

The School for Field Studies News from the Field, March 4, 2008

By Jackie Dearborn, '09 **(reporting from Australia)**

Sundays are our free days during the week. This past Sunday we chose to go on an all day outing to different waterfalls in the area. On the way to the furthest waterfall, we had the opportunity to stop at the Atherton Tablelands lookout, which was absolutely stunning. We could see for miles (or, I suppose, kilometers) and many pictures were taken. After another half an hour or so, we arrived at our first destination. After a two kilometer hike (which involved crossing a "creek" that was much more like a river due to all the rainfall) we arrived at Nandroya falls. Nothing could have prepared me for this spectacular site. One of the tallest waterfalls in Queensland, the sounds of crashing water resounded off of the canyon walls. Within minutes, everyone had on their bathing suits and had jumped into the water. Swimming in the waterfall was definitely one of the highlights of this experience thus far. Whether trying to get as close to the actual waterfall as possible or just floating in the water gazing at the waterfall and surrounding rainforest, that hour was stunning, breathtaking, and absolutely incredible. I had to remind myself that this was real, that I really was swimming in a waterfall in Australia surrounded by a tropical rainforest.

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After that waterfall we went to Mungalli Dairy for lunch. As an avid cheese lover, this was like heaven for me. A plate of fresh cheese, chutney, bread, and salad with a glass of milk to drink was simply marvelous. Following lunch, we had the opportunity to go on the waterfall circuit, which was a drive to three different waterfalls that were all within close proximity to one another. Each of these was just as stunning as Nandroya. To me, waterfalls are some of the most beautiful things on the planet.

By the end of the day I was exhausted but in a state of utter bliss, and the fantastic part is that I have had that feeling a lot since arriving here. Every day brings new adventures and I am enjoying every minute of it.