

OPENING THE DOORS FOUNDATION

*Keeping Koorie Kids in an
Education of their Choice*

Activity Report 2010/2011
10 Years On



Dream if you Dare

(Reflections by Vicki Clark Co-ordinator Aboriginal Catholic Ministry and Trustee of the Opening the Doors Foundation)

Lives can change ... hopes can be fulfilled ... futures can be secured.... all by following through on a dream for a Foundation that could support the hopes and aspirations of Aboriginal families to secure an education for their children.

What a difference there is between listening to, talking with, waiting for the right moment, working with the right people and ensuring the proper cultural way of doing business happens. This, in comparison to being told what's right for you, that this is what you need, and that this is how you will do it.

I reflect on the story as written by Luke, Ch 18 vs 39-40 "the people asked Jesus to tell his disciples to shut up and Jesus replied if they keep quiet the stones themselves will start shouting"

10 years of listening that has turned into 10 years of action ... action that has shouted and that has clearly, made a difference. A Foundation was created that has and continues to support the liberation of people not welfare dependence.

For me, the Foundation is a long term dream that will liberate a race of people through education: it's about supporting those who are at the lowest edge of disadvantage to become people who are rising from the bottom of every social indicator; it's about walking with them on the road to success.

The gorgeous photos of the smiling faces, bright young Aboriginal children gleaming with pride of who they are, bring me to tears of joy, emotional moments in the business of my daily work!

Many of the children we support here in Victoria now have the opportunity to have the best of both worlds. They are taking part in an education that encourages success, all the time surrounded by their Aboriginal community, reinforcing culture and identity and finding from within themselves that other great wisdom, the wisdom of pride in self and culture, that strengthens them for the future as Aboriginal leaders.

I'm amazed at how the Foundation has survived, how we started, with nothing but the dream and the knowledge that the community desperately needed what we were setting out to achieve. What guts it took to defeat all the odds, survive and thrive to become the organisation we are today – a truly Aboriginal organisation that is meeting the needs of our own community, building strength and resilience in our youth and supporting our families. What better future could we dream but the liberation of a race of people through education?

continued...



The Opening the Doors Foundation acknowledges the traditional owners of ancestral lands across Australia. Respecting Elders past and present and local Aboriginal Custodians.

This material may contain images of members of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities who have entered the Dreaming. They are used with the greatest respect and appreciation.



