

Overland Trek, Tasmania, March 2015

by Susan Rogers

This was the most challenging, hardest and brilliant tramp that I had ever undertaken. It was not the physical challenge so much as the mental aspect of this tramp. "*Sometime the thing that is holding you back...is all in your head*" Anon. This was very true for me and once I had conquered this fear the rest of the tramp was much easier.

Day 1 Ronny Creek to Waterfall Hut - a hard slog up to Marion's Lookout with a 16.5kg pack. A good steady climb and unfortunately no summit as the weather was rain, rain and then some more rain! This was a tough day physically and mentally.



Day 2 Waterfall Hut to Windermere Hut - short day 3hrs only, mainly raining with some sunshine briefly, saw lots of pademelon wallabies. My toughest day mentally, in that the realisation of how alone we were and what we were undertaking hit me today. I realised how much trouble you could be in if you are not prepared and that even if prepared you can still get into trouble!

Day 3 Windermere to Pelion Hut 6 1/2hrs walk today. Lovely weather - rain, sleet, rain and a tramp through button grass and then forest that was so dark it would have been easy to lose the track. Stopped to eat some snacks and nearly ate a leech thinking it was a raisin - thank heavens I realised! Today was a very long wet day - everything was damp. Pelion Hut was a lovely big hut with lots of room. Coming into Pelion Hut there was no view due to the mist, fog and rain, however the sun came out later and the view was outstanding.



Day 4 Pelion Hut to Kia Ora Hut We tramped up to the saddle where, if the weather is kind, you can climb Mt Oakleigh 4-6hrs, Mt Ossa 4-5hrs or Mt Pelion 2hrs. We discussed climbing Mt Ossa, however it sleeted, then snowed and then sleeted again. No summits for us and we trudged on. The private walkers tried for the summit (we found out later only went to the first ridge and returned as weather too bad). The fun game today that we played was "which pocket did I put that in!" This was also mud day, mud, mud and more mud! And the heater did not work in the hut. This hut was very small, cramped and not a lot of space at all.

Day 5 Kia Ora Hut to Bert Nichols Hut, A frosty start to the day and I could not feel my feet for the first 20 minutes! More mud today however the first sunny day so spirits were very high. Nice tramp today - a gradual climb between valleys of spectacular mountains. This was also waterfall day, and we met up with the private walkers again (their guides gave us a fresh loaf of bread to share with our hut group - was



excellent). Bert Nichols Hut is the best hut - it had a drying spot to hang wet gear and boots, a large kitchen area and a wonderful view of the Du Cane Range. We had our fresh bread following tea and everyone was happy.

Day 6 Bert Nichols - Narcissus - Echo Point A long walk today as we decided to trudge on to Echo Point to make our last day not so long, as we did the full walk and did not get the ferry back. DOC are currently upgrading Narcissus Hut, lovely spot near the top end of Lake St Clair. Not a nice section of the track - lots of slippery tree roots, more mud and lots of leeches. Echo Point hut sleeps 4, very small and not nice - rats - so we slept in our Bivvy Sacks on the beach. That was very nice. Cooking breakfast in the rain was not, but our last day so who cared?



Day 7 Echo Point – Yes, we sang the song! It was a damp & humid start and more rain and more mud - just when you thought the mud had finished it had not!. Leeches today, lots of leeches, I am so casual now about them!. When we finished Annette and I cried just with the relief of finishing this tramp, in one piece and still smiling!. The elation of what we had done was overwhelming...and if we had the time we would have turned around and re-done the tramp!



Lessons learnt

- take a pack of cards
- merino should be firm fitting to work properly
- bring chux not body wipes
- you have fun tramping even in the rain, sleet and mud
- buy new sleeping bag
- buy waterproof pack cover (to keep pack from getting wet and heavy)
- only 1 blister (small and not bad) and 2 purple toe nails! Not bad!

Photos 1 Start of the over land trek, Photo 2 finishing the trek, Photo 3 view from Bert Nichols hut, Photo 4 Bivvy sacs & Photo 5 view from Pelion Hut