced me and others to European psychology, and for this I am eternally grateful."*

Carmen worked hard to maintain the exceptional standards set by her school leaving results but she embraced all that College had to offer. She attended balls and parties, was the Freshers' representative and was involved in the Social Club and the Newman Society. She committed to do an Honours degree in Psychology, left St Catherine's during third year to share a flat but returned to become Senior Student in

1967. There she faced an issue which questioned the basic rights of women. A St Catherine's student was found to have a man in her room. "I'm not sure that there was anything going on but she was expelled, cold, bang, gone. I complained that this was unfair but she stayed expelled."

Carmen completed her Bachelor of Psychology with first class honours in 1968, winning a prize for the most outstanding graduate from a group of Faculties. She travelled to Europe and had a scholarship entry to Cornell University in the United States but decided with 'the perversity of youth' not to accept the offer. During the early 1970s she worked at the University of New South Wales as a research assistant and at Melbourne University tutoring in Psychology. In Melbourne, a 'longish' relationship resulted in the birth of her son, David. "I thought marriage was for the birds. I was a radical."

*Managing a baby as a single mother with no childcare facilities and tutoring at University stretched her resources but she maintained a central role in the Women's Electoral Lobby, pressing for affordable childcare, improvement in women's educational opportunities and promotion in the workplace.*

Returning to Perth and with family support, she took part-time positions at WA Universities for several years where she refused to prolong her workdays longer than necessary. "I would not have wanted to be as fully engaged as I know some women are today with their little babies. I enjoyed being a Mum." At WAIT (Curtin University) she established a course for nurses in Behavioural Sciences.

*Carmen retired from politics in 2007 and currently is a Professor in the School of Psychology, UWA and a Fellow of St Catherine's College.*







From left to right: Jo Patman – Tutor, Pat Church – Warden, Carmen Lawrence – Senior Student, Sue Boyd – Social President, Sue Parker – Freshers' Rep



Paul Keating PM and caucus colleagues, congratulating Carmen Lawrence on her election to the Federal Parliament

Carmen had been a quiet child in a big family. Teaching full-time for four years in the School of Psychiatry and Behavioural Sciences at UWA and her love of language taught her how to project ideas to a wider audience. She completed her PhD in 1983 and she saw two ways to achieve political and social change. One was to pressure politicians to take action. The other was to be a politician. She joined the WA Labor Party and in 1986 won the seat of Subiaco in the WA Legislative Assembly.

An illustrious political career followed. In 1990 she became Australia's first woman Premier and held many additional portfolios before serving in Paul Keating's Federal Ministry 1994-1996. In 2004, she was elected the first woman President of the Australian Labor Party. She considers her earlier experiences, such as establishing the Women's Electoral Lobby with 13 other women and her first portfolio as Minister for Education, amongst her most satisfying.

*"Being the first woman to become Premier of an Australian State was a considerable honour. It was a wonderful experience and I was able to use the skills I learned during my Psychology degree to try and find solutions to the social and economic problems we faced at the time. In particular, my university education allowed me to assess the validity of evidence and arguments presented to me, while using critical thinking to analyse and develop policy. In 1990, I became Premier at a challenging time, marked by sustained calls for investigation into the relationship between a former Premier, Brian Burke, and some prominent businessmen. Despite the ongoing controversy, and our decision to establish a Royal Commission into these allegations, our government was still able to chalk up some notable achievements, including*

*building the Northern Suburb Transit Line, constructing additional public housing and developing community neighbourhood centres to increase rates of early childhood education."*

Carmen retired from politics in 2007 and currently is Professor in the School of Psychology, UWA and a Fellow of St Catherine's College. She widely mentors young people and feels you should do what you're good at and love.

*"It is about finding something that gets your blood racing and exploring the possibilities that can open up from the interests you already have. I find it preferable not to have an entire set of goals mapped out. Typically, I only plan for the fairly short term, which hopefully means that I am more aware of what's happening around me, seeing what is, rather than focussing on what I hope will be the case."*

*"We don't know what's around the corner, so it helps to embrace every possibility, rather than waiting for the perfect moment. I think persistence is most important in rising to whatever challenges you face or set yourselves - no matter what obstacles are put in your way, keep on trying! "*

## The College's most valuable asset is **its alumni**

The women and men of St Catherine's have collectively created today's College and the legacy you have left continues to be sculpted and developed by current residents.

The primary focus at St Catherine's is to prepare its residents for productive careers and meaningful lives, as well as encourage them to share their talents through community engagement both during and after their College years. We also point with pride to the successes of our alumni and your contributions to the greater world.

The College has an active alumni engagement program that allows us to stay connected with you and to create avenues for you to stay connected with your fellow alumni. The relationship between the College and you, our alumni can and should be reciprocal and mutually beneficial.

### WHAT DOES OUR CURRENT ALUMNI PROFILE LOOK LIKE?

In 2017, we currently have a database of 5090 alumni, most of whom we can contact via mail.

