

Breakwater to Old Highway along the Rail Trail: 5 Oct 2013

Walkers: Gwenda, Jim, Karen, Lothar & Mabel (leader)

The perfect walking weather enhanced this lovely walk. There were lots of people on the trail, many of them cyclists. Even the snakes thought it was a good day to be out and about. The track looks quite different in each direction so even though it was an out and back course it was not boring.

Keeping up the bushwalking tradition the walk finished with coffee and cake.

Mabel



Mid-week Grampians Escape at Pomonal: 15–17 Oct 2013

Six Warrnambool Bushwalkers shared the Adair Homestead in Pomonal for two nights. This spacious house was built for a tobacco plantation manager in 1930. Currently it is let as a short term stay home. Despite rather wet and windy weather we enjoyed a number of walks in the area and visits to wildflower nurseries, the Gap Winery and an exploration of the 25 acre property with its wildlife and fruit trees. The house was very comfortable and warm once the fires were lit in the kitchen and lounge rooms.

The food at Pomonal.... We had to cater for 6 Warrnambool Walkers over 2 nights and honestly, you would have thought we were feeding an army of bushwalkers. We were each allocated specific items we were to bring but I think we each forgot about there only being 6 mouths to feed. Along with the lunch in Halls Gap and our own catering I believe we all went home a little heavier, in fact one night I could hear us all groaning as we laid down to go to bed. But all that said what a great venue and company, a very successful 3 days. Thank you Coralie for organizing it all.

Linda

Mt Cassel On our last day, after we had vacated the house Helen, Coralie, Marg and I climbed Mt Cassel before we headed home. We followed cairns for a short time, then slowly made our way off track up through the rocks in light bush, stopping often to admire lots of wild flowers and dainty orchids. It was a steep scramble to a rocky ridge where we were rewarded with views to Barney's Castle and The Dome in the foreground with the spectacular Serra Range behind. Climbing and traversing to our right we made our way to the summit through and around great rocky outcrops. It was very windy so we did not stay enjoying the view for long. We were then able to pick up the track and made our way down to the saddle on the other side. It was a very steep descent on a four wheel drive track down to Pomonal where we enjoyed a cup of coffee from the shop before walking the 3 kms back to the car.

Diane D



12 Apostles to Princetown: 17 Nov 2013

Walkers: Gwenda, Irene, Jim, Karen, Linda (leader), Lothar, and from Camperdown: Floss, Kate and Kevin.

Six Warrnambool Bushwalkers met up with 3 Camperdown Walkers for a very pleasant walk from the 12 Apostles to Princetown, where the Camperdown walkers left us and we returned to the 12 Apostles after lunch. The new track that takes you from the 12 Apostles is well formed and goes under the highway at Gibson's steps. If I was to have any criticism it would be that the start of the track is not marked at all, so unless you knew where it headed to you could easily mistake it for a different track.

We had quite a strong south easterly breeze which fortunately kept the temperature down, as in some spots away from the cliff, it got quite hot. With the sun shining and the ocean looking beautiful you would be hard pressed to find anywhere in the world so breathtaking.

Linda



1st–6th December: Maria Island

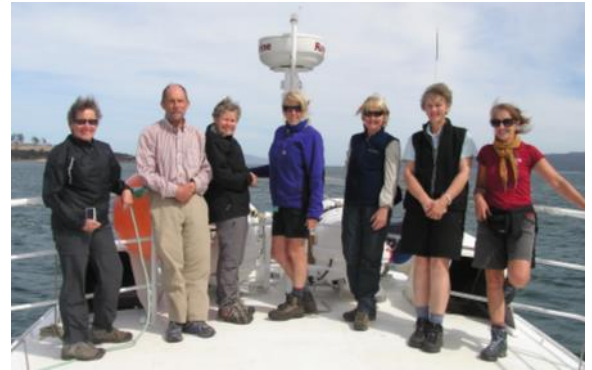
Mabel, Rob, Janice (leader), Diane, Coralie, Andrea and Amanda

We met at the bus terminal in Hobart after arriving in Tasmania in ones and twos over the previous 2 days. Time to sample the next-door farmers' market before the 90 minute bus ride to the sleepy seaside town of Triabunna. Not much happening there apart from it being home to a small fishing fleet and some tourist shacks, and the twice daily ferry service to Darlington on Maria Island.

The 30 minute ferry ride almost proved to be too long with some of us nearly succumbing to seasickness. The sea had picked up over the course of the day and the Captain took great delight in encouraging us all to go up top for a better look, though not before he gave us the very serious safety talk. Most of us got drenched.

