



PENLEIGH AND ESSENDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

# Altior et Sapientior

September 2025





## *From the Principal*

In reading the stories gathered in this edition of *Altior et Sapientior*, I was struck by how often greatness begins in the smallest of places. A Prep student proudly counts to 100, and suddenly the patterns of mathematics open before them. A Year Seven discovers courage on stage in Drama and realises they have a voice worth sharing. A group of Year Nine students plant shrubs for local wildlife, and in doing so, strengthen our connection to community and place.

These "little things" - the theme that continues to shape our year - are never small in meaning. They are daily acts through which our values come to life. Respect is learned when students greet a new culture through language, food, or performance. Excellence is cultivated when rehearsed notes become a concert or a shy recitation becomes a prize-winning poem. Accountability is practised when a House Captain leads others with quiet organisation, or when students raise funds to support Indigenous literacy. Curiosity is sparked in the questions of a young scientist investigating oobleck, or a senior student peering into the cockpit at Qantas Engineering. And Heart is found everywhere - in the kindness of building birdhouses, the encouragement on the basketball court, or the joy of our School Song sung in unison at One School Day.

Our community is at its strongest when these moments are noticed and nurtured. For it is rarely in dramatic leaps, but in the accumulation of "little things," that extraordinary futures are built.

Thank you for the part you play in modelling and celebrating these values alongside us. Together, we ensure that every small step taken by our students is also a step toward becoming the thoughtful, capable and compassionate people we know they will be.

**Kate Dullard**





# McGotty Day – Strengthening Bonds Through Teamwork and Creativity

McGotty Day was more than just a break from the classroom; it was a purposeful opportunity for Year Eight students from McNab House and Gottliebsen House to connect, collaborate, and learn together. The programme was designed to encourage respect, teamwork, and the building of positive relationships – skills that will support students well beyond this one day.

In the morning, students worked in mixed form groups on activities that highlighted the importance of cooperation and communication. The *Circle Starter* encouraged everyone to contribute, while the *Pipe Cleaner Structure Challenge* tested creativity and teamwork. A *Brain Break* provided space to reset, before students came together for *The Big Quiz*, which reminded them that learning can be both fun and collaborative.

The afternoon offered a broader canvas for expression and connection, with sessions in games, drama, sport, and art. These activities gave students the chance to discover new strengths, step outside their comfort zones, and appreciate the diverse talents within their year level.

By the end of the day, McGotty Day had achieved its goals. Students left with stronger friendships, a deeper sense of respect for one another, and a clearer understanding of the value of working together. It was a reminder that meaningful learning often happens when fun and purpose come together.

**Jennifer Adams**  
Acting Year Level Coordinator, Gottliebsen House



A photograph of three female students in school uniforms sitting at a table in a library, looking at books. The student in the foreground is wearing glasses and a dark blazer with a crest. The background shows bookshelves and a potted plant.

# A Week That Changed Lives

When Year Six Class Captains Ashi, Aviana, and Olivia joined forces with RAP Captain Thea Tang, they helped to spark something extraordinary. Their mission? To raise awareness and funds for the Indigenous Literacy Foundation - an organization working to improve literacy access in remote Indigenous communities across Australia. The students didn't just talk about making a difference - they helped make it happen. Speaking at assemblies and visiting classrooms, they educated their peers about the Foundation's vital work. With the RAP group's support, colourful awareness posters soon decorated the entire campus.

The final week of Term Two became an unforgettable celebration featuring dress-up days, concert performances, a talent show, discos, the epic Walkathon, guessing games, and a giant raffle draw at the final assembly. The energy was infectious, and the results were phenomenal.

The incredible outcome - over \$17,000 raised - represents more than fundraising success. It's tangible proof of our school values flourishing: Respect for Indigenous communities and their contributions, Accountability in taking responsibility to create change, and Heart through genuine kindness and empathy.

Our students didn't just support a worthy cause; they discovered their power to make a real difference. They demonstrated that when a community unites around shared values, extraordinary things happen. This week showcased young people building meaningful relationships, acting with integrity, and proving that compassion in action can truly change lives - both for those they're helping and for themselves.

**Christine Hallman**  
Head of Section, Junior School (girls)



# The 2024 Premier's Awards

In July, it was our pleasure to celebrate our Premier's Award recipients for 2024 at a ceremony at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

These awards recognise students who have demonstrated outstanding achievement in a VCE subject and are the result of exceptional understanding, dedication and hard work.

Class of 2024 students, Sarah, Amy and Sienna each received multiple awards. Sarah received awards for Ancient History and Global Politics, and Amy for Geography and History Revolutions. Sienna, who was one of our Duxes in 2024, was presented with a Top All-Round VCE High Achiever award, as well as awards for English Language and Mathematical Methods. The Top-All Round VCE High Achiever award is given to students who have achieved study scores of 46 or higher in at least five VCE subjects.

Current Year Twelve students, Kate and Alessandra, received awards for Legal Studies and Accounting, respectively.

Congratulations to each of you. The excellence you have demonstrated in achieving this recognition is a credit to you.





# Reaching New Heights

For many students, the Year Nine Outdoor Education program stands as the pinnacle of their Camp experiences. One of our School Captains, Simon, even mentioned this as one of his highlights in preparing for his One School Day speech.

Over five unforgettable days, the program weaves together trust and responsibility through meaningful challenges and collaborative peer engagement. It recognises the importance of students' growing connection to Country, as well as place-based knowledge, both of which create valuable opportunities for developing independence.

Together, these elements foster an environment that encourages students to expand their mindset and reach new personal heights. For some, this may involve abseiling in the Cathedral Ranges, navigating across undulating terrain to locate markers, or using flint and steel to light a fire. For others, it might mean rising from a warm sleeping bag on a frosty morning, learning to tie a rethreaded figure-eight knot, trying unfamiliar foods, or simply spending five days away from the comforts of routine.

What proves most inspiring, however, is not the scale of the challenge itself, but each student's willingness to embrace vulnerability. We commend those who courageously stepped into that space throughout this term. Their openness has not only fostered personal growth but also strengthened the collective spirit of their form groups. To those still to attend: be bold, be brave. Stepping into discomfort often leads to the most rewarding and transformative experiences.

**Bonnie Morris**  
Outdoor Education Teacher





# What a Day!

Here is a scenario for you.

Question: What do you get when you take 2,500 students, 350 staff, 55 buses, a Stage Band, a Senior Choir, a Junior Choir, a Symphony Orchestra, 50 Senior dancers, 160 Grade Six dancers, 55 cast members of *Finding Nemo JR* (pause for breath ... ), 30 winners of school prizes, 15 student announcers, a Chairman of the Board and a Principal and put them on stage in the Plenary at the Melbourne Convention and Entertainment Centre?

Answer: You get One School Day 2025!

And what a day it was! A true celebration of the PEGS community and an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of students across all year levels. Beginning with a stirring rendition of *Feeling Good* as performed by the PEGS Stage Band and Swing Syndicate, the audience was warmly welcomed to the event by school captains, Mia and Simon, after which the (now) traditional parade of Year Twelve students provided a fitting acknowledgement of the Class of 2025.

The excitement continued as the audience were treated to an encore performance of one of the songs from the recent production of *Finding Nemo JR*, an electrifying dance routine presented by the Winter Dance Performance Squad, a captivating song from the Junior Choir, and an item combining the forces of the Symphony Orchestra and Vox Populi.

As School Captains, Mia and Simon spoke of their PEGS journey using the theme of preparing for a run, while Principal Kate Dullard addressed the audience with a focus on the 2025 school theme of “the little things”. Unusually, an interruption to normal programming occurred as we crossed to a live interview with Chairman of the Board, Chris Clausen! Student interviewers Alessia and Tex certainly grilled him with their probing questions such that we all came away with a greater understanding of the Board’s role in setting the school’s direction. (as well as knowing who he barracks for in the football!)

Awards for outstanding student achievement in a variety of pursuits were celebrated throughout the ceremony and demonstrated the enduring connections of these awards to the school’s history.

And then came the finale! Vox Populi, the entire Winter Dance squad, the Stage Band, Swing Syndicate and 160 dancers from Grade Six all combining in a performance of Whitney Houston’s *Step By Step* that had the entire house tapping their toes and clapping along provided a joyful climax to a memorable day.

What a Day indeed!









# Perspective and Insight: Annabel Crabb

On Wednesday 30 July, a near-capacity audience attended a presentation by distinguished journalist, political commentator, social commentator, and cook, Annabel Crabb.

In her address, Ms Crabb reflected on the “sliding door” moments that have shaped her career, leading her to recognise that each person views the world through a slightly different lens. She noted that this insight has been central to her ability to examine modern Australian society from multiple perspectives with fairness and without bias.

Her message was particularly timely for students, many of whom are navigating a period marked by increasing division within society. She emphasised the importance of developing the capacity to understand another’s point of view, even when one does not share it, as a foundation for civil, thoughtful, and constructive political and social discourse, essential to the health of any community.

With her warmth and wit, Ms Crabb brought the highly successful 2025 series to an engaging and thought-provoking conclusion. We extend our sincere thanks to her for generously sharing her time and insights with our community.

In addition, we would like to thank all members of the PEGS Community who attended in support of any, or all, of our series of speakers in 2025. This year’s programme, which in addition to Ms Crabb featured Olympic gold medallist Jessica Fox and acclaimed science educator Adam Spencer, prompted all who attended to develop strategies for purposeful thinking in the face of challenge.

We look forward to continuing with the Thinking Seminar Series in 2026.



## A Cleaner, Greener Vision

We often hear about the need to reduce carbon emissions. It can seem an abstract goal and for many, tangible ways to achieve this reduction are difficult to envision.

At PEGS, we are fortunate to have staff members, such as Shaun Pritchard and Alex Scott, who are leading our commitment to reducing the school’s emissions, and supporting our students and community to do the same.

