

Moggs Creek to Distillery Creek; Colac surrounds: 1–2 April

Walkers: *Marg, Clair, Dianne F., Diane D and Marg P (visitor)*

On a cool blustery day we started behind the Split Point Light station in Aireys Inlet heading west along the beach. Feeling confident that our recent recognizance of the area would be time saving in finding the track we were dismayed to discover that we actually took the wrong track not once but several times and wasted about 1hr finding the right way off the beach.

Marg P and I turned back at this point and had a lovely sisterly get together having lunch in the shelter of the Dunes. We then took the car to Distillery creek where I walked back to meet the group.

IN THE MEANTIME: Marg, Clair and Di F climbed to the coastal heathland to Ocean View lookout. They then followed the track that lead them through an attractive forest before crossing and descending to Moggs Creek picnic area.

They then steadily climbed onto an old road to meet and cross over Gentle Annie Track. Then heading downhill on a formed road they came across Painkalac Dam (the water supply for Aireys Inlet and Fairhaven) Crossing over the dam wall they then headed down the Painkalac Creek valley and left the road at a track junction where I happened to be waiting for them. We then descended gently for about 1km to the Distillery Creek Picnic Area.

We then drove back to retrieve Di's car and had a delicious cupper at Aireys Inlet before driving to Colac.

On arriving at Colac Caravan Park we were greeted by the Owners who welcomed us with gusto. They showed us where to camp and we were delighted to be on the banks of the lake with wonderful views. There were pelicans, ducks, herons and other wading birds within a stones throw of our tents.

Di and I took the easy option and went into town to purchase our dinner while Clair and Marg diligently found a place out of the wind and cooked their tea.

After a good nights sleep Clair departed and Marg, Di and I did a Heritage walk around Colac Passing many wonderful old buildings and reading about their history from the little pamphlet we had been given from the tourist Information.

Another cupper and a slice of Marg's fruitcake before travelling home.

Di D

Old Beechy Rail Trail from Barangaroo to Gellibrand: 9 April

Walkers: *Geelong Walkers- Alex, Elizabeth, Glenda, Ina, Jeff, John, John M (leader), Petal & Wes; Warrnambool Walkers - Diane, Dianne, Helen, Ken, Lothar & Marg*

In January we walked from Beech Forest to Gellibrand and today we continue the link. John M organised the car shuttle whilst we had thermos tea and introduced ourselves. There was another short car trip to the start of the walk and a Geelong couple rode with us. I admired Wes's skill, remembering our names as we had just met in a group of 15. He grinned. "Milk" he said ?? ..MILK for Marg, Ina (his wife), Lothar and Ken.

We set out from the 103 mile post, walking on a well gravelled track which left little evidence of the former narrow gauge railway line. Magnificent tall timber towered in the forest - eucalypts with smooth cream trunks and stripped bark shed at the base, and Stringy and Ironbarks and Blackwoods and a dense, lush understory. Few wildflowers were out and I didn't notice any birds. However after a while I did notice that our group was spread out. Groups chatting, about trips to China, Flinders Ranges and probably Spain...whilst some strode ahead or lingered at the back. They would have heard the bird calls, the wind in the trees and probably the whistle of the log train??

We stopped at Kawarren for a picnic lunch. The walking had been easy and well suited to mountain bikes as well as horses (which had recently trotted the trail we noticed).

After lunch the chat seemed to abate. However from Kawarren the trail runs adjacent to the Colac-Lavers Hill Road and it was busy with weekend traffic. Again we missed the bird calls (and train whistle).

The trail is well barricaded to cars and motor bikes but side gates open for the walkers and these robust gates protect the track. On reaching Gellibrand homemade quilts were on display and we browsed by stalls selling soap, blackberry jam, pottery, and produce. The Cafe served a good coffee.

Thank you John M for organising a great walk on the rail trail and for such good company for the day.

Marg.

