

Yamba Kayak Camp – 22 - 29 February 2024

Attendees 8 paddlers and 2 supporters – Barry and Charmaine Renaud, Graham Mills, Margaret and Frank Micale, Rob Nelson and Vicki, Greg Cushion, Judy Williams and Bill Murray

Day 1 Yamba Kayak Camp

Clear skies all the drive as we meet the mighty Clarence River and the amazing bridge built over it.

All paddlers arrived safely with 5pm happy hour set to discuss the next days of paddling.



Day 2 Esk Island Tour

Tide 8.42 H 1.72, 8am on the water - 19km

Note:Tidal Range was 1.20m each day

This was Day One of which promised to be a splendid paddling holiday. Contrary to some weather forecasts, however, it was a beautiful day with bright blue skies and fluffy white clouds.

The Blue Dolphin Holiday Resort was situated right on the banks of the Clarence River.

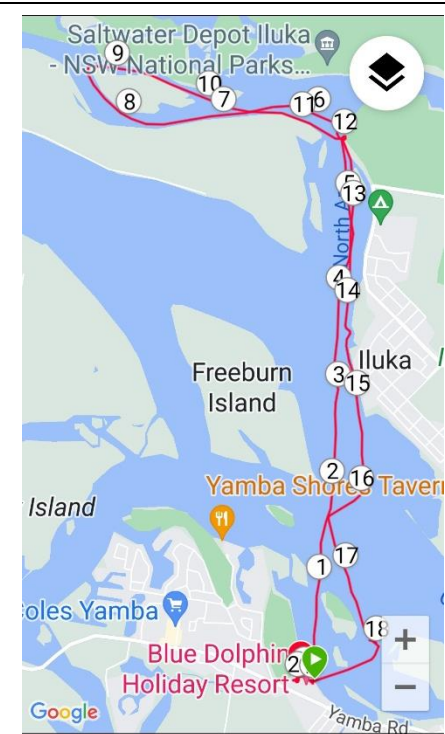
The pod of eight launched at 8am and paddled 2.5km toward Iluka traveling East of Goodwood Island. It then made its way to the middle of the north side of this island whilst going past Nihill Island. The pod then clockwise circumnavigated Esk Island.

The environs in which we paddled was truly splendidly scenic – See Att . Islands everywhere with water expanses interleaved between the land masses. These islands had lovely romantic names such as Goodwood, Yargai, Freeburn, Thorny, Palmers, Romiaka, Sleeper, Arael, Rabbit, Whyna.

Smoko was had at the Illuka Nature Reserve, old ferry crossing. The scenic beauty of the environs in which the pod travelled was really enthralling. Due to favourable tide flows very good paddling speeds were achieved.

The return trip also had tidal flows in the pod's favour with speeds sometimes in excess of 10 kph.

One interesting feature of the paddle was that due to the many islands (see above) and water areas, it was quite difficult for the “geographically challenged”: person such as this scribe to work out where the launch point was. I usually rely on a GPS with waypoint. However, the way-point merely gives the direction in a straight line to the point-of-interest. With so many land masses between a particular pod’s position and the GPS it **is not that useful**. So when I remarked to a fellow pod member that the launch point was only x kms away as *the crow flies* he was non-committal. Then when I repeated this remark several times, in understandable exasperation he strongly remarked “if I get my hands on that blinking crow I will strangle it..”. This off-the-cuff witty remark gave rise to empathetic chuckles by members of the pod who by this time had paddled over 15 kms and were getting tired.





The overall trip distance was almost **19 kms**.

This was a splendid Day One to start off the very enjoyable paddling holiday at Yamba with nature plentiful of kangaroos, dolphins, stingrays and eagles along the journey. Our biggest challenge was navigating the rock walls which protect Iluka and Yamba as the tide was high and we could not see them.



Back at the caravan park we gathered together Happy Hour and a delightful BBQ together.

