

YEAR 12 CHEMISTRY EXCURSION

On a very foggy Thursday morning ten Year 12 Chemistry students departed Mackillop College at 5:40am for a two day excursion to Sydney, accompanied by Mrs Anderson and myself. Firstly, the girls participated in the Chemistry Kickstar Program at Sydney University's School of Chemistry with about twenty student from Shore. During the workshop they performed a series of hands on experiments from the Chemical Monitoring and Management topic involving Atomic Absorption Spectrometry, conducted a titration using EDTA, and determined the sulfate content of fertiliser. They also observed demonstrations of the Solvay process, production of sodium hydroxide and an equilibrium reaction from the Industrial Chemistry option. After spending some time having a look the facilities at the University of Sydney we headed down to Miranda to our accommodation. Once the girls were settled in, we went across the road and spent a couple of hours at Westfield.



On Friday, the students visited ANSTO (Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation) at Lucas Heights. Here they attended a presentation by Robin Davis, an analytical chemist, at the Education Centre before going onsite. As it is a facility patrolled by the Australian Federal Police, we had to leave NSW for the next two hours! Here the girls were shown the OPAL (Open Pool Australian Lightwater reactor) and the neutron beam guide hall and experienced a hot cell where radioisotopes are removed for specific medical and industrial purposes. This part of the excursion should assist students with their study areas of Nuclear Chemistry and Chemical Monitoring and Management.

At the end of the tour the girls got to talk to Emily, an environmental chemist, and hear about the work she does at ANSTO. The very successful and educational excursion came to an end on arriving back at MacKillop more than 36 hours later.