



HELLENIC COMMUNITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA INC.

REPRESENTING ALL GREEK AUSTRALIANS IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Hellenic Community
Aged Care



HELLENIC COMMUNITY ADMINISTRATION
SAINTS CONSTANTINE AND HELENE CHURCH
COMMUNITY HALLS
COMMUNITY'S TOWER HOUSE



Monthly Newsletter

Stay connected with our community

The December Edition



The Afkos family with the official plaque unveiled at the Grand Opening of the Bianca Afkos Science and Technology Hub at St. Andrew's Grammar

This month's features

- President's Message
- Grand Opening of Bianca Afkos Centre
- New Years' Eve Celebrations
- Christmas Celebrations
- ...and more!

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President's Message



Dear Members,

It is with great pride that I welcome you to this special edition of our December newsletter. To open my President's Welcome, I would like to mark a significant milestone for our school and our wider community - the opening of the Bianca Afkos Science and Technology Centre.

The Centre is a state-of-the-art facility that will shape teaching, learning and innovation at St. Andrew's Grammar for generations to come. The Centre also stands as a reflection on the extraordinary journey of the school. From its humble beginnings in 1991, operating out of a rented room at North Morley Primary School with seven students and three staff, the school has grown into a thriving educational main stream community of the 951 students.

For more than 32 years, the Hellenic Community of Western Australia has invested deeply in our youth's education, contributing close to \$49 million to ensure our school stands proudly within the mainstream education landscape, delivering high-quality learning for future generations. This

commitment reflects not only financial investment, but an enduring belief in the power of education to strengthen our community.

None of this would have been possible without the generosity of our benefactors (past and present) whose confidence in our vision has helped shape the school we see today. Their philanthropy, alongside the ongoing support from our members and volunteers, has ensured that our community-owned institutions continue to cautiously grow with prosperity.

Over the past five years, we have witnessed extraordinary growth. Student enrolments have increased dramatically, waitlists have emerged for the first time in the school's history, and our school now begins 2026 stronger than ever. This growth brings responsibility, and it also brings opportunity – to continue investing wisely and to ensure our facilities match the ambition and potential of our students.

The Science and Technology Centre represents the largest single investment our Community has ever made in the school, nearing \$9 million in the past 18 months. This project has been made possible through the support of key funding partners, philanthropic foundations, and our financial institutions, working together with our governance bodies, CEO, leadership team, architects, and builders. Their collective effort has delivered a state-of-the-art facility, completed on time and ready to welcome students at the start of the 2026 school year.

On a personal note, I would like to acknowledge the profound honour of having this Centre named after my late wife, Bianca. She was a woman of great kindness, integrity, and generosity and whose commitment to family, community, and philanthropy defined her life. Her support for education was unwavering.

The decision to name this Centre in her honour was made independently by the Advisory School Board, the school's governance, and the Community – a gesture for which my family and I are deeply grateful. It is our hope that Bianca's legacy will inspire other benefactors to continue supporting our community and our school with the same spirit of generosity.

As President, and as a lifelong member of this Community, I am immensely proud of how far we have come – and even more excited about what lies ahead.



For the full speeches from School Principal Craig Monaghan and Chair of Advisory Board Eleni Evangel, click on the buttons below.

[Principal's Speech](#)

[Advisory Board Chair's Speech](#)

Our Church – Saints Constantine and Helene Church

Christmas and New Year Service

Our Church Services prior to Christmas day and on Christmas day, as well as New Year's day have been very well attended. The week's liturgies and celebrations started on the 21st December with the Sunday before Christmas Matins and Divine Liturgy.

For the Christmas Eve service, we were honoured to have His Grace Bishop Iakovos of Miletoupolis, who was visiting Perth while accompanying His Eminence Archbishop Makarios of Australia on his pastoral visit.

It was heartwarming to see our church full of parishioners and community members celebrating the birth of Jesus on the 25th day of December. This

church service received a record number of parishioners attending the service – with very large number of parishioners receiving communion filtering into Parker Street outside the church.

We thank Father Terry for all he has done for our Church in 2025, and who had requested myself to thank all who have contributed with the work and needs to the church, and to extend our Christmas wishes.

We also thank Presbytera Stamatia and all members of the church committee.



