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Walk Softly—Leave only footprints—take only memories.

Wally's Journal

A better future—together we can.
Hello Everyone!!

My name is Wahlmoorum. Welcome to my journal. My job is to help you protect the environment. Here is a Dreaming Story about me.

“Battle of the Animals”

A very long time ago when many of the mountains we are so familiar with today were still being made and the animals and birds were much larger than they are now, there was much anger felt by the land animals with the sea animals, for the latter frequently made visits ashore and trespassed on the land animals’ territory. The land animals held a great meeting which was made possible by the “willy wag tail” which is a friendly talkative bird with boundless energy and he contacted all the land animals and birds and amongst those present were the sand goanna known as “Maroon”, the flying squirrel from “wynambyn” (weem means flying squirrel), the copper snake from “Kooralbyn” (guralbang means brown snake) and many others too numerous to mention! The meeting decided to attack the sea animals next time they ventured ashore and it was decided to appoint “Bingingerra” (binging means turtle) the giant fresh water turtle to be their leader for he, although slow, was very sure and determined and his hard shell afforded his good defence against attack! The great battle took place and the sea animals were driven back far out to sea never to return to the territory of the land animals.

Unfortunately such a great battle was not without its casualties! Poor old sand goanna suffered mortal wounds, but before he died he crawled inland to the base of the Great Dividing Range and his body after turning into rock
found all this stuff that had been left behind by us, this was very strange because we had done such a fantastic job of cleaning up our cabin.

Sam met us at 9am for our final group challenges. In the first one we had to cross the “Toxic Snot” without anyone falling in and use a rope swing across to an island and escape from the great white bog-water shark.

We all really enjoyed working together. We have learnt so much about ourselves and what we are capable of as individuals and as a group. The most amazing thing was the fact that I realised I can work with anyone. Sam asked us to fill in a comments sheet on our time at Maroon. We had to write down the sorts of things we learnt and what we enjoyed the most. I loved everything we did and I hope I can come back again one day.

Sam waved to us as the bus roared down the drive.

formed what is now known as Mount Maroon. The Koala bear was in the thick of the fighting and when he discovered that not even a stump remained where once grew his lovely bushy tail he climbed up a great gum tree, placed himself in the fork made between the main trunk and a large branch and just cried and cried, and to this very day seldom comes down for a drink and mainly lives on the leaves of the gum trees and whenever frightened or hurt still cries like a human baby. The little bird that we know today as the blood bird or the mistletoe bird and can be frequently seen feeding upon the mistletoe in the trees did not always have that vivid red breast—No! He became saturated with blood when giving much care and attention to “Bingingerra” who had suffered many terrible wounds and he “the blood bird” retains those vivid blood coloured feathers to this very day.

Poor “Bingingerra” made a noble effort to make his way back from the sea shore—when all the fighting was done—to his home in the lagoons along the Albert River, but his life was slowly ebbing away and when a short distance from home he lay down with his neck stretched out to have a long, long sleep from which he never awoke and like Maroon his body turned to stone and that is how Mount Bingingerra (Mount Witheren) was made in the shape of a great turtle at rest.


There are many dreaming stories about me because they were all told by different tribes. Each dreaming story is a little different because I had a different meaning to each tribe and the stories were passed on by word of mouth.
Our Last Day...

We all woke early for our last breakfast and our last lot of fun activities with Sam. We went to the dining hall for a 7:30am breaky. The cooks do a great job, the food tastes great and there is nearly always seconds. When it was our turn for kitchen duty all we had to do was get everything out and set the teachers table. After the meal we put everything through this gigantic dishwasher and the best thing was you didn't need a tea towel. I'm going to try that at home.

After breaky it was straight into packing. It didn't take long to shove and push everything back into my bags. I didn't realise how easy it was to pack and wondered why it had taken so long for Mum to pack in the first place. I'll pack next time and put everything I want to wear in my favourite bag. We then took all our bags out and put them under the big tree. Sam did a cabin inspection and
would be clean and tidy for the next group.

We walked out to the road and were met by the Principal and Chris who had come to pick us up. When we got back to Maroon we helped pack all the clean campout gear away and wash and hang the dirty stuff. Some people scrubbed with brushes, others hung things to dry, a few went with Sam to wash the stoves and dishes. It didn’t take us very long because we all pitched in and worked quickly so that we would have time for a shower before dinner.

After dinner our teachers played some funny games and we all put on a short skit about our week so that all the other groups would know about all the things we learnt. The teachers gave out awards for the “tidiest camper”, and the ‘most helpful camper’ and lots of others.
The bus trip was long and fun. We sang songs, told jokes and played eye spy. Maroon Dam is out in the country. It is about 20kms past a place called Boonah, which is a small town surrounded by farms.

The bus slowly revved down this really steep hill and we could finally see what looked like small houses. The cabins were really cool, they are linked by covered walkways. We were able to fit 4 of us in a room, 2 double bunks per room, 16 students in each cabin altogether plus a teacher, our own shower, toilet and a common room. We placed our gear in our rooms, had a fire drill and then we were introduced to Sam, our Maroon teacher. Sam took us on a tour of the centre which ended up at the dining hall just in time for lunch. That afternoon we met Sam at the tennis courts with our water bottle, a hat, covered shoes and sunscreen.

