

castle

SPRING 2016 - TRAFALGAR CASTLE SCHOOL AND ONTARIO LADIES' COLLEGE



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From the Head of School

“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.”

— Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

One of the best gifts we can give our students and their families is aspiration. As educators, that desire for our students to “dream big” is inculcated and firmly imprinted in our DNA. My own childhood is filled with idyllic moments spent dreaming about how I would change the world. And now I do, as part of a team, work one day at a time, one student at a time, to make a difference in the world.

As parents, I fully understand the worry that you have for your child. I have that for my own daughter and even to this day, though fully grown, I know that I am always my mother’s child. Those fears and worries that everything will turn out alright and that the future will be bright and filled with hope do not ever go away – though they can be assuaged.

That is what we do at Trafalgar Castle School daily: help both our families and students see the possibilities that are available to them as they transform and realize their potential. The journey is filled with side roads and intermittent detours, but a vision of where parents see their children and where children see themselves is what propels our mission.

Much will be said about the academic excellence at Trafalgar, and we take pride in our curriculum, but beyond it we offer unique programs that build a strong sense of community and school spirit, many of which will be highlighted in these pages. These are the gems that we treasure and the moments that make it all worthwhile.

- Dr. Leanne Foster



THE YEAR OF LIVING INQUISITIVELY

Dr. Leanne Foster Reflects on her First Year as Head of School

Ask Dr. Leanne Foster what she has learned about Trafalgar Castle School in her first year as Head and she doesn't hesitate. "This place is special," she says. "The girls have opportunities to explore and take chances in a highly supportive setting. It's an ideal way to promote problem solving and creativity. That's why the academic program is so strong. And it's why the girls have a wonderful can-do attitude and sense of adventure."

Dr. Foster sees this spirit and resilience on display throughout the School. Two examples of highly successful, student-driven enterprises easily come to mind: the robotics program, with Trafalgar's Team 1547 recently appearing on the Rick Mercer show, and the Haunted House in the fall, which brought in over 500 members of the local community.

Creating this culture of growth requires a talented group of teachers. "I have been overwhelmed and impressed by the faculty. They are incredibly dedicated and available to the students, and their work ethic is amazing. They know each student well and are deeply committed to creating the conditions for student success through customized learning and individual attention."

After a year, Dr. Foster sees significant benefit to the School's decision to remain small and emphasize high-quality programming. "There is a lack of bureaucracy here that allows for adaptability and gives students and faculty a voice in what is happening," she says. "It allows us to continue to innovate in our academic and school life programs to ensure the girls' needs always come first. It also allows us to create the warm and welcoming community that exists here, which feels like a home away from home for our boarders."

Assessing school and education systems is nothing new to Dr. Foster who has dedicated her career to exploring the optimal conditions for learning. She spent her first ten years in various public school roles before moving to Branksome Hall as a Learning Strategies teacher. She also earned advanced degrees in education, with a special emphasis on learning conditions in low-income neighbourhoods, and worked as a Senior Research Associate for an international consulting firm specializing in education. She then went on to take charge of the academic program at St. Clement's School before arriving at Trafalgar.

"I have seen the power of education to transform lives and emancipate," she says. "I have also seen kids with brilliant minds who don't fit the mold but get up each day and try again. As teachers, we have an enormous responsibility to enable our students and a wonderful opportunity to figure things out with them."

Her passion for learning has been evident throughout her first year as Head. "I ask questions constantly – it must drive people mad," she laughs. "Really, though, it is the Head's role, especially in the first year, to be a catalyst for reflection. My job is to hold a flashlight and focus our collective attention."

Guided by this commitment to inquiry, Dr. Foster and her leadership team have spent time asking questions like why do we do it that way? What are we trying to achieve? What is our goal and how will we get there? Her quest has been to unearth truths that underlie and inform the Trafalgar approach so that the School can make the best decisions about the future.



Dr. Foster with her husband Dan and daughter Olivia outside their new home at the Cottage.

"There is a danger in making assumptions," she explains. "I try to constantly question mine. I never assume I know it all. It's not my role to dictate what we do. It's to help us figure out what's working best and where progress is needed. A good Head attends to both the business of schooling and the heart of the community, so I try to maintain that balance in every conversation about Trafalgar."

After a year of learning, coordinating and building relationships, the question now becomes, “Where do we go from here?” The particulars will be worked out over the coming months and years, but Dr. Foster has a sense of some initial priorities.

“The leadership team has done a wonderful job of operational sharing to coordinate decision making,” she says. “We are striking a balance between alignment and autonomy so there is room for creativity. The path forward needs to be flexible to get where we want to go, yet we all need to row in the same direction.”

The School is exploring a variety of enhancements, such as creating more opportunities for the day and international girls to connect and enriching the diversity of the boarding program. There is also an increased focus on health and wellness programs to help strengthen the girls’ internal resources.

“The world they are entering is fast-paced and complex with pressures we didn’t face as children,” explains Dr. Foster. “We can help them develop life-long strategies for managing those complexities by building a preventative skillset. From mindfulness to personalized learning, we can foster their awareness of who they are as learners, leaders and people.”

There are also plans to deepen relationships beyond the

Castle walls, beginning with the vibrant network of alumnae. “Over 140 years, we have produced a remarkable group of confident and interesting women. They came from a strong, safe school community that built them up and they went on to pursue their passion – often in non-traditional fields. We want to continue to reach out to them so they can connect to each other and Trafalgar.”

There will also be a heightened emphasis on authentic opportunities for members of the local community to know the School better. “It’s never been the Trafalgar way to trumpet what is great about this place, so there are people in the community who don’t know us very well. Some people I have met believe we are a school for ‘a certain kind of girl’ when the truth is that any girl can thrive here. We have an interesting mix of individuals, which makes for quite a diverse student population.”

As Dr. Foster comes to the end of her first year at the helm, it is evident that her beliefs about progress are a perfect fit for Trafalgar’s commitment to continual improvement. “I believe I have never arrived. I always want to grow – personally and professionally. I think the heart of success is being creative and resilient in the face of adversity and always trying new ways to get where you are going.”



“Over 140 years, we have produced a remarkable group of confident and interesting women.”

- Dr. Leanne Foster

BOARD UPDATE

Changing the World Together

Working as part of a team can be extremely rewarding, and so it has been for me as Chair of the Board of Directors of Trafalgar Castle School. I remember as I first accepted this task, being acutely aware of the importance of adaptability and flexibility – for us as an organization and in particular as the governing body of a school embarking on exciting times. I recognized quite early that the world in which we live and work is constantly evolving, and I was challenged to ensure that as a Board we continue to adapt to the changes we face and be willing to adjust to the use of new technologies, products and services. We continue to do that as we work through the third year of our Strategic Plan, embracing opportunities that will benefit the School.

