

AROUND ABBOTSLEIGH





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Abbotsleigh: An exciting and vibrant learning community

This edition of *Around Abbotsleigh* featuring a selection of some of the many stimulating and varied learning experiences in which our girls, Pre-K –12, have been involved, as well as some of the great activities in which our Old Girls, our staff and our parents have participated, demonstrates very clearly that Abbotsleigh is indeed an exciting and vibrant learning community.

Our girls love learning and it is a great pleasure seeing their excited faces as they learn so much all day every day, both within and beyond the classroom. It is also marvellous to see the way in which our girls learn: they are curious and creative, enjoy grappling with difficult concepts, solving problems and thinking critically. They avoid taking things at face value, delve deeply into topics (at an age appropriate level) and are prepared to take risks and make mistakes.

As our future leaders, it is so important that our girls possess these learning dispositions, which are actually learning dispositions of people who possess a growth mindset. Growth mindset, a theory based on extensive research by Stanford Professor Carol Dweck and her team, advocates that our brains continually develop and that, with effort, our abilities and talents can and do improve and grow. This is not a 'pie in the sky' or

'Pollyanna' approach to learning; it is based on significant brain research that demonstrates that our brains develop new connections and 'grow' when we grapple with problems and learn new things. It is this mindset that we foster here Abbotsleigh, and it is one of the reasons why our girls, not only strive to achieve their personal best, but also love learning so much.

In addition to learning in the classroom, our girls have the opportunity to be involved in myriad activities. Their wholehearted and enthusiastic involvement in what seems like 'absolutely everything', and our staff's eagerness to give our girls every opportunity possible, are part of what makes our school so vibrant. This vibrancy extends to all members of our community and it has been a great privilege to have participated in so many wonderful parent and Old Girl events this year.

As you read each article in this edition of *Around Abbotsleigh*, I hope you capture a glimpse of the positivity, deep learning, vibrancy, vitality and verve that is Abbotsleigh, Semester 2, 2017.



From the Chair of Council

I am pleased to have this opportunity to firstly introduce my family and myself to the Abbotsleigh community, and secondly to share with you the focus for Council this year and the next 18 months.

My wife Gaby and I have two children, Emma (12) and James (10). Emma enrolled in Abbotsleigh's inaugural Transition class in 2010 and is now in Year 6. As a Christian family, we worship at St James, Turramurra, where we are actively involved in the Church. Family and family time is very important to me, and I seek every opportunity to spend time with them, whether it is camping, participating in sports or leisure, or just providing for them in the kitchen.

My professional formation encompasses experience as a Chartered Accountant and licensed forensic investigator. In March this year, I commenced in the role as Partner and National Practice Group Leader for Forensic and Technology Services at Clayton Utz. Prior, I was a Partner at EY for 11 years.

I joined Abbotsleigh Council as the Honorary Treasurer in October 2012, and have also been a director on the Abbotsleigh Foundation ever since. My role as Chair of

Abbotsleigh's Council began on 1 May this year, upon the retirement of Reverend Ian Millican.

2017 has been a very busy and rewarding year for Council as we work to finalise Abbotsleigh's Strategic Plan, which entails looking at what the School's purpose is, what our values should be, what key drivers our new Headmistress, Mrs Megan Krimmer and her senior leadership team should be focused on, and how these drivers will eventually be measured. We aim to launch Abbotsleigh's Strategic Plan at this year's Speech Day celebration.

During 2018, Council will turn its attention to Abbotsleigh's Master Plan, another important and exciting project, which no doubt will involve planning for potential major capital projects soon.

My personal ambition as the Chair of Abbotsleigh – through God's grace – is to continue to drive Abbotsleigh's purpose and embed Christian values in all that we do. And to do more with what we have whilst strategically planning for 2030 and beyond.

I am looking forward to these challenges, and enlarging my acquaintance of the Abbotsleigh community.



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Alana's first visit to Sydney, when she was in Year 6 at St Joseph's Catholic School, Walgett.

Record contributions, massive thank you

This year's Leather and Laces Sports Lunch was a resounding success, reports Development Manager, **Danielle Cotter**

Held on Friday 25 August, the 6th Leather and Laces Sports Lunch was attended and enjoyed by more than 200 guests. The highly anticipated sports panel comprised legends Marcia Ella-Duncan, Emily Seebom, Robert de Castella and Michael O'Loughlin. Interviewed by Tracey Holmes, guests were entertained by hearing from panellists about their sporting careers and life journeys.

Year 11 Indigenous Scholarship student, Alana Sharpley spoke about what an Abbotsleigh education has meant for her. *'Looking back on my childhood and growing up in such a small community, I definitely would never have seen myself here at Abbotsleigh, let alone on a scholarship. Generally, anyone I knew that grew up in Lightning Ridge or Walgett, stayed there and continued with high school at home. If I had done that, my experience of school would have been quite different. It was my decision to come to Abbotsleigh, a decision based solely on the fact that I wanted a better life and future. Abbotsleigh definitely gave me more opportunities and has opened many more doors than school at home could have done for me.*

My elders at home were really proud, as I'm the first person in my family to go to a boarding school and I will be the first person to graduate.'

After school, I hope to do a gap year through the Defence Force. I feel it will really challenge me and force me to think about my priorities. There are so many opportunities within the defence force and I look forward to going on exchange. I hope to then complete a Bachelor of Applied Psychology majoring in Aboriginal Studies and Criminology. I'm really interested in helping Aboriginal youth in detention centres and I feel I could contribute with this degree. These people are the future generations of my culture and they need guidance.

I am so grateful for the support of the teachers and boarding staff but, most importantly, for donors for allowing me this great opportunity to come to such an outstanding school.

Thanks to the generosity of the school community, more than \$150,000 profit was raised at the lunch, which will go towards providing Indigenous girls, just like Alana, with a scholarship at Abbotsleigh.



Indigenous perspective

Young minds open to the wisdom of Aboriginal elders, writes ELC Director **Shelley Laycock**

This year the Early Learning Centre has made a deep commitment to embedding indigenous culture into our program. Recognising that diversity contributes to the richness of our society, a group of educators within the ELC has formed the Narragunnawali Group as a way of promoting greater understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of 'knowing and being'. *Narragunnawali* is a word from the language of the Ngunnawal people, traditional owners of the land on which Reconciliation Australia's Canberra office is located. It means alive, wellbeing, coming together and peace.

One of the initiatives of our Narragunnawali Group has been the formulation of a weekly Yarning Circle for each of our classes. This has been invaluable in ensuring that an Indigenous perspective is authentically embedded in our weekly curriculum and has also meant that many Indigenous visitors have come to the School throughout the year.

In September, local Darug elder, artist and educator Chris Tobin returned to the ELC to spend a whole day with us. Chris previously visited during NAIDOC week and shared a Welcome to Country as well as conducting a Smoking Ceremony. During this most recent visit, he shared his stories, songs and other artifacts. Chris visited not only each of the ELC's rooms but shared his knowledge with Transition, Kindergarten and Year 1. The children learnt how to say 'good morning' in Darug and to count from one to five as well as how to dance like a rainbow serpent, kangaroo and an emu. He showed the children how to grind up clay and add water to make paint. Some of us were lucky enough to have our faces painted.

We look forward to welcoming Chris again to our End of Year concert in November, when he will conduct another Smoking Ceremony and Welcome to Country. We feel privileged to learn from Chris Tobin's cultural knowledge.



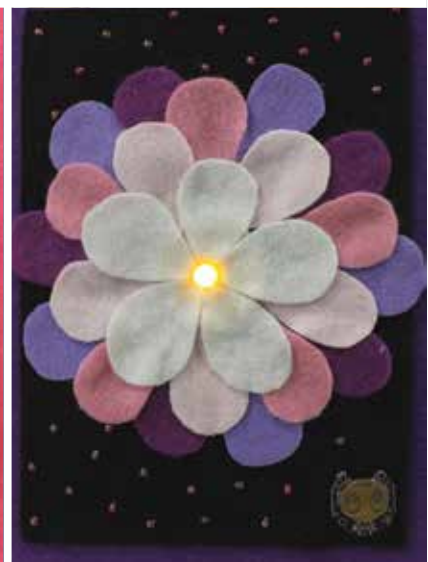
Let there be light!

Year 6 have been experimenting with e-textiles, says Junior School Visual Arts Teacher **Louise Keyter**, and the results are spectacular

To integrate with Year 6's studies of electricity and circuitry in Science, students have been exploring the world of e-textiles (electronic textiles) in their Visual Arts lessons. E-textiles are fabrics that enable digital components and electronics to be embedded in them.

Students were asked to design a textile composition that included the use of a single LED. They worked in felt, cutting, gluing and 'drawing with thread' their composed images. When the felt designs were complete, students began sewing the electrical components into their fabric. First they attached a battery holder with an on/off switch, next they finalised placement of the LED and then, using conductive thread, sewed a positive and negative trace. With the soft circuit finished, a coin battery was inserted into the holder, the switch was flicked and the work came to life or should we say light!

To further enhance their studies of e-textiles and the use of light in art, students went on an evening cruise to view Vivid Sydney 2017 and experience art and light installations on a grand scale.



Gathering STEAM

From zebrafish embryos to crime scene investigations, the STEAM Festival was a celebration of learning across all year groups, write Head of Junior School, **Sally Ruston** and Deputy Head of Junior School, **Kate Grzanka**

Great excitement was evident at the launch of STEAM Festival week on Monday 16 October. The girls were so responsive to the extensive range of activities and opportunities to explore things mathematical and scientific over this week-long period, concluding with 'Suit up for Science' and a presentation by Dr Stephan Oehler about his research into zebrafish embryos, capturing the girls' imaginations.

Early Learning, Transition and Kindergarten: Professor Maths visited and provided engaging hands-on activities including interactive board and construction games that not only enhanced mathematical understanding but also social skills.

Years 1 and 2: The Brickworks incursion and a sea of different coloured and sized building bricks saw the girls respond to a design construction challenge. Class-based activities included a float and sink challenge and homemade bouncy ball experiment.

Years 3 and 4: The girls joined forces and fine-tuned their orienteering skills by participating in a treasure hunt course, following a series of cryptic clues.



Year 5: Students participated in a workshop on the origins of energy and how this transforms our everyday lives.

Year 6: The girls participated in a crime scene investigation, including fingerprint, hair and fibre analysis. The annual AbbKart Derby was a fitting start to our STEAM Week. From prototype to working billycart, the Year 6 girls learnt much about engineering and design as they were guided by Senior School teachers working in the TAS Department.

Across Stage 3 the teachers designed and delivered activities, including the making of lava lamps, dissection of sheep hearts, the creation and science behind slime, the building of a geo dome and the chemistry of cooking. The day culminated with a wow factor science show from Fizzics Ed.

What better way to celebrate women in science than to have a movie night watching *Hidden Figures* with parents and popcorn.



Latin for literacy

Students in 5D and 6D have been time travelling back to Roman Britain, write Year 5 and 6 teachers **Lynne Verghese** and **Susanna Matters**, and discovering that Latin is not a dead language



Students in 5D and 6D have been time travelling back to Roman Britain each Wednesday as part of an exciting Latin pilot program. With the help of 'Minimus' (an ancient mouse), the girls have been introduced to the Latin language, and Roman culture and mythology.

The chance for girls in Years 5 and 6 to collaborate in their learning is a particularly engaging aspect of the program. The girls are allocated a 'reading buddy' in the other class who supports their learning. Together, the students navigate purposeful games and role play activities.

So why should the girls study a classical language? Latin enriches student understanding of important literacy concepts covered in existing Stage 3 units of work. The study of Latin involves an emphasis on grammatical training and linguistic analysis. These areas provide a firm foundation for the learning of other languages and for the appreciation of the etymological roots and syntax of English. Moreover, Roman culture influences many facets of contemporary life in the fields of art, architecture, literature, philosophy and government.

Young learners are absolutely fascinated by Roman culture and mythology. They are delighted to discover that so much word building in English is derived from Latin, and often excitedly tell me how the language even appears in children's literature like the *Harry Potter* series by J K Rowling.

Latin is a highly anticipated lesson each week as the girls immerse themselves in powerful and interesting stories from the past and form meaningful connections with the modern world.



Amadea Luong (6D) shares her thinking about connections between languages.

Dressing for success

Kindergarten had a problem... the dress-up trolley was empty, write Kindergarten Teachers **Nicole Hunt** and **Cassandra McKie**

The idea was posed that the students think of some costumes they would like to have available. Their costumes could all be unique and represent something they have learnt this year. So they began sketching ideas.