Shaun is our Facilities Manager and oversees property, maintenance and building projects across the school. He and his team have spent many years quietly integrating sustainably responsible fixtures into new buildings, and replacing broken or redundant items with sustainable upgrades in existing buildings. Some examples of this include changing over standard light bulbs for LED bulbs, replacing gas hot water systems with solar electric systems, installing hundreds of solar panels on the roofs of buildings, installing electric car chargers, using all-electric maintenance and gardening tools and drastically reducing the usage of chemicals in the maintenance program.

These measures to promote sustainability are also supporting students in their learning. Using findings from a study from The Pennsylvania State University as the catalyst, Shaun and his team are leading the roll-out of CO2 monitors in classrooms which, when CO2 levels increase, draw fresh air into the rooms. The study showed that, as CO2 levels in classrooms rose, so too did the levels of fatigue and inattention in students. By introducing fresh air flow, students are better able to learn and concentrate. The fresh air also reduces our reliance on air-conditioning. A win for learning and for the environment!

Alex has led the Conservation Club at PEGS since its inception 15 years ago. He continues to work with a dedicated group of students each year, championing environmental and sustainability causes. Alex has been instrumental in fostering connections with external organisations such as the Royal Botanic Gardens, Zoos Victoria, Parks Victoria and several local ecologists. While thinking on a global scale, Alex has recognised that by acting local the impact and purpose is more easily shared throughout our community.

A recent example of this is a project undertaken by the Conservation Club which has seen the planting of species-specific vegetation at our Keilor Park site. These trees and shrubs have been identified as important food or nesting material for vulnerable and threatened species of wildlife in our immediate environment. These species include the Growling Grass Frog, the Legless Lizard, the Swift Parrot, the Orange Belly Parrot and the Golden Sun Moth. In learning about this flora, fauna and the importance of biodiversity, students carry curiosity and purpose into their own homes and local environments, and so continues the impact of this important work.

Though the nature of their work varies, Shaun and Alex continue to share resources and information to support their teams and our community towards the common goal – reducing carbon emissions. Their vision and commitment to a sustainable future at PEGS, and beyond, ensures a cleaner, greener and more purposeful community for generations to come.



# Building Skills, Confidence and Team Spirit

Our Prep – Year Two students have been actively engaged in a fun and purposeful sport program across the year, developing key movement skills while building confidence, friendships, and strong connections to our school values.

In Term Two, students learned the fundamentals of soccer and AFL, practising marking, goal-kicking, dribbling skills and teamwork. There were plenty of great goals - and a few kicks that went in unexpected directions! Through these games, students displayed respect, learning to share, turn taking, and supported their teammates with kindness.

Term Three shifts focus to court skills, where students are building their abilities in bouncing, catching, and shooting for goal. Students develop their hand-eye coordination and show curiosity by trying new activities and improving on these skills each week.

In Term Four, our striking skills unit introduces bat and racquet-based games, including cricket, hockey, T-ball, and tennis. These activities encourage teamwork and perseverance, giving students a chance to show heart by working together, building new friendships, and celebrating each other's progress.

The program is made even more special as it takes place at the Keilor East Campus Gym and the Keilor Park Sports Complex, giving our younger students access to amazing facilities to support their learning through sport.

We're proud of the effort and enthusiasm shown by our students as they continue to grow and thrive—on and off the field!

**Brett McQueen and Callum Glassford**  
Coordinators of Sport  
Junior School (girls) and Junior School (boys)



## Performance Physical Education

In June, the Year Twelve Physical Education cohort was lucky enough to consolidate our Unit Three Physical Education and fitness knowledge through the METS incursion. We were also able to put our performance skills into practice.

During this full day activity, we stepped into the world of elite athletes where we had access to advanced Lab tests such as the VO2 max treadmill test and the Wingate 30 second test that accurately determined our aerobic power and anaerobic capacity respectively.

All the students came together to support each other and cheer on those who put their hands up to perform the physical challenges. This day not only helped us prepare for our upcoming SACs and exam; it also gave us an insight into the expansive and enriching career of exercise sport scientists and elite athletes.

We had the opportunity to participate in a wide range of lab and field tests using advanced equipment. We were lucky enough to get the opportunity to race our friends in a 20m sprint across the gym court, where light-gates would measure our sprint times, and bring out our fiercely competitive sides. These experiences were an excellent way to revisit and reinforce the concepts we've learned over the past year in an exciting and hands-on way. We used tools such as light gates, VO2 max masks and GPS tracking devices. These allowed us to collect precise data during the sessions throughout the day.

A highlight from our day included an activity analysis using a series of ultimate frisbee matches with a vortex, which resulted in many laughs.

The friendly staff at METS encouraged many of us to step outside of our comfort zones and test our fitness skills to the best of our ability. A big thanks to our hardworking PE teachers, Ms Still, Ms Johnson, and Ms Stangerlin.

**Natasha, Caitlin and Mia**  
Units Three and Four Physical Education students



A group of female students in dark blue school uniforms are sitting on blue mats on a wooden floor in a gymnasium. They are looking at a tablet together. In the background, other students are also sitting on mats, and one student is standing and looking at a phone. The scene is brightly lit with large windows in the background.

# Wellbeing: an Integrated Approach

Whilst it is convenient to be able to point to a particular programme, a wide reading of the literature, and lots of experience, tells us that student wellbeing is usually best supported by an integrated approach.

The principles of our approach to Care and Wellbeing make this clear.

We know that feeling valued and having a voice are vital for a person to flourish. This is why we ensure that each student has a team of people to support them - from their class teachers to the more specific support provided by their Form Teacher, Student Coordinator and Year Level Coordinator. We also know that wellbeing is nurtured by mutual respect and strong sense of connectedness, which is why respect is taught explicitly in our Form programme, and students have so many different opportunities to form connections, within, and across year levels, and even sections.

We know that wellbeing supports, and is itself supported by, good thinking and learning, and significant formal and incidental academic support is provided not instead of, but rather as part of, our efforts to support student wellbeing. A wide range of class elective options (which increases over time), many and varied 9ERs activities, and a vast cocurricular programme gives students choices and some sense of agency about their school lives.

Our integrated approach can make it harder to identify the outline of our wellbeing programme, but caring and developing wellbeing is not a thing that we do – it's fundamental to everything we do.

**Anthony Simmons**  
Head of McNab House



# 100 Days of Learning, 100 Days of Growing

A rite of passage for Prep students is acknowledging and celebrating their first 100 days of school.

Students were greeted with streamers and messages of congratulations as they donned their special t-shirts and entered their classrooms for the 100th time. Morning activities were centred around 100; students brought in collections of 100 things, tried to write their name 100 times, did 100 exercises.

The highlight of the day was when both Junior campuses met at the Ian Morton Centre. A glow stick disco was a fitting celebration before students ate lunches together and enjoyed playing in a shared space. Proud parents greeted their weary children at the end of a big milestone day.

For families, it means they have achieved 100 wake ups, 100 school lunches and putting on uniforms 100 times. Early numeracy activities begin from the first day of school when the daily count toward 100 begins. This learning continues, grows and develops into skip counting, recognising patterns, and working with two and three-digit numbers.

Marking 100 days of school is more significant than the linked numeracy learning that is afforded. It allows the school community to stop and take stock of growth; even with its youngest learner; even in increments smaller than a year. With well-developed routines, better fitting uniforms, and a greater understanding of expectations, learners who have only been in this formal setting for 100 days still amaze and astound.

Students have rapidly moved through stages of learning, from demonstrating pre-literate competencies, to emerging writers and decoders, and some even becoming independent readers. With clear expectations and mutual respect, games can be played, challenges can be set, and goals can be achieved.

100 more memories are being made as you read this, and the Prep students are travelling from strength to strength. We join with families in relishing these moments, as this stage in the life seems inexplicably quick! Our school theme of 'the little things' further reminds us to take stock and enjoy these times with our young learners with the brightest futures.

**Kylie Hammond and Ebony Paulka**

Prep Coordinators – Junior School (girls) and Junior School (boys)





## Celebrating Success at the University of Melbourne German Poetry Competition

Our students shone brightly at this year's University of Melbourne German Poetry Competition, delivering performances that reflected their hard work, talent, and deep commitment to the German language.

Year Eleven student, Elen, impressed the judges with a striking rendition of *Wespe, komm*, earning a well-deserved fourth place in the *Einzel* Performance category.

Year 12 students achieved particularly outstanding results. Stevie was awarded first place for his compelling performance of *Giersch*. Stevie's achievement is especially significant, as it represents the culmination of years of steady progress, dedication, and a genuine passion for the German language. His persistence in refining pronunciation, attention to detail, and determination to perfect every performance have inspired those around him. This year, that hard work was rewarded with the highest honour in the state.

Adding to the celebrations, Janice placed third, Charlotte secured fourth, and Mia earned fifth place all with their unique interpretations of *Giersch*.

As this year's chosen poem, *Giersch*, aligned with our school theme *The Little Things*. In German, nouns are traditionally capitalised, yet this poem defies convention: it is written entirely in lowercase the *little letters*, with minimal punctuation. This stylistic choice invites performers to interpret the text more freely, making each performance uniquely expressive.

Language competitions such as this are about more than rankings. They give students the chance to practise public speaking, build confidence, and immerse themselves in the beauty and rhythm of another language. I encourage all students to take part in these enriching opportunities; you never know where the journey might lead.

**Jenine Riley**  
Coordinator of German (Middle Schools)

## Excellence and Curiosity

Term Three in Years Nine and Ten has provided students with many experiences to support their pursuit of excellence and respond to their curiosity. From representing the school at Maths Games Day to making thoughtful subject selections, students in Years Nine and Ten have shown respect for learning and accountability in their choices. Study groups led by Student Coordinators have facilitated collaboration and supported the development of confidence and determination, while the selection of new subjects for 2026 has given them the ability to follow passions.

