

Wild Sheep Hills/Cathedral Rock: Saturday 18 July

Bushbashers: Diane D (leader), Marg, Rob, Janice, Steve, visitors: Alan, Kerry, Pete

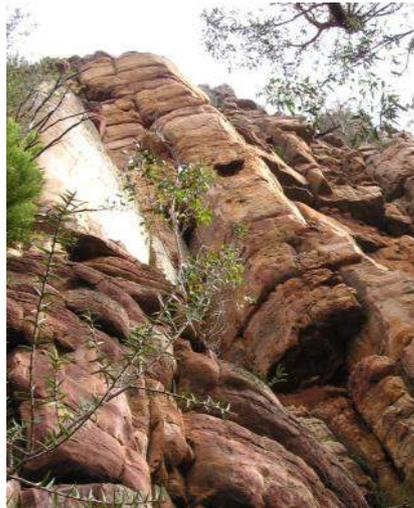
From the Mt William Walking Track carpark, we walked up the track a short distance before disappearing into the bush on a bearing for Wild Sheep Hills and Cathedral Rock.

The bush was thick prickly fire regrowth, which made progress slow as we climbed the rocky outcrops towards our destination. Favourable weather allowed us magnificent views of Mt William and the Serra Range.

After lunch we descended into a steep saddle and traversed around spectacular cliffs before descending through scrub to re-join the Mt William Walking track finishing back at the car park followed by coffee at Halls Gap.

To all who participated, thank you for making it a very enjoyable day.

Diane D



Christmas in July—Halls Gap: 24–26 July

Three Warrnambool Walkers met up with 14 Bayside Walkers on the Friday evening of the 24th July. The Halls Gap YHA once again lived up to its popularity. We had a roaring fire in the lounge room where we all sat with wine, bickies, cheeses and dips. Discussion was around the walk for the next day and introductions. We were booked into the Halls Gap Hotel for our evening meal, which was an utter delight.

The following morning was overcast and VERY cold but it did not deter us at all. We car-pooled and drove around to Sundial car park for the start of our trek. We had barely made a step when the heavens opened for a very brief moment and that was it for the remainder of the walk. (How lucky were we!) The rain had made the rocks quite slippery but we were all safe. Morning tea was taken just before we got to the Pinnacle in a lovely sheltered little spot just near the nerve test. One Bayside member ventured out a little way but then sat down and could not continue. Up at the Pinnacle visibility was excellent, windy and cold but nonetheless, breathtaking. There were a number of Bayside who had never been to the area so you can imagine their excitement as we went down Silent Street and then the Grand Canyon, there was a lot of water flowing and it was very noisy. Lunch was had at the Wonderland car park before we started the trek down to Halls Gap where of course we all indulged in vanilla slices and coffee etc.

The Christmas in July evening meal was held at Barney's Bistro at Pomonal and it was a fabulous spread with pork or turkey and roast vegetables, followed by a rich chocolate pudding, Yum Yum. Of course Kris Kringle arrived with his helper. The manager had pre-recorded Christmas music for us to sing and dance to. It was a really enjoyable evening.

The following morning was overcast with a little bit of drizzle but it did not stop us. We divided up into two groups. The first group walked beside the creek out to Brumbuk whilst the second group climbed up to Chatauqua peak and onto Bullacles Glen.

After viewing Clematis Falls, and upon arriving at the turn off to Chatauqua Peak, the group split into two. Lynne, Kaz and Dina clambered over the



rocks up to the Peak. The last stretch was quite steep, so back packs and walking poles were discarded to allow free use of all limbs. We were rewarded with yet another terrific view of the valley below. We managed to catch up to the rest of the group shortly before Hall's Gap, much to their surprise (despite Lynne warning them of our proximity by producing an almighty "Cooee" when we glimpsed them ahead). As the two groups met at the restaurant for lunch the heavens opened so we said our merry farewells and headed for home.

A huge thank you to Dina for leading the Chatauqua peak section of the walk.

Linda, Irene and Dina.



The Timboon Rail Trail: Sunday 2 August

Walkers: Coralie, Linda, Gwenda, Rob, Jim and Rod

Details of the walk appeared in *The Standard* on the Friday prior, however, no enquiries from the general public were received. Despite a dire weather forecast, the walk did attract 5 regulars and newcomer Rod.

