

## A Seniors Week joint activity—Glenfyne to Timboon Rail Trail: 4 Oct 2008

Di, P, Linda and Irene were joined by two community volunteers, one Warrnambool City Council worker and 24 walkers from the Archie Graham Centre. The bus left the Tourist Information Centre at 8:45 and travelled to Glenfyne where we were met by the Chairperson of the Rail Trail Committee.

We were under the understanding that the main idea was to walk gently whilst the lady from the Rail Trail Committee walked with us and explained the development of the Trail and other interesting features i.e. the trees that were sugar glider feeders and how to identify them, the invasion of some red deer, the construction of the bridges and how that was developing etc. How wrong could we be? Once we were off the bus it was like holding back a herd of wild brumbies waiting to bolt. And bolt they did. They took off with only two staying back with the volunteers to enjoy the information. The herd ended up having to wait at the Curdies Bridge for one hour before the rest of us arrived. At this point half of the walkers hopped onto the bus and went straight back to Timboon for an early feed. The remainder of us continue on to complete the remainder of the trail.

Lunch was supplied by the Brewery at Timboon; might I add it was sensational. We left Timboon at 2 pm.

It was a really great day and we had lots of fun. It was quite satisfying giving up a day to support the Council and the local members of Archie Graham. Most of these retirees can outwalk us, in terms of speed!!!! Thanks Di for offering to take on the organising.

*Linda*



## Great Ocean Walk from Marengo to the Lighthouse: 17–19 Dec 2008

*Walkers: Linda, Irene, Helen, John, Glenda*

Irene and I drove to the Otway Light House on the Wednesday where we left our car. We were picked up by the Otway Shuttle and taken to Marengo where we started the walk. This service is well worthwhile and very informative.

After loading up our packs we headed west towards Elliott Ridge. We were walking on the rocks at low tide and we had not gone 500 metres and I slipped on some seaweed and fell. At that point we decided that we would in future stay on the high ground.

The walking was not difficult, steady but not arduous. The weather was overcast but no rain. In fact it was absolutely perfect walking conditions. The track is well defined and the scenery spectacular. It was not long before we were at the camp. We had settled down well when another walker arrived. She was a young woman from Belgium and carried a pack which was massive. Another hour later 3 other walkers arrived, all young men who are studying in Australia. There was an American, Iranian and the last was from Pakistan. How lucky were we to be with such a group of different cultures we could not believe it. We had many laughs as each group prepared their evening meals.

The following day we meandered our way towards Blanket Bay arriving just on lunch time. We had not booked into the walk in sites but chose to go to the drive in area. I can understand why this area is so popular during the tourist season. It is truly magic. What I could not understand was why the toilets were in such a state of disrepair, they were filthy.

Later that day Helen arrived in her car to stay with us.

The following morning John and Glenda arrived to walk with the 3 of us to the Lighthouse. There were some very steep sections but also some stunning scenery. It was a most enjoyable day, especially being able to catch up with John and Glenda who we have not seen for some time.

After arriving at the Lighthouse I took Helen, John and Glenda back to their cars where we said our farewells.

*Linda*

## **Nepal: Tengboche Monastery and Annapurna Sanctuary: 29 Sep to 27 Oct 2008**

*Walkers: Linda C, Lothar S, Peter M, Rosalie M*

It was my third trip to Nepal. It was great going to two different parts of Nepal this time - they were different enough to make the effort and extra danger worthwhile...I think. When we flew in to Lukla we were already 500 m above Australia's highest mountain. For the next few days, all around us, were snow-capped mountain peaks which were 3–5 km higher still. Awesome! The Annapurna Sanctuary a couple of weeks later was just as spectacular (if not more)! We employed a guide and 2 porters on each section of the trek - each porter carrying less than 20 kg of our luggage. We saw quite a few porters carrying loads of kero which looked in excess of 100 kg!!

In Kathmandu (Acme Guesthouse) we did the usual touristy things—lots of shopping and eating, avoiding the touts and traffic, and visiting Durbar Square, Bodhnath Stupa, Patan, and Bhaktapur. Pokhara (Karki Guesthouse), as usual, was a lot more relaxing than Kathmandu—it has the lake, much less traffic (and touts!), and has mountain views (from the tops of hotels).

We had quite a few incidents this time: a rock slammed into my shoulder (nothing was broken), a plane crashed (at Lukla) and killed 18 people, a bacterial/giardia infection wouldn't go away and made Linda miss out on the Sanctuary, and Linda's 270 degree flip 100 m from the end of the trek . She was able to hobble around on her bruised ankle and join in all the activities over the next few days but back in Australia discovered that the outside part of her ankle had actually broken. But you don't have to go on holidays to break a limb, as our president discovered in her garage!