*"Working with my peers at Maths Games Day, where we competed against the top schools in Victoria, was invaluable. The competitive atmosphere encouraged adaptability, communication, and creative thinking – skills that extend well beyond maths. Working together under pressure taught us perseverance and excellence, shaping our mindset for future growth."*

Ashley, Year Ten

*"Year Ten Subject Selection was a valuable process that let me explore areas of interest and deepen my understanding of VCE. I am striving to participate in Acceleration Biology."*

Isla, Year Nine

*"At the Careers Conversations Expo, I learnt about many career pathways. Talking to industry professionals gave me a better understanding of the skills required and opened my eyes to options I hadn't considered before."*

Hannah, Year Nine

*"Shared forms with Gottliebse and McNab House and mixed elective classes are a great experience. They allow us to form new connections before VCE at the Larkin Centre, stepping out of our comfort zones and building bonds that support learning."*

Mia, Year Nine

**Marinda Hill**  
Year Level Coordinator, McNab House





# Engaging with Community

This term, students embraced a wide range of experiences that reflect the values of Curiosity and Heart. This included working with the Country Women's Association, a range of activities through 9ERs, and community leadership in a number of areas. Each opportunity encouraged students to learn, lead and reflect in meaningful ways, and inspired growth and connection.

*"Year Eight has been fortunate enough to have some members of the Country Women's Association share their expertise in knitting and crocheting. We have gained new skills and a chance to do something to help others."*

Mary, Year Eight

*"The Werribee Zoo staff highlighted the impact we have on nature and why it's important to care."*

Sophie, Year Nine

*"My involvement at the Sacred Heart Mission Op Shop included supporting everyday operations and discovering the importance of giving back."*

Mishka, Year Nine

*"I was lucky enough to coach children aged four to six through tennis. This has allowed me to gain valuable skills in working with young people."*

Divya, Year Nine

*"Mentoring as part of 9ERS at our Junior School was extremely rewarding."*

Aanvi, Year Nine

*"Visits to Avondale Heights Aged Care were heart-warming. Our experience has taught me the values of kindness, patience and respecting our older generations."*

Isabella, Year Nine

*"A group of students volunteered at the CWA's High Tea. Smiles were aplenty as students chatted with guests and were taught how to successfully wield a teapot."*

Reet, Year Ten

**Rebecca Anderson**

Year Level Coordinator, McNab House



# The Altior Award for Senior Students

Earlier this term we acknowledged our Term Two Altior recipients, and in doing so we also celebrated the values that shape our community: Respect, Excellence, Accountability, Curiosity, Heart. We would like to congratulate the following winners of an Altior Award for Term Two:

**Stevie**

*Stevie's passion for Indigenous issues, together with his outstanding participation in class and school life, exemplifies Respect and Heart. Always willing to assist others and strengthen a supportive, inclusive environment, Stevie lives our value of Accountability through action.*

**Jai**

*Jai is widely respected by peers and staff for his exemplary moral character and his constant drive to do his best while lifting others to do the same. His consistency of behaviour reflects Excellence and Respect in equal measure.*

**Ethan**

*Ethan's leadership, kindness and strong work ethic inspire those around him. Balancing academic commitment with encouragement for others, he models Excellence, Heart and Curiosity every day.*

**Annabel**

*Annabel embodies Heart and Accountability through wide-ranging service including; school sport, RAP, Social Justice, Feminist Collective, PEGS TV, mentoring Year 9 students, and volunteering with the Special Olympics to support participants' health and inclusion. Her contribution strengthens our culture of Respect.*

**Anna**

*Courageous and encouraging, Anna gives every activity a go and consistently strives to be her best while helping others do the same. In doing so, she showcases Curiosity, Excellence and Heart, and actively nurtures an inclusive school environment.*

**Harry**

*Harry's friendly leadership and behind-the-scenes organisation of the lunchtime futsal competition, from booking courts and securing supervision to coordinating teams and fixtures, demonstrate Accountability and Excellence in action, all while fostering a vibrant, respectful co-curricular culture.*

We would like to acknowledge the students and staff who took the time to nominate these role models, and everyone who contributes to a caring, excellence-driven Larkin Centre community. We look forward to recognising the achievements of our peers again for Term Three as we continue to live and REACH for our values.

**Aaron**

Community Service and Activism Captain, Altior Committee Member, Larkin Centre



## Sovereign Hill

The Year Five excursion to Sovereign Hill offered students an opportunity to immerse themselves in Australia's rich colonial heritage and deepen their study of the Victorian Gold Rush.

The day commenced with the dynamic education program *Put Yourself in the Eureka Story*, where students assumed the roles of miners, soldiers, and officials. Through dramatic re-enactment, they developed a nuanced understanding of the Eureka Stockade and its enduring legacy in shaping democratic ideals.

At the diggings, students eagerly embraced the challenge of panning for gold. Employing authentic nineteenth-century methods, they experienced the exhilaration and anticipation that once gripped thousands of hopeful prospectors. This activity fostered both excitement and empathy for those who pursued fortunes in an era defined by resilience and ambition.

Strolling the historic main street, students were captivated by the sights and sounds of a recreated goldfields township. From traditional trades and bustling storefronts to the everyday details of colonial life, the streetscape vividly illustrated how communities flourished during this transformative period. A further highlight was the self-guided descent into the Red Hill Mine, where the dramatic retelling of the discovery of the Welcome Stranger nugget provided a powerful and atmospheric encounter with history.

This excursion was both intellectually enriching and deeply engaging. By situating their classroom studies within such an authentic environment, students not only enhanced their historical knowledge but also cultivated a lasting appreciation for the people and events that shaped Australia's recent history.

**Lisa-Marie Fiorenza**

Year Five teacher, Junior School (boys)





# Community Leadership

Term Three at Gottliebsen House brings with it the opportunity to have conversations with our students about the Community Leadership opportunities they have taken up over the preceding weeks and months. The value of stepping beyond the classroom and into the community, taking part in a range of leadership and volunteer opportunities, gives students a unique and invaluable opportunity to develop key skills. They demonstrate through their participation that leadership is not just about titles; it is about service, responsibility, and initiative.

Volunteering encourages teamwork, as students learn to collaborate with people of different ages and backgrounds. They are building communication skills, learning how to listen, share ideas, and speak with confidence. Problem-solving, resilience, and adaptability also come into play as they face challenges and find creative solutions in real-world situations.

Equally important are the personal qualities that volunteering nurtures. Students gain empathy as they see firsthand the impact of their efforts on others. They develop a stronger sense of responsibility and independence, understanding the value of commitment and the power of collective action and accountability. These opportunities also boost self-esteem, as students recognise their ability to make a meaningful contribution to their community.

By engaging in leadership and volunteer work, our middle school students are not only giving back but also preparing themselves for the future. We are proud of their efforts and look forward to seeing their community spirit continue to grow through their time at PEGS.

**Stephanie Lazarides**  
Deputy Head of Section, Gottliebsen House



# Mathematical Association of Victoria – Maths Games Days

This term, students from both Junior School (boys) and Junior School (girls) proudly represented our community at the Mathematical Association of Victoria's annual Maths Games Days. These much-anticipated events draw more than 20 schools from across the region, offering a vibrant celebration of mathematics through problem solving, teamwork, and creativity.

Our Year Three team attended the Games Day at Derrimut Primary School, our Year Four team travelled to St Lawrence Catholic Primary School, and again this year, PEGS was delighted to host the Year Five event. On each occasion, one team of four boys and one team of four girls participated, competing alongside peers from a diverse range of schools.

The Maths Games Day format is designed to extend mathematical talent and foster collaborative problem solving, while removing the usual classroom pressures. Students work together to tackle challenges that reward lateral thinking, efficiency, and group contribution. Importantly, the days highlight that mathematics is not only rigorous but also enjoyable, engaging, and deeply worthwhile.

We commend all our students for the enthusiasm, persistence, and teamwork they displayed across the events. Their efforts exemplify our goal of helping young people become excited about mathematics and confident in their abilities.

We also extend our thanks to the host schools, the Mathematical Association of Victoria, and our own staff who supported the organisation of the Year Five Games Day. These occasions remind us that mathematics, at its heart, is about curiosity, creativity, and community.

**Jacqeline Benson**

Mathematics Coordinator, Junior School (boys)



## A Slam Dunk Success!

The much-anticipated PEGS Junior School (boys) House Basketball Tournament was held at Keilor Basketball Stadium, bringing together the Year Four–Six students for a day of spirited competition, camaraderie, and sporting excellence.

Across six courts, our four house teams; Bradman, Elliott, Reynolds, and Rose competed in a round-robin format, showcasing their skills, teamwork, and determination. From the first whistle, the atmosphere was electric, with the music pumping, the students cheering, and the players giving their all in every match. The standard of play was exceptional, reflecting the hard work during Physical Education lessons and their commitment to representing their house with pride.

After a series of fiercely contested games, it was Rose House who once again claimed the championship, securing their third consecutive title. This is an outstanding achievement that speaks to their consistency and competitive spirit. Congratulations to all members of Rose House on this remarkable feat.

Importantly, the tournament was not only about results but also about sportsmanship, enjoyment, and participation. The behaviour, respect, and effort demonstrated by all players was exemplary, and it was heartening to see the students encouraging each other both on and off the court.

A sincere thank you goes to the dedicated teachers and learning assistants whose support and organisation helped ensure the smooth running of the event. Their enthusiasm and commitment contributed to making the day a memorable and positive experience for all involved.

The House Basketball Tournament remains a highlight on our sporting calendar, one that truly reflects the spirit and values of PEGS.

**Callum Glassford**

PE Coordinator, Junior School (boys)







## Ringwood Eisteddfod with the Novice Piano Trio

During the Term Two holidays, we performed at the Ringwood Eisteddfod Showcase concert. The Ringwood Eisteddfod is an annual music event that offers young musicians an opportunity to demonstrate their talents in front of a large audience and receive feedback from an expert adjudicator.

