

## Canoe trip, Hopkins River: 8 April

*Participants: Bill & Geoff.*

Bill and I had a very enjoyable short paddle from the Hopkins Falls to Allansford on Saturday morning. We started just below the falls paddling only a few meters before we had to portage over about twenty meters of loose rocks. After that it was plain sailing apart from the odd log protruding or lying just below the water. The day was perfect for paddling, not a breath of wind and the water was so clear we could see the weed on the bottom of the river. Bill saw a platypus and there were some swans. The Hopkins has high banks so it's hard to establish where you are so our arrival at Allansford announced by the cars on Prince's Highway.

*Geoff.*

## Mt Difficult Range: Briggs Bluff & Mt Difficult , April 15-16

**Walkers:** Coralie (leader), Caroline, Carolyn, Margaret, Nick & Lothar

We met at Roses Gap, arranged a car shuttle by leaving two cars at Troopers Creek, then set out with overnight packs along and up the track to Beehive Falls where the creek is crossed over on a newly constructed bridge. We then scrambled up and out of the gully and walked across sandstone terrain, then up and onward to Briggs Bluff. We reached the campsite mid afternoon, pitched tents and empty-handed we walked onto the summit which affords marvellous views of the Northern Grampians. We watched a cheeky brilliant red-breasted robin show off as it flitted about the rocks of the high peak. Grampians mint bushes offered fragrances as we brushed against them on our return to the campsite. I collected some scrappy wood but we didn't need a campfire after all as each of us was happy cooking on a fuel stove before the skies darkened after sundown. Later, by torchlight, we explored the track to Deep Gully and we looked out towards the lights of Stawell on the horizon. The waxing moon sailed in and out of view as clouds moved across the sky.

By 9am next morning we were packed and ready to start walking. We left our packs and explored Deep Gully passing several small campsites and seeing that this area could be a site for us to explore further some other time. There should be tracks that would take one closer to the caves set in the tall cliffs beyond.

Instead we returned to pick up the packs and continue across the range towards Mt. Difficult. Last Summer a bushfire raged in the area and the new growth was emerging from charred remains. We dropped our packs and climbing to the summit of Mt. Difficult and from there could look across to Mt William and east to Mt. Langi Ghiran on the horizon. A pair of wedged tailed eagles were soaring effortlessly overhead. We added more stones to the summit cairn before descending to the lunch spot back on the track.

The walk was spectacular before we descended in zig-zag fashion from the range, huge rocky cliffs towering down on us. Then we followed the steep descent past Wind Cave and on to Troopers Creel to our waiting cars. Thanks to Coralie for leading us to great heights in the Northern Grampians, and to the group for such a good weekend.

Marg



## **Dunkeld, Grampians, 23–25 April**

**Walkers:** *Marg, Caroline, Ken, Trevor*

Marg, Ken, Trevor & Carolyn spent two night camped at Dunkeld campground, comfortable and cosy in the caravan, whilst Trevor slept in his tent. The perpetual campfire light added to our comfort.

Sunday we drove to Jimmy's Creek campsite and took the walking track which crossed the Wannan River and intersected with the Ingleton Track which we crossed and continued up and on to the Serra Road. Here we interrupted the loop walk and took the overgrown track opposite until it petered out. We climbed and clambered over rocks until we rejoined the track close to the main elevation of the area and from there we looked out to Mt. William. Returning to the Serra road we descended for 1.4 km to the intersection with the Ingleton track which we followed for 2.6 km through the forest back to the turn off to the campsite.

Monday, armed with Coralie and Dianne's walk notes, we drove to the turn off at Borough Huts and up along Redman Road, parked at Seven Dials Road signpost. We walked along an overgrown jeep track in Long Gully following the creek bed and on to Tunnel Track that ascends and offers good views of Lake Bellfield. We had lunch at the top of the ridge then descended to an old hut that told of the history of Stawell's water supply, which was piped from the area. The track then leads to a rough road that climbs steeply on and upward following the ridgeline of the Mt. William range and the rocky Mt Cassel. The track proceeds past The Dome and meets up with the Redman Track.

Tuesday morning we climbed the majestic Mt. Abrupt. It was a clear morning but hazy to the north. The peaks along the Serra Range and Mt William beyond were prominent rising up above white clouds.

