

## School Memories by Martin Pollard OC 1951 - 1956

### Brief Career Details:

- 1957 – 1964: Clerk, Commonwealth Public Service Taxation Department and High Court of Australia; part time law student University of Melbourne. Law Graduate 1964.
- March 1965: Admitted to practice as Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Victoria.
- 1964 – 1975: Legal Officer, Senior Legal Officer, Principal Legal Officer, Commonwealth Attorney General's Department.
- 1976 – 1978: A/g Assistant Commonwealth Crown Solicitor (Shipping and Transport).
- 1979 – 1983: Senior Assistant Secretary, Commonwealth Department of Transport.
- 1984 – 1993: Manager, Legal Services, Victorian Road Traffic Authority, subsequently VicRoads.
- 1992 – 1996: Director of Legislation, National Road Transport commission.
- 1996 – 2002: Manager, Legal Services, VicRoads.
- 2003 – 2005: Part time legal projects VicRoads (semi – retired).
- Oct. 2005: Retired.
- Awards: Public Service Medal, Queen's Birthday Honours List 2001  
"For outstanding public service to transport, law and legislation".  
Australian Defence Medal.  
Anniversary of National Service 1951 – 1972 Medal.



**Matriculation 1956**

**Back Row: Martin Pollard, Martin Hartnett, Peter Kelly, Jacques Fievez, Roger Hartnett**

**Middle Row: Carmen Vasta, Francis O'Sullivan, Peter Tripcony, Kenneth Boland, Daniel Taggart, Maurice Boland**

**Front Row: Kevin Healy, John Elson, Brian McCrohan, Graeme Watson, Peter Deayton**

On the morning of our first day at the college, my brother John and I on approaching the bus stop near home on the first leg of our journey to school were pleased to see two other boys of similar age and similarly dressed in the College cap and brand-new uniforms waiting for the bus. They told us in passable Strine that they were from Belgium and had arrived in Australia some 12 months previously. Thus, began a friendship which I had with Bernard Bruggeman and his family for the whole of our time at Marcellin.

Overall my first year at Marcellin was a mixed one. The exam results at the end of each term were encouraging but late in the year Mum suffered a lung collapse and died in November that year. The support from the College and classmates was helpful in enabling my brother and me to cope with this tragedy.

Bernard and I took it in turns as top of the class or runner up for practically all the term and end of year exams for the rest of our secondary education at Marcellin.

I can recall only small snippets of our time in class. Not surprisingly, the classes were larger in Forms 1 – 3 (Years 7 – 8) than in later years. Boys who wished to enter a trade, the banking industry, public service or professions such as accounting, would not normally stay on to year 12 before entering the work force. My guess is that the class size was about 30 in Form 1 and by Form 6 it had reduced to less than 20. There was only one stream in my year and those ahead of me. Overall the College was quite small by today's standards.

Our end of year examinations for Years 10, 11 and 12 were held externally, normally in the Exhibition Building in Carlton. However, 1956 was the year of the Olympic Games in Melbourne and the Exhibition Building was the venue for many indoor sports. Our exams for that year were held in the Showgrounds. I recall sitting the French exam in the Dog Pavilion.



**Inter School Athletic Team 1953**

**Back row:** Ronald Bond, Martin Pollard, Richard Hastings, Michael Kettle, Maurice Lynch, Michael Joyce, L. Lawrie  
**3rd row:** Terence Cleary, Kenneth Carr, Geoffrey Green, John O'Leary, Graham Code, Graeme Emery-Smith, Kevin Healy  
**2nd row:** Geoffrey Kelly, Brian McCrohan, Ross Aldag, James Ledger, Peter Grey, Peter Conlan, York Gertsman  
**Front Row:** ?? , Gerard Leonard

We competed in inter-college events in football and athletics. I recall playing representative teams against schools such as Assumption College at Kilmore and Camberwell Grammar. The size of the school was such that we were not often successful in these endeavours. One memorable part of these was the bus ride to and from Kilmore around the many bends on the Hume Highway over Pretty Sally Hill on the Great Divide. It was shrouded in fog in mid-winter and the ground at Assumption College was an unpleasant smelling muddy bog on which the locals reigned supreme. Our football was lamentable, but the showers afterwards were hot, and the hospitality of our hosts could not be faulted.

How it prepared me for life:

Marcellin provided me with enough depth of understanding of contemporary science and mathematics to be able to cope with any kind of further study in those fields, had I wished. It also enabled me to understand experts on those fields in connection with matter of a legal or governmental nature in the course of my chosen profession.

It provided me with the confidence to pursue further studies in the legal field, knowing that I could keep pace with the best of my contemporaries.

My studies in Latin and French were also of great assistance in providing an understanding of the origin and meaning of many English words and the structure and presentation of grammar. To be able to communicate effectively and avoid ambiguity in writing and, to a lesser extent, the spoken word.

It provided me with the tools to be able to build self-confidence in dealing with the leaders of society and to take a leadership role when there was no one else more suited to the task.

The example of dedication and selflessness given by most of the Brothers encouraged me to assume voluntary roles in a number of fields, including professional associations and parish activities.

Finally, in retirement and old age, it has provided me with the background skills to be able to pursue a range of useful activities in fields which I might otherwise not have attempted, including horticulture, information technology and genealogy. It has also provided me with an interest in active sport to remain reasonably fit and healthy.