

My first visit to the Snowy Mountain

Nafsi Shah (12) – Year six (Quakers Hill Public School)

Few weeks ago I observed that baba had written "Surprise Trip" in the box of Saturday the 25th and Sunday the 26th of September on our home calendar. At that time I had no idea where we will be going.

Lately I had been hearing baba talking about going to the Sri Lanka Vs Australia One Day Cricket Match which will be held in Sydney. But the surprise trip was for 2 days. And how will it be a surprise if he kept on saying it loud.

A few days later I realised the match was in November the 5th, so it couldn't be a cricket match. Then friends started asking where we might be going on the holidays. At this point I started to listen very carefully. To my surprise baba said that we will be going to the **SNOWY MOUNTAINS!!!!!!**

My long outstanding dream was about to come true!!!

Since Year 2, I had always wanted to go to the Snowy Mountains and to see, to touch and to feel snow. Every year something very important would block my dream from coming true.

Baba mentioned we will be going to Canberra to see the Floriade, to see the wonderful flora in the capital city. Then he said that we would stay in a holiday cabin in **Cooma**, near Snowy Mountain. I couldn't wait for the day to come.

The Journey Begins

On Saturday the 26th September 2010, my whole family woke up at 7:30am. We quickly got dressed and packed everything needed for the trip into the car. Luckily, we packed our bags on Friday night, so we didn't need to fuss so much about loading car with stuff. We quickly finish our breakfast and made sure we had everything we need for the dream trip.

At 8:30, we left Quakers Hill and then the real journey began.

In the car

I took my MP4 player to listen to and I also took a book to read in the car. It was going to be a 3-hour journey to Canberra, so it was going to be a long time in the car.

In the car, I was excited about this journey. I tried to visualise about what's going to happen.

I spend the time in the car listening to music and reading my book and also playing with my brother Nashwan.

I enjoyed looking at the view outside from the car. However, there was something that I was very disappointed with. It was the death of so many Kangaroos and wombats in the highway. I

think I saw at least 100 dead Kangaroos and 2 wombats. I was thinking that at this rate kangaroos could be extinct in a couple of years. Every now and then baba would see many dead animals that upset all of us.

Goulburn

After 2 hours, we stopped at Goulbourn to see the wonderful **BIG MARINO** and to have a break. We took many pictures with the huge Marino. Nashwan enjoyed looking through the shops. I realised it had changed a lot since the last time I came to visit Goulburn. We also went into the shop. We had a quick look around than we set off to go to Canberra.



Back in the car, we ate some snacks and continued our journey towards Canberra. Nashwan was very interested at looking at the cows, sheep, and horses, which were wondering around in their fields. They looked very nice in their fields with their friends, roaming around lazily.

Canberra

After another hour of sitting in the car, the Parliament House was coming into view. It looked beautiful from a long distance. We parked the car in an underground parking lot and then we took the stairs and went up to find ourselves facing the parliament house. We taught Nashwan that this was Julia Gillard's office and to remember it so he can tell us what it is when it pops up in the news.



We took many pictures with the parliament house and then we set to the field that was right in front of the Parliament house. We decided to have lunch there. We had burgers for lunch, which were prepared at home by Ammu.

All we had to do was place all the fillings into the burger itself. It was very tasty so I helped myself to another one. After prayer, we set off for the magnificent Floriade gardens next to the Lake Griffin!!

Floriade

After another 10 minutes in the car we finally reached our main destination in Canberra! There were so many cars in the parking lot that finding a parking was very rare, but we luckily found one which was waiting to be filled in. We quickly parked and then went off to the garden which was awaiting us with welcoming and open arms.

We crossed the busy streets and entered the garden. There were many stalls there with people looking through. There were many people wandering around examining the beautiful, unique flowers.

At the first sight of the flowers I was overwhelmed with joy just looking at them. They were so beautiful all bunched up together. It had been a long time since the last time I went there.

We took many pictures with the flowers and wandered around looking at more flowers. Nashwan liked taking pictures while touching one petal of a flower. I was allowed to get an ice-cream while we were wandering around. After a long time that I had Chocolate flavoured Paddle Pop.



After an hour of wandering we started leaving. It felt nice smelling and seeing the wonderful flowers.

