UOW (Moss Vale) student Sam Goodfellow joined a group of other history students earlier this year to experience the Gallipoli Peninsula and the Ottoman Empire first hand. It was a fulfilling and unforgettable experience.

The best 8 credit points you’ll ever get at Uni

story by Sam Goodfellow

The 2009 Gallipoli Tour was an opportunity of a life time. Filled with experiences and sites which descriptions from me can hardly do justice, the tour was the best 8 credit points offered at University. There were too many highlights for me to discuss in this small article however I would like to highlight a few.

Prior to departure, the group met for lectures and tutorials which were basically a cramming course on the Gallipoli campaign as well as teaching us about the culture and the sparse history of Turkey. The classes only made us more excited for the adventure we were about to undertake.

As the only Moss Vale student I initially didn’t know any others in the group, but once we met up, that all changed very quickly.

The first few days we spent in Istanbul, seeing the sites, bartering with the locals and meeting a whole bunch of people who genuinely wanted to hear about your life. The sites were spectacular, however any photos or descriptions just do not do them justice. They just have to be seen to be believed. The Turkish people love Aussies and we did not come across anyone who had a negative thing to say about the Aussies.

After our time in Istanbul, we set off on a six hour drive to Canakkale (which is a town near the Gallipoli peninsula). From there we caught the ferry each morning to the Peninsula. The atmosphere on the Peninsula was incredible, after doing all the research prior; being there in the flesh was just the icing on the cake.
I think that this was the most moving thing about the tour. The opportunity to study what happened and then see the place for itself really instils an understanding of the occurrences at Gallipoli.

REFLECTIVE: Sam Goodfellow sitting with “his soldier”, Corporal Fred Crisp in the Australian section at war memorial at Gallipoli

Each student was required to research a digger and an area and then present their finding to the group. This part of the tour was the most emotional as the information researched really comes off the page and many students reacted strongly. My soldier was Corporal Fred Crisp. He was my age and lived several kilometres from my home in Moss Vale before dying in battle at Gallipoli in 1915. The fact he was my age and from my district made it all the more real.

To cap off the tour there was a final dinner which I would have to say was another highlight of the trip. There was fine food, dancers and then a singer who can sing in 42 different languages. If you don’t believe me, that’s fair enough, I didn’t at the time. During the night I was dragged on stage. Three of the performers made me lie down and they placed a wooden plank over my lower torso. They then stood up and placed knives in their mouths. The first performer flicked the knife out of his mouth and onto the board. He placed another one in his mouth and they all then had a go. Horrifying, but definitely made a memory I will never forget.

As previously mentioned, the trip was incredible and a small article is not going to be enough to persuade people into it. So if anyone has any questions about the tour, please do not hesitate to ask me.