

## Paris Trip Summary by Tom Thorpe

Tom was a Yr 11 at Commonweal last year, but like many ex students continues to support the school. Thanks you are all stars!

### Saturday

Everyone arrived with excited expressions on their faces at the specified time of 6:15 am. Well... everyone except for Jenna Godfrey, who arrived at specifically 6:27. Little did we know how much influence the number 27 would have on our whole week. After buying our extortionately priced breakfasts, at a service station, we filed back to the coach. Then we travelled to Dover. Natasha Kami and Naomi Afouneh fell asleep on the journey... it was clearly going to be a tiring week for them. After refreshments on the ferry we arrived in Calais, another hideously boring coach journey was to follow! Much later we arrived at our home for the week – Campus Saint Therese. Nathan Mulcock, Jon Keating, Thomas Graham and Tom Thorpe were given room 27 and to say they were delighted would be an understatement! Finally we had our first provided meal which was, most agreed, less than appetising. Room 27 was just getting ready to sleep when suddenly, it began. Thomas Graham's first anecdote was delivered.

### Sunday

We all woke up energized for our first day in France. Our first attraction was the Eiffel tower. We headed towards the sight as Nathan Mulcock noticed he was sitting in seat 27 – it was following us! After many photos were taken of the tower, we were put into groups, depending on how far up we wanted to climb. Miss Clements used this opportunity to stay firmly on the ground! The rest of us began our audacious climb to the top, stopping at the first level for a very much welcomed cuppa and pain au chocolate. After climbing more than 700 stairs we realised that we were not even half way and headed for the huge lift to the top. The views were astonishing. Abruptly we noticed the words on our hoodies that said music tour and realised that we should probably perform a concert. This is when we headed for a local hospital after struggling to order our food because of language. The concert was well received by all and we were happy to have pulled off a good performance. It seemed to be most appreciated by a patient's dog that insisted on smelling the trumpets and flutes feet prior to the music! This was followed by a quick drink before heading to Notre Dame. We spent roughly 40 minutes in the church before going on a mad shop for various hats and of course a football. At the meal Nathan Mulcock decided to make a number 27 out of 27 peas... a tradition was born! After the meal at the hotel we had a quiz. This involved questions about our new surroundings and also a dressing up game. Everyone had a huge laugh at this entertainment. We had everything from Henry Wakelem as Barbie, Tom Costello as the queen, Naomi Afouneh as superman and Tom Thorpe as maid Marion. More Thomas Graham anecdotes were to follow which was more fun than room 22 and specifically Elea Jackson was having.

## Monday

After we had all calmed down from the previous night, we headed to the river Seine for a boat cruise. This trip resulted in the presenting of a snow globe being awarded for the quiz, to 27 emulsion drops (woop woop!) Sadly this journey also involved the breaking of the prize and so another one had to be purchased. The boat trip provided many more photo opportunities of the Eiffel tower, Notre Dame, many elegant bridges but Nathan Mulcock still found room in his camera memory for two unknown joggers! Due to cries of “were hungry” we all headed for some lunch at a baguette café. It was scrumptious but again pricey. We had no problem remembering this because of Tom Graham in the group. After entering the Louvre we decided the best plan of action was to get ridiculously lost inside. Jenna Godfrey, Tom Thorpe, Nathan Mulcock and Emily Harding did not get a chance to see the famous Mona Lisa in time because they went astray and so headed for the exit. They remembered vividly the instructions to meet at the lamppost. Sadly there were many lampposts in sight and couldn’t find the right one. Mrs Sutcliffe saved the day with her arrival on the scene and then everyone headed to Sacre Coeur. We all had an hour of shopping time before sitting on some stairs for live music. Little did we know that we would receive both music *and* dance. Yes, the dancing was by a drunken man but it was still very entertaining. In spite of this, all was not well with Jon Waite and the loss of his bag. We then walked to our evening meal away from the campus. Either pizza or chicken and chips were available which seemed to please everyone. Tom Thorpe even managed a 27 creation out of ketchup. The conclusion of this day was another concert, (we started to feel overworked!) This was at the Fiap Jean Monnet Centre. The crowd was somewhat sparse until a cry of “That’s Sam Wearing!” was heard. It turned out that Hreod School were staying at the very place we were playing at.

