

St Joseph's School Clare P&F AGM

Presidents Report – Sophie Millington

Tuesday 25th March 2025

Eight years ago, I reconnected with my former Year 7 teacher, Peter Shearer, as St Joseph's School Clare had earned a strong reputation, and I was seeking a more enriching educational experience for my children. I wanted them to receive the best education a regional school could offer, while being part of a close-knit community that would nurture and support them. Looking back over these eight years, my children have received everything we hoped for and more. So, when the opportunity arose to serve as Parents and Friend's (P&F) President for a second term, I knew I wanted to continue in the role, to give back to my former teacher, my children, and St Joseph's Clare.

Term 1 was the usual busy term, so the P&F hit the ground running. I was pleased that we were organised at the end of 2023, and appointed **Class Representatives** for 2024 prior to the end of the year. This meant all parents were notified who their upcoming new representative was prior to the start of the year. I am very thankful for the great cohort of parent leaders who accepted these positions. These parents were assets to each class, disseminating information between parents, teachers, and the school community, and due to their early appointments, they were able to be there to meet and welcome any new parents in the classrooms on Day 1 of 2024.

The **coffee machine** was again fired up by the P&F on the first day of school, the first Assembly and all other Assemblies for the year, proving to be a welcome service to many parents for socialising and a caffeine fix. Again, it has been great to see our year 8&9 students grow in confidence behind the machine as they continued to undertake barista training, as part of their Food and Nutrition curriculum. The P&F would like to thank Café 1871, particularly Joel and Henry, for their time and efforts in training these students, which inevitably then lightened the workload of the ever helpful, P&F coffee group. The students again proved to be a great asset, as through many events such as Assemblies, Clare Show and the School Fete, they were able to refine their barista skills. It was great to watch their confidence grow, with now several of our students working in the coffee shops down the main street. A great outcome for all.

The P&F also facilitated the machine for the busy days of Sports Day and Book Week, and I would again like to thank the P&F community for stepping into assist.

It was great to welcome the **new parents** into the community with the annual New Parents Dinner at La Storta. This lovely occasion with scrumptious bites, prepared by Alice Duncan and Laura Davidson, with Kelly Shanahan assisting. Thank you ladies, for coordinating such a welcoming event and to all the Year 7's and student leaders for waiting.

Our hardworking **Canteen Committee** has again tirelessly worked to coordinate and facilitate the canteen for our students. The committee continued to review, investigate, update, and coordinate the best options for our children, whilst trying to support local businesses. The efforts of juggling weekly volunteers, rosters and food handling procedures is testament to the dedicated committee. I would personally like to thank Janes Adams, Fiona Sullivan, Amy O'Shea- Coulter, Amy Trengrove, Jen Chestnut, Yana Zanette, with staff rep Helen Hay, for all their hard work and efforts.

Another sub-committee of the Canteen is the **Bakery Fundraisers**. Catherine Driscoll again took on the coordinator role for 2024 and I would like to commend her for how seamlessly she took over this position. Catherine ran several drives throughout the year, raising funds for the school, whilst providing delicious local baked goods for the school community.

Unfortunately, the **Kids Can Cook** program didn't happen in 2024, as the P&F could not find a person available to coordinate it. Rebecca Sullivan's success in 2023, left big shoes to fill as unfortunately she was unable to continue on in the role due to her travel commitments in 2024. This is a very rewarding program for all students involved and hopefully in the future this will be offered again, should a person come forward to coordinate it.

In 2024 a variety of catering jobs were undertaken by the P&F, which allowed for some good **fundraising** opportunities. From smaller events such as platters for the "Fringe Events" that was held in the school gym, to large scale events that were hosted at school. The annual Community Dinner organised by Year 7 parents, was again a success with the 2024 theme being 'Rock n Roll'. Many thanks to Ash Catering for preparing the entrée and mains for the event and to all staff, parents and students who were involved with another fun, successful dinner.