Toy Drive Donation

On Wednesday 17 December 2025, Christmas gifts were presented to the Perth Children's Hospital by Father Terry and our Church helpers as part of the Perth Diocese's annual Christmas Toy Drive.

This year, our church collected over 1200 toys and gifts donated to the hospital. This was almost double the number from the previous year! These gifts were donated from parishioners, students at St. Andrew's Grammar, members of our community and other organisations, reflecting a strong spirit of compassion, generosity and love for children in need during the Christmas season.

The gifts were warmly received by Perth Children's Hospital representative. The hospital staff and volunteers expressed their sincere gratitude to the Perth Diocese and all contributors for their generosity and thoughtfulness.





New Year's Eve Celebration

We celebrated the New Year with our annual New Year's Eve celebrations held at St. Andrew's Grammar, with 517 persons in attendance and special guests joining us to celebrate include His Grace Bishop Elpidios, the Greek Consul Eleni Georgopoulou and her family, Consul Secretary Panagiotis (Peter) Karydis and his family, the new Marine Commander Ioannis Faltsetas, and Frank Paolino MLA, Member for Mount Lawley. We were also joined by the Presidents of the Floreat Athena Football Club, the Pan Macedonian Association, the Florina Association, the Hellenic Club, the Romanian Community of WA and the Albanian Community of WA.

Our guests and audience enjoyed an evening of wonderfully prepared traditional Greek food, delicious lamb and chicken souvla, Greek salad and other side dishes. We were serenaded with a night of song and dance, performed by Nick Karagiannis and Korina Margaris as we welcomed 2026.

Just after the clock struck at midnight, we proceeded cutting by the correct protocol manner the traditional Vasilopitas with all in attendance receiving a piece. A big thank you to Chef Sunil from the Hellenic Community Aged Care for his hard work in preparing all foods including the Vasilopitas for the night and all our volunteers who helped make the event such a resounding success.

Thank you to Savvas Papasavvas and Vangelis mastered the marinating the cooking of the lambs and chickens.



Wishing Fr John Athanasiou a Happy Retirement

On behalf of the Hellenic Community, we want to wish Father John Athanasiou well as he retires from his ministry at the Church of Saint Nektarios.

Fr John is a qualified lawyer who had served as the former Vice President of the Hellenic Community from 1995 to 2001, which were very difficult and challenging years. He studied Theology under the guidance of the late Archbishop Stylianos. He was later ordained as a priest at Saint Nektarios and served as its Parish Priest for nine years until his retirement.

During his tenure, he served the church and community faithfully without taking any remuneration – choosing to give to the needs of the parish. He will be missed and I am sure many community members would like to wish him well.

Our School – St. Andrew's Grammar

New St. Andrew's Grammar campus at Northbridge

As you may have read in the news, we have been given approval by the State Government to establish a new Year 7-12 school at our 20 Parker Street location in Northbridge.

The new campus will again be focused on commercial success for our community as we have at Dianella. It will also focus on creating a globally connected educational hub in the heart of Perth's cultural district, surrounded by universities, transport and business, and make our Parker Street headquarters the Hellenic hub. We have the support of the City of Perth, the Minister of Education, and local Members of Parliament as we continue to meet with Federal Ministers to support this project funding.

This will strengthen Perth's reputation as an international education destination that will offer international families another high-quality schooling option – the International Baccalaureate.

Statement of Solidarity with the Jewish Community

The Hellenic Community of Western Australia expresses its deepest sorrow and heartfelt condolences to the families and loved ones whose lives have been shattered by the tragic violence at Bondi Beach on 14 December 2025. We mourn with all those affected and hold them in our thoughts during this time of profound grief. We stand in solidarity with the Jewish community at this moment of immense loss and sorrow.

Shaped by Hellenic values and our Greek Orthodox heritage, we hold human life as sacred and believe deeply in the inherent dignity of every person. Acts of hatred, terror, and antisemitism stand in direct opposition to these values and have no place in Australia or in our society.

Like in the Jewish community, many of our own community came to Australia having fled war, persecution, and hardship, seeking peace and opportunity. Through hard work, *philotimo* and strong community bonds, they helped build a nation grounded in fairness, freedom and mutual respect.

Australia is a diverse democracy united by shared civic values – respect for life, equality before the law, freedom of belief, and the right to live without fear. Violence driven by hatred undermines these foundations and damages the social fabric that binds us together.