The girls were excited by the idea of bringing their costumes to life. They eagerly walked to the Senior School and worked with TAS Head of Department, Ms Terri Moore to use the facilities in the textiles space. She demonstrated how to create a pattern using shapes and how to draw this onto paper in order to construct an outfit.

The Kindergarten students then used their knowledge of measurement to carefully produce a pattern that was the correct size. This involved measuring with informal units such as blocks, string and tracing around their bodies. They also had to draw on their understanding of geometry in creating the correct shapes to match their vision.

Once completed, the designs were traced onto material, decorated and sewn to make them wearable.

The girls took great delight in showcasing their costumes to Ms Ruston, Miss Grzanka and their peers during the 100 Days of Learning celebration.

Through this experience the girls developed a range of skills that involved designing and making something that was of personal interest and value to them. The project incorporated a range of mathematical knowledge that they were able to communicate through a real life context, demonstrating how Mathematics can be applied in everyday situations.



Getting the message out

It all adds up. Year 2 uses Mathematics to design a communication device, writes
Year 2 Teacher **Elyse Holmes**

After lessons learning about the range of communication devices and how these affect people's lives, the students in Year 2 were asked to consider designing a device that would include all the best forms of communication. Students worked with partners from each class to brainstorm their initial ideas. During the subsequent lessons, the girls were introduced to specific Mathematics topics, ones that would help to enhance their projects. They were asked to create simple surveys to receive feedback on their ideas. After finalising their designs, they were given a strict (pretend) budget to purchase craft supplies from the classroom to build a simple model of their prototype. Throughout this purchasing process, girls had to weigh items such as plasticine, and measure sticky tape to ensure that their materials were within budget.

After completing their models students recorded the user instructions of their communication device using OfficeMix. In addition, they were required to measure their models to ensure that what they had created met the suggestions presented to them in their initial surveys. All girls were highly engaged throughout the project and were very proud of what they had achieved. During the end of term Celebration of Learning day, the Year 2 students presented their projects to the girls in Year 6.

This project was submitted into the MANSW competition and received second place, which is an outstanding achievement for our Year 2 girls.





Tall tales, and true

Experiential based learning scenarios where girls learn by doing are invaluable, writes Year 4 Teacher **Murray Keating**, who led Year 4 on a Tall Ships excursion around Sydney Harbour

Attaining the core literacy and numeracy skills is essential, but so too is the application of these skills in experiential based learning scenarios where girls learn by doing. This might include the turning of traditional nursery stories on their head to write fractured fairy tales or exploring the imagery of text in a sophisticated novel such as *The Book Thief*.

Our experiential learning approach draws elements from the Reggio Emilia philosophy of early learning that recognises the importance of the voice of the child and the importance of learning through experiencing, exploring and interacting.

In May, Year 4 delved into Sydney's convict past on a Tall Ship tour of Sydney Harbour, a First Fleet related experiential learning experience. This was a full day of excitement and adventure, designed to set the scene for our Term 2 History unit on the British colonisation of Australia. The girls travelled on and explored the *Soren Larsen*, one of the tall ships that was part of Australia's bicentenary celebrations in 1988.

To add to the authenticity and fun of the day, each girl wore a convict-themed outfit, comprising long pants, school shoes, a white shirt complete with convict arrows and a straw hat or bonnet. These costumes were also worn for our walking tour of The Rocks and Convict Day, which took place later in Term 2.

We were blessed with clear, blue skies and a gentle sea breeze. This allowed the *Soren Larsen* to sail non-stop for two hours around Sydney Harbour, while the girls spent time exploring the ship. After carefully descending the very steep stairs from the top deck, they enjoyed a guided tour of the dark and somewhat mysterious hold.

To sail on a real timber sailing ship, similar to those in the First Fleet, provided each student with a unique opportunity to learn first-hand about the conditions on that historic voyage.

I really enjoyed going under the deck and seeing where the convicts lived and slept.
Sophie Choi 4L

The best thing about the Tall Ships excursion was enjoying the view of Sydney Harbour.
Elizabeth Goodsir-Cullen, 4L

I liked it when we got to pull down the sails, which was really hard because we weren't so strong but we tried our best to pull them down. The most exciting part was when we got to dress up as convicts and we all looked the same in our shirts that we painted. Ashleigh Nguyen, 4O

Going on the tall ship, the *Soren Larson*, was amazing. I never knew that they put lime in their water to prevent scurvy. Sarah Richardson, 4G

The excursion was the best day I have ever had because we got to see Goat Island and the man said that in Aboriginal language it was called Eye Island. Also, we got to see under the ship's deck and the staircase was really steep!
Anisa Farhod, 4G

Yesterday's excursion was awesome and my favourite part was how I learnt that the boat was built in 1949. Also, I saw a mysterious bucket with a piece of rope in it. Malissa Mao, 4O



Giving voice to feelings

The Primary Ensembles Concert and the Infants Concert showcase the girls' performance endeavours but, writes Junior School Head of Music **Stephan Kooper**, students regularly explore music and composing in class.

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We explicitly design activities and projects for the girls that serve to engage their imaginations and enhance their opportunities for personal expression. In addition to the co-curricular offerings to perform in vocal and instrumental ensembles, students regularly explore music and composing in class.

Composition projects help develop girls' knowledge of musical theory. Through their own compositions, they understand how theory can serve expressive needs. Additionally, an avenue is provided for students to creatively adapt or change the 'rules' to produce their own unique and interesting works.

The Primary Ensembles Concert and the Infants Concert showcase the girls' performance endeavours in ensemble

work. As well, this year an original and creative work by Year 6 Music Captain Emma Yap was featured and performed at the Infants Concert. Entirely appropriate to the Infants Concert theme of Carnival of the Animals, Emma's work was entitled *The Polar Bear in My Fridge* and was composed for her Kindergarten buddy.

Repertoire of value engages students and generates enthusiasm during the process of learning and refinement. Emma's piece certainly engaged students in Infants as demonstrated by the frequent requests, loud cheers and enthusiastic singing each time the piece was performed. Why don't you sing along, too?



Carnival time

The new format Primary Athletics Carnival is a great success with the girls and their parents, says JS PDHPE Coordinator **Paul Guirrieri**

The Primary Athletics Carnival underwent a significant format change in 2017, with the aim of maximising participation and having all of our girls actively involved in events throughout the day. The track and field was awash with colour as the girls rotated through activities that included the 800 m, 100 m, 200 m, long jump, shot put, discus, high jump, turbo javelin and relays. Much fun and laughter was had at the novelties, highlighted by sack-racing and tug-o-war.

At a time when women's sport is starting to attract mainstream press and positive national exposure, it is imperative that our girls get the most out of participating in sport and value its simplicity for what it is, and for all the right reasons. Our restructured carnival had a great mix of fun, participation, skill development and healthy competition. The changes were warmly welcomed by parents, staff and, most importantly, the girls. Whether an athletics novice or an elite athlete, the carnival certainly catered for everyone.

Included in an overwhelming amount of positive post-carnival feedback was this very pertinent comment from one of our Junior School parents: *'Given all the current campaigns to encourage girls/females in general to engage in physical activity for the health benefits and fun rather than feeling the need to excel, to participate or look good enough in sportswear, I think this new format is a very timely change.'*



Betty Archdale: a life well lived

Abbotsleigh Archivist **Julie Daly** traces Archie's remarkable story

Helen Elizabeth Archdale – named after her mother Helen but always referred to as Betty and known to her girls as Archie – was Headmistress of Abbotsleigh from 1958-70. She was born in London in 1907, the daughter of a suffragette (Helen Russel) and a professional soldier (Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Archdale). Her father drowned when she was 11, just prior to the end of WWI, leaving her mother to support the family on a widow's pension supplemented by her earnings as an editor.

Betty's early life resounded with passionate, articulate and educated family and friends. Her maternal grandfather, Alexander Russel, was editor of *The Scotsman* newspaper. The desk he used was bequeathed to Betty and now forms part of Abbotsleigh's archival collection. Her maternal grandmother was one of the first female medical students at Edinburgh University, although she left after a couple of years to get married. As Betty remarked in her 1972 book *Indiscretions of a Headmistress*, 'There must have been something out of the ordinary about grandmother for her even to think of taking a medical course. In those days well-brought up girls did not go to the university and certainly were not expected to be interested in anything so unladylike as medicine.'

Helen Archdale, Betty's mother, was a passionate and militant suffragette. Some of Betty's earliest memories are of visiting London's Holloway Prison where her mother was jailed – twice – for her suffrage principles. Abbotsleigh is fortunate to have Helen's suffragette badges as part of our archival collection. The Suffragette Medal was commissioned in 1909 by the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), and fewer than one hundred are thought to have been awarded. Helen's is inscribed with her arrest date, 19 October 1909, making her medal one of the earliest to be awarded. These medals are a potent symbol

of the efforts women in Britain made in order to obtain the vote. There are three others held in Australian institutions: at the National Library of Australia, the Museum of Democracy at Old Parliament House and Museums Victoria. These medals are some of the most historically important items in Abbotsleigh's archival collection.

The smaller square silver and enamel badge, inscribed 'Votes for Women', is in the WSPU colours of purple (for justice), white (for purity) and green (for hope). This badge was issued by the Union to promote the suffragette message and raise funds for the campaign 'war'. This war for suffrage and emancipation was waged in the home and at work, and had begun in 1870. In 1918, women over the age of 30 achieved the right to vote, but complete (voting) equality with men was still a few years off.

Betty's mother's closest friend was Margaret Mackworth, Viscountess Rhondda, whose own struggles with gender discrimination meant that she lost her rightful place in the House of Lords, even though she held a hereditary title. Together they formed the Six Point Group which, working alongside the Equal Rights Committee, strove to reconcile the dissonance between the 1918 decision and their desire for full voting rights, a victory that was finally achieved in 1928.

This fiercely feminist, liberal-thinking, political and militant life was the backdrop for Betty's early upbringing. Her mother's friendship and political affinity with Emmeline Pankhurst, founder of the WSPU, saw her engage in political acts and suffrage militancy, to the disapproval of her husband and his family, and divided opinions within her own family. Helen eventually committed herself entirely to the WSPU cause. When Betty was six, Helen took her and her two brothers to stay in Switzerland and Italy, with



Betty with her 1965 Prefects



Betty seated at her grandfather's desk c1990



Betty with Margaret Peden in 1934 (NMA)



Helen Archdale's historically important suffragette badges



Betty's MBE and military memorabilia



Betty at Women's College centenary, 1992

Emmeline's daughter Adela acting as governess. Betty believed that, at this time, Adela was on the run from authorities due to her illicit suffrage activities, which obviously thrilled the young Archdale children.

Back in England, six-year-old Betty went to Bedales School in Hampshire as a boarder, where she learnt to play cricket, and later to St Leonard's Girls School at St Andrews, Scotland. This holds resonance for her future years at Abbotsleigh as the foundation of both schools was the premise of educating girls along the lines of boys' grammar schools. Sport was compulsory and the Scottish school had an excellent academic reputation. Betty achieved top marks in her final year, leaving as Head Girl and captain of the cricket team.

After school, Betty studied at McGill University in Montreal, graduating with a BA in Economics and Political Science. She studied Law in London and took the Bar exams, but never practised.

While at university Betty excelled at sports and in 1934/35 she was captain of the first English women's cricket team to tour Australia. Her team won the series. For Abbotsleigh, this unknowingly marked a turning point in our history. Margaret Peden, the Australian team captain, was an Abbotsleigh Old Girl (1928) and her sister Barbara was also a member of the team. The Peden sisters became lifelong friends of Betty, and both were encouraging when it was suggested that she become Abbotsleigh's sixth headmistress.

Betty's cricket career was cut short by the advent of World War II. She signed up for the Women's Royal Naval Service (Wrens) and served in the UK, Singapore, Ceylon, Kenya, the Persian Gulf and Australia. Betty was awarded an MBE in 1944 for her role in evacuating nurses from Singapore.

Her service medals and MBE also form part of Abbotsleigh's archival collection.

At the end of the war Betty was stationed in Sydney. She considered resuming her career in law, but instead accepted an invitation from Women's College at Sydney University to become Principal, a post she held from 1946-1957. The college history would have appealed greatly to Betty, as at its establishment in 1892 it was the first college for female scholars of its kind in Australia.

