

Trip Reports

Cliff top walk: Saturday 7 January

Walkers: Rob (scribe and folly organiser), Lothar, Ross, Coralie, Jim and Dave

I've said it before, and will no doubt say it again: the cliffs between Lake Gilliear and Peterborough provide spectacular pleasant walking ... except perhaps when the predicted 38° is actually reached. Our 8 km figure of eight had four parts. Parts 1 and 3 followed the cliff edge on a mix of no track, marsupial tracks, and errant 4WD tracks, mainly on short grass but occasionally on areas devoid of vegetation. The other two parts were along the maintenance track on the reserve's northern boundary. Twas a pleasant temperature as we headed east from *The Antares* monument at the end of Radfords Rd. We ooh'd at the view many times, eyed off a couple of boats at the foot of the cliffs, surprised a wallaby, and saw no snakes. There was still enough water in one large depression for a swan and four cygnets to glide around. After the seemingly endless final 2 km track-bash we hastened to Cheeseworld for cheese tasting, cheese purchases, and milk shakes/tea/coffee. As we drove past the Allansford oval we noticed the cricketers and thought "who'd be stupid enough to play sport in such heat?"



Fitzroy to Surrey Rivers—Mouth2Mouth: Sunday 15 January

on which Lothar (leader), Jim, Dina, Ian, Ross and Rob maintained the Club's tradition of finishing last but Coralie and Helen A didn't.

We left early so as to arrive at Narrawong shortly after 8 am. We registered, each paid our \$15 fundraiser fee, were arm-banded, and soon afterwards boarded the bus to the mouth of the Fitzroy River.

The river was flowing so we all had to take off shoes and socks and ford across. We dried our feet using the disposable towels and congregated...except for Coralie and Helen who were caught up in the competitive rush to start and were not seen again until Narrawong hours later.

The walk was pleasant: not hot, with a cool headwind. The sand was a bit soft in patches but generally OK. And not many flies at all! We had a quick break at the 5 km marker, and a breather at the "bar" to look at a whale's grey skull bone that's been in the dunes for years.

We finished without any fanfare while they were announcing the winners of the running competitions. We bought lunches, drinks and ice-creams, and were entertained by country singers. A very pleasant way to end the walk. Thanks to all for making it a great day out.

Lothar

Sorry, no graphic photos of the crossing of the Fitzroy River Outlet. The depth and current were too great for Lothar's plastic bag method, and besides he hadn't bought any. A weevil seen on the beach must suffice.



09:08 about to wade the Fitzroy and 14 km later

12:13 the floating bridge across the Surrey



Blacks Falls on Mount Emu Creek: Saturday 21 January

Since the walk was partly on the Wangoom Circuit, the peloton on their nulli-cycles were: David (orange jersey), Linda, Coralie, Lothar, Rob, Sharon, and guests Sarah, Catherine, Elaine

After completing our car shuffle, nine walkers headed one km down the rough Junction Road from Hopkins Falls Road to the junction of the Hopkins River and Mount Emu Creek. A most picturesque sight greeted us there and many photos were taken.

Returning to Hopkins Falls Road, we walked along it until we reached the bridge over the Hopkins River and proceeded into the Hopkins Falls carpark where we again admired the view. The waterfall was flowing reasonably well despite being mid-summer. There were two girls swimming in the pool below the falls.



The Hopkins River at its junction with Mount Emu Creek, upstream as seen from the bridge, and at the Falls.



Hitting the road again, we continued towards Wangoom and turned right into Sullivans Road for 2 km, then right again at the Wangoom-Warrenyea Road for another 2 km and another right turn at the Blacks Lane intersection. After passing the Framlingham Community Centre, we walked down to the Warrenyea Bridge over the Hopkins and went down the track to the river. More photos were taken at this delightful little picnic spot.

Back to the bitumen and then uphill until the top where we left road and proceeded onto permission-obtained private property, walking through a freshly-cut paddock. Much debate and caution was exercised when crossing the electric fences, but no alarm was needed. We continued past the old derelict O'Shannassy house towards the creek. The sound of rushing water could be heard, and we were almost immediately greeted with the sight of Blacks Falls.

