

Great South West Walk—Tarragal to Portland: 3-6 Apr 2009 ...or How the “Porker” award was won in four days!

Walkers: Linda, Lothar, Mabel

The starting point of Lothar’s planned conquest of the Great South West Walk had to be changed due to the fire in the Lower Glenelg National Park. Lothar, Linda and Mabel set out from Tarragal on the day planned to start the walk. Soon after leaving Tarragal camp wind farm towers became a feature of the horizon and stayed that way until near Portland. The greatest disappointment is the dominance of the towers on the horizon behind Cape Bridgewater as you walk around the bay. Mallee camp is beside some towers and the noise is all consuming. No longer is it the noise of the animals in the feedlot that prevents sleep but the sound of the wind towers – it is like having a airplane overhead and someone turning the volume up and down at regular intervals.

There is now a new track from the beach at Cape Bridgewater, about a kilometre from the café – it is a ladder up the sand dune and a gravel track along the ridge to the car park – where the steps came out. Don’t follow the markers along the Cape Bridgewater road when leaving the café but stay on the beach.

Now to the serious topic of food! It was very important that we were packed and on the track bright and early from Springs Camp to make it to the Cape Bridgewater Café for lunch and the famous hamburger. It was the same the next day leaving Trewalla – Isabella’s Café at Cape Nelson for lunch followed with a very interesting tour of the lighthouse and back to the café for cake and coffee. The routine was continued at Mallee – this time it was to get to Portland for the berry cheesecake with coffee and still



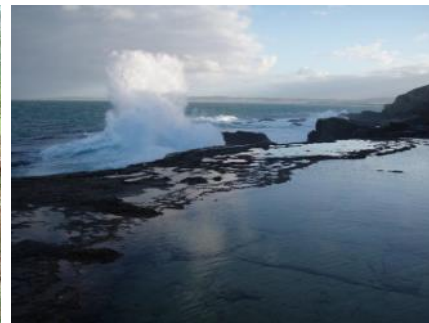
allow enough time for me to drop Lothar and Linda off at Moleside before I came home.

Report has it that someone arrived at Nelson with a banana cake and that was served with delicious Greek yogurt, another trip into Portland for the berry cheesecake and a celebration at Port Fairy on completion of the walk – guess what – more coffee and cake!!! Coralie has conceded the Porker title!

Congratulations to Lothar on completing the entire GSWW!

Mabel

Lothar: Mmm...Over the 15 days I did eat about 7–8 cakes (yes, I've lost count) and 3 steaks but I still managed to lose a couple of kilos! Must be due to all those tins of Pulses I consumed....



GSWW—Nelson to Swan Lake: 11–12 Apr 2009



Beeripmo: 18 Apr 2009

Walkers: Clive, Coralie, Janice (leader and scribe), Mabel, Mike

This walk, despite being offered in the club program several times over the past 6 years, can still offer some unexpected challenges!

Challenge #1: A new direction? OR Where is she going?? In response to popular demand, from those in the back seat of the car, we decided to take this walk back to front and start at the end; no wonder the chief navigator was confused and lead the team off towards the South Australian border rather than in the direction of Mugwamp camp! Disoriented by the sudden appearance of Coralie out of the bush, the chief navigator ignored the obvious markers, steps AND track and headed off on a forestry track. Just as well the ever vigilant Coralie noticed the error in time and took corrective action or we would all be still struggling on our way over towards Penola by now. (Although, I have heard that they do have a great bakery over there!)

Challenge #2: Taking the long slow downhill climb at the end of the walk as a long slow uphill climb at the start of the walk. Common consensus was that it was probably better.

Challenge #3: Avoiding wrigglies in the tank at the walkers camp. Response: just don't drink the water. Prefer the dehydration option.

Challenge #4: Avoiding DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness) due to reverse direction of the walk. Some of us were less concerned than others; it had something to do with the privileged few having SKINS. The rest of us had to rely upon our generally high level of fitness.

Challenge #5: Surviving on a diet of bread and water. See points three above and six below.

