

The Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.

'Journey With Joy' as we celebrate the beginning of Term 2

Mrs Megan Krimmer
Headmistress

Welcome to Term 2! It was wonderful to welcome back our girls and staff this week after what I hope was a fantastic term break for every member of our community. In typical Abbotsleigh style, the term has begun with energy, verve, activity and great learning for our girls.

The term has also begun with some very special events. The first of these was our inaugural WiLA (Women in Leadership Academy) Conference organised by our Deputy Headmistress, Mrs Victoria Rennie. This conference, which featured well-renowned keynote speaker Tracey Ezard, and Annabelle Chauncy OAM, to whom we are very grateful, as well as many members of our community who gave superb presentations on leadership, was absolutely outstanding. I would like to thank Mrs Rennie and Mrs Mannix very much for their organisation of this exceptional event. I would also like to sincerely thank Michelle Markham (panel member) and workshop leaders – Vivian Chang, Sora Cho, Vivienne Gilkes, Dr Aastha Gupta, Amanda Hing, Chantal Mamo, Lisa Seary, Garima Singh, and Jill Toohey, who gave up their time to share their wisdom and expertise with our girls and guests from other schools. Thank you also to all those in our community who volunteered to do this – we will most definitely be organising more WiLA conferences in the future.

Mrs Rennie has written an excellent article about the WiLA Conference, which I warmly commend to you.



Secondly, continuing an important tradition at Abbotsleigh, we have honoured all those who have served our nation in war by commemorating Anzac Day in a number of ways. We held a very special Anzac Service in the Senior School on Thursday, and another in the Junior School on Friday afternoon. Further, over the weekend, a number of our girls will be representing Abbotsleigh at Anzac Day ceremonies in Wahroonga, Turramurra, Hornsby and Gordon.

I would like to thank Alya Bamby, Pratyangira Bhan, Josie Chan, Tianchi Fang, Jasmine Gong, Charlotte Notley, Alice Parker, Olivia Shortman, Evelyn Vale and Hannah Zhou (Year 7) and Ms Humphries (Year 7 Coordinator), who will attend the Anzac Dawn Service at Hornsby; Chloe Palmer (Head Boarder Prefect), our boarders and Mrs Katie White (Head of Boarding), who will attend the early morning Anzac Service at Wahroonga; Annika Loel (Vice Head Prefect – Service), Anna Wallwork (Vice Head Prefect – Duties) and Ms Penny Chilton (Head of Senior College) who will attend the morning Anzac Service at Turramurra; and Laura Jones (Head Prefect), Mackenzie Mullarkey (Vice Head Prefect – Houses) and Isabella Sicouri (Junior School Captain), Mieke McDonald (Junior School Vice Captain) and Ms Larissa Cameron (Head of Junior School) who will attend the Anzac Service on Sunday at St John's Church, Gordon. I would especially like to thank Cindy Li (Year 11), who will speak at the Wahroonga Service and Olivia Lin (Year 11), who will speak at the Turramurra Service – I am sure you will all represent Abbotsleigh beautifully, girls.

Rev Sarah Hobba has written an excellent article about Anzac Day, which I warmly commend to you.



Journey With Joy: Abbotsleigh's inaugural Women in Leadership Academy Conference

On Monday this week, Abbotsleigh was thrilled to host the Inaugural Women in Leadership Academy Conference, the first large scale event of our newly launched Abbotsleigh Women in Leadership Academy. This occasion marked an historic milestone for our school and a transformative opportunity for young women, not only from Abbotsleigh, but also from several independent schools who joined us for the day.

The Abbotsleigh Women in Leadership Academy has been established to support young women on their leadership journeys; to grow their courage, sharpen their voices, be brave, stretch their potential and open doors. As a first-of-its-kind initiative in an all-girls' school, the Academy reflects Abbotsleigh's bold commitment to empowering young women to become influential, ethical and courageous leaders. The launch of the Academy represents not just a beginning but an invitation for our students to embrace leadership as a journey, one undertaken with purpose, reflection and joy.

We were incredibly grateful to welcome an exceptional group of female leaders as our guest speakers and workshop presenters. The conference commenced with keynote speaker Tracey Ezard, a speaker, educator, mentor and author widely recognised for her 'Ferocious Warmth' approach to leadership and her work in building strong professional cultures. Tracey encouraged the girls to reflect on who they are and reminded them never to underestimate the impact of how they show up in the world. She spoke about the importance of accessing both cognitive and emotional skills in leadership, drawing on both head and heart, and challenged students to reflect honestly on their strengths as well as the areas where they need to stretch. Her discussion on reframing power, exploring the ideas of 'power with', 'power to' and 'power within', resonated deeply and prompted thoughtful discussion throughout the day.

Following the keynote address, students participated in a diverse range of workshops led by female leaders from across the Abbotsleigh community and a variety of professional backgrounds. These women generously shared their personal leadership journeys, including challenges faced, lessons learned and practical advice, offering students valuable insight into the many ways leadership can be expressed. The workshops explored themes such as personal brand and leadership lessons from decades of experience, turning curiosity into leadership through technology, leading future careers in a 100 year life influenced by AI, building confidence and purpose, understanding that powerful leadership is not always loud, and learning when and how to put your hand up. Together, these sessions reinforced the idea that leadership is not a single pathway but an evolving journey shaped by curiosity, resilience and reflection.

