

Recollections of Trinity College 1982 – 1986

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I still find it hard to believe that it is more than 40 years since a relatively small group of pimply 12-year-olds first walked through the (not quite finished) doors of the newly-constructed Trinity College. I can still recall the feelings of apprehension at starting high school and the quiet relief that there were not hundreds of older kids and year levels to navigate. As the inaugural Year 8 class, we had only each other and our small band of wonderful, dedicated teachers to shape the adults we would become and the legacy of Trinity College.

My first recollection is of our really special group of teachers. First and foremost, our Principal, Brother John Mullins, who passed from this life 10 years ago. I have included separately the tribute I wrote for Brother John at his passing in November 2012 and I believe we and the College were truly privileged to have had Brother John as our first Principal. My first Year 8 home room teacher, Brother Jeffrey Barrington, and later, Br Peter Rodney, were mentors and friends, both embodying the Marist spirit: being present, kind, welcoming, having a sense of fun and joy, expert educators and truly interested and engaged in the lives of the young people they taught.

I also remember fondly two of my wonderful English teachers, Jan Watford-Lowther and Susan Barnett who (together with my English teacher Mum, Veronica!) instilled in me a love of the language and the enduring pleasure of books. Who could forget Phil Lam, who raged into the classroom, channelling his strict disciplinarian persona in the early days! Before long, however, we soon realised he was much gentler, kinder (and funnier) than on first appearances! Nell Kidd, Julie Dale and Sister Cecilia Anning (who sadly passed away in late July 2022) were truly top-notch teachers and I remain grateful for the nurturing, compassionate and academically excellent environment they helped create. I especially enjoyed being part of the Student Council at Trinity, and one of the first College Captains (together with Brendan Mulheran). The College environment and these experiences made me braver and more confident in ways that my 12-year old self could never have imagined!

Some of my life's most treasured friendships (past and present) were formed at Trinity College and it makes me smile to see (through the lens of Facebook!) the many long-standing friendships that have endured these last 40 years, from the Class of '82! Today, I write these recollections from Valencia, Spain, having lived and worked for the United Nations, in various parts of the world, for the past 14 years. I am a long way from my high school years but those five years – family, teachers, friends, classmates – were the foundation for a blessed life that has followed. As I look back on the last 40 years, it is with such gratitude for my happy and enriching formative years at Trinity College.

Happy 40th Anniversary celebrations, Trinity College, and look forward to sharing your Golden Anniversary in 2032!