

# Life in the Wilderness

Term 2 Issue #4 | Thursday 5 June, 2025

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FROM THE PRINCIPAL

## Reflection and Engagement with our Past and Future

**Belinda Arnfield**

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Term 2 has provided the Wilderness School community with many opportunities to reflect and engage deeply with our past and future. Events such as Founder's Day and National Reconciliation Week have opened new avenues for insight and understanding of the past and how we intend to move forward. Looking to the future, our SRC President Niya Singhal has recently presented at a conference on Reskilling Revolution: Preparing for the Future Workforce Landscape. As always, I continue to be inspired by the thoughtful contributions of our students, staff, and wider community.

### **Student Voice at the Forefront of South Australia's Economic Future**

At a recent Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA) event held at the Adelaide Convention Centre, Reskilling Revolution: Preparing for the Future Workforce Landscape, our SRC President, Niya Singhal, delivered the final address and summary presentation to an audience of government, education, and industry leaders.

Representing not just Wilderness School but the voice of young South Australians, Niya spoke with insight, conviction, and a clear grasp of the challenges and opportunities facing our future workforce. She reflected on key themes raised by the panel, ranging from AI literacy and trade skills in regional SA to innovation, migration, and the brain drain and made a compelling case for including young people in decision making processes that shape their futures.

Her contributions highlight the importance of equipping young people with the skills,

mindset, and ethical grounding needed to navigate a rapidly evolving landscape. At Wilderness, this begins with our Artemis curriculum, which encourages students to think critically, adapt with confidence, and engage meaningfully with the world around them. Through programs like Artemis and Futures and Foresight, we are deliberately helping our girls to shape their futures.

It is both encouraging and energising to see one of our girls step so confidently into this space. Niya's voice is an example of our young people having agency in leading their futures.

### **Founder's Day**

Founder's Day remains a deeply cherished tradition for us. This year's assembly brought together students, staff, and old scholars to learn about and honour the legacy of the Misses Brown —Wilderness School's pioneers whose vision and dedication continue to shape our school's identity. Following the assembly, it was wonderful to see old scholars reconnecting over a heartfelt lunch in Hender Hall, sharing memories and reflecting on their time at Wilderness. We are proud to carry forward their legacy and the values that make our school uniquely special.

### **National Reconciliation Week**

During National Reconciliation Week, our Reconciliation Assembly was a meaningful event where we acknowledged the rich cultural heritage of Australia's First Nations people, held on Kurna land. It was an opportunity to reflect on the importance of respect, understanding, and reconciliation within our community. Our library displays complemented the week's theme, Bridging Now to Next, featuring a wide selection of literature for all ages to help deepen our understanding of history and culture.

### **Ukaria Chamber Concert**

Our talented string orchestras and chamber ensembles recently spent an unforgettable Sunday immersed in music at the stunning Ukaria Cultural Centre in Mount Barker.

Throughout the day, students rehearsed in this world-class venue, refining their ensemble playing and soaking up the inspiring surroundings. The experience culminated in a beautiful afternoon concert, showcasing the depth of talent and musical sensitivity across all ensembles.

It was a truly memorable day for performers and audience alike—a wonderful opportunity to share music in a space that celebrates artistry and connection through live performance.

### **Belinda Arnfield**

Principal





EARLY LEARNING

## A Season of Story, Connection and Care

[Rebecca Williamson](#)

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The past few weeks in the ELC have been rich with meaningful learning, celebration and connection. From exploring our school's proud heritage to engaging in National Reconciliation Week, the girls have embraced opportunities to develop a deeper understanding of themselves, their community and the world around them.

Both the Annie and Mamie House girls celebrated Founder's Day by learning about the remarkable Brown sisters, after whom our early learning spaces are named. These stories are powerful in helping the children connect past to present, and to begin to form a strong sense of identity as Mamie girls, 'big Annie girls' and, importantly, as Wildy girls.