Mt Stapylton: 16 April

Walkers: Clare, Coralie (leader), Diane D, Irene, Ken, Linda, Lothar, Mabel, Marg, Val

Who suffers from acrophobia?

Who didn't realize the walk involved rock climbing?

Who tagged along with nine intrepid climbers?

Val

Who was calm and unflustered?

Who was patient and talked me through the climb?

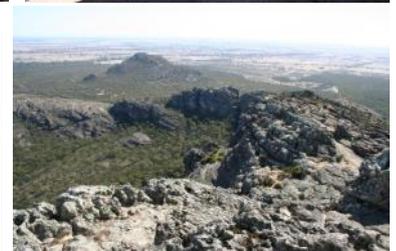
Coralie & everyone else

The view from the top of the mountain was breathtaking - worth the shaky knees and the apprehension at the thought of going back down. The Easter Bunny was even at the top distributing Easter eggs. Thank you Mabel. Thanks also to Lothar for the pre-walk hot cross buns.

Thanks everyone for an adrenaline pumping walk.

Val

PS. Marg took Ken and I for a quick walk up Mt Zero to finish off. (Not finish us off)! No skinny ledges with steep drops to get around. A piece of cake!!



Tower Hill to Koroit: 22 April

Walkers: Doug, Helen, Irene, John, Linda (leader), Lothar, Peter, visitor



Chimney Pots Track Maintenance: 13–14 May

Walkers: Leader: Dylan (Parks) Linda, Coralie, Diane D, Dianne F, Helen, Michael, Clare and 2 Melbourne Walkers.

Linda's Report:

Following a most enjoyable Saturday evening by the camp fire, I went to my tent that night wondering if it was possible to continue the exhilaration onto the next day. Would the weather hold out, would all the clubs continue their warm and welcoming approach to each other?

At 6:30 the Kookaburras woke the whole camp up. People started to emerge bleary eyed from their tents and went about their routines whilst we waited for the rangers to arrive. We were divided up into 3 groups, each with a ranger, and away we went. Warrnambool Walkers had been nominated to cut a new track at the Chimney Pots, 2 walkers from another club joined us for the day.

Armed with a chainsaw, rakes, clippers, saws and large pruners we headed up to the Chimneys. It's amazing how time erases your memory. There was no way I remembered this walk being quite as steep as it was. What added to the enjoyment was the fact that the higher we climbed the further into the clouds we went. We finally arrived at the start of the new track. Dylan divided us into 2 groups. The first group went to the end of the new track whilst the rest of us started from the bottom. We had been told that we had to make it wide enough so that if we swung our arms we touch nothing. Well we made sure of that. Everything within reach got chopped, clipped or pulled out. A herd of elephants could walk through (a slight exaggeration but it creates a picture.) The two groups finally met in the middle and then we made our way back to the top to see what the view would be like, forgetting of course that we were in the clouds. It soon became time for us to make the descent back to the cars where we had lunch and then the mandatory stop at Penshurst for coffee and cake.

The whole weekend was fantastic. Congratulations must go to Parks and the Rangers for such a well coordinated event as well as all the walkers from 7 different clubs who gave up their time to care for the Grampians.



Diane D's Report:

Warrnambool Walkers had decided to participate in a track maintenance weekend held in the Grampians on the 13th and 14th of May. Linda, Michael, Helen, Clare and Diane D, travelled up to Buandik camp ground on the Friday to be ready for the "early" start on Saturday. Several other walking groups continued to arrive throughout the evening until there was quite a large group of volunteers.

On Saturday three rangers arrived and they explained to us that they had three separate tasks they wanted us to be involved in:

1. To clear the far end of the Fortress track (Old Victoria Range road end)
2. Clear Hut Creek Track, an old overgrown 4wd track, to walking track standard so that it could be used to make a pleasant walking track in a Fortress circuit walk.
3. Scat hunting to try and find evidence of the brush tail rock wallaby, thought to be wiped out in the Grampians.

