Eaglehawk Secondary College

"Via Aquilae" - by way of the eagle

1964 saw the commencement of Eaglehawk High School in five portable classrooms at the Camp Hill State School in Bendigo. There were 122 pupils in Forms 1, 2 and 3 with a teaching staff of 5 under the headmaster, Mr Arthur J Wilson. By August, the school uniform had been decided upon, incorporating the "Two Blues" of Eaglehawk and the school adopted its motto "Via Aquilae" - by way of the eagle. The outstretched wings of the eagle symbolise the sheltering wings of staff and council who will guide the pupils on their educational way.

In 1965 students moved into the new school building at Eaglehawk. The staff had increased to 13 and there were now 208 students. Inter house sports were introduced, with the Houses being named Dowding, Grieve and Lester after three early Borough councillors and Walker after the first Town Clerk.

Mr Alan Coulson was appointed Principal in May 1969 and one of his main areas of concern was the lack of facilities - especially in the trades area. After rallying for this for quite some time, in 1972 a decision was made to provide the Eaglehawk community with technical facilities - with Eaglehawk High School therefore becoming the first High Tech school to be established near a provincial city. Technical staff were appointed to the school in 1973 and graphics, woodwork and metalwork portables were provided. At this time Eaglehawk High was the only provider of co-educational technical facilities at the junior secondary level in Bendigo.

The course expanded in 1974 when an automative practices portable was supplied, and a comprehensive elective scheme was introduced at years 9 and 10, encouraging student participation. The course continued to expand, and soon encompassed engineering, craft and physical education. In 1977 construction of a permanent Technical building commenced, and continued throughout 1978. The first classes in the Technical Wing were conducted in October 1978. The official opening was held on November 29, 1978 - with the building named after Alan Coulson, a fitting tribute to the man who had worked so hard to obtain the facility.

