



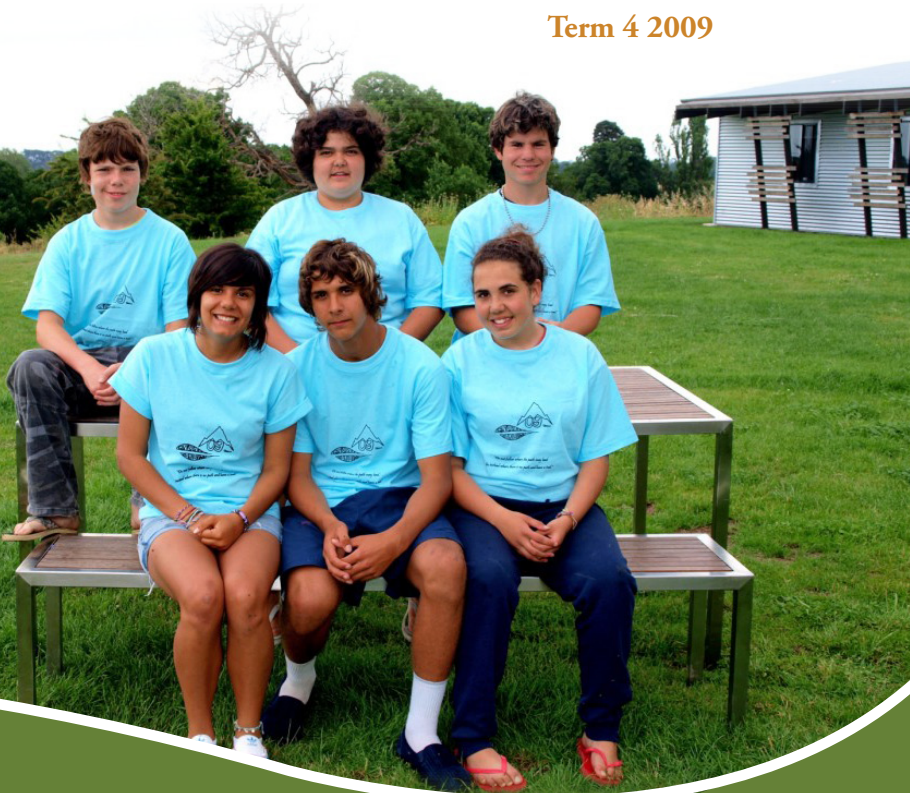
Gnurad-Gundidj Campus

School for Student Leadership

Our Story

“Without struggle there is no progress”
– Frederick Douglass

Term 4 2009



Barwon South West

Front row from left: Amelia Livesey, Navajo Lovett, Sharon Bamblett.

Back row from the left: Kurwin Clarke,
Bree-Anna Wackett, Danny Thompson

Sharon's Journey

NAME: Sharon Elizabeth Bamblett

HOME TOWN: Heywood Victoria

My journey started when I was in Heywood and this is how it happened. I got asked by my aunty Rossie if I wanted to go to the school and I said "yeah ok". I thought to myself this would be a great experience and don't get me wrong it has been. When I first came to the school for student leadership at Gnurad Gundidj, I was a bit scared. I was really homesick because I didn't know anyone and I was the only one from Heywood. Because of being homesick, on the first day I tried to walk out the gate. I was really homesick for like another 3 weeks then I got more active and out of

my comfort zone. The way I got over being homesick was people telling me how good I was doing, how proud they were of me, not talking negative all the time getting emails and letters from home, and just letting people in and letting them help me. After the first 5 weeks I have had a lot of fun. I have gotten to know everybody and they are very friendly. Whoever is reading this, I say if you ever get this chance or anything like this, I say take it. This school helps a lot in life, if you don't take it then what else is better than this for a 15teen year old. Being here has taught me the good in life like how important your family is and their lives are to you. Me and 8 other indigenous kids were the first indigenous people to come to this school and it has been a great experience. So I say to all you young indigenous and non-indigenous teens to get out there and give new things a go otherwise you won't end up anywhere, so take the chances you get.



