

Griffiths Island and Port Fairy: Saturday 3 October

On a surprisingly warm and very pleasant morning, a small group met at Port Fairy near Griffiths Island and set off on our stroll. Along with numerous families and lots of tourists (it being a long weekend), we circumnavigated the island, then checked out the various craft moored on the river, before making our way to Charlies on East for the obligatory coffee (and for some, a second breakfast), sitting on the balcony enjoying the fabulous view of East Beach in the sun!! Thanks to the 3 visitors, Rhonda, Margaret and Ian for a very enjoyable morning.

Dina

Mt Abrupt working bee: Saturday 10 October

Navvies: Rob, David T, Mabel, Lothar, Coralie, Jim together with Kyle (ParksVic) and David W (Grampians Walking Tracks Support Group)

It was a pleasant day for snipping and drain-enhancement. The view from the top was good despite a smoky haze. Our efforts in May meant that there was less to do this time, and we finished earlier than expected. The party then split for their respective coffee and cake fixes: the first three navvies going to a much hotter Halls Gap in readiness for Marg's walk the next day and the second three navvies heading to Dunkeld.

Rob



This pretty little plant was struggling for life on a track corner. A type of correa was a popular guess but no, after checking with an expert, it is a *Marianthus* species, possibly *M. bignoniaceus* aka Orange Bell Climber, and once classified as part of the Billardiera family.

The Pinnacle: Sunday 11 October

Walkers: (Grampians) Marg and Adele (co-leaders), Ken and Jane; (Camperdown) Murray and Jenny; (Warrnambool) Rob, David and Mabel.

Members of three clubs arrived at the Halls Gap pool at 9 am for this joint walk to *The Pinnacle* along the Grampians Peaks Trail. Marg's coffee-is-your-reward challenge was to find a spider orchid—Mabel succeeded admirably. And speaking of flowers, while the species varied, there were masses of blooms along most of the route. There were many other walkers, especially once we reached the Wonderland carpark, although the numbers thinned after we left *The Pinnacle*.

It was a hot day and a cool, spacious, shady gap between two large rocks provided a welcome noon lunch spot. We made a diversion to look at the new Bugiga campsite on our way to the Rosea carpark and our road bash to Delly's Dell. From there we followed a not-too-overgrown track almost up to *Sundial Peak* before descending along another track to Lake Bellfield's dam wall. A quick rest was had before the final stretch along the bike path to Halls Gap, reached around 5:20—precision timing in fact since the doors of one ice cream shop closed as we were being served. A long day but most pleasant, with the company and Grampians at their best.

Rob



The Big Rail Trail Weekend: October 17 and 18

Participants: Coralie (leader), Rob, Jim, Helen A, Lothar and Linda.

Four walkers met each morning in Koroit Street to catch the 9 am bus to our destination for the day (Koroit on Saturday and Port Fairy on Sunday). Two walkers checked in both mornings and the other four walked one day each.

On Saturday we sampled coffees/hot chocolates at the newest addition to the café culture in Koroit's main street before heading onto the trail proper. Not wishing to disturb the working bee in full swing at the Koroit Station (to establish a children's playground), we marched south-east along the track, crossed the highway and set off at a brisk pace towards the Tower Hill section. Not long into our journey we met Marg F and her son on an out and back bicycle journey to Port Fairy.

The weather was perfect for walking and we made good progress, stopping at the old quarry site for morning tea. This gave those with light-weight portable chairs a chance to show how walking with all creature comforts can be achieved.

Continuing along the route we noticed that all cross roads are now sign-posted and a small section along the back Illowa Road has been added to separate walkers from the traffic. From here we made our respective ways back to our homes.

On Sunday no coffee was permitted before the walk—there was the 2:05 bus to catch—and we soldiered on until Moyne siding before a refreshment break was called. Many other people were out on the trail travelling in both directions as again the weather was very pleasant for enjoying outdoor pursuits. Cows, bulls, goats, sheep and magpies were abundant in the adjoining paddocks; occasionally other birds such as galahs were seen. No dangerous animals were encountered other than cyclists approaching silently from the rear. After some near misses,





Linda and I 'considerately' provided some fortunate riders with instructions on bell use.

At Koroit, we eagerly lined up at "Poppies" lunch counter to order and, after three attempts, found the table that was "not too hot and not too cold" to enjoy our food and drinks.

The same driver who had taken us to Port Fairy took us back from Koroit. He was most interested in what had transpired between bus journeys. Lothar then left to attend another café in Warrnambool; admiring his fortitude, the rest of us slipped quietly home.

Coralie



Saturday's rail trail walk provided more proof of telekinesis:

After the split, while Coralie enjoyed a scenic tour of Warrnambool courtesy of the meandering bus route 1, the other three of us continued along the rail trail. "There are snakes on the corner of the road" said three cyclists. "There are snakes on the corner of the road" said another cyclist. Indeed, as evidenced by over 20 slithering marks across to the road, there certainly had been. But we saw none.

