

## Burrum Heads Camp 28th May - 3rd June 2017

After many years absence from Burrum Heads (due to adverse reports from the previous camp) the Committee decided we should revisit and hold another camp at this site. We were on arrival pleasantly surprised by all the improvements that had been carried out to the Hillcrest Holiday Park and the Burrum Heads boat launching site.

At this camp we had 34 paddlers who paddled one or more days and 6 paddlers who paddled all the scheduled paddles. Also attending the camp were 9 wives or partners.

On our day of arrival (Sunday) after settling in and finding out who else was there and exploring the Holiday Park and Burrum Heads we met at 5pm to watch the sun set over the Burrum River and find out where we going to paddle on Monday.

Monday's paddle - Burrum Heads to Buxton and return. With 25 paddlers present we set out from adjacent to Burrum Head's boat ramp and paddled to Buxton for morning tea, then return to the boat ramp paddling a distance of 16.2kms. The route taken was on the right hand bank upstream and on the left hand bank downstream. The weather was ideal, warm and sunny with only a slight breeze (sailing was out) which meant we all had to paddle hard against the tide to get home.

Tuesday's paddle - Pacific Haven boat ramp to Howard boat ramp and return. With 15 paddlers and a late start we set in convey from Burrum Heads to the Pacific Haven boat ramp. (Others attending the camp decided instead of paddling the Burrum River to go cycling to Toogoom and return.) The paddlers on arrival at the launch site found it to be very muddy and unattractive for launching. After a short debate we decided to launch and commence our paddle upstream.



After just under 2 hours paddling we reached the Howard boat ramp and most stopped there for a late lunch. The rest continued further upstream towards the Burrum River Dam No 1, some making it and then returning to the lunch site.



Following lunch we all returned to Pacific Haven, paddling a total distance of 28.5kms, arriving there about 4:30 pm to be met by swarms of midges and sandflies. Many of us were bitten very badly and

itched for days after whilst one of us required an ambulance trip to Harvey Bay Hospital for a checkup. The weather was again fine and sunny with only a slight breeze.

Wednesday's paddle - Burrum Heads to Woodgate and return. The day 20 paddlers were waiting for, a chance to do an open water paddle, a return distance of 23.4 km. The weather was again fine with a slight wind to assist the 17 who had and used their sails during part of the journey. The beach landing was easy with only very small waves (mostly less than 0.3m in height). No incidents during the paddle, just pleasant memories.



Tonight was the Club's Dinner at the local bowls club, the location being organised by the non paddlers. One of the conditions for the location was that it had to have good large TV screens as many of us after dinner watched the 1st State of Origin match.

Thursday's paddle - Upstream on Beelbi Creek from Toogum and return, total distance 22.7kms. 27 paddlers launched from the Toogum boat ramp on a mid level tide and attempted to paddle upstream as far as possible and then return. For the 4.5kms of the journey after paddling and walking their kayaks through the shallow sand banks (many times) conditions improved when the creek became deep, narrow and winding. The morning tea site was located on the creek bank adjacent to the Harvey Bay-Burrum Heads road bridge. On the return we had a candidate for the Christmas turtle award when he caught a gust of wind whilst under sail. Also who towed who today????



Friday's paddle - Lake Lenthall. Today we finally had wind which pleased many of the 18 kayakers present. Leaving the launch site adjacent to the dam wall we paddled/sailed in a westerly direction circumnavigating part of the lake for a distance of 19.2kms. At times we were in open choppy water and in other in sheltered narrow headwater creeks. We were surprised to see cattle on one of the islands in the middle of the lake, wondering how they reached the island. After the paddle many of those who were staying the night at Burrum heads met and had another excellent dinner together at the restaurant at Toogum.



Saturday - homeward bound after another very successful and memorable camp - yes, we will return one day to Burrum Heads.

Report by Jim Blyth and photos supplied by Bob Whiting.