

# On Campus

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE RIDLEY COMMUNITY / MISSION & MINISTRY COLLEGE

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## A Campus Out of Proportion

**Tim Foster** explains the role of different spaces on the Ridley Parkville Campus.

### CAMPUS SPACE

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It is a little humbling showing a visiting scholar around the Ridley campus. Ridley has a strong reputation internationally, built on the legacy of Leon Morris and sustained by our current crop of renowned faculty. This reputation is out of proportion to our campus with its lesser brick buildings and modest size. People expect more, and are surprised that such a humble facility has such a far-reaching impact.

And yet, modest as it is, the Ridley campus is a vibrant hub that nurtures and sustains a strong community.

Apart from offices and administrative spaces, there are four very important spaces, each with a specific function and unique contribution. Not only do these spaces provide important functions, but they each have a symbolic value, signifying something vital about Ridley's life and ethos.

The dining room which is more than just a place to eat. When people eat together they do more than share a meal. At Ridley food provides the context for building relationships, serving one another, welcoming and

including people and sharing ideas and informal learning. There is an energy in our dining hall that alerts visitors to the health of the college and the strength of its community.

Classrooms are probably the first thing you associate with the word "campus". What you will notice about our classrooms is not just the technology like smartboards and Wi-Fi, but the flexibility that supports a range of learning styles, promoting collaborative learning and engagement. Campus learning is not a solitary affair, and

the contemporary classroom will promote learning that is student centered and active.

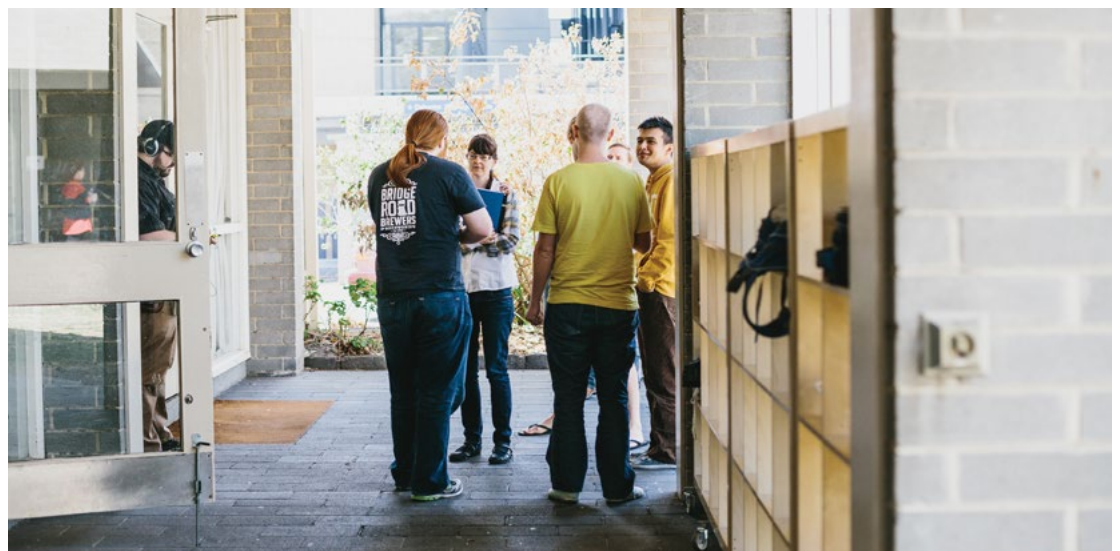
While only used for 50 minutes a day, the chapel – relocated in 2008 to the centre of the campus – reminds us that we are not just a learning community, but a worshipping community. Of course, our worship of Jesus is not just confined to chapel, but it certainly finds its focus there.

From books comes knowledge, and knowledge is a beautiful thing!

Our library is a valuable legacy of both previous and current generations who have invested in this incredible resource. The Ridley library, which boasts 57,000 volumes, offers more than books, journals and opportunities for private research. It also offers a collaborative learning space, student support and curation of our vast collections of digital resources.

Each of these four spaces is a valuable and indispensable part of our campus. And each is evolving as technology provides new opportunities, our pedagogy develops and student needs change. In this issue of the Ridley Report we will introduce you to our latest plans in this regard, as we attempt to make our campus slightly less humble!

**Tim Foster**  
Vice Principal



On Campus

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For The Calendar

- Aug 23–25** 'Unless they Hear: The Urgency of Evangelistic Preaching' Annual Preachers' Conference
- Aug 27** Dwell: A Youth Leaders Training Event (hosted by VCYC)
- Sep 22** Alfred Stanway Lecture given by Chris Wright
- Oct 6** Charles Perry Lecture given by Joanna Cruickshank
- Oct 14** Annual Dinner with keynote George Savvides
- Oct 22** Busy Womens' Retreat
- Oct 27–28** Life @ Work Conference



## From the Principal

Are Ridley's facilities fit for their purpose? It's a big question for us at the moment.

**PARKVILLE CAMPUS LIFE**



**Annual Dinner**

With Keynote Speaker: George Savvides  
14 October 2016



**Celebration of the Reformation**

Ridley College Friends & Supporters Tour  
Led by Richard Trist and Rhys Bezzant  
28 June – 11 July 2017  
Secure your place now:  
[www.ridley.edu.au/reformation](http://www.ridley.edu.au/reformation)

There are many ingredients that make up a good theological college: qualified and godly faculty, professional and friendly staff, a competent and committed board, a well-resourced library, scrumptious food, excellent online courses, best-practice teaching, an inspiring chapel, vibrant learning communities, a committed prayer life, droves of serious but cheerful students, enthralling table tennis, good coffee, and so on. The most important thing, of course, is good theology, which runs through and colours everything.

One thing I didn't mention in this list is the college campus itself. This issue of the *Ridley Report* focuses on our facilities in Parkville. The college leadership and community have been pondering a number of questions over the last twelve months: What is the college experience like for those students who study on campus? How well do the buildings and grounds serve our aims and vision? Which aspects of the campus, if any, need upgrading?

Two things need to be borne in mind when thinking about the Ridley campus. First, facilities shape and express the values of the College. At Ridley we are committed to solid, evangelical theology addressing the contemporary world. Currently, some parts of the campus do better with the first half of that sentence than the second. The library, for example, while housing an excellent collection of books and other resources, does not give

the impression that Ridley seeks to promote the gospel in our twenty-first century setting.

Second, the facilities need to be fit for purpose. Trends in higher education point to more use of informal spaces for conversation and instruction both in the library and elsewhere on campus. You only have to visit a modern university or high school campus to see examples of such facilities. The Ridley campus has to be functional and function is changing. We want to give students, faculty and staff the best possible facilities to encourage learning and formation both inside and outside the lecture rooms.

With this in mind I am excited to let you know that we are looking to undertake a major building program to improve key aspects of the campus. These include extending and modernizing the Leon Morris Library, a new entrance to the College, an efficient campus hub, a lift for disabled access, and an attractive student lounge on the main courtyard.

Ridley College is committed to equipping students to communicate the unchanging message of the gospel of God's grace in Jesus Christ to a rapidly changing world. I am convinced that such a campus upgrade will help us in this urgent and weighty task.

**Brian Rosner**  
Principal

Check the Ridley website for times & locations:  
[www.ridley.edu.au/events](http://www.ridley.edu.au/events) or join our events mailing list: [j.daw@ridley.edu.au](mailto:j.daw@ridley.edu.au)

# Embracing Challenges

Student **Flyck Clift** reflects on the **Same-Sex Attraction: A Pastoral Response** Conference that was held at Ridley.



## PASTORAL SEMINAR

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As far as colleges go, Ridley College appears fairly unassuming. Compared to Oxford's Magdalene or Trinity, or Yale, or Princeton, Ridley College doesn't look like much. The college has its charms though. It's purple gates and standard roses precede blockish classrooms, creating a subtle impression that unpretentious yet considered goodness may be found within. The large tree in the courtyard spreads its boughs over bench seats and tables, encouraging people to gather and commune beneath, to engage in open discussion, and to grapple with current issues until their present and theological significance may be determined. It is not only Ridley students and faculty who are encouraged in this endeavour, but through pastoral seminars, theological conferences and guest speakers the broader Christian community is also invited to embrace this challenge – to engage seriously with contemporary culture in order to be equipped to live out our faith in an increasingly complex world.

The world is brought close through the many friendships that Ridley has established across the globe. As testament to this, I feel confident that all who attended the pastoral conference or free public talks held in early August would acknowledge the privilege it has been to participate in Ridley's world-embracing community. Evangelical Christians from Melbourne, Tasmania, NSW, WA and New Zealand were in attendance at the conference where Dr Wesley Hill – Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies at Trinity School for Ministry, Pittsburgh – generously shared himself, his experiences and his learning; a service made even more powerful in light of the current social and political climate in Australia. Two days of keynote lectures, panel sessions, and workshops, and three public talks stimulated students, ministers and laypeople alike to consider the hot topic that is same-sex attraction.

Refreshingly, rather than hearing a repetition of traditional approaches to the topic of same-sex attraction that revolve around cause, culpability and discipline, the themes of redemption, the power of faithful community, and spiritual friendship were at the centre of the conference.

Some themes made me sigh in agreement, such as the reminder that redemption for all who turn to Christ is an ongoing process to be completed at Christ's return, that our identity as God's image-bearers is far bigger than our sexuality, that same-sex attracted people are not, because of their orientation, required to carry a greater burden than any other Christian struggling with temptation; and that the church should not fear or refrain from acknowledging the existence of same-sex attracted people or fail to nurture the spiritual gifts of those who are Christians.

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Raising our Christian voice to speak the truth in grace is essential if we are to retain any social standing  
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Of the many practical tips that I took away, three stood out: First that small gestures count whether towards individuals, in speech, or on a political level. Second, that raising our Christian voice to speak the truth in grace is essential if we are to retain any social standing. And third, that listening rather than assuming is a more loving, helpful and informative base from which to form attitudes regarding same-sex attraction.

Both within and outside the church the topic of same-sex attraction has long been divisive and, sadly, the church has much to repent of in its handling of the issue. Yet if the conference and public talks were paradigmatic it gives me great hope for the church. The atmosphere of the conference was pervasively peaceful, inquisitive, earnest, and amenable. This state was fostered by Ridley's faculty, by Wes Hill's intelligent, frank and gracious attitude towards the topic, by the many workshop and panel speakers who gave up their time and knowledge, and by the attentiveness of the attendees. Above all, the great spirit of unity, humility, and grace began in and flows from the heart of our loving and redeeming God, whose name and glory motivates Ridley College to reach beyond its Parkville confines and into the world.

*Flyck Clift is studying a Masters of Divinity at Ridley College alongside working as a nurse in her local hospital and being involved in her church community.*





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## A Place to Stop and Think

The **Leon Morris Library** plays a vital role in the academic and community life of Ridley.

### LEON MORRIS LIBRARY

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The Leon Morris Library provides a home (or at least a study!) away from home for many students. The quality of the library reflects many years of sustained investment by the College, library staff and supporters in this vital resource.

The library collection currently includes 57,000+ print books. Each year we add about 1,500 print books to the library, most of which we buy, but some that we receive by donation. Special collections include a display of the writings of former Ridley Principal, The Reverend Dr. Leon Morris, and the Charles Perry Collection which was launched in July 2009 and is being developed into a specialist research collection focused on the history and development of evangelicalism.

In recent years we have seen massive growth in ebooks (electronic books). We've gone from having no ebooks at the start of 2012, to now having access to over 20,000 titles. Ebook usage has soared over the last 4 years, while print book loans have remained steady. We expect that we will continue to build both our print and ebooks collections well into the future.

The library subscribes to around 150 print journals and magazines and we also subscribe to several online databases that give our users online access to a vast array of journal articles, and direct them to further resources that are not available online but are held in our library.

In recent times the library has taken on new responsibilities in relation to sourcing and managing online readings for both Ridley Online and on campus subjects. Some readings come from our ebooks and online journals and others are scanned from our print collections.

The Leon Morris Library provides a home (or at least a study!) away from home, for many students.

It is excellent that Alison Foster, our Assistant Librarian, manages this facet of our work as she came to Ridley in 2014 bringing a wealth of experience related to working with electronic resources.

The library has seen many changes since I was appointed as the College Librarian in 1992. However, the two that seem to have evoked the most positive responses from students were the introduction of WiFi, and our decision to allow people to bring coffee and other (non-alcoholic!) beverages into the library.

The library exists primarily to serve our faculty and students, but we welcome visitors and people in the wider College community who would like borrowing rights are invited to become library members (\$50 per year, or \$350 for life membership).

Our library building was opened in 1984. It has served us well but is now at capacity or over-capacity in relation to space for books, students and library staff. There has been no substantial work on the interior though over the years we have made a number of improvements such as installing new signage, study carrels and blinds and remodelling the front desk area. We therefore look forward with anticipation to seeing plans for redevelopment of the library come to fruition.

Ruth Millard  
College Librarian