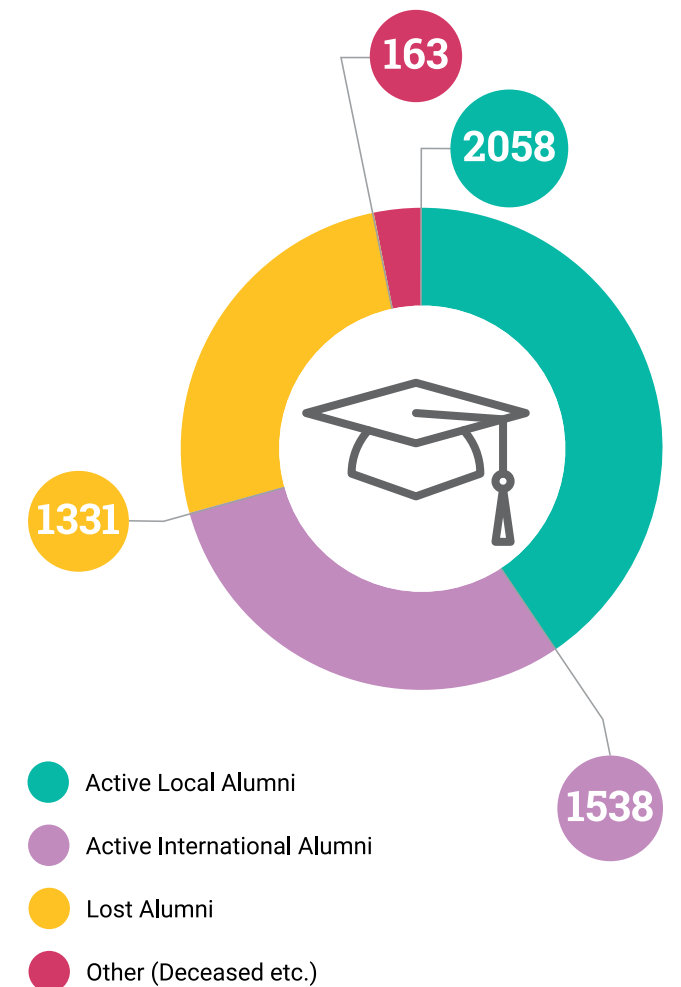
Unfortunately, we have lost contact with over 1000 alumni, largely due to contact details not being updated. Women are more difficult to track as they often change their surnames so we would really appreciate your help in finding our lost Cats - please see the link below. If you find someone you know on the list, please get them to update their details with us!

**Help find lost Cats at**  
<https://stcatherines.uwa.edu.au/lost-cats/>

*Active Local Alumni* means we have a valid contract address for you. Of the 2058 Active Local Alumni, only 36% have given us their email addresses and our target is to increase this to 50% in the next 12 months. With an email address we can successfully communicate with you in a cost effective manner and keep you abreast of what is happening at College. This is especially true for our international alumni as the cost of mailing is just so prohibitive.

**Update your email details at**  
<https://stcatherines.uwa.edu.au/community/alumni/update-your-details>

In recent times, the shift towards social media has really taken off, so if this is your preferred communication channel please find us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or YouTube.







Alumni from the 1970 Reunion

## HOW DO WE CURRENTLY ENGAGE WITH OUR ALUMNI?

Regular communication is the key to building any relationship and the College has substantially increased this over the past three years.

We now have three publications per year in May, August and December. The May and December issues are alumni specific and the August issue coincides with Open Day and is a more visual representation of what is happening at St Catherine's. The August issue is aimed at school-age children and their parents but many alumni have said how much they enjoy seeing what is happening at College. The size and format is different for both publications to make them distinguishable from each other.

We regularly post on our social media channels and encourage as much interaction there as possible. We have also created decade-specific Facebook Groups to link alumni from a certain era directly to each other.

## EVENTS

There is no better way to feel connected than in person. Reunions and invitations to College events such as Open Day are always available and to date we have held successful reunions for the 1940s, '50s, '60s, '70s and '80s. The '90s and 2000s are coming up soon.

## MENTORING

For many alumni, they want their connection with St Catherine's to be meaningful and to actively engage and support the residents. At College, we run a professional mentoring program for older students so they can be ready for the workplace once they graduate. We are always seeking professionals who are keen to participate in the program so please contact [alumni@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au](mailto:alumni@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au) if you would like to get involved.