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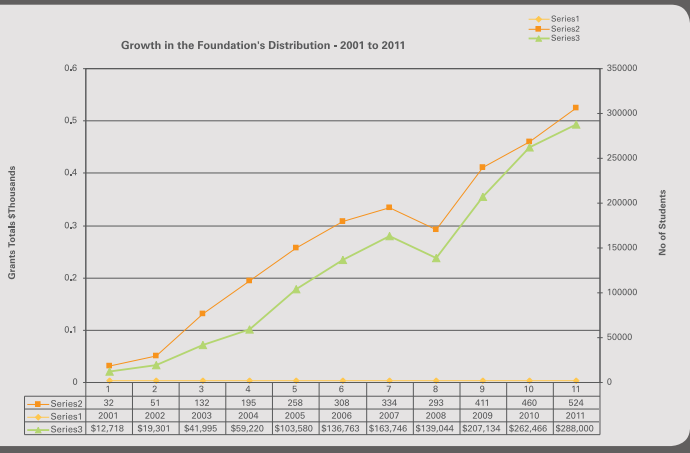
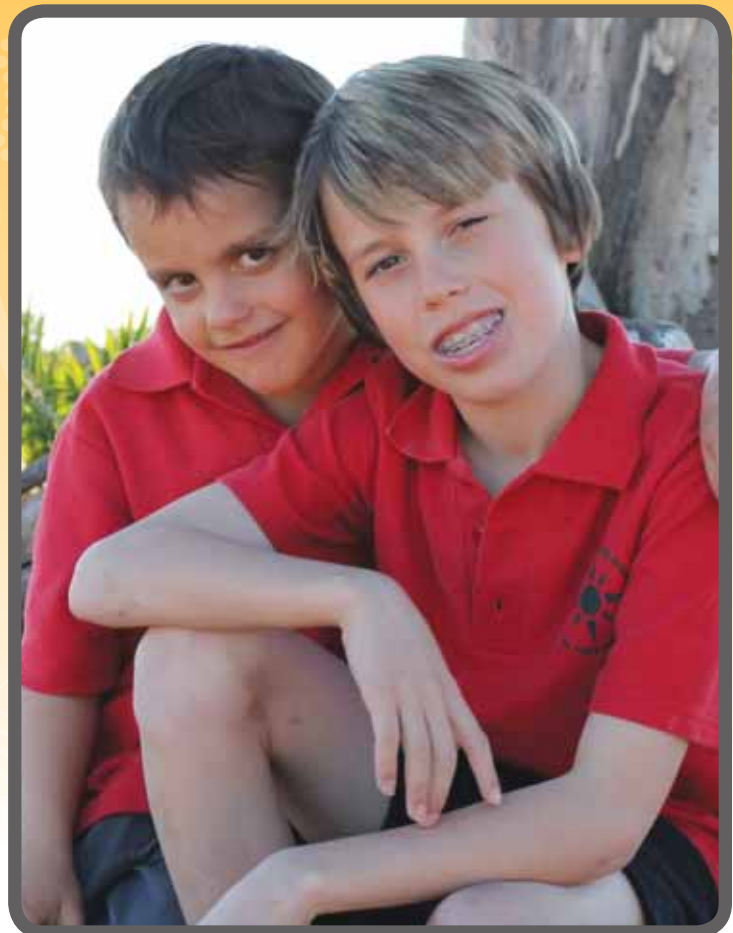
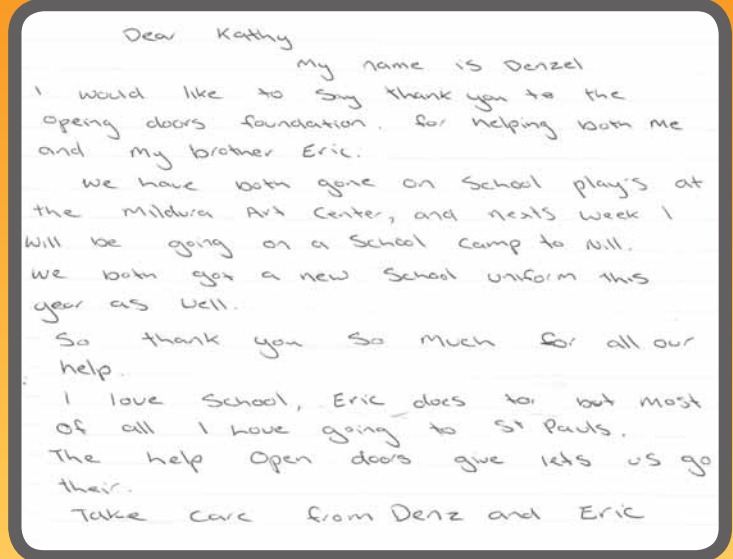
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To defeat the odds and to grow and develop we needed the support and encouragement of everyday philanthropists who have shared their resources with us. It's the ordinary people, community groups, schools, churches as well as businesses and organisations that have gifted us with their financial support and personal encouragement. We are so very grateful to each and every one of them, without them we would not be here celebrating ten wonderful years.

So many people have been involved in the success of Opening the Doors Foundation – each one of them, I know, takes enormous satisfaction in knowing that the Foundation has kept to its ideals and is continuing to flourish and to support our fantastic kids as they look to changing the results of the past by building a strong and effective future for themselves, their families and their community.

It's the Victorian Aboriginal community that has been and continues to be the back bone of our survival. The trust they have bestowed on us is incredible and the confidence given to us is shown in how they promote (talk us up) us amongst the families and community networks. We can all take great pride in and look forward to the next ten years of success and growth.

We are very proud of the growth of the Foundation in the 10 years that we have been in operation.



1991 to 1999

The dream begins – requests from families, visits, discussions about WHAT and HOW

2001

August 4th - Launch of the OTDF by Archbishop Hart, Archdiocese of Melbourne. 32 students supported with \$12,718.

