

## Focus on fashion

Maria Island, the Skipton rail trail, wherever one strolled, the jaunty, low-slung look was *la haute couture* for **day packs** in 2013.



## Trip Reports

### Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January: BBQ

*Notre hôtesse: Di P*

It was a very pleasant evening and although many donned warm jackets we managed to eat and socialise outdoors which is, after all, what we are about...being in the elements! We had a full house—about 20—and both food and wine were enjoyed. Everyone contributed to a really delightful social evening. A wide mixture of delicious salads were on tap and meat lovers and vegetarians enjoyed the best of both.

Thanks for such a great turn up...and happy walking for 2014.

Di P



## Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> January: Fitzroy River to Surrey River

Five Warrnambool walkers met at the Narrawong Recreation Reserve, which was abuzz with multitudes of both walkers and runners keen to participate in the Mouth2Mouth fundraiser for the SLSC at Portland. We were transported by bus to the mouth of the Fitzroy River, which was the location of quite some excitement/trepidation as the bus driver had some difficulty manoeuvring the bus between all the campers and their tents and vehicles to turn round; unfortunately he didn't quite manage this process and clipped one 4WD.

Next, all the participants had to negotiate the Fitzroy River—four of us removed our boots and socks, as we did not trust Lothar's garbage bags to be up to the task! Lothar did comment that there was a "sail-like" effect of the current on the garbage bags, and some effort was needed to maintain his balance.

Once we were overtaken by all the joggers, we settled into a steady pace along nice firm sand for our 15 km walk to the Surrey River mouth, with the regular offers of free water from cheerful volunteers zipping past on ag bikes. We purchased our lunches at the numerous stalls at the Reserve and ate them to the sounds of live music.

Thanks to our leader Lothar and the other participants Linda, Irene and Jim.

Dina



### Decisions, decisions, decisions

Just what's a wombat to do when bushwalkers approach—hide under mum, run away, or keep on sleeping?



# Trip Reports

## King Island Circuit: 13<sup>th</sup>–25<sup>th</sup> January

*Rock hoppers: Mabel, Janice, Diane, Steve (leader), Coralie, Rob*

The first walk completely around King Island was in 1802 by two sailors sent to look for survivors from wreckage found on a beach. Nobody was found, just a cat, a gun, and a lot more wreckage. A report of this search triggered Steve's interest, and so six of us found ourselves walking for 10 days around King Island's coastline: 180 km on sandy beaches, rocky beaches, rocks, sandy tracks used by kelp gatherers, gravel roads, paddocks and grassland. Lots of sun and lots of wind, a pinch of rain and a pinch of scrub. A great time was had by all, as our highlights below show.

### Steve's highlights

1. Crayfish pie at the Currie Bakery.
2. Lunch time swim to cool down on hot days.
3. Sharing porridge sitting on a picnic table at Penny's Lagoon with my new mate Mr Bennetts Wallaby.
4. Walking kilometres of uninhabited beach on Martha Lavinia Nature Reserve shared with the occasional seal and a myriad of sea birds.
5. Crossing Sea Elephant River having waited 5 hours for the lagoon to empty sufficiently after the high tide.
6. Bert's Cafe Naracoopa — a true culinary oasis among the Backpack Larder wilderness.
7. Raymond Perry delivering 40 litres of good drinking water to Patterson's beach.
8. Hot showers and a house provided by locals at Grassy. Thanks Jackie and Wendy.
9. Food and water drops always delivered on time. Thanks Reiner.
10. Stumbling upon icons like the Calcified Forest, Dripping Wells and the Cataraqui burial site.
11. There were locals that said we'd never make it, yet we did.



### ... and Steve's lowlights

1. A visit by a copperhead that resulted in the relocation of the campsite at Pass River.
2. The grumpy worker building a golf course who made the statement "There's coppers and tigers in those bushes". There is some kind of local obsession with the perceived large numbers of snakes. When we reported a low tally of snake sightings the response would be "you've been lucky".
3. Mr Bennetts Wallaby must have enjoyed his porridge so much that he decided to cook his own. He tried to drag Janice's MSR stove from under her tent vestibule. Janice was needless to say not amused. I guess they'll not be entering *My Kitchen Rules* together.
4. Trying to step around mutton bird burrows without them caving in and causing ankle rolls and expletive-enhanced language.