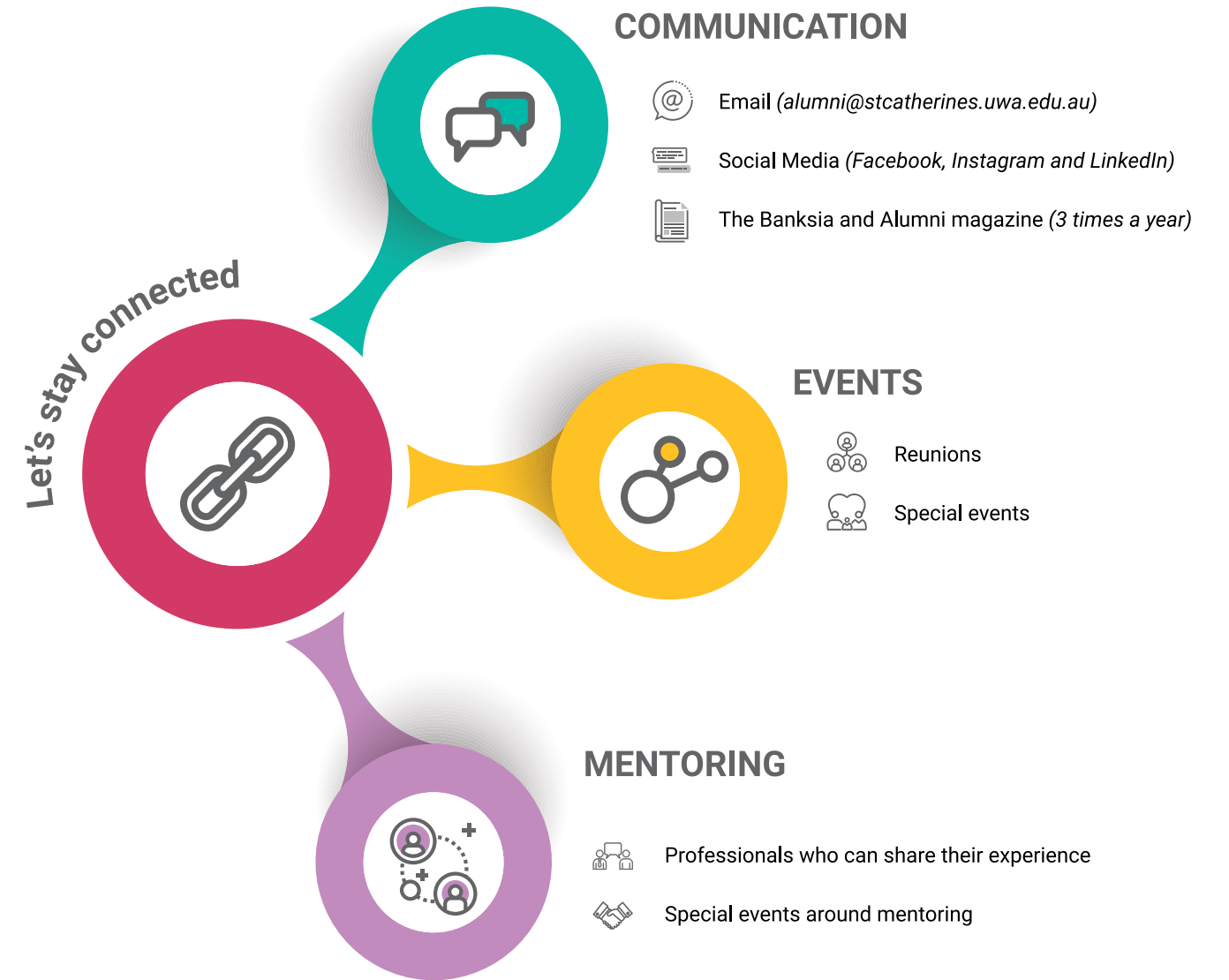


Singapore Alumni



1950s Alumni

## ENGAGEMENT PLAN



## ALUMNI TEAM

We think it's important for current residents to understand what it means to be an alumna of the College so have employed a current resident, Brooke Peden, as an Alumni intern. Brooke is in her final year of a Bachelor of Science Majoring in Psychology and is the perfect bridge between current and past residents. Her wonderful way with people coupled with a questioning mind and a really developed efficiency in all that she does, makes Brooke the perfect Alumni Officer.

*As a team, we are here to support you and look forward to hearing from you!*

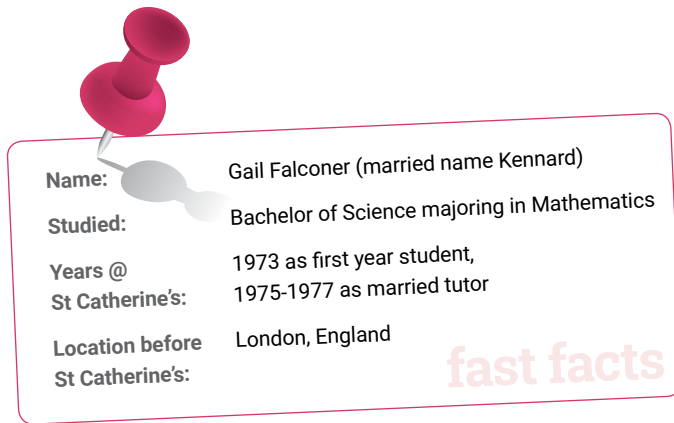
Mandy McFarland  
Director of Advancement



Brooke Peden, Alumni intern



# Gail Falconer



Name:	Gail Falconer (married name Kennard)
Studied:	Bachelor of Science majoring in Mathematics
Years @ St Catherine's:	1973 as first year student, 1975-1977 as married tutor
Location before St Catherine's:	London, England

**fast facts**

## How long have you been a part of the Anglican Church and when did you decide to become a Parish Priest?

Since I was 10 years old I have been a worshipping Anglican. For a long time, I had a sense of call to the priesthood, although, as a woman, it would have been insane to share this in those early years. I trained as a statistician, working in London and then came to WA to study to become a teacher of mathematics. My teaching career has seen me work in independent schools and universities across the country. When I was at the height of my career, I was the Acting Principal at Methodist Ladies' College in Melbourne. In my second year there, a parasite caused me to lose sight in one eye for several months. Throughout my painful recovery, I had time to think and I decided to follow my early sense of call to join the priesthood.

I started training in 2005 and was ordained as a Deacon in 2008. I worked as a hospital chaplain at King Edward Memorial Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital, a confronting ministry of grief and loss, which allowed me to support families throughout the community. I later decided to enter Parish ministry and that is where I have been for the last six years.

## What is the most rewarding part of your job?

Leading the communion service is one of the most amazing experiences. Previously, when I was a Deacon I was not able to preside at the Eucharist, so when I became a Priest, being able to stand behind the altar and lead a service was life giving. I make sure that each service is engaging, produced well and contains well developed themes. The Eucharist was a special part of my spiritual life growing up and I want others to have that same experience.

## Over the years, church attendance has declined. What efforts do you make to increase attendance?

An increase in church attendance is important for our survival. Before I became the Parish Priest of St Columba's Anglican Church, the parish was depleted and had lost many members. When I started, we had 29 people attending our main service and now we have over 40 people.

*Increasing attendance can be achieved by engaging the members and reinforcing the importance of a supportive church community.*

After the service, we encourage those who attend to stay for morning tea, which allows people to come together and interact. If people uncover this supportive community, we hope they will spread the word and invite their friends to come along. We also make sure that we target specific audiences in the community and develop volunteering and fundraising activities that will suit them.