2002

51 students supported - \$19,301 disbursed.

2003

'Walk Across our Paperbark' – Major fundraising Gala dinner. Opening the Doors Foundation's Trust Deed executed. Over 100 students supported.

Message From John Arthur Chair of Trustees

The Foundation celebrated its tenth birthday on 4th August 2011, National Aboriginal Children's Day. The occasion was marked by a celebratory evening generously hosted by Genazzano FCJ College and an Oration from Dr. Anita Heiss, an Indigenous Literacy Day Ambassador and a prolific author.

Anita shared with those in attendance, the intriguing and captivating story of her life from the challenging family and school environment that she experienced in her youth to the joy and elation of being the first Aboriginal student to graduate from the University of Western Sydney. Anita recalled having to wear a hand-me-down school uniform and the many occasions she experienced racial vilification.

However she also referred to the commitment to hard work and sacrifice that her parents made to ensure she had the very best education they could afford. Anita did not let her parents down and she has repaid their sacrifices many times over.

Anita's Oration was so fitting for the night.

The student beneficiaries of OTDF are attending independent school because of the commitment of their parents to give their children an education of their choice. They are continually making sacrifices to achieve this outcome. Unlike Anita however, because of the Foundation, the students are able to wear their own school uniforms, not hand-me-down uniforms.

Anita finished with a very powerful message that could become the motto of all our student beneficiaries. Make the most of your talent and skills, dare to dream, strive for the best education you can obtain and be determined to succeed in all that you do.

Anita is a remarkable role model for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community. I dream that, with the help from OTDF, many more Koorie Kids will follow her footsteps.



Anita Heiss signing books



Genazzano girls with Dr Anita Heiss, Trish Cowling (Principal) and Lila McInerney (Dep Prin)

My oldest boy was not a happy child and was put in the too hard section, so he missed out on a lot. After countless visits to the school, I pulled him out and placed him (at the local Catholic school). Because of your help my children now have a brighter future.

2004

Establishment of Development Office. Establishment of Annual Newsletter and Activity Report. DGR Status granted. Website developed.

2005

258 Students supported - over \$100,000 disbursed. 1st Appreciation Gathering held at the Treacy Centre, Parkville.

2006

Growth in 5 years from 12 students from 13 families to 308 students from 188 families.

2007

Inaugural Oration for OTDF at Genazzano FCJ College Kew, during Reconciliation Week.

A great big 'THANK YOU' to all our generous partners and donors in the 2010/2011 Financial Year.

St Vincent de Paul Society and Portland House Foundation are our very important long term partners and their support has been critical to the growth and development of the Foundation.

Victorian Catholic Bishops. Since 2004 the Catholic Bishops of the four Victorian dioceses have provided strong financial support for the Foundation. A very special grant was given this year in celebration of our 10th Anniversary.

Cabrinian Apostolic Planning Committee has trebled their contribution to the Foundation this year, in line with their commitment to justice for Aboriginal people and in recognition of the importance of educational support for Aboriginal families in Victoria.

Genazzano FCJ College have supported the Foundation with an annual fundraising event since 2007, this year they hosted our special 10th Birthday Celebration.

The Merrin Foundation - We were delighted to again receive a generous grant from the Merrin Foundation for 2011/12. This will enable us to offer Curriculum Extension Programs for LOTE and Cultural Immersion opportunities.

Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust have once again generously supported OTDF as have the **Magistrates' Court Fund.**

For the first time, we have received support from the **Killen Foundation** and the **Jack Brockhoff Foundation.** We hope that we might form partnerships with these Foundations into the future.

The Sandhurst Catholic Education Office staff has worked tirelessly and with great commitment for the benefit of the Aboriginal students in diocesan schools and colleges. They have also raised funds for the OTDF to help us continue supporting families with educational expenses.

Arnold Bloch Leibler – Generously provide us with Pro-Bono advice.

