

Warrnambool to Port Fairy: 6 February

Walkers: *Dianne F, Doris, Doug M, John V (visitor), Karen, Lothar (leader), Marg, Steff, Vivianne*

It was a perfect walking day - no wind, starting overcast, and then clearing to a fine sunny day. A lot different to the dreadful weather we'd had the previous 2 weeks.

We met at Thunder Point at 10:15am and then did a car shuffle to Port Fairy...finally getting underway at about 11:20am.

We rounded Levy's Point at low tide, had a breather, and then continued our long march (at a cracking pace!). We walked mainly on the firm wet sand at low tide. However we had to keep an eye on the waves - they would periodically surge up the beach and we would then have to run to escape them.

We had lunch just before the cutting, staring out to sea.

At Killarney Beach we were met by Chris and her sister Jean, and were joined on our walk by Steff and John V.

Tired and sore but happy, we headed for our favourite watering hole in Port Fairy. We were joined by Betty, Chris & Jean at Rebeccas (Cafe) where we had drinks, cake, ice cream, etc. A very pleasant way to end the walk!

Many thanks to all for making it such a great day.

Lothar.



**Grampians Jazz Festival:
11–13 February**



Otways: Yuulong/Burrupa loop: 19 March



GSWW from Cape Bridgewater to Cape Nelson Lighthouse: 6 March

Walkers: Mabel (leader), Linda, Lothar, Vivienne, Doug (and Betty), Doris, Dianne and Karen.

We left Warrnambool on an overcast and drizzly morning loaded up with our wet weather gear ready for a damp walk. The pre-arranged quick car shuffle from the lighthouse to the cape didn't go as planned but the happy walkers enjoyed short tours of the lighthouse and Portland smelter along the way.

The drizzle stopped as we set off from the Cape Bridgewater kiosk down the beach, a flock of terns and pied oyster catchers seeing us off. We soon warmed up after a kilometre or so and the raincoats and jackets were packed away. After a pleasant hour along the beach we headed up the stairs for the cliff top walk. We stopped at the top of the stairs to take in the wonderful view of the bay then continued on for our morning tea break at Tarrigal Camp.

We set off again along the cliff tops admiring the scenery. The track veered once again on to the beach for what turned out to be quite a long stretch. We were reminded by the bits of flotsam lying about that it was National Clean Up Day so as we strolled along, pieces of rubbish were picked up and stashed in pockets, packs, plastic bags, or wherever they fitted. We filled up a largish plastic bag, several packs and pockets with rubbish. Some large pieces of rope were hauled along the beach. Doug demonstrated how some of the frayed green rope could make a good wig but Doug we like your hair just as it is and I am sure the club will agree after they have seen the photos.

At the end of the beach we climbed up a long long stretch of sand dunes to stop at the top of the cliff for one of the best lunch spots on the west coast. We could see all the way back to Cape Bridgewater kiosk and beyond now bathed in sunshine.

After a good break we set off again through the cliff top moonscapes of sand dunes and petrified rocks, then the track changed course and went inland through shady enchanted tea tree forests. We expected to see the Cape Nelson lighthouse at any moment but it wouldn't appear. The track came back to the cliff edge where we could hear the waves pounding the rocks below and still the track went on and on and no sign of the lighthouse. It didn't appear until it seemed only minutes away but then the track veered around the cliffs for another half hour before we arrived. What a lovely walk it had been. The weather had been very kind, the track and beach took us through beautiful coastal scenery and we had each others company to enjoy.

Our biggest problem of the day was which café to go to. Portland boasts an array of seafront cafes these days and we spent quite some time deciding on which one to indulge in. Finally we were settled and enjoyed wonderful coffee and cakes.

What a wonderful day we had. Thank you Mabel for leading a great walk. And thank you Doug for your advice on hair fashion.

Karen



Great South West Walk (Fitzroy Camp and Cobboboonee Camp): 27–28 March

Walkers: Karen (Leader), Linda, Helen, Coralie, Diane and Doug

The group had arranged to be dropped off at the start of the walk and picked up at the finish by Gordon and Kathy Page from Friends of the Great South West Walk. We all met outside Portland Police Station to leave our cars for the weekend. Gordon informed us that we should modify our intended walk from Fitzroy Camp due to the fuel reduction burn-offs being carried out near Cut Out Camp. We all agreed to start the walk at Harris Road just west of Moleside Camp and walk into Fitzroy Camp then continue on to Cobboboonee Camp the next day to be picked up.

Gordon and Kathy drove through the burn off area to the drop off point. Their advice was greatly appreciated as the area was smouldering and smoky creating quite an unpleasant environment to walk in.

We headed off late morning from the junction of Harris Road and the GSWW track and arranged to meet Gordon and Kathy the next afternoon at Cobboboonee Camp. The forest was serene, light, airy and full of bird song. We were escorted by a pair of yellow-tailed black cockatoos the whole day. The going was easy (except for the porkers, I mean Walkers who were loaded down with dips, nibbles and wine for the Sunday Happy Hour). We made many stops along the way, soaking in the tranquillity.

Sunday night Doug suggested we have a camp fire, it was lit in no time, nibbles consumed, dinner done and by nine o'clock we were all off to bed.

Monday morning we were up early (most of us anyway) and set off for Cobboboonee. It was obvious we were going to arrive a lot sooner than anticipated so we made our breaks long and frequent. We had lunch an estimated half hour before we would reach the camp. We headed off for the last leg only to find the camp five minutes down the track. Gordon and Kathy had boiled a kettle for cuppas and bikkies.

It was an enjoyable and relaxing two days. We spotted two new orchids – the hyacinth orchid and parson's orchid along the way (I am excited that not only do orchids sprout in spring but there are some varieties that bloom in autumn!).

The real porkers stopped in Portland for yet more coffee and cake at Port of Call and waddled back to the car for the trip home. My thanks and gratitude to Gordon and Kathy for transporting the group and for their advice about the walk. My thanks to the porkers for their good company and good cheer.

Karen

