

Maria Island February 5/6, 2015

This was basically a final training paddle for the Flinders Island trip in 4 weeks. I wanted them to start thinking about food and water and how much they would need for a week and whether it would fit in.

Monday: Toby came down from Launceston, and Richard and John from Hobart. We met at Earlham at 10am and probably started paddling about 11. I used both sails all the way and barely had to paddle – a nice SE wind. The others didn't put sails up till in more sheltered waters as you start to enter Chinaman's. Toby is using a sail he made yesterday, but intends to make a better one for the trip. A bit over an hour to Encampment Cove in Chinaman's Bay where we set up camp and lunched. Richard mentioned that he started to feel slightly sea-sick as we approached Chinaman's. After lunch we walked to French's farm for a look, and then back via the convict cells. John had not been here before, and Toby said that he had never been to the cells although had done several trips out here.



We loaded the kayaks up where the cars were so we could have a practice carrying them a long distance down to the beach









We picked up a lot of gum branches on the way back to camp. The wind was still quite fresh and a bit chilly but eased off a little after dark and we had a good fire. Toby cooked on his Trangia but Richard and John cooked a big steak in a frypan on the fire (they did manage to drop it into the coals one time). A lot of Wombats about. Another couple in a small tent there, and a couple of ladies arrived late and we think they camped in the hut.





Toby slept out in the open without a tent and John and Richard put theirs up nearby.

Lot of boats in the bay but way across the other side. There was very faint music coming from one of them but barely

noticeable. However the woman camped nearby apparently went up to the hut to see if the sound was coming from there, and then came down ready to abuse us if we were playing it. She was a bit surprised it was coming from so far away, but quite irate about it and used the f word. I showed the others the strap sewn on the top of my hat to take a flasher and suggested they all do the same – I have 3 flashers as used on bikes. Toby had brought one of the old flashers that I used to make 18 years ago and with the original 9V battery – it still worked but very dim.



Tuesday: I had said I wanted to paddle at 9 to head up to Darlington but we were all ready by 8.30 so left after Toby's porridge, and John's weetbix in a leaky ziplock baggy.



Richard demonstrated his sail to one of the other campers before we left.

Almost no wind so a leisurely paddle following the shoreline. Richard was dragging his feet all the way. 2 hours 40 minutes to Darlington where I mentioned I'd like to leave at 1pm. The others walked up and inspected Darlington including the camp ground while I sewed up Toby's sail which was falling apart where the batten sticks out. A lot of tourists arriving by the ferries.



After lunch we left at 12.30 and headed across for Lachlan Island – unseen from here till we got a lot closer. The forecast had been for NE winds and a sea breeze so I was expecting a good sail back to Earlham. We had almost no wind and later it did come in from the south and then the SE – a very weak sea breeze and a very tight sail against it. We went round the eastern end of Lachlan Island where it was quite choppy off the point and I was surprised John kept his sail up through it. Richard took his down while he rounded the point. We paddled 29km today.



We carried the kayaks up to the boom gate one at a time, and then from there to where the cars were. I'd made 4 handle that could be quickly attached to the front and rear of the two plastic kayaks so that 4 people could carry them. Yesterday we carried the kayaks from the cars down to the main beach, and today we landed there and carried them up to the cars. All good practice for Flinders. My kayak was probably the heaviest but I did have everything in there whereas the others had only brought some of their food and water.





Toby and I got stuck behind a mob of sheep for a km or two.



So Richard and John had just about finished their first beer by the time we got to the pub at Orford.