Religious Communities

Blessed Sacrament Congregation; Redemptorist Community; Sisters of St Joseph; Sisters of the Good Shepherd; Carmelite Monastery Kew; Presentation Sisters; Loreto Sisters; Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart; Sisters of Mercy, Melb Congregation; Franciscan Missionaries of Mary

Parishes

The Brighton Deanery; St Thomas', Greensborough Nth; Holy Saviour, Vermont South; Holy Spirit, Ringwood; St John's, Mitcham; St Martin de Porres, Avondale Heights; St Dominic's, Camberwell East;

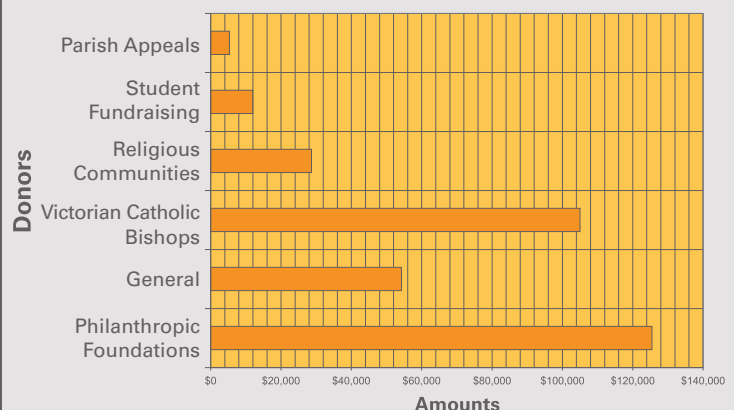
Schools (FIRE Carriers)

Genazzano FCJ College, Kew; Aquinas College, Ringwood; Avila College, Mt Waverley; St Joseph's College, Geelong; St Columba's College, Essendon; Sacred Heart Girls College, Oakleigh.

Schools

Padua Secondary College, Rosebud
Assumption College, Kilmore
Our Lady of Sion College, Box Hill
Christian Brothers College, St Kilda
Clonard College, Geelong West
St Mary's Primary School, Myrtleford
Catholic Ladies College, Eltham

Donation Base 2010/11



2008

Promotional DVD produced and distributed.
2nd Fundraising Gala Dinner - 'Back to our Paperbark'

2009

FIRE Carrier Project (Friends Igniting Reconciliation through Education) launched by Mr Ian Hamm, Executive Director of Aboriginal Affairs Vic, at Genazzano FCJ College, Kew.

2010

460 students supported - over \$250,000 disbursed.

2011

524 students supported - over \$280,000 disbursed. OTDF supports highest ever number of Gr 6 students (41), Yr 7 students (85) and Yr 12 students (19). 10th Birthday & Oratio Celebration at Genazzano FCJ College.

Celebrating Positive Results

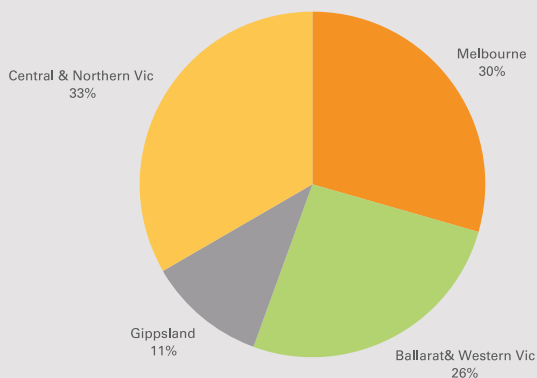
Breakdown by grade level – the numbers speak for themselves!

	Prep	Gr1	Gr2	Gr3	Gr4	Gr5	Gr6	
2006	25	26	27	14	37	14	19	= 162 students
2007	22	21	28	25	17	29	13	= 155 students
2008	11	24	21	26	23	16	24	= 145 students
2009	24	20	24	25	29	22	15	= 159 students
2010	29	23	20	33	23	35	29	= 192 students
2011	28	39	29	25	35	21	41	= 218 students

	Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Yr11	Yr 12	
2006	28	33	24	32	20	9	= 146 students
2007	29	41	37	35	23	14	= 179 students
2008	22	24	35	32	24	15	= 152 students
2009	66	53	42	39	37	11	= 248 students
2010	48	79	64	36	26	15	= 268 students
2011	85	60	70	42	30	19	= 306 students