In the Annie House, the girls also participated in a sustainability project with Miss Sarina, who is currently undertaking studies in early childhood leadership and advocacy. Together they have established a worm farm and a garden in the Parents and Friends Garden. This hands-on initiative has sparked ongoing conversations about care, responsibility and environmental stewardship. We look forward to continuing the watering together and, hopefully, enjoying the fruits of our hard work at lunchtime in the weeks to come. We are very thankful for Miss Sarina's dedication to this project, as it has made a significant contribution to the girls' learning.

Both houses acknowledged National Sorry Day and participated in learning experiences aligned with this year's Reconciliation Week theme, Now More Than Ever. In the Annie House, the girls made clay 'Care for Country' pots with their buddies and learnt the song "Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes" in Kaurna language. These activities have supported the children in building knowledge of First Nations culture through respectful, joyful and



developmentally appropriate learning.

In the Mamie House, the children listened to Somebody's Land by Adam Goodes and explored the meaning behind the Aboriginal flag. Each room created a collaborative artwork to serve as a meaningful and enduring reminder of our ongoing commitment to reconciliation. These works now sit proudly on display, anchoring a message that extends beyond one week and into the everyday rhythm of our learning community.

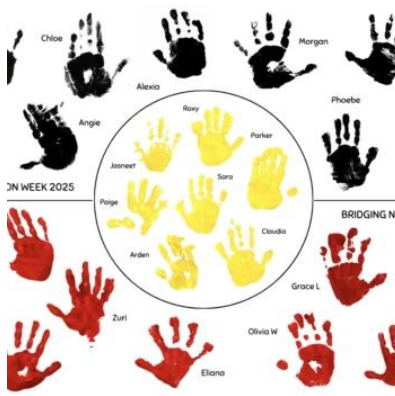
The Mamie girls also recently farewelled Miss Tommie as she begins her maternity leave. Her time with us was celebrated through the creation of a collaborative artwork, with each child contributing a unique petal to a shared piece that captures her lasting impact on our program. It is an incredibly impressive piece of art, and if you have not seen it, please visit the Mamie room where you will see it proudly displayed.

Finally, both Annie and Mamie girls were visited by author Louis Brennan, who shared his story Driver Camel's Rainy Day. This experience sparked a wave of storytelling, inspiring the girls to create and share narratives of their own.

As always, the ELC remains a place of thoughtful exploration, purposeful learning and deep connection, where each child's voice, creativity and sense of belonging are nurtured with intention and care.

**Rebecca Williamson**  
Director of Early Years











JUNIOR SCHOOL

## A Busy Mid-Term: Excursions, Camps and Events

[Liz McCarthy](#)

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We have enjoyed a busy mid term in the Junior School, with excursions, camps and numerous events adding to the experiential learning and vibrancy of our community. Our Year 4 girls have enjoyed their camp, with 4 Rice attending in Week 5 and 4 Zammit in Week 6. An Outdoor Education experience based on literature is the focus, with the girls reading 'Walking the Boundaries' by Jackie French, an Australian novel set in Douglas Scrub. The girls visit Douglas Scrub and spend their time retracing the steps of the children in the novel and engaging in the same challenges and experiences as they did. The camp is designed to support the girls to step out of their comfort zones and to conclude with a wonderful sense of achievement and pride in all they have accomplished in the outdoors.

Our Year 2 girls blasted off on an exciting adventure to the Mawson Lakes Planetarium. To complement the girls' learning about Space, they explored the solar system, spotted stars and moons and marvelled at the amazing patterns in the sky. One of the highlights was watching a short clip called Tycho's Trip to the Moon, which transported the girls inside a space adventure too.

Our Reception girls participated in their first excursion on with their Muddy Puddles Outdoor Education Day. Travelling to the Mount Lofty Botanic Gardens, the girls explored the outdoor environment with Adventurous Learning at the centre of all planning for the day. Coming home very muddy with leaves in the hair, the adventure was rated a lovely success.