Positives: almost everything else I suppose - scenery, culture, food, etc. You also learn to thoroughly appreciate the comforts and infrastructure we have back in Australia even though many Australians whinge about it. You learn to eat and enjoy more vegetarian food. In the cities and on the trek you have a wide choice of western or Nepalese style foods. All the months of training we did beforehand made the treks much more rewarding .... however we all worked hard and each sweated off a few kilos. You learn to use squat toilets but more and more toilets are western like. You learn to laugh at and put up with the lack of hygiene. We saw more wildlife than in previous treks: apart from the many domestic animals (including water buffalo), large butterflies, insects, sacred cows roaming the streets, etc, we also saw longhaired "Yaks" (in many manifestations), Danfe/Danphe pheasants, musk deer, choughs, black kites, Himalayan Thar/Tahr (a near true goat), Langur and Rhesus Macaque monkeys, Lammergeyers, and a guinea pig like creature near ABC which could have been a Pikka.

As noted last year, the popular treks are getting more crowded in certain sections and it won't be long before many more trekkers will have to take their tents to be assured of a bed for the night. Between Chhomrong and ABC some of the lodges had already been booked out for the evening by 7:30 am in the morning! Guides or porters would be sent ahead early to place bookings. Trekkers without guides/porters were always at a disadvantage unless they could walk fast and also left their lodgings at 4 am or earlier...

*Lothar*

Day	Date	Start	Finish	Duration	Height	Comments
1	28-Sep	Melb	Kathmandu			leave 0740; arrive HK 1505; leave HK 1855; arrive Kath 2125
2	29-Sep	Kathmandu				stay at Acme Guesthouse
3	30-Sep	Kathmandu				around Bodhnath Stupa
4	1-Oct	Kathmandu	Lukla to Phakding	5	2600	fly to Lukla (2800 m)
5	2-Oct	Phakding	Jorsalle	3-4	2805	Lothar hit by large rock
6	3-Oct	Jorsalle	Namche Bazaar	3-4	3460	Friday/Saturday market
7	4-Oct	Namche Bazaar		6-7	3460	acclimatisation day; return walk via Khunde & Khumjung
8	5-Oct	Namche Bazaar	Tengboche	6-7	3870	via NB lookout post
9	6-Oct	Tengboche	Namche Bazaar	6	3460	
10	7-Oct	Namche Bazaar	Phakding	6	2600	
11	8-Oct	Phakding	Lukla	4	2800	Plane crash at Lukla - 18 die
12	9-Oct	Lukla	Kathmandu			fly from Lukla to Kathmandu
13	10-Oct	Kathmandu				sightseeing & shopping
14	11-Oct	Kathmandu	Pokhara			fly to Pokhara; stay at Karki Guest House
15	12-Oct	Pokhara	Syauli Bazar	3	1990	Linda sick O/N; taxi to Naya Pul, then walk
16	13-Oct	Syauli Bazar	Khumrong Danda	5	2250	lunch at Ghandruk (1940)
17	14-Oct	Khumrong Danda	Sinuwa	5-6	2350	lunch at Chhomrong (2040)
18	15-Oct	Sinuwa	Deurali	6	3230	leave Linda at Sinuwa; lunch at Dovan (2606)
19	16-Oct	Deurali	MBC	2	3940	return walk to ABC (4130) in afternoon
20	17-Oct	MBC	Dovan	2	2606	return walk to ABC starting 4 am
21	18-Oct	Dovan	Chhomrong	5-6	2040	meet up with Linda again at Chhomrong
22	19-Oct	Chhomrong	Jhinu Danda	1	1750	rest day; frequent hot springs
23	20-Oct	Jhinu Danda	Tolka	4	1700	via Taglung, New Bridge and Landruk (lunch)
24	21-Oct	Tolka	Pokhara	5		walk to Phedi; drive to Pokhara; dinner with guide/porters
25	22-Oct	Pokhara				rest day; shopping, etc
26	23-Oct	Pokhara				Kathmandu
27	24-Oct	Kathmandu				sightseeing (Bhaktapur) & shopping
28	25-Oct	Kathmandu				sightseeing (Patan) & shopping
29	26-Oct	Kathmandu	Hong Kong			All except Lothar return to Australia on 27/10/08







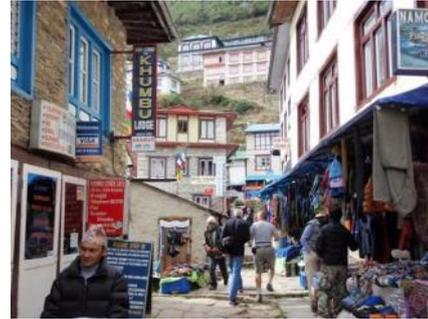
The previous three pages were Linda's photos.







The previous three pages were Lothar's photos.







The previous three pages were Peter and Rosalie's photos.