

Around Childers Cove: 9 July

Walkers: Claire, Claude, Di F, John L, Lothar (leader), Marg

What a great area and so close to home!

Lothar led us on this half day walk along the cliff tops and beaches east of Warrnambool. Its a wild and rugged coastline with all the features of the famous parts of the Great Ocean Road but without the tourists and tour buses. There are stacks like the Twelve Apostles that seem likely to topple sometime soon, sea birds perching and soaring, caves intact and collapsed and beaches where ours were the only footprints.

We began by heading west along the management track at the edge of the farming property for a couple of kilometres then headed south to the cliffs, east along the cliff tops and beaches then back to the cars. Coffee at the Allansford *Cheese World* capped off a great day.

I can't stress enough how surprisingly beautiful this area is! But don't tell anyone!

Thank you Lothar.



Childers Cove to Flaxmans Hill: 23 July

Walkers: Claire, Claude, Liz H, Lothar (Leader), Mabel, Marg, Michael J, Mike H

Headed east from Childers Cove along the cliff tops. The sun was shining and the sea looked blue. Stunning view of steep cliffs and rugged coastline - this is a well kept secret! It is just as beautiful and spectacular as east of Peterborough but we had it all to ourselves!

The walk was a mixture of vehicle tracks and bush tracks - not always well defined. We were able to go down to the beach in areas - usually with a steep climb down and back up again. Lots of sandy beaches surrounded by steep cliffs. There is a variety of cliffs, not all are sandstone - see photos above. The Bay of Island Coastal Park is very narrow and so the paddocks and cattle were never far away - all added to the interest of the day.

Keeping to our usual porker style we finished the walk with coffee - had to return to Warrnambool's Proudfoots for that as Allansford's *Cheese World* was closed.

Thanks Lothar.

Mabel



Great Ocean Walk from Johanna Beach to Moonlight Head: 29–30 July

Walkers: Heaton (leader), Dianne F, Mike, John, Marg, Coralie, Mabel and Janice.

Porker Report:

In hindsight, this trip could be seen as the first battle in the tussle for porker leadership. The pretenders stole an early advantage over the old guard by departing early and scoring a fine triumph with an excellent dinner at the Port Campbell Hotel on Friday night. A leisurely breakfast in camp at Johanna on Saturday reinforced their glutinous advantage over those who drove up in the morning.

Perhaps the early lapse in navigation as we couldn't find our way out of the car park at Johanna could be attributed to the stress of being outporked!

Nevertheless, we recovered quickly and the whole group enthusiastically beat a hard path up the first of many steep hills on our way to Sunday Lunch at the Port Campbell Bakery.

The first section of the walk provided excellent views of the picturesque Otways before we stopped for a restorative morning tea on the Melanesia track and changed direction towards the coast. Heaton planned for lunch at a favourite sheltered spot on Melanesia beach. The afternoon set the pattern for the rest of the walk with several sustained hard climbs out of steep little valleys. Once again Heaton proved his "it never rains on my walks" status and we enjoyed perfect walking conditions. The forecast showers held off until we reached camp, and were nothing more than a temporary distraction.

Arriving at Ryan Den about 4:00, we quickly organised tent sites on the four campsites we had booked and settled into afternoon tea in the shelter. The old favourite Nutella jostled for table space with cashews, chocolate biscuits, dry biscuits, smoked almonds, and a variety of savouries. The Yea Semi-matured cheddar with water



crackers was voted the appetiser most worthy of pack space and weight (125g, and was complemented by a fine 2004 fruit vintage. There was just enough daylight left before dinner to explore the rest of the site.

The area has been thoughtfully planned. The dinning shelter features back and foot rests, plenty of hooks for all those utensils and food bags, and a water tank next door. The camp sites are flat and interspersed through the bush, and some have million dollar views. However, the toilet is the piece d' resistance. It features a viewing window through the tree canopy, rustic design and a clever handle made from local wood. There is even a red/green occupied/vacant system in place to avoid embarrassment.

A vigorous debate about the rights and wrongs of lids on cooking systems (you had to be there) sharpened our appetite for dinner. The virtues of old technology Trangias were clear as they coped with the breezy conditions ahead of new technology, windshield-challenged, lightweight cookers. Our repast included Vegetarian Pasta, Sweet Chile Baked Beans, Sweet and Sour Pork, Asian Vegetables, and Mushroom and Salmon Pasta.

Breakfast included a similarly vast range of good food, and thus fortified we enjoyed more beautiful coastal scenery on the way to morning tea and car shuffle at Moonlight Head. We met at the Port Campbell Bakery for pasties, pies and coffee. The consensus was that the Wirrabarra Bakery's pies were not under any threat.

This walk highlights the beauty of both the Otway Ranges and the Great Ocean Coast. Strenuous effort is rewarded with stunning scenery that few people get to see, and the coffee in Port Campbell was worth the 23 km. Whether the position of head porker is really under threat remains to be seen.

Thank you for another "dry" walk (weather only).

Janice



Flaxmans Hill to Peterborough: 2 August

Walkers: Claude, Helen, Liz C, Lothar (leader), Mike H

We hopped into 2 cars, drove to Bay of Martyrs (in Peterborough), left one car there, and then went to the end of Mathiesons Road. It was cool and overcast as we gingerly made our way down the steep cliffs. The tide was low so we were able to head East and safely around a point before following a creek back uphill. Once we reached the management track we headed East and after another 15 minutes we reached Flaxmans Hill.

From Flaxmans Hill we headed along the horse trail running east along the clifftops. After Blake Road we sometimes went along the clifftops and sometimes along the management track. We had lunch out of the wind and overlooking Antares Rock at the end of Baileys Rd.

As we'd gone only a relatively short distance and just had lunch we quickened our pace and only stopped a few more times to look at the magic views. Before Boat Bay we were stumped by a steep and bush lined creek cutting across the management track but we eventually went over a couple of fences to get around the obstacles.

After a breather at Boat Bay we then plodded mainly along the bitumen for about 4-5km back to the car. The rain held off all day - until we picked up the second car.

We plan to return to Boat Bay next week to further explore the area between it and Radfords Rd, identify another track to get around the steep creek, and identify additional tracks and view points. For a future weekend walk the walk would be shortened and terminate at the Bay of Islands carpark.

Many thanks to all for making it a great day out!

Lothar



Warrnambool weekend with the Ballarat Bushwalking and Outdoor Club: 4–6 August

After thoroughly enjoying a weekend in Blackwood with the Ballarat Bushwalkers, we decided to return the favour and host a walk in our neck of the woods. Of course, we did lure them with the promise of whale sightings and perfect weather.

Seven Ballaratiens made the trek down for the weekend – all keen to see the whales but a tad skeptical about the weather. Two members from the Geelong bushwalking club also joined us so the weekend became a tri-club event. Therefore, we had:

Seven Ballaratiens; Two Geelongians; Four Warrnamboolians

On Saturday, we walked from Killeen's Road to Childers Cove. This walk provided some rock hopping, tree dodging, sand duning with the odd hill thrown in. The rocks were being displayed in their full splendour by the magnificent sunshine that lasted all day. (Of course, the Warrnamboolians did state that our weather is always this good!) After exploring the beach around Childers Cove, we made our way via the scenic route to Warrnambool and met up for a lovely dinner at the Shamrock.

On Sunday, we decided we would do some serious whale watching. Another two Warrnambool members joined us for the day bringing our number to six. We walked from Proudfoots with the intent of getting to Gaul's Cave but after a hasty retreat up the rocks to avoid an unintentional swim with the whales we decided to have lunch while watching the whales (who just happened to appear when called from the top of the rocks! After lunch was over, the consensus was to head back to Proudfoots for that all important coffee.

We all enjoyed coffee (one Ballaratiens happened to enjoy a little more coffee than the rest of us but we will not mention names!), some laughs and general chit chat before drawing our weekend to a close. All in all, it was a wonderful weekend. It was great to be able to show off our wonderful coast. I thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to walk with my old walking club – with old friends and new ones made. The added bonus of having Richard & Janet from Geelong was fantastic. I think the concept of combined walks has worked well so far and it is something I think could be done as an annual event.

Thanks to all who came – with particular thanks to the Ballarat and Geelong people who travelled some distance to participate in the weekend.

Dianne F



Tower Hill Wattle Wander: 13 August

Walkers: Helen, Irene, Linda, Lothar, Mabel

Mabel, Helen, Linda and I met up with Lothar for a lunch date at Tower Hill, to be followed by a short wander around to view the wattles, before coffee and cake in Koroit. Or so we thought. All assembled, lunches in the backpacks, off we went. Up our first hill. Lunch was enjoyed in the company of our first koala, looking out over the magnificent views of wattles in bloom.

Lunch finished, packs packed, photos taken, Lothar rounded us up to hit the track. Down the hill, around the corner, we came across our second koala then an emu with chicks. Up another hill, around another corner, where we gave way to a pregnant koala whose belly was wriggling and squirming, along the boardwalk (are we there yet?) Around the corner, up another hill around the bend, up to the quarry (are we there yet?) Back down, then up again (Lothar, Koroit is in the other direction!!!) around another corner, the group splits into two (are we there YET?) Back together and around another corner. AT LAST the car park. Packs are quickly taken off; we are in our cars and a well deserved coffee and cake. YES WE ARE THERE!!!!!!