Total students 524

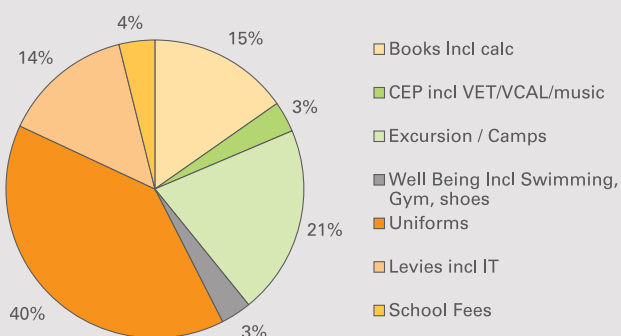
Regional Distribution



Where do our students come from?

Central and Northern Victoria (176), Melbourne (156) and Ballarat & Western Victoria (135) are the biggest disbursement areas for OTDF.

% Categories blended



What do our students need support with?

Category	number	Amount
Books	198	\$40,573
Calculators	18	\$3,297
Curric Extension	4	\$5,650
Excursion / Camps	221	\$59,513
Gym	35	\$860
IT/ Laptops	21	\$2288
Levies	172	\$37,987
VET / VCAL	8	\$3,322
Shoes	26	\$3,428
School Fees	48	\$11,101
Uniforams	356	\$113,574
Swimming Levies	81	\$5,368
Music	3	\$837
Total:		\$287,798



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*“What can I say?
He hasn't been out of his
uniform all weekend and
can't wait to start school.
Thank you so much for
making this possible.”*

2011 Oration

Thursday 4 August 2011 marked a very special Birthday for the Foundation.

Ten years ago a dream was born, to establish the Opening the Doors Foundation. On August 4, over 100 people came together at Genazzano FCJ College to celebrate this achievement. Dr Anita Heiss, author and Indigenous Literacy Day Ambassador was a perfect choice as special guest speaker. Anita is an ideal role model for all Koorie students supported by the Opening the Doors Foundation since 2001.

The Foundation is grateful for our strong partnership with Genazzano who generously played host for this special occasion. Principal, Patricia Cowling, Deputy Principal: Faith and Mission, Lila McInerney and other Genazzano teachers continue to be wonderful contributors in influencing new generations of students to seek a deeper understanding of Aboriginal history and culture.

Thank you to all of those who shared in this special night and to those who helped make the night such a success, including our FIRE Carrier students and our enthusiastic, always reliable and hard-working volunteer Support Group.

What's happening in the Office

Our blessed Volunteers

Sr Agnes Murphy RSM has been volunteering her time since last year. She is actively involved with the Aboriginal Catholic Ministry and the OTDF through support for administration two days a week. Sr Agnes enabled us to bring our data base up to date and makes the smooth operating of the office a reality.

Sr Anne Priestly RSM is also volunteering 2 days a week to develop and support a greater number of Parish Partners. Parish Partners are being sought to promote Reconciliation throughout the Catholic community and to support the work of the Foundation as a practical demonstration of that desire for justice.



Sisters Agnes helping at the Oration

Co - Patrons of the Foundation

Opening the Doors Foundation is privileged to have Co-Patrons representing both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities: Emeritus Auxiliary Bishop Hilton Deakin and Professor Joy Wandin Murphy, Wurrundjeri Elder.

The Opening the Doors Foundation is currently governed by 7 Trustees, the majority of whom are Aboriginal.

John Arthur (Chair), Vicki Clark, Mitch McKenzie, Therese Power, Joyce Smith, Cherie Waight, Debbie Walsh.

Farewell and thank you to retiring Trustees:

Sandra Walker will be greatly missed; a stalwart and conscientious friend of the Foundation, travelling long distances to attend meetings and working behind the scenes to support our endeavours. Naomi Wolfe has also had to resign due to ill health and work commitments and we will be sad to see her go. We wish both our valued trustees improved health and happiness in the future.