### Diane's highlights:

Every day of our walk around King Island was amazing, coastal scenery so diverse, its ruggedness and tranquility. My highlight would have to be belly flopping, fully clothed into Penny's Lagoon after a very hot day walking. It was superb. However, to see a group of teenagers at the local club in Curry greet us with a big smile and "hello" came a close second.

### Rob's highlights:

One was obviously the Cape Wickham lighthouse, the highest in the southern hemisphere, impressive, everything a lighthouse should be. An even higher light was the full moon, sparkling off the water and lighting up everything: the landscape in 50 shades of grey at 2 am was magical. Other than that, no real highs and no real lows—a pleasant walk through pleasant scenery with pleasant company. Swam on five days. Hogged the shade at rest stops. I'm sure that bubble-wrapping my chocolate reduced the melting.

### Coralie's highlights:

For me, the challenges of completing the circumnavigation and stories of the shipwrecks were the initial inducements which drew me to this trip. They didn't disappoint but I was pleasantly surprised at the scenic coastline and the willingness from the local folk to swap stories and help wherever they could. Once or twice I thought disparagingly of a campsite only to find that it had other charms—think Tufa Terraces campsite. Who in their right mind would camp in the only tiny, dry patch in a bog? Well, we did and it was one of our prettiest campsites as the evening approached. Having a day in Currie was a good way to wind down and *The restaurant without food* was a quirky, local initiative I found appealing.



Mutton bird burrows



Penny's Lagoon post belly-flopping



Sea Elephant River at 2 am



The restaurant without food

### ... and Coralie's lowlights:

As it was a circumnavigation there were long, hot, blister-forming slogs along sandy beaches but I particularly disliked walking in pock-marked paddocks that were created by cattle walking over sodden pastures. Luckily we didn't have too many of these. Not being able to visit the cheese factory was disappointing; the island does not cater for those without some form of transport.

### Mabel's highlights:

1. Good weather, good company and spectacular scenery especially the rugged, rocky coastline.
2. Learning more about the shipwrecks—it is a long time since I have had someone read to me and I really enjoyed that. I could really get a sense of the despair and horror of the people who were shipwrecked and I only saw the sea in a good mood. I can only imagine how rough the sea could get.
3. The birdlife: especially seeing so many hooded plovers, some in family groups having successfully reared their young this season; the large numbers of oyster catchers, both pied and sooty; the variety of gulls and terns; the blue wren that looked even more spectacular than the species here; discovering that there is a red capped plover – not endangered but unknown to me.
4. It was great seeing the fur seals on Nine Mile Beach.
5. Seeing kelp being harvested and learning more about that. I really appreciated the tracks made by their vehicles—it made it so much easier on some of the rocky areas.
6. Finding camp sites: not always the best but we had some spectacular scenery
7. Cape Wickham. I love lighthouses and thought that one was really nice.

### ... and Mabel's lowlights

1. I never want to walk on a beach again!
2. Going clockwise all the time meant we were increasing the pressure on the outside of our left foot—many blisters and a sore left knee. All mended quickly after the walk
3. Mutton bird burrows . Rest assured they are not endangered—there must be many millions on King Island!!!

### Janice's thoughts:

The highlight was the Tufa Terraces in the evening light. The lowlights were the roaring forties (wind) and sand psychosis (fortunately restricted to the few times the tides were not on our side). The unexpected bonuses: generosity of locals, not discovering "coppers and tigers" in every bush, developing the ability to detect mutton birds by aroma alone, and an appreciation of the strength of character of those who settled our land via sailing ship.



# Trip Reports

## Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February: Princetown—Devils Kitchen

Nine walkers (*Viviane, Linda, Irene, Helen, Coralie, Diane, Rob, Clive* and leader *Janice*) walked from the bridge at Princetown to the Devils Kitchen camping area and back.

The day was perfect: sunny skies and a cool SE breeze making for beautiful views of a large ocean swell crashing onto the coastline. The track was in good condition and cleared to about a metre wide which allows walkers to see snakes before standing on them, although only one snake was sighted on the day.

The 7–8 km out went fairly quickly with plenty of chatter, whilst the return seemed a little longer, warmer, and much quieter. The walk was enjoyed by all and interest was piqued for another trip to explore new track work from Devils Kitchen to the beach and the new inland route.