For me, I never tire of The Grampians as a walking venue as the weather and seasons always offer change of mood, temperature and atmosphere. Just like the golfer has a new challenge each time he plays a familiar course and needs to take in to account the wind and seasonal state of the course.

Thanks to my family for an enjoyable camp at Dunkeld this Easter.

*Marg.*

## Cappuccino walk: 30 April

"Cappuccino walk. 2-3 hour walk starts at 2pm at Proudfoot's boathouse - come earlier if you're having prewalk drinks. Walk to Hopkins river mouth, behind sand dunes to the Flume, along the newish concrete path to FiSh Sails cAfe, and then return via a similar (or Cafe Royale) route to The Stables. Some sand, mostly bitumen/concrete paths. Pit stops by consensus." S-2-2

**Walkers:** Anne, Bill, Judy (& baby), Lothar (leader), Marg, Retea, Sandra, Tony, Val, plus 4 guests

**Report:** The windy conditions and overnight rain had cleared and it was a beautiful day. At 1:30pm I arrived at Proudfoot's Tea Rooms, ordered a Cappuccino, and sat in the sun waiting for the others to arrive. It was just gorgeous by the water even though the area was a little boxed in - the river was still blocked at the mouth and the water level was very high and flooded the paths around the boathouse. I'd expected about 6 walkers to show up but by the time we left at about 2pm we were 13+1/2! (In fact we should have been 2 more but we had a couple of sickies - Lois & Chris). The walk along the river past Lyndoch was closed due to the flooding and so we walked the longer way around Lyndoch. We managed to walk past the Stables without doing a lefty, and then at the Hopkins Bridge headed up the river track to the mouth. There we briefly took in the view before heading back along the road to the start of the Shipwreck trail. We diverged (to climb the steps leading to the peak with the trig point) and then continued along the track behind the sand dunes until we reached the Flume area. At this point the concrete path began and the going was a little easier.

By the time we got to Fish Sails we were all thirsty. The (inside) table booked for 6 was added to to accomodate 13. Peter and the 2 other children also turned up to take other table. The Warrnambool Walkers had taken over the place! Chips & salad, cake, cappuccinos, soft drink, ice cream . . . have I left out any other treats we consumed? During our 40 minute pit stop we were also entertained by a few men setting up a very marque outside - they were getting ready for the breakfast with the (horse) stars as part of race week.

At about 4pm we decided to just retrace our steps and leave the other cappuccino stops (until the next time?). Our number was now depleted by 3 but we had Peter and the 2 kids join us for part of the return journey. We briefly stopped at Granny's Grave, and took a slightly different track to the top of a hill overlooking East Warrnambool and the Hopkins River area. In another 10 minutes we were back at the boathouse.

It had been a very sociable and enjoyable afternoon and one which I'm sure many of us will want to walk and drink to again.

*Lothar*



## Lake Elizabeth, Otway State Park: 6 May

*Walkers: Caroline (leader), Bill, Claire, Glenda, Irene, John, Lothar, Margaret, Stephanie and Vivianne*



## Chimney Pots (& Mt Thackeray), Grampians: 20–21 May

**Walkers:** Wayne (leader), Bill, Debbie, Diane, Lothar, Marg, Ron, Sandra, Sandy, Tony

### Lothar's report:

Bill drove Marg, Ron and myself to the Chimney Pots via Dunkeld, Victoria Valley Rd, Jensens Rd, and Glenelg River Rd. We were the first there and so had hot drinks and biscuits/cake while we waited. When we were all there Wayne and Bill did a quick car shuffle to leave Wayne's 4WD at Strachan's Hut.

Published references to the walk describe it as a "short but steep walk through redgum and stringy bark forest". And so it was. As we proceeded the drizzle got heavier and heavier, it seemed to get colder, and the visibility decreased. Just what we expected! We took the left fork (to circle the Temple in a clockwise direction) and later paused near some cliffs for a photo opportunity. At "the top" the brave continued to scramble up even higher on the steep wet cliff face of the Temple to get a good look at the views. (Later Wayne described the [views from the top](#) as incredible, so to speak). Anyway while this was happening, the rest of us waited huddled under/beside boulders/cliffs to shelter from the rain. The half hour wait was most enjoyable - we watched waterfalls appearing on cliff faces and chimney stacks, and there was much excited chatter particularly from the group huddled under the boulders. When they finally emerged they revealed the very latest in shell wear. The one-off sack looking garment was modelled by and designed for Tony who had started out in shorts and Polo shirt but now was... anyway, Paddy Pallin, eat your heart out!