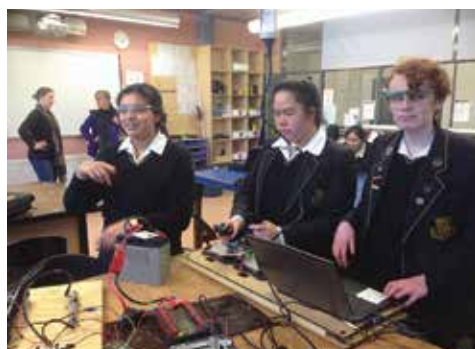
Abbotsleigh enters the story again in 1958 when Betty Archdale was invited to be Headmistress of Abbotsleigh. At Foundation Day assembly in 1991, Old Girl Annabel Baxter (Marr 1965) summed up Betty's tenure: 'As far as she was concerned, the school was there for the girls. The whole reason for the existence of Abbotsleigh was to educate girls, not for teachers or parents or Old Girls or anyone else. We all had the feeling that she was on our side...'

In her 12 years at Abbotsleigh, Betty was credited with breaking down a rather rigid system of discipline at the school, introducing sex education and abandoning gloves and hat as part of the school uniform. She also provided greater freedom and an emphasis on self-discipline, with the girls empowered to play a much larger part in the running of the School.

Betty lived a life of breaking down barriers, and not always intentionally. Her mother's suffragist vision obviously formed her view that a girl could do and be anything. Betty lived that philosophy – yet her achievements have to be viewed against the backdrop of the time in which she lived. Her accolades and honours in academe, sport, the military and educational leadership are quite simply unique – a fitting life for a woman who was formed in the heart of the suffragette movement.

Sport for the mind

Abbotsleigh's ARTEMIS teams are the entrepreneurs of tomorrow, say Robotics Patron and Mentor **Kim Allan** and **Erin Filan**



ARTTEMIS is an acronym for 'Abbotsleigh Robotics Team: Engineering, Mathematics, Inspiration, Science'. The team designed its logo with arrows to represent Artemis, the Greek goddess of the hunt. Students aim high, striving to achieve their personal best.

Robotics is more than circuits and coding. It has been described as 'sport for the mind'. All skill levels are needed, technical and non-technical, and every student is welcome. Students bring along such skills as programming, electronics, metalworking, graphic design, web creation, public speaking, videography, and learn new ones along the way. The benefits are manifold, overflowing into academic and life arenas. The girls gain confidence working in teams, solving challenging problems and creating innovative solutions.

ARTEMIS received the Gracious Professionalism Award at both the first competition at Homebush in March and the recent Duel Down Under at Macquarie University. This highly sought after award recognises the team

that is gracious in competition and professional in all their relationships. The Duel Down Under design was ambitious and challenging, ensuring that the team made it to the finals. The students learnt much from their mistakes in the process, teaching them valuable life lessons.

The team is growing and flourishing due to the passion and enthusiasm of the students as well as the mentors, led by Erin Filan, who freely give of their time and expertise.

This year, ARTEMIS has two FIRST LEGO League (FLL) teams. The competition involves building and programming EV3 robots to complete different challenges, and completing a project investigating and improving our interactions with water. The teams meet on Mondays from 3.30-5 pm in the DT area, and are open to new members in Years 7 and 8.

Follow the team on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Stay tuned for YouTube videos being developed as part of Project Athena, designed to support other teams.





Loud and proud in Europe

Our students are to be congratulated on delivering a professional standard concert tour, writes Director of Music **Kimball Harding**



On the last day of Term 2, 48 students from Years 7-12 waved goodbye to their parents, hefted instrument cases onto their shoulders, tamped down the excitement threatening to burst out and boarded a plane headed for Milan, Italy. These girls (and five staff members) formed the Abbotsleigh 2017 European Concert Tour Ensemble. During the previous nine months, they had been preparing a 90-minute, entirely Australian, concert program for presentation in venues across Italy, Slovenia, Croatia and Austria.

The ensemble consisted of Chamber Orchestra and Choir. Not only was the program challenging technically but it also pushed the boundaries of the students' conceptual understanding of music, with sound worlds ranging from more popular idioms, to references of Baroque Western Art Music and also some examples of modernist musical language, all of which spoke to the multi-layered and complex cultural identity of Australia.

The tour allowed time to visit some amazing sights, such as the Milan Cathedral. The girls had a performance once every two days, the first being at the Ultrapadrum Festival at a historic palazzo in Casteggio, built circa 1700.

Next stop was the Mediterranean coastal city of Genoa, where we learnt about the rich and often turbulent history of the sea-faring Genovese.

It was spectacular to see how much sightseeing and shopping the girls could squeeze in before their concert at the beautifully ornate baroque church, Santuario Nostra Signore del Suffragio, in the town of Recco. The crowd was effusive, showering the girls with long applause, speeches, gifts and foccacia. Very sleepy students bundled onto the bus to travel across to Pisa, Lucca and Florence. The Palazzo Vecchio was an absolute highlight with its fabulous frescos and sculptures by Renaissance masters. In Florence, we were part of an intimate concert at the Church of Santi Apostoli.

In Venice, we were shown around the fascinating Cannaregio area, the first ghetto in the world established under the Venetian Republic, and also the visited Peggy Guggenheim's house (or palace), one of the great Guggenheim museums of modern art. Unfortunately, there was no time to visit the Venetian Biennale, but the concert at San Pietro di Castello certainly had a very festive feel.

On the way to Slovenia, we stopped at the amazing Postojna Caves before arriving at the picturesque and romantic capital Ljubljana. This is a city whose central statue and muse is a poet who suffered unrequited love, where Gustav Mahler founded the symphony orchestra and where the bridges are guarded by the local totem, a dragon.

All the girls fell in love with this city and vowed to return. Concerts were interspersed with cycle tours around alpine lakes, the famous Bled cream cakes and a day trip to the Croatian capital, Zagreb.

Vienna was our final stop, where, along with thousands of other young people who had come to Austria for the International Summa Cum Laude Youth Festival, Abbotsleigh was at St Stephen's Cathedral. The grandeur and history of Vienna was extraordinary. With so much to see, the group needed to divide and conquer: some explored the Opera House; others took in the artwork at the Albertina; and some simply walked around central Vienna, looking at the grand architecture.

We performed at the home of the Vienna Boys Choir (MuTH), which had much dryer acoustics than we expected, and also at the Musikverein, the concert hall that houses the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. After such lofty venues, we enjoyed some downtime at the local amusement park, the Prater, where even some of the teachers were persuaded to take on the rollercoasters.

After a very early departure from the hotel, and some delays on our flights home, the group arrived back home in Sydney exhausted, exhilarated and wanting to do it all over again!



Laura McDonald returns to Abbotsleigh

A very special masterclass was a source of great inspiration to a lucky group of our senior musicians, writes Director of Music, **Kimballi Harding**

W

World-renowned pianist Laura McDonald (1991) returned to the School in August to hold a masterclass with students. After graduating from Abbotsleigh, Laura went on to study a Bachelor of Music at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music where she graduated with 1st class Honours in piano performance. She was awarded a full travelling scholarship from Sydney University, and continued her studies in Fiesole, Italy and Moscow, Russia.

While abroad, Laura competed in international piano competitions and was awarded first place in the Concorso Pausilipon in Italy, and second place and the People's Choice prize at the Concorso Internacional Jean in Spain. She has also performed at the Concorso Pozzoli in Italy; the 1997 Hamamatsu in Japan; the 2000 Warsaw Chopin Competition and the 2004 Sydney international competition.

Laura was highly engaging and gave excellent constructive feedback, providing me with a greater insight into the musical and technical understanding of my piece, and shaping me more as a pianist. Her masterclass also allowed me to identify what aspects I needed to put more work into, motivating me to improve the quality of my performance. The masterclass certainly benefitted me as a musician and passionate pianist, and my sincere appreciation goes to Laura for giving up her time to provide us with this rewarding opportunity.

Sophie Looi, 10R

My experience with Laura McDonald was very beneficial, as she provided a professional approach to technically and musically improving my piece. It was an exceptionally helpful masterclass session, and I found her critical feedback very valuable.

Madelie Joubert, 11F

Shabbots more popular than ever

Like the participants from Abbotsleigh and Shore, Crusaders Coordinator **Victoria Bell** loves the annual weekend camp



Since 2014, the Abbotsleigh Crusaders group has enjoyed a growing partnership with Shore school. In addition to casual meetings throughout the year, our main focus is the annual camp over the June long weekend – affectionately named 'Shabbots'. We have seen a pleasing growth in numbers, from 43 girls and 11 boys in the inaugural year to 66 girls and 33 boys in 2017. The camp is largely student-led, with a combined team from both schools creating the program and running the activities. We always include a service element: this year the students packaged art supplies, that they donated to Bear Cottage, the children's hospice in Manly.

Year 10 student Angela Seitan sums up what makes Shabbots so special for her. '*Cru weekend away is a wonderful camp that I love being a part of every year. This year my big takeaway was that God's love can guide me through anything I face in life. It really empowered me to know that even through my toughest times in life, God's light can guide me through it. Learning in fellowship with my brothers in Christ gave me the opportunity to grow in my faith, as they experience different things with their faith than I do at Abbotsleigh. Shabbots always leaves me so encouraged, as we are fully immersed in the Bible throughout the whole camp.*'



A German adventure

Hamburg, Munich and Austria were on the itinerary of a lucky group of German language students, reports Head of Languages **Janet Lloyd**

T

Trips to Germany are offered every two years to students studying German in Years 9 and 10. The trips are designed to enrich the girls' cultural knowledge, give them opportunities to speak the language with native speakers and experience German home life with a family during the homestay component.

In April, 15 girls visited Germany in the school holidays to try out their language skills. After three days in Berlin, visiting the iconic monuments and learning about the fascinating history of this city, the group travelled to Hamburg to stay with German families and attend a local private school. Interestingly, the vast majority of schools in Germany are public. The students all enjoyed this challenging but satisfying week with their host families and found school life to be very different from here. The girls were intrigued to learn that the German students are not required to wear a school uniform and that the classes are co-ed. As well, there are no assemblies and no tutor time, so it is up to the students to read the notice board and organise themselves for their activities and, if a teacher is absent, then the students are not required at school!

After Hamburg, our group travelled by fast train to another German-speaking country, Austria, where they enjoyed being in Salzburg and attended the *Sound of Music* and the Salt Mines tours.

The trip finished with five days in Munich, with bike rides, castle visits, a tour of Dachau, trying on national costumes, an afternoon at the movies (*The Smurfs* in German) and a visit to one of the largest thermal baths in Europe.

The girls gained much from the trip, one of them summing up the general mood when she said that it 'significantly improved her German communication skills and confidence'.



Differentiation for inclusion

Reading the Bible in different languages can deepen understanding, writes Christian Studies Teacher, **Ann Lim**

MMy intention as a teacher is to communicate meaning. As a trained language teacher and speaker of Korean and Japanese, I see meaning as separate from words. As a result, I am happy for my students to acquire understanding without the necessary dependence on any particular language. In my class, girls are free to read the Bible in any language they please. Having studied semantics in my MA Applied Linguistics, I know that each language brings its own beauty and depth to each concept. I don't want to cheat my students by not allowing them access to what their heart language could open up to them. I know God speaks all languages and he communicates with hearts.

Recently I encouraged my Year 10 ESL students to use Chinese when completing the visual representation section of their assignment. They were asked to explore Philippians 2:5-11.

I was hoping that this differentiation would not only bring about deeper learning, but encourage them to speak up more and share their unique perspectives.

I asked them how this had affected their learning, their confidence to interact in class and how they plan to use their heart language to enrich their learning in the future.

Yuelanda Dai: *'By reading and writing the Bible chapter in Chinese, I am able to understand the meaning and concepts deeper. Reading the Bible in both languages gave me multiple ideas of the chapter, therefore enabling me to*

think of the topic in different ways. By understanding the Bible from different perspectives and opinions, I am able to express my ideas deeper to my class and discuss with them the things and ideas I had learnt from the Chinese version of the Bible. I plan to read some articles from the internet in both languages to get a better understanding of the Bible.'

Alison Tung: *'I feel more connected to my work using Chinese. It makes me feel more relaxed and I can explain how I interpret Philippians more. It also makes me feel that the assignment is less complicated as some words in Chinese can explain better than using English.'*

Sonia Shen: *'I have never tried this before, but using Chinese to complete my assignment makes me feel comfortable and confident, and it's the first time I thought being Chinese could be unique in an English-speaking school. Writing my assignment in Chinese helps me understand the context better, because my Chinese literature level is higher than my English. And also, the Chinese Bible gives a different portrayal, and for me, a deeper understanding.'*

I believe this approach has the potential to be a powerful tool for deepening learning, improving students' ability and confidence to express themselves in English and empowering them to contribute their ideas, enriching their learning environments.

