

Kokoda Trek Report - 16 Apr 13 - Andrew Johnson

06/05/2013

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This was my 2nd ANZAC Day trip, and my 10th Trek overall, two great milestones for me!



This year was a group of 8 alpha males and a trainee Guide, Andrew Flanagan (if you can't book a trip with me at any point, I would highly recommend you put it off till the next year and still get me!, but seriously, I can't believe the quality of guide that NoRoads has, all five I walked with this year, just brilliant!)

Right from the outset, this busy period of the season lived up to its reputation and packs were offloaded in random order in Port Moresby to be further randomly sent to Popenetta & Kokoda over the next 24 hours. Would we let a little thing like no tents, cooking gear etc., slow US down?, no way!, so we scrounged and borrowed and got to Deniki first night as planned.

With everything then with us by the end of the second day, trekking got into full swing and we jostled with other groups for the lead, for the significant sites and for the campsites. In the process we made a few friends and we hope no enemies.

First side trip to Myola2 this time, given we had a strong group, and we really wanted to see the Kittyhawk crash site. Flanagan told the story with so much enthusiasm that he featured in the poem by our resident poet Steve that night. This poem is to be released after MA15+ classification confirmed!

Was worth the effort and may feature in my future treks, IF you are a strong group.

Menari saw our first Mankini run (posted elsewhere in Facebook under my name) which left everyone rolling in laughter, none more so than Tobias who was awarded this functional piece of hiking gear at the end of the trek. Reward (major reward) is available to anyone who gets a picture of him in it.

Finishing at Owers is always special, and no exception this time as we all come to that realisation of a mammoth effort completed and a far greater appreciation of those who went before us. Dinner with the whole crew and given we ran three concurrent groups, the porters chorus was just magnificent.

Dawn Service at Bomana confirmed it all again, very moving. Most impressive was the Blackhawk fly-over and our own GG her Exc Quentin Bryce with her message and that she jumped onto one of the Hawks to get to Isurava GG? Stands for Go Girl!!

Finishing it all off was the yacht club where the fearless guide dared not tread but not for obvious reasons. He rested until the first flight home then got taken directly to Hospital for a little surgery. Kokoda claims yet another 'gut' wound but I survived. Sadly Wozza did not survive the yacht club and we got only fleeting glimpses of this man as we journeyed home. It also claimed an infected shin, so remember everyone, it's the tropics so blast cuts with everything you've got!!

Thanks to Sean for his bucket list, choosing NoRoads and bringing his mates along. Thanks to Jeffo, our 68 yr old with the heart of a 30yr old, who kept up with his boy Courtney all the way. And thanks to all the team, trekkers, porters & support staff for making this yet another life changing experience.

Andrew Johnson
Expedition Guide
No Roads Expeditions
ajohnson@noroads.com.au



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Comments

Courtney Smith

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Great Trip. Thanks to Andrew(s) for the experience.

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