Our Junior School teachers are in the final stages of Semester 1 assessments as they prepare to write End of Semester Reports. Including a rubric outlining the achievement



standards for each curriculum area, with each girls' achievement to date highlighted, we anticipate that these reports, along with the accompanying teacher comments, will form a detailed and informative snapshot of progress and achievement. Parents will receive a notification in Week 1 of the holidays letting them know when their daughter's reports are available to view on Verus.

Congratulations to Year 5 student, Aria Pasin, who attended Gymnastics States mid-May and, following her outstanding results, has been selected to represent SA in Rhythmic Gymnastics at Nationals in Queensland in July.

Wishing you each a wonderful final few weeks of Term 2.

Warm regards,

**Liz McCarthy**

Head of Junior School

### **Bedtime Stories**

One of our most precious Wildy events is Bedtime Stories, an opportunity to don our cosiest pyjamas, snuggle up with a soft toy friend and share reading adventures with teachers and special guests in our wonderful Library. This year our event was held on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> May. Colourful bracelets and friendly Junior Library Committee girls (assisted by our Senior Library Representative) welcomed Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 girls and their parents to nine cosy story nooks. This treasured event is made extra special by the obvious delight our Story Readers show by carefully selecting stories which are part of their own reading adventures, past and present. It reminds us that we can share and enjoy stories at any age.

Once again, our delicious take home treats were baked by recent graduate, Demi Moutos. Her brand 'Deliciously Simple' certainly lived up to its reputation!

On behalf of the girls we thank readers Annette Mescke, Bec Williamson, Sophie Bonner, Wendy Menzies, Lauren Trennery, Melissa Foster, Bec Ratcliffe, Emma Sippe, Danielle Moir, Brenna Bence, Ashlee Thiele, Travis Henderson, Jess Foster, Brad Waller, Matthew D'Aloisio, Nicole Marinos, Mia Ellis, Bobbie Keane and Andrew Vanlint for their generosity and joy, and special helpers, Ruth Lim and Laura Sieradzki and all the people behind the scenes for a memorable night.

**Katie Silva**

Teacher Librarian





MIDDLE SCHOOL

## da Vinci Decathlon and Incredible Art

[Rhiannon Giles](#)

### da Vinci Decathlon

Congratulations to the Year 7 and 9 teams who competed in the da Vinci Decathlon. Following their win, the Year 9 team has been invited to represent the School and South Australia at the National Finals at the end of term. Below some members of the Year 9 team explain more about the Decathlon and their experiences at the State Finals.

The da Vinci Decathlon, is an opportunity to immerse students in 10 significant disciplines including English, Mathematics, Science, Art and Poetry, Legacy, Codebreaking, Engineering, Creative Producers, Ideation and Cartography. The state theme for 2025 was 'Light', where we explored a variety of topics like Shakespeare's utilisation of light in his works, light waves in a scientific perspective, how light can inspire artistic and innovative visions, ways light can be used and manipulated and how light has left a lasting legacy on our society.

We started the day with Art and Poetry, Ideation and Science where we were quizzed on the science behind Lasik surgery, lumens and designing futuristic glasses in Ideation.



The Art and Poetry sector involved creating an artwork which evaluated the importance of art and poetry in our society, how it brings light to the world. Our team explored the themes of AI, human touch and history through our 3D piece which integrated an interconnected poem.

After a short recess, we returned to complete Maths, English, Cartography and Engineering. During this session, our team was called to complete Creative Producers; this year's topic centred around 'shedding light'. In Maths we calculated periods of Sine, measured shadows and determined distances travelled by lasers while our teammates engineered and created kaleidoscopes. In Cartography, we were presented with images of light maps and names of observatories and asked to locate them. English challenged our writing and comprehension skills by looking at the motif of light in Romeo and Juliet, analysing book covers and creating our own story around the theme of light.

