

## Some of our past staff or students and their stories

### Jill McCulloch



Jill commenced teaching at Wonthaggi High School in 1973 and moved to Korumburra High School in 1975. The friendly manner of both staff and students ensured she stayed until she retired 29 years later. Jill made a very significant contribution to Korumburra Secondary College.

The majority of Jill's teaching load was in Physical Education, where she taught over 4,000 students whilst she was at Korumburra Secondary College. She was very knowledgeable about all sports and really enjoyed watching her students achieve their best in interschool competitions. Jill was a great character and a very caring teacher. She was well liked and respected by students, staff and parents. She coached many sporting teams over the years; in particular hockey, soccer, softball and girls football. Jill enjoyed coaching so much that she continued to coach at Korumburra Secondary College after her retirement in October of 2003.

Jill also made a wonderful contribution to the life of the school, by jointly directing and producing 21 School Productions over 21 continuous years, with her good friend John Howard. She would always worry about how it was ever going to come together for the opening night, but without fail, it was always a huge success. Jill absolutely loved seeing students perform, and often they were students who struggled with other parts of their schooling.

Jill was a very kind person. She gave up much of her free time coaching students, attending numerous camps and excursions, coordinating various sporting events and carnivals and supervising the gymnasium during lunchtimes so the students had somewhere to play during cold and wet winters in South Gippsland.

Jill was a tireless member of staff who gave much of herself, encouraging students to excel and realize their passion and potential and was a familiar face at many school cultural evenings, notably performing arts festivals, music recruitment nights and orientation sessions.

She contributed to the social cohesion of the staff always participating in staff events, whether sporting, staff functions, staff versus student matches or school fundraisers. She would always willingly pitch in and help.

Jill was a strong and active union member and always supported union action which was a way in which she could promote social justice.

Jill loved music. She was a passionate supporter of the college's music program and so she ended up deciding that she was going to learn an instrument and join our band program. She became an accomplished saxophonist and an integral member of the Concert and Big Bands.

Jill went on countless excursions and camps over her teaching career. She really enjoyed this part of the job. Jill attended every Year 7 camp for over 25 years. She helped in the planning and was responsible for the swimming program. When the camps were in Inverloch, she always took groups of the Year 7 students, armed with torches, on her famous night walks.

She also took many photos over the years of students involved in camp activities. These photos Jill brought to the college for the 50th Anniversary celebrations. Of all the memorabilia that came to the school, about 50% of it was from Jill.

There have been numerous student reunions at the school over the last twenty years and invariably, Jill would attend each one. The students loved catching up with Miss McCulloch as she had a great memory and she loved to reminisce.

Jill was always a keen St Kilda and local environment supporter.

After her retirement, Jill became very heavily involved with organizing the Inverloch Jazz Festival each year. She would really work hard for months to do everything that she could to ensure that it was a successful weekend.

With the death of Jill on August 30 2008, the school has lost one of its keenest supporters but whose memory is treasured by so many.

## **Russell Short**



Russell Short was the flag bearer for the Australian Team at the Beijing Paralympics. Russell is vision impaired and competes in the javelin, shot put and discus. He was a gold medalist in the Sydney Olympics and this was his sixth games.

Russell grew up in Poowong and attended Korumburra Secondary College from 1981 to 1986.

Don Hislop, his Phys Ed teacher for six years, writes in Korumburra Secondary College 1954-2008 A Chronicle "He was just one of the boys to such an extent that I would go for months without thinking about his vision problem. I can only remember him ever asking for special consideration once, when we were playing baseball and he asked if he could not play shortstop because he had heard the ball go by him, but he never saw it so I put him in the outfield ... Russell has gone further in his sport than any other Korumburra HS or SC student in the history of the school He has represented Australia in every Paralympics from 1988 to 2004 and never failed to come home with a medal, usually gold. He has received an OAM for his contribution to sport in Australia."

Russell currently works as a public speaker and has featured in a book and a film shown on ABC TV on hiking the Kodoka Track called "The Blind leading the Blind" (1995).