

Trip Reports

East of Killarney: Saturday 1 July

Walkers: Rob (scribe), Linda, Lothar, Chris, Mary, Ian, David, Maxine.

We set off from Gormans Rd in glorious sunshine (albeit a nippy 2°) for our beach stroll to Killarney's oval. The weather was perfect, it was low tide, and the sea was gentle. The sand was perfect for walking despite there being lots of seaweed. A colony of white faced herons on one rocky point was the highlight of the few birds seen. Some rocks had just been placed across the beach at the end of Basin Rd to enforce the "No Drive" signs for the beach.

It was most enjoyable walking and I was tempted to abandon the planned route and return the way we came. But I didn't, and after a rest at the oval, we followed the road almost to the highway before turning east along Survey Lane. It's a pleasant enough walk along the lane, with glimpses of the "lake" and the sea. We left the lane at Towilla Way, went through its little enclave of houses, followed a track to the beach, and retraced our steps for the final kilometre to the cars, reached at noon. Basalt Winery for coffee (and chowder for some) completed the walk.



An eating meeting: Tuesday 11 July

Nine diners were much too busy eating and talking to document this pleasant evening at the Cattlye Thai restaurant. A good time was had by all. Thanks to Lothar for organising the evening—it was a pity it coincided with his grandpa duties in Melbourne that evening!

Mt Richmond to Bridgewater Lakes: Saturday 15 July

Walkers : Rob, Lothar, Ann, Gwenda and guests Maxine and Sharon

After a car-shuffle, we started our 18 km walk along the Great South West Walk at 9:30 from the park entrance. It proved to be a perfect day for walking, despite the cool start and a smidgeon of drizzle and dark clouds. We had some views to the west on our ascent of the towering Mt Richmond. We diverted for morning tea and a superb view at the platform on the Ocean View Circuit. After that it was back to the GSWW for the rest of the day, passing through various types of vegetation—grass tree, sword grass, or bracken understory—on different track surface, sometimes gravel road, sometimes sandy road, but mainly soft-underfoot walking track. One leech, quickly flipped off, was the sum total of the nasties. Few plants were flowering.



We reached our lunch spot at the Terragal camping area at 12:45, a little late for lunch by my stomach's normal reckoning, but then again half a coffee scroll had been going begging at morning tea. The first half of the final 5 km was through bush but the other half was through sheep paddocks and had glorious views of the Bridgewater Lakes and the ocean on our final descent.

All that was left was to unshuffle the cars and head to the Richmond Henty for coffee. Thanks to all who came, to Gwenda for the car shuffle (and over-catering on the coffee scroll), and the Hawkesdale contingent whose socks ensured we never dozed off.



Tower Hill Christmas in July Wattle Walk: Saturday 22 July

Revellers: Lothar (leader), Chris (reporter), Coralie (photographer), Helen A, Dina, Jim, Linda, Mary, Rob, Ross, Maxine, Ken, Shirley

Picnic table nabbed and covered with a festive plastic tablecloth; nearby BBQ inspected and declared okay. We set out our gear and wandered around in the pale winter sunshine, searching for koalas. (Hint: look just above where a clump of people are gathering and exclaiming excitedly.)

Hardy walkers arrive and after a bit of a chat it's time for delicious pumpkin soup (thanks Dina) and/or spicy split pea soup (thanks Coralie and Curtis Stone).

Then Lothar serves up German-style sausages with sauerkraut and mustard in easy-to-eat rolls. Plenty for all, plus smoked salmon and falafel balls too if you like something different.

We're slowing down a bit, but who wouldn't want to make room for fairy cakes (thanks Maxine) and individual iced Christmas puddings (thanks Rob) with our cuppas?

A quick pack up and the walkers set off under Lothar's wing for a relaxing wattle walk, sun shining on happy faces. Linda and Chris were happy to ditch the walk and head for their respective homes, but we know it would have been lovely!



Trip Reports

Port Fairy rail trail: Saturday 29 July

Walkers: Dina (leader), Lothar, Jim, Mary, Helen A, Mabel, Rob, Rhonda, Maxine.

Leading from the rear is a well-established style; leading from home takes this to even greater heights. But so it was for this enjoyable stroll along the rail trail. Dina turned up at KFC, wished us well, and returned home to her sick bed. The two out-of-towners were met at Port Fairy and taken to our starting point at the rail trail crossing on the Penshurst road, resulting in two cars at each end of the walk. We started walking on the newly surfaced section of the trail in very strong wind and proceeded non-stop to the end. The tail wind might have helped, though it became less (and the clouds less ominous) as the morning progressed. As I said, it was an enjoyable walk, although it unfortunately finished 10 minutes too early for Rebeccas to be serving soup. C'est la vie.