Session 3 commenced after lunch, leaving two more disciplines to be completed: Code Breaking and Legacy. We encountered a multitude of challenges ranging from deciphering Caesar Shift and interpreting pictograms. We also looked at the legacy of da Vinci and the Renaissance, and the inventions and scientific discoveries of great scientists.

da Vinci Decathlon provided us an opportunity to converse with other schools, exercise our academic, teamwork and creative abilities. We placed first overall, earning us a chance to compete in Sydney on a national level under the theme of 'Turning Points'. We are incredibly excited to compete and represent Wildy at Knox Grammar at the end of this term.

Sirui, Evangeline, Amber, Chenuthi

### **SA Showjumping Championships**

Congratulations to Rila Li, who won a Fifth Place in the 75cm category and First in the 85cm category at the recent SA Showjumping Championships.

### **Rhiannon Giles**

Head of Middle School

### **Year 8 Art**

Over the past two terms, our Year 8 Visual Arts students have been exploring two dynamic art styles through separate assessment tasks, developing both their technical skills and creative expression.

In **Term 1**, students created vibrant Pop Art-inspired paintings, focusing on bold colours, simplified forms, and high-contrast imagery. Drawing on the work of prominent Pop artist Andy Warhol, they explored how visual repetition, and everyday objects can be transformed into striking compositions. The learning intentions for this unit included understanding the key elements of Pop Art, experimenting with colour theory, and

developing composition and painting techniques.

In **Term 2**, students turned their attention to the Australian modernist Margaret Preston, whose bold lino prints and celebration of native flora offered rich inspiration for their own printmaking projects. Students designed and carved their own lino blocks, learning about relief printing techniques and the importance of line, pattern, and negative space in creating a successful print. They were encouraged to think critically about composition and symbolism while developing their technical skills in lino cutting and inking.

Throughout both projects, students have shown growing confidence in their artistic choices and an ability to respond to diverse styles in thoughtful and creative ways.

**Ashleigh Kelly**

Head of Art

### **Girl Up Committee Period Poverty Drive**

On Friday 23 May, the Girl Up Committee held its annual Period Poverty Drive, inviting Middle and Senior School students to exchange a donation of sanitary products for a baked treat. This initiative followed Monday's powerful assembly with KickStart for Kids and Jenna in Pink, which helped raise awareness about period poverty and the impact it has on young people. All items collected will be donated to KickStart for Kids, supporting children who lack access to essential sanitary care. The event was a huge success, with the school community showing generosity and spirit for this important cause. We collected 333 packets of sanitary products totaling 5312 individual sanitary items.

**Ebony Jack**

Teacher

### **Wilderness Students Compete in Round One of the FUSE Cup**

On Tuesday 28 May, four students took part in Round One of the South Australian FUSE Cup, held at Pulteney Grammar School.

The FUSE Cup is an international esports competition that provides students with a safe, supportive, and structured environment in which to engage in competitive gaming. With a strong focus on digital wellbeing, teamwork, and respectful gaming, the FUSE Cup allows students to connect, collaborate, and compete with their peers while developing essential digital citizenship skills.

Representing Wilderness in this exciting event were Rosie Morgan, Madison Mason, Erin Monu, and Zoe Chappell. The students competed alongside participants from other schools across the state, showcasing not only their gaming abilities but also their teamwork, resilience, and sportsmanship.

The competition saw strong performances from all four students. Rosie impressed early

by placing first in her heat, while Zoe Chappell secured second in her group. Both Rosie and Madison advanced to the finals stage, with Rosie progressing to the semi-finals, an outstanding achievement in a field of 48 players from six schools. Although she was eventually knocked out in the semis, Rosie showed grit and focus throughout. Erin faced a tough round but remained positive and supportive of her teammates. Across the board, the students demonstrated excellent preparation, teamwork, and resilience under pressure.

The event highlighted the growing role of esports in education and the opportunities it creates for students to engage in inclusive, forward-thinking digital experiences. Our students represented the school with pride and positivity, embracing both the competitive challenge and the spirit of the FUSE Cup.