I am approaching the end of my term as Chair and will be handing the reins to a new chair in September. I have particularly enjoyed my role working with the Board and the Heads of School. The Board has worked very closely with Dr. Foster in her first year as Head of School, as she focused on reviewing all aspects of the School to identify and explore opportunities for positive growth. We remain steadfast in the mission of making Trafalgar Castle School a leader academically, as well as in providing an environment for our students to become strong young women and empowered leaders, making meaningful contributions to their communities and the broader world.

You will recall that the Board had approved the purchase and sale agreement with Stafford Homes for the sale of the excess land located north of the school grounds. We continue to work with all

stakeholders to reduce any obstacles in finalizing this process. Stafford will be submitting their plans to the Town of Whitby in order to obtain approval in the upcoming months, which will allow the School to sever the land and proceed with the sale.

In addition, the Board of Directors is currently recruiting new members, particularly from the alumnae and the broader community. The Board is comprised of hard-working and committed volunteers who meet approximately 10 times a year and may meet more frequently for sub committees. There will be an election of new members in September at our Annual General Meeting and we welcome candidates, either as Board members or members of our committees, with expertise in the following areas:

- Legal (preferably corporate/commercial and drafting);
- Finance (preferably with a professional designation);
- Previous non-profit board experience; and
- Fundraising.

I have enjoyed my time working closely with the Board to strengthen the governance role at Trafalgar Castle School and encourage us all to be the change we want to see. I regularly try to pay it forward and say “together we can change the world.”

- Terri McKinnon
Chair of the Board of Directors

“Change will not come if we wait for some other person, or if we wait for some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

- Barack Obama





"We all live through the transition of adolescence to teen to graduating young adult. What a delight parents have during this time of change!"



ACADEMICS

Beyond Academics - Transition Benefits Students

Is transition in the lives of our students strictly academic? I would argue no: transition at school occurs around us socially and within us personally.

Transition is all-encompassing and constantly in play. Science offers clinical insight into this phenomenon: we see that over the course of seven to ten years, humans have regenerated a vast number of the body's cells. It would appear that within nature, we are in a constant state of transition.

For our students, change and growth is encountered frequently and usually tolerated well. A major event that our students share is the transition to our Trafalgar universe, once they step through those Castle doors for the first time. It's a good shift. There is so much available to our students in our small school that can't be found in larger environments and that offers new possibilities.

Most students set goals and want to be challenged either by athletics, academics, co-curriculars or the structure of a new school. That's where good things begin. The desire to develop from new experiences creates fertile ground to grow and expand beyond what is known and comfortable.

Once a student is well established in a particular grade, change continues with the constant shift of topics within the curriculum and within specific subjects. Students also encounter new courses such as Media Studies, Anthropology, Sociology and Psychology. There are defined rewards for advancing and progressing in these situations. While enjoying the comfort of familiar friends, there is often a new setting or perhaps a

new teacher to get to know as well as the challenge to learn something new.

It doesn't end there. The life of a typical student includes the transition to credit-earning courses in Grade 9 and the important life decision in Grade 12 to transition into post-secondary education. We all live through the transition of adolescence to teen to graduating young adult. What a delight parents have during this time of change!

So what prepares a student to succeed through transitions?

One answer is resilience. In order to successfully grow and develop through these changes, students need a solid foundation of deliberate self-awareness, a known support system from adults and peers, and the willingness to learn through failure. Though the transition may be very difficult for some, the key to success is to continue onward, get back up after a fall and go further.

It is actually scientifically shown that we have a natural drive to reach beyond our grasp. It's why we learn to walk and to speak as an infant. With the loving support of those around us, our transition to the next stage of life is nurtured, and we are able to adopt new strategies and ways to sprint over the next hurdle. Sure we may occasionally fall, and thank goodness we do. There is so much more to learn when we don't succeed periodically. Our self-preservation kicks in, and we become sturdier from what we learn about what didn't work. Like a

broken bone that has fused, we naturally grow stronger through our trials and tribulations.

Transition is natural, and as educators and parents, we support and nurture this drive. With our students showing us daily examples of resilience and growth, it is a pleasure to witness as well as be a part of their constant evolution and personal transition to the next step and beyond.

*- Tim Southwell
Vice-Principal, Academics*



SCHOOL LIFE

Using Data to Help Develop the Whole Child

In an evolving, fast-paced world, parents and educators have to make rapid changes to respond to the emerging needs of children. In schools, one advance underway is the use of data to drive decision making so that we can understand the conditions that optimize learning for students.

As New York times columnist David Bornstein puts it, “People with good intentions have long worked on social problems in the dark; increasingly they are being asked to prove that they are getting somewhere. This is a departure from the past.” In this way, 21st century education is more scientific than ever as quantitative measures are increasingly blended with qualitative insights. By applying knowledge from neuroscience and behavioural psychology, educators are adding “researcher” to the list of hats they wear and paying more attention to data and evidence about learning, teaching and student development.

A key theme in recent research is that students thrive when schools adopt a whole child approach to learning. By developing the emotional and social parts of the self along with the mental and physical, we can fully prepare students for wellness now and in the future “by addressing students’ comprehensive needs through the shared responsibility of students, families, schools, and communities” (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development - ASCD).

In essence, research is helping us redefine our concept of a successful learner. At Trafalgar, this emphasis has been in place since the School’s inception, and we continue to build on that foundation by working with key partners, parents and community organizations to foster the social and emotional development of our students.

If we look at resilience as an example, evidence is driving a shift in education toward an emphasis on the process of learning rather than the outcome. Dr. Martin Seligman, a psychologist with the American Psychology Association, suggests that we need to change our view of setbacks and adversity: “Our expectation is that things normally should go fine and that, every once in a while, there will be a problem to face, which we should quickly solve so we can return to a state of normalcy.... [However,] difficult and sometimes insoluble problems are, for better or worse, part of the state of normalcy.”

There is no guarantee our children will be resilient in

every situation they face later in life. But by understanding the importance of adversity, we can emphasize opportunities for them to practice life skills independently without adults intervening. Whatever they face, they will have to persevere through struggles. Success comes from the ability, in times of strife, to rely on character, apply problem-solving skills, and move forward.

To expand our appreciation of this topic, Trafalgar invited psychologist Dr. Alex Russell to speak with our community about the negative effects of over-parenting on building resiliency in children. He encouraged parents to take a step back from micro-managing their child’s experiences to allow them to develop the necessary strategies to overcome obstacles on their own. He refers to this concept as “dropping the worry ball” in order to help children develop a stronger sense of self and solid coping skills. At Trafalgar, we apply this concept by ensuring that we provide authentic learning opportunities where support is always nearby but our girls are never disrupted from taking responsibility for their own lives.

