



ABBOTSLEIGH

Old Girls' Union Inc.

The Loom

ABBOTSLEIGH OLD GIRLS
NEWSLETTER

December 2022



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UPCOMING EVENTS



Friday 31 March
Generations Breakfast
To welcome new Old Girl
Mothers and Daughters

Friday 26 May
Online Speakers Breakfast

Friday 16 June
Archibald Tour

Saturday 29 July
Mother Daughter Dinner/
High Tea

President's message

What a fabulous year we have had

What a fabulous year we had in 2022. In some ways it felt like we were butterflies unfurling from our COVID-cocoons and exploring outside our confined space once again. It has been so great to be able to again connect face-to-face with so many Old Girls, as well as with the broader School community.

As we have unfurled, so have our social events! We have been glad to have again held in-person events, especially the sorely missed reunions. With so many "make-up" reunions, there were more than 25 events held last year including the special milestone 60th Reunions for the Classes of 1960, 1961 and 1962, and the 70th Reunion for the class of 1952!

It was particularly special to hold a North West Reunion in July, with a turnout of across four decades of Old Girls. What really struck me was how Old Girls across generations can have so much to talk about! Old Girls based in Regional NSW were able to see more of the School this year, with Abbotsleigh Community Events being held concurrent to the boarding expos in Dubbo, Wagga Wagga, and Tamworth with current, past and future parents as well as Old Girls able to come together. Many thanks to the School, the Abbotsleigh Boarder Parents Association and the Abbotsleigh Parents Association for hosting those events.

COVID taught us that Old Girls like to connect with each other, even if it is not in person. We therefore continued to hold our Speakers Breakfast via Zoom with a particular focus on how our Anniversary Grant has benefited girls in Tanzania.

We also added two new Zoom Meet The Author events, where Old Girl authors Kate Forysth and Nicole Alexander shared their journeys to become bestselling authors, as well as gave insight into their creative process. The attendees were in awe of what it takes to develop and write their books.

Last year was certainly one of reestablishing connections across our Abbotsleigh community. There was a real buzz around Abbotsleigh campuses, with so many activities and new buildings being opened. I certainly have new-found appreciation for being able to once again do things that pre-COVID we took for granted, like being on campus to attend the Birthday assembly, see friends at a much-anticipated reunion, or have a chat and a cuppa after an Art Gallery tour.

The AOGU is currently rethinking how our Members best connect with each other. In January you will receive a survey to help us better understand what you are looking for from the AOGU. It asks important questions about our values and traditions, as well as what you would like us to offer and what events we should hold. Please do take the time to share your thoughts, and thanks in advance for completing it!

We are looking forward to a vibrant 2023, including the launch of an exciting new mentoring program and seeing you at events and reunions. In the meantime, the AOGU Committee wishes you and your families a healthy and joyous end to the year and start to 2023!

Sarah Franks (1991)
President, AOGU



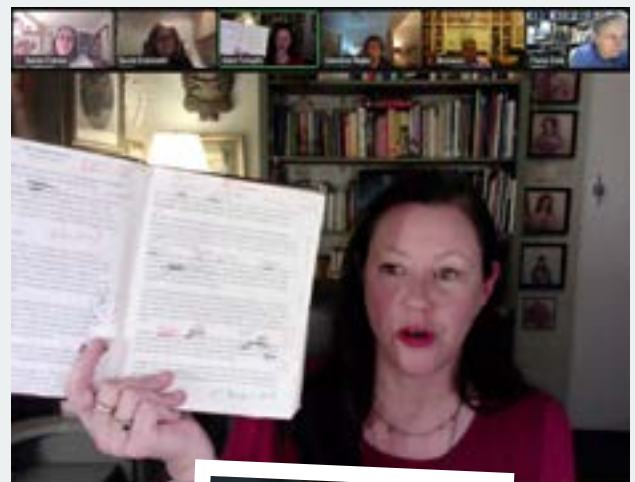


Meet the Author

The AOGU started a new event this year to celebrate and profile our members who are authors. We commend these events to you as a chance to understand what it takes to not only write a book, but to be published. These events were attended by Old Girls and current parents.

Kate Forsyth (1984) generously gave of her time in June to share how she became an author and her creative process. She even shared her first published piece from *The Weaver!* We were treated to a delightful peek at Kate's notebooks where she writes copious notes to develop her characters and stories. They were true works of art. Kate's writing spans historical fiction, young adult/children and non-fiction, and her latest book, *The Crimson Thread*, is a reimagining of 'The Minotaur in the Labyrinth' myth set in Crete during the Nazi invasion and occupation of World War II.

Nicole Alexander (1983) spoke to us in September. We started by having a laugh at some photos of Nicole and her friends during her school days, before Nicole shared her writing journey. She came to writing late when moving back to her family property and being inspired by the land and the people. Nicole diligently researches people, places and history to bring together her interwoven stories based on Australian life and times. Nicole has published 11 historical fiction novels, as well as poetry, travel and genealogy articles and her latest book, *The Last Station*, set on the Darling River during the dying days of the paddle steamer.





Speakers Breakfast

On Friday 10 June, we held our Speakers Breakfast once again via Zoom. We used this opportunity to share the impact that two Old Girls are having in Tanzania, and the difference that the AOGU's 110th Anniversary Grants have made with their work.



Helen Hoskins (1969) established the Bunda Girls Secondary School, where day and boarding students complete high school, with most going to college and jobs outside the home. Helen shared the obstacles girls faced in being able to access an education beyond the primary years. The school has an adjacent sewing school, which trains the girls who are not academic with an employable skill. We are proud that we were able to contribute funding for one of the students, Mary Masanja, to attend two years at Bunda Girls Secondary School.

Grace Pattison (2013), founder of School Girl Essentials (SGE) along with Zion Issangya, described the challenges that face girls once they start their menses, with girls skipping school during their period



Mother Daughter High Tea

We welcomed two generations of Old Girls with their current girl daughters and granddaughters at a special Mother Daughter High Tea on Saturday 30 July. It was fabulous to once again host this extremely popular, annual event in the Boarders' Dining Room.