We were invited to perform at the showcase concert because we won first place in the Ringwood competition. From the moment we arrived at the venue, the atmosphere was electric. The space was filled with eager participants rehearsing, organising their music, and tuning their instruments.

Beyond the competition aspect, the Ringwood Eisteddfod also gave us the chance to connect with other young performers. Everyone was so nice and kept congratulating us.

One of the highlights of the event was watching the other performances. They all demonstrated incredible skill and dedication, captivating the audience with their precision, passion, and creative expression. Each group brought something unique to the stage, showcasing not only technical excellence but also a deep emotional connection to the music.

The Ringwood Eisteddfod Showcase concert was a wonderful experience that was inspiring and an event I will remember for a long time.

**Angela**  
Year Seven student, McNab House

## Using Mentor Texts in a Rich English Curriculum

Mentor texts are an effective tool in teaching reading and writing at a primary school level, particularly in Grades Three and Four when the reading ability of the students is such that a class novel becomes a powerful teaching tool.

A mentor text is a piece of literature, often a picture book, novel, or poem, that serves as a model of good writing for students to study and use as a guide when drafting their own writing. By examining mentor texts, our students can see how authors use language, structure, and style to communicate ideas. This exposure helps our students understand not only what good writing looks and sounds like, but also how it works.

In Reading, our mentor texts provide opportunities to explore vocabulary, sentence patterns, and text structures within the context of the novel they are currently reading in class. Teachers can guide students to notice how authors create mood, introduce characters, or develop a setting. This deepens comprehension by encouraging students to think critically about the choices writers make. Mentor texts also support differentiated learning, and our class novels are regularly reviewed to assess their ability to cater to student interests, cultural backgrounds, and in some cases, make explicit links with our general studies foci.

In Writing, we use the class novel to make explicit connections between reading and writing. Instead of writing in isolation, students use the text as a guide for trying out new techniques, such as using dialogue, descriptive language, or varied sentence beginnings. They can imitate specific aspects of the text, while still developing their own writer's voice. This approach builds confidence because students see clear, attainable models of strong writing. A mentor text also supports students who often say, 'I don't know what to write about,' as it provides both a springboard and a framework on which to build their own ideas.

Overall, mentor texts make reading and writing more tangible and engaging. They bridge the gap between reading for enjoyment and writing with purpose, helping primary students become thoughtful, capable communicators. One only has to hear the laughter emanating from our current Year Three classrooms as they delight in the exploits of Roald Dahl's *Matilda*, and to see the impact this text has had on their writing, to know that mentor texts continue to work their magic on our students.

**Lois Newberry-McLeod**  
Years Three and Four Coordinator, Junior School (girls)





# ‘Book an Adventure’ to Celebrate Book Week

This year, the Children’s Book Council of Australia’s (CBCA) annual Book Week marked a remarkable milestone in its history. It has now been eighty years since this event first captured the imagination of Australian children through the raising up of beautifully written and illustrated literature. Under the theme of *Book an Adventure*, the 2025 Book Week continued in this tradition. Spread over four sections, the PEGS Library busily prepared and executed a unique Book Week experience for each student cohort based around this theme.

The CBCA book award categories cross a wide range of age groups such as sophisticated narratives that grace the Older Readers category, the creative artistry of Picture Books category, the magic of younger literacy for the Early Childhood category or the award for educational excellence known as the Eve Pownall. Despite the warm hearted and thoroughly entertaining nature of the literary works on the judging block, the competition to win the ultimate prize of ‘Book of the Year’ in their chosen category is fierce and robust .

Book Week 2025 swept through the Junior School (boys) campus like wildfire, confirming a love of stories and their power to inspire and transform. The school was buzzing with librarians piloting hot air balloons, conducting dynamic live and virtual events to celebrate storytelling, and hosting a special visit from acclaimed children’s author, Michael Wagner.

The Junior School (girls) campus also started Book Week with a hot air balloon theme as Year Six students and their Prep buddies creatively repurposed books together. Likewise, the Year Five students generously created hot air balloon gift cards for their Year One buddies. Author Huda Hayek was extraordinary with her personal writing knowledge and insights to our burgeoning future writers.

The Book Week parades at the Junior Schools were a sight to see. At the boys’ campus, there was a show-stopping performance from Year Five students and enchanting costumes paraded by other year levels. At the girls’ campus, the Prep to Year Six theatrical dress-up parade brought joy as they paraded in front of a devoted and proud parent crowd.

Meanwhile, Gottliebse House and McNab House students eagerly journeyed through a range of activity locations. Students enjoyed ‘travelling’ between seven virtual continents, each of which hid a challenging competition - the chance to win a prize always a possibility. Favourite competitions included *Guess the Pages* (of wrapped books), *Genuine or AI* (fake book covers) and, of course, the Book Swap, where students traded a book in order to take home a new treasure.

Larkin Centre students were also captivated by daily competitions to enter and enjoy. The competition to *Guess the Title* of a shredded book proved a particular favourite as students poured over tiny pieces of paper looking for clues of character names or thematic hints hidden in a pile of shredded pages. While students were concerned that a book had been shredded, they learned that books have a lifecycle just like everything else.

Every year the success, enjoyment, and engagement of the whole PEGS community in Book Week demonstrates the school’s devotion to literature now and into the future.

**James Durston**  
Director of Library Services











## Reasons for all the Drama

When many people think of school Drama, they think of a group of outrageously extroverted young people with a penchant for scarves who enjoy loudly singing show tunes at one another. And whilst students like this do exist, there are even more students who select Drama for reasons that may surprise you.

So, what is the point of studying Drama if you don't want to be an actor? We asked some of our students:

*Drama is a subject that's empowering, inspiring and joyful. It builds critical thinking, social skills and confidence. My introduction to Drama was in Year Seven. At the start I was incredibly shy, reserved and I hardly spoke a word. It was through Drama that I discovered my confidence. I found it by stepping outside my comfort zone in further productions and studying Drama all the way up until VCE.*  
Rhea, Year Eleven

*I never imagined myself doing Drama, but it ended up being one of the best things for me and, honestly, one of the most fun and interesting classes I've ever had. When I started, I had no idea what I was doing. I wasn't the type to perform in front of people. I was shy, quiet, and not very creative. Now, I'm way more confident, creative, and have stronger communication and social skills, all thanks to doing Drama in Year Nine.*  
Rudransh, Year Ten

*Studying Drama not only enriched my passion for performing but also developed key skills in critical thinking and communication that I've used countless times since. Drama didn't just teach me how to portray a character or write scripts; it taught me to blend creativity and logical thinking to develop ideas while clearly communicating my thought process. Additionally, I learned to collaborate with my peers, creating work we were proud to share. Drama gave me resilience and a deeper understanding of teamwork that continues to benefit me today.*  
Alessia, Year Twelve

Beyond its more obvious applications, Drama helps our students build confidence, presentation skills, communication mastery and even aids literacy. If you have ever felt as though you are too 'shy' for Drama or 'not creative enough', perhaps that's the perfect reason for you to give it a go!

**Emily Atkins**  
Drama Coordinator

## Building Connections in Year Seven

Term Three has been a time of further growth, discovery, and connection for our Year Seven students at McNab House and Gottliebsen House. As Year Level Coordinators, we've been proud to see students come together through thoughtfully designed activities that encourage interaction, empathy, and friendship.

One highlight was Fast-Friending. Students were paired with peers they hadn't met before, using conversation cards as prompts to spark dialogue. Amy shared, "I, along with many other McNab students, felt somewhat nervous to do this activity." As partners rotated, the questions - ranging from light-hearted to more thoughtful - encouraged students to open up and share their experiences. "It really helped to make the conversations more personal," Amy reflected, "and I believe this will help our year level's future connections with each other grow."

Another creative initiative was making Chatterboxes, where students from McNab and Gottliebsen collaborated to make paper chatterboxes and used them to spark conversations.

Oliver recalled "Although awkward at the start, we made many different coloured chatterboxes and got to know each other better using them".

Students have already begun suggesting future activities they would like to incorporate, including outdoor games and more direct conversations to deepen the experience.

These activities have laid a strong foundation for connection between the students of Year Seven. We look forward to building on this momentum with more opportunities for collaboration, understanding, and shared experiences in the term ahead.

**Peter Farrant** (Gottliebsen House) **James Tizard** (McNab House)  
Year Level Coordinators





# Finding Nemo JR

*We Swim Together* was among a number of catchy tunes expertly performed during the school's recent production of Disney Pixar's *Finding Nemo JR*. The song perfectly encapsulated the way student performers from Grade Six, Year Seven and Year Eight joined as a united team to rehearse and refine the show over many months. "Cooperation is the secret to our success" they sang.

Working closely with one another to study *Finding Nemo JR*'s dialogue, vocals, and choreography, the group enjoyed a range of activities to prepare them to present the spectacle of a puppetry barracuda attack, Nemo's net kidnap, Marlin and Dory's treacherous journey through a bloom of stinging jellyfish, surfboard riding with a group of mellow sea turtles, and their much-loved encounters with some chip-stealing seagulls.

Other scenes they performed ran from the brilliantly bright *Big Blue World* in which they explored the wonders of the coral reef, to the menacingly dark *Fish Are Friends Not Food*, in which a group of hungry sharks tried to counsel themselves away from snacking on aquatic treats, to the sea-turtle themed hit *Go With The Flow* in which parent fish Marlin was taught to relax.

One of the main themes of the *Finding Nemo JR*, was Marlin learning that his son had capabilities beyond what he had imagined. "You think that you can do these things but ... I know you can" the character declared at the end of the show. At the end of our performances, teachers, students, families and friends who were part of the audience, could certainly say the same of all the talented students who were involved.

**Jessica Gorlin**  
Director of Performing Arts



# The Little Things: The Role of Kindness in Learning

When we think of kindness, we often think about simple gestures, like sharing a smile, offering help, or comforting a friend in need, but within the context of kindergarten, kindness becomes so much more. It is a foundational social and emotional skill that plays a vital role in children's learning.

