

EVANS HEAD CAMP REPORT -

Feb 22ND - March 1ST 2013

Submitted by Sue Alcock.

Photos courtesy of Brian M & Sue



As we drove south along the Pacific Hwy, through torrential rain, 75km per hour winds, flooded roads and backwash from the semi-trailers, all we could think of "what on earth are we doing driving through this severe storm to go to a kayak camp" at Evans Head, NSW. But fourteen keen kayakers braved the elements and made it to our destination. We unpacked in the pouring rain, and listened to the roar of the surf in the background. Needless to say we all looked forward to a drink at happy hour at the 'surf shack' where we discussed what waterways were still possible to go kayaking along over the next few days. Our paddles were limited to several different paddles on the Evans River, another one in the Bundjalung National Park at Jerusalem Creek and one at North Creek, Ballina.

While the flood waters were still flowing pretty swiftly we chose to paddle down-stream on the Evans R, which certainly made for an easy paddle, but not for Bob and Evan who turned around and paddled all the way back to their cars, against the flood tide! On another occasion we paddled upstream to Oyster Creek where some folk experienced the faster flowing waters below three fallen logs. With the adrenalin pumping we all managed to turn without anyone taking a quick dip in the waters. Highlights of the Evans R paddles were its natural beauty, the bird and wildlife, where some were fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of the occasional wallaby along the riverbank. Of particular interest was the historical background of the Bundjalung Aboriginal people and the remains of the natural ironstone barrier, where, over the past thousands of years they used to cross the river.

Photo of Umi leaving the rapids



While the kayakers were out on the waterways, the non-paddling partners enjoyed a coffee at the various cafes in 'downtown' Evans Head. Here is a note Lorna wrote for this camp report

"Evans Head township proved to have an interesting mix of small shops and good coffee cafés, which provided for enjoyment & companionship for non-paddling partners. The rendezvous at 10.30 each morning, continues a tradition, which as at Chinderah, Noosa and Brunswick Heads camps, has been a special way of getting to know the girls who don't paddle. I hastened to add that the group (of up to eight) do not need shops and cafes, as the gazebos or camp kitchen areas of caravan parks in which we've stayed, have been good spots where we have gathered with coffee cup and 'bickie' in hand, to enjoy good company and fun.



Reflections on the Evans River - Courtesy Brian

I must mention the great 'happy hours' we had each evening, where Sue gave the details of the next days paddle this was a good way for the partners to have some insight into the fun that the kayakers could expect .The evening out at Evans Head Bowling Club, where we ate delicious chinese food (so good some went back a second time) was enjoyed by all including Isle, a young Belgium lass who joined the kayak trips and the Senior's at happy hour.

The only disappointment of the Evans camp was the poor weather, as we could not enjoy the beach or bikes rides, but it did not spoil our fellowship. So partners of SSRKC members, do come to future camps and join us. You will be quickly included and welcomed.

*Thanks to Sue for planning and conducting a special club event."
Lorna Whittle*



One of the highlights for me of the Evans Head camp was "a paddle along Jerusalem Creek an opportunity to enjoy a beautiful and secluded waterway flanked by national park on the northern side" and a spit the other side where we could "hear the regular sound of the waves crashing" (The Paddlers Guide to NSW) We were initially concerned about the flood waters, but had no trouble at all paddling to where the creek meets the sea, to have morning tea and return. A short detour took us into a natural dark, coffee rock bowl where we observed an inspiring tea-tree waterfall. It is actually hard to tell, the in the photo, just which is a tree and which is the brownish water but a good memory for those who experienced this pristine spot.



A special thank you to all those who supported me in decision making and paddling support responsibilities, in some challenging waterways it was greatly appreciated!