The girls sipped pink lemonade with umbrellas while the Old Girls started with champagne. We ate, reminisced and laughed over sandwiches, wraps, fruit, cakes and slices, surrounded by fairy lights and balloons.

Bron Cooper (Ross-Jones, 1981) hosted a couple of rounds of heads and tails, asking trivia questions about Abbotsleigh today and in the past. The attendees were so knowledgeable that she had to crowdsource some extra questions on the spot! This is a very special event where current girls can appreciate their connection to the greater fabric of the School.

Many thanks to Bron, Catherine Twyman (Gorfin, 1990) and Carly Bull (Mansfield, 1991) for organising a superb event.

and many dropping out completely. SGE targets the heart of the issue, educating both girls and boys to reduce menstrual stigma. They provide practical advice about menstrual hygiene as well as reusable menstrual products. Our grant enabled them to rollout their program to a new school and more students. The smiles on the faces of the students say it all!

We are thankful to both Helen and Grace for sharing their experiences and for what they do for others, and are delighted to be able to support them in a small way. The 2022 recipient(s) of the 110th Anniversary Grant will be announced at our upcoming AGM.

Snippets

PIP BRETT

Old Girl Pip Brett (2001) was named one of Australia’s most influential female entrepreneurs, as nominated by The Sydney Morning Herald (SMH) and The Age’s business team with input from industry leaders, on International Women’s Day (IWD) 2022.

Pip is the creative genius behind the successful homewares, art and fashion empire, Jumbled, located in Orange, NSW, and has become a regional business leader who regularly shares insights about business storytelling online. In the SMH article, Pip describes this year’s IWD theme of “Break the bias” as needing to be “a constant conversation”. You can read more [here](#).

Pip also recently joined fellow Old Girl and best friend since school Edwina Bartholomew (2001) for



And We’re Rolling podcast creator Stephanie Hunt with Old Girls Edwina Bartholomew and Pip Brett.

an And We’re Rolling podcast episode on the Power of Friendship. The pair share stories from their boarding school days as well as the ups and downs their tight-knit

circle of 2001 leaver friends have experienced since. It is a ‘laugh out loud’ episode that we are sure many Old Girls can relate to!

You can listen to the podcast [here](#).



JANET LAURENCE

Congratulations to Janet Laurence (1963) on her selection as one of twelve finalists in the National Photographic Prize: National Photography Prize 2022 Finalists Announced | Murray Art Museum Albury (MAMA) (mamalbury.com.au)

Janet’s work was included in the travelling exhibition ‘Earth Canvas’, at its final destination of The National Museum of Australia.

Earth Canvas showcases works by leading contemporary artists, developed in response to regenerative farming properties situated between the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers in southern NSW.

Visit: www.earthcanvas.com.au

Snippets



JESSICA NAGY

Congratulations to Jessica Nagy (2019) who had an extremely successful campaign at the 2022 Touch Football State Of Origin Series in Coffs Harbour in September.

Jess played for the NSW Women’s 20s and made a try-saving touch in game 2 that gave NSW the winning lead and clinched the series!

In naming the team to represent NSW, the NSW Touch Association stated, “To receive such an accolade in the year of NSW Touch Association’s Golden Jubilee adds to the honour of representing yourself, family, friends, affiliate, region, and now NSW.”

Congratulations, Jess!



SOPHIE SCAMPS

After serving the community in the Emergency Department of Mona Vale Hospital and then practising as a GP in Narrabeen until November 2021, Dr Sophie Scamps (1988) decided to run for parliament and claimed victory as the Independent for Mackellar in the 2022 federal election.

In 2019, Sophie founded Our Blue Dot, a community-led, non-profit organisation aimed at empowering her local community to reduce waste and emissions, successfully supporting the installation of solar panels on Avalon Surf Club.

Sophie is the first Abbotsleigh Old Girl to be elected to Federal Parliament.



ABBOTSLEIGH

Old Girls' Union Inc.

2021 and 2022 Centenary Scholars

Congratulations to AOGU Centenary Scholarship recipients for the last two years.

Jasmine Burton was awarded the 2021 AOGU Centenary Scholarship at the Year 11 Prize Giving Assembly in December last year. Maya Khanna-Boyle was awarded the 2022 AOGU Centenary Scholarship at the Birthday Assembly on 23 July this year, the first time the scholarship could be awarded in front of the whole School since 2019.

The Centenary Scholarship was inaugurated by the AOGU in 1985 to commemorate Abbotsleigh’s Centenary Year. It is awarded annually to a Year 11 girl (whose mother is an Old Girl) who by her effort and enthusiasm, participates in a broad spectrum of the School’s curriculum and community activities.

All the girls who interviewed for the scholarship were outstanding, with a diverse range of interests and strong contributions to School and the broader community.

Sport Snippets

OLD GIRLS ATHLETICS NEWS

Old Girls were triumphant again at the Senior School Athletics Carnival held at Sydney Olympic Park Athletic Centre.

According to all reports, it was a great race with one of the strongest Boarder teams to take the track in years, just missing out on second place to the Day Girls. Pictured is the triumphant Old Girl team including Mia

Hemsworth (2019), Ash Bruce (2012), Larissa Pasternatsky (2009) and Rosie Andrew (2020). Larissa is currently on staff at school as one of the Abbotsleigh Sport Coordinators. Chisholm Old Girls will be thrilled to learn that the dark blues were overall winners on the day!



KIANA ELLIOTT

Kiana Elliott (2014) finished fourth in the 71kg weightlifting event at the Commonwealth Games held in Birmingham.

Read more [here](#)

NICOLA HOGG

Nicola Hogg (2021), the 2022 Oceania under-20 3,000 m champion and 1,500 m runner-up, was selected as a member of the Australian team that competed at the World Athletics U20 Championships held in Colombia in August. Nicola opted to bypass the 3,000 m to concentrate on the 1,500 m where she ran a time of 4:28.43.



Who's Who on the AOGU



AOGU Executive left to right: Lucy Shilling, Sarah Franks, Belinda Burton and Fiona Hobill Cole.

