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An experience Metala, Abbie will never forget

Nuriootpa High School students, Abbie Nourse and Metala Burgess have returned from a two week study tour to Vietnam as part of the Premier's ANZAC Spirit School prize.

Days after returning home, the duo are still coming to terms with their adventures and the experience.

Among 13 students from across the state, the pair were selected to participate in the study tour after successfully researching Australian servicemen, Claude Vivian Radford and Frederick John Schenscher.

Reflecting on the fully funded trip, Metala summed it up by saying "we did so much".

Flying into Ho Chi Minh City, the group had the chance to take in the sights of the area, viewing landmarks along the way.

"On the second day we went to the Cu Chi tunnels... that was such an eye opening experience," said Metala.

"It is where the North Vietnamese soldiers fought from and hid underground. It was really interesting down there and so dark... it was really interesting to see how they would have fought and lived."

Metala and Abbie did venture into these tunnels, which have been made wider to accommodate tourists.

They also went to Long Tan, where in the "blistering heat" a wreath was laid on the Long Tan Cross Memorial site.

The group were also at the air base and visited the scene of the battle of Binh Ba.

"It was really eye opening, standing in the same place and seeing the leftover bitumen from the airway," said Metala.

"You'd think about what they wore and how they fought... most of us were in light pants and t-shirts and it was so hot."

It was these thoughts that were often, where Abbie, said, "At Long Tan in the middle of the jungle ceremony for our soldiers that was the most memorable..."

remembering our soldiers that we researched."

But a visit to an orphanage also made Metala and Abbie realise how lucky they are to have family and a school.

"The orphanage... we weren't there for long," said Abbie.

"Just seeing the kids... with no family or parents and were bed ridden."

"The primary school had four classrooms and hardly any facilities for them compared to ours... it was a chalk board and a few desks and tables."

But it was that experience and singing to the children that will remain in Abbie and Metala's minds for some time.

"You couldn't take the smiles off their faces. Their writing was so neat too," added Metala.

Also part of the study tour was a visit to the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam former operations and their former headquarters, Red Beach, where the Marines came ashore in 1965, a battlefield tour of Citadel, a visit to American bases at Camp Carroll and the Rockpile and "Hanoi Hilton" prison.

"We went on a one kilometre walk at Camp Carroll for a memorial to the North Vietnamese, we were there to honour them," said Abbie.

"We kept walking and then it started raining... lots of rain and heavy and then we found it (the memorial)."

"The umbrella broke and seeing the palm trees reminded me of a Tsunami and then we found it was three kilometres up and three back."

"I felt like giving up and thought of my soldiers... what it was like for our soldiers to go through in the Vietnam war... that's when it really sunk in."

Abbie and Metala said having knowledgeable guides helped with the additional learning and they both agreed

they learnt far more than what they would have by just being in the classroom.

The experience has also brought a new and greater perspective for life.

"There's always two sides to every experience we had and it wasn't all about the war," said Metala.

"It was a very eye opening experience and it made me rethink what we have... I have travelled before but this was so different."

Abbie said, "I don't think you would experience what we did if you went over to travel... we did so much."

"You look at things differently... a new perspective on life in general."

Abbie and Metala will participate in the school's Remembrance Day service and while they've only just returned from the study tour they are likely to participate in ANZAC Day services next year.



Metala Burgess and Abbie Nourse, Nuriootpa High School students, at Long Tan as part of the Premier's ANZAC Spirit School prize.

Fundraising target within reach



Jamie Gladigau, JBG Architects and designed of The Barossa Cellar, with Tanunda's, Tim, Sara and Elsie Liersch, who has offered the stone from an old barn on their property in Tanunda to potentially be featured in the building.

The Barossa Cellar is seeking cash donations to enable it to meet its fundraising target and proceed with the project by the end of the year.

This target is well within reach, according to chairman, Mr James Wark.

"We have had tremendous support from 75 Barossa wineries, and we are now urging local grape growers to make a donation in the name of their family or vineyard," James said.

"We want to acknowledge as many growers as possible as supporters of

The Barossa Cellar, as this project will benefit everyone associated with the Barossa wine community, from growers and winemakers to suppliers and winery and vineyard employees. Every donation, no matter how small, will help us reach our target and will be greatly valued and acknowledged on a permanent display within the building."

Tanunda's Tim and Sara Liersch were among the first growers to donate a Vine in the name of their family.

In addition, Tim's father, Dean, has

offered the stone from an old barn on his property in Tanunda to potentially be featured in the building.

Mr Jamie Gladigau from JBG Architects, has designed The Barossa Cellar and made a significant in-kind donation.

The Barossa Cellar is believed to be the biggest, single community project ever undertaken in the region and there are many ways to get involved.

For more information or to donate visit the website at www.thebarossacellar.com.au

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