An eight week term goes so fast - and part way through I was thinking there wouldn’t be much to put in the Buzz. Wrong! This is our first ever 10 page issue in over 50 editions. There’s been a takeover bid by the Year 11 and 12 boarders in terms of articles and that’s great. There are some really interesting pieces and I hope you’ll take the time to read what some of our departing Yr 12 boarders have to say. After 6 years I am always keen to see what they write and I’m sure you’ll enjoy their articles.

It’s sad to see them all go, but it’s great to know that they have found their years here rewarding and that they feel well equipped and confident to go out into the world. I wish them all every success.

This term we also say goodbye to Suzanne McKay and Rachel Linder who have been doing casual weekend shifts. Suzanne is having a baby and Rachel is finishing her degree. We thank them for their efforts and wish them both every happiness in the future.

Also leaving this term is Julie McLeod who, until recently, has cleaned the girls’ boarding house for the past 12 years. She is off travelling and we thank her for her efforts and wish her every happiness.

6. Marie is going to Europe in a few months and we hope she has a wonderful adventure.

Also leaving this term is Julie McLeod who, until recently, has cleaned the girls’ boarding house for the past 12 years. She is off travelling and we thank her for her efforts and wish her every happiness.

We’ve only had 6 boarding weekends this term, but we have packed a lot in. We’ve done cooking, had a progressive dinner, held the Christmas party, tried archery, gone bowling, played beach volleyball, had games nights with the boys and more. The main focus this term has been raising money for the Philippines disaster. We usually buy gifts for Donations for a Difference at Christmas, but this time we decided to divert our (continued on back page).
Boarding School is no different to society where I am sure I will experience every situation, discover who I am, make friends for life and hopefully become a successful adult.

Over the past six years I have attended boarding school here at St Philip’s College. I came here as a twelve year old bush kid from Ntaria Community, and am leaving as a well-educated and outgoing young adult. Living in a boarding house has been the biggest adventure I have had in my eighteen years. It’s a once in life time opportunity that many people do not get to have, yet I have been fortunate enough to have this opportunity and I am so very grateful to my parents for allowing me to attend boarding school as without it, I am positive I would be a very different person and don’t know where I would be.

The best part of going to a board-
Wow! How times flies when you’re having fun! I remember as if it was yesterday that I was going to boarding and crying to my mother that I wanted to go home, but in the end I made it, and I must say I don’t regret any bit of my life and the journey I went through. My boarding life has been so much fun and means the world to me. I became a boarder in the second semester of Year 7 and gosh that time went by fast. Then before I knew it I was Boarding Prefect for 2013. The little Year 7 girl who made trouble all the time was about to become a responsible Year 12 and was going to become a role model for the juniors. I never thought that I would become Boarding Prefect in my junior years.

Yes boarding has its ups and downs but it has been a big part of my life. It’s taught me to be an independent, confident young lady and on my life at a new school with new people a bit daunting. But looking back now I realise it was one of the best turning points of my life. I would have never dreamt of writing a thousand word essay, speaking in public to a crowd of 100 or more, doing exams, dancing or acting or becoming a prefect. That shy girl of twelve years old six years ago has come a long way. My time here at St Philip’s has helped me become more confident in myself and my dreams, and helped me realise my potential and where I want my life to lead - and I couldn’t be more grateful.

A year or two into my time here I realised my passion for dance - particularly ballet. It took me a long time to become confident in myself and my dream for dance, and to actually go out there and pursue it. After realising I could achieve this, many other doors opened for me. I soon became confident to believe in myself, to strive and to have goals.

One of the biggest stepping stones for me was discovering God, discovering compassion and self-worth. St Philip’s has given me many opportunities to be thankful for. And though it seems like I’m pouring my heart out it’s true, because from a place where all these things seem like a dream - it’s wonderful to me. Where would I be in my life today if it weren’t for the last six years?

I also was fortunate enough to meet my best friend here at St Philip’s. Cindy - daring, loud, awesome, loving, self-driven, caring, confident... where would I be without her? She’s also a person I thank for helping me become the person I am today. I am so glad to have spent the last six years with her.