Thanks to Janice for organising the walk and doing the paperwork, for providing the pear cake (leftovers of which will be consumed very quickly at home) and dragging us all to Port Campbell in time for ice-creams and drinks.

Clive



No peeling  
required

**Tomato & Apple Sauce:** put it in a commercial sauce bottle and a fusspot 5-yo won't even notice that it's home made

- |                         |                       |   |   |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1 tbsp olive oil        | 10 cloves             | ➤ core apples—no need to peel them        | ➤ add a muslin bundle of the spices   |
| 5 red onions            | 2 cinnamon sticks     | ➤ roughly chop apples and tomatoes        | ➤ cook gently, stirring reasonably often, until about half the volume (3–4 hours) |
| 2 garlic cloves         | 3 bay leaves          | ➤ peel and chop onions and garlic         | ➤ add pinch of salt and pepper  |
| 1 kg apples             | 12 juniper berries    | ➤ in 8 litre pot warm olive oil           | ➤ cool a little, puree, and bottle  |
| 2.5 kg ripe tomatoes    | salt, pepper to taste | ➤ sweat onions gently for 10 minutes      |   |
| 2 cups caster sugar     |                       | ➤ add the garlic and sweat for a minute   |   |
| 500 ml red-wine vinegar |                       | ➤ add apples, tomatoes, sugar and vinegar |   |



## Warrnambool Bushwalkers walk for a cleaner coast

On the morning of Sunday March 2<sup>nd</sup> five Warrnambool Bushwalkers donned packs and walked from Thunder Point to Levy's Beach. Gloved hands grabbed all manner of unnatural objects spoiling our coastline as we ambled along the beach and rocky headlands. Plastic drink bottles hid behind *every bush* above the high tide line; old rope, whisky bottles, thongs and many other items too were soon bulging from our packs and collection bags. The dead dolphin wedged between some rocks was left to decompose in peace and we drew a line at picking up the dog poo thoughtfully left by dog owners on the track up to Levy's Car Park.

After sorting the rubbish and completing the requested Clean Up Australia survey, Rob dropped the 10 bags collected into Barton's Waste Transfer Station. A very satisfying morning's work!

Thanks very much to Dina, Rob, Di P and Jim for giving up their time for this community service.

Coralie



## Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> February: Four waterfalls in the Otways, an antechinus and a power pole

The heat was of no concern to the three cool walkers (*Rob, Kate and Lucee*) who strolled along shady tracks through tree ferns, beech forest and pines looking for a power pole to show Kate. On the way we saw Little Aire Falls, Triplet Falls, two tourists from Florida, an antechinus, Beauchamp Falls, and Hopetoun Falls, before finding electricity pole 387–98. It is at one end of an impressive span of cable across the wide, deep Aire River valley—a pole well worth finding.



Pole aficionados will be interested to know that 387–98 was reconducted a few years ago, and is, as Kate correctly surmised, on the Gellibrand Line.

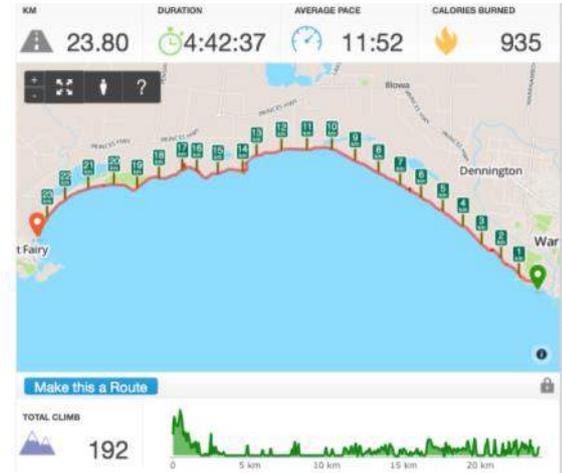
## Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March: By coach from Port Fairy to Warrnambool

The tour group (Coralie, Jim, Helen R and Rob) was ably led by tour guide Lothar. After an hour or so looking at Port Fairy in the throes of its folk festival, we boarded the newly and conveniently scheduled Route 8 coach. There was a short tour of the back streets of Port Fairy before we headed along the highway to Koroit. Glimpses of the lakes within Tower Hill augur well for the *Progressive Day*. Ways to utilise this bus service for future walks will be investigated—the weekend fare (free) for seniors is very attractive!