The Anglican Church can be very traditional; however, we make sure we focus on wider issues and try to support the local and global community. This allows those in the community to join our Parish while also engaging in activities which help others, such as emergency food relief.



## What does 'community' look like for you?

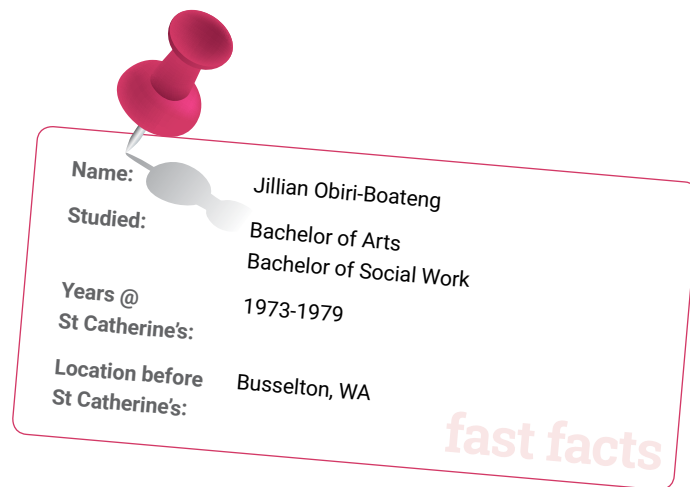
Our mission is to be a welcoming community; however, many people need help to make sure this is achievable. The whole church community has a role to play in encouraging interaction and a sense of community and it is not only the priest's job. The foundation of social interaction is based on volunteers. New members are more likely to stay if they see that current members are engaged and committed and give a helping hand when needed. To reach our goal to become a welcoming community, inclusivity is key. Everyone should be able to be their authentic self and not feel ashamed to talk about their feelings and concerns. When our members create a safe place for others, social interaction and a sense of community follows.

## What advice would you give to young Alumni who are uncertain of their career path?

Make sure you're open to all possibilities and have a go. Remember that success is not due to luck - it's about hard work and being a lifelong learner. Always put your hand up when opportunities come your way, and remember it's ok to make mistakes and fail! We can grow even out of darker times. Life is for living and for joy so embrace it!



# Jillian Obiri-Boateng



## You work as a Community Capacity Building Manager for the City of Rockingham.

### Can you tell us about your role?

Community capacity building is part of community development and it aims to empower community members to develop the capability and resources necessary to grow a strong community. We provide guidance, support, assistance and knowledge to community members and organisations to help them develop sustainable events, programs and opportunities for the local community. This will hopefully grow people's connection to place, therefore, their connection to their community. Furthermore, we strive to develop a community that is safe, strong, inclusive, welcoming and more resilient.

## What was your career journey after leaving St Catherine's College?

After leaving College I worked for two years at King Edward Hospital as a social worker. I then went overseas and worked for the World Health Organisation in Nigeria as a research assistant. When I returned to Australia I worked as a medical Social Worker at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, and then decided I wanted to be involved in community work.

I have been employed in numerous roles for the City of Rockingham and these roles have allowed me to develop best practice youth services for 'at risk' young people, community transport programs for transport disadvantaged community members, and the social connector program for the socially isolated, amongst many others. The social connector program is one of the most rewarding programs I have worked on and involves trying to reduce social isolation for the people of Rockingham. We have trained people in the community to become social connectors, and their role involves establishing sustainable reconnections for isolated people which will allow them to re-enter the community of Rockingham.

## How do you build connections at all levels of the community?

- 1 Firstly, we have a community grants program which allows the Rockingham community to run their own programs, events and projects. This gives the community an opportunity to bond together and increase social connections. The grants we receive can range from \$3,000 to \$10,000. The funding helps many organisations including school P&Cs, sporting, and non-for-profit organisations. A great recent example was the Men of the Trees, a non-for-profit organisation that plants seedlings to prevent the spread of erosion, salinity and deserts. They were assisted to build strong governance and succession planning procedures, enabling the sustainable growth of this group.
- 2 Our second strategy is to sponsor community events that bring the community together. One of these events is the annual Rotary Club of Palm Beach's Horse Race on the Beach. This event attracts more than 20,000 people and builds engagement.
- 3 Our third strategy is holding continuous pop-up social connector events in pocket parks (small neighbourhood level parks) which connects people and reduces social isolation.

## You are in a leadership position. What makes a good leader?

Make sure you listen to your passionate staff as their ideas can lead to amazing outcomes. Give them a chance to put their ideas into action, while also making sure you have good processes and risk management in place to support them. A good leader lets their staff feel empowered. My door is always open, as I want my staff to come to me with any ideas or concerns they may have and to really be accessible. Model positive thinking, ethical behaviour and passion for community.

## What advice do you have for young alumni entering the workplace?

Don't be too fussy with your first few jobs. It's about getting experience on your CV and immersing yourself in the workforce. Be brave and give everything a go. Ask for mentoring, supervision and make sure you don't get too comfortable in the role you're in - move roles and embrace change.





# Lorna MacGregor



**Name:** Lorna MacGregor  
**Studied:** Bachelor of Arts  
Diploma of Education  
Master of Business Administration  
**Years @ St Catherine's:** 1980-1982  
**Location before St Catherine's:** Narembeen, WA

**fast facts**

## How did you get into your field of work?

I came from a small wheatbelt town where the only people that I knew who had careers were teachers and doctors. I am squeamish, and I had a passion for literature and reading, so I decided to become an English teacher. Living at St Catherine's College provided me with exposure to a smorgasbord of careers that I previously had not known existed. After a few years of teaching I decided to go back to university and study a MBA where I specialised in marketing and strategic planning. My degree has provided me many opportunities in marketing including the role of Group Marketing Manager at HBF.

In 2008 I had the opportunity to take a senior role in a non-for-profit organisation, Activ, as the Director of Strategy. I did think carefully before I made my decision to move into working in the NFP sector. It is said that once you work in the NFP sector it can be difficult to transition back into more corporate roles. However, having a commitment to social justice, the opportunity to work with organisations committed to improving the lives of those less fortunate outweighed any other concerns.

I have worked in senior roles in the NFP sector since 2008 and I enjoy the challenge and the sense of purpose. I have am currently the CEO of Lifeline WA.

## What is the local impact of your work at Lifeline?

Suicide is a serious public health issue; on average one person in Western Australia loses their life to Suicide every day.

Suicide is preventable; by connecting vulnerable people with crisis support Lifeline WA can keep them safe and refer them to the relevant help and services.

Lifeline WA is part of the Australia wide Lifeline network which ensures that all Western Australians experiencing a personal crisis can have access to 24 hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

Somewhere in Australia there is a new call to Lifeline every 32 seconds. Last year more than 44,000 Western Australian's contacted us for support.

In addition to the telephone crisis support service, Lifeline WA provides a range of prevention and counselling services.

Lifeline WA also delivers education and training programs to increase understanding of suicide prevention and mental health with the community and workplaces.

We also advocate to reduce the stigma about mental wellbeing and suicide risk.

## What challenges are facing Lifeline or the industry?

Lifeline WA's greatest challenge is building our capacity to answer every call. The demand on our services is increasing, and we need to build our pool of telephone crisis supporters to ensure that someone is there when a helpseeker calls.

Currently Lifeline WA has 140 telephone crisis supporters - every single one of them a volunteer. We have a three year plan to build that pool to more than 270 which will allow Lifeline WA to answer 46,000 calls.

*Telephone crisis supporters may be volunteers, but they are highly trained and skilled. It takes 172 hours of training, mentoring, coaching and probation before a telephone crisis supporter is fully accredited.*

Lifeline WA only has the capacity to train 70 new telephone crisis supporters each year. In the past this has only been enough to maintain the pool. So our key challenge is two fold: strategies to increase volunteer retention, and strategies to increase our capacity to train more telephone crisis supporters.

## What advice do you have for young people entering your industry or generally working in the non-for-profit space?

My advice is not to enter the sector with a romantic notion. The NFP sector is challenging; there is so much unmet need and there are never adequate resources. You need more than just passion and a good heart (but you definitely do need these). On a personal level you need to be resilient and to be able to establish boundaries. On a professional level you need to have sharp business skills. Good intentions are not enough; the community is as deserving of managers committed to professionalism and best business practice as shareholders in a for profit company.

I found my experience in the corporate sector prior to being in NFP ensured that my commercial skills were well honed, and I was very fortunate to work in large organisations that invested in very good professional development. Generally NFP's don't have this capacity, or they morally struggle to redirect investment away from direct service delivery.



# What's happening around college and how can Alumni get involved?

A modern-day College is a busy and energised environment with an ongoing schedule of events, opportunities for residents to learn about wider global issues and recognise excellence.

The range of activities caters for all residents at the different stages of their studies and their College experience. Here are some opportunities which we think alumni might be interested in supporting and is a way for you to connect directly with residents.



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## FORMAL HALL

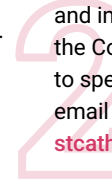
Formal Hall is held every Monday evening during the academic semester, and is a representation of the coming together of St Catherine's as a community of scholars. It is for this reason that academic gowns are worn for Formal Hall, as they have been for centuries at the world's leading university colleges.

Formal Hall is compulsory for first year residents and the rest of the College attend in their Wings on designated dates. Each Formal Hall has a theme which is supported by decorations, special food and speakers who share their experience. Very often the themes address national or global issues and are designed to facilitate courageous conversations around issues such as racial equality, equal pay for equal work or women in the workplace.



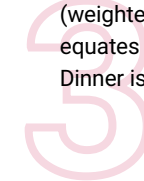
## FACULTY DINNERS

Faculty Dinners are a wonderful opportunity for our residents to meet with accomplished professionals and academics in their field of study while enjoying a three-course meal. Residents can invite their favourite lecturer and table seating is focussed on residents studying similar courses. Over 400 academics and industry professionals have visited the College this year so if you would like to speak at one of these dinners, please email [directorofstudentdevelopment@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au](mailto:directorofstudentdevelopment@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au)



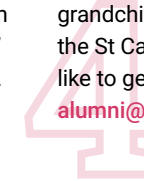
## SCHOLARS' DINNER

Scholars' Dinner is an annual tradition at St Catherine's to celebrate residents who have achieved outstanding academic excellence at university. Our scholars are made up of students not only from UWA, but all the WA universities, and across many disciplines and fields of study. 50% of St Catherine's residents have a WAM (weighted average mark) of over 70 (which equates to a distinction) and the Scholars' Dinner is a highly sought-after celebration.



