

The Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.

'Beeing Connected' for the good of others

Mrs Megan Krimmer
Headmistress

'Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country'

John F Kennedy – Inaugural Address, 1961

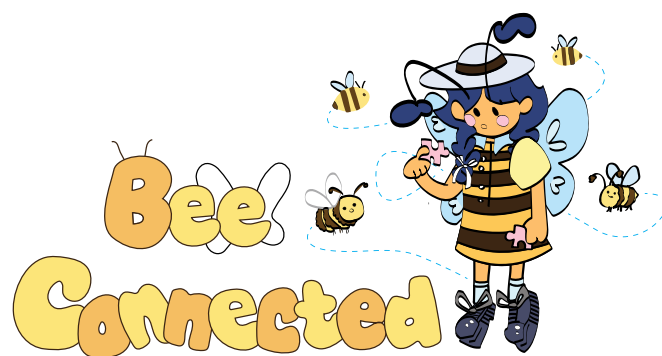
November often brings a wave of documentaries about John F Kennedy, and this year has been no exception. While many of them revisit the numerous conspiracy theories surrounding his untimely assassination on 22 November, 62 years ago, they also highlight the many positive aspects of his presidency. It is the inspirational quote above that has lingered with me most over the past few weeks.

It is through these words that JFK motivated thousands of people to work for the greater good, rather than just focusing on themselves. It inspired the establishment of the American Peace Corps and myriad fantastic service initiatives where volunteers have worked and continue to work, both within and well beyond America, for the benefit of others.

At Abbotsleigh, the call to contribute or act for the greater good has been a key plank in our raison d'être for the past 140 years. Our girls, staff and parents live by our core values of deep respect, courage and compassion, and we always look out for others and live out our own 'call to arms'. This could be paraphrased as:

'Ask not what others can do for me; ask instead – what can I do to make the world I touch a better place?'

The following service projects across the School are but a few that demonstrate these wonderful characteristics.



Anglicare Toys 'n' Tucker

The Junior and Senior Schools have been overflowing with gifts and food for Australian families who are less fortunate than we are. We are very grateful to all our Abbotsleigh families who have been so generous. Your thoughtfulness will make a huge, positive difference to many young people and their families in and around Sydney at Christmas time – thank you so much.

Out and about around Wahroonga

It is wonderful that our girls contribute to organisations in and around Wahroonga – Our eldest neighbours, who sometimes receive no visitors, absolutely love visits from our T-6 girls, and St Lucy's and St Edmund's* students enjoy our reciprocal Junior and Senior Schools visiting program. Indeed, it was an absolute delight to have St Lucy's students perform in our dance showcase two weeks ago.

An area of service in which our whole school community has been involved over many years is The Dish, which provides meals on Tuesday and Friday nights to people in the Hornsby area. It is fantastic that our girls and parents – both day and boarder – as well as Abbotsleigh staff and Old Girls, are committed to providing meals for those who are less fortunate.

*More details about our activities with St Lucy's School and St Edmund's College are outlined below.



Junior School

Our Junior School girls demonstrate care and compassion every day through their World Vision giving program – each year group sponsors a girl overseas, helping to provide essentials such as food, clothing and access to a good education. Our students not only raise funds for their sponsored children but also write to them. These letters are well-received, and our girls are always excited when they hear back.

Our Junior School girls have also been involved in the 'Light-Up Lives' program with Knox Grammar, providing light in countries where electricity is scarce so that they can read into the evenings.



'Connect-a-thon'

The Junior School has generously supported St Jude's School in Tanzania for many years. This year, the girls are undertaking a 'Connect-a-thon', a wellbeing initiative that fosters a positive culture of 'being connected' across year groups – and even campuses – with our Year 7 girls also taking part. These highly intelligent Tanzanian girls would not have access to an education such as that provided by St Jude's if it weren't for the generosity of communities like ours. The girls, parents and staff at St Jude's are so grateful for the enthusiasm, hard work and generosity of our Abbotsleigh community. I, too, am very grateful indeed.

St Lucy's School – Year 3

We are very proud of our Year 3 girls' strong connection to the students from St Lucy's School. Our girls have shown great kindness, empathy and enthusiasm throughout this partnership. Together, they have created beautiful collaborative artworks that will be displayed and sold at an upcoming art exhibition. Year 3 girls will also have a stall to raise funds for resources that support the learning and communication needs of the students of St Lucy's. Thank you to our girls and teachers for your creativity, compassion and commitment to making a positive difference through service learning.