## Tuesday

It was finally here, the day we had looked forward to all week. Disneyland! The atmosphere was electrifying and many people were hyper. We arrived at about 10 am and went back stage ready to begin playing and singing on the Fantasy Festival stage. The Disney guides decided to tell us now that we couldn’t perform in jeans! – Not a good scenario to be in. Luckily Mrs Sutcliffe worked her magic and we went on as scheduled. Mr Chivers and his family also joined the audience for the performance. The rest of our day was at the resort. Mrs Sutcliffe and Jenna Godfrey were both persuaded to go on Space Mountain and it’s fair to say they didn’t enjoy themselves massively! What the teachers didn’t know is that the year 10 girls had a plan to get them all presents. Hannah Mulcock and Annabelle Black collected some money off of everyone and went shopping. They came back to the coach with all sorts of Disney merchandise still unknown to the staff. One memorable moment was when the older members of our group saw Goofy, Pluto and Minnie mouse. The looks on their faces were extremely joyful as they headed for their photos. They did somewhat dwarf the other members of the public waiting for their turn for a photo but they did not

mind. After a great day we headed back to the coach. There had been a common recurrence on the coach journeys so far that we would sing different songs. From the front of the coach came choir songs, from the middle came band numbers, and from the back of the coach came songs about caterpillars eating too much! After realising that the three songs didn't mix well together we all began to sing together. The favourite seemed to be the band tune 'tequila' which was often heard booming from the bus. After a good old sing song we arrived back at the campus, all very hungry. We sat down for food and tonight the 27 was made out of butter. (The kitchen staff must have wondered why the number 27 kept appearing on their plates!)

### **Wednesday**

Today we had a lie in... 8:30, however some boys, led by Tom Costello had decided that the football purchased needed to be used and so 6 of them got up at 6:45 to have a game! Wednesday was another exciting day for everyone, spending a day in Disney studios. Mr Leslie had everyone well informed on the best way to plan their day and so we all headed for the entrance. There were some shows available to see which involved Animagique, a clever screen production, a tram ride around the back of the park and a stunt show, involving car chases, a man jumping off a building and of course a man on fire! There were also some exhilarating thrill rides, such as rock and roller coaster and the tower of terror. As we left we took a group photo (available on Tom Thorpe's facebook). We then headed back to the campus and had an evening of fun ahead of us. We were set the challenge on the coach to get into groups and perform a song in costume from a Disney story or a musical. There were lots of varieties, including 'part of that world' from the little mermaid, 'supercalifragilisticexpialidocious' from Mary Poppins, 'Oom Pah Pah' from oliver and many more. This was a huge success and a superb final evening, enjoyed by all.

### **Thursday**

No-one wanted this day to come, but of course this was inevitable – going home day. We had our final breakfast and Miss Clements set the challenge to Tom Thorpe of creating a number 27 out of 27 cornflakes. The group then headed to Cite Europe, a shopping centre in Calais. Many items were purchased with left over euros and then after a delay, waiting for Carine Conway and Verity Dams we headed towards the ferry. We took this time to hand out the gifts to the staff bought previously. We had a slightly rockier crossing this time but thankfully no-one was seriously ill! We arrived at Dover at about 5 o'clock and had an emotional goodbye with the tour guide, Phil. He was a great help during the week with translating. It was a long journey home and everyone just wanted to be back in Paris. We were just singing 'tequila' when Nathan Mulcock had a brilliant plan – he would compose the tune on his phone. We arrived back at Commonweal at 8 o'clock and as the door opened the parents were bombarded with a whole coach rendition of 'tequila.' In conclusion the trip was absolutely fantastic –thank you to the teachers and also everyone who participated who made it so good.