Our group volunteered to clear Hut Creek Track. Hut Creek Track is approx 2kms south of Buandik, off the Harrop Track. We were given safety instructions, hard hats and tools and off we went to begin our task. As we made our way along the track Dylan, Ranger in charge of our project, wielded a mean chainsaw, whilst we followed chopping sawing digging and raking our way along the trail. It gave me great pleasure getting my own back on that mean old cut grass that has tripped and cut me over the years. We had permission to trim anything in "flapping distance". That meant we could stand there and flap our arms and any obstacles were trimmed or removed.

After several kms the 4wd track became indistinctive, so Dylan decided that it would be tackled from the other end on Sunday to hopefully be finished, joining where we had reached. It was fantastic to walk back along the freshly groomed trail as we were able to marvel at the rocky outcrops, plants and trees that we had little time to notice on our way in. I am looking forward to going back and walking on this trail as it gives new options to walking in this area.

We all had a very rewarding weekend, and I recommend track maintenance work as it is an opportunity to give back something to our magnificent National Park.



Blackwood: 20–21 May

Walkers: Di F, Helen, Lothar, and 10–17 walkers from Ballarat Bushwalking and Outdoor Club



Lake Gillear to Childers Cove: 28 May

Walkers: Chris, Francis & Jacinta (both visitors), John P, Lothar (leader), Michael J, Peter

About a year ago at the WRAD Expo Jacinta had mentioned that this was an excellent walk and that she would support moves to make this a recognised walking track. It is along the western end of the [Bay of Islands Coastal Park](#) and the [VicMap Topographic map numbers](#) are T7421331, T7421332 and T7421323. With the help of John P the walk route was (eventually) teased and marked out over a period of several weeks (us retirees were able to do this midweek!). Mike H also joined in the trial run a few days beforehand. We found that many of our pink marker ribbons had been chewed and/or removed by the wildlife but with some ribbons remaining and 2 GPSs between us, it was easy to follow the planned route.

We started on the 28th with a 3 car shuffle to Killeens Road and to Childers Cove. When we arrived back (at the end of Buckley's Road) I was pleasantly surprised to find Jacinta and Francis there and ready to join in the first hour or so of the walk. We commenced the walk at about 10:50am. The overnight rains had cleared and it looked like it was going to be a bright sunny day - albeit a little bit cool and windy.

The first part of the walk was along a well formed path (less than 1km). Near the end of this path we diverged onto a well worn sidetrack and headed towards the cliff face and the fishermen's track to the rocks below. Some gingerly scrambled down, and some stayed at the top to watch and chat. We then headed up to the fence line and the management track.

When we reached the "fisherman's hut" we turned right at the 4WD sidetrack and headed back to the cliffs. Here we admired the views and settled down to have lunch. Below and in front of us was the needle - a top heavy sandstone pillar/rock stack jutting out from the sea - and in the distance Warrnambool.

After lunch, Jacinta found a way down to the water's edge (yep - another fisherman's track). Some scrambled down the damp and tricky slope to get a closer look at the pillar and to take pics of it. At the



top I took a group photo before Jacinta and Francis said their goodbyes and returned to their car.

We then wove our way (off track) across rocky ground and low bushes until we came to the next 4WD track. From there we rejoined the management track until we came directly above Killeens Road. Here, Chris left us to drive back to Warrnambool. And then there were four ... AND - for once - we were all male!

We initially headed towards the giant sinkhole and had a rest there. Then we spent 2-3 hours weaving our way across the uneven/rocky ground and through changing vegetation, and saw many kangas - some very large. Periodically we would return to the clifftops to take in the views. We also inspected what remained of the survey point at "The Cove".

We returned to the management track to walk along it for about 15 minutes before again heading back to the cliffs for the last leg. In one section we came across a hole in the ground and out of which the wind was blowing....about 15-20 metres from the cliff edge. Another area to be wary of the next time around! Also just before Childers Cove there is what looks like an enormous sinkhole - a much larger one than before and another spot for getting down towards the water's edge and fishing.

