

# The Brigidine Link

*Staying connected...*

## Upcoming Events

29<sup>th</sup> March – End of Term

30<sup>th</sup> March – Good Friday

1<sup>st</sup> April – Easter Sunday

2<sup>nd</sup> April – Easter Monday

4<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> April –

Commonwealth  
Games on the  
Gold Coast

16<sup>th</sup> April –

Pupil Free Day  
in Qld due to  
Commonwealth  
Games

17<sup>th</sup> April – Term 2 begins

## Due reunions

10 year – Class of 2008

20 year – Class of 1998

30 year – Class of 1988

40 year – Class of 1978

50 year – Class of 1968

No details advised

at this Stage.



## Her Story

### Lyma Nguyen – Class of 1999

What a great honour, privilege and pleasure it was, to be invited to Brigidine College's Award Evening 2017. When I was first approached to speak at the function, I was incredulous – I thought, "what a random blast from the past!"

But I was also excited at the thought of coming back – of the prospect of taking a walk down memory lane – and, of *looking at the future*. When I say, "looking at the future", I'm literally referring to students. Cliched as it sounds – it is true – they *are* the future leaders; and future agents of change and influence.

Brigidine College is a place where I've had some of the most memorable times of my life. Some of my memories are as clear as though 1999 were yesterday. The closest friendships I've maintained are those formed at Brigidine.

The theme at Brigidine in 2017 was "Courage to...[Be]". I thought, "I would make that the theme of my speech.

In my endeavour to define "courage", I reflected that courage is *often* found in the most *unusual* of places. But one must *get* to that place first. Or perhaps it is courage that *leads* a person to that place.

My passion for working with human rights formed at a young age. It crystallised when I became President of Amnesty International at Brigidine College. I always felt a great pull towards the ideals that Amnesty stood for: human rights, freedom, courage, and respect for human dignity.

On reflection, perhaps there is no courage greater than the courage of a person who has left everything that they know behind, to travel to

distant shores, in circumstances of extreme danger, in pursuit of freedom.

I am very proud to hear that Brigidine College – in living out the Brigidine sisters' values of compassion, love, gratitude, justice and service – has actively fundraised for asylum seeker support projects. This *is* a courageous thing to do – particularly in a political environment where "turning back the boats", "national sovereignty" and "border control" means that, as a country, Australia is putting up fences rather than building bridges for those most in need.

I was born into a refugee situation – so I may be biased – but I have always considered that refugees are the *very* kind of people that one would want to build a country – they are the *very* people who have the courage to leave everything they know for a life *unknown* – and to have the drive and motivation to overcome extraordinary adversities for a better future.

I have never forgotten who I am, and where I came from. Indeed, my name was the result of a misunderstanding – a call-sign – lost in translation, and nothing less! And I feel that I came from *nothing*, to become *something*.

During the time that I was President of Amnesty at Brigidine, Mr Schlenker – probably unbeknownst to himself – was an inspiration. I remember conducting the lunch-time letter writing campaigns for prisoners of conscience; for offenders facing the death penalty; requesting of governments to exercise democracy; and hoping that our efforts would mean that even a *single* prisoner, could be freed.

(Cont.)

## this issue

Her Story – Lyma Nguyen **P.1**

Out of the Archives **P.2**

Staff Connect – Di Elsworthy **P.3**

Cyber Safety – Tricia Munn **P.4**

What's On Page **P.5**

I remember when the independence ballot in East Timor took place in 1999. During an exam period, I had decided to study rather than hold the usual lunch time letter writing session. Then the massacres occurred. I felt an incredible sense of guilt. Probably over-dramatically, I felt I had let the people of East Timor down. I said to Mr Schlenker, "Perhaps if we had held that letter writing campaign, this would not have happened."

Mr Schlenker very wisely responded, "If you had pressured a government who was not going to be moved, they might have reacted worse." I had never thought of this perspective.

One important lesson I have learnt in my career so far is that, in exercising one's freedom, one never feels quite *ready* to do anything that is of any worth. But you will never know your limitations and your capabilities, unless you do it. You just have to take a leap of faith. That is courage.

When I was first started working with genocide victims, I was 26. When I first started representing clients in Cambodia's internationalised court, I was 27 but I looked 17. I found myself amongst QCs, silks from London, who had written legal texts on international law, French and German lawyers with 25 or 30 years' experience. And having only been admitted as a lawyer a few years earlier, I did not feel that I was experienced enough to take on the challenge of representing a class action in such an extraordinary international case.