Executive Committee

PRESIDENT

Sarah Franks (1991)

Sarah became involved with the AOGU in 2017, after her daughter started at Abbotsleigh and she realised how much she again enjoyed being part of the school community.

She was the Secretary from 2018 to 2021, the AOGU Representative on the Marian Clarke Society from 2019 to 2021, and started a term as President at the end of 2021. Sarah studied Commerce (Marketing)/ Law at UNSW, followed by an MPhil in Economic and Social History at University College, Oxford under a Commonwealth Scholarship.

After working in management consulting for 15 years including time in the US and NZ, Sarah has specialised in human resources and strategy and recently left Google to start her own consulting business.

Sarah combines work with family life and her passion for coaching and life drawing.

VICE PRESIDENT

Lucy Shilling (Lyle, 1987)

Lucy lived in Sydney and worked in finance after leaving school, with a couple of years travelling overseas in the mix. She now lives in Orange and works in the family crane and earthmoving repairs business. Lucy's daughters graduated from Abbotsleigh in 2020 and 2022, and has a son who has also left school. She has a strong connection to the school with her mother, sister, mother-in-law, sister-in-law and three great aunts having attended Abbotsleigh. Lucy was the AOGU Boarder Representative from 2019 to 2022 and has been the Vice President since the end of 2021.

TREASURER

Belinda Burton (Tjeuw, 1991)

Belinda has been involved with the AOGU Committee for 7 years and has held Executive positions as Vice-President, President and currently as Treasurer. Her favourite part of being involved with the AOGU is the opportunity to meet

Old Girls across the generations and help inspire the next generation of Old Girls. Belinda is also an Abbotsleigh parent with a daughter going into Year 11 and one who graduated in 2022 and values the opportunity to be involved in the Abbotsleigh community in different ways. Belinda is a corporate lawyer by training and also spent a number of years as a risk, compliance and corporate governance consultant. She is now working as a Director and Fund Secretary for the Manildra Flour Mills Retirement Fund and volunteering as a local JP.

SECRETARY

Fiona Hobill Cole (Armstrong, 1981)

Fiona joined the AOGU committee at the end of 2019 as her youngest daughter left school. She has enjoyed keeping connected with the Abbotsleigh community and valued meeting old girls and current girls and becoming a more active old girl. She has served as Secretary since the end of 2021. Fiona is a landscape architect with her own landscape design business of 23

years, "Fiona Cole Design" and works mainly in the residential sector. Fiona has two (ex-Abbotsleigh) girls and a son who have all finished school and while not designing gardens and supervising their construction, enjoys ocean swimming, hiking, watercolour painting and, of course, visiting historic gardens.

General Committee

Rebecca Baillie (1989)

Rebecca loved her time at Abbotsleigh and is passionate about making connections with other Old Girls and keeping in touch with lifelong friends she made at school. After graduating, Rebecca completed Arts Law at Macquarie University. She is a journalist, television producer and documentary maker, currently working at SBS on the Insight program. Rebecca worked at the ABC for two decades as a reporter and a producer on shows including 7.30 and Australian Story. Her daughter graduated from Abbotsleigh in 2021 and her son is entering Year 11. Rebecca was the Vice-President from 2018 to 2021 and is the force behind significant AOGU projects such as the Kathleen McCredie Oral History and The Loom - COVID Edition.

Kim Boniface (Anderson, 1985)

Kim studied Commerce (Marketing) at UNSW, completed an EMBA at the AGSM and works in Employee Engagement and Communications for the Westpac Group. Her three daughters are all recent Old Girls. In her 'spare' time, Kim enjoys judging Rhythmic Gymnastics and recently joined the Gymnastics NSW Judging Management Committee. She has been an active member of the Committee since 2008, during which time she also served a three-year term as AOGU Treasurer and most recently a six-year term as AOGU President finishing in 2017.

Carly Bull (Mansfield, 1991)

Carly joined the AOGU Committee at the end of 2020, as she felt it's a great way to give back to Abbotsleigh and stay active within the school community, after her eldest child and only daughter completed year 12 at Abbotsleigh in 2020 (she also has 2 sons at Knox going into years 10 and 12). Carly studied Physiotherapy at Sydney University, graduating in 1995. She has had a varied career as a physiotherapist both in Sydney and overseas, but for the last 14 years has run her own physiotherapy and Pilates practice in Turramurra (formerly in Killara). In 2021 Carly returned to university studies, commencing her Master of Science in Medicine (Pain Management)

degree at Sydney University. She is also a keen endurance sport competitor, having competed twice at the ITU Triathlon World Championships (2014 and 2018), Ironman Australia in 2016 and UltraTrail Australia 50km in 2021 (despite not being very athletic at school!).

Bronwyn Cooper (Ross-Jones, 1980)

After leaving school in 1980 Bron received her BA LLB from Macquarie University and practiced civil and commercial litigation. She married Bruce Cooper, another lawyer and moved offshore, living in Hong Kong and Singapore for 18 years. She has 3 children Alexandra (1995), William (1997) and Georgina (2002). Since returning to Sydney Bron has become more involved in the running of their cattle property near Dungog and is particularly interested in regenerative and sustainable farming. Bron is the Chair of the AOGU's Events Sub-Committee.

Suzie Evennett (Taylor, 1984)

Suzie studied at Macquarie University and travelled extensively through Europe while working in the banking and insurance industries. After a career break to raise her children, she returned to work in the education sector and has remained there for the last decade. Of her three children, both her daughters attended Abbotsleigh,



The 2022 AGM was in full swing as both an in-person and Zoom event, meaning that attendees from regional NSW, Tasmania and even those in Sydney stuck at work or not feeling 100% could attend.

with the youngest graduating in 2018. Suzie has been on the Committee for more than eight years and enjoys the ongoing AOGU connection to the School, the interaction between generations of Old Girls, what they have achieved and how they work together to support the wider community.