Nurturing kindness within our educational programs not only encourages positive social interactions, it also encourages emotional development, builds positive learning environments, promotes co-operation and teamwork, enhances self-esteem and confidence, develops important life skills, improves learning outcomes, and encourages positive role-modelling.

Throughout Term Three, the kindergarten children's participation and learning have been deeply rooted within understandings, demonstrations and thoughts of kindness.

The children of Cottage 49 have been thinking deeply about the world around us, in particular, the ways in which we can care for the animals and creatures around us. The introduction of stick insects has provided opportunities for the children to think about what others (the insects) need to survive, and have taken on responsibilities such as spraying their habitat daily. We have observed these understandings being transferred to the outdoor yard where the children have been thinking about the needs of our resident creatures.

In Cottage 51, what initially commenced as thoughtfulness towards the bird community in our yard, turned into small group projects where the children co-operated and displayed teamwork, with the planning and construction of birdhouses. The children respectfully shared their ideas and perspectives on the size of the birdhouse, size of the door, and the need for warmth and shelter. All while navigating the architecture together.

When the local initiative of 'Coats for Kindness' was brought to the attention of the children in Cottage 53, they committed themselves to this cause by collecting pre-loved coats and travelling together to Footscray Library to donate their collection to the worthy cause- demonstrating active citizenship and positive role-modelling within our wider community.

Through caring for creatures, collaborating on projects, and contributing to community initiatives, the children have not only been engaged in the value of kindness but have also embodied it in meaningful ways. These experiences foster empathy, responsibility, and cooperation - qualities that will serve them well beyond the classroom and into their futures.

**Lauren Olcorn**  
Director of Kindergarten





# A Celebration of Culture and Language

This term, PEGS was honoured to host a celebration of Chinese language and culture, with esteemed guests including Mr Fang Xinwen, Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Melbourne, Mr Feng Yunsheng, Chairman of China Education Publishing and Media Group (CEPMG), along with other guests and delegates from the Chinese Consulate in Melbourne and CEPMG.

Our guests were delighted with a performance from the PEGS Chinese Orchestra, and a speech, given entirely in Chinese, by Year Seven student, Zoe.

In recognition of our Chinese language programme and through the generosity of CEPMG, our Chinese faculty was invited to select 300 new Chinese-language books for our library. This donation means that our students of Chinese-language have an array of additional resources at their fingertips. These texts are a springboard for cultural understanding, intellectual growth, and future opportunities for our students.

In her speech, our Principal, Kate Dullard, recognised that in taking part in foreign language study, "... our students are challenged and engaged in ways that prepare them not only for academic success but also for life as compassionate and informed global citizens. Language learning opens doors: to exchange, to friendship, and to opportunities in a global economy where the ability to connect across cultures has never been more important".

The books are on display in the Middle School library and will be shared amongst the sections of the school for all our students to learn from and enjoy.

## Opening Performances 开幕表演

1.Traditional Chinese instrumental music performance  
中国传统器乐演奏

2.Student speech by Zoe (PEGS, Year 7)  
佐伊的演讲 (PEGS,7年级)



## Languages Week

Languages Week was a huge success and gave everyone a chance to celebrate different cultures in a fun way. The food, provided by the canteen, was arguably the best part!

Across the week, we had five themed days, each bringing its own activities, music and food that made the experience memorable for everyone. For example, French Day kicked things off with face painting of the French flag, bright hair spraying, and delectable warm chocolate croissants at the canteen.

The last day was Multicultural Day, and that was honestly the best part of the week. The canteen had chicken gyros with tzatziki, beef tacos loaded with lettuce and cheese, and churros for dessert which we all loved. It felt like a mini food festival, and heaps of students got involved.

The music all week made it even better because every day had songs from the respective culture playing between classes. It gave the school a fun, livelier vibe. Lots of students who may sometimes be shy about getting involved got involved because of the food and music, which made the days feel even more special.

Overall, Languages Week was fun and full of good energy. The food was great, the music made everyone happy, and it was just a cool way to finish the week together.

**Kevan and Ranvijay**  
Gottliebsen House students



A photograph of three young girls in school uniforms. The girl in the center is smiling at the camera, while the two girls on either side of her are looking down at something they are holding in their hands. They appear to be engaged in a hands-on science activity.

# Year Three Scientists in Action

Throughout the term, Year Three students at Junior School (girls) enthusiastically explored the natural world through observation and investigations, deepening their understanding of how science shapes the world around them.

Working collaboratively, students designed and conducted simple experiments to explore the properties of solids, liquids, and gases. They made predictions, used familiar tools to measure and record data, and applied scientific vocabulary to clearly communicate their findings to their peers. With the opportunity to reflect on their methods and results, they learned to draw conclusions based on evidence and began to understand the importance of controlling conditions to ensure a test is fair. Clearly, the crowd favourite was the creation of oobleck, a non-Newtonian fluid, which demonstrated how matter does not always fit neatly into one category.

With a much-anticipated return visit by Hands-On Science Australia, students became immersed in a lively exploration of the states of matter. The presenter guided students through a range of investigations which explored how heat and chemicals induce changes between states of matter and how temperature can influence the behaviour of different materials.

Through planning and conducting experiments, students learned to ask meaningful questions, work collaboratively, and communicate their understanding effectively. Such skills are essential not only for science, but across all areas of learning.

**Julie Neylon**  
Deputy Head of Section, Junior School (girls)



# Exploring Aviation Careers: Students Visit Qantas Engineering Facility

A group of enthusiastic Year Eleven and Twelve physics students visited the Qantas Engineering Facility at Melbourne Airport. The excursion offered a rare behind-the-scenes look at one of Australia's leading aviation companies and introduced students to a range of career pathways in the industry.

Qantas staff shared their personal career journeys and spoke about the company's apprenticeships and training programs, covering areas such as aircraft maintenance, avionics, and engineering support. Their insights highlighted exciting opportunities for students interested in aviation and technical trades.

A highlight of the visit was the guided tour of the engineering hangars, where students observed aircraft undergoing maintenance and learned about the systems that keep planes flying safely. The experience was capped off with a chance to sit in the cockpit of a real aircraft - an unforgettable moment that sparked curiosity and excitement.

We thank Qantas for their generosity and commitment to inspiring the next generation of skilled professionals.

**Daniela Mariani**  
Careers Advisor



# Maths Success at the Year Seven Maths Games Day

Congratulations to our Year Seven teams for their fantastic performance at the Maths Games Day at Overnewton College. The Gottliebsen House team claimed first place and the McNab House team proudly earned Third place. Special recognition goes to Cyrus, Zachary, Alan and Alexander, Angela, Vihara, Rosanna and Ziana, for representing our school with excellence. A big thank you to the staff who supported the students on the day.

**Silvana Nusan and Tina Darestani**  
Maths Enrichment Team



# Year Eight Maths Games Day

The new gym wasn't full of basketballs this time but buzzing with calculations for the Year Eight Maths Games Day. With 58 teams from across Victoria, the energy was huge.

We started with ten tricky puzzles, then played maths games against other schools — winning all three! The final challenge was the hardest: 30 problems in 40 minutes. It was intense, but we worked together right until the last second.

I realised maths isn't just numbers — it's teamwork, creativity, and problem-solving. Our team, Gottliebsen House Team One finished only four points behind third place. It was so close!

Thanks to all the teachers and Larkin Centre students for such a great day. We are already looking forward to next year!

**Medhansh and Jayanth**  
Year Eight students



# Another Musical Term

It has been another busy and exciting term for music students and staff, filled with a variety of concerts showcasing incredible achievements and hard work across different musical disciplines.

The term started with the Primary Piano Concert at Limerock Hall, where our young pianists demonstrated their developing skills with style and confidence, creating a joyful and inspiring atmosphere enjoyed by an enthusiastic audience.

Following this, the Music Technology Concert highlighted the creativity of students working with modern digital tools, blending innovation with musicality to produce unique and captivating performances. This was also the opportunity for student compositions and arrangements to be shared.

The Vocal Concert brought a diverse range of voices to the stage, from solo performances to ensemble pieces, displaying impressive vocal techniques and emotional expression. For many it was the first time to perform a solo in such a large space to an audience. The students displayed courage to perform with confidence.

The Woodwind Concert showcased students playing flutes, clarinets, oboes, bassoons and saxophones. We also heard from the Flute and Clarinet Ensembles and the Saxophone Quartet.

The Guitar Concert featured an exciting mix of styles, from classical to contemporary, reflecting the versatility of this popular instrument. We also heard from the Senior, Intermediate, Essendon and Moonee Ponds Guitar ensembles!

The Suzuki Concert was another highlight, this time demonstrating the progress of the less advanced students. They all displayed aspects of the Suzuki method, emphasising ear training and technique.

The final recitals for our VCE Music Performance class provided a platform for these students to present their polished, advanced repertoire, in preparation for their final performance examination early in Term Four.

Finally, the term culminated with the Concerto Concert, where nine students and one special guest performed demanding solo pieces accompanied by Stage Band, Curro Strings or Symphony Orchestra. All works presented were at an advanced level requiring technical and listening skills, which definitely impressed the audience with their musical maturity. Overall, the term's concerts have been a testament to the dedication and passion of everyone involved in the music programme.

**Amanda Rowarth**  
Director of Music



# Four Premierships in One Season!

## Boys Firsts Football

The 2025 PEGS Boys Firsts Football season was highly successful, built upon the past few years of dedication and training. The team faced and overcame many challenges throughout the year, none more dramatic than an unexpected Round One loss to Camberwell Grammar.

We bounced back, trained hard, and won the next six matches in a row. Heading into the last round of the season we needed a win over our arch-rivals, Yarra Valley Grammar School, to give ourselves a home ground advantage into the finals. Despite being up at three-quarter time, we let the game slip through our fingers, to then finish the season third on the ladder.