Recent data from the Canadian Mental Health Association indicates that 10-20% of Canadian youth are affected by a mental illness or disorder and only one in five receive adequate mental health services. Based on findings like this, school leaders are exploring ways to equip youth with the necessary knowledge, skills and character to thrive. Some of the solutions lie in data that shows that “learning environments that focus on caring student-teacher relationships, students’ social and emotional needs, and high expectations result in students who perform better academically; are more likely to attend school; and have significantly lower rates of emotional distress, violence, delinquency, substance abuse, and sexual activity” (ASCD).

A supportive learning environment is a priority at Trafalgar in structures such as our all-encompassing Advisor Program, through which we work with the girls on goal setting, academic achievement, authentic leadership experiences, active citizenship, and connections to the world. Our Health and Wellness Team



“Success comes from the ability, in times of strife, to rely on character, apply problem-solving skills, and move forward.”

is also putting programming in place, such as a proactive Circle of Care to offer workshops, information sessions, counselling and just-in-time care for students and faculty. We also have faculty taking the lead with programs that foster mindfulness and mentoring.

Engagement is another area that we focus on to help our students succeed. Researchers use the term “engagement” to refer to the extent to which students identify with their school, participate in academic and non-academic activities, feel a sense of belonging, and participate in school activities. The Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning reports that students “engaged in school-based social and emotional learning attained higher grades and scored 11 percentile points higher on academic achievement tests than peers who did not engage in such learning.” This means that engagement in school doesn’t just promote emotional well-being – it improves student achievement.

We are also exploring ways to help our students understand the importance of developing good basic habits. Scientist and physiologist Dr. Greg Wells recently spoke to our community about the role of better eating, sleeping and moving in optimizing daily and long-term performance. This topic is particularly relevant to teens who have a tendency to stay up late, eat unhealthy food and avoid exercise. A 2010 report in ScienceDaily linked physical fitness to better school performance, and a 2014 study by the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health indicated that skipping breakfast is associated with decreased cognitive performance (e.g., alertness, attention, memory, processing of complex visual display, problem solving) among students.

The research about sleep is even more extensive. The National Sleep Foundation recommends that children ages five to 12 get 10-11 hours of sleep a night, indicating that teenagers need about nine hours, though only 15% of them actually achieve that amount. Dr. Reut Gruber, lead psychologist at the National Sleep Foundation, led a study in 2015 which found that additional

sleep improved both student behaviour and attention. There is also increasing evidence that a teenager’s cycle of sleep and wakefulness typically begins two hours after an adult, so a teen’s body clock naturally wants to go to sleep and wake up later. Based on these findings, we recently piloted two late start days to promote extra sleep and optimize learning.

Trafalgar is fortunate to have an involved and caring community of learners, families and staff that is committed to success. This network and the strong relationships that exist here help us make informed, data-driven decisions about our programs to support our girls through the changing tides of adolescence. We know that the needs of each child are unique. Our goal is to establish a foundation that can be the basis of an ideal and customized learning and living experience for every girl.

*- Linda Parnsalu
Vice-Principal, School Life*



RESEARCH

Reflection, Growth and Student Success



“As students engage in building their digital portfolio, they are creating a profile of who they are as learners as well a record of their journey through each grade.”



As the end of another school year draws close, Trafalgar girls have grown taller and more mature, and yet this growth is only a fraction of the change that takes place inside their minds and bodies. As educators, we look at small steps of growth as the building blocks of learning that enable students to develop their skills as historians, scientists or musicians. We also look at how students think about their own growth and how we can help them capture this progress as a significant aspect of their mindset for learning.

When students are challenged to work through a problem in any subject area, they tackle it in many different ways. Individuality and past experiences contribute to these differences. Even so, research has demonstrated that mindset is a key factor in how students will succeed in their learning.

Individuals with a growth mindset see challenges as an opportunity to try something new and proceed to figure out the task, rather than viewing it as impossible or a failure if they do not get the right answer. A growth mindset also contributes to traits such as determination, perseverance and reflection within the learning process. These are central to students understanding who they are as learners and how they can grow in their skill development over their time at Trafalgar.

Reflection is a skill that we have focused on this year as part of our

professional development for faculty. “Meaningful reflection” is the phrase that Trafalgar teachers use to describe the toolkit of strategies they emphasize with students to promote the development of specific skills and goals central to the learning process. Reflection asks our students to consider their progress through key skills gained rather than measuring learning success with a mark. This is a fundamental concept because it shifts a student’s focus away from marks as a benchmark for achievement. Instead, progress is measured in key areas that are present in all academic disciplines, such as collaborative engagement, creativity and innovation, critical thinking and digital literacy.

Those themes are the foundation of the digital portfolio program Trafalgar is exploring as a way to enable our students to demonstrate their growth and progress over time. Each student personalizes their own portfolio to reflect who they are as a learner. Setting goals and recording ideas in the portfolio allows students to become accountable to themselves about their progress throughout the year. Students also collect learning artifacts as examples of how they are progressing with a skill or strategy. Reflecting on how the artifact demonstrates a step forward or a step back in the learning process, students record this information in their portfolio.

The best part of a digital portfolio is the end result! As students engage in

building their digital portfolio, they are creating a profile of who they are as learners as well as a record of their journey through each grade. Students can see their progress in key areas and are able to identify their next steps in conjunction with their goals, all without focusing on marks and averages as the single benchmark of success.

Similarly, the role of reflection in the learning process ensures that students are engaged in their own learning and are charting their progress in key areas that galvanize them to take responsibility for their experiences and success. Ultimately, measuring this growth will empower Trafalgar girls to succeed in ways far greater than can be measured by marks alone.

*- Christina Schindler
Director of Research*



YEAR IN REVIEW

Trafalgar Experiences



1. KIN-BALL

In March, Trafalgar students from Grades 8 to 11 enjoyed a rousing game of Kin-Ball as part of their regular Gymnastics class. Kin-Ball is a unique sport that originated in Quebec in 1986, and special guest coaches Marc-Andre and Eric from Kin-Ball Canada led the classes. In a given game, three colour-coded teams compete by throwing the huge ball and challenging another team to catch it before the ball touches the floor. That team then sends the ball back into the air yelling “Omnikin!” plus the colour of the next team that must catch it. An intricate and collaborative sport, Kin-Ball was a fun way for students to try new skills.