Anyone who doubts my camera's ability to cause birds to take flight need look no further than this picture: unfortunately there can be no "before" photo of this flock of flapping ducks to show them peacefully swimming on the Merri a couple of seconds beforehand.

Rob



Trip Reports

Mt Richmond: Saturday 31 October

Walkers: Rob, David

Despite 25 mm of rain around wake-up time, there were only a couple of drops on the drive to Mt Richmond. The rest of the day was sunny, quite warm in fact, with every breeze appreciated. The first stop was the Gorae West Hall to be one of the 57 who voted there. Except for the obligatory failure to immediately find the starting point, the navigation for the walk was easy as we followed a combination of walking tracks and various grades of roads, almost all of which were soft underfoot. For about half the walk there were a reasonable number of plants in flower, one species of gum especially. A solitary purple *Pattisonia* provided a splendid dot of colour and hence was a most worthy candidate for the camera. Needless to say 100 metres around the corner was a swathe of the same for metres along the edge of the road. We saw a couple of wallabies and seven bushwalkers from Melbourne who had just started on part of the GSWW for the long weekend but no snakes. After a couple of hours we reached the Ocean Views lookout and took an early mark to have lunch and admire Cape Bridgewater. There were some more views of the surrounding country side during the remaining hour of walking back to the car.



On the drive home we diverted slightly to look at the GSWW's Tarragal Camp and stopped for a well-earned ice cream at Narrawong. It had been a pleasant 12 km walk, one well worth repeating when the flowers are blooming.

Rob



Federation Walks: 24–25 October

History. The first Federation Walks event was held in 1935 to provide an opportunity for walkers from all clubs associated with (what is now) Bushwalking Victoria to walk and engage in fellowship. The event is organized and hosted by a club, or clubs in partnership. This year's organisers were Bayside Bushwalking and Great Dividing Trail Association and, with 350 walkers participating, it was a monumental task. The walks were based in Hepburn with 20 walks around the Daylesford area. Participants were asked to select their preferences for each day several months before hand and were notified of the outcome.

2015. Irene and I were the two walkers from WB who attended. We also went to the dinner on Saturday night. Unfortunately the venue could only cater for 140, so many missed out. The meal was a fabulous feast and we were able to catch up with several people we had met last year at Rawson.

We selected *Blowhole to Shepherds Flat* for Saturday. The highlights of this walk were that it traversed typical goldfields bush land with varied topography passing a number of interesting historical features including the Blowhole, gold diggings, aqueduct/water race, and the home of Australian cricket bat willow. Unfortunately one hour into this walk Irene fell and twisted her ankle and had to be transported back to Hepburn to be treated by the medical staff. I continued and completed the walk. The next morning Irene's ankle had blown up so we made the decision to go home.

2016. Next year the Wimmera Bushwalking Club with the help of several others will be hosting Federation in the Wartook Valley region. We have been asked to assist by leading several walks. As yet I have not been notified which ones but as I told the President of Wimmera we have a couple of members who I feel sure will rise to the occasion and offer their assistance.

Linda



The leader giving instructions



Paddling the Hopkins: Saturday 7 November

Participants: David (admiral of the fleet), Bill, Kate, Rob, and Diane

Thick azolla on the Merri meant we tackled the Hopkins instead. David's grand plan was to launch the canoes at Jubilee Park, paddle upstream to Tooram Stones, and then back past Jubilee Park to exit at Proudfoots for coffee. Gwen drove the canoeists from Proudfoots to Jubilee Park and took the car and trailer back there. Thank you Gwen.

I decided to put my kayak in at Gillen park and paddle upstream to meet the others at 8.30. For me, starting off was tough going. After crossing a broad stretch of water with a head wind and choppy waves I reached the shelter of the cliffs on the far bank and made my way to the meeting point. Not long after that the others arrived.

It wasn't long before we were on our way. We negotiated a reef, and passed Breakfast Rock and the occasional fishing boat. It was lovely to be on the river. Lots of ducks and waterbirds took shelter on the banks. There were several long "high tide" marks on the reeds. We appreciated the shelter of the trees on the banks as we neared Tooram Stones.

After turning at the Stones we had a head wind and I think I heard someone warn of "white water". Downstream it got a bit tricky as the wind and waves got up. Kate and Rob were blown around a bit and had to do a U-turn. Sights included a couple of pelicans floating near the banks, lots of big houses, a grounded bale of hay, and a willy wagtail seriously annoying a crow.

I docked at Gillen Park, loaded the kayak on the car, and drove back to join the others for coffee after their uneventful further paddling to Proudfoots.

Thanks David for organising the trip and supplying the canoes: a good time was had by all.

Diane



Trip Reports

Mounts Abrupt and Sturgeon: Saturday 28 November

Birthday girl: Marg; well wishers: (Grampians) Alex and Julie; (Warrnambool) Coralie, Mabel, Corinne and Rob; (conscripted family) Ken, Trevor and Carolyn.