The semi-final saw us score a memorable win over Yarra Valley Grammar School in a nail-biting finish and it was on to Ivanhoe Grammar School in the Grand Final. All the hard work the players had put in across the season saw us in great shape, our stars shone, and with great support from our parents and the whole school community, we achieved a convincing premiership win for the team and school. As team Captains, we could not have asked for a better finish to our school sport experience.

**Hamish and Cooper** (Co-Captains)



## Girls Firsts Hockey Back-to-back Premiers 2025

Coming off the back of the 2024 season, as premiers of the competition, the girls were determined to defend their title. The new year brought some recruits, furthering both the depth and strength of the team. While there was no telling the trajectory of the season, with the collective standards of the competition increasing yet again to newfound levels, one thing's for sure: the girls remained steadfast in their ambition.

Becoming back-to-back premiers meant consistency and teamwork were at the core of every training session and every game played, even against the toughest opposition. Additionally, the positivity and support among all team members proved to be an integral part of the girl's success - even in the face of early Saturday mornings in Geelong, missing shoes, and broken bones, their spirit became stronger.

When all was said and done though, the ultimate victory was determined by the final contest of the season. As one of the first-ever girls' AGSV/APS grand finals hosted by PEGS, the match was set to be a good one. Far from an easy contest, up against the top competition in Caulfield Grammar School, the girls fought relentlessly over four quarters, nervously anticipating the final whistle. The result: a one all draw, but thanks to an upper hand in the points system, once again a premiership for PEGS. Definitely a moment for the history books!

**Ella** (Captain)





## Girls Firsts Soccer: Commitment. Dedication. Triumph.

The PEGS Girls Firsts Soccer team has etched another golden chapter into our school's sporting legacy, securing back-to-back championships for the very first time.

Building on the momentum of their 2024 victory, the vision for sustained success in 2025 became a powerful reality. This year, the theme was simple yet profound: "The Cap." Mr. Depetro and Ms. Schiavo challenged the squad to focus on one clear goal - the honour of earning and wearing that coveted championship cap.

Welcoming a wave of young talent, the team faced a motivating challenge: to unite, grow, and rise together. From the very first match, the girls displayed relentless determination, taking on every opponent with grit and heart. One of the season's most inspiring moments came at Geelong Grammar, where both coaches were absent due to illness. Despite trailing by a goal early on, the team rallied with an extraordinary comeback - scoring five consecutive goals in the second term. Their momentum was unstoppable.

Hosting the grand final for the first time in league history was a privilege and a defining moment. It symbolised our unwavering determination to defend the title. As the final whistle blew and cheers echoed across Keilor Park, every mind turned to that simple yet powerful symbol - the cap. It represented the hard work, resilience, and unity that carried the team through the winter season.

This was a season painted with friendship, perseverance, and exceptional performance. Every player contributed to a story of skill, strength, and spirit. The PEGS Girls Firsts Soccer team proved that anything is possible, further cementing a proud legacy that will inspire generations to come. And maybe, just maybe, it's a dream, but why not? Why not win it for a third time, a triumph never achieved in the history of this competition. That was Mr. Depetro's and Ms Schiavo's simple message to us. "Why not?"

**Alyssa** (Captain)



## Girls Cross Country

For the first time since 2009, the PEGS Girls Cross Country have claimed the AGSV Cross Country Premiership - and they did it in dominant style.

Team captain, Piper, sealed the team's incredible season with a convincing win in the Open Girls race, before proudly lifting the Premiership Cup. "It was such an incredible feeling to lift the trophy," Piper said. "All the hard work throughout the season had paid off - the pride and excitement within the team was something really special."

The team delivered a perfect season, earning maximum points across all six rounds. Each week, PEGS athletes consistently finished at the top, with two runners placing in the top three every round.

A testament to the team's depth and talent, seven PEGS students were selected for the prestigious AGSV vs APS representative event.

Congratulations to all our runners on an unforgettable season!



## Inaugural Boys Netball Championships

Congratulations to Jack (Year Eight) who represented the inaugural Boys 15 and Under School Sport Victoria netball team. Jack, who was named the team's Vice Captain, travelled to Queensland in July to represent the State at the National competition. After 10 high pressure matches Jack and his team came away from the tournament undefeated gold medallists and National Champions!







# From the Archives

## The Origins of One School Day

Brigid Cooper Archivist

### Speech Night

Right back to the early days of our Foundation Schools, Dorset House Ladies' College and Carlton College, the celebration of student achievement had a high priority. Speech Days or Speech Nights were held annually in December, attended by students and their families and friends. These events included speeches by the Principal and a special guest, often someone closely involved with the school's management, or a former student, followed by the "distribution of prizes." Alongside these formalities were displays of student work, singing performances, instrumental music items, or recitations.

"DORSET HOUSE LADIES' COLLEGE." The Argus, 19 December 1874  
*The annual distribution of prizes at Mrs. Tulloch's Ladies' School, Dorset House, Moonee Ponds, took place on Thursday afternoon, in the presence of the Rev. Edward Puckle and many friends of the pupils.*

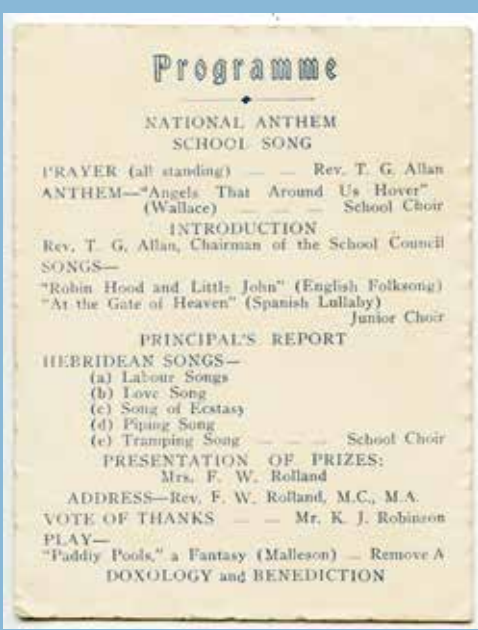
*After a goodly array of plain and fancy needlework had been inspected, and a selection of instrumental music had been pleasingly rendered, Mrs. Puckle proceeded to distribute the prizes. A numerous and joyous party assembled in the evening on breaking up for the long vacation.*

"CARLTON COLLEGE." The Argus, 28 December 1874  
*The annual Speech Day was held in the hall of the Athenaeum on Thursday, Dec 17. The hall was crowded with the parents and friends of the pupils. The chairman having opened the proceeding with a few appropriate remarks, the Principal, Mr. Neighbour, read the report for the past year. The recitations and singing then followed.*

*The prizes were then distributed, the winners, as is usual, being loudly applauded by their comrades. The formal proceedings of the evening were then closed by singing the National Anthem. After cheers had been given for the chairman, the principal, and Mr Henderson, the company separated and the college broke up for the Christmas vacation.*



Penleigh Presbyterian Girls' School students in their Sunday best holding their book prizes at Speech Day. It was held outdoors due to the 1937 polio epidemic. (PEGS Archives [PH00067])

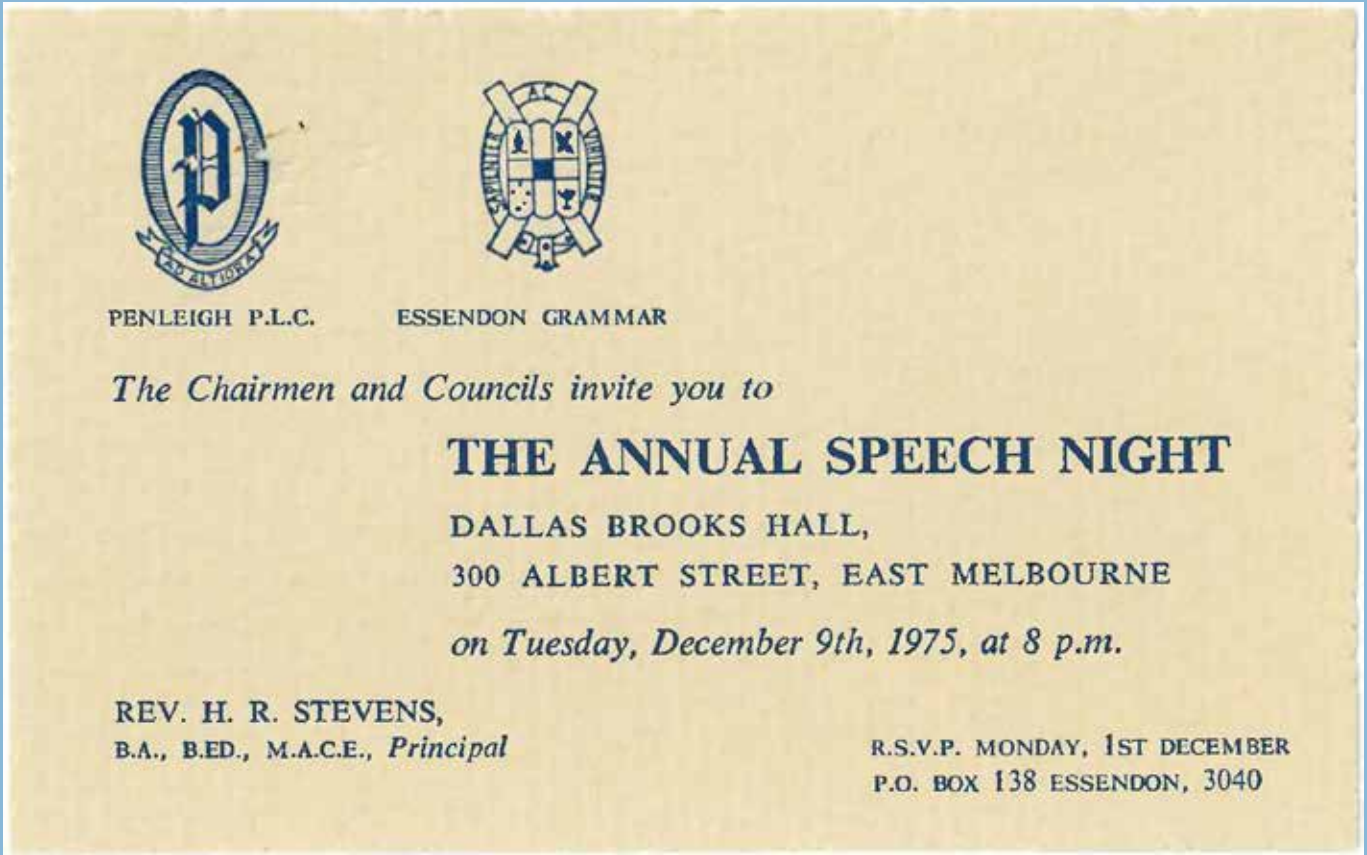


Like our One School Day today, Speech Night included performances as well as speeches and the awarding of prizes. (PEGS Archives. Donor: D Lee (née Dawson) [PEGS07770])