Our Artwork

Bree's Journey

My journey through Gnurad gundidj

Hey my name is Bree-Anna Wackett, this is how I came to Gnurad Gundidj. Well I was sitting in science with Kurwin Kermond Clarke flicking paper wasps at people then an announcement came over "Can all Koorie kids in year 8 & 9 go to the meeting room now for a special meeting". That's when Mr. Castersen came to my school and showed us the homepage of the school and he said what we do at Gnurad, it sounded fantastic. He told us about all the activities like surfing and canoeing and that we have rest days instead of class and that I would live there for nine weeks. I couldn't wait, so when I went home and I said to mum I want to go to Gnurad Gundidj, she said "What are you talking about"? and then I explained it to her. Then I rang dad and said the same thing. I was waiting for Wayne to call mum to say that I can go, but Mrs. Burch and Robbie

told me that I got in and I was so excited. I ran home and told mum and she was as happy as I was because she got rid of me for nine weeks. Now she wants me home cause I can show my sisters what I have learnt. I have had so much fun here, if you ever get the chance come here you should. It was the best experience of my life ever. Being the first in my family to come to do something like this makes me and my family proud of me. I am so happy that I got the chance to come here so I hope you have fun, it will be an opportunity of a life time. Have fun and stick to it and hope that you can get through it. During my time here I believe that I have gained more confidence in approaching people and public speaking also I am more independent in the sense that I can look after myself and accomplish great things like a 81km bike ride that up until Wednesday the 18th I thought it would be impossible.

Danny's Journey

I'm Danny Thompson and my journey began when I was in textiles. I heard an announcement for all year 8 and 9 Koori students to go to the meeting room at the front office. So I went up to the meeting room and I sat down where Mr Castersen mentioned Gnurad-Gundidj. He told us some information about the school. I thought it would be a good experience so I said I would do it. About a week later I got told I wasn't going, I felt shattered, but then a few days later I felt excited when Robbie came and got me from my Maths class. We walked down to the careers office where I saw Bree and Kurwin. He then gave us letters saying congratulations you have been accepted to Gnurad-Gundidj. I went home and told my mum, she was very proud of me and started to cry. She told me "I am glad you're going and I don't mean this in a bad way, but the other day when you came home and told me you weren't going I was kind of relieved". Then

I said "Mum I know how you feel but this is a once in a life time opportunity and I need to go" (so it does affect everyone; friends and family). She understood what I meant and I understood that she didn't want me to go but she let me. If you're reading this, I recommend that you go because this is a once in life time opportunity and I wouldn't want to miss it for the world. If you don't go you will regret it. You will be doing bridge building which is awesome, on rest days you can go pretty much anywhere in the rest day's book, expos are really fun and you ride bikes to different places. The first expo you go to Lake Keilembete and back. On canoeing you go to the Hopkins River in Warrnambool and you stay there for most of the day. This experience has made me more confident and not so shy to meet people.



Bridge Building



Milly's Journey

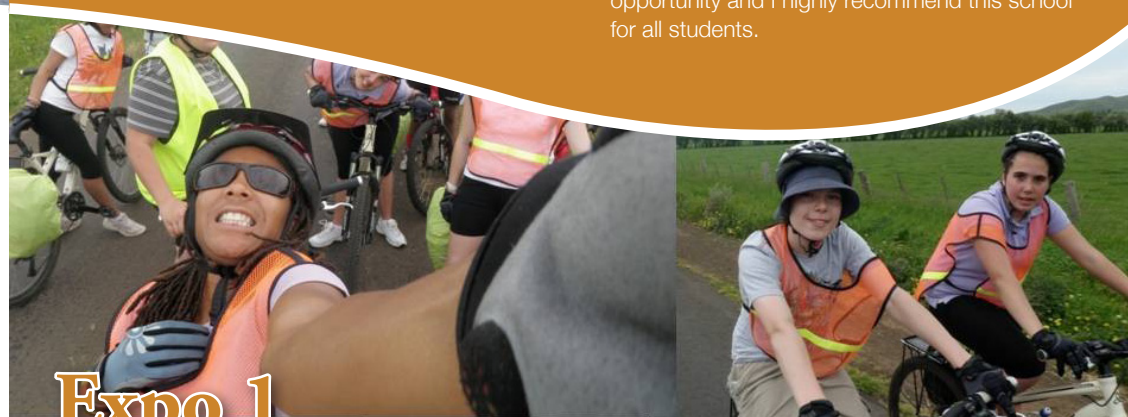
My name is Amelia Livesey. I'm from Geelong and my journey began after a good day of school in Geelong. I was sitting on the computer talking to some friends. Then Mum started calling out to me from the other end of the house. I get to the kitchen and there was Uncle Ritchie Fry sitting at the table. He asked me if i wanted to go to a school for student leadership, without thinking I said no straight away. I didn't want anything to do with it for various reasons, such as homesickness, missing out on things like the show and parties. Also I thought that it was going to be real strict. Richard said ok well just have a think about it because it's a good experience and you will regret it if you don't go. So he left me with a booklet about the school. I thought that there was no way I would ever want to go to Gnurad Gundidj. After a lot of persuasion from family members and teachers from school I changed my mind. Ritchie was right because this is just an amazing experience. On the first day I didn't know anyone. The only person I knew was Navajo

