

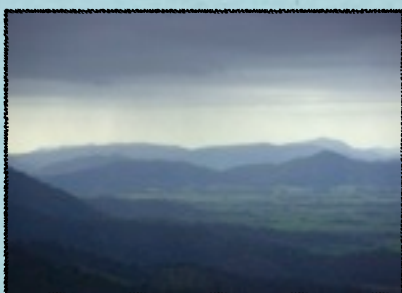
NORTHERN ADVENTURE

NOWAK TRAVELOGUE | APRIL, MAY | 2012

1770

We had planned to stay another day at Eungella, but the cold, overcast weather returned and changed our plan. Yesterday we spent the day traveling. We didn't quite make it to 1770 but about midday today, we arrived and are now camped right on the water. The sun is shining and the seagulls are begging to be fed. The weather has improved but there is a strong wind. This is really a delightful place to do nothing. The 1770 Camping Ground fronts the beach and allows fire pits to be enjoyed on the sand in front of the camps. The little kids next to us are having a ball. Very few camping grounds still retain this accessibility to the beach and/or the freedom to camp in this way. We love it here. This is our third visit.

Our trip is now essentially at and end. We will spend two days here, doing nothing much and then make a dash for home and back to reality.



CLOUDED IN The view from our campsite at Eungella was totally awe inspiring. The trouble was that the same conditions that gave us this great view also resulted in a great drop in temperature.



EAT HEALTHY We try to eat healthy food and prefer wholemeal bread. Imagine our shock when we asked for a wholemeal loaf at a bakery in Walkerston only to be told that we would have to order one for the next day or wait till Saturday. We deduced that the locals only eat "healthy" on the weekend.



THE SKY IS FALLING We settled down at 1770 to admire the sea view. Clunk! Evidently the tree we were camped under had been shedding nuts for the last couple of days. Its not a nice feeling constantly looking up to see where the next bomb would likely hit.

CAMPING GROUNDS



Holidaying in a campervan has been a very enjoyable experience for us. We have spent most of our evenings in caravan parks because there have not been that many chances to “free camp”. In some places it was illegal and in other places it was dangerous. On the whole we have had good experiences - until last night.

After a long day of driving and some lengthy delays due to road works we had no choice but to take a site just out of Rockhampton located right next to the highway and a very busy railway line. We could see (and hear) the large truck traffic but we did not reckon on the scale of rail traffic at night up this way. It is coal country you see and the area is the hub for coal exports to Asia. All night, every 30 minutes, the clanging rattle and squeak of train carriages kept us awake. In between this din the trucks filled in the void. It was horrible.

Tonight, camping right next to the sea at 1770, the loud noises we can hear are leaves rustling in the wind and waves lapping the shore. Then there is an occasional THUMP of coconuts landing. There are no prizes for guessing which we prefer.

Reflections



OUR OVERVIEW

It is a hell of a long way!! However, I'm glad I have sampled what the north has to offer. Some of it was magic and some of it was just hot and dirty. An air conditioned van would have helped a lot. We are pleased nevertheless that we went when we did. The consequence was that we were never crowded out of caravan parks or the few tours that we wanted to go on. We regularly had the walks to ourselves. We underestimated the problems of traveling on unmade roads with our light weight van. As a consequence we will have to do a little bit of repair when we get home. To be as free a birds in the north you really need a serious 4WD. If you stay on the bitumen all is well. Much can be seen and enjoyed in this way. Taking our boat was a waste of time. Because most of the waterways have a croc problem, we only got use it once. Our bikes were a great asset however. The purchase of the audio books, Kings in Grass Castles and We of the Never Never, was a great idea. They, together with downloads of Conversations (an ABC radio production), were great time fillers for the long legs on the way up and spots in between. If you have not read (or listened to) Kings in Grass Castles, we recommend it highly.

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- * **Fog Dam** -- beautiful “Lord of the Rings” scenery
- * **Katherine Gorge** walk to Paddy’s Lookout and the Southern Rock Hole.
- * **Amalia Gorge Walk** - one of our best
- * **Lake Argyle**
- * **Darwin** was a pleasant surprise (as was **Cairns**)
- * Canoeing on **Lawn Hill Gorge**
- * Flight over the **Bungle Bungles**
- * The area around **Lake Tinaroo** (inland from Cairns)
- * Seeing Saturn at the Cosmos Observatory