Senior School

Bunda Girls Secondary School

Our Senior School Service Project partnership with Bunda Girls Secondary School in Tanzania has developed and deepened. Our Years 7-9 girls have raised sufficient funds this year to continue funding scholarships for six girls, Yvona and Mary (Year 7), Ntoji and Happyness (Year 8) and Elizabeth and Agnes (Year 9). These girls have done very well academically, and the relationship between the Abbotsleigh and Bunda girls has flourished.

We are hoping that the trip to Bunda next year will be equally as successful as our 2024 trip. Our relationship has been further enhanced through letter writing, fundraising and regular updates by Rev Canon Helen Hoskins' (1969) return trips from November 2024 to January 2025 and from June to August 2025. Supported by Dr Alison Gates, Mrs Annette Ware, Rev Sarah Hobba and the 15 Abbotsleigh girls who are ambassadors from the immersion tour in July 2024, we continue to stand Bega-kwa-Bega (shoulder-to-shoulder) with Bunda Girls Secondary School.

Canon Helen Hoskins spoke earlier in the year about her new hope and goal, which is that Bunda Girls Secondary School can be accredited for girls who are hearing and/or visually impaired, so that they, too, may receive an education there. Our Year 9 Commerce Market Day this year raised considerable funds to help towards that goal. The tremendous friendships and bonds between our two schools are treasured by both Abbotsleigh and Bunda teachers and girls alike.





Year 10 Immersion Week

One of our most impactful service-learning programs is our Year 10 Immersion Week, which has taken place this week. Immersion Week is a learning experience that our girls prepare for thoroughly throughout the year.

The program has three key pillars:

1. Immersive experience

It provides an opportunity for students to dive deeply into a cause or community.

2. Deep learning

It fosters learning that 'sticks' beyond the actual experience, contributes to meaning and purpose and helps a person find their place in a complex world.

3. Positive social impact

It provides an opportunity to make a positive social impact in response to real needs and through collaboration and teamwork.

As well as immersing themselves in a community or cause, an important part of the girls' experience has been reflecting deeply on empathy, one of Abbotsleigh's key learning dispositions, as well as on what they have learned about themselves and others.

It goes without saying that our girls and staff have been nothing short of sensational this week!

I would like to thank Mrs Annette Ware, Dean of Senior College, for her vision and incredible hard work in developing Immersion Week for our Year 10 girls. I would also like to thank her EA, Mrs Libby Bennett, for the phenomenal work she has done for the girls, and Year 10 Coordinator, Mr Jon Dunk, for his support. The 30 staff members who led and supported each of the different programs deserve our immense gratitude for their hard work and their willingness to give up their time for our girls and for others.

To provide some idea of the depth and variety of programs in which the girls have been immersed this week, please see below:

Year 10 Immersion Week Projects – 2025

- Cooking Up Stories About Culture – Auburn Girls High School
- Eddies Live – St Edmund's College, Wahroonga
- Fit, Fun and Full of Ideas – St Edmund's College, Wahroonga
- Gabe's Gifts – St Gabriel's School, Castle Hill
- Head, Heart, Hands – Our Big Kitchen, Vinnies, Anglicare, Lifeline and Youth off the Streets
- Holroyd High School Cultural Exchange
- Ignite – Werrington Public School and Berowra Public School
- Life in the City – Our Big Kitchen, St John's Community Services Darlinghurst, Anglicare, Sony Foundation Abbox respite camp, Youth off the Streets
- Red Earth Indigenous Immersion – Far North Queensland
- Sport Legends – Werrington Public School and Berowra Public School
- Studio Artes – Hornsby
- Sydney Refugee Team
- Take Love – Anglicare's Roden Cutler Residential Aged Care



We are very grateful to the following staff who have given up their time for our girls and others:

Mrs Kim Allan, Mrs Lisa Andrawes, Mr Adam Antonio, Ms Lauren Barlow, Mrs Renee Black, Mr Steve Bultitude, Mrs Jessica Carlisle, Mrs Sarah Dallen, Mr Jon Dunk, Mr Jason Garrett, Ms Ella Gibbs, Ms Vivienne Gilkes, Mrs Carole Helbert, Ms Alicia Highfield, Mr Ben Hunter,

Mrs Sarah Israel, Mrs Sally Lucas, Rev Rowena McMicking, Dr Michelle McVeigh, Ms Martina Muehlenbernd, Ms Catherine Oliver, Ms Jessica Parker, Mrs Tori Rennie, Ms Isobel Royston, Dr Irini Savvides, Ms Josephine Scalone, Mrs Julie Shannon, Mrs Victoria Small, Mrs Victoria Staas and Mr Rob Winslow.