Wayne, Sandy, Diane and Debby (on her first club walk) then headed off into the scrub to bush bash to Strachan's Hut via a round about route while the rest of us completed the circuit. The descent was steeper but we got back to the vehicles unscathed.

We drove to Strachan's Hut picnic area and had a very pleasant lunch sitting around one of the tables. The rain had also cleared. Tony is a local to the area and knew most of the tracks. So he had another excursion planned. After lunch all 6 of us climbed into Tony & Sandra's 4WD and headed along Sawmill Tk and then Victoria Range Rd (a 4WD track) to the car park near Mt Thackeray. It only took a couple of minutes for Tony to find the start of the path to Mt Thackeray. It led us N-NW (or thereabouts) past Mt Thackeray before doubling back and leading us up to the summit. The views from the top were fantastic and a highlight of the day. Across the valley the Fortress looked spectacular.



After returning to the 4WD we continued along the Victoria Range Rd to Goat Tk, turned right, and shortly afterwards stopped at the car park leading to the aboriginal shelter. The shelter is now well protected by cyclone fencing. We then continued along Goat Tk and then (I think) Syphon Rd and Glenelg River Rd back to Strachan's Hut. By the time we had afternoon tea it was 4:45pm and the other's hadn't as yet emerged from the bush. But as we had every confidence in their abilities, we packed up and drove home (following Tony & Sandra via Bullawin Rd, Middle Crossing Rd, and Cavendish Rd back to known territory).

Many thanks to Wayne for organising the weekend and to Bill and Tony for their driving. I thoroughly enjoyed the day! I'm also looking forward to a future club walk to the Fortress.

### **Sandy's report:**

In the bleak, wet conditions as we peered out across the Victoria Range which was shrouded in fog, it was with some hesitation that I bade farewell to the others who had chosen to do the walk to the chimney pots and return that evening to the comfort of their own beds and other similar luxuries. The fleeting thought/vision of a cappuccino or a glass of red wine in front of a roaring log fire was almost enough to make me break ranks and join "the others".

However the anticipation and challenge of the unknown once again overrode rationality. As we headed off through the dense and very wet scrub I could almost hear the words of "once more into the breach" ringing in my ears and later these same words became almost deafening as I dragged myself, yet again, from the vertical to the horizontal position! I had to keep reminding myself that this just had to be the Aussie equivalent of "tramping". One just had to be careful that it was not them that were being trampled!

For Debbie (the new member) this was almost a "baptism by fire" introduction to the Club's activities but I feel it would take more than this type of walk to even slightly extend her or ruffle her calm and competent demeanour.

Diane, in her element of course, just surged ahead with almost audible squeals of delight. As I had recently seen the movie "Gladiator" I had time to reflect on some of the content and to muse over some seeming similarities as we forced our way ahead to defeat the enemy. Maybe there could be some advantages in including one of those combat shields in my next grab bag of "bush necessities"!



The combination of the terrain and the prevailing weather conditions certainly made this a hard walk and for me being “sense of direction challenged” I was once again impressed by our leader’s navigational skills (ably assisted by Diane) and his extensive knowledge and experience of the Grampians. Often when I discuss my activities (antics) with some of my colleagues they simply shake their heads and mutter such things as “rocks in your head”. It’s hard to explain often to those who have never had, or wanted these experiences, exactly why you enjoy these sorts of activities. To me this area of the Grampians is particularly awesome and one cannot but feel humbled in such a magnificent and pristine wilderness.

Last year I travelled through Zion National Park and the Bryce Canyon in southern Utah. There I experienced the magical and almost “spiritual” atmosphere that envelopes you surrounded by the spectacular rock formation. For me this feeling is comparable to how I feel when I spend time in the Grampians.

Eventually we emerged triumphant and made our weary way to “the truck:”. That night revived by hot food and warmed by yet another magnificent Pyro-Binney fire, we watched the majestic full moon come up and reflected on the day’s activities. Earlier I experienced first hand the effectiveness of salt on an unsuspecting pleasure-seeking leech.

Next day, being sun, we had the luxury of a “lie in” –except for Diane who unfortunately had been up and down all night but this time it was not due to “the virus” but some other virulent bug. After a leisurely breakfast with pancakes cooked by Wayne and complete with maple syrup, we loaded up “the truck” and headed off to the Fortress.

