



Pilgrims are schooled in the fine art of boomerang throwing at "Ellamara".



Pilgrims from Arundel-Brighton taking advantage of facilities at "Ellamara", (l-r), Peter Winstanley, Sean Cahill and Aidan Godwin.



Lucy Barley of "Ellamara" and Albano Ribeiro of Portugal.



Harri Goldsmith (left) and Helen Parsons of Arundel-Brighton with 'host mother' Pat Hopkins of Merriwa.

TASTING THE REAL AUSTRALIA

One of the pilgrims who stayed in the Upper Hunter remarked that he felt they were blessed to have a taste of country life, given that they would encounter city life during WYD Week. The centrepiece of the rural experience was a day at "Ellamara", north of Sandy Hollow. Sheep shearing, horse shoeing, boomerang throwing, didgeridoo playing and the skills of sheep dogs "Ronaldo" and "Sonny Bill" combined with a picnic lunch to show pilgrims sights that many Australians have perhaps not seen.

Sean Cahill, 38, of the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, UK, who was attending his fifth WYD, said that "Hospitality has been above average" and "lamingtons" had been a new taste sensation. Tim Tams were familiar but are known as "Penguins" back home.

Regional co-ordinator Leo Walsh, assistant principal at St Joseph's Aberdeen, said, "The Upper Hunter community has put on an entertaining and interesting event which has given both pilgrims and locals a real experience of the traditional lifestyle, skills and values of country people. It is easy to see how the church has flourished for generations in this beautiful and welcoming environment."

Owner of "Ellamara" Penelope Young, who opened her home and property to the pilgrims and their hosts, told visitors that she was not a Catholic but belonged to "the church of Australia" and wished to encourage all to live together in harmony. The atmosphere of friendship and warmth that prevailed indicated that her hope was fulfilled.

Tracey Edstein

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