It was then time to go to next stop which was we were going to stay that night. It was the city of **Snowy Mountains, COOMA.**

Back in the car

It takes 1 ½ hours to go from Canberra to Cooma. So I did the same thing I always do in long journeys like that one, listen to music, read a book and I even looked at the poor old dead kangaroos. It was very painful to watch so many dead Australian native animals lying on the side of the road. I felt very sorry for them. I thought something could have been done for the poor animals.

I tried not to look at them and enjoy my music from the MP4 or reading book.

After 1 hour of drive, to my surprise I finally saw a sign which said "WELCOME TO COOMA"

COOMA!!!

At that time my heart leapt with joy, I just couldn't believe that I would that close to the snow.

Cooma is the largest city in The Snowy Mountains. Cooma has a population of 8000 and an elevation of 800 m above sea level.

After ½ an hour we could see the large sign of the place we were going to stay for the night. It was called "**SNOWTELLS Holiday Park**". Pretty cool name though.

We parked in front of the information centre. From inside the car we could see they had a ski hire shop. The shop had all the things you could need for having fun in the snow. Baba went in side to get our key and our cabin number. When he came back he told ammu that they have really good deals and they have everything we could need. Ammu agreed on having a look around the shop and maybe hire a ski jacket for Nashwan as he doesn't have any warm clothing fit for the snow.

We took a quick look around and we bought a pair of snow boot for Nashwan and for myself, a snow jacket for Nashwan and also a tobaggon to play in the snow.

In the cabin

Then we went back into our car set off to look for our cabin which we booked. After we finally found it we started to unpack all the things from our car. Ammu started to brush all the dirt on the house floor as we had some dirt on our shoes. I really liked the cabin. It had a kitchen which had everything we could possibly need, it had a bathroom with shower, a main bedroom with many cupboards , T.V and the best thing that Nashwan and I loved was the 3 storey **bunkbed**.

I wasn't expecting anything more from the cabin it had everything, and was tidy with every thing in its place. It reminded me of our own room at home.

After we unpacked and washed ourselves thoroughly, baba set up the laptop, ammu started cooking dinner and me and Nashwan helped ourselves to watch TV.

After a while our food was ready, so me and Nashwan sat down to eat a proper meal for the first time that day. Ammu cooked rice, lentils, fried eggs and home made yummy chicken curry. Nashwan was very hungry and he wanted to eat all and sat down to eat by his own hand.



The funny thing was he made the egg as a lebanies bread and put the rice with lentils and chicken inside. Ammu and myself found it very funny. We took lots of pictures of the cute little chap. Another funny thing was that the poor dude couldn't say "snow" instead he said "nohw".

He was really looking forward with playing with snow.



After dinner Nashwan started going up and down the bunkbeds. He chanted that he wants to sleep in the top bed. I was happy that Nashwan was growing up and he wanted to sleep by himself *mashallah*.

After our parents had dinner I watched TV. until I realised that ammu, baba and Nashwan were all watching a natok/drama in the main bedroom on laptop. I rushed to them to enjoy the humour of the natok. While watching we enjoyed some popcorn. Every now and then baba would send me to the TV room to see the score of the AFL grand finals and to inform the score back to him. Coincidentally the game was a tie so now there will be a rematch next week.

When it was time to go to bed Nashwan insisted on sleeping on the bunkbed. So we let him sleep in the middle one. I wanted to sleep on the top one.

After a few minutes Nashwan changed his mind and he wanted to sleep with me on the top bunk bed.

After a few minutes, yes, Nashwan changed his mind again and wanted to sleep with ammu. So poor baba who was half asleep had to go on to the middle bunk to have his beauty sleep and he hoped no one would disturb him.

Finally after a while everyone was happy with where they were sleeping, specially Nashwan. We all couldn't wait until the next day. My dream will come true as we will visit Snow...

DAY 2, COOMA

When the next day came coincidentally everyone woke up at the same time at 6:00am, with the same excitement as we were going to see snow in few hours.

I was full with excitement and thrill as I tried to visualise what was going to happen. My parents had been to the Snowy Mountains many times before but without me and Nashwan.

We ate our breakfast and got into our warm clothes and packed the whole house, put all our belongings back into the car and hopped in. We buckled up and set off for the Snow.

