

GSWW from Cape Bridgewater Bay to Cape Nelson Lighthouse: 18 January

Walkers: Chris, Lothar, Mabel, Karen, Marg, Ken, Sandra, Tony and Dianne

The walkers met at the Cape Bridgewater kiosk to do a car shuffle. Chris and Lothar were going to walk the beach section of the walk so they were kind enough to take the drivers back to the start of the walk saving us from doing a car shuffle at the end of the day. We had sunny weather and a cool ocean breeze, perfect walking conditions. We started out along Cape Bridgewater beach led by pied oyster catchers and seagulls digging furiously in the low tide for worms – we thought they only ate chips. A couple of kilometers along and it was time to say farewell to Chris and Lothar and take the staircase up to the clifftop section of the walk.

The views from the clifftop were spectacular. Azure seas, spectacular rock formations and wild coastal heathland. The track ambled through lush vegetation with wildflowers still in bloom. It wasn't too long before we reached the Trewalla campsite complete with picnic bench and a viewing platform. Although we had only been walking for an hour and a half, we all agreed it would be a shame not to make good use of the facilities for lunch.

After lunch we still had more than half the walk to complete. We headed off through the bush and soon we were back on the beach. The rock formations and cliffs along this section were quite amazing. The sand under the cliffs had undermined much of the rocks and they looked like they could tip over at any time.

We had made good progress and started up a very, very steep and slippery sanddune to the cliff tops again. The terrain changed several times from pristine white rolling sand dunes, to the moonscape typical of the petrified forest nearby. Further along we were back in heathland and shady forest. We still couldn't see the Cape Nelson lighthouse but it couldn't be too far away.

As we ambled through some steep tracks we heard a cry for help. Sandra had tripped up and head butted a sharply pruned tree branch on the side of the track. First aid kits emerged from several packs as Mabel attended to Sandra's wound, a very large and deep gash to her forehead. Tony and Karen decided that we could walk on to the lighthouse to get his car and Sandra might be able to walk back to a dirt road 200 metres back on the track where she could meet the car. Little did we know that after an hours walk to the lighthouse and taking the car up a couple of tracks to find the rest of the group, Sandra had recovered and was quite capable of completing the walk. The party had waited about an hour for us and in the meantime had flagged down a local resident who gave them all a lift to the main road just in time to meet Tony's car rounding the corner.

Sandra was in fine spirits and we were all relieved that she had recovered so well. Tony took her to Port Fairy hospital where she received 11 (neat) stitches to her gash after half a tree and lots of dust had been cleaned out of the wound.

Despite our concern for Sandra, we had enjoyed a lovely walk. Many thanks to Mabel for doing a sterling first aid job and thanks to every one there who provided a myriad of first aid items, comfort and care for Sandra.

Karen

Byaduk Caves area: 25 January

Visited Tumuli cones (scoria cones) at Byaduk North, Byaduk Caves, and Mt Napier.



Grampians Jazz Festival Weekend 13-15/2

Plenty of fun was had at the Jazz parade, listening to Jazz music in the evenings, and even doing a walk in 35+ degree heat.



Relay for Life: 20–21 February

Walkers: Coralie, Diane, Dianne, Doris, Helen, Karen, Linda, Liz, Liz & Mike, Lothar, Marg

Friday 20th February saw the start of the second 2004 Relay for Life event at Deakin University, Warrnambool. In keeping with 2003 form it was a far bigger event this year. Once again the Warrnambool Walkers had a team in the Relay. Sporting our brand new highly sophisticated banner we were there to demonstrate our support to a great event. Unfortunately the weather was not so kind to us this year, the day that started out quite hot had turned cool and very very windy by 7.00pm. (The wind did give the new banner an excellent tryout – yes, it passed – must have been Mike's ingenious work in hammering in those stakes!!).

Despite the inclement weather a good time was had by all. The walkers were cheered by colleagues on the sidelines (funny how as the red wine dwindled - the cheers increased!). Even in the middle of the night when many had retired there remained a depleted but nonetheless enthusiastic cheer squad.