But I did my very best – and, as it turned out, I was the *type* of lawyer that my clients needed. My clients were the ethnic Vietnamese minority, living in floating villages on the Tonle Sap River in Cambodia. They were victims of Pol Pot's genocide, and had experienced a range of crimes against humanity and war crimes inflicted upon the group by the regime in the 1970s. They didn't need a QC – they didn't need someone with 25 years legal experience in a country where almost every judge and lawyer had been eliminated because they were part of the intelligentsia – they needed someone who could speak their language, someone who was independent from the government who they could trust to tell their stories to; someone who cared sufficiently to act in their best interests in a very politically charged and sensitive case; and simply, someone who would turn up. I became their international counsel.

During my work, I went from conducting outreach in remote victim communities – to submitting their stories at the court – to appealing judicial decisions adverse to their interests – to preparing my clients to give evidence at the trial. A number of my clients – all of whom are elderly – passed away before having their day in court. However, a couple of clients were able to give evidence about mass executions of their families, and their deportation to Vietnam. Those who died, passed, knowing that they had been given a voice.

At that time, everyone thought the tribunal would operate for only 3 years. How wrong they were! The trial has continued to this day, almost a decade later, and we now await the Trial Chambers' judgment for mass and historic crimes in Cambodia. In a sense, I was thrown into the work at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia. But on reflection, I was thrown into it because I chose it.

Likewise, when I was called to the Northern Territory Bar in 2014, I had worked as a Commonwealth prosecutor for 7 years. But I never really felt ready for the independent bar.

We, as women, I find have a tendency to downplay our own abilities. You imagine barristers as specialists with twenty or thirty years behind them, the image that comes up is usually an older, greying and, rather corpulent gentleman, who is perhaps slightly aggressive in manner, but effective in court. Not only did I look 20, I *didn't* have 20 years' experience behind me, and being a woman who is quite petite did not really help. However, with some encouragement from my Head of my Chambers, I took one of the greatest leaps of my life.

Each and every one of us face all manner of opportunities in our futures. My message is to never undermine yourself by thinking you are not ready. Or rather, never choose *not* to do something because you *feel* you are not ready. It's sometimes more important to *just do it*, than to *feel ready* for it. But you've got to be ready to be *thrown into* it. And that takes courage. That is also simply the adventure of life.

Winston Churchill said, "*Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.*" These words still hold true, and will continue to resonate as we journey into the future.



Update your contact details and we'll post you an exclusive Brigidine Alumni Keyring!

We'll keep you informed of events and details of the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations in 2019.

Click on the below link to update your details;

**UPDATE CONTACT DETAILS**

## Out of the Archives – The year 1929

Students from the Holy Family Parish School on the day of their Confirmation, posing in front of the iconic Convent. The Brigidine Sisters officially opened Brigidine College as a Secondary Girl's College this year also.



# Are you kids safe online? Social Media Safety Tips with Tricia Munn (Lamb - 1992)



Are your kids safe on social media or when they are online gaming?

Most parents will agree that trying to navigate their child safely through the minefield of their online interests could be closely likened to trying to get past Dr Ling with an extra earring in one or both ears.

Predators, cyber-bullying, identity theft, sexting and what about their digital reputation when they get to employment age? Which is the biggest concern, or should we say, which is our biggest concern today?

If you haven't been to a Cyber Safety session lately, maybe it's high time you made the time. Times have changed and the presenters working in this field are determined to make your job as a parent, as easy as possible.

We can't give you a clear enough picture of WHY you need to be interested, in a short article in the first Brigidine Alumni Newsletter, but we can give you some great tips to get you started:

## Did you know?

- Some SNAPCHAT stories do NOT disappear after 24 hours.
- "Ghost mode" doesn't stop your child from telling people where they can be found.

## Changes to reduce the risk:

1. Turn "See My Location" to GHOST MODE
2. Turn LOCATIONS OFF for Snapchat in the PHONE SETTINGS
3. Set "Who can view my story" to FRIENDS
4. Set "Who Can Contact Me" to MY FRIENDS
5. Don't let people find you by your phone number... or Quick Add
6. Only post to OUR STORIES in public places - not at school or home!