But once on land much was forgotten as our thoughts were focussed on the next few days' walking. After checking in at the info centre, we were shown to our accommodation. Originally this was the penitentiary; each cell (room) now housed 7 bunks complete with comfortable mattresses!

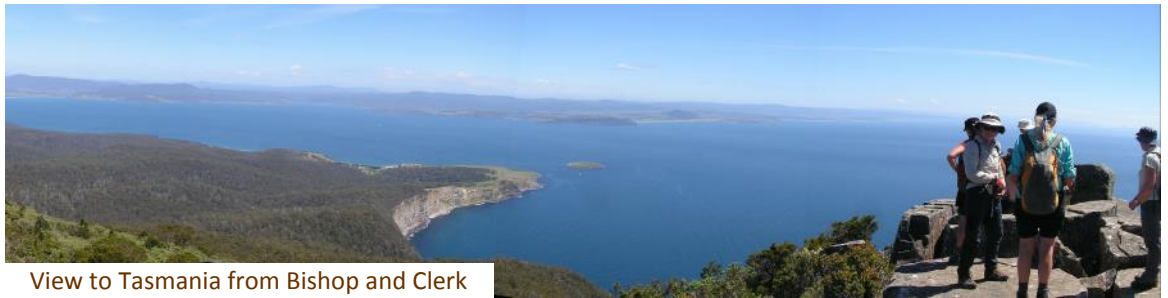
After a quick unpack it was time for a look around the island before dark. Cape Barren geese were everywhere, not at all afraid of the tourist invasion. The next type of wildlife sighted in large numbers was the wombat. A little more wary of humans but still happy to graze noisily (which they did constantly, morning, noon and night)) without too much concern.



The next four days walking provided some challenging steep gradients, the first to the Bishop & Clerk lookout with amazing vistas awaiting those who made it.

Mount Maria was billed as difficult and proved to be so, even though the boulder hopping as it is called was enjoyed by all. Andrea won that one. If we didn't know better she could have been back at school! Unfortunately the view clouded over just as we got to the top.

Other highlights were the fossil cliffs, the painted cliff, ruins, and Encampment Cove (originally home to numerous solitary cells, with only the crumbling red brick ruins remaining). The prisoners that were sent there could have had breathtaking views of beautiful Chinaman's Bay from their cells. Sadly, I don't think they would have had that privilege.



View to Tasmania from Bishop and Clerk



Fossils, ruins, Janice and Coralie testing their new accommodation, and the painted cliffs.





Haunted Bay (above) took a bit of effort to get down to and then back out again but the scenery was breathtaking. What a place to have lunch! Always keen for some local fauna, Rob spotted some penguin burrows high up the cliff face beside the track. Quite unexpectedly one contained 2 chicks waiting for the parents to return with some food. We're not sure who was more surprised—us or the chicks.

Camping at Frenchs Farm gave us plenty more opportunities for wildlife spotting—wombats, wallabies and the odd pademelon. We had the use of the old shearing shed for cooking—if only the walls, what was left of them, could talk!

Each day concluded with a swim or paddle to sooth our weary legs in the pristine waters surrounding Maria Island. But, after four days, our time had come to return to the real world via the Maria Island Ferry. This time we got to share the experience with 40 school students and their luggage!!!!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for making Andrea and myself so welcome on this walk.

Amanda & Andrea



You're not my mum!



Trip Reports

Saturday, 14th December: *Some “high” points of Warrnambool*

Leader: Rob; aromaphiles: Lucee, Lothar

Our walk followed the coast from the Levy Point car park to the dead whale where the planned nibbles stop was deferred to a less whiffy spot. We then passed the sewerage works, cut a corner of the golf links, and traipsed back along the Merri River bike trail for a view of the rendering plant. An overcast sky made for a pleasant walking temperature and there were enough birds to enjoy. My camera has the uncanny ability to move the intended avian subject out of the picture just as I press the button. That’s nothing compared to Lothar’s iPhone: every duck on Kelly’s Swamp took flight when he raise it!

Rob



A sad sign of our times



- 👍 By train using Myki to Morwell—success.
- 👍 By taxi to a Heyfield bakery—success.
- 👎 By same taxi to near MacAllister Springs—failure.

A locked, closed gate on the Snowy Plains Road blocked the way. The sign next to it explained why. Sniff, sob, it was two Fridays before the Cup: we had an extra 28 km road bash before reaching the “real” start of the walk!

Rob

