



Sallyanne's Farewell

Address by Kim Lyons on 8 April 2021

Thank you, Flo and may I say what an honour and privilege it is to have been asked to pay tribute to Sallyanne this evening on behalf of The Women's College Council and its members past and present.

I have had the pleasure of serving on Council with Sallyanne since 2012, including as Deputy President in the later years of her own presidency.

Tonight, is an invaluable opportunity for us to formally acknowledge and more importantly, thank Sallyanne for her significant contributions as President of Council. Flo has comprehensively detailed the many and varied special projects and achievements during Sallyanne's tenure as President. Significantly, the recruitment of Flo as Head of College must be reckoned as one of Sallyanne's key achievements, alongside her work in identifying a potential new leader, Emeritus Professor Carol Dickenson AM, whom Council in turn appointed to be her successor as President.

It was indeed a difficult task to compose my address for this evening as firstly, how does one truly find the words to describe Sallyanne and secondly, summarise the role she has played and her contributions to The Women's College over more than a decade.

READY TO LEAD/PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

Sallyanne brought with her to Women's an extensive career and wealth of experience in government, business and social affairs, on a local, national and international level. An astute businesswoman, Sallyanne seamlessly transitioned from the boardroom to the Council Room.

As President of the College Council and a woman who was undoubtedly born 'Ready to Lead', Sallyanne was committed, enthusiastic and hard-working. A dynamic personality who simply 'got things done', she was also persistent, resourceful, collaborative and strategic in her thinking.

A strong woman is someone who isn't afraid to share her opinions and speak the truth – this was (and still is) undoubtedly Sallyanne! Her unequivocal honesty, frankness, tenacity and forthright manner meant there was never any doubt about her thoughts on a given topic.

Sallyanne showed great faith and trust in the abilities of her team and to new members, was an always wise counsel. She was confident in creating a vision that



made those sitting around the table with her, want to be part of the team; she would then work with them to turn the vision into reality.

Through her cooperative approach, she always sought and valued the input of every Council member, diligently listening to fruitful discussions before eloquently synthesising key points, actions and presenting the way forward. In her role as President, Sallyanne welcomed new Student Club Representatives to Council Meetings at the beginning of each year. As an 18 or 19 year old, it is no easy feat to join a room of unfamiliar and more 'mature' faces to speak openly about the day-to-day happenings of College. Sallyanne always made these young women feel at ease and comfortable enough to bring any matter to the table while encouraging and complimenting them on their strength of leadership.

She was a firm believer in a 'common sense' approach to governance and the value of a personally signed letter, phone call or face-to-face meeting rather than an email. I have no doubt this more personal and traditional communication approach served to advance our causes more favourably on many occasions over the years.

THE WOMEN & THE STAFF

As a former collegian herself, Sallyanne always took great interest in our women – their academic progress, involvement in extracurricular and social activities and aspirations for the future. She was always keen to hear what was happening in the College on a day-to-day basis and loved going along to support the students at large inter-College events such as Dancefest and Choralfest.

Over the years, through her extensive network of contacts, Sallyanne facilitated valuable connections between students and potential career or industry-based mentors; many of these later turning into internships or job opportunities.

Sallyanne has always showed a great interest in the staff - their happiness and well-being, regularly popping into College to say hello. She also made it a priority to maintain a close working relationship with the Head of College, with whom she met weekly, always making herself available to support, mentor or share experiences which she felt could be beneficial.

EVENTS & NETWORKS

During her years as President, Sallyanne was extremely dedicated to representing the Council and College at a diverse range of annual events.

While aligning dates with her exhaustingly full schedule was undoubtedly one of the trickiest aspects of event planning for staff, once 'in the diary', Sallyanne was always a presence with bells on! Many a time, she juggled her commitments as a voluntary



board member with such institutions as the Museum of Brisbane and QBI, to make herself available to attend functions at Women's. We often wondered how she could so seamlessly transition from one board meeting to another.... I'm sure many of her days were spent going from meeting to meeting.

To witness Sallyanne in action at any College event was always a wonderful learning experience. Her memory for names and faces was truly remarkable as was her ability to make conversation with any guest in the room. Her genuine interest in people, coupled with her inquisitive nature and curious mind, ensured no conversation was ever dull!

As a well-known public figure and seasoned public speaker, hosting formal College events such as Academic and Valedictory Dinners, was second nature to Sallyanne. She could capture the attention of any audience, speak 'off the cuff' on any given topic and never failed to bring laughter to a room through a touch of good humour.

Sallyanne also enthusiastically attended a diverse range of external events, rarely missing an opportunity to represent the College in the wider community. Her visibility in this way is something I doubt we will be able to replace - she was, and remains, a very well recognised figure who was always willing to draw on her extensive network of contacts around Brisbane and beyond, for the good of the College – whether it be guest speakers for Formal Dinners or suggestions for potential new Council members from diverse backgrounds with a broad range of skills. Over the years, she has introduced Women's College to an incredible number of highly influential and inspirational women. A well-connected woman – no doubt about it!

COLLEGIALITY

While always fiercely standing up for the best interests of The Women's College, Sallyanne was also proactive in fostering opportunities for collaboration on topics of common interest or concern amongst fellow UQ residential colleges. She was a strong believer in and advocate for the College experience and regularly spoke with and attended events with Presidents, Council Members and Staff from other Colleges.

ON A PERSONAL NOTE

Before closing, on a personal note, I would like to thank you, Sallyanne for the faith and trust you instilled in me and for the openness, honesty and experience you brought to our every conversation. I learnt numerous invaluable lessons working alongside you and am extremely grateful for the opportunity to have served as your Deputy.



THANK YOU

Although no longer on Council, I know Sallyanne will not be a stranger to College – in fact, I believe she has already keenly volunteered to rally a cohort of residents for the 1960 College Reunion and expect if available, she'll also be gathering a group of friends for our Standing Committee fundraising Luncheon.

Sallyanne, you gave so much of your time, energy and self to The Women's College and I know that I speak on behalf of Council members, staff and students, past and present, in offering our most sincere appreciation for all that you have done for College in this chapter of our history. We are all beneficiaries of what your dynamic personality has helped to shape over the last decade.

Finally, and in closing - there are so many things to thank you for Sallyanne, but to me, these five things stand out above all:

- Thank you for openly and willingly sharing your lifetime of knowledge, experience and stories with us.
- Thank you for your uncompromising style, formidable approach to all things 'Women's' and for being a loud and proud ambassador for our College.
- Thank you for your enthusiasm in governing the College, and underpinning that, your genuine care for all those who have and will walk through its doors.
- Thank you for always reminding us of the importance of tradition and the undeniably important role it plays in our future.
- And lastly, thank you for your loyalty and love for Women's and all that it stands for.

Sallyanne, on behalf of the entire College community, we wish you nothing but the best in the next chapter of your life and may Women's always hold a special place in your heart.