

Canberra Camp

2019



Canberra Camp - Year 5/6, August 2019

On Saturday, August 3, 2019, twenty-four Year 5/6 students, two teachers, twenty-eight parents and two siblings departed Perth for a week of fun and learning in our Nation's capital, Canberra. This was the seventh such trip the school has made since its inception in 2008, and has been assisted by funding received through the Federal Government PACER program (Parliamentary And Civics Education Rebate). This year they contributed a rebate of \$310 per student.

Prior to the trip, the class have been studying topics across a number of curriculum areas including HASS, Civics and Citizenship, Science, Language and the Arts. Our trip to Canberra consolidated many of these concepts learnt as well as introducing the class to some amazing, rich and unique learning experiences.

Our first experience was at Questacon on Sunday morning. Questacon is an amazing building filled with interactive scientific displays on different levels of the building. Each of the interactive displays demonstrates and helps to explain a variety of scientific phenomenon. There was also a live Liquid Nitrogen show as well as the perpetual favourite, "The Big Drop Slide" where the kids could test their nerve against the forces of altitude and gravity.



"Canberra camp was truly an experience. I learnt all sorts of things about democracy and our country. It was a once in a lifetime experience. I loved it!"

Felix, Year 6



"I really enjoyed Canberra this year. It was amazing and I learned so much. This year I have been trying to be more confident with my public speaking and going to Canberra has improved it by far. I have also learned so much about politics and government and it is going to stick with me forever."

Iris, Year 5

Our next area of discovery involved driving to the top of Mt Ainslie to take in the stunning views and get a better picture of the layout of Canberra. We followed this experience with a visit to the National Capital Exhibition Centre where we learnt about the history of Canberra and why it was chosen as our nation's capital. On Monday, our first activity was a visit to Old Parliament House where we applied our knowledge about democracy in an activity called, "Who's the Boss". The kids were each given an access card that helped them find clues in the Democracy Museum to help them answer a variety of different questions.



Following this, we sat in the old Lower House and did a short role-play activity. Then, we were able to explore the building and see a snapshot as to what life was like in 1988, the last time parliament met there. Our final activity was a re-enactment on the front steps of Gough Whitlam's dismissal speech, "Well may we say, 'God save the Queen', because nothing will save the Governor General!"

After lunch in the old parliamentary rose gardens, we strolled down ANZAC Parade to look at the memorials that commemorated various international conflicts that Australians have been involved with. We then made our way to The National War Memorial where we participated in a programme called, ANZAC Legacy and had a look around the extensive collections in the museum. Many of the kids were able to find the names of relatives on the Walls of Remembrance as well as paying their respects in the Shrine of Remembrance. We finished off the day by attending the Last Post Ceremony where two of our students, Orla and Luka, laid a wreath on behalf of the school.

It was now Tuesday and another busy day ahead. We started with a visit to the National Gallery where we went on a guided tour. We saw some traditional indigenous art and learnt about its significance, as well as some modern and classic works. We saw the famous 'Blue Poles' by Jackson Pollock as well as an amazing black and yellow polka dot pumpkin installation by

STUDENT COMMENTS:

"The trip was a fascinating experience that has inspired me so much. I believe that it is an important for a child to have this sort of learning in their life and it is a time in my life I will never forget."

Alessandra, Year 5

"First off, I feel extremely lucky to be able to go to school with such awesome opportunities like going to Canberra. It was a great experience to be able to learn so much from a very educational trip with such amazing teachers."

Lulu, Year 6



Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama. Some of the parents and kids also visited the Monet collection that was currently on display.

Following a lunch in the Sculpture Gardens, we went to the National Museum and participated in a programme called, 'Making of a Nation'. Earlier in the year, we did a unit of work focussing on Immigration and this activity complemented it perfectly. The kids were able to use their skills and background knowledge to successfully solve the clues in identifying five mystery migrants, the period they arrived and the circumstances that brought them to Australia.



When we left the Museum, we did a driving tour of all the different embassies and consulates. This was fascinating in that many of the buildings were built in the traditional architectural styles of the country they represented. We finished the day by visiting the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. Along with Kathryn, two of our students, Tadhg and Rio did some research before the trip and shared their knowledge of the history and significance of the place with the group.

We had an early start on Wednesday with our visit to Parliament House. This visit was the culmination of an intensive unit of study in Civics and Citizenship that focussed on democracy, politics and government prior to our trip. The kids did an outstanding job applying their skills and knowledge in a role-play activity that involved debating a bill in the Senate. We completed our visit with a tour of the building that took in both houses, the Grand Hall, Portrait Gallery and other areas of the building.

Our next stop was the Arboretum where we had lunch, followed by the National Library. We were all amazed by the size of the extensive collection of publications as well as how the library operates. Every item that was ever published in Australia, including junk mail, is catalogued there.

Our final activity of the day was a visit to the Royal Australian Mint. Many of the kids and parents thought this was one of the highlights of our trip, largely due to our animated guide who kept us entertained and informed about the history and manufacture of currency in Australia.

PARENT COMMENTS:

"Travel to another part of Australia, a week spent in a community of friends and caring parents and teachers, new experiences, an introduction to a whole variety of national institutions and collections that we in WA are often not privileged to see, increased independence around everyday activities and budgeting with spending money, reflecting on daily activities every evening, living with others and negotiating needs within a community, a feeling of having done something very special!" Parent

"This camp feels like a very special journey in many different ways - it is memorable and significant because of the distance travelled and the wonderful learning that happens. I loved watching my own child and all the others in her class really engage with everything around them and blossom in different ways throughout the camp." Parent

After our tour, we had the opportunity to make and purchase our own dollar coin and purchase items from the gift shop.

We had a very early start the next day as we needed to be on the road early on our way to the Perisher ski fields in the Snowy Mountains. On our way there, we passed through Cooma and saw Lake Jindabyne and the Snowy Mountains hydro-electric scheme. Excitement was rising as we began to see snow on the side of the road. For many of the kids, and some of the parents, this was their first time in the snow. It didn't disappoint as the mountains were covered with a fresh layer of snow that allowed us to put our tobogganing and snowball making skills to good use. We all had a great time and it was one of the many highlights of the trip.

It was now Friday and our trip was rapidly drawing to a close. Our last adventure involved a road trip from Canberra to Sydney that included a freezing cold stop in Goulburn. When we arrived at Circular Quay in Sydney, we saw the two famous Australian icons, the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House as well as other points of interest in the area. Before we knew it, we were boarding our Perth bound flight and heading home.

This was an incredible educational experience and I'm sure everyone who attended would agree. These trips take an enormous amount of organisation. On behalf of the school and everyone involved, I would like to thank Chrissy and Tempe for all the many hours of hard work communicating, organising and making sure everything ran like clockwork. It wouldn't have been possible without you. I would also like to thank the kids for all of their hard work and for being fine ambassadors for our school as well as the parents for being so supportive of their children and showing interest in their learning.