We met at Dunkeld to scale the special peaks of Mt Abrupt and Mt Sturgeon to celebrate the auspicious birthday of our walk coordinator Margaret Farrar. Our group comprised members from Warrnambool Bushwalkers, Grampians Bushwalking Club and Launceston Walking Club. The day started a bit overcast but the sun soon presented itself as we hiked up the re-routed track to Mt Abrupt, duly repaired after flood and fire damage in recent years. We stopped intermittently to enjoy the ever-increasing view and enjoy the wildflowers. From the trig point, Signal Peak looked great as did the nearby Mt. Sturgeon beckoning us for the afternoon. Our descent was enjoyable, and we were soon enjoying a picnic lunch.

The warmer afternoon meant swapping beanies for sun hats and converting trousers to shorts as we enjoyed the steady climb of Sturgeon. With the odd participant keeping the group on time and so ensuring that we were enjoying the ambience of Cafe 99 in Dunkeld by 4 pm where a great selection of cakes were on offer. The odd person was disappointed that that there was only one piece of berry cheesecake left but it was replaced by another equally delicious option! Thanks to Mum and Dad (Marg and Ken) for the birthday afternoon tea!

Our 5.5 hours walking was well-rewarded. A wonderful day was had by all and you all helped make it a birthday to remember for my Mum.

Carolyn, President Launceston Walking Club



Lilydale-Warburton Rail Trail: 17–19 November

Participants: Coralie, Diane, Gwen, Helen R, and Mabel.

6.08 am departure from the Warrnambool Railway Station, bikes safe in the goods van. Slick change to metro train to reach Lilydale, pedalled 6.9 km to Mt Evelyn, conquering the steepest climb of the trail (135 m), for a lunch stop. It needs to be noted, we were up at 5-am-ish to board the train. Then continued another 30 km to Millgrove for refreshment stop. Not enough room in the bike shed at the Apline Resort for our bikes so the manager directed us to stow our bikes in the function room. Hearty meal in the hotel dining room with responsible service of alcohol supervised by Mabel.



Plan for the next day to ride the O'Shannassy Aqueduct Trail to O'Shannassy Reservoir, but alas we rode and rode, not getting the feeling of our destination in sight. Lunch break, and a posse on foot, with no enlightenment of a destination in sight, consensus reached, to return to Warburton. This decision was reached inclusive of some mechanical hindrances. What took us 2.5 hours to this point took 1.5 hours return, funny about that. Plan, next time we pedal the extra 8 km to our destination. BUT this ride was through rain forest of lush gums and tree ferns filtering the warm sun of the day and the chuckle of kookaburras. Just luscious. Upon return, coffee and treats, visit to the book shop, tea shop and tourist info, then return to our rooms for a little rest for some and for others off on a jaunt through the surrounding area. Regroup for our meal and drinks supervision.

Next day breakfast in Warburton, pedal to Seville for morning stop, and after Mt Evelyn, wheeee downhill ride to Lilydale. Next train to Southern Cross for a spot of shopping, evening meal on the train for the journey home.

Helen



EOY do at Cape Bridgewater: 4–7 December

Participants: Coralie, Corinne, Dina, Helen A, Janice, Jim, Linda, Liz, Lothar, Mabel, and Mike

We all camped at the Cape Bridgewater Coastal Camp. This has the advantage of a commercial kitchen and a big indoor dining area ... free of flies and weather. The kitchen enabled us to prepare sumptuous meals.

Most of us arrived on Friday afternoon and set up tents, had nibbles, etc. The evening meal was chicken soup.

On Saturday we had Linda's bacon and eggs 'McMuffin' style for breakfast. Afterwards, we walked from the Blow Holes to the Bridgewater Lakes Picnic Area. We explored The Springs, and had hot cuppas at the Springs Camp before moving on. At the Lakes we had a couple of kilos of prawns, special potato salad, and bubbly for lunch. Some walked/staggered back to the Blow Holes whilst others drove back to camp. The evening meal was a vegetarian Dal Baht Terkari (complete with the appropriate plates of course!), fruit salad, not to mention nibbles and wines.

Sunday had Linda's pancakes for brekky, lunch at the Cape Bridgewater Kiosk, and roast turkey et al for dinner. Oh, and we also managed to somehow squeeze in a walk from Trewalla Camp to the Blow Holes.

On Monday morning we packed up. Some unfortunates had to return early to Warrnambool. The lucky stayers drove to the lighthouse, did a shortish return walk along the cliff tops with a hot cuppa halfway, and then had a delicious lunch at Isabellas ... a fitting end to the weekend.

I think I can safely say that a great time was had by all! Think about where you'd like the next eoy w/e to be and pipe up at the next meeting. With the great and central facilities at Cape Bridgewater this venue is still #1 on many members' list.

Lothar

