

OUR ADVENTUROUS DUKIES



Can't come to Sydney without stopping off at this iconic landmark

Our Dukies have been very busy in the past few months, planning, organising and going on their Adventurous Journeys. These journeys are an opportunity for The Dukies to push themselves out of their comfort zones, to set big goals, to go somewhere they have never been before and to do it independent of their families! The planning involved in each of these journey's is comprehensive, Dukies need to put in many hours looking at all aspects of their trip to ensure that everything runs smoothly and with minimal risk of incident. Well done guys on planning and executing some fabulous Adventurous Journeys!

JYE'S JOURNEY TOWARD INDEPENDENCE

I live in Maryland, up in the Hunter region. I chose

to do my Adventurous Journey (Practice Journey) trip to Sydney to experience being independent and being away from family.

Whilst I was there I also tried to navigate public transport independently and met up with friends who live in Sydney. I felt that I achieved every goal from my journey as I used public transport, met up with friends and experienced

living independently without family. The weather played a big part in my trip, I needed to make changes to my original plans of visiting Taronga Zoo as it was pouring with rain on the first day. Instead I met up with a friend, caught the ferry and visited Wildlife Zoo and Darling Harbour. I explored quite a bit of Sydney whilst I was there and learnt further how to adjust to unplanned changes.

Experiencing living without family even for just one night can be really hard but is worth it as you realise I can live independently. I am now planning my



Making the most of sunny Sydney!

Qualifying Journey back to Sydney, where I will be pushing my limits even more!

Jye Donkin 20yrs, DMD

JACK'S EPIC SYDNEY ADVENTURES

Earlier this year I was nominated by my school, Ungarie Central School, in central NSW to participate in an Information Technology week (15th-20th May) in Sydney organised by the Rotary Clubs of West Wyalong and North Ryde. Five students from across NSW attended this trip. I was the only one in a wheelchair.



On the bus, ready to go!

I decided that this was the perfect chance to combine a great opportunity with my Adventurous Journey for my Bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Some of the things I organised to be able to undertake this trip were: booking my train ticket, hiring a shower chair, booking and organising the timetable for a carer, discussing my needs with my host family, booking the accessible taxi to fit in with the organised business visits, presenting to the Rotary Clubs at the end of the week and lots more.

I left Ungarie on Sunday on the Trainlink bus. At Cootamundra I boarded the train for Central Station in Sydney with Jason

(my support for the week). We were hosted by a Rotary family and a carer from 'Just Better Care' helped morning and night with my personal care.

For the rest of the week we used accessible taxis and trains to visit many businesses and places that focus on IT. This was the first time I had caught a city train in my power wheelchair. It worked really easily and it gave me the confidence to do it again. The places we visited included Optus, Oracle, Coles Distribution Centre, University of Technology, Cisco, Google, Macquarie University, Konica Minolta, Microsoft, IBM and the Powerhouse Museum.

My favourite activities were the visit to Macquarie Uni ICT centre where we each got to build a small robot using Lego Mindstorm EV3 kits and program it to follow a path on the floor and our time at the Powerhouse Museum where we had a go at controlling a replica of the Mars rover. We could then walk on the model of Mars and see where we had driven the rover. At all the businesses employees spoke to us about their training and qualifications, what their company did and what their exact job was.

The week also included some social activities. We went Tenpin Bowling, played Foosball, went out to dinner and

spoke at a Rotary meeting about our experience. The other boys went to Laser Tag but this was the only organised activity I couldn't participate in for the whole week as it had stairs at the entrance!



The hands on part was the best!

This week was a great trip away and I would like to thank all the members of both the Rotary Clubs of West Wyalong and North Ryde for helping me to organise this trip and ensuring they worked with me to make sure I could participate in my wheelchair and have a great experience I could never normally see by myself. I'd also like to thank Ungarie Central for nominating me to go and Jason for coming as my support person for the week. Finally thank you to MDNSW for supporting me and helping this to be a part of my Duke of Ed Award. I really enjoyed it and got a huge amount out of it. It will have an influence on my future when I leave school.

Jack Wason 15yrs, DMD

SCOTT TAKES ON NEW ZEALAND

On the 18th of April this year I had the great opportunity of going to Auckland in New Zealand for my Duke of Edinburgh's Award, Silver Adventurous Journey.

Blake Willis, who is one of our amazing camp carers, came to my house to stay the night before so we could leave straight away in the morning for our Virgin Australia flight (code shared with Air New Zealand) leaving at 10:50am. We got up, got ready and headed to the airport.

At the airport we checked in, said goodbye to my family and boarded the plane ready for the 3-hour trip to the Land of the Long White Cloud. On the plane we watched movies, ate lunch and talked about what we thought we would do whilst in New Zealand all the while being looked after like royalty by our Air New Zealand crew. The flight landed at about 3pm New Zealand time (2 hours ahead of Sydney). When we got off the flight we collected our bags, went through customs and found the Sky Bus terminal where we caught a bus to Auckland CBD, 15 minutes away from the airport. For the rest of the day we did some grocery shopping, cooked dinner (chops, chips and vegetables), then relaxed in order to get ready for a very hectic 6 days ahead.

We stayed at the Citylife Auckland which is part of the Heritage Hotels chain. The next day we visited the Domain where we saw many exotic plants in greenhouses and spent time looking at the nice view from up the top of the hill. For dinner, we cooked tacos.

On the third day we visited Kelly Tarlton's Sea Life Aquarium and went on a cruise across the harbour to Devonport. This is a beautiful and exclusive harbour-side suburb of Auckland with an old historic



Lovely to meet everyone at MDA NZ

military site used during WWII which had amazing views of the city. We visited Sky Tower that night where you could see all the lights of Auckland. Later, we made spaghetti bolognese.

The fourth day was a very exciting day. We woke up early, got ready and ate breakfast. Then we met Melissa Wentworth-Perry to discuss the day ahead; spending it with the Muscular Dystrophy Association of New Zealand. Melissa told us we were having an official Maori welcome. After our talk, and a long wait for our taxi, we made it to MDA NZ. We waited for them to set up and we met their CEO Ronelle, who has MD herself (which was pretty cool and inspiring). We headed inside and the ceremony started; the CEO and another

member of staff sang to us, a song which translated to being accepted peacefully into their tribe (in this case, to MDANZ). Then they sang a song of choice to us, which brought tears to our eyes it was so moving and then Blake, Mel and I sang Waltzing Matilda (which brought them to tears for all the wrong reasons; it was so tragic!!!). I was then presented with a greenstone necklace from the Chief, who officially welcomed us and we ate lunch (rolls, salads and lots of different cakes) after the chief had blessed it. After lunch we had a meeting with the staff to discuss activities we do at MDNSW such as the camps and the Duke of Edinburgh Award, which they sounded very interested in starting themselves. The meeting went for a couple of hours. That afternoon, as Ambassador for MDNSW, I had to make a speech about the Duke of Ed where I talked about my experiences and achievements whilst completing the Award. It was interesting to chat to people from another country, share experiences and hopefully bring our two organisations together. That night Melissa, Blake and I celebrated by going out to dinner at a fabulous steak restaurant where the steaks were half the size of the entire bull!

Day 5 we got up and headed out early to catch the bus to Auckland Zoo. At the zoo we saw many animals and the best part was seeing the cheetahs walked around the zoo by their keepers. Included



Scott & Blake brave the Sky Tower

in the admission price, we almost saw a young child eaten by them because the parents weren't watching the child run directly into the cheetah's path. For dinner that night we cooked chicken schnitzel which was blackened but tasty.

Our last full day we spent at the Auckland Museum, Tamaki Paenga Hira. We saw many Maori artefacts including the traditional houses and watched Maori dancing. It also doubled as the War Memorial where we saw planes, the Hall of Remembrance and saw a model of a trench. For dinner that night we went to a restaurant to celebrate our trip and to thank Blake for all his assistance, care and friendship.

The next day we got up early, cleaned out the mini bar and waited for the medical equipment to be collected. Then we checked out, headed to the airport and got ready to board our Air New Zealand flight home. We arrived back on Australian soil at 7pm Sydney time. I had a great time and can't wait to return, hopefully in the near future, to renew all my new-found friendships.

I will never forget the New Zealand hospitality, all that I have learnt about Maori culture and my incredible (and humbling) Maori welcome. Thanks to Blake, Mel, Duke of Edinburgh Australia, MDNSW and MDANZ for making this happen.

Now, it's onto my Gold Journey. Where to next? Stayed tuned.

Kia Ora,

Scott Green 16yrs, DMD