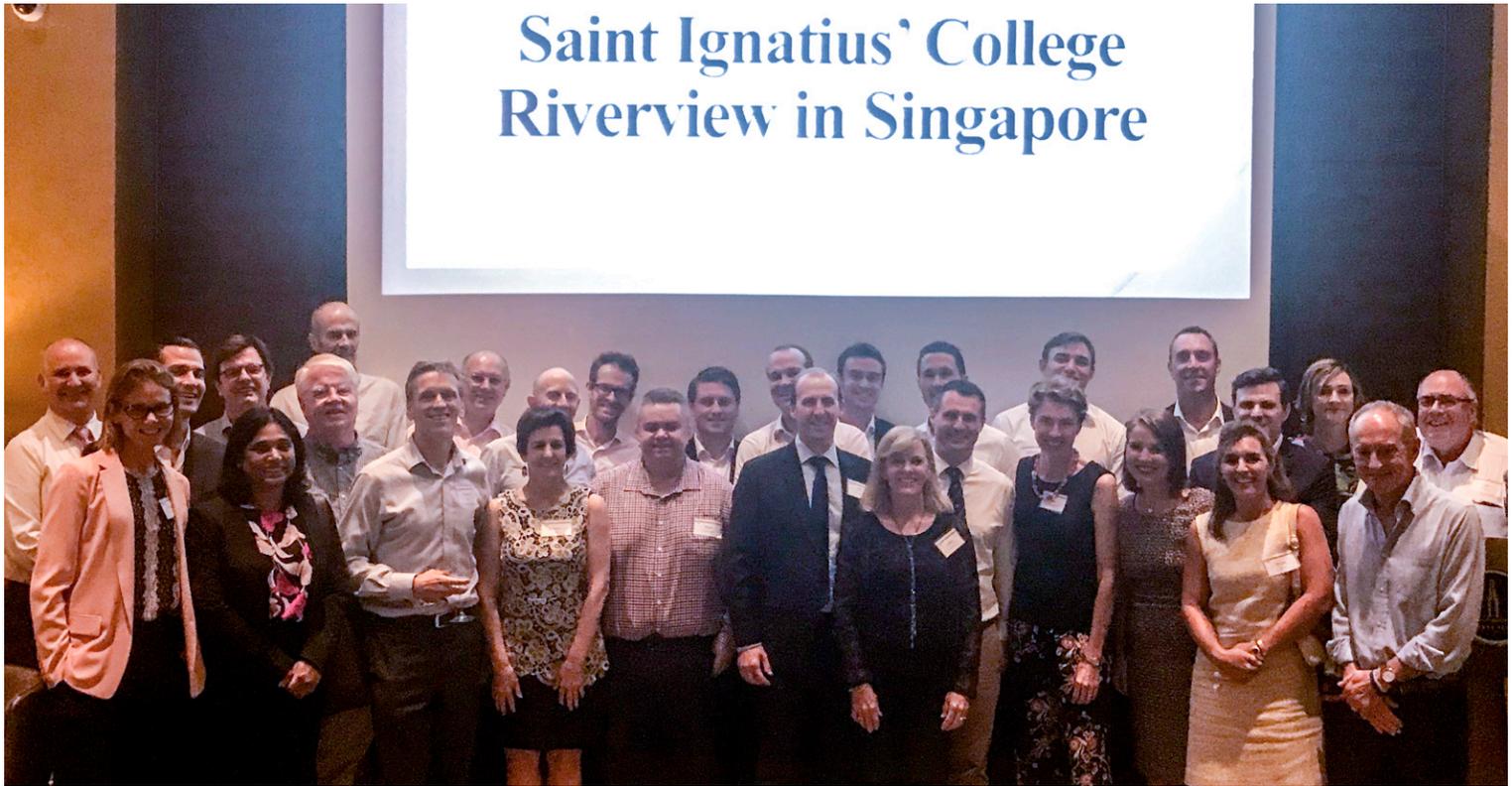


New Beginnings



Over the past week there has been much activity around the Senior School as the boys who are taking up enrolment in 2018 began the formal process of transition. A mixture of excitement, apprehension and not a little bewilderment at the scale of what will be encountered over the coming years was clearly evident. Parents, a number of who are new and unfamiliar with the routines of school life 'Riverview style', experienced their own sense of awe at the breadth of the educational program in totality while all the boys, including those from Regis, took their first preliminary steps towards the more rigorous demands of secondary schooling. Whether families have siblings already in the school or whether they take up enrolment for the first time, it was clear that there was a palpable sense of anticipation and expectancy about the road ahead. I suspect that it will take many weeks in the early part of 2018 to begin to feel the full parameters of the operation, but as has been the case for the better part of 140 years, it will surely follow as these young men will forge their place in the community. It was particularly impressive to see the senior boys of each House shoulder the responsibility for showing the new boys around the campus and sharing their own views of the salient – both appealing and at times challenging, features of life at the College. As the latter months of 2017 begin to give way to the early part of the coming year, I suspect that the sense of expectation and at times apprehension will continue to grow so our community will need to be vigilant and support all of these boys as they formally walk through the gate to pursue their education and formation at Riverview.

A very special group of young men formed part of the transition cohort: the First Nations boys who hail from regions far and wide. For some from remote regions, they arrive at a school that is larger than their own rural communities. Having been the object of fine grade assessment over the early part of the year, these are the boys who are believed to have the credentials to go all the way. Initially, this means adapting to the rigorous learning and assessment regime of secondary school, as well as responding to the wide range of opportunities and demands that are the corollary of a broad and holistic educational program. Equally importantly, it is about retaining their own indigenous culture while adapting to a busy life in the city and in residential living – both of which will require their own significant adjustments. It was encouraging to see the boys engaged in the various transition activities that had the dual effect of

enculturating them to the routines of College life while distracting them from the uncertainty and doubt that can be part of new and unfamiliar experiences.