Anthea Fagan (1989)

- appointed November 2022

Anthea was a Boarder from years 7-12 and joins the AOGU as a current Boarder Parent Representative. Anthea is a mother of two sons, and daughter Dimity who commenced boarding in 2021, and will be completing her year 12 studies in 2023. Anthea is a Registered Nurse specialising in Neurosurgical Intensive Care nursing and a Clinical Nurse Educator. She continued her education with a Graduate Diploma in Neuroscience Nursing and Master of Nursing with an Adult Education major while working simultaneously in the clinical and academic settings. Anthea was a Lecturer at UTS for five years before moving to UNE in Armidale in 2006, where she continues educating undergraduate nursing students to become RNs and interprofessional postgraduates in clinical simulation. She recently submitted her PhD to the Uni of Southern QLD, focusing on Nursing Students experiences of speaking up for patient safety during clinical placements. Anthea is delighted to co-represent the boarding community with Lil Harding, also from the 1989 cohort.

Lil (Lisa) Harding (Stevenson, 1989)

- appointed November 2022

As a third generation Abbotsleigh Old Girl Boarder, Lil is genuinely keen to continue to foster AOGU community and connections and has thoroughly enjoyed being part of the school once again, now as a mother. Lil was born on a farm in Bombala and after leaving Abbotsleigh spent just over a decade studying and working in Sydney as a lawyer. Following an extended working holiday around Europe, Lil returned to the Monaro and moved to Jindabyne in 2004 to raise her family. She has a daughter who left Abbotsleigh in 2021, a son going into year 12 and her youngest daughter is currently in year 11 at Abbotsleigh. Lil set up various businesses in her local community from accommodation booking houses to childcare centres but now continues in the legal profession with her own practice, having completed a Masters

in Law majoring in Wills and Estates in June 2018. Lil is honoured to be a new member of the AOGU Committee and the Boarder Parent Representative with Anthea Hagan.

Sarah Horner (1986)

Sarah graduated from Medicine at the University of NSW in 1994, completing her registrar training at St George Hospital. She then went on to work as a GP in the Eastern suburbs, before returning to UNSW to study a Masters of Public Health. During the following years she spent time working overseas in a volunteer capacity whilst continuing her training. For the past 15 years she has worked in a medical administration role at St Vincent's Clinic, Sydney. She has 3 children, including a daughter, Emily, who graduated from Abbotsleigh in 2019. Her passions include tennis, golf and working in the community. She was delighted to be a new member of the AOGU Committee from the end of 2021.

Margaret Jordan (Thiel, 1986)

Margaret completed an Honours degree in Pure Mathematics at the University of Sydney before embarking on a career as a secondary school Mathematics teacher. She taught in a range of independent girls' schools in Sydney and then Canberra from 1991 to 2008. She returned to Sydney in 2009, taking on a teaching position at Abbotsleigh, where she has been ever since, and is currently the Director of Studies. Margaret's daughter graduated from Abbotsleigh in 2022 and her son is at university. Margaret joined the AOGU Committee at the end of 2018, serving as Treasurer for three years, before stepping down to be a regular member of the Committee in 2022.

Jacinta Lin (2018)

- until November 2022

When Jacinta graduated from Abbotsleigh, she came away with a love of learning and desire to serve others. At school, she developed her passions for public speaking and drama. She studied Arts (Latin, Anatomy and Histology) at The University of Sydney, and is currently studying Medicine. Her life is underpinned by her Christian faith, which was kindled in her during her time at Abbotsleigh. She was excited to be involved with the AOGU

Committee in 2022, particularly reconnecting recent leavers with each other and creating supportive networks, for which we thank her. Jacinta continues to be a Moderator of The Yarn, the Facebook group for recent leavers.

Lara Lizzio (Dawson, 1996)

- until July 2022

Lara joined the AOGU Committee in late 2020. Lara works in Corporate Communications consulting to government agencies, large corporations, small business, entrepreneurs and politicians, providing advice on strategy, media, public relations and communications, as well as issues management and crisis communications. Lara is Founder of LM Consulting, operating for 13 years and more recently founded, Wellmum, a platform based on her passion for wellness advocating for mums. After discovering a love of athletics at Abbotsleigh, she captained the Athletics Club at Sydney University and competed for Australia in athletics. She has served on Committees for The Garvan Institute of Medical Research, the Brain Cancer Committee, Vision Australia, Camp Quality Children's Cancer, The Young Professionals Australian Olympic Committee and the Australian Tourism Export Commission. Lara's daughter will commence Abbotsleigh Junior School in 2027. We thank Lara for her time on the AOGU Committee.

Karen Love (1987)

Karen works in the corporate world in management consulting and mediation. She is a current Abbotsleigh parent and has found being on the Committee since 2017 very rewarding as it provides a different perspective to school life.

Kate Nicholls (Hall, 1985)

- until November 2022

Kate studied Actuarial Studies at Macquarie University, then worked as an actuary before taking a career break to focus on her children. She now works for NAB in remediation. She has two daughters who left Abbotsleigh in 2016 and 2020 and a son who graduated in 2018. Kate is a former Treasurer for the AOGU, serving in this role for four years before stepping down at the end



The 2022 AGM attendees farewelled long-standing Committee members and welcomed new faces.

of 2018. Kate stepped down from the AOGU Committee in November 2022, and enjoyed being on the Committee as it gave a different perspective to school life. The AOGU is grateful for the significant contributions Kate made over her time on the Committee, particularly for her calm and sound financial management of the AOGU.

Niki Nojournian (2017)
- appointed November 2022

As a recent member of the AOGU, Niki joined the Committee in 2022. Niki is currently in her final year of university studying a Bachelor of Arts(Hons)/ Law at the University of New South Wales and has secured a legal graduate position for 2024. From her time at Abbotsleigh Niki was a keen member of the Archdale Debating team and now works as the Head Debating Coach at Abbotsleigh. Her passion for all things oratory saw her as the 2022 Competition Skills Vice-President of UNSW Law Society. She is excited to be a new member of the Committee and to be further involved in the AOGU.

Caroline Rigby (Miller, 1984)

Caroline had a career in paediatrics as a Clinical Nurse Specialist at RNSH. After taking a career break to focus on the children, she returned to the workforce and now owns an in-home nursing business, HomeWise Health. Caroline comes from a long line of Abbotsleigh connections. Her mother, aunts, sister-in-law are all Old Girls. She has four

children; her two daughters graduating in 2016 and 2020. Caroline has been a member of the Committee for several years and loves everything to do with Abbotsleigh.