As Saturday dawned people reappeared and the breakkie queue grew, and grew . . . and grew! The morning brought rain, which did clear only to return just in time for the final few laps and the closing ceremony. (However this did prove to be very effective in keeping those dreaded bloody speeches short and sweet).

As predicted the 2004 Relay for Life has been a HUGE success. Last figures received were:

63 teams (31 last year)

1250 Participants (approx. 600 last year)

\$150,000.00 funds raised (approx. \$74,000.00 last year).

The Warrnambool Walkers team this year raised: \$2020.00 (\$2129.25 last year)

Well done all. Thanks to the Warrnambool Walkers team and to all those who contributed to the success of the team and the event.

It is very difficult to raise funds in an event that has become so big in a relatively small town. However it is an excellent cause and worthy of all the effort taken. If this year is any indication it is likely to be even bigger next year so any ideas to make next years fund raising easier will be gratefully accepted.

Dedication

The Warrnambool Walkers 2004 Relay for Life team dedicate this year's team walk to Norman Brian and Jimmy James Rooke who both died from cancer during the week of the relay.

And to all who have been lost to cancer.

Dianne Fraser.



GSWW - Battersbys Camp to Nelson 28-29/2

Walkers: Sat: Mabel, Janice, Karen and Sam; Sun: Mabel, Janice, Karen, Sam, Lothar, Marg and John

After a quick run drive to the start of the walk at Battersbys camp on the Glenelg River, Mabel and Janice organised a car shuffle. Karen and Sam waited at the river for the drivers to return, helping some anglers catch their first bream of the day (they too were from Warrnambool).

The weather was quite pleasant as we started out towards our overnight camp at Pattersons Camp. Janice and Mabel helped adjust Sam's pack, it being his first overnight walk for some years. We enjoyed the marvellous riverside scenery along the way and after a couple of short stops had lunch at Murrells. We left our packs at the picnic table and sat on the jetty watching anglers and boaters doing their weekend thing. It was hard to leave but press on we did. During the afternoon we saw emus, kangaroos, lizards, a snake (dead but looking deadly), birds along the track. Summer wildflowers brightened up the track as it followed along the river, then inland along dirt roads and back out to the riverside jetties.

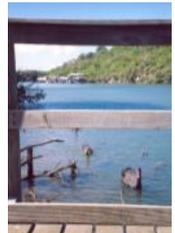
It was mid afternoon when we reached Pattersons and made a quick camp. Light drizzle started to fall, but not enough to dampen our spirits as we prepared pre dinner nibbles. Sam had been advised before the walk on what essentials he should pack on an overnight walk. He produced two satchels of red wine to share along with Mabel's wonderful tasty cheese and crackers and Janice's jellies. Then we had dinner pastas, rice, etc. Then we had dessert!! Janice wanted to practice her camp culinary skills and had brought along some chocolate instant pudding mix, chocolate biscuits and choc coated coffee beans. The bikkies made a base, the rest on top for a rich mocha "cheesecake". The mix goes into a bowl, then placed in the river (cold water) to set. The water wasn't quite cold enough to set the pudding but the result was very very rich and tasty. We needed to do a lot of walking to work these calories off. Sam proved how warm the river water was, by taking a dip. The drizzle cleared and we made a fire to have dinner by and stayed up until we had used up all the firewood.

Overnight we had a very heavy and noisy downpour but by morning, everything was dry, the sun was out and the walkers were keen to set out on the 20km walk to Nelson. We were to meet the day walkers along the way. It took only an hour to catch up with them and we continued along the canyon walk admiring the fringe lilies and small bearded-dragon lizards skittering across the track. Along the way we could calculate how far we had walked with John's GPS gadget, which could also map our way, tell the time, make cappuccinos, you name it. Later in the day he brought out a pair of binoculars, then a video camera, a cell phone with more gizmos – we could never get lost (or be lonely) out here.

We stopped for lunch at Hirths Landing (in South Australia) enjoying an extended break at the picnic area before tackling the last few kilometres into Nelson. The drivers left us at Simsons Landing to do another car shuffle and meet us in Nelson where Sam suggested coffee at the new art gallery/café Ambience – just off the highway. Definitely worth visiting for interesting artworks and wonderful coffee.