The consummation of the induction program occurred with the Mass and information session that was held last Sunday in the Ramsay Hall, when all of the new families came together for the first time. It is symbolic that the Ramsay Hall over recent generations has been the place where new families celebrate their arrival, and it is in the same auditorium where this cohort will come together in 2023 for the rites of graduation. The latter seems so very far away, but the lessons of history assert that this will happen with disarming speed and in the metaphor of tomorrow, there is a deep sense of providence about that. As these young men come into the College, as their new beginnings beckon today's tomorrow, may we be with them and their families as they take up the mantle of their Jesuit education over the years ahead.

As I pen this particular edition of Viewpoint Fr Ross and I are in Asia as part of our [visitation schedule](#) to the families who entrust the education of their children from overseas. It is a mighty responsibility and one that we don't take lightly with the 42 boys in boarding who come from 11 different countries in the world. It is not often known that the first overseas boarders from Asia arrived at the College back in the 1930s with William Dawes (OR 1933-38) who derived from Singapore, Richard Johnson (1937-45) from Shanghai, and, the three da Rosa boys – Bruno (OR 1938-42), Manuel (1938-43) and Denis (OR 1938-45) who came together on the boat from Hong Kong. For decades and generations since the boys have kept coming, some families of which now span three generations. Each of the major functions that we attended had its own mix of Old Boys, current parents and future parents who came together to share in the collective sense of community that is inimitable to this wonderful school. It was also an opportunity to speak with new expat families in different parts of Asia, a number of whom are Old Boys, who wish to enrol their sons to pursue a Jesuit education from the northern hemisphere over the years ahead. In addition to visiting families who come from Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai, Fr Ross and I spent time in Macao, viewing some of the earliest works of the Jesuits in the Far East. The fusion of two cultures – East and West, was instructive and enriching. It is with a deep sense of gratitude that we acknowledge and thank the families whose hospitality provided such an enjoyable and memorable time for all. And, we particularly welcome those boys, three of whom in 2018, will make their new beginnings at the College from Asia.

As the term consolidates key activities and events are on the horizon. The HSC Examinations conclude this week and the gloss and glitz of the Blue & White will be enacted in the Exhibition Centre next Friday. Next week the Year 9 Challenge is underway and across the school the boys are at different stages along their assessment and examination continuum. Let us be mindful of the momentum of the term, yet, deeply grateful for the opportunities that present on a daily basis.