I want to thank the Professional Learning Meeting, the original forum in which this idea was shared. As we have discussed differentiation together, I have become a better educator.



BOOK tasting RESERVATION ONLY!



Café Palmer's tasting menu

Book tastings at a transformed Palmer Library saw a record number of girls completing the Abbotsleigh Reading Challenge, write Head of Junior School Library, **Sue Krust** and Teacher Librarian, **Tania Moriarty**

What is the Abbotsleigh Reading Challenge?

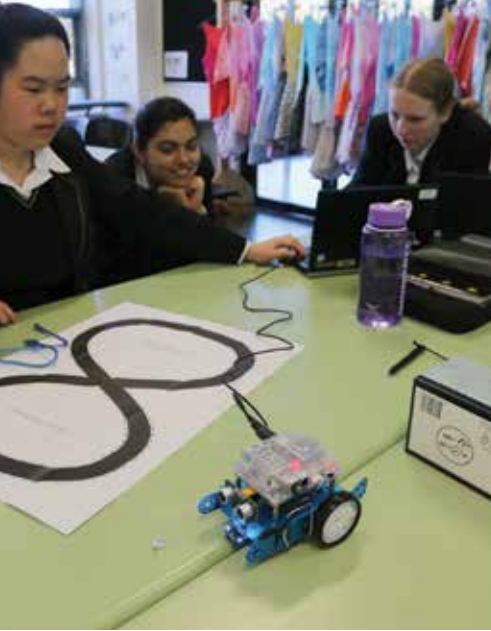
The Abbotsleigh Reading Challenge (ARC) is a genre-based reading program for all girls in Years 4-6. It was introduced in 2011 and each year has had a slightly different focus. This year, the focus has been on 'tasting' the books, learning which will satisfy us for recreational reading.

Library lessons in Café Palmer

Palmer Library was transformed into Café Palmer by using black tablecloths, flowers and (battery-operated) candles. To introduce each genre, a chapter or excerpt from a book was read in the lower level of the library. Discussion about the genre, and the use of the 'cliffhanger' excerpt, set the scene for an enjoyable 'book tasting'. Students moved to the café, and chose a book that 'grabbed their taste buds' from the selection on the tables. The 'tasting' followed, when the girls silently read several pages, exploring the book beyond its initial appeal. Students reflected on their experience of the book in their Menu booklet.

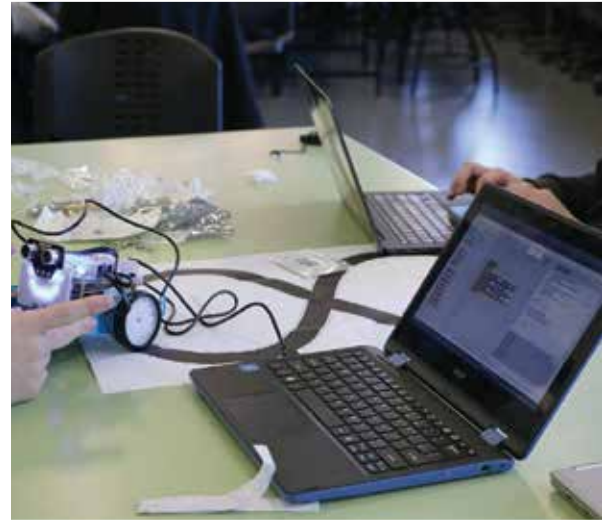
Café Palmer's success with staff and students

Café Palmer kept the students excited about reading throughout Term 2. Each week would bring a new genre and a new excitement: 'Which books will we be tasting today?' The ultimate success was not only in the record number of students who completed the ARC, but also in the independent selection of books in a previously unknown genre. Café Palmer was the perfect introduction to a variety of books for a reading feast.



Talking in codes

STEM has never been more exciting, says Year 11 student, **Georgina Caprioli**



In August, Year 9 and 10 IST and Year 11 SDD girls spent a day in the Maker Education Space learning about coding, robotics and upcoming opportunities. We heard from coding expert Professor Branka Vucetic, a woman who has made incredible leaps in STEM research. She told us her story and the possibilities for STEM women in the future. Following her inspirational talk, she presented Abbotsleigh with eight 'mBots' – programmable robots that can be used for practice and to encourage and inspire girls to pursue STEM subjects.

We then worked in small groups to solve a variety of coding problems. At the end of the exercise, we had all learnt something new, and had enjoyed doing so. We assembled our new robots and experimented with software for them. We enjoyed the building process and getting creative with the movement of the robot and its facial features. The whole day was filled with fun activities, programming robots and learning about the future of STEM for Abbotsleigh girls.



An international outlook

Different cultures come together at Embrace Global, says the group's Patron, **Ann Lim**

Embrace Global is a student-led group, started in 2014, whose members are international students or those whose families live overseas. We aim to know our members, help them express their ideas and to answer their questions so they feel empowered to contribute their gifts to Abbotsleigh.

This year we have had the pleasure of getting to know our exchange students. Groups from France, Japan, China and the US talked about their experiences of life in Australia in comparison to their home schools. We also heard from Claire Eaton, a returned exchange student to China. As well as playing games such as 'What Australian food is that?' and 'Which country is this from?', we watch movies and get invaluable advice about subject choices from Careers Advisor, Mrs Selby.

Here's what some of our Embrace Global members have to say:

'I get to know different people from different places, I really enjoy the meetings.' **Alison Tung, Year 10.**

'It is a place where we can talk to each other and have fun.' **Jane Yang, Year 8.**

'I love it because everyone is so friendly and we can chat across all year groups and share our experiences coming from different global cultures. It's really nice to say 'Hi' in the corridors to people you meet in Embrace Global, and the food is great – so many Asian specials!'

Elizabeth Zhang, Year 10.

Mrs Jia Jia Hammerton, Senior School Languages Teacher adds, *'There are various aspects of Embrace Global that I adore, the main one being that it provides a platform for girls who are usually quietly spoken and enables them to step out of their shells and step up to be leaders.'*



Thank you for your support in 2017 – your gifts have made this all possible

A New Maker Education Space will welcome the girls in the Junior School in Term 1 2018: a place where girls can gather to create, invent, tinker, explore and discover using a variety of tools and materials in a space that invites learning.



More than \$150,000 profit was raised for Indigenous Scholarships at the Leather and Laces Sports Lunch – the highest amount ever achieved in the six years of the event. You can read more about the 2017 Sports Lunch on page 5.



Two means-tested Foundation Scholarships were provided to girls entering Year 10, covering 50% of their tuition fees for the remainder of their schooling. Your gifts contribute to giving these girls an education that they may not have otherwise experienced.



Other works include renovation of the female toilets and change rooms in the Aquatic Centre, resurfacing of the Junior School sports courts, new ceilings to the seminar rooms in the ARC and pedestrian access and landscaping to Gate 2 in the Senior School, along with continued upgrading and maintenance on both campuses



Thanks to your support, Abbotsleigh has contributed to the education of 21 Indigenous Scholarship students since 2008. Indigenous scholars Tyesha Armstrong and Lena-Jade Cochrane graduated from Year 12 after six years in the Senior School.



The Foundation's Library Fund continues to support the libraries' activities. This year has seen a 10% increase in the number of e-books borrowed, while Betty the mobile library van (launched in Term 2) travels around the Senior School campus at lunchtime with books for on the spot borrowing. Planning is well underway for the 2018 Literary Festival in Term 2.



Warm thanks to all who supported the Foundation's work in 2017.

Thank you also to those who have chosen to remember Abbotsleigh in their wills.

A final thank you

This year we farewelled Foundation directors Colin Roden, Margaret Sachs and Anthony Serhan; three most generous individuals who together, contributed an incredible total of 52 years of volunteering on the Foundation Board.

Abbotsleigh Commemorative pavers



ABBOTSLEIGH
FOUNDATION



To celebrate Abbotsleigh's long years of educating women, in 2005 we inaugurated a program of commemorative pavers to record the thousands of links that Old Girls, past parents, former staff and past Council members collectively have with the School.

We invite you to commemorate your personal links with Abbotsleigh by ordering a brick engraved with your name and the years of your connection with the School.

Gifts of \$500 or more to the Abbotsleigh Foundation's Building, Scholarship or Library Fund can be recognised with a commemorative paver.

A tax deductible gift of \$500 will support the School's ongoing development.

For further information, please contact the Development Manager,
Danielle Cotter on 9473 7738 or email cotterd@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au

A Christmas gift that gives

The scarf, priced at \$100, is beautifully packaged in a quality black gift box and measures 180 x 50 cm.

To order, please email Development Manager Danielle Cotter at cotterd@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au or phone 02 9473 7738.

About the artwork and artist

Shedding Totem: Kamilaroi Bloodlines

Artwork by Hannah Ranby

2013 Abbotsleigh Old Girl and Indigenous Scholarship recipient

This scarf is a reproduction of a lino print created by Hannah in 2013 as part of her HSC body of work. The design evokes the patterns found in bark and trees, revealing the natural habitat of the carpet snake, Hannah's totem.

Indigenous Scholarships at Abbotsleigh

Abbotsleigh welcomed its first Indigenous Scholarship students in 2008 and since then, Abbotsleigh and the Abbotsleigh Foundation working in partnership with Yalari, have enabled 19 Indigenous girls to gain an Abbotsleigh education.

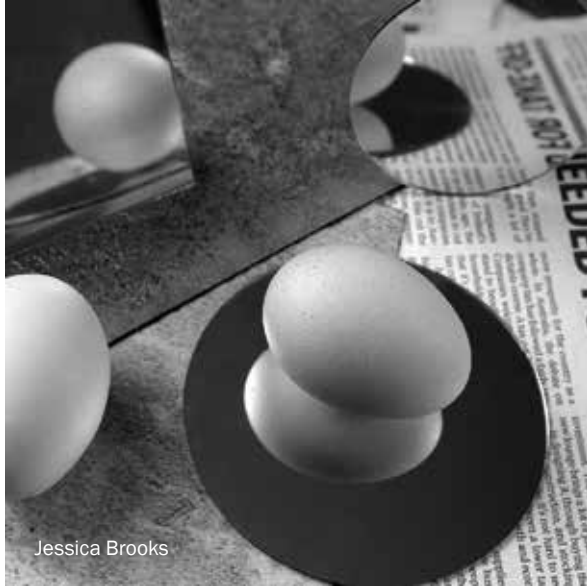
These scholarships are made possible by the ongoing generosity of the School's community – profits from the sale of these scarves will support Indigenous Scholarships at Abbotsleigh.

For more information visit www.abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au/giving.





Amelia Ballantyne



Jessica Brooks



Elbertine Chai



Miriam Keogh



Rachael McDonald



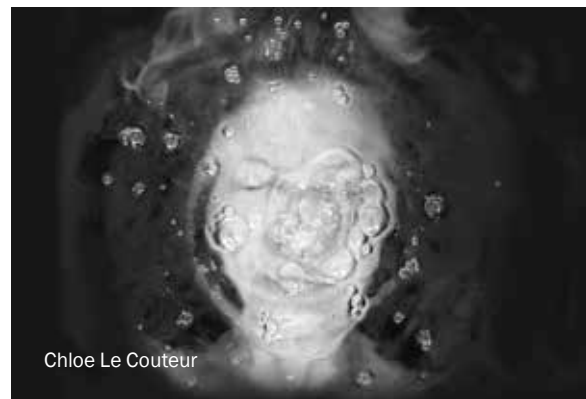
Madeleine O'Meara



Jacqueline Truong



Macy Chong



Chloe Le Couteur



Cynthia Ojah



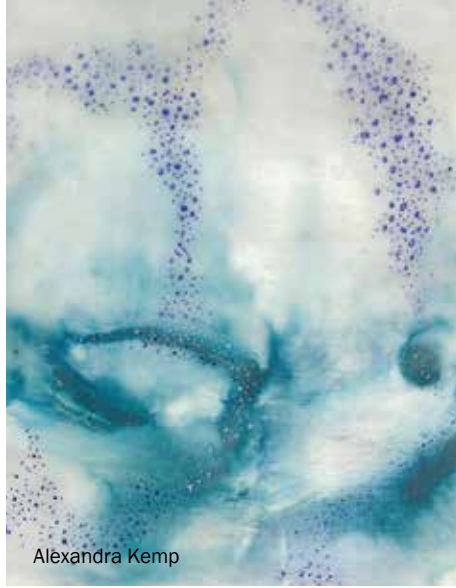
Rachel Lau



Uma Martens



Thea Hayes

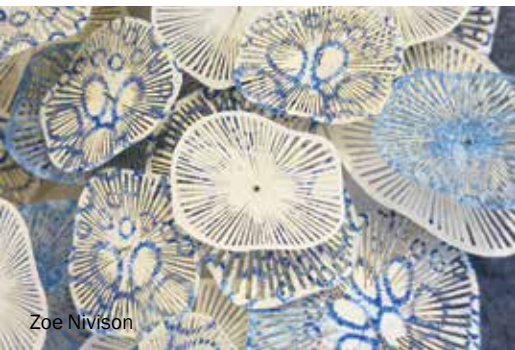


Alexandra Kemp



Cindy Gu

ABBOTSLEIGH 2017 VISUAL ARTS HSC BODY OF WORK



Zoe Nivison



Molly Rennie



Saffron Sylvester



Juliet Farlow



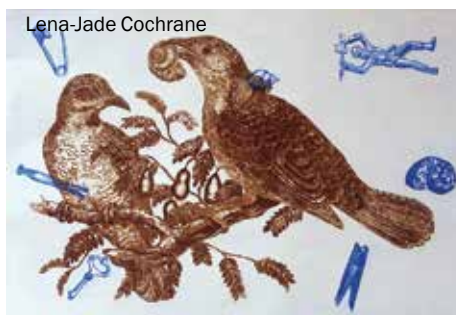
Sarah Flint



Adelaide Cloros



Eliza Hannah



Lena-Jade Cochrane



Stella Zhang



Gabrielle Stevens



Nicole Holborrow



Adele Laurie



Madison Samali



Sophia Nicita





2017 HSC MAJOR DESIGN PROJECT ABBOTSLEIGH DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY



Rose Murray



Chloe Le Coureur



The art of education

Curating exhibitions for learning makes the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery unique, explains its director **Mary Faith**