and we hardly even spoke before coming here to Gnurad but now we are really good friends. Because I'm not a very shy person I made new friends pretty quick. Within the first 2 days I had friends and within the first week we all became really close. So yeah, if you do come don't hold back, be yourself because someone is always bound to like you for who you are. Every day was just getting better and better, the days started going faster and faster and our time here was starting to run out. Being here doesn't even feel like a school, it's just like being home and it feels as if we are all just a big family. All the teachers here are just amazing, they are all understanding and very fun. I really love it here and can't imagine if I hadn't come here. My short amount of time here has made a massive impact in the way I think and act. I believe I have grown into a better person. I am confident and understanding in most things I do. All the friendships that have been made here are strong and hopefully they will stay that way forever. If I ever had the chance to come here again I would definitely take up the opportunity and I highly recommend this school for all students.

Kurwin's Journey

Well I was sitting in class with Bree and I flicking paper wasps at one of our classmates and a couple of us indigenous students got called to the front office. Michael Castersen, the campus principal of Gnurad Gundidj came to talk to us about the school. He came back a couple of days later and we went to visit the school. I still wasn't that convinced to go but my dad's friend talked me into it. My mum also wanted me to go. I went and at first I was a bit nervous but I got used to it and started to enjoy it more. I met people from different cultures and different back grounds and different places, it was interesting. Some aspects of the school I disliked such as doing the same thing over and over again in different ways in our D.E.A.R.R journals. We had four thinking and learning lessons some which I didn't really enjoy so much and others I did. I found the time here spread out for a while but it still went quick in

comparison to normal school. I didn't like this school as much as I thought but it was better than normal school. For me the activities that were fun were the bridge building ,expo, surfing, watching movies ,going to Framlingham, making new friends playing basket ball, table tennis and parent visiting weekend. On expo we went to Lake Elingamite and then we went to Lake Bullen Merri. We camped for two nights, we learnt how to cook food in trangias and I learnt how to set goals and stick with them. This experience has taught me how to talk up more, not get distracted and express my feelings more. Go to this school, you will get great opportunities in life and become leaders for your communities and learn skills for life like independence.



Expo 1





Canoeing

Navajo's Journey

HOW I GOT HERE:

I got here because I was at a camp called TYPO station for five weeks and I was speaking to one of the teachers there. Her name was Kate and we were talking about how my brother came here and how I would like to come here. Then she said I know a lady there and I could ask her if there is any available spots open. When I got home my mum told me that Alpine sent her a letter saying I could go and I was so happy. My school put in money for things that I didn't have and Wathourong gave me money to pay for it. Then mum got a call saying that Milly was going as well. I felt that it would be a bit easier to do it now that I'm going with someone that I know and that Richard Fry was taking us down.

WHEN I GOT HERE:

When I got here I felt a bit nervous because I didn't know anyone here besides Milly. Then I realised that there were people that came here alone and that just built my confidence up. I got to know a few new people and the teachers and that made it a lot easier for me. Meeting my room partner was a bit weird but now we talk a lot and meeting my c.i.p group 2B. We were told that there was about ten Koori kids here and I found that now I was real comfortable here and made me feel more at home. Then sitting at a table full of new people was great because we all got to know each other and getting along with each other. I started talking and hanging out with new people and it felt more comfortable and easier as the days went past. Meeting my class and expressing my feelings and my goals also got

easier. Getting to know all the teachers made it a lot easier as well.