I will also never forget my experiences and life in boarding school. It’s been a roller coaster journey - up and downs, good and bad. If it weren’t for the strong bond, fun, values and friendship of boarding I don’t how I would have survived.

I would like to give a big thank you to Stevo... what a time it has been, and I can’t believe six years has gone by that fast. It only seems like yesterday I was starting out for the first time. Thank you for your support, kindness, time, effort and hospitality. My time here has truly been a great one.

Though this is not a final goodbye... next year I will be returning to work here at St Philip’s.

I look forward to what my life has to offer now. And I think I can do it with confidence, enthusiasm and passion.

Umema Curtis 2008-2013

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Umema Curtis 2008-2013

boarding journey I have met a lot of people I will never forget.

I will always cherish the memories and moments that I have had in my boarding life, even those memories when I got into trouble. These are the times I will look back and laugh about.

This has been the best six years of my life and it has taught me who to be today and has brought my personality together and this is what makes me who I am today.

Umema Curtis 2008-2013

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Umema Curtis 2008-2013
On 2 November, the girls ventured off to different teachers’ houses for a Progressive Dinner. There were four houses visited that night.

Before all this started, the boarding house was pretty loud and busy, with the girls up early in the morning. Some went to town to buy dresses and make up, while others soaked up the sun and got their tans on. The hallway was filled with girls modelling and strutting their hot stuff, and showing off their beautiful dresses.

Finally we all decided that it was time to go, and climb on the bus, but not before we took a few pictures. The girls were happy when they found out that Ms Killer was joining us for the trip.

As a tradition, we play a game called ‘Whose house are we going to next?’ but there’s one catch: only one guess per house per person. This game is pretty hard and interesting for the girls.

We went to Mr and Mrs Leesong’s house for entree, where we had some five star snacks and juice, and we had a nice view of the big rocks, as the sun was starting to set. After the entrée was finished, we went inside to play a game called Good Frog and Bad Frog. This game is traditional to Stevo’s Progressive dinners. Unluckily no one knew the answer, so that ended our entrée, with a good atmosphere and everyone very curious, as everyone really wanted to know the answer to the game. Sadly we have to wait until next year to guess again.

As we went to the bus, all the girls looked over to the big rock, right next to the river and took pictures as it shone red and bright due to the sun setting over it.

Next we ventured to Nurse Jo’s house, and another interesting ride, as we didn’t know where we going! Luckily Rhiannon had her phone, on her and found the right street. When we got there we
were drawn by the lovely smell of homemade bread that had just come out of the oven. Liking chicken, everyone went for the chicken and corn soup, while Stevo and Ms Killer went with the celery soup.

After the soup, we got on the bus, and luckily Nurse Jo joined us for the rest of the trip.

For the main course we went to Mrs Crogan house, where we had a barbeque, salads and home made garlic bread, that tasted so good, that some of the girls decided they wanted to take some home. As the night went on, girls went for seconds of everything. Sadly we had to leave the main course house and venture off to our last house for dessert. Yummy!

Lastly we went to Mrs Page’s house. She’s also our matron. Our breath was taken away by the beauty of the house. The desserts were homemade, which made it more special. We took a tour of the house and were amazed by everything, especially the radio, which played band music, that everyone knew. The music blasted out loudly, as some of the girls danced and played air guitars, happily. Mrs Page also joined us and showed us how it’s done, while some decided to cool off the night in the pool.

As the night went on, tiredness took over our bodies, and we decided that it was time to go back to the boarding house and sleep it off.

The night was an amazing one, and it wouldn’t have happened without Stevo’s help organising everything and driving.

We would also like to thank Mr and Mrs Leesong, Nurse Jo, Mrs Page and Mrs Crogan, for taking 22 girls into their homes and making it the best weekend for us. Thanks to all the boarders who helped clean up after each house, and congratulations to all the prize winners.

Sunette Mndebele
Goodbye from Marie

Reminiscing about the past four years of my life spent in boarding often brings smiles and laughter to my face. I will always have a special place in my heart for the Girls’ Boarding House and all the many individuals I have met during my time here. Whilst I mainly worked in Girls’ Boarding, I have had an enriching experience with both the young women and men in the boarding houses. It is a credit to you as parents and guardians for continually supporting us in our role of caring for your babies while away from you. I can safely say, these young individuals have educated me and I feel I am walking out of here a more assertive and mature individual and I hope in some small way that I have given back to them as much as I have received from them.