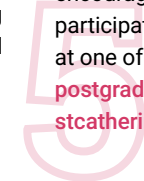
## OPEN DAY

Open Day is one of our largest events of the year where we open our doors to the wider community to showcase our wonderful facilities, programs and activities. This year we received a great response from alumni returning back to College on Open Day, either to follow the tours or to investigate for their children and grandchildren who are interested in joining the St Catherine's community. If you would like to get involved next year, please email [alumni@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au](mailto:alumni@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au)



## POST GRADUATE DINNERS

Post Graduate Dinners occur once a month to stimulate thinking and debate on a range of topics more suited to older residents. The speakers are a blend of high profile academics and industry professionals and residents are encouraged to invite external guests to participate. If you would like to speak at one of these dinners, please email [postgraduateprogramcoordinator@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au](mailto:postgraduateprogramcoordinator@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au)





# Francois Pieters

**Name:** Francois Pieters  
**Studied:** Master of Professional Engineering (Electrical and Electronic)  
**Years @ St Catherine's:** 2015 - 2016  
**Location before St Catherine's:** Stirling, Perth

fast facts



## What advice do you have for young people entering the field of engineering?

The best advice I can give is to follow your interests. If you are passionate about your field of study then you will be more motivated at university as well as afterwards. Whatever you choose, it is important to be persistent and never give up; there is no substitute for hard work. I don't think anyone will ever say it's easy to obtain a degree in engineering, but if you decide to pursue it - keep your mind fixed on the final goal.

## As a recent graduate what made you want to study engineering?

The main reason that I chose to study electrical engineering was that I wanted to work in renewable energy. I've always been fascinated by the idea of using natural energy sources to produce electricity, and it became a big goal of mine to obtain work in the field. I feel extremely fortunate to have achieved this goal as the graduate program that I am currently participating in gives me a lot of exposure to renewable energy technology.

## You are part of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia's (CCIWA) Engineering Graduate Program. Tell us about the program and what the benefits have been for you.

CCIWA decided to create the graduate program in an effort to strengthen the future of power engineering in Western Australia. It is well known that the electrical power industry currently suffers from a lack of youth, and the program hopes to address this. Graduates are employed by CCIWA and then undergo secondments to various electrical power companies throughout WA.

I think the biggest benefit of the program is the sheer variety of experience that I will have gained upon completing it. My first rotation was at Synergy's Kwinana Power Station and my current rotation is with Horizon Power in Technology Park. Each rotation is significantly different to the previous one and will strengthen different professional skills. I believe I will be a very well-rounded engineer at the end of the program.

## What makes you passionate about renewable energy?

My passion for renewable energy started while I was still in high school. It began purely as fascination and then grew deeper over time. When I got to university, I gained an insight into power engineering as a whole and chose as many units in the field as my course allowed me to.

## I hope that Australia as well as the rest of the world is able to make the most of renewable energy systems.

Once installed, they are essentially sources of free electricity which don't have a negative impact on the environment. However, the success of renewable energy faces a variety of challenges (technical, financial and political to name only a few) making this a complex and exciting time to be working in the electrical power industry.

# Sarah Bellottie

**Name:** Sarah Bellottie  
**Studied:** BSc Applied Geology  
**Years @ St Catherine's:** 2013 - 2016  
**Location before St Catherine's:** Regional WA - Shark Bay/Geraldton

fast facts



## Tell us about your work at BHP Billiton

In 2013 I received a scholarship with BHP Billiton to study at Curtin University where I was given the opportunity to be involved in the university's vacation work program. I participated in this program for four years, which really enhanced my work place knowledge and I was constantly gaining valuable experience. As a result, I have been fortunate enough to gain employment as a Geologist with BHP Billiton where I am involved in mining and exploration. I enjoy getting my hands dirty and working as part of a team and I am developing new skills every day.

## What goals would you like to kick in the next five years?

I would like to complete my graduate program with BHP Billiton in the next two years and gain as much industry experience as I can. I would also like to revisit my studies and work within the 'Indigenous space' in conservation and land management. This is very important to me as I have grown up in the Gascoyne region of Western Australia in a World Heritage Area called Shark Bay. The town of Shark Bay has some of the most important land and management sites recognised internationally. Through my studies, I have realised how important it is to look after the land and maintain the cultural significance of it and I want to ensure my land culture knowledge is passed down to the next generation.

## Your five top tips for other young people entering the job market.

1. Set goals and really understand the reasons why you want to achieve these goals.
2. Don't ever take anything too seriously. All that is expected of you is to think objectively and be a contributing member of the team. Have fun with your team and get to know them as friends for life.
3. Learn how to work in a team environment and be an effective team player. Nine times out of ten you will be working in a team.
4. Develop communication skills. Communication is more than how you speak, it is about how you relate to others, process ideas and understand context.
5. The job market is tough so make sure you get co-curricular and work experience now while you are at university.

## You were a senior member of the Dandjoo Darbalung program at St Catherine's. How did the program prepare you for your future?

Prior to me living at St Catherine's College, I lived at the Curtin university campus. I had a lot of fun, but I felt there was a lack of community. I was the only Indigenous person living in that community and I felt that being Indigenous was an identifying factor. I decided to join the *Dandjoo Darbalung* program at the College and was part of the program for three years. Having a program for Indigenous students is very important! Previously, being Indigenous was a part of my life that was not celebrated. However, the *Dandjoo Darbalung* program has shown me that my culture is something to be proud of and to embrace. I learnt so much and really developed my inter-personal skills. I transitioned from being mentored by students in the *Dandjoo Darbalung* program, to becoming a mentor and I now see myself as a leader who is comfortable in myself and is ready to challenge the future.



# Junran Cao

**Name:** Junran Cao  
**Studied:** PhD Economics  
**Years @ St Catherine's:** 2013- 2015  
**Location before St Catherine's:** Bella Vista, NSW

*fast facts*

## Tell us about your role as an economist at the ATO?

My role primarily consists of creating econometric models that are used to measure and/or evaluate the effectiveness and impacts of various government policies. For example, the ATO wants to find out if a taxpayer's compliance behaviour changes in the subsequent years after being subjected to an audit or review. Further, what is the size of this behavioural change in monetary terms and what does it mean for the design of preventative vs corrective policies?