Abbotsleigh is unique among schools across Australia in initiating and resourcing the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery, open to the public six days a week, 48 weeks a year. Since 2013 the exhibition program has connected the gallery with contemporary artists, the education community and the local area.

In 2014 the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), Sydney University and the Australia Council for the Arts acknowledged in a short video¹ presentation that participation in the arts at school has valuable and long-term benefits for children of all ages and abilities, in terms of both academic and non-academic outcomes and achievements.

The provision of opportunities to develop creative thinking skills, enhance effective problem solving and enable social communication are essential aspects of the education requirements for the '21st century learner'. The gallery is a physical acknowledgement of the powerful place the arts hold in stimulating teaching and learning.

The focus on curating exhibitions for learning is a unique situation in the Australian gallery world, and it places Abbotsleigh at the forefront of inspired education. Because the gallery is located on a school campus and the gallery staff have prior teaching experience, exhibitions can be designed to integrate multiple learning outcomes, while still holding broad appeal for the wider community.

This year there have been two exhibitions curated in consultation with Abbotsleigh Heads of Department. In Term 2 the exhibition *Cut Fold Shape* evolved in collaboration with Ms Terri Moore, Head of Technological and Applied Studies. The elements of cutting, folding and shaping, which underpin the work of Abbotsleigh's textile and fashion students, were revealed in the vintage fashion designs of international designers Christian Dior and Madame Vionnet and the accompanying pattern pieces created a visual record of their designs. Works by the artists Sue Pedley, Donna Sgro, Kate Scardifield and Yasmina Black expanded the concept. The creative hands-on worktable facilitated making activities and personal and imaginative responses to the ideas of the artists and designers. This exhibition provided teachers across a range of subjects with an active-engagement opportunity with their classes.

The exhibition *Seeing Science* was planned in consultation with Head of Science Ms Kathryn Fraser and the Science Department. Art and Science both demand a balance of curiosity, knowledge, imagination and patience. The science laboratory and the artist's studio are places of open-ended enquiry, revolving around thinking and doing, and both acknowledge that failure can be a significant and reflective part of their process.

As noted American programmer, artist and STEAM² advocate John Maeda wrote in a 2013 guest blog for Scientific American: *'With all that we have to address in the world – warming continents, fluctuating economies, monstrous cities – pursuing scientific questions in tandem with artists and designers may not seem like conventional wisdom. But given the unconventional nature and scale of the problems we face today, there is real value to be gained from collaborations that bridge the best talents we have in both the quantitative and qualitative domains. Artists and designers are the ones who help bring humanity front and center, make us care, and create answers that resonate with our values.'*³

Seeing Science exhibited works from some of Australia's finest artists pursuing scientific questions and examining the important scientific ideas of our time. Works by Julie Brooke, Maria Fernanda Cardoso, Julia Davis, Janet Laurence, Helen Pynor, Caroline Rothwell, Jack Stahel and Shona Wilson reflected on global concepts of man and his place in the environment, with specific concerns for sustainability, identity and scientific process. These works enabled teachers to generate broad discussions with students about geology and tectonic changes, biology and the human body, the environment, ecology and the nature and processes of science.

The gallery expands the boundaries of learning at Abbotsleigh. With future departmental collaborations exciting programs will continue, enabling inspiring and relevant learning through and with art.

1 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp5oAxFq2uo>

2 STEAM, Science Technology Engineering Arts and Mathematics, is an approach to learning

3 <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/artists-and-scientists-more-alike-than-different/>



Boarding, education and long-distance love

Current boarder mum **Samantha Flanery's** inspiring talk at the Year 7/8 Mother Daughter Breakfast on the mother-daughter bond and the importance of education is shared here

Abbotsleigh, thank you for asking me to speak and for providing this lovely opportunity for us all to stop, pause and enjoy each other's company as we revel in being, for want of a better description, 'mothers and daughters'. Of course, this phrase means many different things to many different people and we all know that you can be in a mother/daughter relationship without any biological connection at all. All I can say is, that because we are here, we must be celebrating a special relationship and as a result we are all very lucky.

As most of you know, I am a boarder mother and, before I go any further, I want to thank from the bottom of my heart, all the day girl mothers and parents for your generosity, care and, in some cases, love of our boarder daughters. Over my eight-year association with Abbotsleigh, I have seen endless acts of generosity, whether it be going out of your way to pick up the boarders for sport, weekend outings, trips to the doctors and sometimes just a chat, coffee and a brownie. I am not sure whether you have ever been thanked directly by a boarder parent for your generosity but I am sure that I can speak on behalf of every boarder parent in Abbotsleigh when I say that without day girl mothers' love and care of our girls the boarder experience would be so much the lesser. Less safe, less exciting, less enjoyable and less normal. Thank you.

By way of some background, Tony and I have four daughters. Isabella (21), Matilda (18), Claudia (16) and Clementine about to turn 14, and we live near a small village called Galong, which is on the south-west slopes of NSW near the bigger towns of Harden, Young and Cootamundra. We are dry land farmers, growing wheat and canola, wool and fat lambs.

Tony's family moved into the district in the late 1880s and were contract farmers until about 1900 and then, as a result of the book my father-in-law is writing, I now know that they purchased their first property in the region in 1910. On Tony's completion of his degree of Agricultural Economics at Sydney University, he returned to his parents' property and continued to work in partnership with them and his brother until 2009, after which time each sibling started operating separately, having divided the land, plant and stock.

My mother's name is Belinda Bateman, I find it very difficult to encapsulate what my mother means to me and what



she has given to me. She is everything to me, my sister and two brothers. Really the essence of my mother can be summarised in the word love; selfless unconditional love that continues to be never-ending and unquestioning even when she is angry with me.

She completed a Bachelor of Arts at Sydney University, majoring in English and History, and instilled in me many things, of course including a love of literature and reading.

ADMITTED TO BAR



MRS. TOM BATEMAN, formerly Miss Beatrice McGirr, leaving the Supreme Court yesterday morning after having been admitted by the State Full Court to practise at the Bar in New South Wales. Mrs. Bateman, who is the wife of Dr. Bateman, is a graduate of Sydney University in Arts and Law, and is the mother of a seven-month-old son, Edmund. Her husband is waiting to be called up for the R.A.A.F.

I remember being absolutely startled by the speed at which her eyes would move across the page as she read silently. It was absolutely mesmerising. I think she still reads more quickly than I do.

Mum has continued to educate herself, attaining a Diploma of Landscape Design from Ryde that she started in 1984 when I was 18 and my youngest brother was eight. She still attends weekly art classes, specialising in print making and oil painting. She was at the University of Sydney in the 1960s, a very exciting time. Clive James, Germaine Greer, Robert Hughes, Richard Neville and Richard Walsh were her peers and some were her friends. It was the beginning of the feminist movement, and it was also the beginning of the anti-Vietnam war protests, so both my parents were feminists and political. Both my mother and father instilled in me the importance of obtaining an education as a woman, as they viewed an education as a wonderful base from which you could grow for a lifetime and maintain economic independence if required.

The law has played and continues to play a huge role in my life. My father's mother was admitted to the NSW Bar in 1940

when my father Edmund was seven months old. She was the fourth woman to be so admitted to the NSW Bar. Her name was Beatrice Bateman (née McGirr), and she went on to have seven children, the third of whom was a daughter also called Beatrice, who was admitted to the Bar in or around 1968 – at that time, she was only the 16th woman to be admitted. How slow is that! Only 11 women between 1940 and 1968 admitted to the NSW Bar. Beatrice, my aunt and godmother had three boys, so when I was admitted to the NSW Supreme Court in 1990, I was the third generation of female lawyers within our family. Not surprisingly, I suppose, Izzy, our eldest, is also studying Commerce Law and is in third year at ANU. So who knows? There may be a fourth generation of female lawyers from within the Bateman family.

On graduating with a Commerce Law degree at University of NSW, I somehow wangled a job at Allen, Allen and Hemsley, which in 1991 was closest to the largest commercial law firm in Sydney, if not Australia. I must have interviewed well as my grades, whilst good, were not top of the class, and for a couple of years I worked like an absolute navvie within the construction and commercial divisions of Allen's, six days a week, 12 hours a day. I think this is what is required, to this day, of young lawyers. It was hard and unrelenting, but nevertheless challenging and exciting. I loved the city existence but the person who made me the happiest lived four hours' drive away from Sydney. So at the age of 24, I made a decision to give up my corporate legal career and marry Tony, which also meant that I knew that I would eventually be sending any children we may have to boarding school from Year 7 onwards. On reflection, it was a pretty big decision, but one that I have never regretted. Although, it does not stop my godmother to this day asking me, 'What do you do down there?' and bemoaning to my mother the legal career that I gave up.

So in 1993, I moved from the 50th floor of the MLC Centre in Martin Place to a rented home down a dirt track where the definition of a cappuccino was a teaspoon of International Roast and fluffed up milk.

However, I wasn't a complete novice to country life. My father and mother had purchased a rural property in 1972 and we had spent all our weekends on that property near Bathurst from when I was six until the age of 18. I had also attended Loreto Normanhurst as a boarder from Collaroy Plateau, where I grew up surfing, sailing and doing very urban things.

On my move to Galong, almost immediately I received a job in a one-man law firm in Cootamundra some 60 kilometres away. The fleet of trolleys, folders and team of junior and senior solicitors and barristers were replaced by a chair, desk and prisoner dressed in green on the other side of the desk. I was no longer dealing with the Leighton Holdings of the world, but found myself as a litigator specialising in criminal law, domestic violence, family law and commercial litigation. However, I loved the contact with people. They were people who really needed my help.

One of the cases that still stays with me 20 years later, involved me representing a four-month-old child in a case where the Department of Community Services was challenging the mother's capacity to care for the child. So as an 'experienced' 25-year-old, I was asked to come to a view based on the facts presented to me by the evidence, on what

would be in the best interests of that four-month-old child. The fact sheet didn't read well, neglect definitely present. However, it was not neglect due to a lack of love, it was neglect arising from poverty and lack of education. So I decided that the child should stay with the mother, and I sought orders that the mother be educated on how to turn on the oven, cook a meal, care and feed the baby. She was not drug-addicted, she was just poor. I am not really sure what happened to that baby but I do know that he lived until the age of 19 in the village that he was born in. I hope his life is okay, but I don't really know. The common thread running through many of my cases as a lawyer was poverty and little or no education. But more of that later.

