

Post card from Charters Towers

When I look back at the beginning of my stay, I honestly have to say, though it seems unrealistic and incomprehensible to me now, that I was fairly homesick, in particular when the German group from my hometown had left.

Still looking back, I can tell you now that all my homesickness was unreasonable and out of place: From the first day I was here everybody have done their best to welcome me into the "Souls Family" and have given me the opportunity to "be somebody at Souls": The students, the teachers, the staff have all done so much for me and I am really grateful for that. You all have become somewhat of a substitute family for me and I will really miss you all!

Actually there were two reasons why I came to Australia and for both of them I could not have chosen a better place:

First, I wanted to improve my English: In fact, my English has become much more fluent (I think so anyway) and this is no surprise: apart from occasional phone calls home and apart from the fact that I taught Australian people some German basics such as how to count to ten or how to say "hello" (Hallo) in my language I got so involved at "Souls" that I spent most of my time speaking English and I feel proud to say that I even picked up some Aussie slang.

The second reason I came over for was to get to know the country and meet its people. This was made very easy for me with help from so many wonderful and open people who have showed me as much as possible of Australia and the Australian way of life.

In the holidays, Cassie and her family invited me to come out to their place in Richmond and to experience life on a sheep and cattle farm in the outback. That was really exciting for me: Never before had I seen so much space and so few grass in my whole life. But as well the work with the animals, such as feeding little lambies, mustering or branding as well as "just" camping outside and much, much more were all experiences I've never had before and I won't get again soon. I had such a good time during those two weeks and besides all the adventures there I really felt at home and welcome at Moselle Station.

This was followed by an exciting weekend in Cairns at Alison's place with a lot of interesting sightseeing such as a visit to an Aboriginal Centre and one to the Reef, where, in fact I came to do an activity I had never done before and I am sure none of my German friends have ever done: scuba diving at the Reef surrounded by lots of colourful fish!



Another highlight was a school trip to Brisbane. Brisbane is a fascinating city. The teachers had worked out a tremendously varied and interesting sightseeing program and took us to places such as Parliament House, the

Science Museum and took us on a River Cat Tour. Somehow it was good to be back in city life, though I love Charters Towers.



In addition, I want to thank Mr and Mrs Bliss for the admirable patience they showed while teaching me how to play softball. Though I played the first games without understanding any softball rules at all, I had so much fun and we finally finished as Premiers.



Thanks to the music teachers for giving me so many opportunities to be involved with Music. Not only did I sing in the choir and play in the band, I was encouraged to play the cello in several performances but also I had the chance of taking trumpet lessons. I gained a lot of new music experience and enjoyed this a lot.

A special thank you to the Year 11s for being so patient and open classmates; I really loved being in your class.



Bonnie Jean Wesmond wrote that "people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel" and I will never forget this feeling of togetherness, hospitality and warmth that I was met with here at All Souls St Gabriels School.



Matthew Silverwood & Caroline Kurtz performing 'Better Days' at the North Queensland Duke of Edinburgh Awards Ceremony. The Northern Miner, November 15, 2005

Caroline Kurtz