Rob



Wednesday 2 August: what'll we do for the usual bike ride

The *Matchbox* was closed for the week and so we rode westward for our coffee fix, stopping for a while at Von Guerard's Lookout.



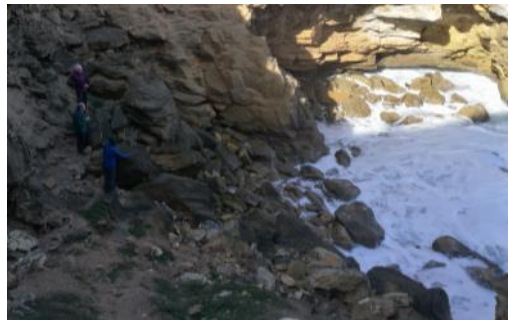
Lake Gillear to Childers Cove: Saturday 5 August

Walkers : Rob (leader, fake news, 📷), Lothar 📷, Mabel, Helen A, Coralie 📷, Ross, Ken and Shirley

Using four cars rather than three meant no one had to wait in the freezing wind during the car shuffle. The initial tourist path and views of the rough seas and cliffs were soon replaced by the maintenance track with farmland on the left and thick coastal wattle on the right. Our diversion along a side track to the cliff edge for morning tea took longer than expected since Lothar knew of a top-heavy rock stack that was worth a squiz.

At the end of the maintenance track we headed across rocky ground to reach the next feature of interest: an overhang in a deep indentation into the cliff line. That was the easy bit—the tricky bit would be the return to the fence line track because of the thick coastal wattle beside it. With the help of a 1:4000 Google satellite image to show what might be rock and what might be scrub, our kilometre back to the fence track finished with a mere 20 metres of scrub, a ten-out-of-ten achievement sadly downgraded when Coralie noticed where we could have emerged scrub-free a few hundred metres further on. Oh, well, better luck next time.

Our lunch spot was out of the wind overlooking farmland. Unfortunately lunch was cut short by the arrival of two extremely friendly but extremely smelly dogs. The bad news/good news was that they stayed with us but were happy to lead the way, at least until they bounded down to, we presume, their home. The standard cliff-top walk west of Childers Cove finished the walk. We had had a windy but fine day, save for a short sprinkle of rain blown from some unseen cloud. The car shuffle diverted to Cheese World for the necessary caffeine fix.



Around Childers Cove: Saturday 12 August

Participants: Ian, Linda, Lothar (leader)

We parked the car at Murnane's Bay and headed west along the fence line until we reached the track heading south to the cliff tops. We then picked our way over the uneven ground along the cliff edges before heading slightly inland to safer ground. Stunning scenery.

We bush-bashed a bit along overgrown tracks until we reached Childers Cove. More clifftops, a cave, a large sinkhole, and stunning views were had before we walked off-track back to the bitumen.

Linda returned to the car to wait while Ian and I took the path to Sandy Cove to ford the creek. We dusted the sand off our feet as best we could before putting on socks and shoes and heading up the incline to the top of the cliffs.

We roughly followed a track hacked out by trail bikers many years earlier, before veering onto another track to our final destination: a rocky beach. Ian waited at the top of the large sand dune while I did the return to the beach. Always worth it...see the photo!

We returned via the nearby 4WD track and bitumen, then drove to Allansford for our Cheese World rewards.

Thanks for a great day out!

Lothar



Whites Beach—Cape Bridgewater—Bridgewater kiosk: Sunday 20 August

Undeterred by the previous week's terrible weather, six hardy souls set off on this 13 km walk along the GSWW in relatively balmy conditions. The walk was punctuated by a little exploration of The Springs; numerous stops looking for whales, that we apparently missed by minutes at the Blowhole; searching for seals, of which we could spy only a handful; and lots of stops checking out the fabulous ocean vistas/photo stops. And of course, there was coffee and cake at the Café to conclude our day. Great company was provided by walkers Lothar and Chris, Shirley, Mary, and visitor Helen O.