Farming is an immense challenge. It is all about taking calculated risks over, bizarrely, risks you have no control over whatsoever, such as the weather. The seasons throw at you what they will throw at you and you, as a farmer, have to adapt and change with those seasons. The millennial drought was literally a killer. It went from 2002-2009 and was relentless, exhausting and soul destroying. It had a huge impact on Tony and me and indeed our little, growing family. As those of you who have seen the extract of Isabella's HSC Creative, the memories linger long. Like those who came before us, we as farmers are merely custodians of our land, and like them we really care and love it. It is not in our interest, financial or otherwise to denude our land of its bounty. It is actually in our interest to build it up. Tony and I are constantly adjusting our farming techniques to take into account the ever changing climate to ensure that we survive and that our land continues to prosper. This has meant that we have attempted to reverse past farming practices, which may have been negative, by, for example, planting thousands and thousands of eucalypt trees. I remember learning Dorothy McKellar's poem *Sunburnt Country* as a Grade 6 pupil with, to be honest, a certain sense of boredom, but now that I live it, I really appreciate the fact



that this land of ours is one of drought and flooding rains. In 2007 flash floods inundated and destroyed our fences, infrastructure and soil, during the millennial drought. That rain, when it finally fell, also brought absolute joy. Rain was novel and the children were so excited, as were we. Clementine and Claudia as eight and six-year-olds, were soaked to the skin, playing in the dirt that had become mud. However, farming is very rewarding as you can see by the crops that we grow, the grain, wool and the sheep that we produce. You can actually see the results of your hard labour pouring into the semi-trailers or being shorn on the board. The work is intense, sophisticated and consequently demanding on the entire family. As a family, we all contribute as a team to its production, particularly at sowing and harvest. We depend on wonderful employees and our working dogs to help us produce what we do, and as a result, we become very attached to our animals and have always done whatever we can to make them live, which includes bottle feeding six lambs at once, four times a day and three calves at once, three times a day, and even trips to the coast on the back seat of the ute on a wedding anniversary weekend.

Motherhood, for me, came as a complete shock. At the time it was the hardest thing I had ever done. Isabella was born as a skinny little baby with not an ounce of fat on her, and she was born hungry. She did not sleep for more than 45 minutes at once for the first three months of her life. I recall Tony coming in from a long day's work, and promptly ringing my father, who was a GP in Sydney, to ask whether anything could be wrong with her as she screamed in the background. His response



was not particularly helpful. 'No, she sounds like she has a good set of lungs on her, she's fine.'

Needless to say, with my milk supply dwindling and with very few friends in the district, I contracted mastitis and a desperate Tony rang the community nurse who in turn called on one of the many non-biological mothers who I have relied on in my life in the country. June Howe, a 60-year-old mother of eight adult children, (do the numbers) knocked on my door and introduced herself. The self-confident sense of calm that entered the house as she walked in was palpable. You have no idea how good four hours of sleep in a row could be. For the first time in my life, motherhood meant that I was no longer in control. I did not seem to be able to find solutions to what was an obvious problem. It was very tough. I had changed from being completely in control as I sat at my desk to being completely out of control as I nursed this baby.

With the help of my mother, mother-in-law and the June Howes of the world, I somehow muddled through, and many laps of the hall and many renditions of at least 10 separate nursery rhymes later, our children entered Murrumburrah Public School. This school, when Isabella started, had 260 children, but by the time Clementine finished, numbers had dwindled to 120. Primary school introduced me to a huge range of wonderful women and families with whom I am friends to this day. However, what absolutely flabbergasted me was the fact that, like when I was acting as a lawyer, poverty was ever present and I was one of the few parents who had the benefit of a double degree earned at a tertiary institution. Our girls were in class with kids whose baby teeth were rotting in their heads, and attended school in, if lucky, a dirty uniform or more likely no uniform, and often hungry. Naively, my solution to these issues was to give these families sets of uniforms, but of course they wore them once and you never saw them again because they couldn't clean them as they didn't have a washing machine. Or if they did have a washing machine, they didn't know how to operate it.

I think in the cities you can get very isolated from those who are living within your city. However, in the country, kids are learning with everyone and it became pretty apparent to me that the only solution to this inter-generational poverty was education so, together with a committee of like-minded people, we set up the Harden District Education Foundation.

Since its inception in 2002, this Foundation has raised about \$750,000. These funds have been distributed annually to about 30 Year 12 or equivalent graduates who are either going to university or entering an apprenticeship. The aim is to ease their transition from a small country town to university in huge cities. These scholarships are about \$2,000 each and are provided for accommodation and text books, ie those expenses directly related to their education.

I have seen a huge change. In 2002, I was being asked, 'What is university?'. In 2017, I am now being asked, 'Which university should I go to, Sam?' The change in our community has been enormous. This is due in large part to the unrestricted university places, but also to the fact that our

kids know that we support them beyond the age of 18, not only financially but also as mentors. Almost every scholarship recipient has been the first person within their family to have attended university. As you can hear, I am passionate about what an education can do for a person, and I have seen with my own eyes over 20 years what can happen when people are given the opportunity to earn genuine money and contribute to communities.

Needless to say, the contrast between the education our daughters receive at Abbotsleigh, which is littered with extension, opportunities and wonderfully dedicated teachers, and the local high school education received in Harden, is stark.

Sending your daughters to boarding school is such a hard thing to do – probably the second hardest thing for me after getting my girls past the first 12 months of their life! When homesickness sets in, I just keep asking myself the question, without Abbotsleigh where would our girls be? The love of the teachers, the friendships – they are things that can never be replaced or substituted, let alone the education they have received.

Tony's and my love of our daughters remains unchanged. We see them frequently and speak to each of them nightly, not to mention the emails and texts. But it never gets any easier.

In 2009, when Isabella was in Year 7, she used to call seven nights a week and cried for the entire phone call for the first eight months of that year. Gosh, it was hard. However, interestingly, whenever I have asked, 'Well do you want to come home?' the answer has always been 'No!' They all know how lucky they are. Fortunately, I was in the position of always saying, 'I'll see you on the weekend,' and – lo and behold – we found eight wonderful years have passed with another four to come.

On that note, I would like you to raise your glasses of orange juice or coffee and take a sip as we toast the mothers and daughters and teachers of Year 7 and 8 Abbotsleigh 2017.



BE PART OF THE DAISY CLUB

The Daisy Club is an initiative of the Abbotsleigh Boarder Parents' Association, started by boarder parents who wanted to find a way to give back to the School. Since its inception in 2007, with the generous support of past and present Abbotsleigh families, it has raised more than \$100,000 for a variety of projects.

Don't have room for a cow or sheep at your address? Don't worry! There are other ways you can help the Daisy Club. You can grow your own magnetic herd on your fridge by ordering one (or a family) of these cute magnets



CALF

\$50



COW

\$100



BULL

\$200

Or go a step further and be part of Daisy Double Up. The Double Up allows a day or non-boarding family to share ownership of a calf with a boarding family. A family contributes \$500 to the Daisy Club and this covers half the initial cost of the calf, which a boarding family will manage and raise until it is ready to be sold. The supporter family receives two ear tags to remind you of your calf.

These brightly coloured ear tags can be used as key rings or bag tags. A third one is sent to the agisting family to identify the calf. You'll also receive updates and photos from your calf's boarding family. It's a great way for city and rural families to interact.

To purchase a Daisy Club fridge magnet please visit: www.trybooking.com/290831

To enquire about Daisy Double Up, please contact Selena Sylvester at selena@sylvestercattleco.com.au or on 0427 468 125.

Thank you for your interest in this important fundraising project supporting Abbotsleigh.





Around Abbotsleigh



AbbTen Father Daughter Tennis



In 1961, the Wyndham Scheme was approved for introduction in NSW secondary schools and so, in 1962, we were the first year faced with six – not five – long high school years stuck in school uniform. Also for the first time, some students were actually old enough to drive, drink in a pub and join the armed services – but not (yet) to vote!

Wyndham was an exciting government experiment with unfolding ramifications. The old Leaving Certificate finished in 1965, so we found ourselves head of the School in 1966 and 1967. This offered considerably expanded opportunities to participate in rotating leadership roles across houses, clubs, sport, theatre, music and prefect positions.

The new syllabuses were written largely by university professors with grand visions but the writing of text books lagged behind. In Science, the infamous Messel textbook tome didn't hit our desks until 1964. We faced the School Certificate in 1965, then our HSC exams, with no past papers to practise on. All of us, teachers and students, were flying blind.

This extra year of high school also catapulted teachers and students into a new kind of relationship, since by our final year we were very much young adults. Our teachers grasped this shift and encouraged discussion and engagement beyond the classroom. We attended concerts at the Town Hall and science forums, saw early computers at IBM and the opening of the Coaxial Cable linking Australia to the world, and sometimes travelled to events on our own.

Matching the change, Commonwealth funding kicked off a massive building spree including a new science and library block, classrooms to house 120 more students, the Chapel and Assembly Hall with stage and music facilities that leveraged musical, orchestral and choral extravaganzas not previously possible. This was a big shift from our Year 7 school assemblies sitting in rows on the gym floor, performing Shakespeare Festivals among the Read House gardens and, for the want of rooms, having some classes on the lawn.

Subject choices were broad. Art, once deemed a soft subject, was recognised for university entry whereas sewing all but disappeared. The School also had to find time for the sports and PE required by the Wyndham syllabus. Who could forget marching around the Oval on a winter's morning after assembly? We also scored another year of the Tildesley – and an extra year of Lifesaving.

Retrospectively, the '60s was a period of significant social change and it is reasonable to claim the Wyndham Scheme was a timely shift that served us well to tackle these uncharted waters. Of course, at Abbotsleigh we were also blessed with an extraordinary headmistress. Intellectually formidable and fearless in the face of controversy, Betty Archdale knew how to navigate change. Importantly, she understood the zone of ambiguity in which we found ourselves by Year 12 – young adults, but still at school. She grasped the defining controversies of those times: the Vietnam War, conscription, student activism, sexual liberation, contraception and the psychedelic counterculture, and excited our participation in the big debates long before we left the premises!

Not all girls stayed for Year 12, since the HSC was intended to gear students for university. For some the shift to six years simply felt too long. For many of our families the unexpected impost of another full year's fees was quite a financial strain. As for us – the guinea pigs – we were part of something quite unique and continue to value the trajectory we found ourselves on.

Thanks to Greta Archbold (Brown), Wendy Blaxland, Penny Carnaby (Dawkins), Joanna de Burgh, Moira Dondas (Ferguson), Fran Everingham, Jan Grose (McKay), Helen Hudson (Charlton), Libby King (Davenport), Pauline McMurchie (Bates), Viki Menlove (Turner), Mariamma Mitchell (Judy Peterson), Marion Moran (Martin), Penny Murray (Robbie), Barbara Podger (Pain), Dee Read, Rosemary Signorelli (Johnstone) and Lyndall Stackpool (Hudson) for their valuable contributions.



From opera singer to preacher

It's an unusual career trajectory but **Esther Brazil (2004)** is elated and excited to leave the stage for the pulpit

I've made a career change. After having my Carnegie Hall and BBC Proms solo artist debuts a couple of years ago and then giving birth to my daughter, Beatrice, I'm leaving full-time music. I'm currently in discernment about my vocation to the Anglican priesthood. In the meantime, I have been very lucky to be appointed the new Ministerial Assistant at the beautiful and historic University Church of St Mary the Virgin in Oxford (just a stone's throw from my old college, Queen's, where I studied Philosophy and Theology from 2005-2008, with the generous help of a prize from Abbotsleigh).

The University Church is an awe-inspiring place: Thomas Cranmer was tried there for blasphemy and heresy during the reign of the Catholic queen, Mary Tudor, then burned at the stake around the corner on Broad Street; John Wesley preached there; and John Henry Newman, founder of the Oxford Movement (which is very close to my heart), was the vicar there before he became a Roman Catholic and left the Church of England. At some point in the year I will get the chance to preach from Newman's pulpit, which is a terrifying and wonderful prospect! I will hold the post for a year.

Postcard from the past

Three Abbotsleigh Old Girls were involved in the Old Government House performance of *Pioneers in Petticoats*, writes **Brigid O'Sullivan (1981)**



This one-woman show, written by Old Girl Wendy Blaxland (1967), directed by her daughter Jessica Blaxland-Ashby (2006) and starring Brigid O'Sullivan (1981), was performed at Old Government House on Sunday September 2017. It has been performed at a variety of historic settings as well as enjoying two successful school runs in Sydney and regional NSW.

Pioneers in Petticoats brings to life four charismatic colonial Australian women. In 1791, First Fleet convict Mary Bryant escaped the colony in an open boat to Batavia (now Timor) with tragic results; child pioneer Eliza Hawkins travelled on a bullock dray to Bathurst; unsung scientist Fanny Macleay, eldest of six unmarried daughters of the Colonial Secretary; and legendary celebrity Lola Montez, who performed her Spider Dance at the Ballarat goldfields in the 1850s.

Playing all four roles, as well as multiple roles within each role, was certainly a challenge.