Lunch was had overlooking majestic and rugged Victoria Range. The fog and mist had cleared sufficiently to provide us with magnificent views in a wide panorama.

As we headed for home I couldn’t help but feel somewhat despondent having to leave that uplifting natural environment and once again return to the “big smoke”.

Thank you Wayne for taking the time out of a very busy schedule to lead this walk and to Diane, and Debbie for your great company and love of the bush. I look forward to our next challenge together.

Leader’s note: Thanks to the “team” for making this challenging walk into an enjoyable experience. The downpour certainly made some parts of the cross-country walk more eventful than expected.

## Daylesford and Hepburn Springs: 27–28 May

*Walkers: Lothar (leader), Chris, Helen, Steph, and Judy, Peter and the 3 kids*



## Mount Cole: 3–4 June

*Walkers: John, Glenda, Anne, Doug, Lothar, Marg, Carolyn and Merran.*

### Day 1

We arrived at Ditchfield Camp and waited for the others to come. Lunch was eaten and then the walk commenced in fine sunny conditions. We started down a logging track which was quite easy until close to the end. We then walked down the escarpment where the track got steeper. A rest was at Richards Hut. The weather had changed to a fine drizzle. We followed the creek for a short while, then the climb up the escarpment began, passing Robs Waterfalls. The views from the top were magnificent and worth the long climb up. (Ed: I distinctly remember leeches along here!) Shortly after we reached the starting point, thus completing a circuit. The moist conditions made checking for leeches necessary. Merran, Marg, Carolyn and Lothar headed home.

The hut that we had planned to stay in was occupied, so we stayed the night at Richards Hut instead. While Glenda and Anne organised the hut, John and I went looking for firewood and found that cutting firewood was harder than walking. The axe must have thought it was chopping ironwood instead of blackwood and lost its head. The effort provided us with a warm and comforting fire. It kept the chill off the cold night air most efficiently.

### Day 2

After a hearty breakfast we headed towards Mugwamp Hut. We walked to Mount Buangor which was shrouded in mist which slowly cleared. Previous storm damage was seen, ferns were flattened and fallen trees and branches were a common sight. Lunch was at Mugwamp Hut. We then headed home.

Thank you John and Glenda for a well planned trip which was enjoyed by all who came.

*Doug Wilson*



## Great South West Walk: 11 June

**Walkers:** Murray, David, Marg, and all the rest

June 11<sup>th</sup> Camperdown Bushwalking Club celebrated their 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary by walking the whole of the Great South West Walk (between Portland & Nelson) in one day. In relay, walkers completed the 250 kilometre track.

We met at the Discovery Bay Centre in Portland and were paired off in three's and transported to our starting points by the generous Friends of the G.S.W.W. Sam drove Murray, David & I to Moleside Camp – the long way round as he was chatting so enthusiastically he missed at least one turn-off! Moleside is just off the Nelson-Winnap Road where the Glenelg River flows deep & gently, just a pair of ducks making ripples in the calm waters.

Our walk took us in an easterly direction, through native Stringybark, Coastal Wattle, She Oak and scrub forest. Pink & white heath, correa and yellow bottle-brush decorated the bush. We passed the Inkpot, a dark, deep and still pond which was probably a cave at some stage. At the edge of the forest we looked out across cleared paddocks and pine plantations to probably Mt Scank on the horizon.

The walking track, cleared for 5-6 feet, meandered on crossing a couple of creeks, Harris Road and later Heath Road then past Mt. Van Dyke. On the forest floor was an amazing number of coloured fungi, colours ranging from grey, fawn, pink, orange, vivid yellow and deep purple. We know that none of these were to be harvested for a culinary delight, they are all fascinating yet toxic and to be left undisturbed.

Sam was there to meet us at Fitzroy Camp later in the afternoon, we'd completed 21.2 kilometres of the Walk. We stopped off to see Ralph's Bridge that crosses the Surray River Gorge where massive Blackwoods and Swamp Gums tower over the ferns. We spotted a lone koala here.

We headed back to the Narrawong Campground to catch up with thirty odd walkers and Portland friends and to be treated to a hot three course meal served to us in the Recreation shelter by the Camp owners. Afterwards we were entertained as each group skited about the highlights of the day: sightings of a dingo (in a collar?), thick snake coiled up by the track, those fascinating mushrooms, occasional bouts of being lost in the bush, wonderful seascapes, various birdlife and wallabies and no seals visible at the seal cave at Cape Bridgewater.