Catherine Twyman (Gorfin, 1990)

Catherine has joined the AOGU Committee at the end of 2021. Her daughters are Abbotsleigh girls, with one entering Year 9 and one graduated in 2022, and she has a son going into Year 11. Catherine works in the telecommunications industry, having enjoyed a varied career across marketing, commercial and strategy roles. She's volunteered in roles supporting local clubs, groups and church. Since joining the Committee, Catherine has enjoyed connecting with more Old Girls and contributing to the wider Abbotsleigh school community.

Alex Zhao (2015)

Ziqing (Alex) is currently completing Bachelor of Commerce and Bachelor of Laws degrees at the University of Sydney. Through her academic and internship experiences in Sydney and overseas, Alex developed her passion in the areas of accounting and law. As a proud Marian Clarke Scholar and with a heart of giving back as an AOGU award recipient, Alex joined the AOGU committee in November 2019 to stay connected to and serve the Old Girl community.

AOGU Council Representatives

Linda Ellis (Morris, 1990)
- resigned May 2022

Linda is Group Company Secretary and Corporate Counsel for Steadfast, where she is responsible for ASX compliance and other regulatory liaison, corporate governance and stakeholder liaison, generating growth and improving financial performance. Before joining Steadfast, Linda was a corporate lawyer, specialising in mergers and acquisitions. She is also on the board of Mosman Church of England Preparatory School. Linda was an AOGU Representative on Abbotsleigh Council from November 2018 to May 2022 and brought extensive experience in strategic planning, major projects, risk management and market disclosure. The AOGU is very grateful for Linda's contributions to the AOGU and School, particularly for her rigorous approach to issues and advocacy for female leadership positions on Council.

Bronwyn Matthews (1982)

Bronwyn followed Abbotsleigh with a BEc MComm(Fin) and a CFA. She has also completed the AIDC course in the last five years. Bron has more than 25 years' experience in investment management, particularly equities. She has also founded, owned and operated a Preschool and K-9 NSW Curriculum school for 350 children in Singapore and ran a recruitment company. Bron

has served as a director on the Abbotsleigh Foundation Board over the last eleven years and has been an AOGU Representative on Council since mid-2020.

Belinda McGuinness (Wilson, 1987)

- appointed October 2022

Belinda has 24 years of experience at Macquarie, having held legal, operational and client-facing roles in Macquarie Capital and Macquarie Asset Management, including 7 years in London establishing and managing the Macquarie European Infrastructure Funds. Belinda joined Macquarie's Integrity Office in 2011 and since 2019 has led the global function as Macquarie's Group Integrity Officer, becoming an Executive Director in 2020. Prior to Macquarie, Belinda worked as a litigation lawyer with Henry Davis York and as Adviser to the Chairman at the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. Belinda holds a Bachelors of Economics and Law from the University of Sydney and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She attended Abbotsleigh between 1979-1986 and served the school as Head Prefect in 1986. After being involved with her sons' schools as a member of the School Council and P&C President of Middle Harbour Public School (2015-2017) and Treasurer of The Scots College Tennis Support Group (2018-2022), she is delighted to be reconnected to Abbotsleigh upon her appointment as an AOGU Council Representative in October 2022.

Michelle Vanzella (1987)

Michelle has a BEc LLB (Hons), an MBA and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She was a Boarder at Abbotsleigh and her daughter finished Year 12 in 2021. She has a combination of customer, marketing, digital, data and commercial legal skills built up across multiple industries, including technology, retail, property and financial services. Michelle practised law at Allens and has held senior executive positions with iconic Australian brands including Westfield, Suncorp and AAMI. She was previously a non-executive director of Canteen and is currently non-executive director at Hunter Water and Collaborate Corp (ASX:CL8). Michelle has been an

AOGU Representative on Abbotsleigh Council since November 2015 and is currently Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee and a member of the Chair's Communication Committee.

Life Members of the AOGO Committee

Annabel Baxter (Marr, 1965)

Annabel attended Abbotsleigh from 1956 to 1965. Her grandmother and mother both attended Abbotsleigh, as did her daughter Sarah. On leaving school Annabel trained as a physiotherapist, and has been a practising physiotherapist from 1970 to her eventual retirement in 2020. When her daughter was at Abbotsleigh, Annabel joined the AOGU Committee, becoming President in 1990. During her time as President, the AOGU Office was founded at the school and the records of the Union were gradually digitised. Annabel was appointed to the Abbotsleigh Council and became the Council Secretary in 1992. In 1999 Annabel returned to university to study for a Fine Arts degree and started working as a volunteer guide at the AGNSW. She subsequently studied for her Masters degree, and upon graduation in 2010 was employed as an Art Educator at AGNSW. Annabel was deeply involved in the administration of the guides, oversaw radical change in the management of the guiding body and in 2012 was commissioned to write "The History of the Volunteer Guides of the AGNSW – the Fourth Decade". She has since retired from this position, but continues as a volunteer guide. In 2016 Annabel was elected to the Alumni Council of the University of Sydney. She was appointed as the Chair of the volunteer working group to investigate the volunteer opportunities for Alumni at the university and retired from the Council in late 2022 at the end of her six year term. Annabel has recently been welcomed back to the AOGU, being appointed Life Member of the AOGU Committee at the end of 2022.

Sarah Hofman (Dowsett, 1986)

Sarah has a Master of Economics, is a chartered accountant and holds her practising certificate from CA ANZ. Sarah is Chair of the Australian Securitisation Forum and is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She is currently a Partner at PricewaterhouseCoopers, having previously spent 20 years as an investment banker. Sarah is a second-generation Old Girl with her mother and aunt both Abbotsleigh Boarders. Sarah's daughter left Abbotsleigh in 2018. Sarah previously served for four years as the AOGU Representative on the Abbotsleigh Foundation, for six years as an AOGU Representative on Abbotsleigh Council and in 2022 took on another term as the AOGU Representative on the Abbotsleigh Foundation. She was appointed a Life Member of the AOGU Committee in November 2019.