Both Wendy and Jessica are North Shore residents and are key drivers in the Save Marian Street Theatre campaign, having directed and written for the theatre on many occasions. Brigid recently directed MSTYP's July production of *Beauty and The Beast*.

The women behind THE Rural Woman

Empowering rural women 'to thrive, heal, evolve and bloom where they are planted' is the mission behind an inspirational network business initiated by **Phoebe Maroulis (Chick, 1992)** in partnership with her friend Rebel Black



Abbotsleigh Old Girl Phoebe Maroulis and Rebel Black are keenly aware of the challenges and struggles rural women face on a daily basis. Both were born and raised in rural Australia and have, at times, experienced feelings of isolation, anxiety and being overwhelmed and completely burnt out.

Long-term advocates, supporters and contributors to rural communities, particularly in NSW, they have been actively involved in community development – both voluntarily and in a paid capacity. However, despite decades of time, energy and monetary investment, Phoebe and Rebel became increasingly concerned by the decline in wellbeing they were seeing in the communities around them. They recognised a serious gap in the support being offered, particularly to women, and realised that with their different skills and business backgrounds they were in a position to help.

Phoebe and Rebel embarked on an ambitious plan to build a global community of rural women that would provide ongoing support for such women to 'bloom where they are planted'. In 2015, this became a company called THE Rural Woman.

The mission behind THE (Thriving, Healing, Evolving) Rural Woman is to build a community of thousands of women who, in turn, are growing thriving communities, positively affecting millions of other women.

Rebel, who ran a successful health and business coaching practice from the Opal Fields at Lightning Ridge, was aware of the ripple effect that her ongoing support was having with clients and Phoebe, whose career background is in agribusiness and community development, had observed that where there was longer term support available for individuals it had a beneficial effect on their communities.

Both women were concerned about the 'very cyclical nature of support in rural communities. When there is a drought, there is government investment in workshops and counselling but when the drought breaks, it disappears – until the next

natural disaster,' says Phoebe. 'We are heavily invested in 'leadership' development. It goes without saying that if we have thriving individuals who are well supported to grow and thrive, the community is more likely to reflect this.'

Through its website, blogs and workshops, THE Rural Woman (theruralwoman.com.au) aims to reverse the trend of rural decline through a genuinely collaborative global online community connecting millions of rural women, who support each other to realise their full potential. The outcome is vibrant and dynamic rural communities experiencing unprecedented growth and opportunity. It helps rural women overcome their most prominent barrier to reaching their full potential – isolation.

'We believe the antidote to isolation is connection. We provide safe, supportive and creative online learning, networking and transformational spaces and experiences to explore and expand life's edge – without leaving the bush!'

Our online educational hubs, bespoke coaching and consulting programs, business, leadership and personal development events and publishing platforms provide pathways for connection. It enables women to host and participate in online events and activities; engage socially through groups and forums; network professionally and personally; use and contribute to a huge library of resources and training; buy and sell in an online marketplace tailored for rural women; be inspired and inspire in return!

Once a rural woman strengthens her connection, we have found she just wants to share, so we have created the ultimate connection point and a 'never feel isolated again' solution for all rural women. #livelocalgrowglobal'

Responding to the changing demands of family, Phoebe has now left the business on an official level but is still deeply involved in supporting the mission of rural women blooming where they are planted.

Berenice Eastman (Rule-Taylor, 1945)



Congratulations to Berenice Eastman, one of Tasmania's favourite authors and writers, who turned 90 recently. Among other books, Berenice wrote the Nan Chauncy biography *A Writer's Life*, and to celebrate her 90th birthday she launched a book filled with her own memories, *My Capacious Hold-All of Recollections*. It recounts not only her own stories but those of many of her contemporaries, including musicians, actors, writers and teachers, and the lives and aspirations of the women of the Hamilton Literary Society.

Katie Wood (1986)



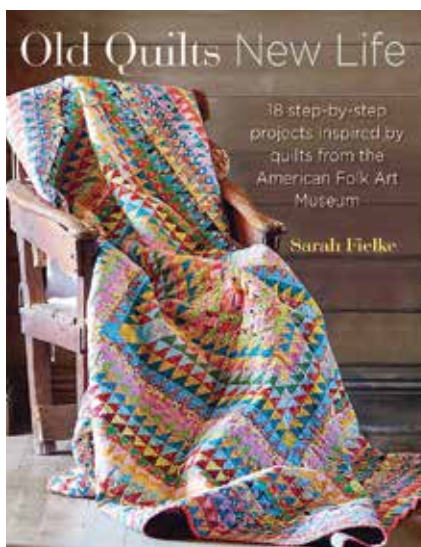
Katie Wood is the Legal and Governance Manager at Amnesty International Australia. She recently spoke in Senior School assembly as part of Refugee Week and World Refugee Day on 20 June. As we face the biggest displacement of people since the end of World War II, Katie reminded us that 'each individual has the power to change the world' and urged the girls to use their young voices to help create change.

Asked why she became involved in human rights work, Katie said: *'I am fortunate to be the lawyer for Amnesty International Australia. I have been working there – in various different roles, including as a volunteer – since 2001. I say 'fortunate' as I'm part of a movement of some seven million people all around the world who work to see human rights recognised for every single person on this planet. We use our combined voices to defend the rights of those who are unable to do so themselves.*

My understanding of human rights came in part from my time at Abbotsleigh, back in the dim, distant 1980s. We were taught to look out for others, to help the vulnerable and to stand up for what we believed in. We learnt that as individuals we are strong, but we are so much stronger when we stand together. I had some amazing teachers who really embodied these principles, and I've carried them through my life. These are the foundations of human rights and of Amnesty's work.

I believe, and have always believed, that human rights matter. Treating everyone with dignity, with respect and with kindness are the only ways to create a better world.'

Katie is pictured here with Margaret Jordan (1986) current Head of Statistical Analysis at Abbotsleigh and Celeste Zhong, President of the Amnesty Club at Abbotsleigh



Sarah Fielke (Cousins, 1990)

Patchwork has been Sarah Fielke's passion. She refers to herself as a patchwork teacher who travels and teaches at quilt shows and conventions around the world. She is actually a patchwork magician. Her love for needle and thread and quilting came from her mother Gayle Cousins and Sarah is *'sure many of the girls in my year at the Junior School will remember her teaching us sewing in Year 4.*

I began sewing because of my mother; she taught me embroidery and knitting and basic sewing. It wasn't until I had had my first baby 20 years ago that I started to teach, first at my mothers' group, and to sell my quilts.'

Sarah designs patchwork fabric for Windham Fabrics, an American company, and thread collections for Aurifil Threads in Italy. She is also a prolific author. *'I have written seven bestselling quilting books, and the next two are in the works!'* she says. *'If anyone wants to see what I've been up to they can see my work at www.sarahfielke.com'*



Rebecca McGrath (1982)

Internationally experienced business leader Rebecca McGrath was recently appointed Chairman of Oz Minerals Ltd. She is the first female chair of an ASX 100 mining company and one of fewer than five female chairs in the ASX 100.

She credits her Abbotsleigh education for giving 'me a great start and a sense that all options were open to me! I think very fondly of my time at Abbotsleigh and especially my involvement in music and drama, which I have enjoyed my own children doing, too. A great all-round education makes a huge difference.'

Rebecca has spent more than 23 years as an executive in the oil industry. After completing a Bachelor of Town Planning and a Master's Degree in Applied Science she held leadership roles in this industry throughout the world and was recognised as one of the AFR/Westpac Australian 100 Women of Influence in 2014. As well as holding her leadership role at Oz Minerals Ltd (ASX), Rebecca also holds the Chair at Investa Office Management Pty Ltd and Scania Australia. As well, she is a non-executive director of ASX listed companies, Incitec Pivot Ltd and Goodman Group.

She is involved with several-not-for-profit organisations and is passionate about growing the number of women in senior leadership in Australia. She is a member of Chief Executive Women and is an ambassador for the National Association of Women in Operations.

Lydia Bilton (2013)

Budding journalist Lydia Bilton was awarded the prestigious 2017 Jacoby-Walkley Scholarship in July, accelerating her dream to work in the competitive TV industry. It will give her access to professional mentoring, a nine-week placement at Nine Network in Sydney, a four-week placement at the Walkley Foundation and TV production at AFTRS, amongst other things.

Lydia left Abbotsleigh in 2013 to study Media and Communications at Sydney University. The past four years has seen her realise a dream born when she was five years old and had her on-air debut in an ABC radio story about the Moree Hot Springs. Journalism and especially TV journalism has been Lydia's passion ever since. Abbotsleigh provided her with a platform to access this.



'I am especially grateful to Abbotsleigh for my high school education. I am particularly appreciative for the History Department for teaching me to critically analyse everything I read (an important skill in this era, where 'fake news' is abundant)! And I am particularly thankful for the wise words of my senior English teachers, Mrs Anderson and Ms Janu, both of whom meticulously edited my essays and built up my confidence in writing. I will always hold Abbotsleigh close to my heart. It is a fantastic educational institution that most definitely laid the foundations for my success at university.'

During her university studies, Lydia gained experience with a wide variety of media organisations including the ABC, News Corp, Mamamia and, most recently, an internship at the Bangkok Post in Thailand, supported by the Australia- ASEAN Council (ACC). The Jacoby-Walkley Scholarship was established in 2013 with the support of Anita Jacoby (1976), one of Australia's most respected and entrepreneurial media executives.



Wendy Bowman (Peters, 1951)

Wendy is one of the 2017 Goldman Environmental Prize recipients, an award given annually to people from six global regions for outstanding grassroots conservation. It is one of the world's most prestigious awards for grassroots activism. Wendy was nominated for decades of work supporting and promoting activism on behalf of Hunter Valley communities affected by coal mining. She was instrumental in founding Minewatch NSW to help the valley cope with mining and safeguard the landscape.

Not only was she the only woman awarded this year, she also was the oldest recipient. Wendy received an OAM in 2013 for service to the community of the Upper Hunter.



Christine Townend (Woolcott, 1962)

Be on the lookout for *A Life for Animals*, Christine Townend's latest book. She is a writer and an artist who has devoted her art to drawing attention to the rights, needs and interests of animals. In 1976, she was the founder of Animal Liberation, which works towards creating a more human and sustainable

future for all animals and she is also the managing trustee of an animal shelter in India and founded two more in the foothills of the Eastern Himalayas. She has published eight books, four of which focus on animal rights.



Helen Pickford (Charley, 1947)

Helen Charley left Australia in 1947, a week after leaving Abbotsleigh, bound for England. She travelled by converted cargo boat and remembers the voyage took six weeks. Once in London, she studied for three years at the Royal Central School and began acting professionally in 1950. When she married, her name became Helen Pickford but her stage name is Helen Lindsay, and you may have seen her in such TV series and films as *Foyle's War*, the *Ruth Rendell Mysteries*, *Mission: Impossible* and *The Wedding Date* – or in one of many West End theatres. Closer to home, she played a leading part in the National Theatres highly successful *An Inspector Calls*, which toured here in 1995.

Although Helen says she will probably not ever visit Australia again, she remembers Abbotsleigh fondly, saying, 'I enjoyed my school life and had two splendid teachers – Miss Poignand for French and an excellent English mistress. Miss Everett was Headmistress and I was a Prefect.' She may live overseas but still keeps in touch, happy to see Old Girls who visit England.

Helen's mother was an Old Girl, Jean Charley (Lindsay, 1924), and her father, Sir Lionel Lindsay was a distinguished artist, whose brother, also an artist, is even more well known, none other than Norman Lindsay. Joan Lindsay, who was married to the youngest of the Lindsay brothers, wrote *Picnic at Hanging Rock*. Artistic talent clearly runs in Helen's family.

Elva Julien

1915-2017



Mrs Elva Julien spent 21 years of her professional life at Abbotsleigh, first as an English teacher, then Head of the English Department, and then Deputy Headmistress.

Elva Taylor grew up in Bendigo. Her father and her high school English teachers instilled in her a love of literature and poetry. She matriculated with honours and won a scholarship to

Melbourne University. On completion of her Honours English and Dip Ed, she was appointed to Wangaratta High School as the only English teacher. It was there that she met theological student Guy Julien, and they married in 1941.

Soon after their first son was born in 1942, Guy joined the army as a Chaplain and served some of the war in New Guinea where his health was badly affected. In 1946, Guy was appointed Rector of country parishes in the south-west of NSW and eventually Cooma, by which time the Julien family comprised three sons and a daughter. Both Guy and Elva became fully involved in the church, education and social life of these towns. However, Guy's health worsened and by 1960 the family had to move to Sydney where Elva began lecturing in English at the University of NSW. Elva was appointed by Betty Archdale to teach English at Abbotsleigh, where her daughter Elise was later a student.