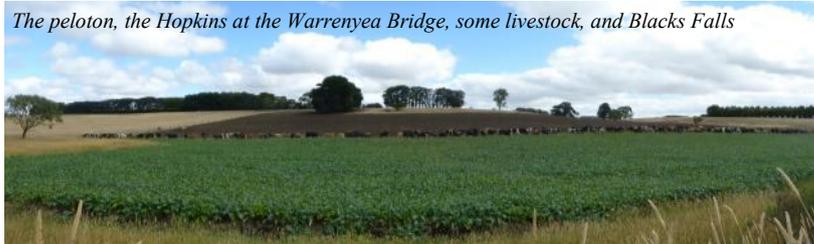
These little-known falls are similar in appearance to the Hopkins Falls and were formed by the same lava-flow, and although about one-third the width of the Hopkins Falls, are equally as impressive. The summer flow gave enough water to provide the curtain of water over the falls.

The 15 minute walk back to the vehicles at the Warrenyea Bridge was followed by a refreshment stop at the Wangoom Store where, since it was booked out by the Red Hat Ladies, we enjoyed our coffee/ice cream on the front veranda.

The ideal weather conditions helped make it a most pleasant 12-km walk.

David

The peloton, the Hopkins at the Warrenyea Bridge, some livestock, and Blacks Falls



Trip Reports

Mt Abrupt walk: Saturday 28 January

Participants: Lothar, Rob, Ross, Sharon & Coralie

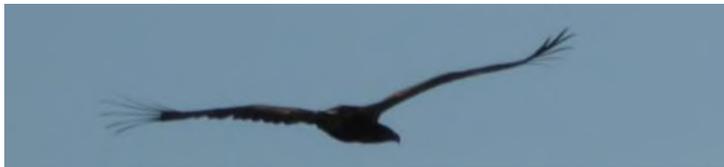
Although relatively mild temperatures were predicted for the South-West Coast, the Bureau suggested it would be warmer inland. An early start was thought prudent and we all assembled at the Mt Abrupt Car Park before 9 am.

For Sharon and Ross, it was their first ascent of this iconic Grampians peak and they were not disappointed with the views. Keeping up a steady pace we were all soon at the summit enjoying the hazy views of the Western District plains, volcanoes and the high points to the north. The resident wedge-tailed also obliged.

Returning to the car, lunch was eaten at the car park. Lothar and Sharon decided they had achieved their training goals for the day and left for home. At Coralie's insistence, the remaining three tackled Mt Sturgeon. We estimate that the temperature was in excess of 33°C, shade was hard to find, and my training pack was suddenly alarmingly heavy. After an hour's climbing, a short distance from the trig point, a decision to retreat was taken. Icy poles in Dunkeld helped to cool us down before the journey home.

Thanks to the others for joining in this "fun" climb.

Coralie



(Above) the Victoria Valley still had some of its October flood water (below).



Southern Warrnambool Delights: Saturday 11 February

Walkers – David (leader), Lothar, Sharon, Loretta, Rhonda, Glenda, Mabel, Elaine, Viviane, Helen, Chris, Debbie & Cecily.



Thirteen walkers left the Surf Club carpark at 8.35 am and headed uphill towards the cutting, taking the path to Cannon Hill. We passed the Portuguese Padrao, commemorating early Portuguese exploration of the Warrnambool area, including the busts of Vasco Da Gama, the Portuguese explorer and Prince Henry The Navigator.

The walking conditions were perfect as we savoured the view of Lady Bay and the Breakwater as we walked through Cannon Hill. We checked out the building progress of the renovations as we walked past the RSL clubrooms.



After crossing the railway line after the Mozart Hall, we turned right and walked around Lake Pertobe, shrouded by the large English Willow trees. Bird life was abundant on the lake. Our cavalcade of 13 walkers stretched out as they engaged in hearty conversation.

We crossed the Merri River footbridge near the old woollen mill and followed the river upstream until we crossed MacDonald Street, and then wound our way along Elliot Street and headed into the old rifle range reserve.