Another project that I am working on is centred on intergenerational wealth transfer (the size of the wealth in question is such that the incomes generated from it have a discernible effect on the national economy). The tasks include the determination of causes that could lead to the wealth being squandered, the resultant impacts on the macro economy and what activities (or 'nudges' in the words of the most recent Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences, Richard Thaler) the tax office can engage in to reduce that likelihood.

## What challenges do you face in your field of work?

Like many other jobs, the challenges are a mixture of technical challenges and personnel challenges. Of the former, it is quite similar to being at university; that is, in order to excel one needs to continuously make the effort to learn new things – be it a new statistical method or a new programming language.

*Of the latter, it is equally important to spend time working on strengthening the professional relationships one has with one's co-workers and other stakeholders.*

*Any project of sufficient size involves collaborative efforts.*

My time spent at St Catherine's has helped me immensely in this respect. Just like being a Residential Advisor, I am conscious of anticipating things from the other person's perspective, to be proactive in initiating and building rapport with others and to make the effort in maintaining contact.

## How do you manage a work/life balance?

I have – or would like to think I have! – quite a regimented schedule that I stick to no matter what, even when I need to travel interstate. Every single day, I make sure I complete the following five items outside of work hours: exercise, reading, maths, economic research and machine learning.

I don't strive for a 'balance' as such; instead I first determine what I want to achieve, then identify what I need to do on a daily basis to get there. In so far as the maintenance of a work/life balance helps to minimise stress, this daily exercise of discipline gives me happiness and eliminates my stress.

## Where do you see yourself in five years' time?

There is a saying posted on the wall of my gym that I like very much, it says "Trust the process". Whilst I do not have a set objective of working in a particular company in a particular role in five years' time, I trust in the process that so long as I consistently give my best both at work and outside of work in my own research/study, in due course, this journey will take me to the places that I aspire to work in.



## What advice would you give to young people trying to enter the job market?

My response is probably most relevant to students of economics (or a similar discipline) who also want to work in this field. I will try to go a little beyond the more commonly known advice that a simple Google search can reveal.

**1. If you still have a couple of semesters left at university, I would recommend selecting units with a focus on developing technical and analytical skills that can be applied to a variety of contexts.** Always choose units that have greater mathematical rigor and require you to complete assignments/projects using a popular data science language such as Python or R. The ever-increasing trend towards data analytics in a large number of industries is unmistakable. And from observations of recent hires, a candidate who has the ability to code, who can empirically investigate and answer business questions using data has a distinct advantage over his/her competition.

In addition, after mastering the fundamentals, search for meet-up events and hackathons and actively participate in them. The importance of professional networking cannot be overstated. You would be surprised at all the opportunities that present themselves when you go out and meet people.

**2. Replying to job advertisements, here is an obvious point that is often ignored: Before submitting your application online, call the contact person listed on the job ad (if there is one).** The benefits of calling the recruiter/hiring manager are two-fold:

First, statistically, getting through the first round of screening is usually the most difficult part and, as such, you would want to enhance their impression of you as they sieve through all the applications.

Second, the reason a position is advertised is often because there is an existing problem that the company wants to solve but is so far unable to. Therefore, after briefly introducing yourself, find out as clearly as you can what it is that the hiring manager is trying to fix/solve. Is her/his team currently lacking capacity in data management? Are they in need of someone who is able to 'translate' technical findings into comprehensible reports for a non-technical audience. In my experience, you often obtain a much better insight into the role when you speak directly to the hiring manager (i.e. they provide you with much more information than stated in the job ad). And, in turn, make sure you tailor your application to those very concerns. (Of course if the demands of the role are simply not a good fit for your skills, then you have saved time for both parties by making a simple phone call.)



**3. Finally, and most importantly, I can hardly over-emphasise how much I benefited from St Catherine's Mentoring program as well as UWA's Career Centre.**

This is a self-evident point but you need to ensure you follow through on the advice given by your mentor/career advisor. I can personally testify to the immense and immediate results due to the changes in my resume that my career advisor suggested to me.

To repeat: if you can, participate in St Catherine's Mentoring program.

**You joined College in 2013 and were one of only 15 men in a College of 150 female students. This must have been quite an adjustment for you. You then took on the role of RA for two years. What impact did this have on you?**

I had such a great time at St Catherine's and the people I met at College have had and continue to have a really positive influence on me. Initially, all I was looking for was a place to stay while I completed my university studies but what transpired over the next few years is something much more transformative: the forming of friendships and the exposure to new experiences that are made possible by this College are things I am ever grateful for. More than just a place to stay, I came away with a real sense of belonging to a wider network and community.

In hindsight, I suppose being one of the first male students admitted is quite a novel experience! At the time, however, there was not even a semblance of awkwardness, everyone was so welcoming and I adjusted to my new environment quickly. Having the opportunity to be an RA was amazing, I was a bit uncertain whether I would be up to the job at first but the friendliness of the residents and the incredible support from the senior RA's, Rebecca Adam and Ellen Fortini, as well as my fellow wing RAs Stephen Wallace and Leonard Dunne made the job such a delight: I felt like I was in a sports' team of superstars - all I had to do was to catch the ball from one player and pass it onto another without mucking it up!