Anne Mitchell (Macfarlane, 1964)

Anne is part of three generations at Abbotsleigh. After school, she worked in regional Australia, moved to the UK, married, then lived in South Africa, Queensland and Philadelphia. Anne's mother had always been active in the Old Girl community and when she passed away, Anne became involved with the AOGU as a way of honouring that connection. She has been a long-standing Committee member, and is a key organiser of the annual Card Day. Anne also serves as the War Records Coordinator and the AOGU Representative on the Marian Clarke Society. At the end of 2021 Anne was made a Life Member of the AOGU Committee.

Jacqueline Rees (Selosse, 1969)

- retired November 2022

Jackie continues to be involved with her company, running O'Grady Drama, which develops skills such as communication, confidence and creativity through drama for children. Jackie loved her years at Abbotsleigh and has been passionately involved with the School ever since. Jackie has strong family ties with Abbotsleigh - her mother Shirley Selosse attended Abbotsleigh in the 1930s and 40s, as did her two daughters Georgie and Charlotte in the 1990s. Jackie joined the AOGU Committee in 1996, serving as the Parents and Friends Representative from 1997 to 1999,

before being elected to Secretary in 1999. After serving for 10 years, Jackie initially stepped down in 2006 but continued to be involved in organising the annual Golf Days. In recognition of her long and valued service to the AOGU Jackie was appointed a Life Member of the AOGU Committee in 2012. In November, after more than 25 years of involvement with the AOGU, Jackie retired to become an Emeritus Life Member of the AOGU Committee and is warmly thanked for her generous and heartfelt service to Old Girls across generations of Committees.

Margaret Sachs (Coburn, 1965)

Margaret works in the family business, ExecEstate. She joined the AOGU Committee in the early 1970s and over several decades has served as AOGU Secretary, Vice President, President and Chair of the Centenary Appeal Fundraising Committee for the Chapel Organ. She also served as a Director of the Abbotsleigh Foundation and member of the Abbotsleigh Foundation Fundraising Committee and the Marian Clarke Society for many years. Margaret continues to be an active member of the AOGU Committee and Marian Clarke Society. Margaret's daughter is an Old Girl and her grand-daughter is a current student in the Junior School. Abbotsleigh is in Margaret's blood.

Melissa Slattery (Walsh, 1977)

Melissa graduated from Sydney University in 1981 and taught English, History and French at St Luke's Anglican School. She joined the AOGU committee in 1987 and has since served on the Committee, becoming Secretary and then President from 2001 to 2003. One highlight of those years was helping her predecessor as President, Elizabeth Tomlinson, to establish the Kathleen McCredie Award. She served from 2003 to 2011 as an AOGU Representative on the Abbotsleigh School Council (including on its Building and Development Committee). Melissa was appointed as an Honorary Life Member in 2013, a role she finds very fulfilling. In 2017-2018 she enjoyed working with Rebecca Baillie to produce an oral history of Kathleen McCredie's life to celebrate her 90th birthday. Melissa's daughter graduated from Abbotsleigh in 2005.

Elizabeth Tomlinson (Mills,1960)

- appointed 2021

After leaving Abbotsleigh in 1960 Elizabeth joined the ABC as a Cadet Film Trainee – an experience which has provided a lifelong love of cinema. Subsequently Elizabeth completed a law degree from Sydney University and practised as a solicitor in both Sydney and Melbourne. As a solicitor Elizabeth joined the Law Society of New South Wales and practised in both the Ethics Department and the Professional Standards Department with that organisation. Subsequently Elizabeth joined the Federal Court of Australia and as a Judicial Registrar and specialising in Industrial Relations, she was able to travel widely interstate. This proved to be a wonderful experience providing insight into the Australian workplace generally, its difficulties and its achievements. In 2006 Elizabeth founded Pointsbuild Pty Ltd, a training and education website for the building and construction industry. Later Elizabeth has been involved with the design and development of physical aids for the handicapped and she has been part of the Fledge group of innovation startup companies at the CSIRO at Lindfield. At present Elizabeth is a Consultant to a Canberra law firm. Elizabeth's involvement with Abbotsleigh is generational – beginning with her mother, herself, her daughter and now her granddaughter in the Junior School. Along this joyous and rewarding path she has been President of the AOGU and Chair of the Marian Clarke Society. Elizabeth believes it is a great time for her to 'give back' in whatever ways she can.

Emeritus Life Members of the Committee

Robin Archer (Horwitz, 1959)

Sue Cross (Jacobs, 1949)

Jenny Davies (Holman, 1963)

Robin Kench (Hobart, 1951)

Kathleen McCredie AM (1945)

Jacqueline Rees (Selosse, 1969)
- from November 2022

Old Girls Year Representative network

We are developing an Old Girls Year Representative network to help us ensure that the Abbotsleigh Old Girls' Union continues to be a strong organisation for all 6,000+ Abbotsleigh Old Girls. Our main aim for the Year Representatives initiative is for all Abbotsleigh Old Girls to know what the AOGU is up to and for the Committee to hear from our members about what they need and want from their Union. It is intended to be light-touch but vital – a key part of the connection between year groups and the AOGU.

The role of a Year Representative is to:

- Be a point of contact between the AOGU and your year group
- Be part of a private Facebook group of Year Representatives where information updates will be shared
- Share announcements and news with your year group's own Facebook (or other social media) page/group, to notify all Old Girls from your year of upcoming events, as well as flagging with them issues that the AOGU would like feedback on
- Provide the AOGU Committee with feedback from you or others in your year, or encourage members to reach out directly to the AOGU
- Reinforce the message that the AOGU is an Old Girls-led organisation which belongs to all Old Girls, and which is separate from the School

The role does not require organising events or reunions, or fundraising.

If you would be interested in being your class's Year Representative and working with the AOGU to better connect the Old Girls community, please get in contact with Fiona Hobill Cole at agou.secretary@gmail.com to learn more.



AOGU reunions in 2022

2022 might be forever known as 'the year of reunions', with many catch up events held this year.