Elva found she loved teaching girls and she became an inspiring, skilful and much-loved teacher, soon becoming Head of the English Department. After Miss Archdale retired,

the new young Headmistress, Kathleen McCredie, asked her to become Deputy, a position she carried out with distinction, while still teaching senior English classes, until her retirement.

Elva became fully involved in Abbotsleigh at many levels, among them supervising the publication of *The Weaver*, encouraging creative writing, counselling and mentoring students and teachers, and overseeing administrative changes. Few people guessed that during all that time she was caring for four growing children, an ill husband and an aged mother-in-law. A warm tribute to her in *The Weaver* says, 'Underlying all her qualities is a deep Christian love which is shown in her high principles and unending tolerance.'

After her retirement in 1980, Elva retained the strong friendships she made at Abbotsleigh, while undertaking many new activities, such as Board member of Tara School; Smith Family counsellor; U3A student and lecturer; art gallery guide, member of a book club and a spinners' club; traveller to exciting places overseas; and a keen supporter of the activities of FAbBS (Former Abbotsleigh Staff). She continued her support of St Paul's Church, Wahroonga, and could now indulge her love of literature, theatre and classical music. She set a wonderful example of how to live a useful, interesting and fulfilling retirement.

At the age of 92, Elva moved to Mullumbimby to live near her three sons, and made many new friends over the next 10 years. She joined the local CWA, Scrabble Club and View Club, and the U3A creative writing group, where she was often invited to lecture on poetry and linguistics. In 2014, at the age of 98, she received the inaugural Seniors' Week Award for Positive Ageing given by the Byron Shire. Throughout her life, whenever she was sitting down, Elva's hands were always busy. For her 100th birthday Elise published a book of photographs of Elva's handiwork: embroidery, tapestry, patchwork, spinning and knitting. Right to the end Elva retained her sense of humour, her interest in other people and her strength of spirit.

Elise Julien (1968)

We remember the following Old Girls

Eleanor Bowen-Thomas
(Hudson, 1942)

Elizabeth Carr (1943)

Jane Norman (Drummond, 1952)

Marno Parsons (Murphy, 1934)

Sue Raphael (Proud, 1962)

Pam Rickard (Wallace, 1945)

Laurelle Pittaway (Chaffer, 1954)

Runa Ross (Robertson, 1944)

Zella Sandy (Austin, 1945)

Georgine Scrivener (1950)

Dee Setright (Kritsch, 1947)

Marjorie Sharp (Walters, 1944)

Mary Stephenson (Stewart, 1949)

Hilary Stride (Pym, 1944)



Emma Fahlman (Holt, 2009)

1991-2016

From joining Abbotsleigh in Year 5 to graduating in 2009, Emma thrived on the many opportunities given her at school to grow spiritually, academically and in her sporting pursuits. She was involved in T-ball, softball, netball and basketball, along with many extra-curricular activities such as debating, drama, and fundraising for charities like the National Breast Cancer Foundation. She was proud to be voted as a Prefect.

The Abbotsleigh community was infinitely supportive of Emma when her mother passed away of cancer in April 2008. Emma's resolve in the face of challenges was well tested during the ensuing senior school years but she went on to excel in her HSC and was accepted into law at the University of Technology, where her mother had lectured.

Emma pursued her law studies enthusiastically and excelled as a student. Over time she became conscious of a calling beyond law, and took time off to explore possibilities.

A new pathway working with Indigenous people in health and education opened up while living and working in Fitzroy Crossing in WA. It was a life-changing time during which she opted to pursue teaching, bringing together her

love of children, her life experiences and new passion for researching the education and learning challenges faced by Indigenous communities.

After graduating with honours from Sydney University with a Bachelor of Education, Emma chose Bourke Street Public School in Surry Hills as her first full-time teaching placement, and thrived on the challenges and joys of teaching in such a richly diverse community. Sadly, it was also her last teaching post. Emma died suddenly and unexpectedly in her sleep with a suspected heart arrhythmia in the early hours of 9 December 2016.

Emma's memory is cherished by her husband, Pontus Fahlman, whom she married in Sweden in 2016, and her family and many friends.

It would take most people at least two lifetimes to accumulate so many experiences and touch as many lives so positively as Emma did. May her legacy continue to inspire others to push through adversity to pursue possibilities, and always keep the interests of others in focus.

Jason Holt (Emma's dad)

Peggy Easter (Howell, 1941)

1924-2017



Peggy Howell was born in Quirindi NSW, where her father was a doctor. She was one of three children. The family moved to Strathfield in Sydney where Peggy was enrolled as a boarder at Abbotsleigh, and often told stories of her sleeping arrangements on open verandahs. She also used to sneak food into her serviette in the boarders' dining room if it was something she did not like.

She loved her schooldays with a great passion. Her daughter, Camilla McGeady (Easter, 1982), recalls: *'During my own schooldays, also at Abbotsleigh, Mum would repeatedly tell me "schooldays are the best days of your life".'*

Peggy was a Prefect at Abbotsleigh. Her interests in the classroom were Mathematics and she was always interested in anything creative or artistic. She was also a brilliant tennis player and played with Abbotsleigh's Tildesley Shield team.

When she left school, she enrolled at the University of Sydney to study Architecture. In those years, she met artists Lloyd Rees and Roland Wakelin who were teaching art in the faculty. They remained lifelong friends.

It was on the tennis court that she met her husband Kingsley, a fellow student. They were a perfect match. They had three children Robyn Wabitsch (Easter, 1968), Bill Easter and Camilla McGeady (Easter, 1982). Robyn and Camilla also attended Abbotsleigh, as did Peggy's niece Annabel Higgins (Schmidt, 1976).

Peggy lived in St Ives until her death at age 92. She was always mobile and alert and continued with her interests of gardening, knitting, sewing and cooking although in the last few years of her life, she suffered from macular degeneration, which made old age very difficult for a woman who had been so active. Peggy was a devoted and loving wife and mother and had all her faculties right up until the day she died.

**Robyn Wabitsch (Easter, 1968) and
Camilla McGeady (Easter, 1982)**



Mother Daughter Dinner

Nearly 100 Old Girls – mothers, daughters, aunts and grandmothers – attended the Mother Daughter Dinner this year. Headmistress Megan Krimmer and Wendy Bowman (Peters, 1951) were the guests of honour.



AOGU Networking Evening

Change is constant, speaker Tara Commerford (Bowman, 1996) reminded us at the AOGU Networking Evening. Each of us can benefit from a little entrepreneurial spirit – being brave, thinking differently and finding out how to tackle challenges. Tara has done this all her professional life. She developed LinkedIn as part of the start-up team and then stepped up as Vice President and Managing Director for GoDaddy Australia and NZ – the world’s largest technology provider dedicated to small businesses. Her advice:

- Don't let anyone tell you it can't be done
- Never think you're stuck in a career
- Rock bottom is always a good place to start again
- Your personal brand is critical to success



Card day in the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery





2017 AOGU Lunch

Jana Pretorius (2013) was the speaker at the 2017 AOGU lunch for Year 12 and offered three practical pieces of advice:

Firstly, while this may seem far off into the future, when you move out of home for the first time, take as many of your parents' towels as they will let you. More to the point, take any towel, quilt, pot, pan or old vacuum cleaner that they will part with. I guarantee your family's household items will be far nicer than anything you'd be willing to buy, and they'll make your life much easier when you're first living on your own.

Number two, and I know you all may hate me for saying it – sleep and exercise, sleep and exercise, sleep and exercise. You'll be happy to know that once you start university, napping is a widely accepted and encouraged practice among all students.

Number three, call your mum. It's easy to get caught up in the excitement of having independence and freedom, but always call your mum. As much as I don't want to admit it, my mum knows just about everything.



Old Girl in the Archibald

This year 55 Old Girls and friends visited the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman exhibition and enjoyed a wonderful and informative tour. It was truly special to see to artist and Old Girl Vanessa Stockard (1993) amongst the finalists in the Archibald for her self-portrait. Old Girls who enjoy this tour and those interested in art can look forward to another fabulous get-together on Friday 25 May 2018.



1967 50 year reunion

It's hard to believe that we left Abbotsleigh 50 years ago, after being the first year to stay at school for up to six years of secondary education and (for most of us) to face the first HSC. Two years as school leaders!

A lively group met on Saturday 16 September for afternoon tea outside what is now the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery, which many boarders remembered as Vindin House. Then Heleen Fourie, Abbotsleigh's Old Girls Relations Manager, who guided us superbly through the reunion, led a school tour. Despite all the changes, as one Old Girl said approvingly, *'the bones of the School are still there'*. Abbotsleigh Chaplain Jenni Stoddart then led a chapel service where we thought of those who are no longer with us and enjoyed raising our hearts and voices together with familiar hymns and readings.

The level of excitement and chatter was high as we met in the dining room for a delicious meal, with a wonderful slideshow of the girls we had been, and a reunion booklet to read about people's school memories, their lives now and plans for the future. Headmistress Mrs Megan Krimmer welcomed us and spoke about the many strands that bind us together.

The next day some of us met at the Greengate Hotel, with some hardy husbands, to chat again over lunch.

It was fascinating to find how much we all have in common, from a new interest in golf or languages, to a joy in expressing ourselves in music or art, or a passion for helping the community in different ways. But through the whole tapestry of the reunion ran this bright thread: the importance of the relationships we formed more than 50 years ago still enriching our lives. For that we owe Abbotsleigh a deep debt of gratitude. **Wendy Blaxland**



1957 60 year reunion

Those of us fortunate enough to attend the 60th reunion of 1957 school leavers were warmly welcomed by the Headmistress, staff and girls. We attended the annual Foundation Day assembly where the girls participated in the conduct of the service, a large choir sang beautifully and Junior and Senior School groups each gave polished performances of modern dance. Were we ever so lithe and supple and rhythmic?

Headmistress Mrs Megan Krimmer and Deputy Head Mrs Victoria Rennie (Gosper, 1987) joined us for a delicious lunch in Vindin House, now the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery, and the newly appointed Head Girl and the Prefect for Houses spoke enthusiastically about their 'typical day'.

Afterwards, as we wandered around the School under the patient guidance of Mrs Heleen Fourie, we struggled to remember what had existed before the Chapel, library and other significant classroom, music and sporting structures were built. The facilities are so outstanding that it was pleasing to know that they are also accessible to the outside community. We recalled lessons in the music rooms, Miss Beynon, the Glen, the lower oval, the tennis wall and the swimming pool that opened soon after we'd left. The 10 ex-boarders explored all corners of Vindin and School Houses, and spoke of the formality (and poor quality) of meals in the largely unchanged dining room.

On the following day, 19 of us met for lunch at the Kirribilli Club, followed by a walk to Lavender Bay through Wendy's Secret Garden. We had a most enjoyable weekend.

Jocelyn Hackett (White)



1947 70 year reunion

The 70 year reunion for the class of 1947 was a happy occasion. Held at the School on Friday 19 May, it was attended by 18 leavers from the year who travelled from far and wide to be there. Rosemary Lindsay (Zweck) and Elizabeth Manning Murphy were the fabulous coordinators who did not leave a stone unturned in making sure that everyone was invited. The group was welcomed by the Headmistress Mrs Megan Krimmer and Deputy Head, Mrs Victoria Rennie (Gosper, 1987), who reconnected with one of her Abbotsleigh Primary School teachers, Patricia Hood (Pain), one of the 1947 cohort. The entertainment on the day was provided by the Abbotsleigh String Quartet who played a number of Australian works.



2002 15 year reunion

Saturday 8 July 2017 saw around 40 2002 leavers turn up at The Oaks Hotel, Neutral Bay for a great night of catching up and reminiscing. The seven weeks' notice period meant many leavers were unable to come due to being overseas or other commitments, but others flew interstate, international and organised babysitters to be there. So it was just a lovely night. The cake was created by Katie's Cakes and Cookies, just around the corner with 24 hours' prep, and it was fantastic! Looking forward to the 20 year reunion!

Jacque Crawford



Upcoming reunions

Reunions held in the last two months of the year will be featured in the next *Around Abbotsleigh*.

Reunions and events 2018 dates:

70 year reunion

All 1948 leavers will be welcomed back to the School on Friday 19 October.

50 year reunion

A lunch is being planned for Saturday 20 October. As is tradition, the lunch will be held at the School, and will be followed by a tour of the School for those who are interested.

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