The day concluded with an inspiring panel discussion featuring outstanding female leaders. Michelle Markham, Director at Microsoft specialising in Cloud Acquisition



Digital Sales, spoke honestly about the realities of leadership and her passion for developing others, particularly emerging female leaders, through mentoring and coaching. Annabelle Chauncy, Co Founder and CEO of the School for Life Foundation, inspired students to consider how leadership can be driven by purpose and used to create meaningful social impact, encouraging the girls to recognise the privilege of access to education and resources and the responsibility to use these to benefit others. Mrs Megan Krimmer spoke about the importance of mentors and the power of leading from behind, highlighting how true leadership often involves creating opportunities for others to step forward.

We are incredibly grateful to all those who gave so generously of their time to share their insights and experiences. Their honesty, wisdom and encouragement made this conference an invaluable experience for our students, who are so fortunate to learn from such outstanding role models. We look forward to offering further leadership opportunities in the coming terms, including additional workshops and presentations, as we continue to support our girls on their leadership journeys; journeys grounded in courage, purpose and joy.



Chaplain

Silent contemplation

Rev Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain and Head of Christian Studies



In today's fast-paced and noisy world, opportunities for silence are rare. One of the most recognised moments of collective silence occurs on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, when we observe a minute's silence to honour those who have served and sacrificed. This tradition has a significant history, including an important Australian connection.

The idea of a collective period of silence originated with Australian Edward George Honey. After serving in World War I and then being medically discharged, Honey worked in London as a journalist at the end of the war. While the streets were filled with rejoicing marking the end of the conflict, his thoughts turned to the immense loss of life that had occurred. In 1919, in the 8 May edition of the London Evening News, Honey penned a proposal suggesting five minutes of national silence as a tribute to those who had died. Although his exact request was not adopted, the idea reached King George V, who authorised a shorter period of silence, which has become the one-minute silence now widely observed.

A minute's silence is a deliberate pause in the noisiness and busyness of daily life. It allows time to reflect on the sacrifices made by others, to remember the cost of service not only to those who served but also to their families, and to acknowledge the freedoms and security we enjoy today as a result. It is also a moment to express hope for peace and for a more just future.

In Psalm 46, the imagery describes a world with mountains falling into the sea and nations in turmoil. The description resonates today of noise, uncertainty and chaos. Into this upheaval comes God's command, *'Be still, and know that I am God.'* (Psalm 46:10) The Psalm reassures us that, even amid conflict and division, God remains our refuge and strength. God is not distant from suffering but is at work bringing peace. Later in the Gospels, Jesus speaks words often quoted on Anzac Day: *'Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends'* (John 15:13).

Before this verse, Jesus speaks of a joy that is made complete. This joy is not shallow or fleeting but the greatest joy arising comes from the greatest cost and great love. It is a self-sacrificing love that brings peace with God, demonstrated on the cross. It is Jesus' 'laying down one's life for others' that we also see echoing throughout the Anzac story.

In a chaotic and divided world, Romans 12:15 urges Christian followers to *'rejoice with those who rejoice, and mourn with those who mourn.'* The end of war has often brought rejoicing, in the relief of its end and the silence of guns. At the same time, as Edward Honey recognised, this call includes mourning profound loss and standing alongside those who suffer. Later in Romans 12, Christian hope is described as seeking peace with everyone as far as possible and resisting revenge. This emphasis on compassion and shared support is sometimes reflected in the Anzac spirit, expressed through loyalty, care and being present with others in times of adversity and loss.

As a school community, observing a minute's silence allows us to do more than simply pause. It is a way to honour sacrifice, acknowledge loss and recommit ourselves to values such as compassion, service and working for peace in the world. Our silent contemplation costs us very little but in it, we can recognise that it cost others everything.



Upcoming events

WHOLE SCHOOL

Parent Wellbeing Hive - parent wellbeing resources	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	Click here to visit
Pacific Highway pedestrian overpass overnight closure	Tuesday 28 April to Friday 31 July 9 pm-5 am	15 temporary overnight closures to complete work on pedestrian overpass
Beyond Utility exhibition	Thursday 9 April to Saturday 2 May	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
Juno Gemes exhibition	Friday 8 May to Wednesday 3 June	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery
Anzac Day Public Holiday	Monday 27 April	
Freaky Friday - Senior School musical	Thursday 30 April to Saturday 2 May	Click here to buy tickets

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Year 6 Doing Da Vinci day	Wednesday 29 April	Knox Grammar School
Year 5 Doing Da Vinci day	Thursday 30 April	Knox Grammar School
Photo Day 2	Friday 1 May	
Years 5-6 Judith Krause parent evening	Monday 4 May 7-8.30 pm	JS Auditorium
ELC Mother's Day breakfast	Thursday 7 May 7.30-8.15 am	ELC
Year 6 Geography parent guest speakers	Thursday 7 May 1.30-2.30 pm	JS Auditorium
Jacqueline Harvey author talk	Friday 8 May 11.30 am-12.45 pm	Everett Hall

SENIOR SCHOOL

Boarders community weekend	Friday 24 to Sunday 26 April	Various locations
Senior School Athletics Carnival	Wednesday 29 April	Sydney Olympic Park Athletics Centre



Year 12 Agriculture excursion	Thursday 30 April to Friday 1 March	Grenfell
Years 11 and 12 Studies of Religion excursion	Friday 1 May	Auburn Mosque
ISDA Debating	Friday 1 May 4-9 pm	Various SS locations
Year 11 PhysX Rehab excursion	Wednesday 6 May	Dee Why
Year 11 Parent Teacher night	Wednesday 6 May 3.30-8.30 pm	Online
Year 11 Ancient History excursion	Thursday 7 May	Chau Chak Wing Museum
Year 12 music performance	Sunday 10 May 11 am-4.30 pm	Galston Uniting Church