The AOGU proudly supported the special milestone 60 year reunions for the classes of 1960, 1961 and 1962 as well as the 70 year reunion for the class of 1952 by subsidising ticket costs.

Organising a reunion

Organising your reunion is easy and lots of fun with plenty of support available from the Old Girls Office to help make your event a success.

The Old Girls Office can assist in terms of administration, including creating and sending of 'save the dates' and invitations, managing RSVPs as well as the processing of payments etc.

The format of the reunion is up to you, as is where and when to hold the event.

Your first step may be to find other Old Girls from your year group to form an organising committee and to perhaps investigate possible dates and venues. The Old Girls Office can suggest venues where other reunions have been held successfully in the past. We can also offer a school tour and/or chapel service around your event should you wish.

The Old Girls Office can share a list of your year group indicating who we do and do not have contact details for, and this is a good opportunity to try and fill those gaps!

Please do not hesitate to contact the Old Girls Office to find out more about how we can put you in contact with your year group's reunion organiser, or if we can help you organise your next reunion!

North West Reunion and Tamworth Community Event



Abbotsleigh Old Girls descended on Tamworth once again, with the North West Reunion held at Carmen's on Saturday 23 July. We were treated to extremely generous servings of delicious Italian food on a picture-perfect Saturday. A total of 23 Old Girls, spanning from 1964 leavers to the 2000s, talked until the restaurant closed, with some continuing to catch overlooking the setting sun. Thanks to Susie Lyle (Craig, 1964) and Anne Mitchell (Macfarlane, 1964) for organising such a great event.

That evening, the Tamworth Abbotsleigh Community Event was hosted by Abbotsleigh, the Abbotsleigh

Boarder Parents' Association and the Abbotsleigh Parents' Association. A different crowd of Old Girls attended this event, with a great showing from some of our younger set who have moved (back) to Tamworth after their studies.

Community Events were also held in Dubbo on Saturday 14 May and Wagga Wagga on Saturday 4 June to coincide with the Boarding Expos. Please look out for these events next year as they are a special opportunity to connect with the broader school community including current, past and future parents as well as with each other.

1960, 1961 and 1962 Leavers' 60 Year Reunions

The wait was worth it for two patient year groups who were finally able to celebrate their 60th reunions in April following delays due to COVID-19 restrictions.

More than 30 leavers from the 1960 and 1961 year groups gathered at Pymble Golf Club for lunches held on different days in April, with some Old Girls also taking the opportunity to tour the Senior School the day before their respective events.

Thanks to 1960 reunion organiser Anne Le Couteur (Bullen) and 1961 reunion organiser Julie McFadzean (Dillon) for their coordination and enthusiasm.

Both events were subsidised by the AOGU.



1960 Leavers' 60 Year Reunion



1961 Leavers' 60 Year Reunion



1962 Leavers' 60 Year Reunion



1962 Leavers' Reunion - Lissa Coote with organiser Rosemary Szente (Dawes)



1962 Leavers' 60 Year Reunion



1962 Leavers' 60 Year Reunion

Classes of 2020 and 2021 One Year Reunions

The Class of 2020 were one of the few years that managed to have their reunion during the correct year! The first Year 12 group to emerge from COVID demonstrated their resilience and determination once again with a hastily rescheduled One Year reunion held after the long 2021 lockdown. Many Old Girls enjoyed a sunny day at the Greengate Hotel. Thanks to Illaria Calo for organising the event.

About 60 Old Girls from the Class of 2021 came together for their One Year Reunion in September this year. They were so busy catching up that they forgot to take photos! Many thanks to Emma Thornthwaite for organising their first Reunion.

We look forward to hosting the One Year Reunion for our most newest Old Girls from the Class of 2022 at the end of 2023. We can't wait to see what wonderful things all of our newer Old Girls will do as they follow their dreams in so many different areas of endeavour and continue to make a positive difference in our world.



The 2020 Leavers enjoyed a sunny afternoon catching-up

2023 Reunions

We have commenced planning our ever-popular regional reunions. Keep an eye on your inbox in 2023 to see if we are coming to a town near you!

For our Old Girls in Europe, we are also planning a London reunion in 2023 and would love to see as many of you as possible. Further information will be distributed in the New Year.

Finally, our Community Events will continue in 2023 at which all Old Girls are welcome.

SAVE THE DATE

**1973 leavers –
50 year reunion weekend**

Friday 17 to
Sunday 19 March 2023
Orange

Generations Breakfast

To welcome new Old Girl Mothers and Daughters

Friday 31 March

Online Speakers Breakfast

Friday 26 May

Archibald Tour

Friday 16 June

**1963 leavers –
60 year reunion**

Saturday 17 June 2023
Lunch and optional tour at
Abbotsleigh

**Mother Daughter Dinner/
High Tea**

Saturday 29 July

**Class of 2022 One Year
Reunion**

Saturday 9 September

Old Girls vs Current Girls Debate

Tuesday 17 October

Ladies Golf Day

Friday 3 November

Past events and photos



Wellness webinar

The past couple of years have tested us all in different ways. The AOGU, in partnership with the Abbotsleigh Parents' Association (APA), was delighted to hold an interactive wellness workshop webinar last November on the topic of 'Wellbeing and Mindfulness – Putting on your oxygen mask'.

Open to the entire Abbotsleigh community and presented by Old Girl Charlotte Jameson (Rees, 2000), the focus was on adult self-care and providing practical tools that could be incorporated into daily life; especially given the extended lockdown and pressures resulting from COVID-19.

