The
Shuttle

Time flies faster than a weaver's shuttle.

Gala and National Science Week celebrations – A 'Journey With Joy'

Mrs Megan Krimmer
Headmistress

I would like to thank every member of our Abbotsleigh community for their generosity and support.

The Gala Dinner last Saturday evening was wonderful, with our community raising $300,211 for our building program, as well as for the Indigenous, Kathleen McCredie and Foundation Scholarships.

The lives of current and future Abbotsleigh students will be enriched as a result of your generosity.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart.






The study of science is absolutely fascinating; after all, it is about the world around us – both the seen and the unseen, and discoveries are being made every single day! Studying science allows our girls to be curious, to explore, to probe, to ask really deep questions, to test and retest hypotheses, to discover new things, to think critically and creatively, to work collaboratively and to solve real-life problems. Studying science is all about asking 'Why?' or 'Why is this so?'; it is exciting, and it is fun.

We are highlighting science this week as it is National Science Week; however, our girls' and our teachers' love of science is not limited to just one week – you only have to walk into our wonderful Science Centre in the Senior School or STEM Street in the Junior School at any time to see our girls engaged and completely mesmerised.

The vast majority of our girls study at least one science subject, if not more (in fact, many study three) for the HSC, and significant numbers pursue a career in science or the health sciences, studying science and science-related courses at university. They do this not only because science is so incredibly interesting, but also because by studying science they know they will work with others to try and solve complex and pressing problems, or embark on research to find cures for many diseases, or find ways of making life and work easier, and so on. In short, our girls want to pursue careers in the different fields of science to make a positive difference in their world.

Indeed, as Katherine Bennell-Pegg, Australia's first female astronaut, Australian of the Year and Director of Space Technology at the Australian Space Agency, stated in the media recently: 'By studying STEM subjects, you can be empowered with the tools to solve problems you care about and make discoveries that excite you.' (SMH 27 July 2026)

This week's *Shuttle* highlights the wonderful activities celebrating Science and Maths Week undertaken in the ELC and the Junior School this week, as well as some of the activities undertaken by Year 10 as part of the Senior School's celebration of National Science Week.

STEAM learning in action across the Junior School and Early Learning Centre

Science and Maths Week provided a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the curiosity, creativity and problem-solving that are nurtured every day across the Junior School and Early Learning Centre. While the week showcased a range of engaging activities and projects, it also highlighted something much bigger: the importance of ensuring girls see themselves as innovators, designers, engineers, scientists and future problem-solvers.

Research consistently demonstrates that early experiences in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics play a significant role in shaping girls' confidence, interest and future participation in STEAM fields. Eccles (2014) notes that children's beliefs about their abilities and future possibilities are formed from a young age, while Master, Cheryan and Meltzoff (2021) emphasise the importance of creating learning experiences that help girls develop confidence and a sense of belonging within STEAM disciplines. By providing authentic opportunities to design, create, experiment and solve problems, we help girls develop not only technical skills but also creativity, collaboration, resilience and confidence, capabilities that will serve them well in any future pathway.

Throughout Science and Maths Week, students across the Junior School engaged in a diverse range of learning experiences that demonstrated the many ways STEAM education comes to life at Abbotsleigh. One of the highlights was the launch of the Day of AI program. Through engaging and age-appropriate lessons, students began exploring the fundamentals of artificial intelligence, considering both how these technologies work and the possibilities they present for the future. These learning experiences will continue throughout the term as students deepen their understanding of this rapidly evolving field.

Across the Junior School, students have been applying technology and design thinking in creative and meaningful ways. For example, Year 3 students commenced an integrated inquiry project in which they designed a new Australian town. Drawing on their learning in Science, Mathematics and HSIE, they considered factors such as climate, geography and population before presenting their ideas through digital infographics. Meanwhile, Year 4 students used stop-motion animation to bring stories of resilience to life, combining storytelling, digital technologies and creative thinking to communicate powerful messages about overcoming challenges.

Many students have also been exploring coding, engineering and invention through the use of Scratch and Makey Makey technology. In STEAM Club, Years 3 and 4 students designed and coded their own digital tennis game before creating game controllers from cardboard and copper tape to bring their projects to life. In the Year 5 classrooms, students used similar technologies to deepen their understanding of Australian history, designing interactive displays that showcased their learning about the Gold Rush through coding and digital invention.

Innovation and creativity have also been evident in the use of 3D design and printing technologies. Students in the Early Learning Centre transformed their drawings of 'home' into three-dimensional printed creations, while Year 1 students designed unique characters for their community project before bringing them to life through 3D printing. Looking ahead, Years 5 and 6 STEAM Club students will use professional design software to create practical solutions to real-world problems, with prototypes produced on our new 3D printer.

Our Year 6 students have embraced particularly exciting opportunities this year. Through the Greenpower program, students have collaborated in engineering, design, marketing and pit crew teams as they construct an electric racing car that will compete against schools from across the region. They have also participated in design-thinking workshops with industry partners and explored game development through the GameChanger Girls program, where students are creating original Minecraft experiences for inter-school competition.