Music Director, Mrs Mary Armour, with the School Choir on stage at the Broadmeadows Town Hall for Speech Night 1973. (PEGS Archives. Donor: M Armour [PH08850])

The boys' schools and the girls' school continued to hold their own Speech Nights until finally, under one Principal, Rev H R (Bert) Stevens, the first combined Speech Night for Penleigh Presbyterian Ladies' College and Essendon Grammar School took place in 1974 at Dallas Brooks Hall.

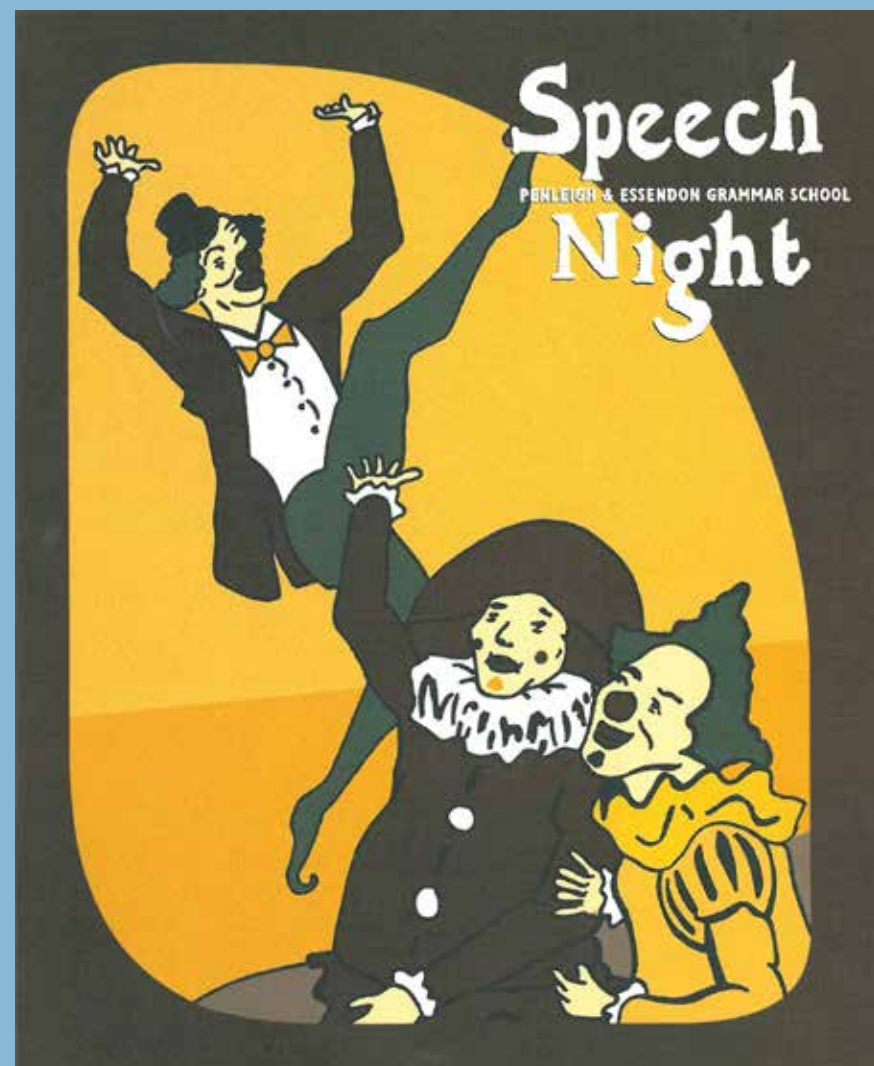


In 1974 the first combined Speech Night was held for the two schools – Penleigh Presbyterian Ladies' College and Essendon Grammar School. Both crests were used on this 1975 invitation card, but it would be over 30 years before the intertwined crest was used consistently. (PEGS Archives [PEGS07815])





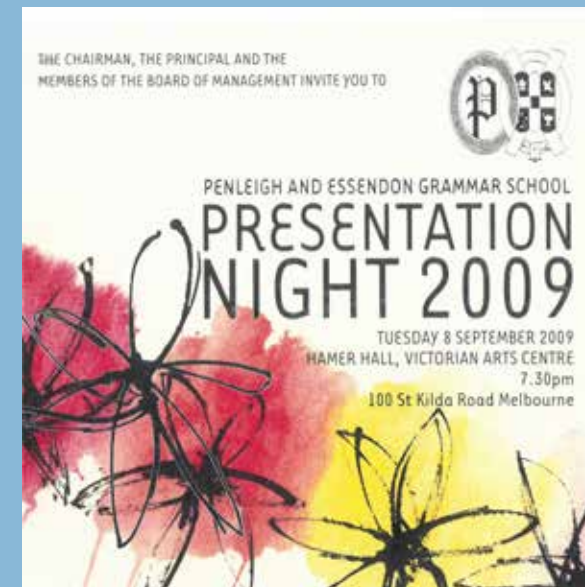
: The PEGS Orchestra rehearses on the Melbourne Concert Hall stage for the 1984 Speech Night.  
(PEGS Archives. Donor: M Armour [PH08869])



Through the 1990s, plain text Speech Night program covers made way for colourful artwork, like this one from 1996.  
(PEGS Archives. Donor: Aplin/Proctor Family [PEGS03702])

## Presentation Night

In 2009 Speech Night was changed to Presentation Night in an attempt to shift the focus from speeches to a presentation of the talents and achievements of PEGS students from the year.



Invitation card to the first Presentation Night, held in Hamer Hall Monday 8 August 2009  
(PEGS Archives [PEGS08001])

## One School Day

2016 saw the biggest changes to the Speech Night format, encompassing not only a name change, but a move to the Plenary in the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre to accommodate all PEGS students from Year three to Year Twelve, PEGS staff, and parents.



The first One School Day – held in Melbourne Convention Exhibition Centre's Plenary in 2016 (PEGS Archives)



# PEGS Alumni Association

## 2025 Reunions

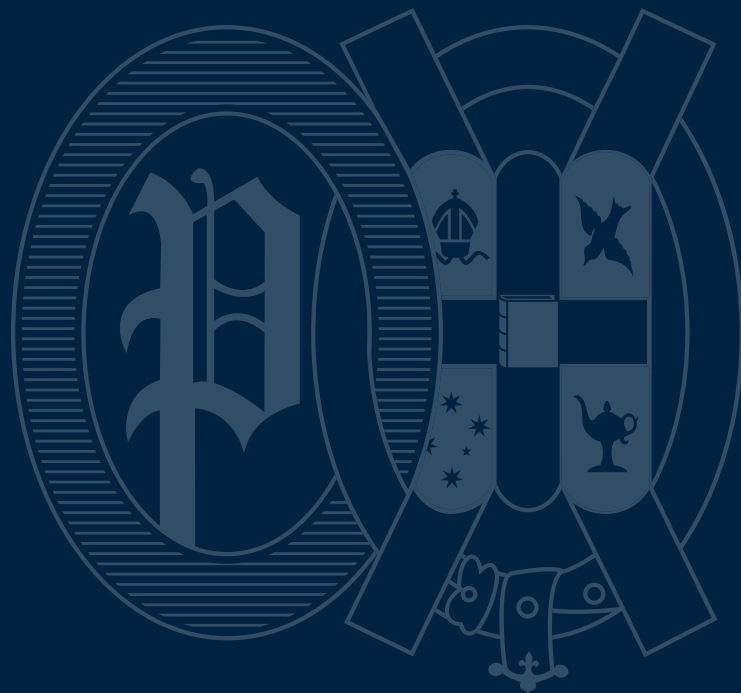
### Reunion Program

The School reunion program offers PEGS former students the chance to catch up with their fellow alumni and reminisce about those wonderful school years.

### Upcoming Reunions

- Class of 2005 Twenty Year Reunion – 10 October, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds
- Class of 1985 Forty Year Reunion – 17 October, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds
- Class of 1980 Forty-five Year Reunion – 14 November, 7pm, Penny Young, Young St. Moonee Ponds

In order to hear about upcoming reunions please make sure we have your recent contact details by emailing us at [alumni@pegs.vic.edu.au](mailto:alumni@pegs.vic.edu.au). You are also encouraged to join your 'PEGS - Class of' Facebook group for event information, booking details and photos of your reunion afterwards. Even if you don't have a milestone event coming up please join us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/PEGSAA> to see what the School and your fellow alumni are up to.



# Living the American (Football) Dream

When Jack Klinkatsis (PEGS 2023) first travelled to the United States to visit family, he never imagined that a casual introduction to American football would ignite a lifelong passion. What began as curiosity soon became commitment, leading him from the playing fields of Melbourne to representing Australia on the international stage. Earlier this year, Jack proudly pulled on the green and gold in a showcase NFL match against New Zealand on the Gold Coast. Australia dominated the contest, recording a 46–6 victory. Lining up in defence, Jack earned praise for his sharp game sense and intercepts, a performance that marked him as a rising talent in the sport.