Jeff Collins organised a memorable walk and celebration, and I was delighted to be included. Thankyou Camperdown Bushwalkers!

*Marg.*

## All Peaks Challenge: 18 June

**Walkers:** *Herb, Diane, Stephen & Pat*

Driving from Mt Sturgeon to Mirranatwa Gap it is hard to believe that Warrnambool Walkers have set foot on all of the peaks up to this point or appreciate the hard work and time taken to achieve this as the car slips effortlessly along the bitumen. After camping at the 1<sup>st</sup> Wannon Creek Saturday night we began our journey from Mirranatwa Gap at 9.00am Sunday morning.

Herb had issued each person a well planned itinerary of the days events and with regular checks of the compass and GPS everything went according to plan. Magnificent views as the sun appeared from the clouds as we lunched on the top of Mt Nelson. A low cloud hovered over Mt Abrupt in the distance giving it a look of a volcano erupting. To the west was the black silhouette of the Victoria Range.

We paused to determine the position of Mt Thackeray. Then looked to the east at the Mt William Range. There was a whisper that it may be the next challenge-who knows?

After a steep decent from the Serra Range to the Ingleton Track we then bulldozed our way through the mud, streams and thick scrubby undergrowth of the Wannon River swampland to finally emerge on the Grampians Halls Gap Road.

Thanks, Herb for a well planned and executed walk and also to the other walkers for their company and assistance.

*Pat*

## Golf Day & walk at Peterborough: 18 June

**Participants:** Peter, Judy, Sam, Joshua, Kate, Ann, Doug, Barry, Lois, John, Glenda, Tony, Sandra, Ken, Marg

Members arrived at Peterborough Golf Clubhouse at around 10.30. Then in beautiful sunshine we walked along the beach front and watched the various people catching fish or having a surf in the water. Everybody enjoyed a BBQ lunch at the Peterborough Golf Clubhouse and then the golf match was played in teams of 4, the event was Ambrose foursome over 9 holes. The winning team by one stroke was Ken, Barry, Ann & Lois. The nearest to the pin competition was won by John.

After the golf match we all enjoyed coffee & cake for afternoon tea, the cake was made by Sandra, a beautiful pumpkin cake which was soon devoured. The weather was perfect for the entire day and the course was in good condition, after our coffee & cake everybody went for a stroll across the bridge over the Curdies River and around Peterborough.

To finish off a great day some of the walking members had tea at the Boggy Creek Pub which was most enjoyable. A great day was had by all the walking members.

*Ken.*

## Tower Hill: 25 June

**Walkers:** *Stephanie (leader), Carolyn, Peter & the boys (Samuel & Joshua), Vivian, Judy & baby Kate.*

Stephanie, Carolyn, Peter & the boys (Samuel & Joshua) cycled out to Tower Hill from Warrnambool Sunday morning. Conditions for riding were fairly good as it was a lovely sunny day with little wind.

They arrived at Tower Hill shortly before 12.00pm & were met there by Vivian, Judy & baby Kate. We sat down to a leisurely picnic and BBQ lunch. Stephanie took the boys off to go Koala spotting while we waited for the sausages to cook. After sighting a few they returned to be awarded with Caramello Koalas. Tower Hill was a popular picnic spot for many that day taking advantage of the sunny weather. Of course the emus were about & the children were delighted to chase them around the grounds.

After filling our bellies we decided to do the boardwalk circuit as we thought the “bridges” would maintain the boys interest in walking/running. Moving across the swampy undergrowth we could hear the croaking of many frogs, but made no sightings of them. We stopped beside a pile of rocks where Stephanie had previously seen a snake basking, though there was no sign of it today. Rounding the bend close to the boardwalk was a mother kangaroo & her joey. They appeared very unfazed by our presence & continued to lie in the sun. Further up the track another koala was spotted high in the branches of a gum tree. Soon afterwards we decided to follow a track which we thought would take us to a high vantage point overlooking the crater. In the end it did not so we decided to walk back down towards the bird hide. Here, peering through the peep holes we could see a number of water birds swimming in the water.

We made our way back to the picnic grounds had a cuppa & some eats and then departed for home some by car & the rest by bicycle.

Thank you to Stephanie for putting on the walk, it was a most enjoyable day.

*Judy.*