

Trip Reports

Mouth-to-Mouth: Sunday 10 January

Determined competitors: Lothar, Helen A, Dina, Corinne and Rob

Five of us set off at 7:30 for Narrawong and their Surf Lifesaving Club's 14 km fund raising run/walk. Registration formalities done, we boarded the walkers' bus to be taken to the starting mouth of the Fitzroy River. Before long, dozens of walkers were ahead of us striding along the beach towards the finishing mouth, that of the Surry River. It augured well for our hopes.

The only disappointment for the day was the start: there was no Fitzroy River to wade and so there are no photos of Lothar's inimitable style of river crossing. Just before the 4 km mark, the first of the runners passed us—they had started about 30 minutes after us. By half way (pictured) we were already celebrating that our traditional position in the walk would be a shoe in. A couple of kilometres further on and there was nobody behind us on the firm smooth sand. Not too many visible ahead of us for that matter.

With 3 km to go we reached the first of the encouraging signs: "Beware of the white pointer's" it said, without telling us what possession of the white pointer we needed to be beware of. Onwards we strode on a most pleasant day for walking. We reached the finish line with the race clock at 2:14:35, a pretty good time except that the clock reflected the runners' starting time. Almost simultaneously the race clock was turned off and we knew we had achieved our aim (and usual position) of being last to finish. A most satisfactory day was rounded off by lunch purchased from the stalls.

Rob



Killarney to Port Fairy: Saturday 23 January

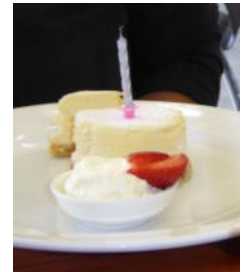
Walkers: Rob, Linda, Lothar and Jim.

The light drizzle that marked the start of the day had gone by the time the bus dumped us at Killarney, thankfully a little further along the highway than the official bus stop. We walked the kilometre down the road to the coast to meet Linda at the oval.

Just before ten we set off along the beach, sky overcast, an on coming breeze, but none the less, pleasant walking conditions. Portland's predicted low tide of 0.50 metres at 9:46 and a high tide of 0.51 metres at 11:47 translated into ample flat beach to walk on. There were only a few of the flocks of the little birds that scuttle along the edge of the water in the area.

We reached the Surf Life Saving Club before noon and settled in for coffee. Unbeknownst to two of us, but obviously beknownst to the other two, it was a significant birthday: the birthday girl successfully blew out the candle on the cheese cake Lothar bought her. But the trip was to the Moyne mouth, not a coffee shop, and we soon were continuing on our way, along the beach and then the stone bank that lines the Moyne's mouth. The fortnightly market, moved to the wharf area for January, provided lunch. A little more walking round town to fill in time and buy an ice cream before the bus trip around Port Fairy and home.

Rob



Trip Reports

The Pinnacle: Sunday 14 February

Walkers: Lothar, Coralie and Kate

In perfect weather we set off from the Halls Gap carpark and up the Pinnacle. I wasn't looking forward to this part of the walk as memory told me it was steps and more steps. But on arrival at the top I decided it wasn't so bad after all!

From The Pinnacle we descended down the other side using a vehicle management track with the idea to cut across from it to Turret Falls and then onto the Wonderland Carpark. Unfortunately this track was closed and, without proper scrub bashing gear, wasn't a good idea. So a bit of road walking was required before we found an entry down onto the Turret Falls track which got us back onto the intended route.

From the Wonderland carpark we walked via Venus Baths back to Halls Gap. Being the Jazz weekend we enjoyed some refreshments with live music in the Stony Creek picnic area before heading back to Warrnambool. Thanks Lothar for a very enjoyable day.

Kate



Timboon Rail Trail: Sunday 21 February

On an absolutely perfect day, sunny, 25 degrees, no wind, eight walkers stretched their legs with this easy but very pleasant walk from Glenfyne to Timboon. As we would do anything to minimise car shuffles, the group split into two, with drivers starting at the end of the walk, and walking back to meet the rest of the group. Walkers set a fair pace, and with only short drink stops and no leeches to contend with, we were all seated at the Distillery well before noon, awaiting our lunches, a great way to conclude a very enjoyable morning out. Thanks to Mabel, Viv, Linda, Irene, Corinne, Lothar and Jim for joining me for the day.

Dina



Mt Sturgeon and Picanniny: Saturday 5 March

Participants: Coralie, Dina & Kate

The weather forecasts suggested Saturday would be quite warm so we ventured on to the trail early. Even so, we had barely started when we were met by a man on his way down.

The clouds were moodily staying low, so views were limited as we climbed. We were on the summit of Sturgeon for morning tea and from our lofty spot took time to check out the Dunkeld township and any new developments inside walled garden. The clouds were starting to lift by this stage and it was beginning to heat up.