# Then and **now**



1970s



2017

- 01 The Wardens of St Catherine's College – Patricia Church and Rosemary Reynolds
- 02 Women's only College of 140 residents
- 03 Prescott was officially opened
- 04 Curfew – 10 pm
- 05 Fees in 1972- \$20 a week
- 06 Majority of students studied at UWA

- 01 The Head of St Catherine's College – Fiona Crowe
- 02 Co-ed College of 400 residents (60% women, 40% men)
- 03 250 new studio rooms opened in 2014
- 04 No curfew – access via a key card
- 05 Fees in 2017- \$465 a week
- 06 Students from all universities and other tertiary institutions are able to enrol

## REUNIONS



### 1980 Reunion

*"We travelled down memory lane and also heard how our College's core value of equity in education has continued to flourish".*

Erica Clarke

30 alumni from the 1980s returned to St Catherine's for a night filled with memories, laughter and enthusiastic exclamations about what everyone was doing now.

The night included a tour of the College which elicited wonder at the new facilities and frequent deviations from the group to find their 'old' room, much to the surprise of current residents!

Catching up over wine and canapes, Erica Clarke (nee Trepp), the 1980s reunion coordinator, shared her recollection of College which included her fond memories of the St Catherine's river cruises and the theatre co-productions with St George's.

The 1980s alumni were so generous and decided to put the surplus from the reunion into creating a scholarship to recognise the women of the '80s. The aim is for this scholarship to offer opportunities to students, many of whom could not otherwise be able to have a residential college experience.



House Committee 1981 (From top left, clockwise): Cathy Hadlow (nee Rigden), Jo Mincham (nee Bunting), Fran Cotton, Mary Argese (nee Cosenza), Lorna MacGregor.



(From top left, clockwise): Cathy Hadlow (nee Rigden), Jo Mincham (nee Bunting), Mary Argese (nee Cosenza), Lorna MacGregor.

Then and **now**



## 1960 Reunion

Alumnae from the 1960s joined old friends over a scrumptious High Tea and reminisced about their time at St Catherine's.

The laughter and conversations included fond memories of the mutual raids between St Catherine's and St George's and having male friends visit their room on a Sunday afternoon. There was also lots of chat about where life had taken them since graduating and how formative St Catherine's had been in the early stages of their lives.



Front row L-R: Ceri Barclay, Sally Lumsden (nee Shaw), Nicole Whitehouse (nee de Pierres), Nicole McDaniel. Back row L-R: Jennifer Engelhard (nee Kerr), Gillian Lilleyman (nee Ovens), Geraldine Connor (nee Hartley), Pip (Philippa) Thomson, Glenda Martinick (nee Holland)



Left to right: Sophie Mirkva, Karen Field (nee Miles), Dana Trtica



Left to right: Mescal Stephens, Helen Wildy (nee Walker)

## More opportunities to meet old friends

### CALLING FOR REUNION COORDINATORS:

#### 1990s AND 2000s REUNIONS

We would like to hold reunions for the 1990s and 2000s in 2018.

If you are keen to be a reunion coordinator for your decade, please contact Brooke on 9442 0591 or email [alumni@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au](mailto:alumni@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au)



## Annual Giving 2017

St Catherine's is a place of vitality, energy and a focus on constant renewal to remain at the forefront of contemporary collegiate living.

This not only means innovative programs and support mechanisms for residents to be successful, but also means building projects to modernise and re-invigorate older parts of the College. St Catherine's has grown and with increasing demand in enrolments, re-development is a priority.

Our Annual Giving program is a lifeline for the College to achieve all that it must and our sincere thanks go to those alumni and friends of the College who continue to support a range of initiatives from buildings, Innovation, Indigenous support or scholarships.

Your gift means so much to the College! Please visit <https://stcatherines.uwa.edu.au/community/giving-and-philanthropy> to donate online to any of the following projects:

### INDIGENOUS SUPPORT FUND

Support indigenous education at St Catherine's College. The program is growing and we need increased resources to maintain the level of support required.

### BUILDING FUND PROJECTS

A gift to the Building Fund is important for our students so they can live and learn in a state-of-the-art environment and we can continue to maintain our beautiful heritage.

### SCHOLARSHIP FUND

A gift to this fund will ensure that St Catherine's can offer opportunities to students, many of whom could not otherwise be able to have a residential College experience. It's a life changing gift!

### WOMEN OF THE 1970s AND 1980s

As we have held reunions, alumni have discussed supporting students so they can come to College and experience the same things they did. The women from the 1970s and the 1980s have established scholarships and would encourage others from those eras to contribute. Every small contribution makes a difference to those young people who intend on coming to university but whose families live far away.



Emily Semple and Sarah Thiruneelakandan





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## YOU can make a **positive impact!**

St Catherine's alumni have the opportunity to make a difference.

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### BECOME A **MENTOR**

Join our mentoring program to support future St Catherine's residents who are just about to enter the workforce and who would benefit from the shared wisdom of an experienced professional: <https://stcatherines.uwa.edu.au/current-residents/plan-my-future>

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### BECOME AN **AMBASSADOR** AND PROMOTE THE COLLEGE

Spread the word about your experience studying in Perth and living at St Catherine's. If you are interested in becoming an ambassador of the college, please email [alumni@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au](mailto:alumni@stcatherines.uwa.edu.au)

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### **EMPLOY GRADUATES** FROM ST CATHERINE'S

Build on your pool of talent and start connecting with St Catherine's residents and graduates: <https://stcatherines.uwa.edu.au/current-residents/plan-my-future>

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### SHARE YOUR **FEEDBACK**

Let us know what we can do to make your alumni experience more beneficial. <https://stcatherines.uwa.edu.au/community/alumni/feedback>

Help us find Lost Cat's <https://stcatherines.uwa.edu.au/community/alumni/lost-cats/>





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