Science and Maths Week also marked the launch of Year 6's Designing for Change project. Inspired by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, students are identifying real-world challenges and developing innovative prototype solutions using sustainable materials. This project exemplifies the powerful combination of creativity, critical thinking and social responsibility that lies at the heart of STEAM education.

As we reflect on Science and Maths Week, it is clear that STEAM education is about far more than coding, robotics or engineering. It is about nurturing curious minds, encouraging students to ask thoughtful questions and empowering girls to see themselves as capable of shaping the future. Whether designing towns, building racing cars, creating animations or solving authentic global challenges, our students are developing the confidence, creativity and resilience needed to thrive in a rapidly changing world. These experiences remind us that when girls are given opportunities to explore, invent and lead, there is no limit to what they can achieve.

Year 10 loving science

There was plenty of fizz, foam and flame in Year 10 Science this week as the girls celebrated National Science Week (15-23 August). Through spectacular demonstrations – including elephant toothpaste, genie in a bottle and methane bubbles, students explored combustion and decomposition reactions. They used their observations to identify reactants and products before representing the reactions using word and balanced chemical equations.

Chaplain

Curiosity, discovery and transformation

Rev Sarah Hobba
Senior Chaplain and Head of Christian Studies

Science Week provides a wonderful opportunity to celebrate curiosity, discovery and the wonder of the world around us. Drawing on my background in Science and Science teaching, I shared this week at Junior School Chapel some of the areas of science I have most enjoyed, including botany and the intricate structures of flowers, as well as the importance of water chemistry for life.

Science encourages us to look more closely at creation and ask deeper questions. While faith and science are often presented as opposites, many of the early universities and pioneers of science saw the study of the natural world as a way of understanding more about God and His creation. The entrance to Cambridge University's Physics laboratory bears the words of Psalm 111:2 (see below), and Oxford University's motto is 'The Lord is my Light'. For Christians, scientific and mathematical pursuits can be a way of marvelling at the richness, beauty and complexity of the world God has made.

We also reflected on one of science's most striking examples of physical change that can illustrate spiritual change: a caterpillar transforming into a butterfly. This provided a helpful way of understanding Saul's dramatic encounter with Jesus. From someone who opposed and persecuted early followers of Jesus, Saul was transformed into Paul, one of the most influential leaders of the early church. He travelled widely, sharing the message of Jesus and wrote many of the letters that now form part of the New Testament. This radical transformation was not simply the result of new knowledge, but of encountering Jesus and understanding His great love and sacrifice on the cross.

As we reflect on Science Week, may we continue to approach both God's world and God's Word with curiosity and wonder, allowing Him to shape us and transform us so that we can share His love with those around us.

Psalm 19:1-2

1 The heavens declare the glory of God;
the skies proclaim the work of his hands.
2 Day after day they pour forth speech;
night after night they reveal knowledge.

Psalm 111:2

'Great are the works of the Lord; they are pondered by all who delight in them.'

Upcoming events

WHOLE SCHOOL

Parent Wellbeing Hive – parent wellbeing resources	Available to all parents on the Parent Portal	**Click here** to visit
HSC Showcase exhibition	Tuesday 25 to Sunday 30 August	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery and the iHub

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Primary ensembles music concert	Friday 21 August 6.30-8 pm	Senior School Assembly Hall
Year 5 Bathurst camp	Monday 24 to Wednesday 26 August	Bathurst, NSW
Book Week	Tuesday 25 to Friday 28 August	Various JS locations
Author talks	Thursday 27 August Sessions throughout the day	Various locations
ELC Father's Day breakfasts	Tuesday 1 and Thursday 3 September 7.30-8.15 am	ELC
T-6 Father Daughter breakfast	Wednesday 2 September 7-8.15 am	Library Plaza

SENIOR SCHOOL

Saturday sport	Saturday 22 August	**Click here** for times and venues
NAIDOC assembly	Monday 24 August 12.45-1.15 pm	Assembly Hall
Year 11 leadership presentation assembly	Tuesday 25 August 12.40-1.15 pm	Assembly Hall
NAIDOC touch football vs Pymble LC	Tuesday 25 August 1.20-2.05 pm	Upper Oval
Japan Concert Band rehearsal	Tuesday 25 August 3.30-5.30 pm	PDCH
IGSA Archdale Debating – Grand Final	Tuesday 18 August 4-8 pm	Various locations
HSC Showcase Opening event	Tuesday 25 August 5.30-8 pm	Grace Cossington Smith Gallery and the iHub
Year 10 Write a Book in a Day	Wednesday 26 August	Library seminar rooms
Year 7 Write a Book in a Day	Thursday 27 August	Library seminar rooms
Year 12 Father Daughter breakfast	Friday 28 August 7-8.15 am	Year 12 Common Room
SDN Debating competition – round 6	Friday 28 August 4-9 pm	Various locations
Year 11 assessments	Tuesday 1 to Friday 11 September	
Japan Concert Band rehearsal	Tuesday 1 September 3.30-5.30 pm	PDCH
SDN Debating competition – round 7	Friday 4 September 4-9 pm	Various locations
Catch a Rising Star Gala Concert	Friday 4 September 6.30-8 pm	PDCH