ABBOX Sony Foundation Children's Holiday Camp

Our Year 11 girls, in partnership with Year 11 Knox Grammar boys, are again working with the Sony

Foundation to host much-needed respite care for families who have children living with disabilities. Beginning the day after Speech Day, along with staff, they will be giving up their time to provide joy, laughter, fun and great experiences to these young children. Parents and members of our wonderful school communities support the program by volunteering to assist with healthcare and other support roles. The children's families will have this time to rest, restore and recuperate before Christmas. Students have planned wonderful activities including, swimming, a disco, an animal farm as well as craft and sport activities. The camp will conclude at Abbotsleigh with a brilliant Christmas lunch sponsored by Wahroonga Rotary for all the children, their families and those involved in the program.

I would like to thank Dr Alison Gates, Mrs Julie Shannon, and the huge team of Abbotsleigh staff, girls and parents who are giving up their time to serve others in such an important and worthwhile way.



Thank you so much to all our Abbotsleigh girls, staff, parents and Old Girls who make it their life's mission to continually:

'Ask not what others can do for me; ask instead – what can I do to make the world I touch a better place?'



Chaplain

Prince of Peace

Rev Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain and Head of Christian Studies

*⁶ For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government will be on his shoulders.
And he will be called
Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷ Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end. **Isaiah 9:6***

When Isaiah first wrote these words, God’s people were living in fear, with the threat of being taken over by the Assyrian Empire. Their peace had been broken by forgetting their relationship with God, leaving God’s good ways and turning to corruption.

Isaiah expresses hope for a ruler who would bring true peace in those troubled times. Much later, and in Rome, Emperor Augustus established the Pax Romana

or the ‘Peace of Rome’. Yet this so-called peace was held together by military control, oppression of the people and brutal suppression of any uprisings. Augustus’ peace was in name only, a propaganda tool to maintain control.

Yet, during the reign of Augustus, in a little province far away from Rome, a child was born who fulfilled the hope of Isaiah – the ‘Prince of Peace’. Jesus’ peace is not achieved through force and oppression, nor is it fake. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus, as the Prince of Peace, mediates between us and God, taking responsibility for our sin and offering forgiveness through faith in Him.

In a world full of anxiety and conflict, we can rest in his words, *‘Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.’* (John 14:27). This peace gives us security now. His peace is also hope for the future, when all things will be made new and peace will reign forever (Revelation 21:4).

Upcoming events

WHOLE SCHOOL

To Approach the Unknowable exhibition	Saturday 1 November to Saturday 6 December	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
SchoolTV program – student wellbeing resources	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	Click here to watch
Last day of Term 4	Wednesday 3 December	
Abbox Sony Foundation Camp	Friday 5 to Sunday 7 December	Senior School locations

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Year 3 Soirée	Tuesday 25 November 6-6.30 pm	Everett Hall
Junior School Twilight Carol Service	Thursday 27 November 7-8 pm	Junior School locations
Year 6 Farewell and Dance	Friday 28 November 6-10 pm	Hornsby RSL Club
K-3 Variety Concert	Tuesday 2 December 11-11.45 am	Everett Hall
APA Junior School BBQ	Tuesday 2 December 12.30-1.30 pm	
Junior School Speech Day	Wednesday 3 December 2-3.30 pm	Senior School Sports Hall

SENIOR SCHOOL

Saturday sport	Saturday 22 and Saturday 29 November	Click here for times and venues
Senior School music workshops	Monday 24 and Tuesday 25 November	
Year 10 Peer Connections program	Wednesday 26 November	
Years 9 and 10 PASS excursion	Thursday 27 November	Central Coast Aqua Park
Senior School Christmas Carol Service	Sunday 30 November 7-8 pm	Senior School Chapel
Boarder Christmas Banquet	Monday 1 December 7-9 pm	Dining Hall
House Theatresports	Tuesday 2 December 2.10-3.25 pm	Assembly Hall
Senior School Speech Day	Wednesday 3 December 9-11 am	Senior School Sports Hall
Boarder Travel Day	Thursday 4 December	