Challenge #6: Coping with the permanent closure of the French Café in Beaufort. Response: just as you would expect. Using finely honed porker instincts we were able to locate a suitable alternative, however the Beeripmo walk will not be the same without the French Café at the end of it. I have it on good authority that it was the only reason that some nameless club members actually do this walk. The suitable alternative involved a world record breaking, huge, warm, sticky, sticky date muffin to resolve challenge number five.

Despite the initial lack of confidence in the leader and chief navigator, Mabel, Coralie, Mike, Clive and I did find our way back to Beaufort for coffee and muffin. The reverse direction made this a different walk, and well worth repeating. We were able to avoid the large number of other walkers on the track, (a couple, a group of 2 and about 10 from Geelong), and noticed some other tracks that are not obvious when walking the usual direction. These tracks will be an opportunity for further investigation at some stage in the future.



Peterborough to Allansford: 23–25 Apr 2009

Walkers: Lothar, and visitors Bill, Chris and Ian

Bill Avery, Ian & Chris Edwards and I walked from Peterborough to Allansford (Buckleys Rd) over 3 days. They have already walked from Sydney to Melbourne and are now doing the long-distance walk from Melbourne to Adelaide. Bill invited the club to join them for this section. They come from Leura & Sydney and walk for about 10 days each year.

The 3 day walks were:

- Thursday: Walk from Peterborough to Radford Road, starting at the Irvine monument at Peterborough
- Friday: Walk from Radford Road to Childers Cove, starting at the car park at the southern end of Radford Road.
- Saturday: Walk from Childers Cove to car park at southern end of Buckleys Rd, near Lake Gillear.

We had good weather on Thursday, light rain for most of the day on Friday, and good weather until after lunch on Saturday.

The long distance walkers were all amazed that this stretch of coastline was so fantastic. It hasn't been publicised in walkers magazines. In the tourist publicity for the area the 12 Apostles get the attention whereas this stretch of coastline is almost completely ignored. A shame considering that it is world class!

Walkers to the area should note the following:

1. About a km east of Childers Cove there is a washed out creek that is difficult if not impossible to cross (in an east to west direction) when it is wet—the slopes are too muddy and slippery. With assistance, Chris was able to scramble up the slippery slope but the rest had to brave the barbed wire fences.... If you can, walk this section in a west to east direction.



2. Between Childers Cove and Buckleys Rd there are large sections of the management track that are no longer existent or have not been maintained, and many sections are overgrown with coastal wattle. We were forced to go off track in some sections - not a problem in terms of getting lost, but a problem in terms of very uneven and rocky ground.
3. When walking along the cliff tops, be very aware of cliff edges that have already started to break away—you often see 5 to 30 cm cracks in large sections near the edges—and walk further inland.

Lothar



Mt Rosea: 3 May 2009

Walkers: Coralie G (leader), Graeme W, Irene H, Linda H, Lothar S, Mabel M, Marg F

For a number of years after the devastating Grampians fires the Mt Rosea Track was closed. This was the Club's first assault on the summit since the track reopened. We left the usual path shortly after commencement to climb via the route taken by rock climbers. This route is well contoured and we made good progress until we hit the old "Grand Stairway". Unfortunately this has eroded over the years and we picked our way carefully up through the rocks and logs of this section.

Rejoining the main track was a signal for morning tea. The view from the rocky ledge chosen was spectacular and overlooked Sundial Peak and Lake Bellfield. Fed and watered we charged forward through the rocky canyons and mysterious rock stacks to the steel bridge across a narrow but very deep chasm.

At the summit, the sun dived under the clouds and the wind sprang up. We identified nearby peaks and made our way down the track to find a more sheltered lunch site. As the track became less steep, we turned our attention to the rock formations: goblins and kings were agreed upon but the Ninja turtle style guardians of the valley did not elicit the same degree of acclamation.

The path down was varied with sandy and grassy sections interspersed with traverses across large slabs of rock and we took time to photograph and enjoy the descent. We reached the bottom at 2 o'clock allowing time for a visit to the "Grape Escape" gourmet event on the Halls Gap oval. As we needed to drive home that afternoon, no one took up the offer. Diane and I had been on the Saturday and can thoroughly recommend it to anyone interested in sampling the food and wine of the region. Perhaps next year a group can stay overnight so that walking, wining and dining can all be enjoyed safely.

