



124th Annual General Meeting

30th April 2024

President's Report for 2023

Opening Remarks

Welcome to the 124th Annual General Meeting of the Old Girls Association of the Brisbane Girls Grammar School in the OGA's 125th year.

It is with much pleasure that I welcome Principal, Jacinda Euler, Chair of the Board of Trustees, Julie McKay, the dedicated ladies of the Management Committee, other Grammar Women in attendance, and Antonia Swindells, Alumnae Relations Manager and Old Girl.

Management Committee

The Management Committee for 2023 comprised:

Julie Caton (Cleghorn 1981) President
Tori Cardell-Ree (1991) Vice-President
Leigh Fielding (Gow 1984) Treasurer
Samantha Caton (2016) Secretary
Andrea Connolly (Peake 1981) Assistant Secretary

Kim Morgan-Short (Skuce 1981)
Dorothy Bourguignon (Scotney 1958)
Jenny Gray (Vallis 1969)
Sue Jordan (Squire 1967)
Ann Caston (Pressland 1958)
Sylvia Pegg (Gaulton 1965)
Michelle Tully (Oswin 1981)
Carolyn Dimento (de Hayr 1981)
Susan Walker (1995)
Nikki Lambert (Pantges 1985)
Katie Allan (1988)

The strength of any association is built on the Committee that steers it. I am very fortunate to interact with a group of dedicated Grammar Women who all bring varied ideas and suggestions to the table. Our meetings continue to be open and honest forums, where the views of members are recognised and respected. To me, this is very important, as each of us is in a different stage of our life and with

different experiences behind us; all of which culminate in making our Committee progressive and relevant.

I acknowledge the work done by both Samantha and Leigh to ensure Minutes and Finances are all up to date. Thank-you to Tori for fulfilling the duties of President when necessary and taking on the role of Memorabilia co-ordinator. Thank-you also to Susan for raising our Facebook profile.

Two of our long serving committee members, Dorothy Bourguignon (Scotney 1958) and Sue Jordan (Squire 1967) are stepping down as General Committee members. Over my years with the Committee, I have valued their personal insights and friendship. Their level of support for everything BGGs has been demonstrated in numerous ways over the years. They will remain connected with the Committee in an informal manner. I wish them both good health and happiness.

OGA Connections with the School

The OGA's enduring connection with the Parents and Friends Association is one that is valued and respected. As both associations are working towards support of, and engagement with, the School community, it is vital that we continue to support one another wherever possible. The President or representative attended all P and F meetings throughout the year, providing an OGA update and reporting back to the OGA Management Committee about relevant topics. President for 2023, Cate Campbell, has been an ongoing supporter of the OGA and I thank her for her friendship and collaboration. The P and F Uniform Shop, managed by Rebecca Goodman, is our primary source for the selling of OGA memorabilia. Thank-you to Rebecca and the volunteers for advertising and selling these items on our behalf.

The OGA is thankful to be included in Strategic Planning days with the Board of Trustees. Being acknowledged as a valuable asset within the School community is gratefully acknowledged. Thank-you to the Board members, led by Chair, Julie McKay. Julie always ensures she connects with the Management Committee ladies at events. This is very much appreciated by all.

Antonia Swindells has been my 'school contact' person since taking on the role of President. Over the years, I have witnessed the high level of commitment to her role and passion for everything BGGs. The OGA's strength is raised by her capable planning and foresight. The Bishbar Blue continues to be warmly received, showcasing a wide range of Grammar Women and keeping connections at the forefront. Reunions, both on campus, at the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and interstate, are well-run and enthusiastically attended events because of Antonia's organisation. The mentoring program, where current students are mentored by graduates, has grown significantly and provides an opportunity to keep the connections and real-world advice relevant. Toni, the Management Committee is very grateful and appreciative of everything you do.

Thank-you to Joseph Stewart, Development and Alumnae Relations, and also Veena Heron, Director of Communications and Engagement, for assisting the OGA in many ways throughout the year. I also acknowledge the great support the OGA received from Pauline Harvey-Short, Jenny Davis and Dominique Baines (Archivists). Nothing is ever too much trouble and I thank them sincerely for their support at events and to me personally.

I met with Principal, Jacinda Euler, when necessary, usually once a term, to discuss all matters relating to the OGA. Thank-you, Jacinda, for being so supportive of our initiatives and ensuring our inclusion within the School community. As a Committee, we know that you value the work we do, as we do of

your capable leadership of the School. Thank-you to Anne Ingram, Deputy Principal, who has been at all campus Reunions to share insights with the Grammar Women in attendance. Your support is also very much appreciated. Whenever I attend an Assembly or designated School event, the staff as a whole are always extremely welcoming. I would like to also acknowledge their assistance and support.

OGA Connections with Students

We have continued to seek to keep connections alive and relevant for those girls graduating and those girls just starting their Grammar journey. In 2023, incoming students were gifted a royal blue bag tag, with a welcome note from the OGA included. The now established tradition of presenting graduating girls with an OGA badge at the Valedictory dinner provides a meaningful opportunity to welcome them to the vast sisterhood of Grammar Women.

As in past years, we have enjoyed welcoming and working with an enthusiastic group of Year 11 volunteers. These girls capably assist at Reunions and other events, interacting with Grammar Women and sharing their own insights of BGGs today.

Memorabilia

OGA Memorabilia sales were primarily made through the P&F Shop and at the end of the year as graduation gifts. At the end of 2023, the Committee launched the BGGs Connection Candle in three different scents, with each scent representative of each of the three campuses. Thank-you to Committee member, Susan Walker, for spearheading this initiative.

OGA 2024

At the end of 2023, the Management Committee decided on a new logo for the association to mark the 125th anniversary. We decided to keep the OGA badge as it was originally designed and launched in 1927, adding the words 'Connections for Life' around the outside.

Concluding Remarks

Reading back through the Minutes of our meetings in 2023, I am reminded of the many ways the OGA interacted with students, both past, present and future. Some examples are -

- Attendance at Leadership Assembly and presentation to Head Girls
- Attendance at Foundation Day Assembly
- Foundation Day Afternoon Tea incorporating 60+ Reunion
- Attendance at BGGs Mothers Group Autumn Lunch
- Attendance at the Senior Drama production
- Grammar Women Sydney event
- Grammar Women Gold Coast event
- Grammar Women Sunshine Coast event
- Open Day – OGA stall – interaction with current, incoming and past students
- Open Day – Reception for current mothers who are old girls
- Brisbane-based Reunions
- Attendance at BGGs Board Strategy Day
- Attendance at Gala Concert
- Attendance at Volunteers' Function
- Attendance at Valedictory Dinner and gifting of OGA badges to graduates

- Attendance at Speech Day

From the excitement of ladies attending the 60+ years reunion, to seeing the excited faces of the incoming students at Open Day, being connected with BGGs is a wonderful opportunity and a privilege. As I have said to graduating students, you may not always need the connections the OGA offers, but they are there for you for life. Knowing that the sisterhood is a constant and supportive presence provides a supportive network when it is needed or desired.

I am very grateful and honoured to have led the Management Committee throughout 2023 and look forward to the many celebrations to mark its special anniversary in 2024.

Julie Caton (Cleghorn 1981)
President, BGGs OGA