In a newspaper article I wrote in another lifetime while travelling as a journalist across the USA, I described a road trip as follows...

Looking back, it was not the wind in my hair, or the miles trudged into my shoes. It was not in a night on Kilimanjaro or a month in the Sahara. I did not find it bathing in the sacred rivers of the Ganges, or trekking the snow-capped peaks of Nepal. It was not beneath seas of the Atlantic, or in the hands of the old lady who mended my shirts in Peru. It was not in my beaten up pack, or my bamboo tattoos from the Amazon. Sadly it was not in the arms of the goddess I loved for a week in Wantanenagro. No, road trip lay in my soul. In those beautiful moments of intimate solitude which magically appeared in the most unexpected places. It was the joyous reconnections with friends. It lay in the notion of no fixed plans and the glory of wandering with no particular place to go.

With this in mind, this year’s road trip led us not out onto the open road, rather, down the Monash Freeway to ‘Liam’s’ Beach House. Ever since Liam first uttered those immortal words; ‘why don’t we all go down to my beach house,’ it has been inevitable that we would as a school head down there one day. And so as Melbourne turned on three of the most beautiful days you could imagine we all boarded Mumford (Our ‘new’ bus) and headed south.

What awaited us was something of a dream. Rather than trying to describe it inadequately, I’ll provide a few photos instead...
Novememories

My inspiration.....

As work submissions close for the year I am able to reflect on what an amazing turnaround so many of our kids have made this year. I am in awe of not only the VCE students, but our Yr 7, 9 and 10 students as well, who have all made positive changes to their work habits.

They are all facing a challenge that people in their lives or past experiences have said they can’t do. A challenge they are not sure they are up to.

They tackle it in an environment that does not shelter them from the real world. They do not have the momentum of up to 200 other students studying the same thing. For many of them they are the only one studying that subject at the school. Finding the motivation, the resources to complete it, and the time management of tasks is left up to them as much as possible.

How many of us as adults can say we have done this lately? When have we last faced down a demon and step after step over the course of one or two years, continued to stare it down whilst the thoughts of ‘I’m not good enough.’ ‘I don’t deserve this’ ‘It’s too hard’ threatened to steer us off our course?

Well our students have done it. Your kids have done it. They have come out on top, against the odds. They have set an example for younger students to follow. And with each year, they wear a path that makes it easier for others to overcome their fears and achieve their goals.

What more can you ask from a person?
Final weeks of term

Students are expected to attend as usual for the final two weeks of term.

Term concludes on Wednesday 11th of December at 12:30pm.

Until this time we will be running a number of activities including photo day, personal development, the school bus makeover, preparations for VCE dinner and speech evening, aptitude testing and career support, technology returns, media production, final DECV submissions and Christmas crafts.

It is also an important social time, with more group tasks and fun activities.

Events

Please be aware of the following events:

VCE Dinner
The VCE dinner is a chance for the school community to recognise the hard work and achievements of the students studying VCE. We would love to see all the VCE students and their families attend this event.

Speech Evening
Speech evening is a chance for us to recognise the achievements of all of our students and to reflect on what we have learned as well as all the fun we have shared. This is a chance for parents to see what their children have been getting up to and see the steps they have taken this year.

Photo Day
This is one of the most important days in our calendar. This is a chance for the whole school to get together and to create a memory of this special part of their teenage years. It is important that all students attend this day because we have all played an important role in each other’s lives this year, and these photos will be a reminder of that.
**DECV**

DECV submissions are now closed, however there are still two weeks of resubmission during report writing. This means students may be asked to resubmit work that was not to a satisfactory level. Students will be informed by their DECV teachers and by Kate if this is the case.

**Reports**

This year you will receive two reports on your child’s progress. JCS will provide assessment and feedback on your child’s progress in personal development, attendance, camp participation, community contribution and overall academic performance in relation to their abilities and progress over the year. You will also receive a report from DECV which will comment on their individual achievement and progress in individual subjects.

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**2013 Road Trip**

Swimming with wild dolphins was the most amazing thing I’ve done in my entire life. The fact that wild animals were quite literally a few centimetres away from me made me feel like the world wasn’t so bad. Such peaceful creatures managed to spend time with things that hunted them and destroyed their lives. Although they may be dangerous, I had never felt so safe in my life. I feel like I experienced a once in a lifetime opportunity without forcing it and without expecting it. It just happened. I feel so lucky to have been able to be where I was at that particular time. I have never been so grateful for the life that I have and seeing these creatures swim among us made me realise that life is such a beautiful thing. That through all the bad things, there will always be the amazing. To experience that shows me that true happiness does exist. I have never once been so content with life, or myself. I’m so lucky to have experienced what I did, because I know I will probably never experience that kind of happiness and freedom ever again.

*Ash Doherty*
good times
good weather
good friends
good year!