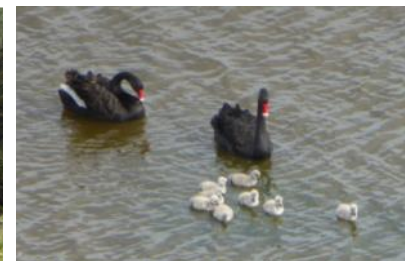
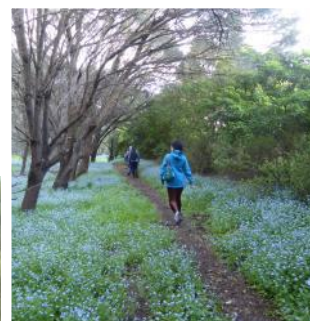


Circumnavigate Tower Hill's crater: Saturday 7 October

Walkers: Rob (leader), Dina, Maxine and guests Toni and Sam

This 3 hour, 9 km walk is roughly equal parts of road bash, foot track, and roo-enhanced off-track, and has good views all the time. By starting at the lookout at the northern end of the crater, the road bash was split into two bursts. Soon we were walking along a most picturesque track below the crater rim, in a glorious sea of blue, albeit forget-me-nots and echium. Up to the road at another lookout, along the fence (passing an emu and chicks which strangely enough escaped the camera), in through the exit gate, some more along the rim, and into the park again at the entrance. The promise of many kangaroos was more than adequately kept, with a bonus two swans and eight cygnets in the lake below. The short box thorn section at the southern end provided more of a fight than usual. After that, it was easy walking around the west side, first on grass, then beside the road. Thanks to those that came on the walk.

Rob



The 16th St Arnaud Saints & Sinners Bicycle Ride Weekend: 14–15 October

The Warrnambool contingent: Coralie 📷, Heather, Lester, Liz, Mike 📷 and Rob 📷✍️

Over the years the routes have passed many churches (for saints) and many hotels (for sinners)—hence the name. This year the rides went from St A to Rheola (95 km return) and Coonooer Bridge (45 km return). The entry fee included a breakfast, two lunches, and a dinner, all extremely well catered for by local groups.

Our drive to the St Arnaud camping ground would have been quicker if we'd seen the “road closed at Rossbridge” warning at Lake Bolac. On Friday night we went to the Sporting Club. Its dessert menu had five items, all with “ice cream” in their title. *They had no ice cream*, save for a single serve of Neapolitan which the two addicts shared.

Mike and two of his sisters (non-riding, visiting St A 60-years-on) caught up with many childhood friends; a font of info for the rest of us.

Only one hill to curse breathlessly at. Weather perfect. We saw some fascinating old buildings as well as pleasant scenery ranging from crops to dry goldfields forest, and even some large granite outcrops. The only blooms were the ubiquitous gazanias beside the roads. A good time was had by all of the 60+ riders. Many thanks to the organiser, Flo, and her team for a most enjoyable and well run weekend.



The ice cream syndicate, clean and fresh at the Court House start, the first water stop at the Logan Pub, Liz’s triumphant arrival for lunch in the Rheola Hall, morning tea at Coonooer Bridge, and, for the orchid lovers among you, the show in the grand town hall.



Mt Napier and Mt Eccles: Saturday October 21

Two major concerns emerged from the Lava Canal Walk at Mt Eccles. The first was the presence of leeches, which were frequently found on various members of the group particularly the tailenders, and caused much excitement/angst and provoked a constant stream of discussion, yelps and even the odd little scream. However, only one small leech actually latched on (see photo Jim's ankle and reference leech).

The second concern was the difficulty with finding the track, as it was very overgrown (? due to spring rains). The track petered out towards the end of the Lava Canal, necessitating a bit of a bush bash and rock climb up the side of the canal to continue the walk, not on the agenda at all!! The leader also missed the steps going to Mt. Eccles for the same reason.

The climb up to the top of Mt. Napier was very straight forward with no such excitements, and with a fabulous view of the plains. Coffee at the Nursery Café in Koroit was our reward, with the comment to Mary from one of the patrons there that "you've got my blood", being very apt in light of our morning's experiences. Thanks to the cheerful, chatty group of Jim, Gwenda and David 📷, Ken and Shirley, Mary, and Maxine for a very enjoyable day.

Dina 📷



A Mt Eccles trip is always a good excuse to remind members of the Club's reference leech (centre) and Jim's sock (left) from Mt Eccles in 2013. Jim's sock (right) shows he wasn't even trying today!



GOW Ryans Den: 28–29 October

Participants: Coralie (leader 📷🔪), Ross, Rob 📷, Marg, Mabel and Janice

We left the Gables Carpark mid-morning and set off on the path to Moonlight Head. The track followed a pleasantly forested route with quite a steep gully to one side. Wildflowers, including a small patch of Spider Orchids, lined our route. We climbed gently, stopping briefly for a snack at the access road to Moonlight Head.

From here on the going was tougher. The day was quite warm and humid and there was less shelter as we descended, then climbed again in quick succession. Lunch was called at the top of a rise leading out of “The Badlands”. Refreshed, but with some gear still underperforming, we pushed on to Cape Volney. Here the route dropped away sharply to the ocean and there were some stunning viewpoints.

Arriving at the Ryan’s Den Campsite mid-afternoon we were soon vying for the best tents sites. Despite Mabel’s dire warning that they were all booked, we managed to spread-eagle ourselves across a fair number of the available campsites. However, we had formed a cunning plan to compact ourselves if the worst should happen and a party of ten were to arrive later, looking for spaces. A cuppa in the shelter revived our spirits and we were all eager to set out, sans pack, to conquer Milanesia Beach. As this section had a couple of wooden stepped areas, the lighter loads were appreciated.

At one stage, a tiger snake made sure Mabel respected its right to cross the path in front of her. This was the third one to be sighted that day. It was also Mabel’s second “excitement” for the day. Unfortunately, modesty prevents me from retelling the story about her first, which involving a young male and his walking attire. Feel free to ask her in person, however.

Since we reached Milanesia Beach in the late afternoon, we could only spend a few minutes enjoying the scenery before the leader cracked the whip and ordered the return to camp. Back at Ryan’s Den, Janice was eagerly awaiting our arrival (to show off her new, green backpack!). In the fading light we cooked our supper and retired to bed, satisfied we had done a fair day’s hike.

In the morning, Marg encountered a cricket in her gaiter. Then we retraced our steps and lunched at The Gables before returning home.

Coralie



Terang to Warrnambool via Ellerslie: Wednesday 8 November

Riders: Rob 📷, Helen R, Mike, Coralie plus Herb 📷, Lester, Mike 2, Rob 2 and Richard

The preview describing this train-enhanced Wednesday ride was: *Ellerslie bridge & cemetery reserve: stranded Manna Gums and River Red-gums upstream and down are last remnants of Riparian Woodland. Swamp Weed and other aquatics thrive under the heritage listed bridge built in 1867. What a perfect spot for lunch! Or not, as the case may be. Whatever, this Wednesday is your chance to find out with a 71 km ride.*

We shall met at Warrnambool Station at 9 am and load bikes onto the train which leaves at 9:18. Bring your Seniors card if you are so blessed to reduce the cost of the fare to Terang from \$5 to \$2.50. We will then ride the 6 km to Noorat for a coffee at The Shed. Another 24 km will see us whiz through The Sisters to reach the Hopkins River and Highway at Ellerslie for lunch. The return to Warrnambool Railway Station is 40 km: 12 km to the Hopkins River at Fram, another 16 km to Wangoom General Store (ice cream perhaps?), and the familiar final 12 km back to the 'Bool.

And so all of that came to pass, in most pleasant weather. The Ellerslie roadside reserve exceeded expectation with its [historic bridge](#), a picnic table, a shelter, a hot plate and (of possibly great interest to distressed travellers on the Hopkins Highway) a loo. A grand day out.

Rob



12 Apostles to Princetown: Saturday 11 November

Amblers: Linda (leader), Lothar, David, Ken, Shirley, Rob

This walk has been done often, and as usual it was a most pleasant walk, even though the day was warmish with the view spoilt a little by sea spray haze. Linda's plan was for herself to only go one way since she had to get back to town early and that we should do the return walk by ourselves. A very good plan, and one we were more than happy to do. But as I said it was warm. A possibly cooler alternative formulated itself over lunch at Princetown: follow the road and beach along the eastern bank of the Gellibrand River down to its mouth. An added benefit was that it was something new for most of us. We walked to the mouth and then east to the end of the beach. Our great puzzle was "What was the concrete structure next to a cave in the cliff?" Google eventually found the answer in a [1997 report](#):

A19 Point Ronald tunnel and breakwater, Princetown.

A river diversion tunnel to the ocean through Point Ronald at the mouth of the Gellibrand River was built in 1909 to aid flood control in the river valley, but was not successful as sand built up in the tunnel. The tunnel is the only known example of this kind of coastal engineering in Victoria.

Rob



The old end of the GOW; grass trees; Point Ronald from the end of the beach; the tunnel and works.



Halls Gap: 16–19 November

Participants: Linda, Lothar 📷, Ken, Shirley, Maxine.

Despite some confusion upon arrival Lothar and I set up camp not far from the camp kitchen on the Thursday afternoon. Ken and Shirley arrived not long after. For dinner that night we went to the hotel. We were all extremely happy with our meals.

The next morning was a beautiful day. We drove to Borough Huts for the start of our 17 km walk up to Mount Rosea along one of the tracks developed for the new trail. The track was well cleared and had quite a constant incline. As we neared the top we had to start rock scrambling to get to the top. A break for lunch was in order. By this time it was starting to warm up considerably.