Irene



Enfield Forest Walk: 27 August

Walkers: *Dianne F (Leader), Diane D, John L, John & Glenda M, Graeme W, Doris D, Doug M, Coralie G, Mabel M, Helen A, Marg & Ken F, Claire & Claude C, Liz L*

A group of sixteen was a terrific turnout for what turned out to be a great day. Enfield is a small town about half an hour south of Ballarat. The surrounding forest country is gently rolling with gullies, which in many places show the impact of gold mining last century. There are many shafts, and the embankments of the mining races now provide easy walking in a number of places.

The distance was around 15 kilometres with most of the walking gentle except for a couple of short climbs and slippery gully crossings. A missed track junction added an extra kilometre or two. Our esteemed leader clearly felt that we needed a little extra distance, as we had not worked hard enough to that point.

At the end of the day, the consensus seemed to be that the walk was quite a solid workout and that the new territory for most of the group was a refreshing change.

Thank you Di for a great day.

John L



Beeripmo: 2–3 September

Walkers: *Dianne F & Diane D (leaders), John L, Helen, Linda*

Dianne F's report:

Despite a dire weather forecast, the sun shone on the five brave souls who met at Beaufort for the mandatory pre walk coffee. Out thirst adequately quenched, we made our way to Richards Campground where the Beeripmo Track starts. After a lesson in packing a pack and general chitchat, we were on our way. On the first day of the Beeripmo walk, there is a wee bit of climbing to do. The forest is quite beautiful and looks different every time one does it. We found a lovely rocky platform with magnificent views and glorious sunshine for lunch. We continued our climb after lunch, "This is the last hill" the leader confidently stated. Such a shame to have such a bad memory - at such a young age! Eventually we really did climb up the last hill and made our way to camp.

With tents up, warm clothes on, we got down to the serious business of cooking dinner over pre dinner nibbles and wine. After a hard days work one needs a lot of little red wine!!!! A jovial night around the campfire was enjoyed by all and certainly helped erase the memory of that last hill. A few were sceptical of the leaders promise that Sunday only brought one tiny little hill! Our evening was finally brought to a close by the promised rain – which lasted through the night. We were fortunate the rain stopped for us to have breakfast and pack up. In fact, the rain held off for us to finish the walk and reach the pub for lunch! And yes, there was only one tiny hill and of course, we bounded up it. The Beeripmo track is a lovely walk and can be done as a day walk or an overnight one. The camp sites are well equipped and certainly make it worthwhile doing the walk as an overnight.

Linda's report:

After training for several weeks carrying an overnight pack through the streets of Koroit and around Tower hill, I finally felt I was fit enough for an overnight hike. Nothing too stressful, so I put my hand up for Beeripmo. I had been assured there was a steep section at the beginning of each day that was all.

At the end of the first steep section Dianne then told me that there was just one more, then another and another. By this stage I was exhausted, however after a long rest we were up and going with new vigour. The camp site was excellent with well designed fireplaces and toilets. Out of John's pack came the bladder of a 2 litre cask, so everyone settled in well for the night.

The morning brought light rain so we packed fairly quickly and headed (that's right) UP what was to be the only steep section for the day. The remainder of the trip was through some beautiful forests with trees so tall and straight. By lunch we were in Beaufort having a counter meal.

Thank you Diane and Dianne, for your encouragement and support.

Mt Staplyton and Mt Zero: 23–24 September

Walkers: Diane D, Dianne F, Linda

Unfortunately Helens cat was sick so she reluctantly had to pull out. This meant that it was no longer an official club walk, but we decided to go ahead anyway. I was not confident about my skill level so decided to take my car as well. Diane assured me that where we were camping my car would be accessible if I needed it. We parked Dianne's car beside Mt Staplyton camping ground and followed the track out.

The walking was beautiful; wildflowers were out everywhere, orchids, kunzeas, wattles and native mints, the garden was putting on a lovely display. Later in the day we arrived at a clearing in the bush just under some magnificent rocks.

We had a great little fire that night until it started to rain.

In the morning we left our wet tents in my car and drove to the Mt Zero car park. We then carried our packs through to Mt Staplyton camping ground. No sooner had we arrived when the heavens just opened and down came the rain. We had an early lunch at Mt Zero Olives.

Thank you Diane and Dianne for your encouragement during the week before the walk. I'm looking forward to our next trek.

Linda