

# Yoga goes to top of class

by LIZ McDOUGALL

TEENAGERS can be amenable to ideas about healthy lifestyle and take on board what is good for them, yoga teacher Loraine Rushton says.

Loraine, who teaches at several northern beaches schools, said she generally finds the students eager to learn.

Stella Maris College is one of the schools to engage Loraine to teach yoga to most students.

Principal Allan Coman said yoga was introduced about four years ago but this year was made part of the structured curriculum, being offered for most girls from Year 7 to 10.

“The main reason would be that in each school there is a real sense of the spiritual but in the ‘busy-ness’ of life it doesn’t get expressed,” Mr Coman said.

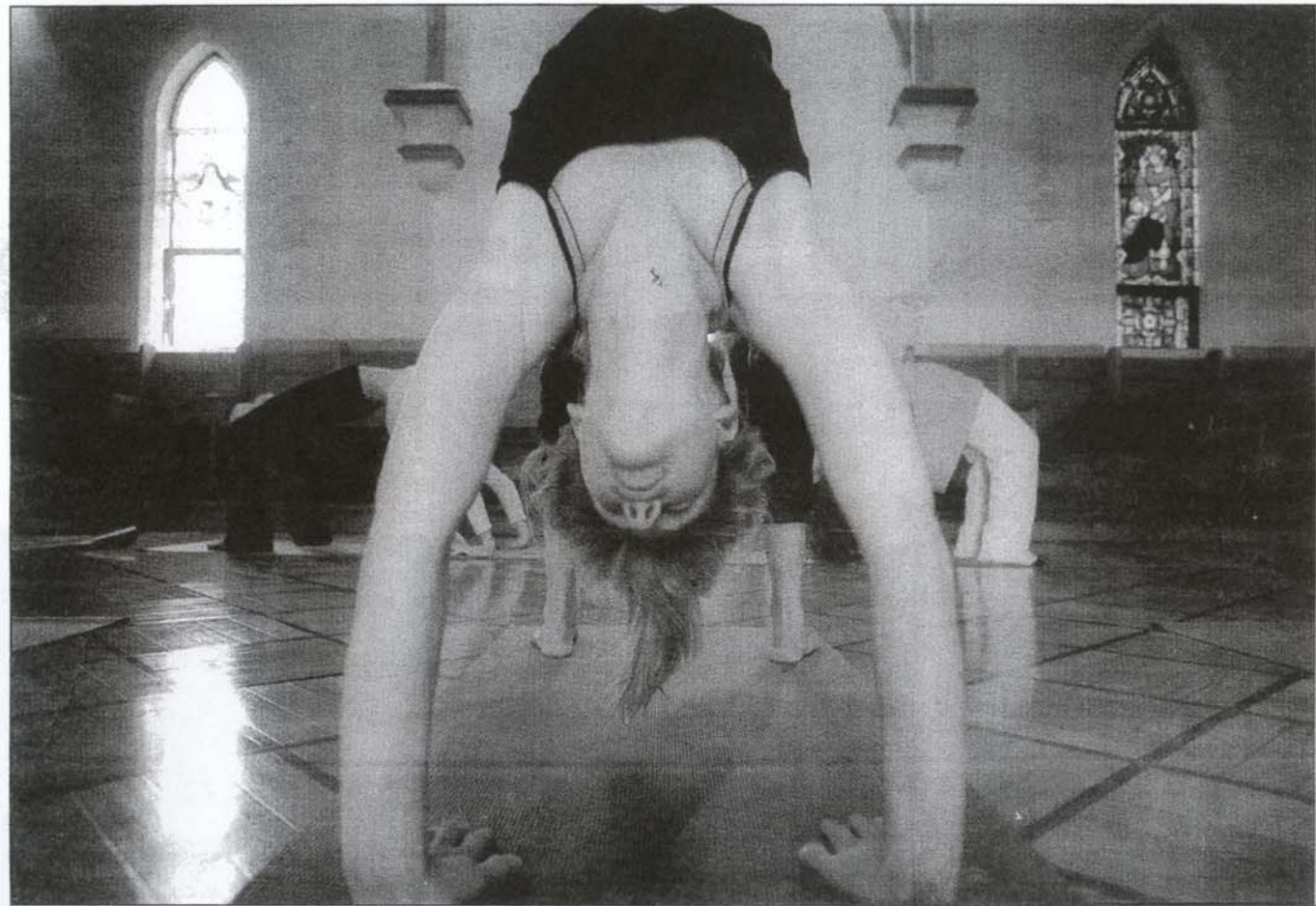
“The calming down of the girls allows them to develop the Christian concept as well as being beneficial for relaxation, posture and strengthening.

“It has had quite a sizeable impact for good – it has exceeded our expectations.”

Loraine’s background encompasses teaching English, Zen shiatsu, wholefood diet and lots of yoga. She encourages the students to think about what they put in their mouths affects their bodies.

“The kids love learning about their bodies and how simple exercises can prevent and alleviate illnesses,” Ms Rushton said.

“If they have colds we will work on that. At other times we



Yoga teacher Loraine Rushton at Stella Maris.

will work to get their health back or strengthen their bodies to help prevent injury.

“I will make dietary suggestions and when they find something works they are keen to know more.”

Loraine has found introducing

meditation can be challenging with a group of lively teenagers. “But we work on it – it’s mental discipline and it stills their minds.”

The girls agree that yoga is relaxing and many recognise the calming effect.

“Ever since I started yoga at Stella Maris College I’ve noticed that I’ve felt considerably less stressed and there is less tension in my mind and body,” said Kate Mullins.

“For me, it is a fun way to exercise both mentally and

Picture: ELENOR TEDENBORG

physically.” Some of the girls want to do more yoga so Loraine is starting a late afternoon Tuesday class also open to non-students.

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