No person should ever feel unsafe because of their faith, ethnicity or background. Our public spaces must remain places of safety, belonging, and peace for everyone. We say clearly and without hesitation: such acts are unacceptable.

The Hellenic Community of Western Australia stands side-by-side with the Jewish community and with all those affected by this tragedy. In mourning, we stand together. In resolve, we reaffirm our commitment to a safe, inclusive and united Australia.

Our thoughts are with every family in mourning. May we honour those lost by strengthening the values of respect, dignity and peace that lie at the heart our shared Australian home.

Paul Afkos OAM

President on behalf of the Board of Management

Grand Opening of the Bianca Afkos Science and Technology Hub



The Hellenic Community of Western Australia proudly celebrated a landmark achievement on 11 December, officially opening the Bianca Afkos Science & Technology Centre at St. Andrew's Grammar.

The state-of-the-art facility will inspire innovation and excellence across science, technology, and the arts for generations to come.

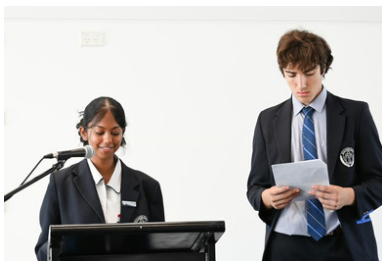
From Term 1 this year, students will have access to advanced science laboratories, cutting-edge robotics, and purpose-built performance spaces, ensuring they are future-ready.

The Centre was officially unveiled by Hon. Sue Lines (Senator for WA), and Paul Afkos OAM (President of the Hellenic Community of WA). Distinguished guests included the Afkos family, Consul Ms Eleni Georgopoulou, Hon. Dean Smith (Senator), Hon. Basil Zempilas MLA, Frank Paolino (MLA), Mayor Mark Irwin, St. Andrew's Advisory Board Chair Eleni Evangel, CEO Paul Savvas, and Father Terry Gerovasilis, who blessed the building.

Key guests were also invited who had significant contributions to the success of the new build were from Commonwealth Bank, T& Z Architects and Devlyn construction. "Great event" said attendee, Jeremy of T&Z, "it was the best opening I've been to, and I've been to a few!"

At the official unveiling of the building Paul Afkos OAM, President of the Hellenic Community of Western Australia, spoke with emotion on the Centre's naming in memory of his late wife, Bianca Afkos. The Afkos family's generosity, including a half-million donation, helped make this vision a reality.

Wonderful messages were shared by Mr Afkos, Ms Evangel and the school's Principal, Mr Craig Monaghan in what was an illustration of community togetherness and Hellenism.





New Years' Eve Celebration



We welcomed 2026 with our annual New Year's Eve celebrations held at St. Andrew's Grammar filled with delicious Greek souvla and sides, music and dancing!

517 people joined us for this special evening, with guests including His Grace Bishop Elpidios, Father Terry and Father Nicholas, the Greek Consul Eleni Georgopoulou and Frank Paolini MLA, Member for Mount Lawley.

It was a night of amazing food, music, and dancing, made even more special by our honoured guests and community friends.

A special thank you to our amazing chefs and volunteers who worked so tirelessly behind the scenes to make the evening such a success. Your efforts made the night simply unforgettable.





Happy Birthday John Metaxas!



On Wednesday, we had the pleasure of celebrating the birthday of John Metaxas, a man whose name is synonymous with the Hellenic Community of Western Australia and Hellenic Community Aged Care.

From the very beginning, John has been there – not just helping to build our community, but sustaining it. To imagine the Hellenic Community without him is, quite simply, impossible.

John's contribution goes far beyond his role. He is the steady hand, the trusted voice, and the person everyone turns to when something needs to be done – thoughtfully, thoroughly, and with heart. His commitment to aged care and community service has shaped not only our organisation, but the lives of countless older Australians.

Over many years, John has been a tireless advocate for small, stand-alone, rural and regional aged care providers across Western Australia. He has generously mentored organisations navigating complex operational and regulatory challenges, offering guidance, reassurance and practical solutions. Much of this work has been undertaken voluntarily – driven by his belief that quality, compassionate care should never depend on postcode.