Coralie



GOW—Near 12 Apostles to Princetown and return: 10 May 2009

Walkers: Glenda M, Helen A, John M, Linda H (leader), Lothar S



Grampians: Major Mitchell Plateau 23-24/5

Walkers: Coralie G, Marg F, Janice (leader), Ken F (support)

Keen to explore new approaches to an old favourite, Marg, Coralie and I started our ascent of the Major Mitchell Plateau at the base of the Stockyard track at Mafeking. After meeting at the William Picnic Ground, Ken had chauffeured us to the starting point and about 9:00 we headed off to climb steeply up to the plateau. The winds were so strong that at times we were relying on our packs and poles to keep us anchored to the ground and we carefully kept well clear of the edge! The wind dropped soon after lunch, and we were happily pitching our tents at the campsite about 2:30.

Staggering, a consequence of an extended afternoon tea rather than the wind, or the steep climb and long traverse, we explored the area surrounding the First Wannon Campsite area for the best vantage point for the customary viewing of sunset across the Sierra Range.

This task accomplished we turned our attention to dinner, and despite an untoward incident, straight from the bushwalkers song book "Fifty Ways to Lose Your Tucker" we enjoyed the usual three course feast, accompanied by fine wine. Replete and knowing we had a short day ahead, we settled into our tents looking forward to a leisurely breakfast in the morning. The wind strengthened back to gale force during the evening, and the tents were constantly rocked by strong gusts throughout the night. I, for one, was thankful that my indulgence over dinner enabled me to hold the tent down and it stayed firmly where it was pitched.

The wind meant we had dry tents to pack up, and after enjoying breakfast we headed off in high spirits. We were able to stay ahead of the rain as we made our way down into Boundary Gap, past the dry Kalymna Falls and on to Mount William Picnic ground by 11:00, where Ken had a fire, warm date scones and a boiling billy waiting as promised.

The route up and across the plateau from south to the east allowed for a challenging overnight walk when time was short. We enjoyed the different perspective on a well known and well walked destination. Thanks to Ken for the delicious morning tea and his generous offer to help with the transfers, reducing the time consuming car shuffles.

Janice



“Fifty Ways to Lose Your Tucker”

(to the tune of “Fifty Ways to Leave Your Lover”)

Walkin’ in the Gramps, Champs?

On the Apple Isle, Kyle?

Hikin’ with the Club, Bub?

Doin’ the Duke of Ed, Ned?

Out the back of Lorne, Shaun?

There’s plenty of ways to go, Bro,

More than 50 ways to lose your tucker!

A big eater, Peter?

Want to lose weight, mate?

Saving up for a pie, Di?

Don’t like your meal, Neil?

Too much food, Jude?

All tried and true, Sue;

More than 50 ways to lose your tucker!

Try a dehyd spill, Phill

Feed it to a fox, Rox

Revive a rat, Matt

Leave it for the ants, Nance,

Make a metho mess, Bess

At home on the shelf, Ralph

In the top of your pack, Jack

For the Currawong to nick, Mick

Food for the crow, Beau

Out for the possums to rob, Bob

There’s plenty of ways to go Bro,

More than 50 ways to lose your tucker

Mt Sturgeon: 7 Jun 2009

Walkers: Lothar, Linda, Mabel, Marg & Ken; non-members: Phil, Josephine

This walk replaced the scheduled two day walk on the GSWW as there was insufficient number for the longer walks but some were interested in a half day trip.

After a leisurely visit to the local café the group headed off up Mt Sturgeon and into the cloud that remainder over the peak all day. It was good walking weather, it didn't rain and it wasn't cold except when we stopped at the top.

When we were on the way down there was a steady stream of people on the way up – we had never met so many people during this walk. It was really good to see people of all ages enjoying the outing.

Another visit to a café, this time in Penshurst, completed the short outing.

Mabel