**SNAPCHAT**

## Did you know?

- Teaching a child to secure INSTAGRAM is a 1.5 hr workshop.
- It's NOT one setting.
- Some info can still be found about your child even with PRIVATE ACCOUNT activated

## Changes to reduce the risk:

1. There should be COLOUR behind the PRIVATE ACCOUNT switch
2. Check your child's BIO for personal information - remove their Snapchat username
3. Scan FOLLOWERS. If your child isn't following the person back, ask why.
4. Check what you child is TAGGED in. Remove TAG for uniform pics or identifying info
5. PHOTOS OF YOU settings - choose MANUALLY

**INSTAGRAM**

## Did you know?

- If you are focusing on checking who your child is talking to, when they are online gaming, you may be MISSING who is LISTENING to your child.
- Predators can listen and collect info on online games.

## Changes to reduce the risk:

1. Ensure your child plays age-appropriate games.
2. Help your child choose a username that is free of personally identifying information and gender/age neutral.
3. Learn how to block/report users on the games your child is using, but remember, it may be more useful to police if you don't block until you have spoken with them, if your child is approached by a predator.
4. Set up a communication for your child to speak with their friends, outside of the game chat function, so that other people can't listen.
5. Discuss with your child regularly that they can come to you if they make a mistake and receive something unexpected from a stranger.

**ONLINE GAMES**

If you are still overwhelmed, you now understand why we created Brisbane's only comprehensive, hands-on workshops for parents and children and a huge range of themed online courses.

We don't sell our online courses on our website, as they were created for in-school or community organisation use, but we will be happy to sell them to Brigidine Alumni to use at home with your children.

Send us an email, to book a family consult, push me to line up a public workshop in your area, or we can send you a list of our online courses. We will always take care of our Brigo friends.

You can also find out more about the topics I've covered in this article, by checking out our Facebook page. [www.eyesopensocialmedia.com.au](http://www.eyesopensocialmedia.com.au)





# Staff Connect

## This edition we find out what makes Di Elsworthy, Teacher Librarian, tick!

### Started teaching – 1975

### Started teaching at Brigidine College - 1987

#### How long have you been teaching?

I started teaching in 1975. That's 43 years ago! I taught in the Education Department for the first decade. I was then at Churchie before I came to Brigidine in 1987.

#### What was it that got you interested in teaching?

I started with a Journalism career in mind but changed about half way through my degree. I have always loved literature and history, so it was an easy direction to follow.

#### Is there anything you wish you taught but didn't have the opportunity to?

No. I have been very fortunate to follow my passions over the span of my career.

#### Do you think being book smart the only way to succeed in life?

Absolutely not. There are many ways to succeed. Perhaps the first step is to have an idea what it is that you want to achieve. I do believe, however, that reading for pleasure will enrich life. I have always told my students that I would hope to be able to ask them at any time "What book are you reading at the moment?" and that they would have an answer for me. Now, that would be success for me!

#### Are there any embarrassing teaching moments you're willing to share? What are they?

Perhaps some of my former students reading this should answer that question! I can recall a moment, as a very young teacher, when a boy put a cane toad in a paper bag and left it as a "present" for me on my desk. Of course, they were all waiting for an animated response and, unfortunately, they succeeded! I wish I had been composed enough to simply walk outside and empty the bag into the garden. Ah, well.

#### What is one of your hidden talents?

I'm an open book type of person, I think. Not sure I have hidden talents. Wish I did!

#### What would former students be surprised to find out about you?

See above answer! Maybe that I am a Rolling Stones fan. Probably have mentioned that along the way though. Also, I love Rugby League. I think they would know that, too.

#### If you could grow up in any decade, which would you choose?

I started high school in 1966 and university in 1971. These were times of great social upheaval and change.



Oh, and wonderful music! I think I'm happy to stay with that.

#### If you could grow up in any decade, which would you choose?

I started high school in 1966 and university in 1971. These were times of great social upheaval and change. Oh, and wonderful music! I think I'm happy to stay with that.

I was also fortunate enough to go (with my parents) to the Beatles concert at Festival Hall in 1964. Who knew how significant that would become?

#### What would be your dream vacation?

I have been very lucky to travel quite a bit over the years. Spending a white Christmas at Lake Louise in Canada was certainly up there. I love New York and would like to spend a month there and go to all the theatre on offer – day in, day out.

#### Of the years that you've been a teacher, which do you think was your most memorable?

That is just too hard! I think back to classes that I have had, or some year levels from the time when I was Year 11 Co-ordinator, or some individuals who inspired or, indeed, challenged me. Some memories come from tough times, others from times of jubilation.

I think I would need a book to answer that question properly!

Perhaps, if I just mention a few memorable times from my years here at Brigidine, in no particular order:

- When the "MPC" was constructed. That led to Year 11 Semi-formals being held in there. We would decorate it ourselves. And we had lunch time dance practices! After that the "semis" were on "The Island" – a barge in the Brisbane River. Fun times.
- The walkathons that we held – to UQ lake. I loved those. I could even bring my children down for lunch. They were happy, community times.