John's leadership and innovation have been recognised at a state level, where he received the highest individual honour at a major aged care awards program. This recognition acknowledged his exceptional service to the sector, his commitment to improving quality of care, and his forward-thinking approach to workforce development – including collaborating with tertiary institutions to support training opportunities for future medical professionals.

Although John was overseas at the time of the award, his absence from the ceremony did nothing to lessen its significance. His impact is felt every day across our organisation – in the lives of residents, families, staff and the wider community. John Metaxas is the backbone of the Hellenic Community, and we are grateful for the extraordinary legacy he continues to build.





Hellenic Community Aged Care Residents' Christmas Lunch



Our staff at the Hellenic Community Aged Care organised a wonderful lunch for our residents and their families to ring in the Christmas season.

The dining rooms across the facilities were filled with a wonderful festive spirit as everyone enjoyed a traditional Christmas meal including turkey, chicken, ham, roast vegetables, potatoes and a selection of desserts that were very well received.

Santa joined our staff and Hellenic Community Aged Care Chair and Board Members to visit each wing, singing carols and bringing Christmas cheer to residents throughout the home.

A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated staff for creating such a special day for our residents and their families. Community and connection are at the heart of everything we do, especially at this time of year.



Christmas Carols at Hellenic Community Aged Care



Residents and their families were treated to a joyful night of Christmas carols performed by the wonderful Churchlands Choral Society, filling the space with festive spirit and familiar tunes.

Santa made a special appearance, delighting the children with gifts, while our incredible staff surprised everyone with a special dance performance that brought smiles, laughter and a few happy tears.

Adding to the merriment, our kitchen team kept everyone well fed and merry, serving up crowd favourites including pizza and a classic sausage sizzle.

A beautiful evening of music, laughter and connection, reminding us that Christmas is about coming together and sharing joy





St. Andrew's Grammar Celebrates ATAR Results



On behalf of the Hellenic Community, we would like to congratulate St. Andrew's Grammar Class of 2025 for their outstanding ATAR results for 2025.

A special congratulations to Anh Vu Nhien Tran (Annie) for achieving an incredible 98.90 ATAR score!

We are all so proud of the achievements of our students and cannot wait to see what the Class of 2025 do in their lives. Up and on!

Christmas Carols at St. Andrew's Grammar



Christmas cheer was loud at St. Andrew's Grammar during our annual Primary School Christmas Carols concert!

The night featured adorable performances from our Pre-Kindy through to Year 6 students. Each year group took the stage with their own festive flair with familiar jingles, movie-favourite tunes and even a few traditional carols given a fun little remix.

Our Primary Performance Choir also jumped in with beautiful harmonies, leading the crowd sing-along. We welcomed more than 200 guests, including Board Members of the Hellenic Community , all here to cheer on our young performers.

A big special mention to Mrs Marina Powell and Ms Julie Wall for their coordination and guidance in getting each year group ready for Monday's performance.

A huge thank you to our students, families and staff for creating such a joyful evening. The Christmas spirit is well and truly alive at St. Andrew's!



St. Andrew's Grammar Presentation Assemblies



Over two occasions, we hosted our Presentation Assemblies, celebrating the hard work, talent and character of our students across Years 1–11.

During these Presentation events, we recognised academic excellence, commitment to service and the students who consistently go above and beyond.

School Principal Mr Craig Monaghan shared with both sets of students in his address: "The secret of success isn't about being better than someone else – it's about being better than you were yesterday. Your personal best is yours alone. Learn from setbacks, and keep chasing your own dreams. Let's make 2026 a year of personal bests—together!"

A huge thank you to our families, staff and community for their extensive attendance, and backing our students through every milestone. Here's to another year of learning, leading and growing together at St Andrew's Grammar.



Year 6 Graduation Ceremony



On 5 December 2025, we gathered at St. Andrew's Grammar to celebrate our Year 6 cohort as they officially wrapped up their Primary School days at the school.

The morning honoured their growth, resilience and the friendships they've built along the way. Some students are stepping into Secondary here with us, while others are off to new schools – but all of them leave as confident, capable young people ready for their next chapter.

After the ceremony, families joined us for morning tea after the conclusion of the assembly, where the graduating class treated everyone to a special performance, followed of course by some classic Greek dancing.

Congratulations to our Year 6s, we're proud of you, and we can't wait to see where you go next.