The new track to the sewerage treatment plant, kindly constructed by Wannon Water, led us to the rise where we could see the sea, and followed the path along the fence-line through the coastal scrub to the Coastal Walk Path. Heading west towards the Far Rocks and after walking for an hour, we reached our destination: the vantage point overlooking Turland Rock. Cautious disbelief and looks of scepticism were given surrounding this unknown name of Turland Rock, and after an explanation was given defending the claim, some sceptical looks remained!



Now walking east towards the breakwater, we followed the Coastal Walk Path through the scrub, checking out the vantage point of Smugglers Cove and the Trig Point Lookout, and onto the Thunder Point lookout. Everyone enjoyed the great views and the sunshine.

Leaving Thunder Point behind us, our procession continued towards the breakwater on the Coastal Walk Path, passed Shelly Beach and Pickering Point, crossed the Merri River over the footbridge and joined the walking path to the Breakwater. Despite rumours of Sammy the Seal being eaten by a shark the previous day, the seal was observed frolicking in the water near the jetty. Reaching the end of the breakwater, we returned to the path and made our way to the Surf Club where we finished the most pleasant 10-km walk with a coffee/tea about 11.15 am.

It was good to see some new faces on the walk and we hope to see them again!

David



Posing in front of the so-called Turland Rock. Some members at February's meeting had different names for it..



Glenfyne to Timboon: Saturday 18 February

This 11.5 km walk from Glenfyne to Timboon on the rail trail, being one of this club's Frequent Flyers, was still as pleasant and enjoyable as ever; beautiful trees, broad and gently sloping path, some points of interest with the trestle bridges, early lunch at the Distillery afterwards, and no leeches (despite the occasional showers)!! And of course, good company, as provided by Lothar, Chris, Rob, David, Ross, Linda, Viviane, Helen A, Jim, Mary, Rhonda and visitor Kris.

Dina

It should be pointed out that once we arrived at Glenfyne, the three drivers (one of which was the leader) drove off, deserting us. The fact that the transport home was now at Timboon provided a great incentive to complete the walk. Anyhow, that meant there was a south-bound group who feasted on blackberries and a north-bound group carrying their in-training heavy-ish packs. The picture at the bottom right shows the Dr Livingstone-like meeting just south of the Curdies River. Kris's iPhone shots show why we do the walk so often.



Granny's Grave Circuit Walk: Saturday 25 February

Walkers: David (leader), Rhonda, Mabel, Rob, Ian, Kris and Scott.

Seven walkers left Proudfoot's carpark at 8.35 am and headed through Scoborio Park, and then along Hopkins Road until we reached the coastal scrub beyond Marfell Road. After following that scrub west, we took the winding track past the Granny's Grave entrance, through The Flume carpark, and continued to the edge of the camping ground, where we turned south and joined the Promenade walkway. We headed east along the Promenade to Point Richie, stopping at Granny's Grave for a breather, and at the Trig Point Lookout to enjoy the view.

The lookout at Point Ritchie gave us a good view of the first incoming surge into the river as the tide started to rise. Rob reckoned he could see himself surfing on the waves!! The width of the river mouth increased considerably while we watched. We took the long way to get to its other side: along the path to the bridge, across it, and back towards the mouth. The party broke up for strategic reasons (to avoid walking on the soft sand), with some of us walking to the Whale Watching Platform via the beach, and the others up the Logans Beach Road.

We then headed back to the start, re-crossing the bridge and following the riverbank to reach Proudfoots at 11 am and have the required coffee there. It had been a most pleasant 10-km walk in good walking conditions.

David



Trip Reports

Timboon Rail Trail ride: Wednesday 1 March

Riders: Mabel (leader), Jim, Rob, Mike 1, Mike 2, Susan, Graeme, Diane, John and Fred

As part of Mabel's get-fit-campaign for her big May bike ride, the first six in the above list of four Club members and six non-members met at the Naroghid end of the rail trail at 9 am, and started pedalling southwards to meet the other four at Glenfyne. The morning's riding was pleasant, blackberries could be picked without dismounting, and Timboon was reached about 11:30. By the time coffee, lunch and ice cream had been found it was 1 pm before we set off on the hotter, uphill return ride. A detour through Cobden provided a cold drink rest stop before the final 7 km. Although the weather continued its series of hot Wednesdays—32° for this one—it was, nonetheless, an enjoyable Hopkins-Point-Road-hill-free day.

Rob



Mabel's bike sans its misbehaving baggage rack.

My success on the return ride was finding a tail light in the middle of the track, which I thought would be a handy spare until I noticed my tail light was missing.

Clean up Thunder to Levy's Points day: Sunday 5 March

Westbound: Helen A (organiser), Mabel, Rob and David;

Eastbound: Jim, Dina and Lothar

This stretch of coast provides one of the nicest walks near town, even if you're on an emu parade. It was an agreeable, slightly overcast day as the two halves of the party walked towards each other, each person collecting a full bag of trophies. Our bags joined a larger collection of bags at the Levy's Point carpark filled from there by a minibus-load of volunteers. Jim returned us to Thunder Point before we made our way to *Bohemia* for coffee and a natter.

Rob



Détente—East meets West

Easter Creek Lookout at Langi Ghiran: Saturday 11 March

Walkers: Rob (leader), Ross and Lothar

That Maccas is verboten for Ross's car posed a problem for Lothar's preferred coffee stop in Ararat. The alternative proved adequate and when asked gave Ross a bonus takeaway cup for his lunchtime thermos of tea. Finding the track to the reservoir from the car park was the next problem, wrongly but adequately solved by following a rough track along the pipe line. We were soon admiring the stonework of the 1876 reservoir. And though a more obvious kangaroo pad diverted us for a few minutes, we were soon admiring more stonework along the pleasant but slightly overgrown track along the water race that leads up to a view point on ridge line where the 8 km pipe from the Mount Cole reservoir empties its water.

From there we followed the road, mainly gaining height, sometimes gently, sometimes steeply. Ross gained 5 brownie points for spotting a hyacinth orchid in flower. Later we came across piles of terracotta pipes from previous water diversion efforts. From our lunch spot at the Easter Creek Lookout, we had a 220° view that included Mts Buangor and Cole, the Mount Langi Ghiran Vineyard and, on the horizon, Mt Elephant.

The downhill return had a few spots where the coefficient of friction was almost exceeded. Retracing the reservoir track back to its start explained our initial problem: the starting sign was hidden behind a family's tent. All that was left for this enjoyable stroll was a stop at a different Ararat café where hot chocolate was a surprising \$8, but did come in a very large glass with a straw and 2 marshmallows.

Rob



Glenelg River Gorge: Saturday 18 & 19 March

Walkers: David (leader and scribe), Rob, Ross, Linda, Helen, and Lothar

Six members met at the Nelson kiosk at 9.45 am. Following our coffee-break and car shuffle, we commenced our 15 km cliff top walk from the car park on the North Nelson Road, opposite the Lasletts river camp, at 10.15 am.

The weather was excellent and the views stunning as we wandered along this river section of the Great South West Walk. Bird life was abundant early in the walk and tapered off in the middle of the day. Some of us were lucky enough to see a pair of the endangered red-tailed black cockatoo. We also saw crimson rosellas and a copperhead snake that crossed our path.

After a drink and break at the picnic spot near the South Australian border, we continued for another hour to Hirths Landing where we stopped for lunch. Many anglers and fishing boats were on the river due to a two-day fishing competition.

After lunch, we had to climb the many steps back up on the clifftop to our walking trail. We passed the little fishing village of Donovans on the opposite side of the river and after another kilometre, we returned to Victoria. The scenery was most pleasant as we continued walking through the river gorge. We made Simpsons Landing on the northern edge of Nelson about 2.30 pm, and reached the Nelson kiosk about 3 pm. After ice creams and coffee, the two there-for-the-day walkers returned to Warrnambool while the remaining four set about organizing their accommodation – three at the camping ground and one at the pub.



SA Sinkholes: Sunday 19 March

Sink hole inspectors: David (leader), Rob, and Ross

After a quiet night for two campers and a noisy night the pub-stayer we converged on the Nelson kiosk at 8:30. With a warm day forecast, three intrepid explorers were



soon heading west into South Australia to check out the sinkhole country south of Mount Gambier. The

first stop was checking out Piccaninnie Ponds (110 m deep) which, like some of the other sink holes, had facilities for scuba divers.

