

*From time to time in the 110 year history of Methodist Ladies' College, during excavations to build new buildings, documents have been uncovered that seem to record the existence of a civilisation that may have inhabited this site in the past. Extensive research has failed to find any clues as to their origins, but contextual cues in the documentation suggest that it is certain that their habitation was from a time of great antiquity. Only last month, workers were surprised to uncover under the new JY build, a carved box in which was found a scroll. The writing there found was transcribed by Dee Haughton, Helen Lyndon, Sophie Norris and Jessica Addy, who are conversant in several of the ancient tongues. They **say** this is what was written thereon:*

The sun shone out over the Kingdom of Melcee, a beacon of light, learning and joy up on the Hill of Enlightenment. The new tower was complete, the lawn was green, the little people were clean, and the Kingdom was celebrating 110 years of glorious existence, although this was a little-known fact and completely understated.

However, the gates of Kingdom were still struggling to keep out the Plague of the Economy, as the danger threatened to devour and retire them all.

One day, the Council in the Clouds sat down on their ivory thrones to discuss the problem of the plague, and how more sheckels could be acquired to stop the danger in its tracks.

“We could ask the Scientites to create a special charm for us?” one suggested.

“No, they’ll demand a refurbishment.” The leader of the Council had dealt with these Scientites before and knew that nothing came for free. Which gave her an idea. “We need more little people,” she said. “With each little person comes a little pot of gold. And with that we can hopefully raise enough sheckles to stop Brown Michael from the Bowels of Barclay from walking across Australia.”

“Bravo!” the Councillors in the Cloud cried, cheering and clapping for the brilliance that had been bestowed upon them, for it was in that moment, that the dream of 1200 was born.

The vision was revealed to the workers of Melcee in an “in camera” discussion. Of course, no one knew what an in camera discussion was, but everyone went along anyway, because if there’s one thing that we know about teachers, it’s that they are all noseys.

Rebecca of the Strategic Vision stepped forward and addressed the scribes and the pen-pushers, some of whom were wondering where the cameras were.

“Today, I am here to share with you a very *special* Strategic Vision I have. A vision that is close to my heart, and is a direct result of my passion for success, excess, and all lovely things. And that is babies. 6 month old little cherub babies. From this day forth, I do declare that the Kingdom of Melcee will be taking these little babies from their mothers and fathers, and indoctrinating them in into the green and purple of our wonderful land. Now go forth back to your tables and slate, and ensure to always give 110%...”

And indeed, everyone was giving 110%, for although they did not know, the 3,146 signs that had the numbers 110 on them had been designed as a trigger for the staff, conditioning them to work harder. All staff felt the effects, as the signs had been placed on so many doors that they simply could not be avoided. The very day they were seen, the fair and fertile Lady Norris was walking down the steps of the Tower of Sumner to pick up her children, and upon seeing the 110 Year crest, she was overwhelmed with the desire to run back to her office and to send three more emails, add anecdotal notes on TA, and to create extension work for all her gifted students who were sitting on or above 60%. Meanwhile, her own little people sat in the cold shivering and waiting. But her students’ marks elevated by .1%, so it was certainly worth it. The scribes, pen pushers and their attendants strived from dawn to dusk from dusk to dawn..... but unlike the little people, failed to thrive.

However, there were some who resisted the trance of the crest. Professor Gara, the Leader of the Scientites, was captured by the blue haze of the Kingdom of Hilda the Battleaxe, who were seeking retribution for the poaching of Marie the Meteorologist. Coombes the Volleyball Conquerer was conquered by her own love of competitive sport, and also decided to pack up her cart and descend the Hill of Enlightenment. Kate “Padfoot” Padman, the Head of the Wizarding Leadership Institute, put forward a suggestion that she should have her own crest of 25 years, and whilst the Kingdom did appreciate her efforts and sacrifices, there were not enough sheckels to print the appropriate stickers. Frustrated, Kate decided to leave with the others and experience greener pastures.

Meanwhile things continued to change to make the Kingdom of Melcee a desirable and profitable place of learning. The sausage rolls were replaced with leftovers from the boarders’ dinner the night before, and if there were no leftovers, Barry the Botanist was consulted as to where free mandarins could be found. The pool was emptied at the request of a family whose daughter could not swim, however they made quite a sizeable donation to the Circle of Excess. The empty pool greatly pleased Maree due to her fear of being splashed. Staff were asked to share biscuits, and to leave their unwanted biscuits for the others to eat.