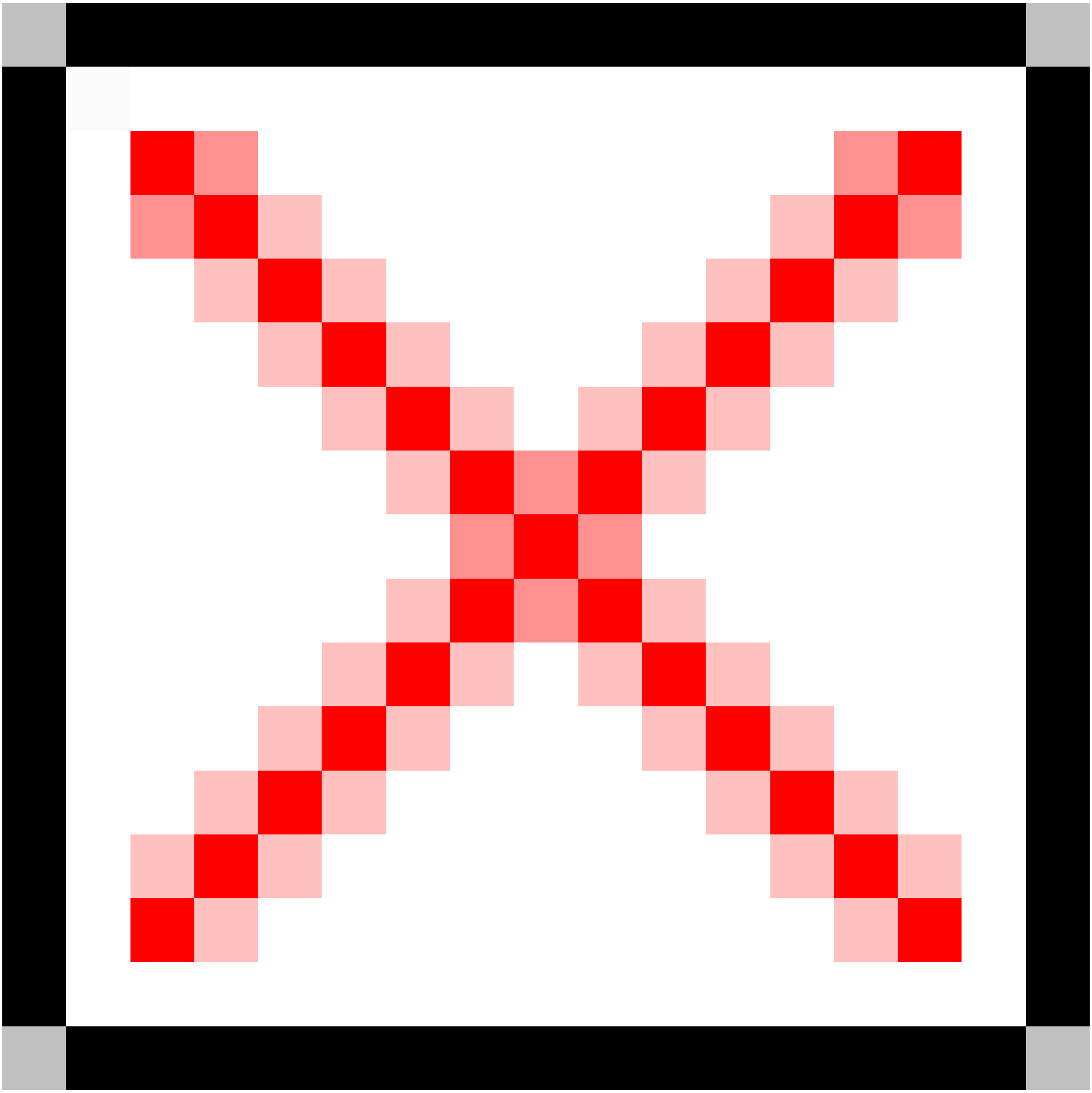
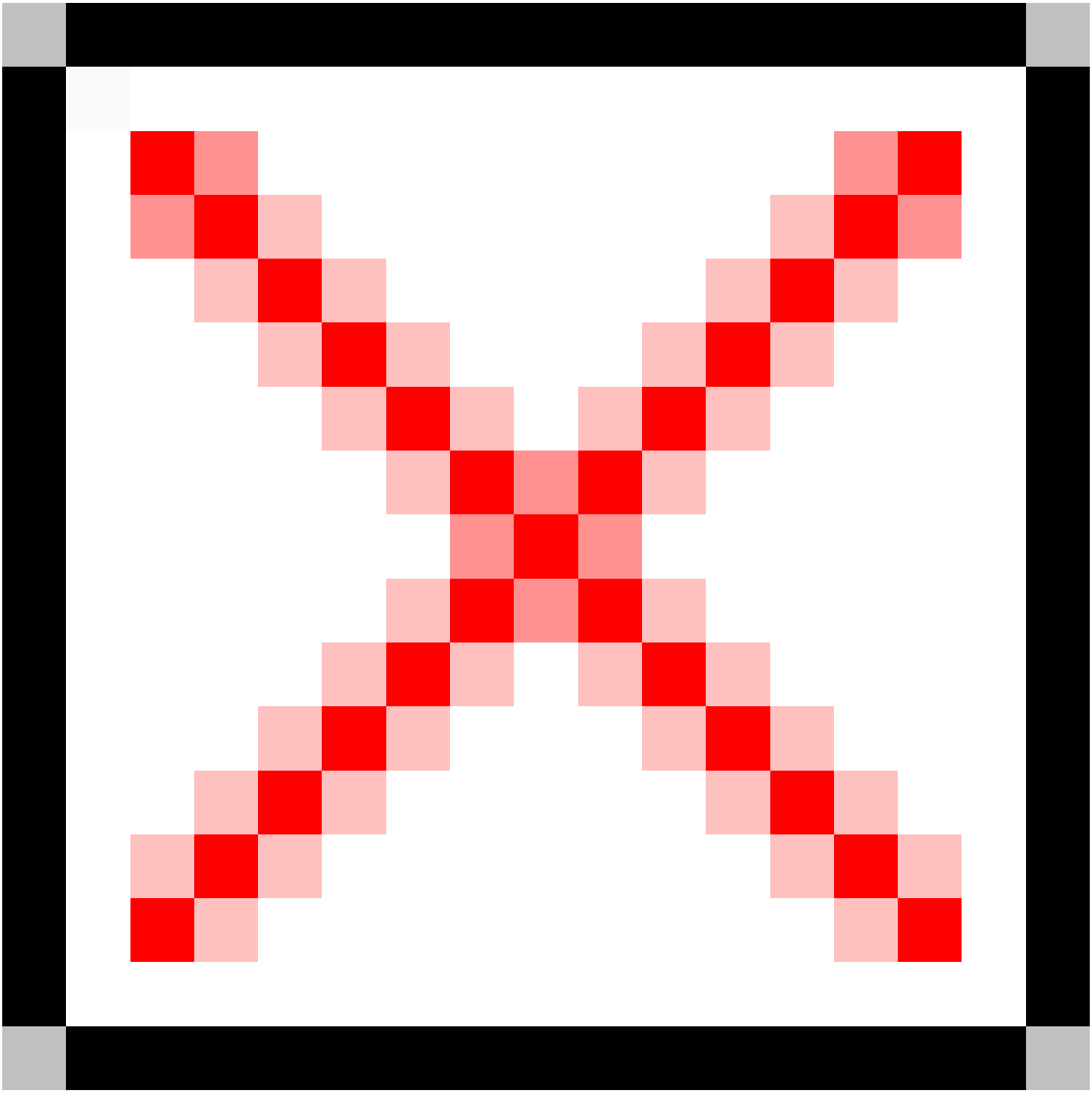
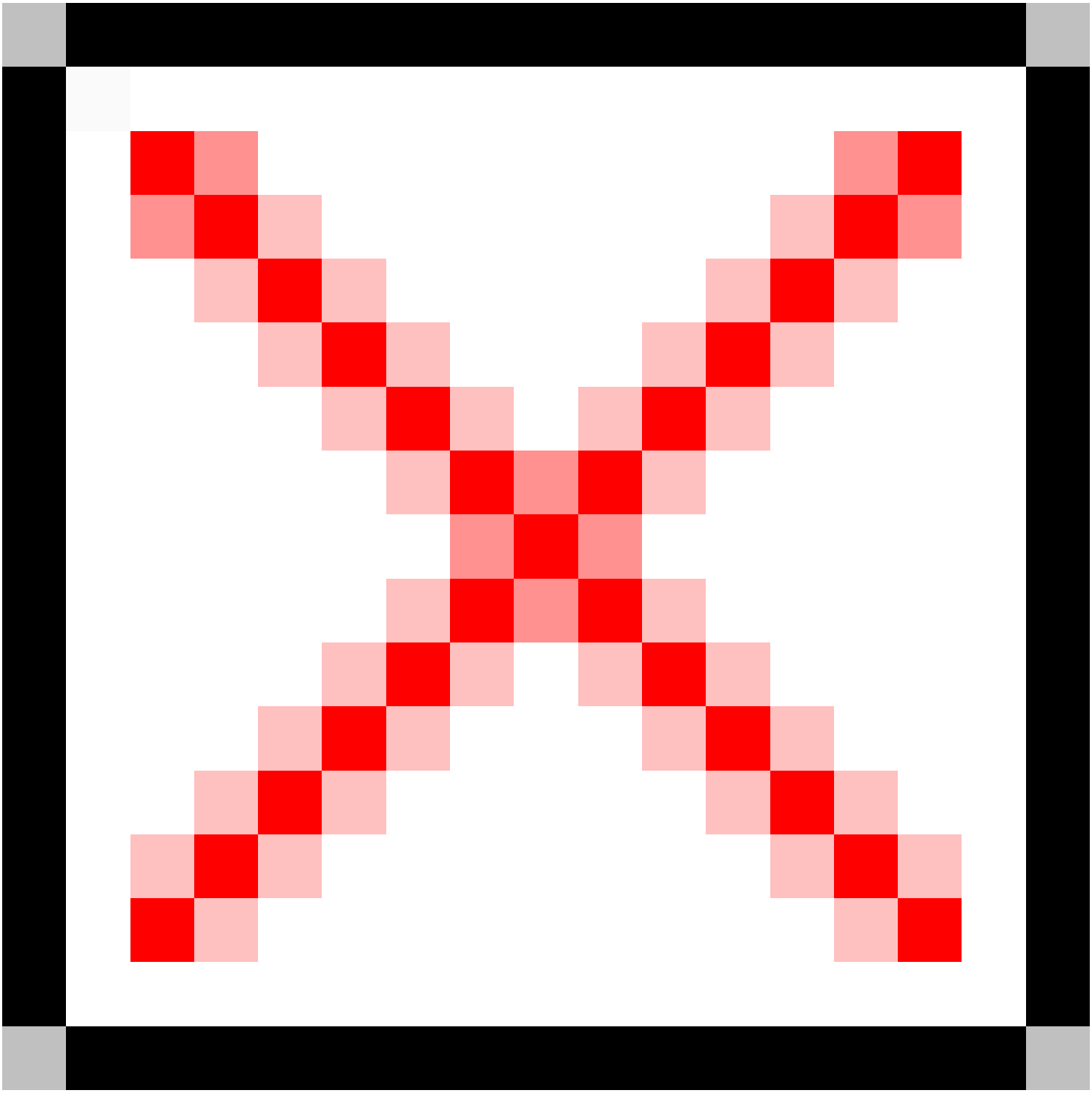
In 1981 the name Eaglehawk High Technical School was adopted by the school council.

