

# Kokoda Trek Report - 17 Jun 13 - Barry Jenks

01/07/2013

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Hi all, just arrived back from my first trek for the year, 17th to 26th June 2013. We were just a small crew of 5 trekkers plus me and the porters. I have to say, it was so nice managing a small group through the chaos that is Moresby Domestic Airport.

We had a very uneventful flight to Popendetta and even took off and landed a little earlier than scheduled. In fact we found ourselves loitering around the front door of the Popendetta Store waiting for it to open for the day. Moving on without a visit to the shop was out of the question because I'd left my fishing tackle back in Melbourne. After ten minutes in the store we had everything we needed and headed off on that truck ride to Kokoda. Surprise, surprise, the road was pretty dry and the trip seemed shorter and more pleasant than usual. Also good to see a couple of new bridges are up and running. Kokoda greeted us with nice hot conditions and a War Museum which was open for business.

Everything went to schedule and we arrived at Deniki in time to set up camp for the evening. Of course the 4.00 o'clock down pour didn't disappoint. We were lucky enough to have a full moon and clearing conditions so the view from Deniki was amazing. Another thing that was amazing was the cooking. We were very fortunate to have porter Scott as our dedicated cook and he set a very high standard from the first meal and maintained it to the very end. He is sensational in fact. I hereby request Scott's company for all of my treks.

Our experience at Isurava the following day was pretty special. The inspiration behind this particular trek was Danny who brought along his son Simon, step son Aaron, son in law Mark and mate David. Sadly, Danny's best mate Peter Brown who had been planning to come on the trek had died of cancer. As a tribute to Pete, Danny carried a soft toy affectionately named "Brown Dog" who became our mascot. "Brown Dog" belonged to be Pete and travelled extensively with him before he died. On our trek, instead of carrying Pete's medication in his pouch, Brown Dog carried Pete's ashes. Danny had the privilege of spreading Pete's ashes at the Isurava Monument which was extremely powerful and touching. You'll be please to know, Brown Dog successfully negotiated the entire trek. Unfortunately, we didn't get to see Con's Rock. I big old tree has fallen right across it and we had to divert around it. Let's hope the local's see fit to restore that part of the track.

We decided to have a fish at Templeton's 2. All previous success has been at Templeton's 1. I placed porter Keito in charge of the fishing and he landed two small Rainbow Trout in no time at all. Unfortunately, that was the end of that. Keito decided I'm a dill because the line I'd brought was too light to catch anything decent. At Templeton's 1 he decided he had more important things to do that try to work with sub -standard fishing equipment. Fair enough. Walter was deterred and had a go but came up empty.

Our stay in Kagi was very pleasant and it was wonderful to experience the new and improved No Roads Camp Site. The Eco-Loo was a big hit with the trekkers. The track was extremely quiet. In fact by the time we reached Menari we had only seen one other small trek heading the other way. It's a small world because not for the first time, there was a trekker going the other way who I knew. This guy was from Adelaide and I'd worked with him some years back in the Solomon Islands. With a hand shake and a couple of happy snaps, we went our separate ways.

Our nice quiet trek was about to change. It was like Bourke Street on days 6 and 7. We passed 4 treks on day 6 and arrived into Ua-ale Creek on day 7 to find 2 other treks already there and another arrived shortly after us. It didn't worry anyone and there was ample room for us all. We had the funny experience of being told by trekkers on their first day that we were in for a very long and very muddy last day. We didn't have the heart to tell them what they were in for.

What a great trek with a great bunch of blokes. Thanks Danny, Simon, Aaron, Mark and Dave. We had a seriously good time and it was a privilege trekking with you.

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## Comments

**Tracey Warr**

07/07/2013 10:33

I would like to thank No Roads for giving my boys a great adventure & an experience that they will never forget.

An even bigger thanks to Barry Jenks for looking after all my boys & bringing them home in one piece.

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**Deborah Akers**

07/07/2013 17:55

As a close friend of Brown Dog and his recently departed owner I would like to thank everyone involved for allowing Peters wishes of travelling the track to become a reality.... It brings tears to my eyes that such a wonderful event finally came to fruition. Peter may not have been there in body but I am sure that he was watching over each and every one of you ... We miss you every single day Peter xxxxx

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