



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

CAMBERWELL GIRLS GRAMMAR SCHOOL CENTENARY COMMENCEMENT

CEREMONY

Tuesday 11th February 2020

Ms Christine Cussen, Chair of School Council and council members

Mrs Debbie Dunwoody, Principal of Camberwell Girls Grammar School

The Right Reverend Genieve Blackwell, Assistant Bishop, Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

The Venerable Greg Allinson, Archdeacon of Kew and Vicar of St Mark's Church

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

Staff and girls

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering. I thank Murrundindi for his warm welcome and pay my respects to Elders past and present.

What a pleasure it is to join you here to help you commence the Camberwell Girls Grammar School Centenary celebrations.

It is special to celebrate a history of 100 years, let alone on the very day that the anniversary falls. It was of course 100 years ago, to this very day, that eight students were enrolled at St Mark's Church School – as you were then called.

There is so much to reflect upon at such an historic moment.

I am full of admiration that you have gathered a large group here today, with students – from the tiny beginners to the senior girls – teaching and administrative staff, school council members, Old Grammarians, parents and church and community representatives.

But I am mindful too that I am addressing a large group, with so many different perspectives.

Let me start with the most important group: the girls.

And starting very much at the beginning, I want to say a few words to the youngest ones who are here.

Some of you are just starting school. You cannot be expected to understand your good fortune to be in this setting. But I hope that, like many Camberwell Grammar Girls before you, you will make many friends here, have fun at school and discover a lifelong joy of learning.

You, the senior girls, naturally have a greater understanding of this school and this occasion. You have spent and will spend some of your formative years here.

Already, you have insight into the gains from a school setting in which you are encouraged to be confident, to lead, to take risks and to achieve academically, whilst stretching yourselves to achieve more broadly – including in community service.

Your school motto is, after all, *Usefulness in Service*.

There are so many wonderful ways that we can all contribute to our wider communities, sometimes in the simplest of ways – even just by small acts of kindness.

When it comes to the teaching staff, I have no doubt that, although teaching philosophies and methodologies have changed across the past 100 years, the fundamental ethos of the School's founders remains. Educators clearly have a vocation: to imbue young people with an enthusiasm for lifelong learning.

And it has never been more important. We know that the future workforce is likely to encounter a number of different occupations. An appetite and an aptitude for flexible learning will be the currency that is needed.

Of course, the educators have always been supported by talented administrative staff. I have been directly involved with several School Councils. I know that you do not reach your centenary without the professional competence of those who support the school infrastructure and services.

It follows that I know too the rigors of serving on a School Council. You are great volunteers. You are the guides who set the course. The same must be said of your predecessors.

The culture of any organisation grows over time. With a school, the alumni are often the keepers of the culture. What an impressive group of women I see amongst your 9,500 alumni. Women who traverse public life, the professions, the arts and business.

Everyone connected with the School must feel proud of the recent and current students and the contribution that each member of your community has made to the excellent academic results that the girls have been achieving. Congratulations on that.

Congratulations too on creating a setting of opportunity and integrity, and of your continuous connection to the Anglican Church and its teachings of care for each other.

Above all, congratulations on this celebration of '100 years of educating tomorrow's woman'.

It is a great pleasure for us to join you in your Centenary Commencement Ceremony and we wish Camberwell Girls Grammar School a very happy 100th birthday.