I am leaving with excited anticipation of my next adventure. However, I am also sad to be leaving children I have watched grow over my four years in boarding and a great support team amongst both the female and male boarding staff. I often recall the first year when I began working in Girls’ Boarding and one of Stevo’s many encouragements would always be a smile, a hug and ‘Don’t worry, you’ll find your own rhythm in this boarding role’.

I generally realised there was a vast contrast between Australian and Papua New Guinean children... ‘This mob seem to question more things, more times than not’ I thought. However, I found great value in this reinforced life lesson and that is regardless of age, gender, religion, ethnicity, etc... it is so important to pay each individual respect before you can expect respect in return. Together with clear communication, this has helped me in building good relationships with most, if not all, of the young lives I have had the pleasure of being part of.

I will certainly miss all the hugs and smiles I get when I start boarding-shifts. It makes everything else seem mundane when I see a child smile, and be happy. I’ve often said I’d much prefer to hear happy kids than not hear any noise so I will miss the laughter and footsteps in the hallway...

To all the young ladies whose lives I’ve had the pleasure of being part of, I wish you the best for the future and thank you and your families for letting me be a part of your lives. You’re good kids so keep smiling, be good, reach for your dreams and never let anyone tell you that you can’t achieve them.

God Bless and lots of love.

Marie Killa

Raising money for the Philippines

This term the girls in boarding started our annual fundraising project for Donations for a Difference. We started raising money by doing bob-a-jobs for staff members. This included gardening, washing cars and babysitting.

However, when the typhoon hit the Philippines we decided to raise money for the disaster instead.

The girls showed amazing initiative when thinking of new fundraising ideas with Kirsten creating her own massage business and raising one-hundred dollars by herself.

All of the girls put in a lot of effort into washing people’s cars, cleaning more gardens, babysitting and massaging. All up we have raised over $1000, and as a group we decided to combine the money raised with the College’s appeal.

The Year 12’s also helped raise money despite being in the middle of exams, by pruning the trees outside of girls’ boarding and tidying up the rocks and car park at the front of boarding.

The girls made an awesome effort and next year in first term we are aiming to raise $5000 dollars for a charity appeal and as a reward if we can raise this money Stevo will allow us to permanently dye her hair rainbow. (Editor’s note: only till it grows out)

Margo Sullivan

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The Term in Pictures
Visitors from South Africa and Oman

Jennifer

I came here to St Philip’s College on a Round Square exchange from Roedean School in South Africa. I arrived at the beginning of Term 4 not knowing what to expect landing in this small town in the middle of nowhere. The boarding house helped me settle into the school and get to experience so much more with their warmth and friendliness.

I really enjoyed staying in the boarding house and having the whole experience of boarding life. I got to share a room with the only other exchange, Farhana. We had a great time together getting to know each other, walking to town, travelling to Uluru and Kings Canyon on Exeat weekend and having fun with the other boarders.

I wanted to get involved with as much as possible in the boarding house with the project to raise money for the Philippines. I helped out with washing cars, cleaning gardens and fixing the Peace Garden. This helped me get to know people better and contribute to the boarding house.

Getting to be in the boarding house really enriched my exchange as I got to know so many more people and build stronger relationships with everyone. My time here has gone by so fast and I have made a mountain of memories and friendships that I hope to keep forever. Words cannot start to explain how much this exchange has impacted my life and how much it means to me to get to know everyone. Thank you all.

Jennifer Murray

Farhana

I can still remember the excitement I felt when I was boarding my flight from Oman to Melbourne. The 22 hour flight gave me a lot of time to think about what was coming for me. I began to start imagining all the wonderful people I would meet and all the memorable experiences I would have. When I landed in Alice Springs, emotions ran through me. I remember being extremely nervous, but all that changed when I reached the Saints campus. I was overwhelmed at how big it was, and was sure that I’d be lost in its vastness in a week.