We look forward to future rounds and the continued involvement of Wilderness students in this innovative and fast-growing competition.

### Liam Sloan

Head of Technology and Enterprise









SENIOR SCHOOL

## Curiosity, Resilience and Independent Thought

Kate Hanson

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At the heart of education lies not just the acquisition of knowledge but the cultivation of curiosity, resilience and independent thought. As educators we are increasingly focussed on nurturing learners who are not only well-informed but also reflective and adaptable, skills essential in a rapidly evolving world. By encouraging critical thinking and fostering a genuine engagement with ideas we aim to support each girl in developing both confidence and a strong sense of purpose in their learning journey. This commitment is evident in the way our students engage with opportunities beyond the classroom. Niya Singhal, for example, recently spoke at the Committee for Economic Development of Australia's event Reskilling Revolution: Preparing for the Future Workforce Landscape, where she concluded the panel discussion by summarising key insights and offering her perspective as a young adult, an articulate contribution that underscored the value of student voice in shaping conversations about the future world of work. Similarly, Saanvi Khanna and Ada Qian demonstrated intellectual curiosity through their participation in the Australasian Neuroscience Society's Brain Bee Challenge last term and have since been invited to the SA State Final. These examples reflect the richness of learning that occurs when students are encouraged to engage thoughtfully with the world around them.

### Study Skills and Exam Preparation

During Week 6, the Year 11 girls had the opportunity to engage with a range of sessions held by Elevate Education. The optional sessions were held during study periods, focussing on topics such as time management, revising for exams with confidence and study skills.

Year 11 mid-year exams will be held in Week 8. Subject teachers will be providing girls with information about the areas they need to revise. The Year 11 girls will be given a day of SWOT VAC on Friday 13 June. This day should be used to prepare for examinations.

### **Year 12 Update**

As the temperature has started to drop, with Winter now here, the girls enjoyed some time spent together in the Common Room, with a surprise of hot chips delivered for lunch. The Year 12s also celebrated Halfway Day with popcorn, videos of old concerts and a Kahoot.

As we work towards the second half of the year, the longer assignments and external assessments will start to become a focus for the girls. It is essential that the girls plan their time well and work at these large pieces consistently.

The mid-year, Year 12 exams will be held in the first week of Term 3. The girls should be starting to consider their study program for the holidays to ensure they adequately prepare. These exams are an essential part of the curriculum and provide the girls and their teachers with valuable information for future growth and areas that require focus. The grades are also used to help formulate predicted grades for the end of year exams.

**Kate Hanson**

Head of Senior School

### **Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity Program**

Recently, our Year 12 Health and Wellbeing students visited SAHMRI to learn about the Wardliparingga Aboriginal Health Equity Program. They gained valuable insights into research aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including topics like Aboriginal health, genomics, and the significance of kinship systems and cultural determinants. This visit served as a powerful reminder of the crucial role cultural understanding plays in health and wellbeing.

**Andrew Mittiga**

Acting Head of House Cedar

### **Silver Duke of Ed bushwalking Adventure**

At the beginning of Term 2, 42 of our Silver Duke of Ed students undertook a 6-day bushwalk in small groups through the beautiful Northern Flinders Ranges. Highlights of the bushwalk included camping under a sky full of stars, experiencing the beautiful landscape by foot, perfect bushwalking weather all week long, and working together as a group to navigate through the diverse terrain that the Heysen Trail has to offer. This experience allowed our students to challenge themselves, physically, mentally and socially, and overcome challenges through collaborative teamwork, and group



management strategies.

The Silver Duke of Edinburgh journey was so much more than just a hike. It was a lesson in leadership, patience, problem-solving, and gratitude. I'll never forget the stillness of the mornings, the sting of sore shoulders, the laughter at camp, or the sense of achievement at the end. This journey has changed me in the best way possible. Year 10

Silver Duke of Ed Student

This rewarding experience allowed our students to develop essential skills for life beyond the four walls of the classroom, which will serve them well in the future. This was a valuable opportunity for our students to disconnect from the hustle and bustle of senior school, and instead foster a deeper connection with each other and the natural environment.