“Would you like this biscuit?” one note read.

“Why, yes I would,” 50% of the staff answered.

“You disgusting animal, put your own trash in the bin,” the remaining 50% replied.

And that’s how biscuit-gate was born.

Meanwhile, the Lord and Lady of the Golden Triangle were interviewing with Audacious Audrey, the Pied Piper of Child Catchers, as they were considering sending their precious Lady Melanie to the Hill of Entitlement.

“Our little Melanie is gifted you know,” they began. “She simply must have the best of the scribes and pen-pushers.”

Hand select scribes, Audrey the Pied Piper wrote on her notepad.

“And of course, she must have private tutoring in Maths. Not because she struggles, but because she is so gifted. She is performing calculus at a third year university level.”

“Oh, fantastic,” Audrey replied. “We do like little people who are special and extraordinary.”

“And of course she will need help fitting in,” the Lord continued. “All the other children are incredibly jealous of her good looks. And she is also quite busy preparing for the 2024 Olympics. Did we mention she’s a world renowned cellist? She is resilient, but please do not push her into doing anything she doesn’t want to do.”

“Of course”, the Pied Piper replied. “She is very special indeed.”

But the efforts and sacrifices were not in vain, for with Lady Melanie joining the Kingdom, the magic number of 1200 had been reached! The staff celebrated, singing the praises of their Queen.

“She is glorious! Glorious! She was born for it! Born for it!”

But little did they know that the final countdown had begun, and that their glorious leader had been recognised for her enrolment prowess from all the way across this great land. And eventually, it was revealed, that Rebecca of the Strategic Vision had made another strategic decision (pause) to leave.

Chaos ensued, as workers began to question everything they had ever been told.

“Do I do daily lessons or can I just have a weekly outline?”

“How am I supposed to integrate technology if the projector won’t work?”

“Why am I here every day when I’m only .4?”

“MMT or Mentor Mentee Time? There’s nothing but inconsistencies in the Reporting Guide!”

Chaos! Mayhem! Anarchy!

“We need to find a new Queen!” Rebecca of the Strategic Vision decried. “Mary! Write this down. Seeking someone who gets the MLC vibe. Someone who likes memory pegs. Someone who knows how special our girls are. Someone who likes purple, but loves dusty pink. And while you’re there, can you also post another missing persons’ ad for Brown Michael of the Bowels of Barclay? Last seen tunnelling through the South West.”

The owls started swooping in with letters from leaders worldwide, begging the Council in the Clouds to become the new face of the Kingdom. The councillors flicked through the applications, but they did not like what they saw.

“Too original,” they said, binning the first application.

“Too outspoken,” they said, tearing up another.

“Too different,” they said, burning a whole pile of cover letters that mentioned wanting to take the Kingdom to the next level.

But eventually, an application was found that fit the criteria.

“Here is an application that is worthy!” one of the councillors cried.

“Her name is Marie. Marie of Melcee. I like it!”

Another councillor then read the application, already nodding in approval. “Marie, Maree and Mary – less for the staff to remember, and more time for co-curricular activities!”

“Yes! And she is a Conjuror of Social Media, so she should be able to help fly the drone for promotional photos now that i-Ben, the once-was Lord of Eyetee, has converted to Catholicism.”

And it was decided, that the Kingdom of Melcee would now be the Trinity of the Marees. All hail Mary!

The appointment was announced at another in camera briefing, where the announcement was given alongside some of the new strategic plans looking towards 2036.

As the scribes and pen pushers were not sufficiently weary enough from pushing the boulder up the hill, they would be pushed into committees, as the Kingdom of Melcee would be needing to prove its worth to join the CIS, otherwise known as the Circle of Illusions and Spells. The scribes and pen-pushers asked for money and time, and were offered less money and less time. For Ruthless Ron of the Department of Hardly Any Riches declared to Battling Bill and Shell out Shelley that the Kingdom only had enough sheckels for a new throne, forty more farewell functions, and a prenatal parking lot.

But luckily, the Council had allocated a budget to commission a statue of Rebecca at the top of the Hill of Enlightenment, forever gazing outwards to the Quarters of Claremont, the Sand Hills of Swanbourne and the Domain of Dalkeith. For the mere price of 3 million sheckels, everyone agreed that it was a worthwhile expense and a lovely way to end such a busy, productive and rewarding year of teaching and learning in the Kingdom of Melcee.