2. Students preparing for the Take Me Outside event in the fall.

3. In September, the entire school went to Camp Kilcoo for some community bonding, team building and leadership development in north Ontario.





4

4. In October, Trafalgar held a ceremonial tree planting to launch its partnership with the Highway of Heroes Tribute.

5. In December, the Junior Christmas Dinner was one of the final official gatherings for our younger students before the holidays.

6. The Senior Christmas Dinner brought students together to celebrate the season and wish each other the best before heading out for the holidays.



5



6



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7. I-CUBED WEEK

Trafalgar's I-Cubed initiative provides for the application and exploration of real-world learning through three key components: integrative thinking, immersive experiences, and interconnected learning. As part of the program, students across all grades participate in a week of thought-provoking activities where they have to work collaboratively to solve problems and invent unique solutions – such as building a boat from cardboard and racing it in a pool. The week was an exciting and challenging adventure for the girls that blended unique learning tasks with creative thinking.



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8. In September, students learned about the wide range of activities on offer at Trafalgar by attending the Co-curricular Fair.



9

9. Dog sledding was one of several challenges during I-Cubed experiential learning week in February.

10. In January, Trafalgar had the honour of hosting the Consul Generals from Pakistan, Turkey and Sri Lanka.



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11. On Drama Night – February 18 and 19 - The Manhattan Monologues and After the Flags and Bands were performed with the latter going on to compete at the Sears Drama Festival in Ottawa.

12. DNA TESTING

Academic excellence isn't just about chasing incredible ideas; it's also about hands-on experiences that challenge our girls to think in new ways. Students in the Grade 12 Biology and Chemistry classes recently learned how to obtain their own unique DNA fingerprint using biotechnology equipment and techniques. After collecting a sample from their cheek cells, they amplified it and separated the resulting DNA fragments. From there, they analyzed the pattern of bands and determined their genotypes.



12

13/14. ROBOTICS

Trafalgar Castle FIRST Robotics program and its flagship Team 1547 “Where’s Waldo?” continue to excel. In December, the School hosted the 10th Annual Durham Regional East FIRST LEGO League tournament, and from there they went on to compete at the Toronto East FIRST Regional Competition (FRC) at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology where they made the news when they adopted media personality Rick Mercer as a team member. Mercer then featured the Trafalgar team on his CBC show, the *Rick Mercer Report*. The Trafalgar team has made a name for itself as one of the few all girls’ teams in the male-dominated world of robotics. As Whitby MP Celina Caesar-Chavannes tweeted after meeting the team, “Who runs the world? Girls.”



15. It was a sea of pink on February 24 as #TrafalgarGirls joined students across Canada to support anti-bullying.

16. In February, the annual Honour Society Dinner celebrated students who had achieved Honour Roll status.

BOARDING LIFE

Living, Learning and Growing in Boarding

How does a boarding program in a small girls' school in Whitby, Ontario end up with a waiting list to get in? It creates an environment so welcoming and engaging for students that they never want to leave.

"Coming to Trafalgar was a new experience for me, and I was very nervous," recalls Kelly, a Grade 11 student from China in her third year in boarding. "Now, it truly feels like home to me and I don't even want to graduate."

There are 76 students in Grades 7-12 in boarding at Trafalgar from all over the world, which in recent years has included girls from Mexico, China, Japan, Korea, the Caribbean and regions across Canada. Each year, exchange students also arrive from locations such as Australia, Spain, the Dominican Republic, Chile and Canada. International students come to Trafalgar to experience a uniquely Canadian school with strong family ties, while Canadian boarders are interested in the cultural diversity of living with students from around the world.

Once here, students are immersed in an environment that is custom designed to help them excel in all areas of life. Guided by the Five Aspects of Self framework (see sidebar), the boarding life team helps students to develop in the intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social and physical domains by ensuring the program is purpose-built to meet their needs.

Central to this approach is a commitment to student well-being. "Wellness is always a priority," says Carmen Holland, who has been Director of Boarding Life at Trafalgar for 12 years. "Students are encouraged to maintain a strong spirit, mind, body and healthy relationships, which sets a strong foundation for effective learning and personal development. Everything we do leads back to wellness, including balanced



meals, access to the exercise room, diverse activities and staff who are available 24/7."

Trafalgar takes a deliberate approach to creating a home-like feeling. Students are divided into six "families" and each group has a "mom" – a teacher who lives in boarding. As Kelly puts it, "the 'moms' are always there to help with every aspect of our daily lives, including our studies. It is very comforting to know you have support when you have a problem."

The students themselves also play a key role in creating a nurturing environment by taking care of each other. "At first, I was scared about the possibility of living with other people, especially a roommate," recalls Sarah, a second-year boarder and Grade 12 student. "Funnily, that became one of the things I like the most, as my roommate is someone who I can always share with, who understands exactly what I am going through, and then I don't feel alone."

The attentiveness of both staff and other girls is particularly valuable to new students who may be filled with trepidation

when they arrive. Isabella, a first-year boarder from Mexico, remembers well what it was like: "I was very homesick at first, as Canada is very different from my home town," she recalls. "I didn't think I would have anyone to help me, and that I was on my own. I soon found out that my teachers and friends were there for me and they made me feel very comfortable."

One reason students feel so welcome is that they have a voice in shaping their own experience. Through the Boarding Council and ongoing conversations with "moms", students are involved in planning activities and discussing concerns or issues that come up from time to time. There are also regular optional outings to destinations like Toronto and Niagara Falls for cultural events such as the ballet or sporting events such as Blue Jays games. Girls also have the option to ski and snowboard on Saturday afternoons, travel to cities like New York and Montreal on long weekends, or join extended March Break trips like the one to Europe this spring.

All of this careful planning and

commitment to student success results in a unique boarding experience. Genie, an exchange student from Australia, is very clear about the distinct nature of the Trafalgar program: “Being in boarding here is different from boarding back home,” she says. “There are so many fun activities here that you can’t help but get involved. Everyone is accepted for who they are, and you never feel alone.” Grade 8 Canadian student Grace, who opted to board at Trafalgar rather than continue at a public school, agrees: “When you go to a boarding school, people think you are in school all day and night. Little do they know how much fun it is here.”

Mrs. Holland summarizes the value of a Trafalgar boarding experience: “Life in boarding develops a keen sense of community, builds maturity, promotes individualism and fosters determination.” And, as the students are quick to point out, it is also a lot of fun. With that balance of guidance, support and social connection, everything a girl needs to thrive is here.

Boarding Mission Statement:
*Empowering young women
 to achieve personal bests
 in a nurturing community.*



Five Aspects of Self:

The boarding community is built on the pillars of academic success and personal learning and nurtures each student’s development in five key areas:

Academic Self

- Learning Skills
- Study Skills
- Academic Achievements

Learning skills are developed through structured programing and time in Study Hall.

