**Annual General Meeting 2020**

**Parents and Friends Association**

**President’s Report**

Good evening everyone. What an incredible year we have all had. With what has happened in the rest of Australia and across the world, I am very proud to have been part of an extraordinary group of people who were able to provide and assist in so many ways to help the students of St Thomas primary school.

**ROLE OF THE P&F**

The P&F’s role in the school was challenged quite a bit this year. The events of 2020 put everyone to the test but our community spirit really showed through. The P&F has shown its resilience and is still a great forum for parents to air their views on what they would like to contribute to for the benefit of the students. We still provide support and assistance to staff for school functions, events, excursions, resources and social events. It has also been a nice opportunity for new parents to get to know more people outside their own child’s classroom.

We have a much smaller requirement for fundraising due to the introduction of the school levy in 2019.

The levy has allowed us to focus on growing the community spirit and gives us more time and energy to participate in and support school events.

**EVENTS AND MAJOR CAPITAL EXPENDITURE 2020**

I would like to start off by talking about the major capital expenditures the P&F has supported in 2020.

Through strong financial management, the P&F has been able to fund a significant amount of projects for the school.

1. Installation of the Long Jump Pit. A long held wish list item for our sports teacher, Mrs Sharon Seaman.

2. Playground upgrades that returned the pirate ship to a safe and useable standard, together with upgrades to the kindy and pre-primary playgrounds.

3. The purchase and installation of new Bike Racks to support active and healthy transport options and prevent theft of bikes.

4. A new vegetable garden with generous community support from Bunnings Claremont and Taylor road IGA.

5. Our New Nature Play playground, to which the P&F has contributed $30,000.

6. The netball court resurfacing which will take place over the summer holidays.

It is certainly impressive for a small community like ours to contribute such significant items and I hope it leaves a lasting legacy to benefit future generations of children at St Thomas’.

On top of all this, we supported and organized some great events.

Parent Sundowner

We started the year off with an awesome sundowner for parents and staff. The turn out was fantastic and it was a really lovely evening. I was on the bar for the night and managed to meet just about everybody (That’s a good tip for an incoming president) and I had their drink preferences memorized as well. The new staff members were mingling, the fairy lights were twinkling and all in all, I was exceptionally proud of Simone Lorbeer and our team for organizing a beautiful start to the year.

Night on the Green/Dads camp out

This was cancelled for term 1 due to COVID but we made it a night in Dwellingup for term 3. This was organized by Joep Vaessen and his team of dads and was a very popular and enjoyable option for everyone.

Harmony Day

This was done on a smaller scale with very little parent participation and help, but we did contribute to funding and provided support for the activities.

Edudance Concert

This was also scaled down to a video concert with performances done in the undercover area and no P&F involvement. Of course, because none of the parents were there, it was a beautiful sunny day… instead of the usual cyclone and floods we have come to expect.

Mothers and Fathers Day Stalls

Sadly these were unable to be held, which meant we missed our opportunity to make a bit of extra money for the school.

Busy Bee Gardening Day and Sausage Sizzle

This was a great event to bring everyone out, on what was a beautiful day and an opportunity to build up our community spirit again. A surprising number of families helped out with gardening and cleaning up the school grounds in preparation for our Open Day. This was followed by a sausage sizzle and treats for all our hard working busy bees and by all accounts a huge success. Thank you for the organizational skills of Joep Vaessen, Bianca Della Vedova, Mel Trend and Netina and JP and for all your back-breaking efforts either in the dirt or on the BBQ.

Art Show/ Open Day

What an extravaganza and fabulous exercise in showing the children just what can be accomplished in a short amount of time with enthusiasm, creativity and a whole lot of resourcefulness. From the lovely greeting at the gate, to the beautifully displayed artwork, the delicious treats in the kitchen, the gorgeous children and all their talents and of course finished with the great support from families. It was a real community event and really brought out the best in everyone. For a non-fundraising event, we managed to cover all our costs and make about $3000 as well. Again, a huge thank you to everyone involved, Simone Lorbeer, Bianca Della Vedova, Celeste Hartfield, Sha Ragnauth, Racquell Farrell Downes, Sharon Tee, Cecilia Burns, everyone who helped out in big and small ways. I keep hearing from the children, we should do it every year, and because I’m retiring this year I think it’s a great idea.

Also supported this year by the P&F were the many Parent Workshops like the online safety talks, St Thomas’ Feast day, The Fathering Project, School and Interschool Sports team events, First communion treats for year 4, Year 6 confirmation, Year 6 Class Graduation items and events, our soon to be formed St Thomas Parents Alumni group, which held its first “Back to School” Party at Claremont yacht club. Hopefully by creating a data-base of past families, this will keep the wider community involved in our school and build a great support network.

