

St Margaret's students have the chance to experience different worlds

One of the very special things about St Margaret's is our boarding community – a diverse group of 185 students who come from regional and rural locations around Australia and overseas.

Sharing in the wide range of backgrounds, lifestyles and cultures from which our students hail is a key tenet of the St Margaret's boarding experience and something that is greatly valued by our entire school community.

One of the great ways they can do that is during the annual Day Boarder Long Weekend.

A school tradition that is held each year in May, our boarding students invite day students to visit their homes and properly experience life in the country or another town or even another country.

Year 11 boarder Maggie Slack from Glen Morgan, a six-hour drive west of Brisbane, was excited to share her home life on her Christmas Creek property with her friends Millie Douglas and Sascha Hughes.

Millie who lives in the very urban suburb of Clayfield has been to Maggie's home before but said that this visit “reminded me how different city and country life can be and how I enjoy both”.

While at Maggie's, Millie enjoyed a range of different activities including horse riding, climbing caves, windmills and tanks, swimming and stand-up paddle boarding in the dam, and yabby races.

True to life in the country, everyone pitches in and helps out, and the girls rallied to complete daily jobs, even lending a hand to fix fences.

“The weekend really broadened my horizons as I got to experience a little part of Maggie's everyday life and got to step out of my comfort zone,” Sascha said.

Year 7 student Adelaide Bothwell visited her friend Ella McLean's property in the town of Surat where the entire town's population is around 400, one third of the total number of students that attend St Margaret's.

“During my weekend at Ella's, I went motorbiking and helped with the sheep mustering and drafting. I also helped with fixing fences.

“One of the highlights was all of the cooking we did. We made so many delicious home-baked treats, and one night, we even had S'mores around the campfire,” Adelaide said.

For Annie Robson in Year 8, visiting her friend Annabel's property in the small town of Condamine was filled with highlights.

“We tried many fun and exciting activities including jumping along the cotton bales, water-skiing in the Condamine Lagoon, going for bush walks and sitting by the campfire at night. I drove their manual car around the farm and learnt how to change gears and I went for a drive on their planter and learnt how seed was planted. My favourite activity by far was tying a ski to the excavator and swinging ourselves into the full irrigation dam.

“Apart from the activities, I also really enjoyed getting to know the other girls that Annabel invited who I didn't know very well. I learnt a lot about them and now we are all great friends!

“Probably, the biggest difference between Annabel's life at home and my life here in Brisbane is the distance between places like home, the supermarket, school, the park – everything is close by. At Annabel's, it is a much longer drive to get to these places which I'm not quite used to,” Annie said.

This annual pilgrimage to the boarders' homes – whether in the bush, the beach and sometimes overseas - allows our students to experience vast and varied landscapes and different ways of life.