The journey back was by the same route and by now it was quite warm so frequent stops for water were needed. In total the trip took 6 hours. The bush was pristine with native grasses starting to seed, some lovely flowers, and Lothar spotted the odd orchid. That night we had tea at the camp ground beside a camp fire.

The next day was even warmer so we decided to do two half-day walks. The first walk was to be to Chitaqua Peak, however the track which we wanted to use was closed due to expansion for the new Grampians Walk. So plan 'B' was enacted. We went back through the Botanical Gardens to Venus Baths then up to the track from there that led us to the Peak. It was still early morning but the temperature was quite hot so not all our party could make it to the top.

That afternoon became very hot so a mutual decision was made to rest. Our evening meal was at the Indian Restaurant. I am so glad we booked. It was packed. The food was delicious. Just as we were finishing our meal a thunderstorm came through: we had to delay our departure because we had walked from the camp ground.

The following morning saw us pack up, after a walk out to the Brambuk Centre. Thank you to those that came, we had a great time, perhaps not quite as much walking as we hoped but sometimes you just have to look after each other and be safe.

Linda



Kangaroo Island Wilderness Trail: 16–22 November

Five of us, *Coralie* 📷, *Janice*, *Mabel*, *Ross* and *Rob* 📷, and the two walkers who set off on the same day, *Jordyn* and *Jarrad*, had a great time carrying their packs along this 5-day 66 km 13-month old www.kangarooislandwildernesstrail.sa.gov.au. Suffice it say that the walk heads west from the Flinders Chase Visitors Centre through forest to the coast, then south along the cliff tops before turning east through a variety of forest types and cliff tops to end at Kelly Hill Caves, and a suitable photo op.

From the first contact with the rangers at the Visitors Centre it is apparent that the walk has been carefully planned with bushwalker's enjoyment and comfort in mind. One map covering the whole route and a book covering the flora, fauna, geology, and the back story of the main sites visited is included in the \$161 price, as well as a tour of the caves and a shower at the end of the walk.

Each day's walk has been designed to include at least one main attraction such as the Remarkable Rocks. The route is easy to follow with distinctive KIWT markers. The track has been constructed to a generally high standard though the cliff top walking on an uneven, limestone surface had some people grumbling.

The four campsites kitchens show a similar robust layout and construction but have been individualised by some fancy artwork. Each campsite is named after a plant in its area and the entrance gate and picnic tables have these leaves or flowers cut into the metal supports. There were also wooden recliners and seats sited in shady or picturesque spots.



A sink in the kitchen with a tap was a most useful feature and when working the water filter to replenish water bottles will be appreciated, especially in hot weather.

The most fortuitous mishap was Janice's hat (arrowed) blowing into the South West River during the pull-on-the-rope boat crossing. This enticed her into the river. Others soon followed, not once but twice. From this you may conclude it was hot: the first day had occasional ignorable drizzle, day two was pleasant, but the last three were hot, around 36°.



We did see some kangaroos, but the highlight from the animal kingdom was the most adorable young echidna snuffling around oblivious to the stares of us and another party of 20. The next contender was Coralie's swarm of bees by the track. We could have wasted much more time than we did watching New Zealand fur seals—some lying indolently on the granite boulders, other pairs in very vigorous games of bizzo and “not onto my rock”. The starfish and crabs in the rock pools of Sandersons Beach weren't to be missed. Dodging goannas on the track was the main interaction with reptiles—only a few skinks and no snakes at all. There were ants. Too many flowers to show a picture of a couple without offending the rest.



Tower Hill: Saturday 25 November

Walkers: David, Gwenda, Mary

Three members left the Information Centre Car Park at 8.30 am for a walk on Tower Hill Island in pleasant walking conditions. From the car park, we followed the path towards Fairy Island and then completed the Lava Tongue Boardwalk.

Exiting from the boardwalk, we turned right and followed the Lake Edge Path and walked anti-clockwise around the lake, passing Hat Island, and then turned left and walked passed Wagon Bay.

At the northern end of Wagon Bay, we turned left to follow the path of the "Journey to the Last Volcano", and then walked anti-clockwise around its crater. After that we followed the path back to the Information Centre.

We continued past the opposite side of Wagon Bay to the Lake Edge Path and followed this anti-clockwise to a track that took us to Yatt Mirng Crater. From here we climbed the path to Tower Hill peak, before returning to the Information Centre by the roadside path.

It was a most pleasant walk: hearing the croaking of numerous frogs, seeing abundant birdlife and many emus, kangaroos and wallabies. Unusually, a koala was spotted in a she oak tree. We saw a number of shingleback lizards, but no snakes!!!! And it was mentioned no leeches!!

On completion of this short 2.5 hour walk a most welcome coffee & cake was had at the Garden Cafe near the crater edge.

David