We left promptly from our Warrnambool rendezvous and were walking by 9.40 am. Early on the way was shaded by the towering manna gums and blackwoods. Much to Linda's regret the old apple trees on the side of the trail had been bulldozed and will no longer be available as a summer treat. By the time we had reached the Curdies Siding the sky was blue and we took time to sit in the sun of the shelter and enjoy Gwen's date loaf.

Crossing the heritage-listed Curdies River Bridge we pushed on to show Rod some of the smaller trestle bridges before turning and walking back in the warm sunshine. We were barely into our lattes inside the Timboon Railway Shed Distillery when the rain started. Snug and dry and now enjoying delicious lunches, we marvelled at our luck in completing the 12 km jaunt in fine weather and without troubling a leech.

Coralie



Trip Reports

Mt Clay: 9 August

Participants: Camperdown—Murray (leader), Bob, Fiona, Julie, Floss; Warrnambool—Rob, Linda H, David, Gwenda, and guest Linda W.

Camperdown Bushwalking Club invited us on their walk to the Mt Clay forest. Mt Clay forest was badly burnt in March last year but the vegetation was growing back, the grass trees especially, a vast forest of them in some areas, all in flower.

We met the Camperdown mob at KFC, picked up Linda H from Port Fairy, and re-met at the Sawpit camping ground just north of Narrawong. The start was a kilometre or so north of that.



While we were en-booting, five mud-encrusted-car loads of *Homo unsapiens* drove passed us and onto the road we would be soon be walking. They had obviously found one of the prestige roads for such activities since there were some large puddles, very big puddles indeed, and there were still the minutest of specks of duco showing on their vehicles sides. We did catch up to the car drivers occasionally but soon that form of amusement left us.

The roads improved considerable thereafter, not that there weren't more puddles. The granddaddy of them all—a hundred metre long puddle where the road went through a swamp—meant the road was impassable and so shortened the walk by a few kilometres.

The countryside was green despite the fire and much of what would normally have been quite scrubby was a broad grassland, as our lunch site shows. There were not too many flowers blooming—some sundews and a running postman. Oh, yes, and tens of thousands of grasstrees in one area.

Nothing out of the ordinary in the afternoon, just a very pleasant day for walking as we continued to the cars.

We drove back to the Sawpit campsite and did the short stroll to the Whalers Lookout on the edge of the forest: a rather impressive view of Portland and its bay as you can see.

After that there was nothing to do but head back to Port Fairy for sustenance, arriving at the bakery before closing but after drinks could only be bought in "take away" cups.

And so ended a very enjoyable day. Many thanks to the Camperdown club, and our leader Murray in particular, for asking us along. Such joint walks are well worth while and we shall arrange to do other ones together in the future.

Rob



Bay of Islands to Peterborough: Saturday 23 August

Walkers: Rob (leader), Linda, Irene, Jim, Rod, Jan, Leon and Sylvia

The walk started at the “boat ramp” car park as the cars disgorged their contents into light drizzle. That was the least of our worries: the first part of the path had been wired off. Fortunately both problems soon passed, although, as one of Irene’s photo shows, the barricade to escape the closed off path presented a more formidable problem.

And so we continued, ticking off the things seen as one is wont to do on a tourist ramble: ponds, frogs, scrub, etc. Arches were plentiful, and almost mandatory for a view to be considered worthwhile. It is a magnificent piece of coast: ragged little islands, some be-dotted white with sea-gulls and some not. Ticked off beach walk and road bash (alas the scrub is rapidly leaving little alternative). Ticked off storm damage, scuba divers, and many more. We even met a neighbouring farmer and added a very interesting history lesson to our list of achievements.

And on we went along road then path to the final feature of the walk: the golf course. On one fairway we were just about to tick off “golfer and buggy”, but oh no, it was a baby buggy. It was added to the list, of course.

Rob



Trip Reports

Brown Creek Gorge and Mt Shelley: 29–30 August

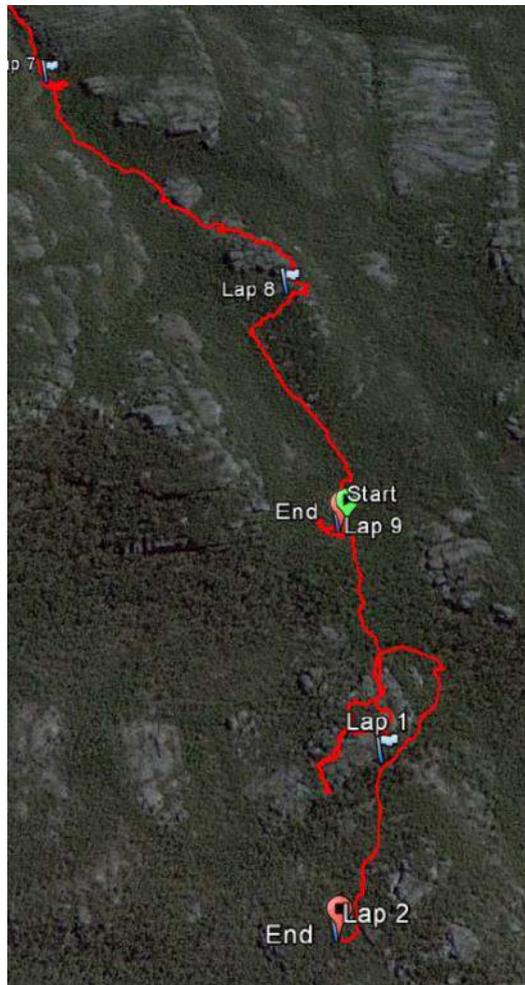
Participants: Diane (leader), Steve, Kate, Rob, and from Geelong, Peter and Kerry

Just after 8 am we all met in the Victoria Valley. It was a very cold morning, registering at one degree on Rob's Subaru thermostat and so I wasn't very enthusiastic about getting out of the car. We left Steve's car parked off the side of Victoria Point Road and our party of six proceeded in two cars to the starting point which was a gate belonging to the water authority, off Geerak Track. Once past the gate we walked almost 4 km on a vehicle track, passing a couple of pumps and a cute old bridge on our way to a weir at the track's end.

At the weir we got ourselves what I would call 'scrub ready' and, with compasses set, we were off into the bush. By now the sun was shining and it was pleasant walking. After a few hundred metres vividly coloured rock formations appeared. Further on we descended into the start of Brown Creek Gorge. This relatively unknown gorge provided a lovely lunch spot with an old hollowed gum tree on one side and a waterfall to the other. I didn't expect the gorge to be so 'gorgeous' and so was pretty impressed with our adventure so far.

With this being my first proper 'off track' walk it wasn't long before lesson one was established—don't leave your compass swinging! A short while after lunch I realised it had been ripped off me by the thick bracken and rushes as we traversed the gorge.





We emerged from the gorge [Lap 7] up onto some rocks with nice views all around [Lap 8 and left]. The idea was to continue that way and look for rocky overhangs in which to setup camp. However, we decided to head back down into the gully and then followed the creek line up to where it flattened out into a saddle. Here we found a perfect spot for our overnight camp, a nice grassy, clear and flat area [Lap 9] complete with running water.

Steve had a fire roaring in no time which was much appreciated considering the light rain and cold that night. Then off to bed we went to what Kerry described as 'Chinese water torture', that being the big fat rain drops falling from the trees onto our tents at too regular intervals!



The next morning wet tents were packed and off we set again in drizzly rain and white skies. A navigational gamble didn't pay off [Lap 1] and a little back tracking was required but on we went through the thick scrub. At morning tea the fog had lifted slightly to give us glimpses of the surrounding features.

From our morning tea stop we were on course to reach the summit of Mt Shelley. We ascended close to the ridge line to reach a high point and had our first proper views for the day. Here we realised we had another saddle to cross before reaching Mt Shelley so it was decided that where we were made a good lunch spot given we were reasonably out of the wind and had nice views. We had a bonus of three eagles soaring in front of us, just out of reach.

Not long after lunch we reached the summit of Mt Shelly. It was open and allowed for a 180 degree view of the Victoria Valley. We were also able to look back at where we'd walked from. From Mt Shelley it was downhill for a couple of kilometres until we reached Steve's car. A quick car shuffle got everybody sorted and off to Dunkeld we went for hot drinks.