In 1989, Eaglehawk High Technical School celebrated "Twenty-Five Years of Secondary Education in the Borough" and launched itself into the last decade of the millennium with a strong sense of identity and achievement. With a name change to Eaglehawk Secondary College, the school continued to be innovative, sensitive to the needs of the community and provide a genuine focus for the families of the Borough in academic, sporting and cultural endeavours.

The constant striving for excellence in terms of curriculum, facilities and the provision of educational opportunities for all has maintained the college as a leader in many areas of the school life. The building of the hall/gymnasium and refurbishment of the performing arts facilities, along with an evolving vision of the role of the "high school" in the broader community has enabled the college to develop increasingly strong and meaningful links with all sectors of the Eaglehawk community. This is no better illustrated than the close relationship between the Dahlia and Arts Festival and the college - and the sharing of facilities and activities.

Principals Wes Vine and Peter Newland guided the college through the 90s and into the new millennium. Karen Roberts (the first female in ESC history to be appointed to the position) then demonstrated great vision and energy as the school positioned itself for the inevitable new directions emerging in education.

2008 saw a massive project commence - the building of the new school facilities. The new school provides a fantastic, flexible and comfortable learning environment for students and staff. From 2012 - 2017, Noel Claridge led Eaglehawk Secondary College through exciting times and helped to reinforce the terrific sense of community in the Borough.

Under the current leadership of Principal Dani Derksen, Eaglehawk Secondary College now has over 620 students and is undeniably an integral part of the Borough. The college - together with the Eaglehawk community - continues to provide outstanding leadership in education and community development.

Were you a former student/teacher of the college? Check out our School Magazine Archive . You can also view images of ESC through the years here.