Descending quickly, we decided we still had energy for an assault on Picanniny from the turn off at the bottom of Mt Sturgeon. Lunching at the top, we were joined by other groups, one sporting a 'selfie stick'. A scarlet robin preened in a nearby branch but vanished the instant Kate's camera phone was produced.

Satisfied that we had met the day's challenge, we enjoyed drinks at the Mountain View Café before returning to Warrnambool.

Coralie



Clean Up Australia Day: Sunday 6 March

Participants: Coralie, Lothar, Jim & Helen A

For the third year, we opted to focus our 'Clean Up Australia' efforts along the beach between Shelley Beach and Levy's Beach. The dedicated work crew conducted a pincer-like movement to trap the rubbish between these two points.

The section near Levy's had been worked over by other crews prior to the official Sunday event. Nevertheless, by the time the two groups met a respectable amount of plastic shards, drink bottles, rope and other items spoiling the grandeur of the area had been captured and secured in bags. On the return to Levy's Car Park a surfer took the time to thank us.

Back at the collection spot we sorted our haul into recyclables and trash, before posing for a group snap (right), each sporting our favourite 'pick up'. Helen chose the dunny lid, Jim a large piece of rubber used to slide down the sand dunes, Lothar the very fashionable Legionnaire's cap, and I took a fancy to an object resembling a rather large top hat.

At the 2Tarts café we were joined by Chris S and had no hesitation in complementing our coffees with delectable items from the cake display case.

Thank you to all who helped out. As the area was significantly cleaner than in other years, next year's event may yield more rubbish if conducted at another site.

Coralie



Warrnambool to Port Fairy: Tuesday 15 March

Participants: Dina, Jim, Lothar

Conditions were excellent for the walk: coolish, overcast, no rain, with the wind behind us. A low tide of 16 cm at about 9:30 am.

We met at Thunder Point shortly before 8 am and headed off along the clifftops. After Shelly Beach we descended to the soft sands.

Past Levy's Point the sand firmed up and was easier going. Between here and the Cutting, we were entertained by jockeys exercising horses and others just out riding and enjoying the morning. Like us.

We had an early lunch at the Killarney picnic facilities before galloping to our destination....the new bluestone lounge chairs below the PF surf club. After a few photos we headed into town and leisurely treated ourselves to coffees....and ice-creams...before catching the bus back to Warrnambool.

A great day!

Lothar



Grampians: 18–20 March

Participants: Coralie, Corrine, Helen, Jim, Lothar (leader), Mabel

Corrine, Coralie and I stopped for a coffee at the gourmet newsagent in Dunkeld before heading to Halls Gap for our weekend adventures. We booked into the central CP and after carefully selecting a flat grassed site we set up our tents.

We climbed up to the Pinnacle via the cliff face route past Mackeys Peak. As always, the views from the top were spectacular. We descended via Silent Street and the canyon before bypassing Wonderland carpark on our way back to Halls Gap via the Venus Baths route. It is a wonderful circuit—probably the best anywhere—and the intermittent rain didn't dampen our wonder or wander. Helen arrived in the afternoon and after settling in we shared 4 dishes for dinner at the Spirit of Punjab.

On Saturday we drove to Lake Bellfield to meet up with Jim and Mabel. Mabel wanted to check out a walk for later in the year. We all headed off together for the steepish climb to Sundial Peak. Halfway up, Corrine, Helen and I decided to return to Lake Bellfield. We then drove to the Mt Rosea carpark and walked in to the new fancy hikers camp nearby. We met the others there for lunch. It is a spectacular setting. Enough said!

Corrine and Helen returned to Halls Gap whilst I joined the group on their circuit back to Lake Bellfield via an overgrown and disused track. We all had coffees in HG before Jim and Mabel departed. We were so impressed by the dinner the previous evening that we went back to the Spirit of Punjab to share 4 more Indian dishes. Absolutely delicious again!

On Sunday morning we packed up. Corrine and Coralie returned home. Helen and I did the walk at the back of HG to the Boronia Peak turnoff but then just completed the circuit. Next, we drove to the Sundial Peak carpark and completed the very pleasant return walk to the Pinnacle. Then it was homeward bound...via a relaxing stop at Dunkeld.

Many thanks to all the drivers and to all for a great 3 days!

Lothar



Bright Bike Riding: 17–23 March

Participants: Helen A, Gwenda, Diane

If there is a bike riders heaven, this area is it.

Day 1 had some rain so a short ride to Wandiligong and Bright—to take pictures of some ladies on the Chinese Bridge.

The rides for the next 3 days included Myrtleford, Beechworth, Gapsted, Wangaratta, Oxley, Milawa and Everton.

A total of 200 kilometres were ridden. We were a bit early for the autumn leaves, which were starting to turn as we finished our time in Bright.

Helen

