

Roding River, Champion & United Mines



As the day for this tramp got closer, the temperature started to plunge as cold air from the Antarctic made its way north, and as well, at this time of year the sun barely penetrates these valleys. The water won't be that cold, I kept reminding myself.

As it turned out, the day was sunny, there was little wind, the company was good, BUT the water was still cold. There were 7 crossings, I am reliably told; it didn't really matter after the first, because by then most of the women had wet boots and socks, but

the majority of the men had dry feet. This is because men can jump from boulder to boulder without falling in, whereas we women take the more cautious approach and wade across. As a result, we always have wet feet, but on occasion the rock-hoppers end up totally immersed! Not on this trip, though, and we (the waders) were grateful for the rock-hoppers who stood atop their rocks and held out helping hands to aid us with our crossing.



We had morning tea at Champion Mine. The sun hadn't quite reached there, and possibly it never did. Thus we were on our way promptly, scabbling (some didn't scabble at all) our way up the hill, to be rewarded with wonderful views across deep valleys. Plenty of gentians were in flower to keep the budding botanists interested. They are late flowering though. We had lunch in the sun and then started picking our way down, and down, and down into the dark valley.

Afternoon tea was at United Mine, and then a quick march back along the road to the cars. By this time, the sun had left the Caretaker's house – but then, it may not have ever arrived – and it was nicely chilly as we put on warm socks and dry shoes and wended our way home.