

The Chancellor's Speech at the Official Opening of the Ivan Head and McMillan Buildings
3 March 2019

Thank you, Don, for that very warm welcome. I would like to start by paying my respects to the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the custodians of the land on which we meet, who have been teaching here for tens of thousands of years and we carry on that teaching and learning tradition at our University.

I was told a lovely story recently about the Gadigal people and how they helped the early settlers. The name Gadigal comes from the plant Gadie. Gadie is a plant that was growing around Sydney Harbour. The Gadigal people taught the early settlers about the therapeutic properties of that plant, as it helped particularly with dysentery, which was one of the privations that the early settlers suffered when they first arrived in the colony.

I would also like to very warmly acknowledge a number of our special guests here today, Archbishop Glenn Davies, St Paul's College Council Chair, Mark Elliott, and other members of Council and, of course, Ivan and Christine Head and Stephen and Emma McMillan, whose contributions to the College we honour today.

Today is one of a very, very special celebration for St Paul's and the University. These two buildings, the Ivan Head Building and the McMillan Building, represent the most important milestones I believe since the founding of this College. It is a great honour and privilege to be asked to be here today and officially open them for you and to be with so many friends of the St Paul's community.

In the 1850's the Sydney community had a vision for the University and for this College. There were only a handful of students then, yet the leaders of the time including Sir Charles Wentworth and Sir Alfred Stephen, were ambitious for the young colony and planned buildings like the Great Hall and St Paul's College which would serve our future students right up until today.

I congratulate the St Paul's community on having the vision to create these new buildings. Undertaking a major project like this is not for the faint-hearted as there are many and substantial challenges to overcome. However, the Council, the management, and the alumni grasped that opportunity for the College to grow and evolve. These buildings are a wonderful addition to College life and represent a new era for St Paul's with the addition of graduate students. I am also delighted that St Paul's has entered a new era of co-education, welcoming women into the Graduate House.

These buildings will enable the continuation of St Paul's strong traditions, as well as change to meet the expectations and needs of the community today. I was fortunate to be given a preview of the buildings a couple of weeks ago with Don Markwell and Antone Martinho-Truswell. I was amazed at the high quality of the accommodation, the dining rooms, the meeting rooms, the whole thing was quite fabulous, and in fact I think the rooftop terrace is going to be amazing for cocktails as the sun sets - really very special. I think Graduate House people will be absolutely blessed with the facilities they have.

How fitting it is to be able to honour two such significant people in the College life through the naming of these buildings. Ivan, of course, was the extraordinary and much loved Warden of the College, as Don has said, from 1994 to 2017, as well as being a poet and an

inveterate Sydney Morning Herald letter writer. Steve's contribution has spanned many years, which Don has already talked about. His time here, his time as Senior Student, his time on Council – and Don is on record as saying that without Steve's drive, vision and commitment to collegiate education Graduate House and the College's expanded undergraduate community simply would not have happened. Steve, I am told that you may have spent as many hours here as I spend at the University! I think it is clear today that having a committed Pauline and an architect investing his time and effort has produced a simply spectacular result.

This ceremony also gives me the opportunity to recognise and thank the many hundreds of other donors who have helped to make these facilities possible. Without their support we would not be here today. As many of you will be aware, the University has just celebrated a major milestone with our 'Inspired' fundraising campaign having achieved its goal of raising one billion dollars. I tell you I was so excited and overwhelmed, as was the Vice Chancellor, who does send his sincere apologies. We are the first Australian university to achieve this figure and it has only been possible because of the extraordinary generosity of over sixty-four thousand donors which include our staff, our students, our alumni and many friends. Our donors, like those at St Paul's, make a real and tangible difference to the educational and life experience of our students and it's the University's success with this program that has put us in a position to be able to support the College through underwriting some of the occupancy of this building.

These buildings embody the important partnership between the College and University. As Don has mentioned, underneath the two buildings is the St Paul's Colonnade, an amazing new teaching space. I wanted to use it for the Senate for a meeting but I was told it was already fully booked, so it shows you what demand it is already in.

In addition, as Don has also mentioned, the College has the aspiration for a Graduate House with an Academic Wing, because we need a home for our scholars, visiting professors from overseas and interstate and in the Sydney real-estate market it is incredibly difficult to find so we're very hopeful that we can do this together. But it is wonderful news that our new Dean of Law is going to be residing with his family in one of the new two bedroom apartments in the McMillan Building. We're very excited about that and we're also excited that Antone and Emma have welcomed the youngest female member of the College, their beautiful young Flora, who arrived only a month ago.

The connection with the University and the College goes back a long, long, way and it goes way beyond teaching spaces and staff accommodation. After all, Paul's is the first College in Australia's first University and we have a hundred and sixty five years of shared history. Don regularly uses the term "St Paul's College, within the University of Sydney". I think this is important because its institutions, the University and Paul's, are inextricably linked. The College provides an extraordinary opportunity for our students to flourish. I always say to students and parents, if you have the chance to live in college, grasp it with both hands.

Paul's provides the environment for our students to excel in their studies and excel they do. The baseline for Paul's students is a credit average but the percentage of students who achieve distinction and high distinction averages is really extraordinary. It is not only the scholarly success that this college imparts, it is the life long friendships which support Paulines in finding their very first jobs, developing their careers and fulfilling their lives more generally. There is a strong sense of community spirit as portrayed in the motto "For God, country and thyself".

Sadly I didn't have the opportunity to go to college, but my husband Roger Massy-Greene, who is here with me today, did. I know from him what an important and formative time his days as a Pauline were, and like Steve McMillan, he cares deeply about, and generously supports community causes.

As I mentioned earlier, St Paul's has a wonderful and strong tradition, however like all heritage institutions including the University, it needs to adapt with the changing times and to meet community expectations and needs. I am so grateful for the Council's support to having worked so closely with the University, as well as with the Anglican church and the St Paul's community to modernise College governance, a process that we have been undertaking with the University since I have been there with the University Senate. The College's new governance model ensures the Council reflects a diversity of backgrounds, experience and skills and strengthens the link between the College and the University. I am delighted that one member of the new Council will always be a member of the University's academic staff. The passing of the legislation late last year was a real cause for celebration.

I must also commend the College's commitment to and the enormous amount of work in implementing their Action Plan for cultural renewal. I know that this has been a time of careful reflection and Paul's has faced the work head on, standing proud as a residential college that lives by the values of respect, integrity and compassion. This is a new stage in the College's proud history and I look forward to seeing its expanded and more diverse cohort of students flourish and grow as scholars and as people having this wonderful opportunity of a residential experience.

Congratulations to all who have been involved in creating these superb new buildings and once again my thanks to those generous donors who have made it happen. Thank you.