**Holli Rawson**

Outdoor Education Assistant

### **Wilderness Students Share Insights at South Australia's AI in Education Conference**

In Week 3 of Term 2, Year 12 students Shayla Retnaraja and Chloe Arblaster proudly represented Wilderness School at South Australia's AI in Education Conference.

The pair participated in a student panel discussion on the use and impact of artificial intelligence in schools, presenting confidently on key issues such as:

- The responsibilities of schools in guiding students to use AI ethically
- How AI can help students overcome learning barriers
- The impact of AI on student creativity
- The bias that exists within AI technologies

With more than 100 educators in attendance from government, independent, and tertiary sectors, Shayla and Chloe spoke with clarity and conviction, offering an insightful student perspective on the role of AI in education.

Shayla and Chloe provided this summary:

Participating in the AI conference as students on a questioning panel, provided us with a very valuable insight into how AI is evolving in education contexts, and how it's likely to keep changing as we move beyond Year 12. One of the most useful parts of the experience was being able to speak directly to such a relevant audience, as we felt like our voices were actually being heard by the people shaping our education. It was also such a great opportunity to raise some of our concerns around how AI is used in learning, and what support students need to use it ethically and effectively. Being able to have those

conversations with teachers means we can help direct our own learning and make sure student perspectives are part of the conversation as AI continues to grow in schools. Overall, it was an incredibly valuable experience, that we were extremely fortunate to take part in.

Shayla and Chloe's involvement not only highlighted the importance of student voice in shaping educational conversations but also reflected Wilderness School's ongoing commitment to empowering young people to lead and engage meaningfully with industry and emerging technologies.

**Liam Sloan**

Head of Technology and Enterprise





BOARDING

## Community and Connection in our Activities Program

[Carolyn Matthews](#)

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The boarding house has had a very busy Term 2 and it is hard to believe that we have arrived at the halfway point. The girls are very excited that they have reached this point and that it is time for the upcoming exeat, where they have the opportunity to head home and recharge the batteries for the final three weeks of term.

We ended National Boarding Week with our much-anticipated moonlight cinema, unfortunately the weather gods were not on our side and rain forced us indoors. That said, the girls thoroughly enjoyed bedding down in Hender Hall with girls from Pembroke and Loreto joining us for our viewing of Legally Blonde. The food stalls were well utilised and it was great to see the girls enjoying connecting and forming some new friendships.

We have had a number of entertaining activities this term. A group of girls attended the Adelaide Crows vs West Coast game and most very much enjoyed the scoreline! Our international students enjoyed lunch out and an escape room challenge which they will have to return to, to fully escape! We have had pizza making onsite, and our junior boarders enjoyed a night of bowling and arcade games organised by PAC. There is more to look forward to, with both ice skating and an Op-Shop shopping trip planned, before the end of term. Activities are such an important part of the boarding program and are vital in fostering a sense of community for our boarders.

Planning is well underway for the annual Boarders Fashion Parade, with girls volunteering for numerous roles, with modelling the gorgeous fashions being the top one! As always, this event is raising valuable funds for the Bhadaure School in Nepal, with whom we have a very close relationship. It is an important event in both the School and boarding calendar and we are looking forward to another fantastic parade again this



year. We have many fashion labels keen to take part and both the silent and live auctions will be full of exciting items to tempt our hip pockets! We would love to see as many family and friends as possible. Watch out on Verus for the link to purchase tickets, either individually or with a group.

It is hard to believe we are almost at the mid-point of the year, time has flown by so quickly, but we have much to look forward to in the coming weeks, prior to the holiday break.

**Carolyn Matthews**

Head of Boarding