(Cont.)

The year 2019 will mark 90 years since the Brigidine Sisters opened Brigidine College as a secondary school.

Below lists the growth in student numbers since the opening;

**1929 - 1931** – Mother Brigid Foley was the Principal with just 4 students enrolled

**1944** – Enrolment grew to 10, and Norma Forgiani was the first student to graduate from Senior.

**1963 – 1968** – Students grew to over 100 with the old church converted into a science lab, and the Delany building opened.

**1975 – 1981** – Student numbers jumped to 438, with the swimming pool completed, more land purchased for the Foley wing, and the Duvac wing opened

**1986 – 1998** – Student numbers were at 500, the MPC opened, and further development across a number of buildings.

**2009 – 2012** – Saw 662 students enrolled, the new state of the art Performing Arts building was completed, the Brigid Centre, and the MPC, now known as Kildare Hall was refurbished.

**2012 – 2018** – There are currently 806 students enrolled this year, the Brigid Centre was officially opened, with plans for a new SCITECH (Science & Tech) Building to commence construction later this year.

- A personal one here – the years that my daughter, Lydia, coached Brigidine water polo. Many Saturdays spent poolside and some wonderful trips away with highly committed players and fabulously supportive parents.

**You're currently in charge of the Library now, and run the staff book club, have you always enjoyed reading?**

Yes, I have. I have always been a slow reader though, so I always have piles of book in the "waiting" category. It's very dangerous for me to be in a bookshop! When I visit Sydney or Melbourne, I always go into the bookshops there. I actually did a bookshop walking tour of Melbourne. It was great. I found a gorgeous little bookshop called "Madhatter" in Burford in the Cotswolds, in England. The lady who owns it was just so dedicated to putting books in children's hands.

**With technology changing so quickly, what current trends are baffling to you? Why?**

Firstly, I have to say that I can see many positives to technology. I can well remember being taught by the then librarian, Noleen Hausler, how to "surf" the internet. How amazing it seemed.

I have social media accounts, love sites like "Goodreads" and have some great apps on my phone. My son lives in Melbourne and I really appreciate the ways we can be so closely connected.

What baffles me is the compulsive effect that sites like Snap Chat have on our young people. Some nasty things happen but it seems hard for them just to turn off.

**What song do you know all the lyrics to?**

Most songs by the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Carole King's "Tapestry", some Powderfinger....there's a long list....

**If you could pass on any wisdom to your former students, what would you share?**

When I have contact with former students, it is often they who teach me something. I am constantly amazed at the places that I encounter past students. It is really exciting to hear their stories and the remarkable things they have done.

Wisdom? Go gently. Enjoy the journey. Try to focus on the positive. I think that "Strength and Gentleness" is a great platform on which to build a meaningful life.

## Get involved

- You could be a guest speaker sharing your life, career or industry knowledge
- Be a mentor to Year 12 students
- Assist with promotion & events for Alumni
- Does your business run workshops or training suitable for students or staff?
- Submit articles for our future newsletters
- Be a supplier or entertainer for College events
- **Would you like to advertise for free in our next newsletter?**

Email [alumni@brigidine.qld.edu.au](mailto:alumni@brigidine.qld.edu.au)



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## What's On

### QPAC's Out of the Box Festival 26 June – 1 July 2018

QPAC's **Out of the Box** festival is curated to offer connected arts and educational experiences for children aged eight years and under. Over five days, this year's festival is jam packed with in-theatre experiences, workshops and activities. For the cost of a Day Pass, you can experience all the festival has to offer. Purchase your day pass on their website:

[QPAC Out of the Box Festival](#)

### Catholic Mission – Give the choccies a miss this Easter

Give the choccies a miss this Easter and check out Catholic Mission's Life-Giving Gifts Catalogue instead. Help give the gift of a full life to those in need around the world.

Purchase one laying hen for a family for as little as \$9! Click [here](#) to see the available tax-deductible gifts, all gifts come with their own E-Card.



### Festival 2018 Events

Festival 2018 is a free state-wide celebration of arts and culture, which will showcase Queensland's creativity to visitors during the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. It is 12 action-packed days of free culture from the Gold Coast to Cairns from 4-15 April celebrating the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Experience music, theatre, circus, dance, ideas, visual arts and film from the Gold Coast, Australia and across the globe. All events are listed on the [GC 2018 Festival Website](#)