We were lucky to get good weather and the Glenelg River was as beautiful as ever. Thanks to all the walkers for their cheerful company, thanks to Sam for his lessons on good coffee and, more importantly, good coffee making. Thanks to Janice and Mabel for organising the walk.

Karen



Cape Otway: 3–4 March

Walkers: *Anne, John, Marg, Mabel, Karen, Janice, Diane D, Coralie (leader)*

We eventually met at Bimbi Park. Pastries appeared from the boot of Coralie's car then we headed off on our ramble around the Cape Otway area to Parker Hill via Rainbow Falls, the Lighthouse and Kiosk and Koala Corner.

Despite driving through light showers on our way to Bimbi Park and the forecast for a damp change overnight, we walked through fine and sunny weather all weekend.

Coralie, as leader, claimed responsibility for the weather. She maintains that she was not really late, just acting upon advice from heavenly contacts to deliberately delay the start time of the walk to avoid drizzly weather!!

We enjoyed interesting variations in landscapes on day 1: well vegetated coastal dunes, cliff tops, beaches and light forest led to a sheltered campsite at Parker Hill.

We arrived in plenty of time for gourmet afternoon tea and to explore the Parker River area.. The debate about the role of leader: (was that host?) was fuelled by the cask of red wine that appeared from Coralie's pack.

The expected showery change did not eventuate, and tents were packed up dry for the return trip back to the lighthouse for ice creams and a tour of the graveyard where we pondered the fate of shipwrecked sailors and babies lost to disease. A visit to the beach between Point Franklin and Seal Point was spent fossicking and admiring a beach house from the sewerage outfall school of architecture.

Careful planning by the host/leader resulted in the opportunity for gourmet lunch and coffee at McDuffs in Lavers Hill. The energy spent walking was probably sufficient to dispose of the calories consumed.

Thanks Coralie for planning, leading and hosting such an interesting walk.

Janice

Killarney Coastcare walk: 14 March

Killarney Coastcare - clean up Australia - picked up rubbish around Killarney beach, then walked to Gormans Rd. Had lunch at Mickey Bourkes at Koroit before walking back from Gormans Rd to Killarney beach.



The Grampians—The Piccaninny, Mt Sturgeon, Mt Abrupt: 28 March

Walkers: *Marg, Ken, Dianne, Karen and John*

The walkers met at the Information Centre in Dunkeld on a warm March day. With a total fire ban in place and a hot northerly wind forecast, we were going to take things easy. The morning started with an easy stroll up the Piccaninny for some lovely vistas towards the western ranges and surrounding countryside. At the top we could see Mt. Sturgeon and Mt. Abrupt on either side. The landscape was very yellow after the dry summer. John and Marg brought along binoculars for some close up views of the farm houses and distant mountains.

The day was warming up as we descended towards the Mt Sturgeon track. After a pleasant morning tea and farewell to Di who was also visiting a client in Dunkeld (and a bon voyage for her Elcho Island trip) we set off towards the peak. High clouds were coming over and part way up the breeze moderated and made the going very pleasant. Ken raced ahead, while the rest of the party stopped to look at the wildflowers and views and an eagle floating across the peak. We had a lot of company at the top, lots of bushwalkers were making the most of the fine weather. Lunch was long and leisurely and followed by bird watching and spying on the Myers residence in Dunkeld.

The walk back down to the carpark was pleasant, we stopped to look at the few sprays of wildflowers and kept finding more varieties the closer we looked. Marg decided to take a big side trip. Luckily we had already passed the rocky track as she landed heavily on one knee. After a brief stop we were on our way again, no permanent damage done, just a big dent in the track!

After a brief rest at the cars, we headed off the Dunkeld for a coffee and decided we had plenty of time for a quick detour on the way home to visit Mt. Rouse (near Penshurst). Believe or not, the bushwalkers drove our cars up to the top carpark! We were greeted by four wedge tailed eagles, numerous falcons that seemed to be fighting mid-air (or perhaps they were courting). We stayed for quite a while watching the birds float in the strong breeze. Having binoculars was a bonus, you could see the birds in great detail as they glided past us. It was a lovely way to end the day. Thanks to Marg for organising and leading the walk – and ensuring the weather didn't get too hot.

Karen