Next stop Perisher

Perisher

Perisher is a large snow field. Many people go to Perisher to ski and to enjoy their time with the snow.

In the car I was waiting as patiently as I could. But it wasn't easy. In the car my parents were trying their best to make me either jealous or make me upset as we couldn't see any snow. I did get upset hearing their stories when they went to snowy mountains before and how much fun they had.

Finally after 1 hour I finally saw my first sighting of snow on top of the mountains. It was simply beautiful and mindboggling experience for me. I recorded the first few moments of the snow on the video camera.

Baba told us that we are lucky to get a very good weather. He was very worried about the car, that it wouldn't be able to handle the weather. But so far everything was picture perfect.

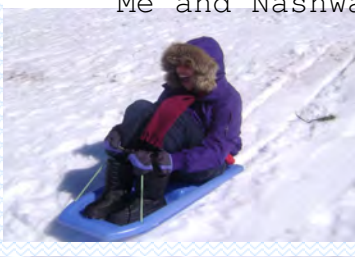
After we paid the tolls and we entered the parking lot I was amazed as I could only see 4 wheel drives. I could see the white snow field in front of me, just amazing and breathtaking picture.

SNOWY MOUNTAIN here I come !!!!!

After we parked I jumped out and then I put on my gloves and my hood. We all then had a snack. I remembered to take the **Tobaggon** We then went towards the snowfield.

I just couldn't wait, so is Nashwan. My dream was going to become fulfilled.

Me and Nashwan rushed towards the snow. As soon as I stepped on it I bent down to feel the snow for the first time in my life. It was cold, very hard and it was just like ice.



I ran towards the hill with the toboggan. When I reached the top I started to slide before Nashwan came. It was sooo much fun!

Nashwan didn't have a problem sliding. Ammu and Baba thought that Nashwan could slide way better than me.

I will admit that I fell off the toboggan a lot of times though.

We all had a go on the toboggan. We all enjoyed it. Nashwan loved to push us off at the start.



After a lot of tobogganing ride ammu and myself sat down and we decided to make a mineature snowman. So then we took our time trying to make the best snowman possible.

After we finished, our snowman was a great success. We put on some finishing touches with a scarf and put on Nashwan's beanie.



After a while we decided to go to the perisher centre.

In that place we were not allowed to use toboggan so we left all our tobogganing at the snow field.

We took some pictures at the entry then we entered. We went through the plaza and excited only to find ourselves in another snow area with lots of people were skiing. There were ski lifts, and ski equiptment. Baba told me the snow there was real. I didn't quiet understand but when I touched the snow it was much softer than the other snowfield. He said that sometime they make artificial snow with machine. We took many photos.

After that we went back in to the plaza. We decided to buy some hot chips to warm us up. Then I really wanted to play with snow again so me and Nashwan played in the snowfield for ½ an hour while my parents got changed and packed car.



Then it was time for me and Nashwan to get changed too. I really didn't want to leave but I had to.

After that we said goodbye to the snow and we were ready to go back to our home sweet home.

The trip Back home

We were back on the road. Baba told us that we will be stopping at Cooma to return back all the snow gears we hired. So after another hour we arrived at Cooma and we returned all the things and then we set off.

I did everything I could to spend the 3 hour trip until we stop to have a break and have lunch. In the car Nashwan fell asleep straight away. Ammu slept a little after him. But I didn't feel like sleeping after a life time experience.

But I eventually *did* go to sleep.

I was expecting to stop at Canberra but we stopped at a resting area past Canberra.

After we stopped, ammu and Nashwan went to the toilets, Baba did both Zuhr and Asr prayer while I set up for our lunch.

Ammu made noodles in the morning for our lunch.

We all ate our noodles hungrily. We had some drinks too.

After enjoying the food we went back onto the car for journey back home.

After another hour I could see the huge Blacktown sign. Baba and myself let out a sigh of relief. Baba did that mainly because the car was able to take the journey without a breakdown and myself, because I was happy to be back in town. Ooo yeah...

It was 7:30pm when we reached home.

Finally HOME- SWEET- HOME!!!!I was very happy to be back home.

This was a trip I would never forget and will always remember for long.



The End !!