Emotional

- Mindfulness Self-advocacy
- Intelligence Empathy

The well person maintains satisfying relationships with self and others.

Physical

- Fitness Hygiene
- Sleep Sexuality
- Nutrition

Physical wellness is encouraged through the integration of regular exercise, effective sleep and healthy eating habits.

Spiritual

- Empathy
- Confidence
- Resiliency
- Decision and Choice Making

Students in boarding are encouraged to take ownership of their words, actions and responsibility for the person they want to be. Trafalgar focuses on developing the character traits of being open-minded, resilient, respectful and balanced.

Social

- Healthy Relationships
- Sense of Community
- Active Citizenship
- Authentic Leadership
- Cultural Understanding

There are many opportunities for the girls to make new friends and maintain healthy friendships.



Excited to Try New Things

I've always looked up to my big sister, so when she started coming to school at Trafalgar, it was where I wanted to go as well. Although there was still time because I was waiting until Grade 5, the idea of starting a new school began to seem scary. I knew I wanted to do something different, but I was going to miss all my friends. And maybe the teachers at the new school wouldn't be nice, and maybe they would yell at me if I made a mistake. I also began to think back to all the movies I had seen where the new student makes a huge mistake on the first day, like trip over something, and then that is all anyone ever remembers about them.

I was so surprised when I started at Trafalgar and found that everyone was nice. I made it through the first few weeks with no trips or spills and I even made new friends. I am now almost at the end of my first year and my classmates are more like my sisters. We talk about everything from sports to books to music stars. Demi Lovato is my favourite singer at the moment and her song "Confident" is really good.

I feel more confident now because of Trafalgar, and even taking the train to get to school has made me more independent. I now want to learn more and I get to do what I love, like reading and working on complicated math questions.

I am much less scared to try new things and am willing to learn from my mistakes. My sister and all the older girls tell me that work will get much harder as I grow older, but I am actually excited to get there.

- Anna I., Grade 5



REFLECTIONS OF A GRAD

From Timid 7th Grader to Confident Young Adult

No one succeeds on their own.

Our surroundings, whether physical or mental, make us who we are. Living in and creating a positive environment for oneself plays an integral role in development. Being surrounded by friends with similar values, an amazing team of educators, and parents who know and appreciate the importance of education – all fine-tuned by mental exploration – has really been the catalyst for growth in my academic and personal life.

I came to Trafalgar after six years at a public school. I can honestly say that I was scared of change and hesitant about trying new things. There were not many opportunities available to me and I needed to do something different.

My first few years at Trafalgar gave birth to my unfettered curiosity. I was encouraged to break out of my bubble and participate in after-school activities. There is always someone pushing you to do your best in whatever area you choose. For me, it was theatre and drama where I excelled.

As I embarked on a journey of self-discovery, with the hopes of establishing myself as a role model while being a student, I soon learned that life is like a rollercoaster with many ups and downs. I learned that the more we better ourselves, the more control we can have over how we approach life's challenges.

Trafalgar has helped to transform me from a timid 7th Grader who was apprehensive about accepting challenges to a confident student who is ready to venture into adult life. Likewise, Trafalgar has taught me to prioritize academics, extracurricular activities, and leadership skills. Trafalgar encouraged a desire to know more and explore, which helped me transform.

To describe my experience at Trafalgar in a few sentences is quite simple. From the beginning, I have been immersed in the best possible surroundings for a young student. I have made friendships that will last a lifetime; I have learned beyond the classroom and textbooks; and I have been encouraged to explore my creative side. I've achieved all of this in a motivating environment that has always been free of judgment.

“I realize that the biggest honour of all was to be surrounded by ambitious young women and a faculty that opened my mind and touched my heart.”

As my final year at Trafalgar comes to a close and I reflect on the multitude of experiences I was privileged to receive, I realize that the biggest honour of all was to be surrounded by ambitious young women and a faculty that opened my mind and touched my heart.

Thank you Trafalgar for giving me the platform I needed in order to transform as I explore a career in law. I encourage all current and future students of Trafalgar to venture outside your comfort zone and ask yourself “how can I transform?”

- Baiyinah J., Head Girl



ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

Turning a Life into Living!



“The first time I drove up to the Castle, I knew that this was the place for me. My passion for education and providing opportunities for girls was alive.”

Even at Queen’s University, I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do with my life. I majored in drama although I was terrified of the stage, but I loved being behind the scenes. I was really good at getting items needed for a play. If they needed an old sofa, I would get it donated. I didn’t realize that was the beginning of a career focused on raising funds and finding resources needed by others.

After returning to work from having my first child, I saw a job for a Development Assistant at the local library. Fundraising. I had some training and a passion for reading and I jumped in. I was offering people the opportunity to invest and make a difference in others. I couldn’t believe how amazing I felt when I got my first donation. Connecting with donors and showing them how they made a difference hooked me for life.

I wanted to know more about fundraising and become a qualified fundraiser. I obtained certification in Resource and Development from Georgian College and after five years in the field applied for my accreditation as a CFRE – Certified Fund Raising Executive. I

continued my career, working at Northumberland United Way, Feed the Need in Durham and the Canadian Cancer Society. I have also been working towards obtaining the Advanced CFRE accreditation.

I am excited to become a part of the Trafalgar family, providing girls with the chance to be anything they want! The first time I drove up to the Castle, I knew that this was the place for me. My passion for education and providing opportunities for girls was alive.

I am looking forward to building relationships with alumnae, parents, staff and students who share the desire to ensure that every girl at Trafalgar has an opportunity to achieve her goals. No glass ceiling. No barriers. Girl power!

Giving to the Annual Fund is one way in which we can support the educational experience at Trafalgar. This fund provides resources to purchase new equipment and fund additional programs at the School. It is also used to offer financial aid, which ensures that the Trafalgar experience is offered to even more girls.

Each gift to the Annual Fund demonstrates the pride and spirit of our community. Our 2015-2016 goal is \$112,000, and a regular investment in your fellow sisters means that you have created opportunities for girls, for today and tomorrow.

Our Endowment Fund is another way you can help. This investment makes sure that Trafalgar Castle School is viable for many more years to come!

I am pleased to have been invited to be part of the exciting advancement of the School and am looking forward to seeing your investments at work every day.

*- Helen Walsh
Associate Director, Advancement*

HELP TRAFALGAR GIRLS BY SUPPORTING THE ANNUAL FUND



Let your spirit shine

With you, **we can significantly enhance the educational experience** of every Trafalgar Girl by providing additional programs, financial aid, endowment, and many more opportunities for excellence.