Jack's journey to the national team has been anything but conventional. After discovering the sport overseas, he joined the Western Crusaders upon his return home, quickly proving himself with consistent performances. His determination carried him through to the Victorian State side and, eventually, the honour of representing his country. Off the field, Jack balances soccer, swimming, and his Bachelor of Business studies, showcasing the all-round talent and discipline that define his approach to both sport and life.

For fellow PEGS alumni Nik Constantinou (PEGS2017), the pathway to North American football was paved by a booming left boot. After relocating to the U.S. in 2019, Nik joined Texas A&M University as a punter and quickly rose to prominence. Twice an All-SEC honouree and a Ray Guy Award semi-finalist, he became a cornerstone of the Aggies' special teams unit.

Although undrafted in the 2024 NFL Draft, Nik's perseverance paid off. A brief stint with the Denver Broncos was followed by selection at No. 5 in the Canadian Football League (CFL) Global Draft by the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. In his first season, he averaged 47.1 yards per punt, a figure that has since grown to over 49 yards, highlighted by a booming 84-yarder in 2025.

From Melbourne to Texas and now Canada, Nik's journey is a testament to resilience and ambition—qualities that continue to inspire young Australians pursuing opportunities on the global stage.

Together, the stories of Jack and Nik highlight the diverse pathways PEGS alumni are carving in the world of sport. Whether through intercepts in defence or punts that sail nearly the length of the field, both athletes prove that with determination, opportunity, and a touch of courage, the leap from Melbourne's ovals to the international spotlight is possible.





# Aria of Ambition

Under the spotlight, Cleo Lee-McGowan (PEGS2012) seems entirely at home. Her voice — shimmering, agile, and rich with emotional depth — soars effortlessly over the orchestra, drawing audiences into a sound world that feels both timeless and modern.

It's hard to believe that the Melbourne-born soprano, now a celebrated performer across Europe's most prestigious stages, began her journey in the chorus of the PEGS production of *Crazy for You* (2010). Yet from her earliest performances, one thing was clear: Cleo possessed not only a remarkable voice but also an unyielding drive to tell stories through music.

Cleo's path began at the University of Melbourne, where she completed a Bachelor of Music with First Class Honours. Alongside vocal training, she immersed herself in languages — French and Italian — realising that mastery of text would be as essential as vocal power.

Her talent was quickly recognised through early accolades, including the Melba Opera Trust's Joseph Sambrook Opera Scholarship (2017–2019). In 2019, Cleo won the prestigious Sydney Eisteddfod Opera Scholarship, which helped to fund her studies at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

It was in London that Cleo truly found her artistic identity. Roles such as Ilia (*Idomeneo*), Governess (*The Turn of the Screw*), Romilda (*Serse*), Mélisande (*Pelléas et Mélisande*), Poppea (*L'Incoronazione di Poppea*), Sophie (*Der Rosenkavalier*), Madame Silberklang (*Der Schauspieldirektor*) and Adina (*L'Elisir d'Amore*) showcased her versatility, helping her refine her technique and dramatic sensibilities.

Since graduating from Guildhall in 2022, Cleo's career has blossomed across Europe and Australia. She joined Glyndebourne Festival Opera as a Jerwood Young Artist, debuting as *First Bridesmaid* in *Le nozze di Figaro* and later covering Susanna. In 2023, she returned as soprano soloist for Haydn's *The Creation* and covered the role of Titania in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Her English National Opera debut came the same year, appearing as First Niece in Britten's *Peter Grimes*. Critics praised her luminous tone and the emotional subtlety she brought to the role.

International opportunities followed, including performances with the Norwegian National Opera, where she appeared as Juno in *Orpheus in the Underworld* and covered Sister Constance in *Dialogues des Carmélites*.

At this time Cleo also earned her place in the final rounds of both the world-renowned Operalia competition (quarter finalist)—held in Mumbai—and the prestigious Belvedere Singing Competition (semi-finalist), reflecting both international recognition and her rising stature among her peers in today's competitive operatic landscape.

Back home, Cleo has captivated audiences with performances for the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, and Victorian Opera. Her role as Gretel in *Hansel and Gretel* cemented her as a rising star in 2017/2018, but it was her most recent portrayal of Konstanze in Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio* — reimagined as *Abduction* — that had critics talking. Her performance of “*Martern aller Arten*,” a notoriously demanding showpiece, was described as “exhilarating, precise, and profoundly moving.”

Cleo Lee-McGowan exemplifies the modern soprano: technically agile, stylistically versatile, and emotionally resonant. Hers is a story of talent, resilience, and fearless exploration, bridging continents and cultures, bringing Australian artistry to the world while inspiring a new generation of performers back home.





# Friends of PEGS

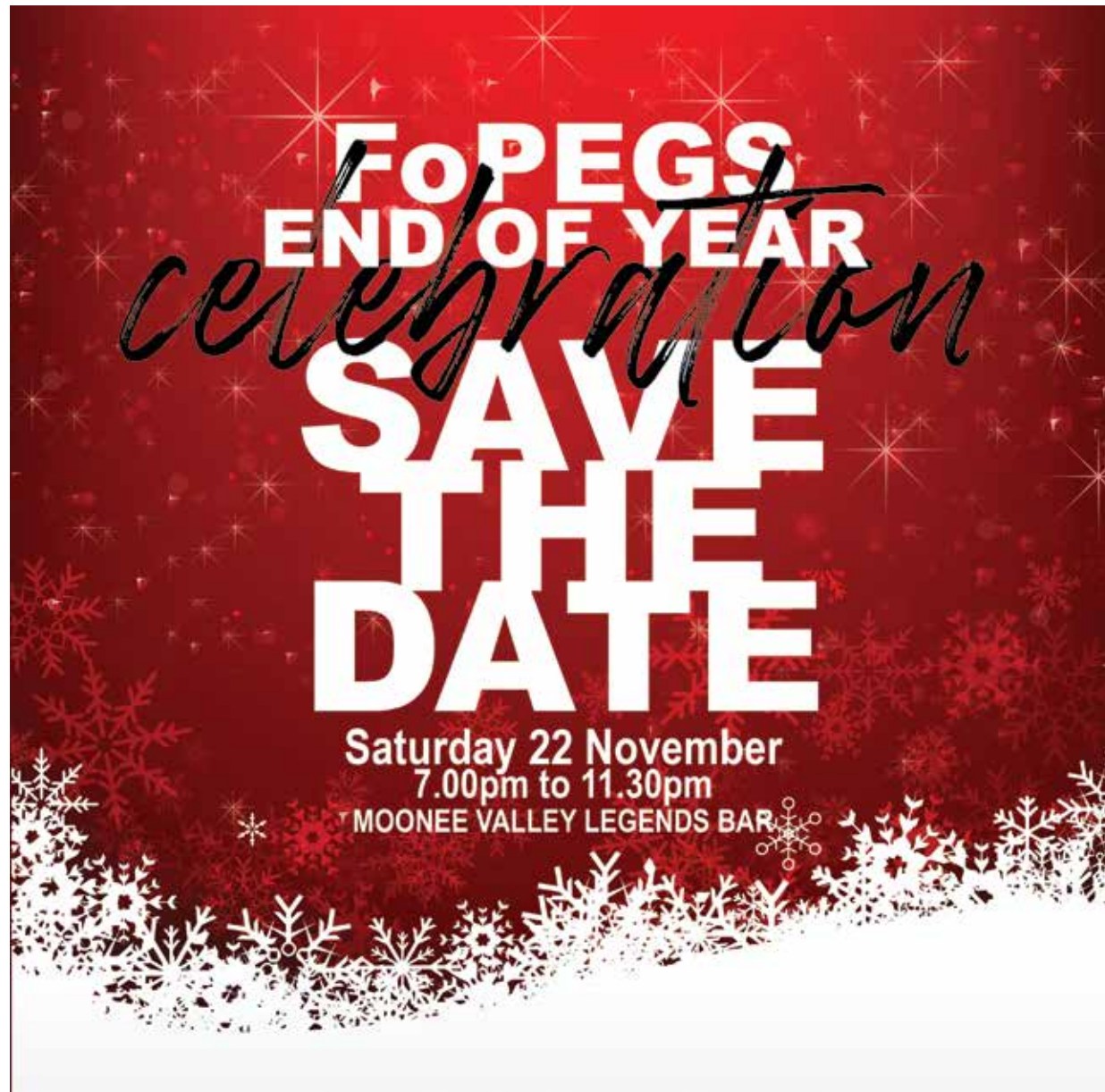
## Enriching the life of the school

Friends of PEGS is the school's parent association which strengthens and enlivens the school community with a calendar of celebratory events for parents and students. We are grateful to the dedicated volunteers of the FoPEGS Committee. The FoPEGS also provides funding for new projects to directly benefit all students. If you are interested in joining or contributing to our committee in 2025 and beyond, we would love to hear from you. For more information, please contact Lyn Rogers: 9016 2183 [lyn.rogers@pegs.vic.edu.au](mailto:lyn.rogers@pegs.vic.edu.au)

## 2025 FoPEGS Committee Meetings

- Monday 6 October 7.30pm
- Monday 10 November 7.30pm
- Monday 1 December 7.30pm

62 Napier St, Essendon. All welcome!





# 2025 Dates for the Diary

## Term Four

Monday 6 October - Wednesday 10 December

Whole School Events:

Valedictory - Tuesday 21 October

Friends of PEGS Fair - Sunday 12 October

Mid-term break - Monday 3 November and Tuesday 4 November

Carol Service - Monday 8 December

## 2026 Term Dates

Term One Friday 30 January to Thursday 2 April

Term Two Tuesday 21 April to Friday 26 June

Term Three Tuesday 14 July to Friday 11 September

Term Four Monday 5 October to Wednesday 9 December

