

Mrs Nancy Rodgers, current APRE: (written in 2022)

It has been my great pleasure to be a part of the Trinity family since 1985. Who would have guessed I would have stayed this long, to still be on staff as Assistant Principal Religious Education in 2022. I remember the first day I arrived for my interview with Br John Mullins for a Home Ec teaching position parking under the big white gums along Scott St, in the area where Block 7 now stands. In those days Block 1 was where the Principal's office, now 1.2, and the staff room, now 1.1, were located.

Thinking about buildings, I recall the whole school assemblies with the whole school standing assembled in the carpark at the Bougainville Street entrance. I think the kids then were made of tougher stuff! Assemblies now happen in the college Auditorium with all seated in air-conditioned comfort. Of course, the Auditorium started life as a simple roof between what was the Art / Music block and the toilet block. Under the principalship of John Lamb, our second lay principal, the Auditorium was closed in and under our next Principal, Catherine Thomson, it was extended and refurbished to what we have today. How far it has come over these past 37 years.

With regard to our students, we have had our fair share of challenges, like any school, but there is one standout occasion. Our leadership team at the time, (late 1980's I think) put into play their finest sleuth skills in order to catch those senior students who had decided to grow their own special agricultural project outside the Auditorium, in front of block 4, nestled in to the foot of the retaining wall that was there at the time. These students had been tending this plant leaving class under the guise of going to the toilet but in fact getting cups of water to water the said plant. One morning the leadership team was in place at various points ready to pounce as the students tended the plant yet again. It seems though that the plant had been harvested so there was no pouncing to be done. This of course was a unique, one off occasion.

There is much that has changed in terms of buildings, and students and staff have come and gone but still the spirit that has pervaded Trinity since the early days continues. The spirit at Trinity has a special place in my heart, and I know that the spirit of Trinity has touched the hearts of many staff across the years. There has always been a special spirit at play here. The Marist Brothers were dearly loved by all on staff and I believe it was their work in the early days, as they administered the college on behalf of Brisbane Catholic Education, that set the tone that has continued. Of course, we have been blessed over the years to have numerous staff who have had connection with the Marist Brothers in other schools and these people along with those who were here at the time of the Brothers were those who passed on the spirit that continues to this day. Most significant has been the nurturing of the Marist Charism that is still alive and well here; it is just such a beautiful and gentle Charism; how blessed we are.

Whilst there are many factors that would have influenced the spirit here across that years I am sure staff retreats would have to be a major part of this. The first staff retreat was held at Cedar Lake resort in the hinterland of the Gold Coast. What a wonderful and enriching experience this was as have been all these voluntary staff retreats across the years. This first retreat though would have to take the cake, so to speak. Like all other retreats that followed it was not all about prayer; there was time to enjoy the company of all in attendance. As it happens the venue had a lake and we were able to take small sail boats out onto the lake. One of our staff, Ann Parry, was very experienced when it came so sailing and took our Principal, Bob Peacock, out for a sail around the lake. All was well until Bob fell in. There was, as you might imagine, great laughter and Bob took it in his stride unperturbed although soaked to the skin. Voluntary staff retreats continue to be a feature at the college but none so exciting as this first one.

Trinity College, my hat is off to you, to all the staff and students who have been a part of the story, and what a beautiful story it has been.

Nancy Rodgers