YOUR GIFT WILL:

- Inspire the next generation of bold thinkers, creative doers and global citizens;
- Honour the School's founding legacy of providing innovative initiatives for girls;
- Enable more girls to discover the Trafalgar experience; and
- Advance the goals and mission of Trafalgar Castle School.



Let your spirit shine now and for generations to come with a gift toward this year's Annual Fund.

MAKE YOUR GIFT TODAY:

trafalgarcastle.ca/give

walsh.helen@trafalgarcastle.ca



Trafalgar Castle
School

CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE

Trafalgar Castle Retirements

BARBARA KWIETNIOWSKI

Sometimes, when a teacher is ingrained in the ethos of a school, it is difficult to imagine it carrying on without them when they retire. When this year comes to an end, alumnae returning to visit Trafalgar will climb the main staircase, look into the classroom at the top and be shocked to discover that Barbara Kwietniowski is no longer here.

Known for her ability to challenge and support students, Barbara has always generated a special energy in the classroom. “It is somewhat impossible to describe the environment she created,” recalls Brian McClure, former Head of School. “However, the fact that she was referred to as ‘Mama K’ by her legions of mathematics students was testament to her gift as an educator. She was always there for them.”

Vice-Principal, Academics Tim Southwell saw the same magic. “She was very careful to create a relaxed atmosphere about mathematics, even for students who struggled. A good part of her success was the psychological calming and ability to give students a positive belief in themselves.”

Looking back, Barbara views her goal as helping students understand how to succeed. “I believe that my students learned that their effort in learning is important. Often, students are afraid of math. I always tried to help them see that if they worked at it, they could succeed. I hope that is something I brought to them – to not give in to fear.”

Beyond the classroom, Barbara has been highly involved. She was the long-time steward of the yearbook, always working in the summer when everyone else had gone for vacation, and she once joined a staff skit with a Sound of Music-style song that parodied advanced mathematics. Barbara also went on many school trips, including the famous Grade 11 and 12 trip to Washington when a massive thunderstorm arrived suddenly and forced the group



into an open-sided shelter beneath the Lincoln Memorial.

Barbara’s colleagues will miss her sage advice. “She comes to each gathering and really listens,” says math department member Chris Huxter. “She isn’t waiting for her opportunity to speak, like the rest of us do. She just listens and paints a mental picture of a situation, often understanding more about what we are going through than we do ourselves. That’s why she gives such insightful advice.”

While it is difficult to encapsulate Barbara’s impact on the School over 34 years, Martha Cassidy, a long-time friend and colleague, sums it up this way: “A totally dedicated teacher, mentor and inspiration, both on a professional and personal level. She never showed frustration, impatience or unkindness and was willing to share her knowledge with anyone who asked. She is a special woman. Unparalleled.”





MARY-RUTH ROADHOUSE

When Mary-Ruth Roadhouse arrived to teach private voice lessons at Trafalgar 26 years ago, then Head of School Craig Kamcke suggested she work in the bird

tower. “I suspect he didn’t love having the lessons across from his office,” Mary-Ruth laughs. It was there that she began her long career teaching voice and piano and first directing and then accompanying the choir.

Looking back, Mary-Ruth says, “It has been so rewarding to work with girls one-on-one. I am still in contact with many of them all over the world and consider them friends.” She also has many fond memories of the spectacular international choir tours – performing in places such as a home for retired musicians in England, a children’s burn hospital in Hawaii, and the Austrian church featured in *The Sound of Music*.

While teaching at Trafalgar, Mary-Ruth was also Music Director in several local churches, continued her work as

a trained operatic soloist and was an adjudicator and examiner for the Royal Conservatory of Music.

In her “semi” retirement, Mary-Ruth is moving to Bracebridge to become the Music Director at the United Church. She will miss her Trafalgar friends and the incredible experience of exploring music with the girls, some of whom now have careers in music.

Mary-Ruth will be remembered fondly for her enthusiasm, compassion and dedication. As VP Academics Tim Southwell observes, “People don’t realize that whenever Mary-Ruth attended a school event, she was volunteering her time. She is so committed to Trafalgar. We will all miss this extremely talented performer and teacher.”

CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE

Staff News



ANGELA MILES-BERRY

Long-time faculty member Angela, who teaches Physical Education, took a major step in her life this year when she became engaged to Brian Marentette. The couple have planned a summer wedding and will be married on August 7th. We wish them all the best and look forward to seeing the pictures of the big day.

MELISSA KNIGHT-JOHNSON

Athletic Director Melissa gave birth to a healthy and happy baby boy named Cillian in November of 2015. Melissa is

enjoying spending her maternity leave with the newest member of her home team, and Cillian is already showing signs of being very active, just like mom.



JANNILYN CAOILE

Jannilyn, who teaches mathematics and technology and is heavily involved with FIRST robotics, will be leaving Trafalgar at the end of year to take up her new post at a colleague school in Toronto. After being at the School for seven years and living in boarding, it was a difficult decision for

Jannilyn. In the end even though she adores Trafalgar, the opportunity to be closer to home led to her final decision. Jannilyn’s energy and warmth will be missed!

ALANNA SILLS

The family is thrilled to have new daughter Charlotte Jean join them. She just turned a year old and they are simply stunned by how fast a year goes! “Charlotte now has four teeth and loves music, dancing, her big brother Luke and playing peek-a-boo.”



THE ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION

Transformations

As the seasons transition, we peel off those extra layers and hope for the warmth of spring. Winter woolens become spring cottons and all around us, peeking out from the last of winter's snows, are tiny bulbs striving to become beautiful blooms. However, before we can enjoy the warm days of summer, we must embrace the busy season of spring: a season of hope but also a season of challenge.

These transformations are the rhythm for our lives. It starts with the wonder of childhood – those carefree days we remember and talk about. Then our school days, often followed by marriage, careers, children and grandchildren. Each of these transformations requires preparation, enthusiasm and a desire to succeed, but they also rely on strong foundations. Trafalgar Castle is such a foundation. History, community and sisterhood each layers in the foundation of our development.

Trafalgar has gone through many transitions and transformations. With each new generation, or season if you will, of girls and women, Trafalgar grows and changes to meet the needs of those who dwell within. Courses

change, technologies are upgraded, faculty and staff come and go, but the heart remains the same. The sisterhood and community of the School remain constant. Too often in our rush to embrace change, we forget the importance of tradition and foundation. Glorious new foliage is nothing without the strong trunk and roots of the tree. The same is true for the community of Trafalgar.