Thanks Diane for making this happen. I had a great time and am very keen for another adventure like this.

Kate



Picanniny and Mt Sturgeon: Sunday 6 September

On a fairly overcast and cold, but thankfully dry day, nine walkers set off to stretch their legs on an 8 km walk in the Grampians. After a short car shuffle (luckily David missed the 'roo), we warmed up by climbing the Picaninny, descending on its far side, to then begin the climb up Mt. Sturgeon. Amazingly, a number of families were also out walking, with the youngsters speeding up the tracks. Numerous stops were taken so Rob could take photos of wild flowers, though there were only a moderate number in bloom. Though we all enjoyed the views, spectacular as ever, lunch was taken just below the summit due to the cold winds. An early afternoon tea was taken in Dunkeld to warm us up before the drive home. Thanks to *Coralie, Linda, Gwenda, David, Rob, Rod, Sylvia and Leon* for making this a very enjoyable walk.

Dina



Tower Hill—last-of-the-wattle: Saturday 12 September

Participants: Lothar (leader), Mike, Viviane, Rob, Jess, Rhonda, and Corinne

It was a perfect Spring morning for one of Lothar's Tower Hill wattle walks. Sufficient wattles were still in bloom, the lakes were full, and the sea dark blue. The first loop of the walk took us to the electricity pole, along a couple of ridges up to and round the last volcano, then passed the bee's cave and back to the start. We met some Melbourne Bushwalkers doing Tower Hill for the day and completing their volcano trek the next day with Noorat, Leura and Elephant. The second loop of our walk tested our uphill capabilities a little more. Lothar summoned support (Chris and her sister) for the BBQ afterwards. Linda joined us too as we finished off the morning's pleasant stroll with a relaxed meal—partly because some other mob had to contend with the emus. Many thanks to Lothar from all of us.

Rob



Linton—Skipton—Linton—Smythesdale—Linton Rail Trail: September 19 and 20

Participants: Gwenda (leader), Diane, Irene, Linda, Rob, Jim, as well as Geoff and Bob

Men are from Pittong, women are from Linton doesn't have quite the same ring about it as the well-known best seller but it does describe our 100 km ride remarkably well. The Skipton leg was going well until Gwenda had merely to mention the lack of magpies swooping to be proved wrong. The mountain views were a little hazier than last year. Thankfully it was also a less eventful ride, although the saga of Jim's disaster was duly told at the point of impact.

Day's ride over, we went to our accommodation: the girls at the Linton hotel, the boys at the comfortable rail trail shelter at Pittong. We reconvened at the pub for a hearty[#] meal and then watched the semi-final for a quarter before heading to our sleeping spots.

The Pittong boys were back in Linton at 8:30, a little earlier than the agreed meeting time, and, also as agreed, started riding. G & D caught up at the Nimmons Bridge. I & L choose Plan B and pedalled from Smythesdale to meet us. After morning tea and some tourist time (the lock-up and gallows) at Smythesdale, six of us pedalling to Haddon and back to justify lunch. An hour and a half more pedalling saw us back at Linton for the end of a very enjoyable ride in perfect riding weather.

Rob

[#] aka huge. No skimping on the salad. An army of chips is hiding under the parmigiana. No guessing the only one to not have dessert.



Trip Reports

Twelve Apostles to Princetown and return: Saturday 26 September

Walkers: Helen A (leader), Lothar, Jim and Corrine

It was a wonderful day for a walk—warm and sunny with a slight breeze. It is difficult to give this trip report a different angle: some things remain the same. The views from both directions were magnificent with the sun glinting off the waves and highlighting the colours of the cliffs.

We were fortunate not to see the slithery kind of wildlife. We did, however, see a couple of mobs of kangaroos, a shy echidna, lots of “little brown birds” (where were you Rob[#] with your encyclopaedic knowledge) and a kestrel or kite just sitting on a rock watching us as we walked by.

Lunch and a well appreciated coffee at Princetown fortified us for our return walk. Time passed quickly with lots of chatting about walks in general. After more refreshments at Port Campbell we bade Corinne farewell before we returned to Warrnambool. A very enjoyable day.

Helen

[#] *no wiser probably, although I believe the correct name is LBJs for little brown jobs. Rob*

