



GOOD SHEPHERD OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROJECT

2008

TABLE FARM

5TH—6TH SEPTEMBER 2008

This project was funded by the Harry Birrell Scholarship Trust

PLANNING AND PREPERATION

This project has been successfully running since 2006. The format for the experience has been well established, however there are always slightly different dynamics and slight refinements that take place each year.

One of the most important aspects of the project is the involvement of the St Andrew's College boys in terms of the planning and preparation for the camp. Although the 'formula' is in place, each year a different group of boys takes the reins and hence new ideas and slight changes are brought in to play.

This year, two DSG girls joined a group of four College boys who were doing their Residential project for the President's Award Gold Award. The rest of the College boys who participated in the project were drawn from President's Award boys who are currently doing their Silver Award.

The organizing groups were changed slightly from previous years. This year boys were divided into the following groups:

- **FOOD** - Menus and supplies for the four days of the project
- **EQUIPMENT** - Camping equipment, equipment for the activities and transport logistics
- **SHOES** - Provision of suitable walking shoes for the Good Shepherd learners
- **PREPERATION** - Activities arranged to prepare the Good Shepherd learners for the camp
- **CAMP ACTIVITIES** - Activities including talks during the hike and the Saturday programme.

Although the boys in each group have always been responsible for the successful preparation of the camp, they have always had a staff member to guide them. This year, the entire responsibility rested on their shoulders. Apart from the initial meetings to set up the groups, the boys had to organize and arrange the entire camp before they left for their school holidays as the camp took place the first week-end that they returned.

The entire group of College and Good Shepherd learners met for the first time just before the school recess to discuss group names and color schemes.

On Wednesday 5th September, the day the College boys returned to school, the Good Shepherd learners were bussed to the College campus for the start of the preparations. This included talks and discussions on appropriate behavior, camp etiquette, safety and litter, as well as setting up tents and camping equipment.

On Thursday 6th, the Good Shepherd learners participated in a swim test and received their new shoes. Final arrangements were concluded for the hike the next day.



THE HIKE

Friday 05 September 2008

The day started early for the College boys. The trailers and busses needed to be packed with equipment and food by 07h30. Needless to say, the boys were incredibly keen and tackled the task with enthusiasm.



Twenty five College boys, two DSG girls and six staff walked down to the Good Shepherd School at approximately 08h30 on Friday morning. Thirty three excited Good Shepherd children were waiting for us. After packing in the snack packs and lunch packs, the groups left school to begin the 20km hike out to Table Farm.



The route took us back passed College, up to the Golf Course and across the road through to the Industrial Site and on to the gravel road to Strowan Farm. One of the additions this year was a visit to the shearing shed of well known wool producer Mike Palmer. He was able to provide the groups with an interesting look into the process of shearing sheep and marketing wool.



Two College boys had prepared talks on snakes and spiders on the walk and we finally arrived at camp at approximately 14h45. In time to set up camp, take in another walk up to the top of Table Hill, and prepare fireplaces for cooking supper.



After supper, groups went out into a beautiful evening on a night walk. The stars were magnificent, and the sounds of the night enhanced by the rule to walk in absolute silence.

It was a fitting end to a wonderful day, and by 10.00pm most people were in bed and sleeping comfortably.

It didn't last long, a huge wind got up, and so did a couple of children!! However it wasn't long before calm was restored and a good night's rest was had by all.

ACTIVITIES

Saturday 06th September

The day began relatively early, some of the groups were up and about by 06h30. Breakfast was over by 08h00 and the programme of activities began at 08h30.

Once again it was really inspiring to see the interaction between the College boys and the Good Shepherd children. Each group was involved in a rotating programme of team building activities and although there is no competition involved, everyone participates with great determination and commitment. There are always lots of laughs and this year was no exception.



Once again, the whole exercise was a great success. Many of the Good Shepherd children expressed a desire to stay longer or do it again. We definitely seem to have hit on a winning formula for both schools.

Our thanks to the Harry Birrell Scholarship Trust for the opportunity they have provided with their financial support of the project.