BISHOP DRUITT COLLEGE
COFFS HARBOUR

THE BRANSON CENTRE
Buy a Brick Appeal

Help build their future
About Victor Branson

Victor Branson was the founding Principal of Bishop Druiitt College.

Before coming to start the College, Victor taught at St Catherine's Girls' School, Waverley and Trinity Grammar School, Summer Hill where he was Coordinator of History. Victor's children, James ('99), Thomas ('97), and Michael ('03) attended Bishop Druiitt College. James was in the first cohort to complete Year 12 and the HSC in 1999.

Victor’s wife, Margaret Ackland, taught Visual Arts at the College. She is an accomplished artist, winning the Portia Geach prize in 1988. A number of Margaret’s works hang in the College today. Many of the other works hanging in the College are as a result of Victor’s enthusiasm for the Arts.

Victor started the College in 1994 with fifty-seven students, three teaching staff and three support staff. It was only a primary school in the first year and was accommodated in what is now the main administration building - along with the canteen!

When Victor left at the end of 2003 after ten years, the College enrolment had grown to 887. Victor had cemented our fledgling school on the educational landscape of Coffs Harbour.

Victor’s vision was to build a multi-purpose centre on campus, but the school’s size and limited finances meant that it could not be pursued during his tenure as Principal. Our multi-purpose centre that has grown from being a covered outdoor learning area will boast two international-sized basketball courts; a full-sized netball court; two volleyball courts and eight badminton courts. It will also host a stage for school ceremonies and assemblies, as well as a new retail shop and new ablution facilities for our students. On a mezzanine level, the centre will also hold three new classrooms as well as an aerobic studio for our students and the wider school community to enjoy.

The multi-purpose centre will make Victor’s dream a reality, and will give Bishop Druiitt College one of the best indoor sports facilities in regional NSW. Recognising Victor’s passion and input into the College in its foundation years, College Council was delighted to approve the suggestion that we name our multi-purpose centre ‘The Branson Centre’.

The Branson Centre will be open for students to enjoy in Term 2 this year. Victor Branson will officially open it on Foundation Day, 21 June.
The Branson Centre is the culmination of a project that began with part-funding from the former Rudd Government’s ‘Building the Education Revolution’ funding. Bishop Druitt College received $3m in funding, which allowed us to build the Primary Library extension and the Primary Learning Resource Centre classroom. We also allotted $450,000 to the first stage of the Branson Centre project, which we knew as the COLA (covered outdoor learning area).

A further grant of $700,000 plus our own borrowings allowed us to complete the centre sooner than we had originally envisaged.

It is a substantial building, measuring 2,200m². The building will comfortably seat the entire school population for special assemblies like Foundation Day, and will allow us to host our presentation ceremonies at school.

It will usher in an exciting new phase of sports education at the College, with first-class facilities for a number of sports. New change rooms will add to the comfort of our students (and have been designed to be expanded in coming years). The PDHPE Faculty will have three new classrooms and an aerobic studio within the complex.

As well as providing excellent sporting facilities, the building will strengthen the culture of our school by providing an all-weather meeting place. As we meet to celebrate and to compete, so too will the soul of our school be fortified.

We look forward to this fabulous new facility coming online.

From the Principal

As our fabulous new centre nears completion, I warmly invite you to participate in our ‘buy a brick’ campaign. We are selling brick ‘facings’ that will be fixed to the interior brick walls of the Branson Centre. You can leave your child’s name (or your family’s or business’) inscribed on your brick in the centre as a legacy of your generosity.

Funds from this campaign will help us add the special touches to the centre that will ensure it is the best it can be. We want the best equipment - electronic scoreboards, motorised divider nets, the best backboards, and on the list goes.

Sponsorship will come in two forms: Donor (buy a brick for $50) and Foundation Sponsor (for donations of $1000 or more). Foundation Sponsors will be recognised on an honour board in the Branson Centre. Foundation sponsorship is open to College family businesses, local businesses, individuals and families.

We hope to raise $50,000 through this campaign. That’s a lot of bricks!

Please join me in getting behind this exciting project.

*All donations are tax deductible.*

Alan Ball
Principal
BISHOP DRUITT COLLEGE
COFFS HARBOUR

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