Next stop was the only hill for the day: Mount Schank. We climbed to the rim of this volcanic crater on its classy steps, and walked 2.5 km around the crater's rim.



Our tour had four more sink holes (pictured below from left to right) before we returned to Nelson about midday for lunch then home:



1. Gouldens Waterhole on Stock Route Rd (35 m diameter),
2. The impressive Little Blue Lake on Mt Salt Rd (40 m diameter)
3. The Sisters (surprisingly on The Sisters Rd) has two separate waterholes with a land bridge between them.
4. The spectacular and eerie Hells Hole, a large sinkhole about 25 m diameter with a 30 m drop to the water located in pine plantations at Caveton.



Trip Reports

Skipton—Ballarat Rail Trail ride: 22–23 March

Riders: Jim (coordinator), Bob, Mabel and Marg

Undaunted by soaking rain the night before the bike ride, we met enthusiastically as Linton at 10 am as planned (Mabel by bike from Skipton). After coffee at the store, Jim collected the keys to the sleepover. We rode north to Ballarat on the trail which was well-grassed, though wide bike tyres were an advantage (so too a soft seat, I'm told). Shelter sheds along the way have descriptive boards of the railway history that began in 1883 to service the goldfields.

We turned around at the trail's end on the outskirts of Ballarat. We picnicked in a nearby shed. Mabel left first to complete her ride back to Skipton (110 km for the day). We followed not too far behind. Pittong Sleepover offered us a hot shower and a room each. Very civilised. Jim drove us to Smythesdale hotel for tea.

In the morning, trucks arriving at the China Clay mine next door awoke us. We rode to Skipton and back to Linton. Bob drove home from Pittong, Jim and Mabel rode back to Pittong to their cars, and I continued to the Ballarat Railway Station to await the train to Ararat. Thank you Jim for organising our happy cycling adventure.

Marg

Three Capes Walk: 28–31 March

Participants: Linda, Irene, Dina, Jim, Mabel, Tam, Chris and Lothar

As a group we did not walk together because there was such a variation in abilities, but we all met up at the end of the day and shared our experiences.

Day 0: We all arranged to meet up on the Monday evening in Hobart and go out for dinner with Karen Bennett. Karen was a member of our club many years ago before she moved to Hobart and has not looked back.

Day 1: The following morning we made our way to Port Arthur to catch the Pennicott boat to Denmans Cove where we were dropped off for our short walk to Surveyors Cabin. There was an immediate climb up. Looking back down I could not believe it but down at Port Arthur was a thumping great cruise ship, we were very pleased to be leaving the area. Our accommodation was 120 m above sea level on the edge of a broad, button grass plain, flanked by low eucalyptus scrub.



The Three Capes Walk (ctd)

Day 2: A "gentle" climb to Arthur's Peak was rewarded with a view over Crescent Bay and Mt Brown and the towering spires of Cape Raoul. The second night's accommodation was at Munro in a tall eucalyptus forest 242 m above sea level.

Day 3: We headed out to The Blade, near Cape Pillar. We were able to leave our backpacks and just carry a day pack—we felt like skipping along with the lack of weight. The Blade is one of Australia's most southerly points and words cannot describe this majestic coastline. Nerves could very easily take over when you realise how high up you are and how very little area there is between where you are standing and the cliff edge. We had to drag ourselves away from The Blade and make our way back to pick up our packs and then another hour to the Retakunna camp for our last night.

Day 4: Today we got to do it all. Climb a mountain, wander through a lush rainforest, follow the thin rind of a coastal cliff, stand on the edge of another cape, meander through fragrant heathlands, and end our experience at the most perfect beach you could imagine. WOW!

My little piece.

I have heard people who classify themselves as "Real Bushwalkers" snicker at this walk because the accommodation is sensational and the track is well formed and graded but they are not looking at the big picture this walk provides. People who would never be able to dream of doing a multi day hike are able to do it in a location which truly takes your breath away.

Thank you to everyone who came. I hope your expectations of this walk were realised; I know it far exceeded mine.

Linda