RLN 28Feb24



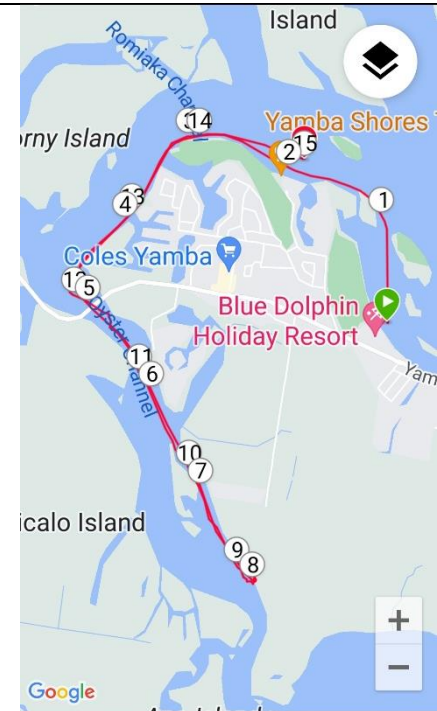
Day 3 Travel West - Clarence River into the Oyster Channel to Carrs Drive return

Tide 9.16am H1.74, 8am on the water - 16km

Padding day 2 rose with overcast and humid conditions but beautiful cloud formations and silver skies. The group left from the Blue Dolphin Tourist Park at 8am for a **16km** round trip to the end of Carrs Drive.

We passed Lightning Point; many beautiful riverside homes; Yamba Shores Tavern; Thorny, Romiaka, Micalo and Periko Islands; and under the Oyster Channel Bridge. The trip upriver was on an oncoming tide and eagles and brahmny kites were a treat to see.

Frank joined us for morning tea and to pick up Margaret (sparing her hip injury an arduous return journey). Her coconut biscuits were a great hit to replenish reserves! The remainder of the group headed back at the (almost) turn of the tide.



The hot, humid conditions made for warm paddle and despite our best efforts to encourage the breeze with our sails, little was to be found. A dolphin provided a pleasant distraction and a brief sandbank stop helped to stretch legs ahead of the last 2kms. An enjoyable and not too difficult paddle taking in just a small stretch of the 400km Clarence River.

Once back at the caravan park it was ladies afternoon. Traveling by car to Maclean discovering Devonshire tea in



an amazing old guest house before driving to Ulmarra a riverport town with quaint buildings and shops. A delightful time for all, while the men went to the Pacific Hotel for a quenching ale.

JW



Day 4 Short Paddle for a few?

Tide 9.48 H 1.73, 9 am on the water -18 km

A short paddle for 4 takers is was said before leaving the shore.

However, an 18 km around Thorny Island with sails up and strong winds in the face was a tough paddle back. Paddlers were glad they did it however the body did feel the effect. At least they slept well.

Bill had a slippery visitor to his camp site in the afternoon and hoping he did not return during the night.

To finish the day a great dinner for all camp goers at Yamba Shores Tavern on the Clarence River with a lovely sunset for all.

CR





Yamba Shores Tavern on the mighty Clarence River

Day 5 West on the Clarence

Tide 10.21 H1.70, 9am on the water – 20 km

Seven paddlers paddled the mighty Clarence River west from the caravan park. Great tides assisting in pushing us 11 km an hour. Completing the western paddle by sightseeing Brown Rock caravan park and the Goodwood Wharf Jetty which use to be used for quarantine stocking boats for Norfolk Island apparently.

Morning tea break was held east of the Goodwood Wharf Jetty in a nice sandy inlet amongst the cane fields with Frank joining us with homemade Monte Carlos for us all.

The return paddle was a little slower even though the tide did change, we checked out the Big 4 caravan park boat ramp on the southern side before



continuing the paddle home.

Once back the cleanup began for all paddlers, as we all left the next day.

A quenching beer was on the cards at the Pacific Hotel with a magnificent view and cheeky stories told by the men and one lady chauffeur.

Our last happy hours was enjoyed by the camp kitchen and everyone thankful for camp good weather and wonderful company.

CR

3:07:58

Time

6.3 kph

Avg Speed

37 m

Total Ascent