THE FOOD:

The food here is delicious and yum. We get looked after real good here and get fed heaps. The chefs are really nice and funny, they have a lot of respect for the kids and they're healthy. We get breakfast, morning tea, lunch and dinner and sometime dessert and cake if it is someone's birthday and the cakes are delicious. We get a lot of delicious food here and the best part is that they give you heaps of it. We can only drink water and hot chocolates and it isn't bad at all after you get use to it because when I went home for parents visiting weekend the only drink I had was water because I was so used to it.

EXPO:

Expo is great fun, going riding in some of the most beautiful places I have ever been and going with all my mates and just having a lot of fun. There were a lot of ups and downs but we got over it quick and had a lot of fun. Some days were hard and hot but at the end of the day I was proud of myself and very tired. It's a good experience spending time alone out there in such great places. Some of the team were struggling but there was a lot of encouragement and that made it easier for everyone. Then the day that I got back to Gnurad is one of the best parts of it all. Just getting back and seeing everyone, it had a massive adrenalin rush going through me. I was so proud of myself after all the hard work that I did for myself and the team.

Hot Tips

- Be interactive with people
- Be yourself
- Stay busy
- Be open minded
- Join committees
- Play sport
- Talk to people
- Be tolerant
- Have a go
- Stay positive
- Try new things
- Write letters and emails
- Exercise
- Go on all rest day opportunities
- Stay focused
- Make good use of your time because it goes fast
- Make friends with the cooking staff
- Be willing to take a challenge
- Relax
- Don't be shy
- Make yourself feel at home
- Let your feelings out
- Make good use of class time don't muck around
- Work hard on your passport don't waste anytime

Rest Days

REST DAYS:

Rest days are great. We went to places like Mount Noorat and Mt Elephant. We went to Panmure water hole and staying at Gnurad Gundidj is great to just relax on the computers or watch a movie.

PARENT VISITING WEEKEND: Parent visiting weekend was great. It was great to see my friends and family, I was so happy to see them and to tell them all about what happened and I had so much to tell them. I stayed home on Friday night and went out with some mates on Saturday night. It wasn't really that hard for me to come back here but every now and then I think about going back because it went so quick for me and wish I had one more day at home.

CLASSES & NIGHT CLASSES:

The classes were sort of a bit fun for me because they weren't too hard and the classes are not like other classes at school because all you have to do is relax and take it easy and take your time and not rush it all because you have a lot of time to finish it. Night classes are fun and everyone has a go. We did things like Kat walks, dress up's, Halloween, Melbourne Cup and more. Sometimes we just sit down relax and watch movies.

CANOEING:

Canoeing was heaps of fun, me and Milly capsized the canoe twice. It was so funny and we were acting like whales in the water and it was just great to see that we all had fun that day. We had lunch down there and canoeing is awesome.

BRIDGE BUILDING:

Bridge building is lots of fun, we all learnt how to do all these sorts of knots and it is a great way we learnt how to work as a team and how to use each other ideas to get across the water to save these little fake animals, it is just so fun.

BIKE RIDING AND SURFING:

Bike riding and surfing where fun. We went to Logan's whale nursery beach for the bike ride. There were no whales but we still had a look and had a bit of fun down there. Then we rode back to Warrnambool beach and had a surf. We had lots of fun doing that, all the guys had a go at standing up, some made it, some didn't. On the way back we listened to the Melbourne Cup and fell asleep on the way home. When we got back everyone got dressed up for the Melbourne Cup then we all had lots of fun just dressing up.

HALLOWEEN:

On Halloween we all got dressed up into all sorts of things, it was so good everyone was laughing at each other's costumes and at the end of the night we all did a little cat walk and showed off our costumes it was so fun.

AND ALL THE REST:

All the rest is fun like free time for instance, we all play table tennis, soccer, basketball, board games, lap tops, have a kick, read, have a laugh or just have a rest. So no matter what there is always something to do at Gnurad Gundidj for me. Now I am getting along with everyone and getting involved with everything and just having a great time, never counting down the days and doing as much as I can because it's all going so quick.



Rest Days



“Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow.”

– Ronald E. Osborn