That afternoon we talked about why we are here at Maroon and we started by doing some problem solving activities. Some people found some of the activities hard, and fire we went down the hill to the Glider Possum. It shot me right up into the air. Some of us pulled and we had traffic controllers and I got to wear a full body harness. When it was my turn I told the team to go fast and I ran as fast as I could. I flew up and twisted, yelled and spun around and around. It was cool. I didn’t want to stop. Everybody had a turn, some people went fast and some people went slow. Everybody had a great time. We then helped carry all the equipment back up the hill and shared the carrying of the really heavy packs.

We prepared a picnic lunch with salami, cheese, tomato and yummy pita bread. There were spreads for those people who didn’t like salad stuff. We packed up our camp and I managed to get all my stuff back into my bag without any help. We helped pack the tents away and did our final jobs to make sure it
Our Fourth Day...

Last night I slept really well because I had remembered to bring some warm clothes and I packed all my food securely into my backpack so that the possums didn't bother me. The possums are cute, but Sam explained to us that we should not feed them because they should eat their own food and not rely on us to feed them. After a yummy brekkie of bacon and eggs cooked on the campfire, we had custard for desert. After washing up was complete the campfire was lit and Sam organised some activities. Other people found them easy. Sam also answered all our important questions about the week we were going to spend at Maroon.

Some of the things we are going to try hard to achieve this week are...

- Work together
- Be Helpful
- Be Safe
- Listen
- Talk to each other
- Make new friends
- HAVE FUN
- Respect the environment, self and others
- Challenge yourself
Our Second Day...

We met Sam at the top of the stairs and headed off down to the Low Ropes. I was really looking forward to this activity as I am really good at balancing and climbing over obstacles. Sam got us all to sit down along the top edge of the bark pit. The whole course was mostly made up of poles, ropes, tyres, cables and a couple of trees. It looked exciting, especially the bouldering wall, as Sam called it.

We walked around the whole course while Sam explained the best and safest way to complete the challenges. Sam chose some volunteers to have a go. Each time there were 2 spotters and one of us had a go. The spotters had to stay very close and keep their hands up to slow our fall if we overbalanced. They shadowed you as you made your way along the obstacle. They had to stand a little farther back at the swinging tyres because the tyres all our gear. My pack was easy to carry and comfortable. Sam had shown us all how to adjust the straps. It was only a short walk to our campsite. It was a great place on a hill surrounded by large shady gum trees with small cliffs off to one side. It had a campfire circle, a shed, toilets and each group had their very own tent site. Sam then explained our tasks and we selected our tent pad and started to put up our fly.

Before we left Maroon my group decided that we really liked the fly with its poles. Rather than the bivvy with no poles and no ends or the 3V dome tent. Some people had domes but nobody had a bivvy. We were the first finished so we helped the others in our food group finish their tents. When everyone was ready Sam demonstrated how to cook. Sam explained the recipe and divided up the food. We cooked Brilliant Burri-
Our Third Day...

Day 3 began with some frantic packing in preparation for our campout. It took a long time to try to pack everything inside our backpacks. With help from a couple of my friends, I finally managed to stuff my sleeping bag into a garbage bag and make it sooo tiny. Sam was right after all. It does all fit inside!!!

Where and what is 85V? That is where Sam told us we were going to camp. 85V was all the way down the other end of the dam. We canoed, carrying all of our clothes, food and camping gear. It was lots of fun paddling. The water was crystal clear and not too cold. As we paddled we had a great view of a mountain called Little Toowoonan. We saw a Sea Eagle’s nest and weaved our way through the dead forest.

We landed, hauled the canoes out and started up the track with our packs and swing wildly all over the place. Then it was time to start on our own. We formed into groups of three and Sam gave us the choice of our first challenge. We were then reminded about walking and making sure we were being safe.

There are plenty of different activities. My favourite was bouldering where you practice climbing. We split up into pairs for bouldering and had heaps of fun trying to get along one of the three walls. It was really fantastic for the whole group.

After a delicious lunch of hamburgers, we met Sam and down the hill we went. First stop was the Aquatic shed for a jacket and paddle. I was keen to try out the gear. My paddle was cold and just a little shorter than my chin, Sam said that was good. The jackets were all sorts of bright colours and I had to guess my weight in
kilos. I'm 28kg and I got a bright yellow one with zips, buckles and a waist cord. The canoe racks are down by the dam. The canoes are stored upside down. You have to work together and be very careful moving the canoes. Sam explained everything to us and that made it really easy to work as a team.

The water looked fantastic and I was looking forward to getting wet. There was a bit of mud at the waters edge so I was glad I had my wet shoes on. Luckily I listened and had my water bottle and hat because one of my classmates had to go all the way back up those stairs to the cabins to get a bottle and a hat. You know I can't really understand how you can forget, our teacher keeps reminding us about our hat, bottle, sunscreen and wet shoes.

The water was nice, smooth and crystal clear when you get away from the bank. You can have 2 or 3 kids in each canoe. We tied ours together and it was easier to paddle and couldn't flip. They are amazing they can't sink.

Paddling was easy - we played plenty of fun games like cricket, tag and statues. We paddled out into the middle, rafted up and went for a swim. At the end of our session our group worked well together, we did a really great job of cleaning out the canoes & putting all the gear away. Sam told us we were excellent.