The mission to provide world-best curricula led by teachers of distinction in the Arts, Sciences and Humanities is still front and centre. Trafalgar Castle is always transitioning to meet the needs of our ever-changing society. As we look at our twenty-first century learners, we have always asked our Alums what were their best experiences at Trafalgar and where can they look back and have input on the transitions for future girls. Academics have always played the primary role in education. However, our learners are multi-dimensional and their needs must be met on many levels in our ever-complicated and shifting society.

Change is managed better with preparation and nurturing. As Alums, we have all benefited from the foundations and

traditions of Trafalgar. Now it is our turn to make sure that those foundations are strengthened. Reach out; get involved, even if it is just a cheery hello or to update us on an important milestone in your life.

Come out to an Alumnae event, meet an old friend, attend May Day. It's your community: strengthen it. Transform it!



- Jacqueline Dunn-Gabrielle
President of the Alumnae Association

“Courses change, technologies are upgraded, faculty and staff come and go, but the heart remains the same.”

FEATURED ALUMNA: JEAN (POLLARD) SPRULES

A Woman with Pluck

This is the phrase that her son and the entire Sprules family uses to describe their matriarch, Jean: a woman with pluck.

“Mimi” – as she is fondly called by her nine grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren – just celebrated her 100th birthday. “My mother is such an adaptable and strong woman that you can’t help but admire her. She possesses great inner will and doesn’t cave in to any external pressure,” shares her son, Lord Robbie Sprules, Lord of the Manor of Wrentnall and the baby of the family.

“I am very close with my mom and she has shared fond memories of her time at Ontario Ladies’ College,” adds the Lord.

Jean Sprules née Pollard attended Ontario Ladies’ College (OLC) for her senior matriculation year between 1934 and 1935 and credits the School with building her character and boosting her confidence. “She has told me many times that those were the best years of her life,” recalls Lord Sprules. Jean has shown tenacity and strength throughout the years in a male-centric environment and has made a mark, for which she takes no credit.

Born in Hamilton in 1916 into a family with established nobility and pedigree, Jean now lives in Ottawa and was surrounded by her family for the milestone celebration. Married to Dr. William Sprules (now deceased), Jean has always been very involved with her three children as they pursued their own interests. Her oldest son Gary earned a PhD from Princeton and is currently Professor Emeritus at the University of Toronto. Her daughter Nancy has a BA in Geography and was the Archivist at the National Gallery of Canada before retiring. Her youngest son has an MA in Administration and Management and is a founding partner, President and CEO of Taylor|Sprules Corporation, which crafts innovative marketing, design and communications strategies.

Jean was originally sent to OLC in a bid by her father to develop a sense of focus as a young girl. “She really wanted to pursue nursing and her dad was very much against that,” explains Lord Sprules. After leaving OLC, she studied at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto and received her ATCM (Associate Diploma) under the tutelage of renowned composer and conductor Sir Ernest MacMillan. While Jean spent some time working as a music teacher, a professional career was not to be and she moved to Ottawa with her husband when he took on the senior Fisheries Science portfolio for the government.

Jean was not limited by her role as a full-time mother and wife and became very useful in the war effort. Having no patience for math, she was not successful in passing the mechanical test required to obtain use of an official army vehicle.



So Jean shrugged it off and marshalled her own resources: she borrowed her dad’s custom-built Buick and became a driver in the Army during World War II. “She would drive officers to meetings all over Ontario. I can only imagine their faces being driven in a car that they would likely have never even seen before with full leather interior,” laughs the Lord.

A people person, Jean often entertained with her husband William, hosting lavish parties at her home in Ottawa. She also travelled extensively to Russia, Japan, Europe and the United Kingdom as William’s social partner. Jean was chosen as a May Court Counsellor, a prestigious Trafalgar tradition which is still honoured today. “She loved being at OLC and fondly talks about how she dressed up for the May Court. She also participated in many sporting activities there. I particularly remember tennis,” reminisces Lord Sprules.

A woman who loves camping, travelling and reading Dickens, Jean has made numerous friends and acquaintances from around the world, many of whom she remains in contact with. As a long-standing member of the United Church of Canada, Jean has also done extensive volunteer work.

“I simply know my mom as always being happy, supportive, and just beautiful,” says her youngest son.

Happy 100th birthday Jean!



ALUMNAE NEWS



1. CAROLYN BABOOLAL, 1981

My mum tells everyone what a difficult child I was. It's a big joke in our family to compare each kids' tantrum to mine! I think it was a communication problem on my part; to be precise, the inability to communicate. As a teen, I was more interested in staying home and reading than going out to parties.

After attending Grade 13 at Trafalgar all those years ago, my life transformed. I totally expected to finish university and move back to the warmer climes of Trinidad. Did not happen! Thirty-odd years later, I am still in Canada. I expected to be an engineer but ended up in psychology and political science. I was going to marry my first boyfriend but met my husband in first year and he was NOT from Trinidad. I wanted five kids and to stay home. I have instead moved around the world and have one daughter, one cat and one dog. And I am helping the family business, out traveling to sell our hospital software internationally and build partnerships.

I have become the outgoing, networking, social "party" person I never was. Plus, my communication skills have vastly improved: NO more tantrums.... well, maybe a lot less!

2. TRACY POWELL, 1987

I have been teaching at Western Oregon University now for the past 17 years in the department of Behavioural Sciences, Psychology Division. I recently created a Forensic Psychology Minor degree program at the University, which is my academic passion at present. I also volunteer for the state of Oregon as a Community Review Board Advisory member for the Juvenile

Justice system overseeing cases of children in the foster care system. I have three beautiful children: Emma (17), Abby (15) and Gray (11).

And, as those who knew me during my years at Trafalgar might recall, dancing was my hobby and profession for a time. So I'll add here that I choreographed the musical "Young Frankenstein" last year for the Pentacle Theatre here in Oregon.



3. ELIZABETH NEWMAN, AKA SR. DEBORAH 1959

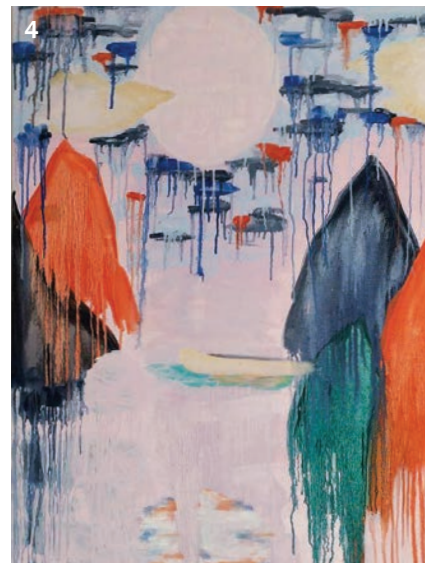
Although I chose my vocation years ago, or perhaps it's more accurate to say, I responded to my call as a religious sister, inherent in this call is a generous invitation to transformation, both inward and outward.

