



International Exchange

By Major (AAC) Ben Robinson

While many young people join the Australian Army Cadets to expand their horizons, a group of 30 Army cadets and staff took this to a whole new level undertaking a vigorous selection process late last year to represent Australia on a two-week International Army Cadet Exchange.

The Army Cadet Exchange is an annual two-week exchange of cadets and staff during which cadets participate in a variety of military, cultural and adventurous activities.

Twenty-four cadets and six team leaders came from all corners of Australia, and gathered at Simpson Barracks in Victoria before heading off in small contingents to Canada, Norway, Germany and the Cayman Islands.

The Australian cadets participated in a diverse range of activities such as flights in service aircraft, rafting, scuba diving and culturally significant sporting events.

Concurrently, Australia played host to 30 cadets and staff from Canada, Germany, Korea and the United Kingdom.

Commander Forces Command Major General David Morrison met with the overseas cadets during a sightseeing tour of Sydney.

The foreign cadets also toured sights of military significance to Australia including The Royal Military College Duntroon, the Australian Defence Force Academy and the Australian War Memorial.

They also participated in a variety of field and adventurous activities.

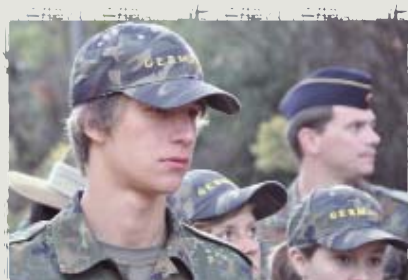
The Army Cadet Exchange was originally established by Colonel Lars-Gunnar Sölin of Sweden who is now the Honorary President.

"The Army Cadet Exchange gives the youth of our countries the chance to travel from one end of the world to the other and, as a result, build bridges of understanding in the leaders of the future," Colonel Sölin said.

"Our youth will take the places of leadership we now occupy, whether they want to or not."

He went on to say that no matter if their careers will be in business, politics or in the armed services, it would serve our countries well to have future leaders who can approach issues with an open mind and an appreciation for other national cultures and points of view.

In a letter sent to the headquarters Australian Army Cadets following the exchange, a parent wrote, "The influence on a young person's development and skills learnt can not be over emphasised. Luke has brought back to his family, his unit, his community and his college a glimpse of the world, its possibilities and its potential. The experience has lifted others in his unit to aspire for application next year and students at his college have become more aware of the cadet unit and all the benefits that come with being a member of the AAC – teamwork, leadership, personal development and challenging yourself to be the best you can be."



Young Endeavour

DEVELOPING TOMORROW'S LEADERS

Words Lieutenant Brooke Olds

If you saw them suspended 100 feet up a mast above the heavily rolling wooden deck of Sail Training Ship Young Endeavour, you'd be forgiven for thinking that the four dedicated Australian Army Cadets onboard were actually promising young sailors.

In September, cadets Warrant Officer Class Two Norman Hansen, Sergeants Shaun Washington and Kaitlyn Champion, and Lance Corporal Kirah Lynn Gustafson were selected to participate in a 12-day Young Endeavour voyage that had them sailing from Darwin to Broome past the spectacular and rugged Kimberley coastline.

"We visited King George River, Bigge Island and Yampi Sound," 17-year-old Sergeant Shaun Washington said.

"I especially loved Bigge Island because it was a good place to explore, with its aboriginal art and interesting surroundings."

Rather than just fostering sailors, the Young Endeavour Youth Scheme's mission is to provide young Australians with a unique, challenging and inspirational experience at sea that increases their self-awareness, develops their teamwork and leadership skills, and creates a strong sense of community responsibility. Sail training is the vehicle used to achieve this worthy mission.

"We learnt how to sail a tall ship, but we also learnt a lot about ourselves," Shaun said.

The Royal Australian Navy operates and maintains Young Endeavour on behalf of the young people of Australia. The program is designed to be upbeat, entertaining, flexible, energetic and fun.

Young Australians who join the ship are taught seaman-like skills including rope work, deck work, climbing the mast and, of course, sailing. But most importantly, the focus is on building teamwork and encouraging leadership.

"Before the trip, I expected working with complete strangers to be a challenge," Sergeant Kaitlyn Champion – who celebrated her 18th birthday during the voyage – said.

"But, before I knew it, we were working together as a team and talking as though we had known each other for years!"

The cadets enjoyed the voyage and the program immensely and were quick to sing its praises.

"This was a very worthwhile trip to be on and I highly recommend it to all young Australians," 18-year-old Warrant Officer Class Two Norman Hansen said.

Sixteen-year-old Lance Corporal Kirah Lynn Gustafson agreed. "It was one of the best experiences of my life!"

The four Australian Army Cadets from Darwin were sponsored by HQ NT AAC Battalion to undertake a voyage aboard Young Endeavour through the Young Endeavour Youth Scheme Scholarship Program.

Voyages on Young Endeavour are open to all Australians aged 16 to 23. For more information visit www.youngendeavour.gov.au



Australian Army Cadets Sergeant Kaitlyn Champion, Lance Corporal Kirah Lynn Gustafson, Warrant Officer Class Two Norman Hansen and Sergeant Shaun Washington stand on the bowsprit of Sail Training Ship Young Endeavour.



Members of Charlie Company, 24 Battalion, ham it up during downtime on the range – and enjoy the view from One Tree Hill in Singleton during their AFX 2009 (annual field exercise). Pics Pete Whitton