We arrived at the Childers Cove carpark just before the rain squall hit. I was greatly admired for this timing feat and/or the arrangement with the power that be! John had the window wipers going flat out as we drove to Buckleys Road to pick up Peter's car.

The walk is a hidden treasure and so close to Warrnambool. Many thanks to all for making it a great day out!

Lothar



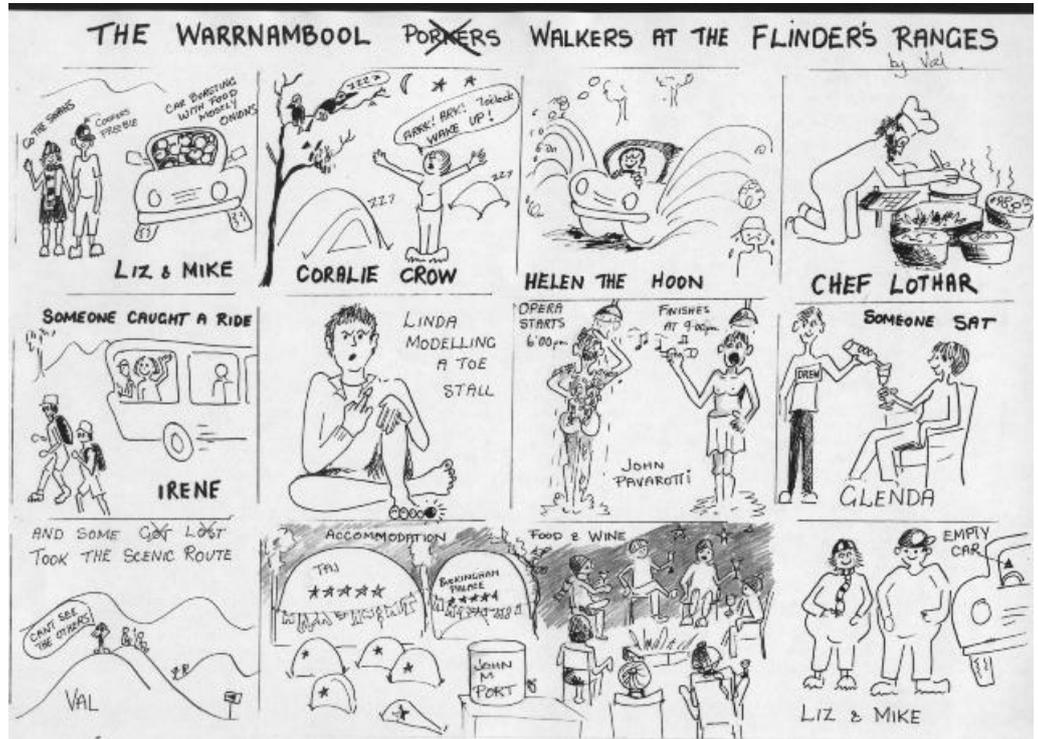
Flinders Ranges: 17–27 June

Walkers: Coralie, Glenda, Helen, Irene, John M, Linda, Liz, Lothar, Mike, Val

Some walkers have returned, some have gone further north on an extended holiday, and some will be going overseas. It will therefore be some time before this section is completed [possibly an understatement April 2021].

The following walks were undertaken:

1. Heysen Trail between Parachilna Gorge and Aroona
2. Blinman Pools walk to the first Pool (Start/end at Angorichina Village)
3. Heysen Trail between Trezona campground and Aroona
4. Yuluna Hike plus a sidetrip to Red Hill
5. Heysen Trail between Trezona and Bunyeroo Gorge
6. Bunyeroo Gorge Hike
7. St Mary's Peak (Wilpena Pound)
8. Bridle Gap (Wilpena Pound)
9. Mt Ohlssen (Wilpena Pound)



Irene/Linda:



Lothar:



Mike:

