

Dear fellow Old Colls

**Subject EOFY opportunity to donate to the Andew Balcomb scholarship**

Hello from Canberra, and I hope that you and your families are in good shape, wherever you and they may be.

I want to let you know about a plan we have to create a scholarship at Wesley to assist future residents who are from a rural/regional background. I propose we name that scholarship after Andrew Balcomb (fr. 1978), a much-loved member of our College who died in a car accident in 1984.

Andrew grew up on his family’s property near Cudal, NSW and attended Hurlstone Agricultural High School. His older brother Ian came to Wesley before him and he was followed by his sister Annie, who became Wesley’s first female Senior Student. We will all have our own memories of Andrew. Mine are of a close friend whom I knew well during and after his time at College. He was very proud of his family, his friends, his rural background, his profession as an agricultural economist – and of his College. He was blessed with a natural ability to get on well with people, to make them laugh, and to be a loyal and supportive friend. He was a classic College person -- a true believer -- and an integral part of our merry crew at Wesley.

Time and life have taken us in different directions since College, but the lottery of life denied Andrew the experiences that we all have had – to grow older with our families and to form our own, to develop our careers, and to see our College friendships evolve into lifelong bonds. I know that Andrew would be very pleased if we could assist in his name a young person to begin their adult life in a College that he loved so much.

We are united by the close bonds of friendship, loyalty and community that we forged at Wesley all those years ago. Now we can help provide the same opportunities to the next generation, and this is especially important today. When I first lived in Wesley in 1979, my parents paid $55 per week in College fees – the equivalent (CPI adjusted) of $258 today. Residents in Wesley now, however, pay about $700 per week. As a result, the Wesley community is much more metropolitan, and much more privileged, than it was in our time there.

We can’t fix all of that, but we can do something to ameliorate it. Please join me in donating to the Andrew Balcomb Scholarship – not only in memory of our long-lost friend, but also to assist a young person to live in a very special place that meant and means so much to all of us.

With my warmest good wishes to you all

Doug Craig (fr. 1979)