Dina



Beeripmo Circuit: Saturday 26 August

Walkers : Coralie (coordinator), Mabel, Jim, Rob, Lothar, Ken, Shirley; Jane, Margaret; Carolyn

Participants from Warrnambool Bushwalkers, Grampians Bushwalking Club and Launceston Walking Club met at Richards Campground at 9.15 am on a foggy overcast Saturday morning. A quarter of an hour later we were on our way. The Beeripmo Track immediately ascends through tall eucalypt forest, the slopes dense with ferns and bracken. We stopped for a breather at the lookout point beyond Raglan Falls.

The track continued up over Cave Hill and onto Mt Sugarloaf. Shrill calls from the sulphur crested cockatoos echoed. From Grevillea Lookout, Mt Langi Ghiran and the wind turbines on Chalicum Hills stood out. Mt Ararat was shrouded in cloud. Hang gliders launch from the weathered granite rocks of this lookout, but not today.

Lunch at the wet Beeripmo campground was warmed by jet-boiled hot drinks, served by Coralie. We bypassed the side trip to Mt Buangor, continued on to cross Mt Cole Road, then started the long descent through Long Gully. 100 foot tall gums towered above. Several fallen trunks crossed our foot track—with acrobatic manoeuvres we strode these hurdles. Laughing kookaburra calls resonated announcing our safe return to Richards at 4.15 pm, our 17 km walk complete. Thanks for such a good day of walking in friendly company.

Margaret and Carolyn



Trip Reports

The Cutting and Kellys Swamp: Saturday 2 September

Walkers: Rob (leader), Lothar, Coralie, Dina, Jim, Mary, Ross and guest Simone

The threat from an overcast sky was cast aside by trust in modern technology: the heavy rain on the weather radar was far away. Our faith was justified: we had a mainly sunny walk which finished two hours before some rain came. We met at Levys Point, piled into two cars and drove passed the rendering plant for 3 km to the start for the walk. The walk went as previewed: a kilometre along the track to the beach, a four kilometre beach bash, a bit softer sand than hoped, and six kilometres along the track to the south of Kellys Swamp, with a couple of short sections a little under water but easily bypassed. There were few birds, either on the beach or on the swamp.

The coastal wattle was about to flower, but other than some clematis, nothing in the flower department. The raucous frogs were by far the most abundant species—unseen but definitely not unheard. The keener members collected many plastic bottles and tins, together with a seat that acted as a carrying tray, and had fun sorting their booty at the end. Not one of the world's top thousand walks, but nonetheless a very pleasant way to spend the second morning of Spring.

Rob



Overnight on the Great Ocean Walk—the Easy Way! Princetown to Devils Kitchen and return: 9–10 September

Walkers: Janice (leader, scribe), Coralie, Mabel, Ross and Rob, with Lothar as a day-tripper.



If there is ever an “easy way” to do an overnight walk with a full pack, then this is it: a casual 2 hour stroll for the 7 km from Princetown to camp at Devils Kitchen on The Great Ocean Walk followed the next morning by an interesting circuit along the beach and back through the bush before collecting the packs and walking back to the cars. NO wonder it attracted one participant who had not carried a big pack for some years (decades even) and another two who were tentatively testing out injuries! Of course there are always those who will do things the hard(er) way and opt to add in an extra walk to the 12 Apostles as a warm up. Lothar walked in more than half way and then, obviously confident we were on the right track and safe to leave to our own devices, returned to his car.

With the tide out on Wreck Beach there was plenty to see on Sunday morning: numerous blue bottles, the unusual find of a cuttlefish in full body, interestingly shaped rocks, pounding seas, and the anchors themselves. We were back in camp in time for a leisurely morning tea, ate lunch at the Rivenoak Guest House site, and enjoyed good coffee and cake in Port Campbell on the way home. Thanks to the team for their good company. Contrary to our recent experiences, it was a relief that the only misadventure on this walk was the leech bite on my big toe (taking it for the team).



Mount Abrupt working bee: Saturday 16 September

Navvies: Rob (nominal foreman, reporter), Lothar, Jim, Coralie, Ross, Maxine; David (real foreman, Grampians walking track support group), Kyle (Parks Vic)

A soggy week was capped off with a foreboding 10 mm of rain lulling us to sleep the night before. The actual day was perfect. View good and at least 15 species were in flower. Unfortunately snipping plants would not be our activity—the trees across the track had been cleared for August's *Peaks & Trail* runs. Our fate for the day could be summed up in one word: drains.