Entering the boarding house for the first time was a pleasant surprise and sharing with Jennifer, the other exchange, made it even better. I love how kind and friendly everyone is here. The upbeat music really gives me a head start in the morning. It was such a pleasure getting to know everyone in the boarding house. The motto ‘Our minds say we’re friends, our hearts say we’re sisters’ really proved to be true during my stay here. I really appreciated how the boarding house enthusiastically took part in community service to raise money for a charitable cause, and their willingness to involve me in it made me extremely grateful.

Stevo, is the best head of boarding any boarding house can ask for. She took such great care of not only me, but all the others in the boarding house. I can’t thank her enough for her useful advice and guidance that she has given me during my stay here. I have been shown nothing but kindness since my first day here and it still continues to be that way. I really wish I could stay for a few more weeks just so I could get to know all the wonderful people I have met at the boarding house. I could not have asked for a better exchange and that would not have been possible without everyone who is a part of the boarding house.

Farhana Fatima
Fun at the Christmas Party

GET AMONGST IT!

Christmas is the time of the year where we celebrate the reunion of long lost relatives or in a more Christian view, celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ.

In the boarding house, Christmas marks yet another farewell to the Year 12s, leaving staff and other exiting students.

This year for the Christmas dinner, we had the sad privilege of farewelling four of our Year 12 girls: Cindy, Rhiannon, Kelsey and Umema all of whom had been here for either 5 or 6 years.

We also said goodbye to two casual boarding staff Suzanne McKay and Rachel Lindner and to our much loved, resident boarding parent in the senior dorm, Marie Killa, who has been with us for four years.

Cindy’s sister Rhonda is also leaving to be a day student and will be greatly missed. Also leaving is Julie McLeod who has cleaned for us for the last twelve years.

It was an occasion filled with tears, laughter but most of all togetherness.

Preparation took a lot of time, whether it was preparing the dining hall or the boarders and guests preparing for the event. However, I can honestly say the time was worth it. I personally have never seen the boarders get so amongst it, especially the boys with their suits and ties.

Girls also shone with their beautiful dresses and especially the high heeled shoes which were prevalent that night.

A big thank you to Stevo and Kris for as usual being the mum and dad, the boarding house team for the hard work in preparation and our two boarding house captains, Margo Sullivan and Cameron Abbott for their leadership.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR EVERYONE!

Martha Ondeyo
The Sunday before Exeat, the boarding house took a group of girls and two boys, to what went on to be a fun and thrilling time at the Dead Centre Bow Hunters Archery Club, where we spent the morning trying to curb our inner Robin Hood. We were first introduced to our instructor, who taught us the basics of how to pull a string to release an arrow. Despite the seriousness of his tone whilst explaining the rules, we did end up having an amazing and thrilling time. We not only learnt about archery as a sport, we learnt that it shouldn’t be thought of as a mindless game of pulling strings of bows, but as an art form which requires specific skill and concentration to master it.

We’d like to thank our instructor for an awesome time which would not have been possible without his help and thanks to everyone at the Club who made us so welcome.

Farhana Fatima

Robin Hood watch out!

The total raised was $1,200 and we added this to the College’s fund raising effort for the disaster. A very big well done to all the girls.

So finally we have reached the end of another year and I’m sure we’re all ready for some rest and relaxation.

My thanks to all the boarders: they are a remarkable group of young people; my thanks to the staff for their dedication; and my thanks to our parents for their unswerving support. Together we make a great team!

My best wishes to all of you for a wonderful holiday and new year and for those of you moving on I wish you all the very best that life has to offer.

Margaret Stevenson

(continued from front page)

Congratulations to:

- Kelsey Year 12 Effort and Determination and Brad Morris Award
- Umema Senior Academic Award for Creative Arts - Musical
- All those Yr 7–11 boarders who collected awards at the academic assembly
- Natalie and Farhana who finished first and second in the ASRWC U18 walk and Zara who came third in the U18 run

Thank you to:

- Our departing Yr 12s for their contribution over the last few years
- Our incoming Yr 12s for the great way they have assumed the role of boarding leaders
- All the staff for their dedicated work

For information on boarding at St Philip’s tel: 08 89504511; fax 0889504522; e-mail info@stphilips.nt.edu.au