

A SNAPSHOT OF THE EAC FOUNDATION DAY ADDRESS



Today (8th March 2018) we celebrate and give thanks for 20 years of learning, living and leading and take time to acknowledge the founders and pioneer families of the College who had both the vision and the courage to step out into the unknown to bring Emmanuel Anglican College to life.

The Founders of Emmanuel Anglican College were obviously like the wise person in the scripture reading from Matthew's Gospel who built their house on the rock. Our firm foundations include our

Christian faith and heritage, core values such as Christlikeness, compassion and integrity and God's enduring presence with us, which is best encapsulated in the College name, Emmanuel, which means 'God with us'. The dream of the Founders was to build a College community that provided access to a quality education for their children in a Christian environment which truly values each and every individual.

As we look back over the many blessings of the last 20 years, I would like to share with you a little about our foundation history.

On 13 December 1995, the Rector of the Parish of St Mary's Ballina, Rev Geoff Smith called together a group of interested people to discuss the possibility of establishing an Anglican School to service the families of the Ballina, Byron and Lismore region. The minutes from the meeting propose 'the establishment of a double stream school of approximately 700 pupils, Kindergarten to Year 12. With this vision in mind, the committed and faithful group, led by Rev Geoff Smith set about the process to seek support of the Anglican Diocese, the relevant government authorities and the people of the region, to bring their vision to life.

Support for the establishment of a school grew quickly and over the next two years, all of the necessary processes were put in place to establish the College. It was determined that the school would be known as Emmanuel Anglican College and in September of 1997, Mr Robert Baker was appointed the inaugural principal. Planning commenced to open the College in 1998. It was decided that, initially the College would operate at the Anglican Church retreat centre known as Gunundi, which was located on the East Ballina Headland. Once the school was up and running, a permanent site would be purchased and the school relocated to this site.

The College then advertised for a suitably qualified, experienced and dedicated teacher to educate the first students of the College. There were over 80 applications for the position with Mrs Joan Pickup being selected to undertake this most important role.

After much preparation, hard work, prayer and with an enormous amount of faith, Emmanuel Anglican College was officially opened on 8 March 1998. There were 16 students on that day. Today there are just under 680 students from Pre-school to Year 12. The College was officially opened on its current site on 5 March, 2000 by which time the College enrolment had swelled to 176 students!

When we look at the incredible facilities and learning opportunities we have today, it is hard to believe the courage of the pioneer families who chose to support the small fledgling school. Without these determined, committed, faith filled and courageous people, we would not be here today.

I am very pleased to say that an number of our founders and pioneer families are here today.

Founders Mr Howard Brockington and Mr Lindsay Walker, both College Council members and great contributors to the College.

Rev Greg Ezzy, former Parish Priest of St Mary's Parish and a member of College Council for almost 15 years.

Pioneer parents: Mr Mark Coghill, Mr Bill McInerny, Mrs Michelle Trudeau, Mr Rick Beattie, Mrs Jodie Shelley and Dr Ann Staughton.



All of these people have given an enormous amount of their own time to the establishment of the College. Each of them gave many volunteer hours as either a member of College Council or as President of EAC Friends. They have spent many hours involved in working bees, coordinating events such as the Harvest Fair and the Friends Ball.

EAC is widely renowned for its capacity to care for each student as an individual learner and our ability to support them to achieve their best. At the heart of the culture of EAC is a loving acceptance of all students, but never an acceptance of mediocrity, a love of learning and achievement but never a blinded obsession with results and a desire to encourage students to make the world a better place for all, not just themselves. And I think it would be fair for me to say that the person who has had the single most significant impact on the culture of EAC is our Foundation Teacher –Mrs Joan Pickup. Joan embodies all that is EAC.

For all of these 'true believers' I genuinely want to say thank you and hope that you see the wonderful College we have today as part of your legacy to our community.

As I have said many times, we are greatly blessed to live and learn in such a beautiful part of the world in such a fantastic school that offers so much to each and every one of us. As we take a moment to give thanks for all we have, I ask every student to think about how they might get the most out of the wonderful opportunities that EAC has to offer. I encourage you all to take advantage of the great gift that God has given you and to make the most of this gift. So use your learning time wisely, get involved in as many parts of College life as possible, build as many strong friendships as you can and always be thankful for the many gifts you receive.

Mr Robert Tobias Principal