We met at the Abrupt car park at 9:30, complied with the red tape, donned fluoro vests, collected our digging equipment, and set off to watch Kyle's "Improved drain design 101" demo after which he left. So, then we set off, you know, like, digging drains, like for four hours: 148 of the blighters was Ross's count when we walked out. Drain digging had stopped a little before the highest point we reached, the saddle on the ridge. It was a useful day's work we did for the Park so thanks to all who came. And, as Coralie's photos show, a nicer band of desperados you wouldn't want to come across on a dark night.



Mounts Noorat, Leura and Elephant: Sunday 24 September

Initially, the weather didn't seem too bad, the sun was out and the wind was only moderately strong! So off we set, first to the top of Mt. Noorat, where a few hats were blown off, as well as some walkers feeling they could be blown off their feet. Half of the company circumnavigated the rim of the mount, while the rest escaped the gales by descending to the car park.

Next, we tackled the Sugarloaf, near Camperdown, managing to ascend and descend just as the weather closed in and we were forced to escape the rain and wind at the shelter near the saddle, where we had lunch. Eventually, the rain cleared and we bolted for Mt. Leura. Despite the conditions, good views of the western plains were visible from all our peaks.

It was decided to beat a strategic retreat to a bakery in Camperdown, rather than tackle Mt. Elephant, which we will just have to tackle some other time! The company consisted of Rob, Lothar, Jim, Shirley, Ken, Mary and visitors Sawako and Toni.

Dina



Trip Reports

The **thoughts** of the thirteen walkers who met at **Wyperfeld** NP's Wonga campground for the long weekend of **28 September to 1 October**:

Lothar: No food disasters, great weather, great company and great support from all. Big wide open spaces, campfires. Terrific bonus to see daughter and family.

Chris: A lovely bunch of happy, cooperative people. Big views. Rippling grasses. Stars. Owls and willie wagtails calling after dark. And one of the best things of all, the heart melting sight of two dear little girls running excitedly towards us, arms outstretched for hugs. On the downside, so many zippers to unzip and (sigh) re-zip at night.

Ken, Shirley: Wonderful company, fantastic food, delightful wildflowers, melodious morning birdcalls. Top weekend.

Liz: The highlight for me was getting to know new club members Shirley, Ken and Ross. Also the beautiful wildflowers—spring is definitely a great time to visit Wyperfeld.

Mike 📷: I really enjoyed coming to Wyperfeld in spring, with the wildflowers and shrubs in bloom. It was also great company with people with skills and knowledge of birds and plants. Many thanks to Lothar and Chris for their work and organisation, making the weekend very enjoyable.

Ross: “WYPERFELD” you welcomed me with your carpet of splendid colour, rolling sand hills habited with birds a-plenty and wild life to accompany my journey. You awoke me every day by conducting the choir of bird recitals as the sun hastened forth another day of splendid walking. The up and personal encounter of two magnificent wedge tail eagles on day three will always be held in awe. I left you with my foot prints in the sand and you gave me great memories that will ensure that I will return again to relive the experience of my first visit.

Dina: Despite Wyperfeld being a semi arid park, I really enjoyed the variety of its landscape and vegetation, especially the clumps of reddish coloured grasses, moving with the breeze.



Rob 📷: The highlight was probably seeing two wedge-tailed eagles leave their cypress pine roost at dawn on Flagstaff Hill. A close second was finding that the light haze of “smoke” in the cypress pines behind the campsite was from puffs of cypress pine pollen. And of course there were a few “F” words: frost free, flowering flora, fine food, fascinating fires, and fabulous friends. Oh yes, an after thought, the unseen emu with incredible self-control.

Linda, Irene: Coralie drank 1 bottle of wine each night (albeit Piccolos); Irene nearly walked over a snake; camp fires were fabulous; food was spectacular; wild flowers were beautiful; and walks were varied and took you through different ecosystems within the park.

Coralie 📷: The food is always a highlight. Under Lothar's stewardship the team works efficiently to produce top-notch meals. Thanks to all those involved in the preparation and delivery. The other highlight was the health of the park. Spring is probably the best time to visit as the wildflowers are abundant and the animals are making the most of the available food and water before summer arrives.

Helen: Again, the tranquillity of the park restored my soul. The meadows of yellow flowers amongst the trees and the bronze grass fronds blowing in the breeze made walking a joyful experience.

All: A huge thank you to Lothar for the teas and organisation, Linda for the breakfasts, and Ross's chooks for the eggs.