The only problem—albeit a very pleasant one—was the 5½ hours needed to get within cooe of the bus stop. Yes, this was the annual Port Fairy beach bash. The tides decreed that it had to be a westward journey leaving Thunder Point at 8 am. The sun was behind clouds, a gentle breeze blew on our backs, the spray from the waves hid the ever-so-far-away destination, and the sand was firm: all these made for a most enjoyable walk.

Just think, phones once had a single purpose. Helen's *RunKeeper* App showed that we had walked 23.8 km before reaching the surf club at 13:30. The party (well, its front end) managed a little over 5 km per hour while walking. Whether the scones and muffins consumed exceeded the 935 calories burnt off is anyone's guess. Blips on the route show our rest stop in the dunes out of the wind at 6.5 km and our lunch stop at Killarney oval at 17 km. And the profile of the hills we had climbed looks pretty impressive, until you realise that our maximum altitude was about 12 metres above sea level.

Rob



# Trip Reports

## Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> March:

### *les tranches de vanille de Koroit*

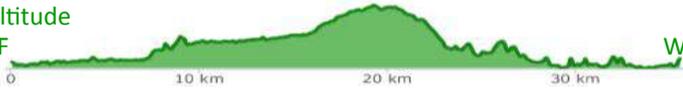
The group (*Jim, Coralie, Diane, Gwenda, and Steve*) had a pleasant though at times damp return ride along the rail trail to Koroit. For those not frantically improving their French, a clue to the highlight of the day, as outlined in the report's title, is in one of the pictures.

*Disclosure: in keeping with major newspaper practice, this report has been totally fabricated by a non-participant looking at Steve's pictures.*



## Saturday 22<sup>th</sup> March: The Port Fairy Rail trail

Altitude  
PF



*Jim's* ability to subvert walkers to the joys of moving while sitting down is increasing: seven cyclists (*Coralie, Rob, Marg, Val and Leo*, their Japanese exchange student *Yuri*, and "temporary member" *Graeme*) set off from the breakwater for Port Fairy. *Helen R* and her trip recorder joined en route and *Diane* joined at Koroit having started earlier than the rest when she realised the trip had a non-esspresso stop at that station. Ten of us in all, with five pedalling both ways. Overcast in the morning, warmer at times in the afternoon, occasionally a head-wind, but all in all, pleasant pedalling for the about 240 m of height gained in the profile. Rob



## Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> March: a Beeripmo day walk

*Coralie's* milk run picked up *Rob*, *Kate*, and *Mick* (first walk with us) on the way to the Derri PO. There the very new, but nonetheless dirty, Golf belonging to our leader, *Janice*, joined the procession to Richards Camp, picking up *Marg* at Beaufort. Luckily we did the walk clockwise—a walk the other way would have stopped half way at a “No entry” sign. The clouds that threatened most of the day made a half-hearted attempt to dampen our spirits for a few moments as we neared the Great Dividing Range. A single *Grevillia* had the only interesting flowers on the almost flowerless dry vegetation. Heart-in-mouth moment on the trip home came from the oncoming traffic on the Hopkins Highway: a car (with trailer) swerving onto the verge (rather than into us, and without rolling over) to avoid a car that had come to a screeching halt in front of it to miss a dog.

Rob



## Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> March: Glenfyne to Timboon

*Irene*, *Linda*, *Gwenda* (leader), *Jim*, *Helen A*, *Helen R*, *Lothar*, *Graeme*, *Rob*

To make it easier for those who didn't want to walk there and back, this Rail Trail walk started in the middle (the trestle bridge) and went to the start then back to the middle and on to the end of the line which, because of the lassitude induced by the large number of chicken pies eaten, turned out to be the actual end instead of the planned end which had been, of course, back at the middle. *Linda's* pack no longer squeaked—the remedy being its free replacement—and so she was welcome to walk with the rest of us, despite the picture suggesting the contrary. *Graeme* provided the interesting geography fact for the day: the water in the clear, strongly flowing *Power Creek* that we crossed several times came from a spring a km or so away.

Rob