Also, this term, due to many factors and demand, the P&F introduced a 5 day a week canteen service to the school. Our new provider, The LunchBox, has been brilliant and by all accounts, runs very smoothly and efficiently with a great fresh menu. I feel this is a fantastic value adding selling point for prospective and current families at St Thomas’.

To finish the year off, we have our End of Year School Disco.

This year it has been organised predominantly by the year 6 students and parent group, with Sharon Tee giving direction and assistance with a view to handing over the reigns to our new team.

**EXPENDITURE 2020**

I would now like to introduce Tom Curnow who will run through the treasury report.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to acknowledge my team for 2020. They were all somewhat wrangled into their positions but have been nothing but a joy to work with.

Canteen

This year had a lot happen and with a few surprises along the way, Bianca Della Vedova, Damira Relota and Tom Curnow and the team from LunchBox, kept things running smoothly. Miraculously, we had a great change over from Lawleys Bakery to The LunchBox. A big Thank you to all of you from the many starving children and busy parents. I think everyone is very happy with the results.

Uniform Shop

Libby Crawford runs the fittings department of the uniform shop where children can try before they buy online and parents can donate and purchase second hand uniforms. Thank You Libby.

Entertainment Book

This is handled by Deliah Cassidy. She quietly goes about keeping the orders coming in and it is a nice little fund- raiser thanks to her efforts.

Class Rep Co-ordinator

Sharon Tee again has been instrumental in the smooth running of class functions and parent involvement in events. She has a very cheery disposition, is incredibly efficient and has been a joy to work with. Thank you. I have loved your spread sheets.

I would also like to thank each and every parent class representative who gathered people together and helped make each class and school event a success.

Vice President

I would like to thank Mel Trend for all her support and her great ‘can do’ attitude. I know if I need something done with no fuss and on time, she is there every time. She is going to continue in her role and help out the new team.

Treasurer

Our new Treasurer, Tom Curnow, has done a great job this year. What a huge year for the treasurer. He really didn’t know what he was getting into but like a trooper, he got into it with his ears pinned back. He is very efficient and lucky for me, a quick learner. He was instrumental in the canteen changeover and his business knowledge has been a valuable resource. Thank you to Belinda Hammond and Trish Coniglio for the smooth handover and assistance you have provided all year.

Secretary

Paul Leighton, my perfect secretary. He is organized, efficient, thorough, professional, has a great sense of humour, is handy on a keyboard and has done a superb job assisting me and answering all my ridiculous questions over the past 2 years. Thank goodness one of us knows how to run a committee. He is a fantastic individual and has been incredibly helpful to us all. Thank you.

General Committee Members

We have had a great turn out at most meetings over the past couple of years with new parents really wanting to get involved. I would like to thank all the parents who have put up their hand to do the odd job here and there or take on bigger projects. In particular, Sha Ragnauth, who has been instrumental in securing grants for our school to put towards a new vegetable garden. She now has a great team of helpers working with her to get this project completed. Thank you.

Principal

Thank you to Natalia Thompson for all the knowledge, ideas and work you have put into the school this year. It was an odd start with COVID but it all came good in the end. We hope you’ve enjoyed being part of our community and will continue to lead our Primary School in new and exciting ventures.

**FUTURE DIRECTION**

The P&F has come a long way over the past 2 years. We have seen it grow from almost nothing to a very enthusiastic group of volunteers. I would like to see it continue to expand and assist in the education and school life of our children. With a new team stepping into a few roles, I’m sure they will continue to nurture the values and community spirit that has made St Thomas’ Primary school what it is today. We have accomplished a lot this year so I’m hoping it will be a quiet year in 2021. I will be excited to hear what the new team has in store.

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**NOMINATIONS FOR 2020**

President

Bianca Della Vedova

Secretary

Melissa Di Latte

Parent Class Representatives Coordinator

Celeste Hartfield

Canteen Coordinator

Vacant

General Committee Members

Any general committee members are always welcome. This year we encouraged more dads to get involved and it has been great to see so many put up there hands to help out in either an official capacity or as general help for events. We always love to get new people on the team and there’s no interview required.

**CONCLUSION**

As president for the past couple of years, I can honestly say it has been challenging but fun. The P&F was almost dissolved with nobody wanting to step forward for 2019. Since then, we have nurtured a new team and parents have come out in support of pretty much anything I’ve asked of them and done a fantastic job. At St Thomas’ we have an inexhaustible supply of incredibly talented and successful parents and I have been very lucky that they all chose to be part of the St Thomas Community. I am very happy to be handing the job over to a strong team of highly capable and absolutely gorgeous people, who I’m sure, will keep the community flag flying high. Here’s to another great year.

Thank you