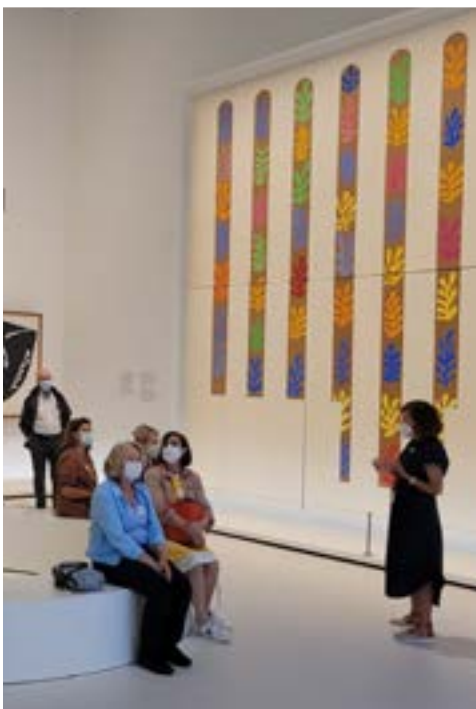
Now a Wellbeing and Mindfulness Practitioner, Charlotte's passion for psychology started at 16 years of age when she was introduced to a sports psychologist at a hockey camp.

After leaving Abbotsleigh in 2000, Charlotte dived straight into studying psychology and over the last 15+ years has been building a career in supporting leaders to become corporate athletes.

Charlotte has worked both nationally and internationally with executives, leaders and teams from a range of organisations.

Matisse Exhibition tour

It was wonderful for a group of 32 Old Girls and their guests to finally make a return to the Art Gallery of NSW on this occasion to view the Matisse Exhibition.





AOGU Mothers Breakfast

A rainy day did not stop girls from Kindergarten to Year 12 gathering with their Old Girl mothers and grandmothers for the 2022 AOGU Mothers Breakfast on Friday 1 April.

Held in the Outdoor Kitchen of the Junior School, more than 70 guests made the most of one of the first opportunities in a long time to catch up on campus. It was extra special having five Old Girl grandmothers, including two who had granddaughters start at Abbotsleigh this year, as well as six new Old Girl mothers.

Old Girls with daughters in Year 10 girls were strongly represented at this year's event!



Mother's Day Classic

Team AbbGirls hit the pavement for the Mother's Day Classic for the fifth year running this year; a wonderful event to bring the Abbotsleigh community together while supporting a cause that is likely to affect us all in some way at some stage.

Team AbbGirls organiser and AOGU Treasurer, Belinda Burton, said she first signed up as an individual nine years ago as a personal challenge, but mainly because, as a mother of two girls, she knew breast cancer would affect their lives in some way.

With options to walk or run and several distances and locations to choose from, the Mother's Day Classic is a very inclusive event for

all ages and abilities.

This year's team consisted of Belinda Burton, Mark Burton, Jasmine Burton, Poppy Burton, Eloise Orme, Bronwyn Smith, Sarah Hornery, Simon Tan, Lachlan Tan, Emily Tan and Luke Tan.

Thank you to everyone who supported Team AbbGirls and breast cancer research through participation and donations.



Card Day

A small but enthusiastic group of card players gathered for the annual AOGU Card Day at the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery. Commencing with morning tea and followed by a basket lunch, four tables of players enjoyed a morning of conversation and games surrounded by the artworks currently on display. Proceeds from raffles were donated to the Kathleen McCredie Award, which is awarded to a girl entering Year 10, who but for the award would not be able to attend Abbotsleigh.



ABBOTSLEIGH

Old Girls' Union Inc.



Apron \$25 each or two for \$40

Tea towel \$15 each or three for \$35

Portable charger \$25

Camellia pendant \$90
(pendant only)

All profits from merchandise sales go towards the Kathleen McCredie Award

Order now via Trybooking at
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Or call 02 9473 7740

Change to the Enrolment Policy affecting daughters of Abbotsleigh Old Girls

It is no longer necessary for the daughter of an Abbotsleigh Old Girl to attend entrance testing for her entry to Year 5 or Year 7. We value your connection with the School and would like to assist with ensuring that your daughter attends Abbotsleigh, as you did. Accepted places are offered to daughters of Abbotsleigh Old Girls entering at ALL entry points on early application. Abbotsleigh Old Girls are strongly encouraged to make application soon after the birth of their daughter to best ensure a place at Abbotsleigh. After 12 months of age, places are offered to those girls on the waiting list and while we will always try to assist with progressing enrolment for the daughter of an Old Girl, it will become more difficult to guarantee a place. The entry points for Junior School are Transition, Kindergarten, Year 3 and Year 5. The entry point for Senior School is Year 7. Please contact me should you wish to discuss any aspect of this process. I look forward to welcoming your daughter to Abbotsleigh.

Mrs Colleen Fenn
Registrar



The Yarn is a networking platform for recent leavers by recent leavers.

Recent leavers often believe they are not 'old' enough to join the Old Girls' Union; however, there is much value in staying connected to peers. Currently coordinated on Facebook, The Yarn <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1103221436832501> offers the opportunity for recent Abbotsleigh graduates to continue to connect and grow. Supported by the AOGU,

The Yarn has an ambitious vision to be a place where we can support each other, share experiences, be mentored as well as mentor others and encourage each other with our different post-school pathways.

Students have already shared job opportunities on The Yarn. We plan to start a video series where recent leavers can share their achievements. We recently established a mentoring program based on industry areas where 2021 leavers were put into a group with mentors from 2013-2020. This acts as an informal forum for students to ask specific questions such as where to buy textbooks, how to write essays, budgeting and moving out. Mentors have enthusiastically shared in detail their experiences from finishing the HSC to finding internships and being in the workforce. We hope that this mentoring program will initiate a continual culture of 'passing it forward', and that The Yarn will also be a centralised way to share information on how to connect with Old Girls who have had deeper career experience to be able to give back to new generations of Old Girls.

While the first year will always be experimental, we hope that this year will allow us to develop many new initiatives including social sport clubs and trivia nights. We would like to thank the AOGU for their support in establishing this new platform.

Jacinta Lin (2018)

On behalf of The Yarn Year Representatives:



Moving House?

Update your details by contacting the Old Girls Office at aogu@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au or call 02 9473 7740.

Stay Connected Contact the Old Girls

Office: aogu@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au
or 02 9473 7740

Locked Bag 1666
Wahroonga NSW 2076

Sarah Franks: aogu.president@gmail.com

Fiona Hobill Cole: aogu.secretary@gmail.com

Follow us on   

*Cover image

A horse being used to level the land behind Vindin House (now home to the Grace Cossington Smith Gallery) in 1934.

