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MEDIA RELEASE

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CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

St Monica's College Epping will celebrate our Golden Jubilee during 2014. The College was established in Epping in 1964 and was originally a College for girls attached to St Peter's Epping before the first construction on Davisson Street occurred in 1966 and the College was renamed St Monica's College.

Principal, Mr Brian Hanley, has launched the Golden Jubilee to the College community and promised a year of celebration.

"The history of St Monica's College Epping is something that many people can take pride in as we reflect on the wonderful achievements of the current and past staff and students. The College has been a significant part of the City of Whittlesea for many years and has impacted on the lives of many thousands of young people."

St Monica's is currently the regional College for the Parishes of St Peter's, Epping; St Luke's, Lalor; St Clare's, West Thomastown; St Stephen's, East Reservoir; Holy Name, East Preston; St Francis of Assisi, Mill Park and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, Epping North. St Joseph the Worker, North Reservoir and St Gabriel's, Reservoir are also Priority Parishes for the College.

Mr Hanley continues. "Pioneer student Kathy Byrne tells this story".

"I recall my mother was invited to meet with the Principal Nun at Holy Name Primary School in East Preston to discuss my secondary college education. It was at this meeting that we were told that I had been selected to attend a brand new College, which was to be constructed at Epping; namely St Monica's, then called St Peter's temporarily."

"As the construction of St Monica's school building had not commenced, the new recruits had to be integrated with various primary schools in the district and I was posted to St Gabriel's Primary School, Reservoir."

"I recall quite vividly our classroom. It was very makeshift. The school hall had to be partitioned, so our room was isolated from the rest of St Gabriel's. The classroom consisted of rows of wooden lift-top desks, lino floors, blackboard, a small platform, and of course the teacher's wooden desk and the chair situated to the front left of the room."

"Being fond of sports, I recall on sports days we would be ferried by bus to Epping to play netball. I can still recall the old bluestone Church and one classroom sitting on a paddock with cows staring at me over a fence, thistles growing wild and rocks everywhere and boy it was cold in winter! It was very much country then. I remember Sister calling out, "OK, girls, for sports today, we will milk the cows and pull out the weeds."

Mr Hanley continues. “The College has certainly grown since those pioneering days and we owe much gratitude to the Good Samaritan Sisters who must have worked so hard in difficult circumstances to establish this College. I am sure they would be proud of the College as it stands today with an amazing range of first class facilities, a curriculum that is contemporary, comprehensive and global in perspective, record enrolments and a strong commitment to the principles of Catholic education.”

“The broad Monican community certainly has much to celebrate and 2014 will be a year like no other as we ensure that our history is applauded. The College theme for 2014, ‘Thanks Be to God’, will guide us in what we do and ensure that we recognise that our College’s commitment to the teachings of Jesus Christ has given us much reward.”

The Golden Jubilee will be celebrated with a range of events for current and past staff, students and families and full details can be accessed via the College website.

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Media opportunity is available with a foundation collegian.