Mothers Day was again introduced into the school calendar and was a highlight for many with lots of Mums and significant others attending. The plentiful supply of a delicious soup lunch provided by the students and special time in the classroom with their children, was enjoyed by all. Many thanks to all involved at the school for giving these 'special' experiences to our parents.

A major **catering** commitment by the P&F was the Northern and Yorke Regional Forum, which consisted of catering for 100 people, for morning tea and lunch. Thanks to our supportive P&F community, this event was a success and initially raised approx. \$2,800 from the catering component.

Another event the P&F supported with food donations was Mark McCarthy's Celebration of Life. Special thanks to Karen Slattery for coordinating this.

We held our 5th consecutive **School & Parish Fete** on the school grounds. This is a calendar highlight for many children and was a very successful day. Significant funds were raised and shared with our Sevenhill Parish. Special thanks to Kristy Woodlands and Stacey Butler who did a great job of coordinating this event for their second and final time.

The P&F also ran a BBQ/Bake & Coffee Stall at Clare High for School Sports Day, as well as a Sausage Sizzle and Trading Table at the Heritage Garden for the Open Garden Day. Big thank you to all parents involved with these events, which raised over \$1500.

The annual **school photos** happened over a 2-day period in May, with the help of office staff and several parents, coordinating the event. This is a momentous task of getting all students and families together, looking at their best for their annual portraits. Many thanks to all who facilitate this and for ensuring parents capture a snapshot of the school year.

P&F Meetings were held usually in Week 3 at the start of each term, were well attended and many topics discussed and decisions made. At our meeting in May, the P&F decided to pledge \$40K in funding towards the upgrade of St Michael's Hall. Those present at the meeting agreed to ask the school for a 'wish list' of items that needed to be purchased, and suggestions were made of items such as; P&F Uniform shop fit out, Science equipment, Maker space equipment, Performing Arts/Drama equipment and Musical instruments.

At our final meeting for the year, the decision was made to pledge \$4K to put towards some bench seating for our Middle School (in honour of leaving Principal, Peter Shearer, which was positioned around the tree that he planted at the Farewell Picnic). Thank you to Tom Gilligan, for overseeing this installation in the school holidays.

I would also like to thank the **Uniform committee**, particularly Vicky Smith and her team for facilitating another year of running the uniform shop to ensure our children are equipped with the right uniforms. The committee continues to develop the Middle School uniform, ensuring there is ample sizing, quality, and products. The well-stocked shop and seamless ordering process via the QKR app, is very fast and efficient and appreciated by all parents.

I would like to thank Jeffrey Gill for auditing the P&F financials on a voluntary basis.

I would also like to thank Sarah Werfel, our ever reliable and professional lady in charge of finances. Sarah was a huge support to myself and the P&F, and plays a vital role in ensuring the finances, communications and school operations all align. Her patience to my endless questions and emails was much appreciated and I thank her for her unwavering support.

I would like to thank the Matt Butler & the **School Board**, and particularly Jess Redden for her efforts as Parent Board representative. Jess has attended both P&F and board meetings, reporting on discussions and sharing proposals. The support and guidance of the School Board ensures the schools values and community are reflected in the ethos of the school; to live, to learn, love in all things.

I want to extend my sincere gratitude to everyone who has supported me in this role over the past two years. A special thank you to former Principal Peter Shearer for his invaluable support in 2024. It has been an incredibly fulfilling and rewarding experience, and truly an honour to give back to this wonderful regional school—St Joseph’s Clare.

Lastly, I’d like to warmly welcome Joe Hicks as the new Principal of St Joseph’s, and also express my thanks to Adele Agars for stepping into the role of President for 2025. Adele has “hit the ground running’ and already made an impressive start. I know with her extensive experience and enthusiasm, I’m confident she will thrive in strengthening the connections within our school and the broader community.

Thank you and farewell.

Sophie Millington
President
St Joseph’s School Clare
2023 & 2024