Currently, I am teaching/tutoring all my favourite subjects – History, English and Government – within a home-school setting here at the Community of Jesus, where there is room for flexibility. The students involved in Winter Guard Percussion on a competitive international level are taking an in-depth tour of Washington D.C. and I am delighted to accompany them as a continuation of my interest in Canadian government and politics.

But the most important aspect of life here is welcoming personal change so that we can be even more welcoming to the many visitors who participate in the Church of the Transfiguration services or

attend our Gloriam Dei choir concerts or the theatrical events put on by Elements, the theatre company which resides here.

Living here in this Community is an ongoing, exciting and transforming experience, made all the more valuable to me by my four years at Trafalgar Castle School, known to me in the late Fifties as the Ontario Ladies' College. My aunt, Rena McDowell, as a former teacher there, is largely responsible for my love of history and community life.



4. AMANDA MANSON, 2013

As I come to my last year at Concordia University, I have started to transition from a student to a full-time artist. I started a small business on etsy where I sell prints and drawings.

I participated in art fairs such as Expozine 2015. I made my first book that I printed and bound myself. I have done multiple commissions for Trafalgar alumnae as well as submitting my work to many shows this summer in Montreal. I created a game that critiques mental health services in Canada. I painted a series based on inverting the male gaze to the female gaze. I am currently working on a project exploring the gender norms and boundaries in today's society with a feminist perspective that will be turned into a book.

I hope that these small steps will help get my small business on its feet and my name out in the art world. You can keep up with what I am doing on my page: <https://www.facebook.com/amandamansonartist/>.

ALUMNAE NEWS

5. DIANE (LEE) WERRY, 1952

In August 2015, I was able to enjoy my granddaughter Micaela from Winnipeg for a week. In celebration of her birthday, she was able to meet relatives she had only heard about. The last thing she said as she was leaving was, “Nana, next time my visit has to be longer; a week was just too short!”

In October 2015, I spent a week with Sylvia (Meeking) Vickers, Class of 1953. We have kept in touch and have visited back and forth all these years. A wonderful friendship evolved through our time at Trafalgar Castle School. Wishing everyone all the best.



6. LAURA MORELLO, 2008

A Trafalgar connection in London, UK! I have recently moved back to Canada after living and working in the United Kingdom. I originally planned to stay for one year for my Master's degree, and as life happens, ended up staying for over three-and-a-half years!

In the UK, I worked at King's Worldwide, the international office of King's College London. It was at King's that I had the pleasure of connecting with Tania Mooring, who spent a year working at Trafalgar and living in residence. Tania and I reminisced about our days at the Castle over cups of tea in the office! It was so lovely to have a Trafalgar connection across the pond—and in the same office. I had a wonderful experience living in the UK and am now back in Ontario where I

continue to work in international higher education. I am happy to be back home closer to my sisters and fellow alumnae Anne (Class of 2002), Jill (Class of 2003) and Christine (Class of 2005).



7. SUMMER DANAKAS, 2010

It is hard to believe that I only have one year left of law school at U of T before finally becoming a lawyer! An exciting development in my legal career is that I was offered a position as a summer student with the law firm Osler, Hoskin and Harcourt LLP working at their Bay Street office this summer.

The position came as the result of a very intense and gruelling recruitment process

that takes place during the second year of law school. The process began last August and finished in November when, over the course of three days, I spent all day (literally 12 hours a day!) interviewing with multiple firms, as well as attending brunches, lunches, dinners and follow-up interviews. In the end I was fortunate to receive multiple offers and accepted Osler's.

Osler, Hoskin and Harcourt LLP is one of Canada's premier law firms and also one of its largest with over 450 lawyers and offices across Canada, as well as in New York and London. The firm is considered one of the “Seven Sisters” – a term used to refer to the collection of the seven top firms in Canada with offices in Toronto. I am extremely honoured to have been offered a position at Osler and am looking forward to what will undoubtedly be a very challenging yet highly rewarding summer experience!

8. CHARLOTTE ALEXANDER, 2003

Charlotte is proud to announce her engagement to Nick Tharrenos. The couple will be getting married on June 19 in Greece. We wish them much happiness.

9. AMY SAUGER, 2007

Amy is a Senior Systems Engineer at Raytheon, a tech and innovation company specializing in defense, civil government and cybersecurity solutions outside of Boston.

10. HEATHER TOSWELL, 1983

My mother Jill Maxwell and I started a small business a year ago called ‘Dare2Tangle’ based in Durham Region, Ontario. We are Certified Zentangle Teachers (certified in U.S.) and we teach this fun art in workshops for all ages to individuals or groups in different locations. We can be found at our website dare2tangle.com, on Facebook and on Instagram.





MARCH BREAK

Europe Trip 2016

During March Break, a group of 15 Trafalgar students embarked on the trip of a lifetime when they travelled to Italy, France and Spain with Mrs. Holland, Ms. Lapointe and Ms. Forrester. A mix of day and boarding students, the girls enjoyed the full cultural experience, sampling local food, exploring European destinations and discussing the historical significance of the places they visited.

The trip began in Rome, where the group took in major sites such as

the Trevi Fountain, the Spanish Steps, the Pantheon and the Coliseum. They then travelled to Vatican City where they visited St. Peter's Basilica, the Vatican Museum and the Sistine Chapel, followed by taking in the broader Italian experience, including Orvieto, Siena, Florence and the Leaning Tower of Pisa. From there, they travelled to Monaco where they saw the Prince's Palace and the Monaco Cathedral before moving on to Nîmes, Barcelona and their

final destination, Costa Brava, which is known as the prettiest coast in Spain.

In addition to their cultural experiences, the girls valued this opportunity to build close relationships with each other, especially given their diverse backgrounds. These friendships will enrich their experience back at school and be carried with them long after they graduate. It was also wonderful for the students and teachers to spend so much informal and experiential time together.



"I loved the March Break trip to Europe and particularly loved the paella we enjoyed in Barcelona. Trafalgar has shown me so many new and different things."

- Shirley, Grade 11 1st year resident from China

Trafalgar Girls don't wonder if they'll be ready for the world.
THEY WONDER IF THE WORLD WILL BE READY FOR THEM.



ALL GIRLS
DAY & BOARDING
GRADES 5 - 12

Trafalgar Castle girls learn and lead on their own terms. They graduate as women of strength and character, ready to make their mark on a waiting world of endless possibilities.

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