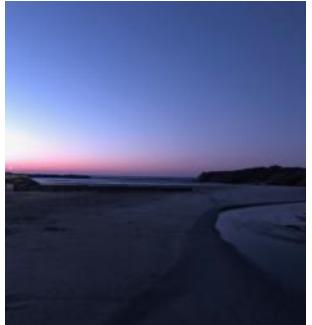
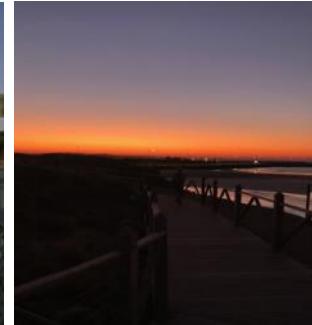


Merri to Moyne: Saturday 3 April

Rob , Rosalie , Theresa, Kirsty  and Geoff were all channelling Lothar who, alas, could only be present in spirit on this, his signature walk.

This pedestrian version of the cyclists' *Murray to Moyne* started from the bridge over the Merri near Stingray Bay at 7:11 and crossed Port Fairy's bridge over the Moyne 7 hours and 26 km later. By the way, 'twas the last day of daylight saving: sunrise won't be at 7:46 again until June 14!



The predicted temperature of 30° had been increased to 32° for the afternoon when the northerly wind would become a westerly. As Lothar had so carefully planned, the tide was very low—more sand and reefs than usual were showing. The sand was firm, even the commonly softer sections. The sky was cloudless. The white of the breaking waves contrasted delightfully with the blue well-behaved sea. All the same three suffered soggy sandshoes syndrome by not being quick enough.



Our first rest was at Levy's Point on the last rock for the walk, thereafter nothing but sand for 20 km. The walk to our next stop, The Cutting, was more pleasant than usual because the beach was firm and not steep.

After The Cutting, the "is it just round the corner?" syndrome set in with "it" being our lunch spot at Killarney. We saw three snorkelers, a float to indicate "snorkeler below", a jet-ski assisted surfer and, of course, the many birds always present on this part of the walk as they scurried along the waterline.



We arrived at Killarney at 11:45 for a half-hour lunch, a chat to Mabel who was staying there, and to discover that no potable water is there. It was only on the Sunday that we discovered a cruel twist of fate similar to Scott's in the Antarctic: Lothar and Chris had been waiting at Killarney until 11:30 with iced water and Tim Tams.

It was noticeably warmer for the two hours walking after lunch. Flocks of small birds continued to scurry along the water's edge until the final bay that stretches to Port Fairy. A rarely and barely seen sight was a "Belladonna Lily" swimming in a secluded cove. I found a golf ball, a hazard from the skies not often considered. The final stretch along the beach had us wending our way through a packed throng before we reached a resting spot overlooking the bay with Warrnambool in the far, far distance. We felt quite satisfied with ourselves. All that was left was the penultimate 400 metres to the Moyne and the final 400 metres to the bus stop and an ice cream.

Rob



Killarney Beach sunrise walk: Saturday 17 April

Sunrise optimists: Coralie, Lothar, Mary, Rob

We all met in the Killarney Beach carpark before the 6:30 am start time. We had just enough light to notice the thick cloud cover... indicating that we weren't going to have the anticipated magical and colourful sunrise. Fortunately though we had no wind or rain.

The wild weather in the previous week had dumped thick seaweed and scoured out edges of the dunes and the beach—the large sandy headland east of the boat launching area was no more (see right).

The low tide made the walking easy. We headed east until we reached the point where Basin Track meets the coast. We then headed back along that track to the Killarney oval.

We had a quick breather at the oval before locating the northern gate to take the at times overgrown 4WD track to the golf course. The track beside it leads to the beach, the way we returned to the carpark.

A 2.5 hr circuit all up. We'd seen quite a few birds, and a couple of wallabies. Mary and Rob headed home but Coralie and I (and Chris) headed to the 2 Tarts in Warrnambool for morning refreshments. A lovely early morning outing!

Lothar





Four Peaks Challenge—Sugarloaf, Leura, Elephant and Noorat: Sunday 18 April

Challengers: Coralie Rosalie, Kirsty, Rob , Janice and Simone (visitor)

Under gloomy skies we arrived at the base of Mt Leura, Camperdown to participate in the annual 4 Peaks Challenge. We were welcomed by Friends of Mt Leura representative, John Fallon, who stood on a table in the rain so he could be seen and heard. Miraculously the misty rain ceased the moment he finished speaking and we all raced up the slope to conquer the first peak, Mt Sugarloaf. From here we followed up with an anticlockwise ascent of Mt Leura.

Piling into the vehicles, we drove to Derrinallum. Out of the gloom Elephant slowly appeared. After entering the compulsory botanic identification quiz supervised by local identity, Val Lang, the rain ceased and we began the steep track to the summit. Along the way, our group of six 'acquired' WBW's Graeme, C'down Bushwalkers' Jenny, and recently-arrived-in-Terang Lana.

Driving in the rain to our fourth peak, Mt Noorat, again we could not see it until almost there. However, as before, the rain abated and

we were able to complete the circumnavigation of the crater in the relative dry. We declined the offer of the organisers to repair to the Terang Hotel for a debriefing and headed home with the Club's honour satisfied.

Coralie



GWW from Portland to Yellow Rock: Saturday 1 May

Walkers: Rob ✕, Theresa, Kirsty ✕ and Gareth (Grampians)

After a short walk along Portland's beach reserve it was onto the sidewalk to pass by the Botanic Gardens with its flourishing dahlias, to cross over the rail and road lifeline to the port, and to see some silos and stored logs before finally reaching some bush near the old battery. Then it was onto walking tracks proper with good views of the sea to the east. But we weren't yet free of industry: the hum of the smelter's conveyor belt in its large pipe, the smelter itself, a quarry, and a small wind farm. We were wary of the rifle range. The gannet colony was closed.

We had lunch with a cliff edge view of Cape Nelson and its bay. The sea was almost flat—hardly any white at the cliff base, though we did spot what had to be puffs of spray from a small blow hole. There were a few surfers at Yellow Rock. One, when asked about the waves, simply said "slow". While the afternoon walk didn't have as many views of the sea as I remembered, nor was it as flat, it is a worthwhile and interesting walk.



South Warrnambool History Walk: Saturday 8 May

Participants: Gwenda and Hugo, Simone, Kirsty, Geoffrey, Rob, Coralie ☺, Mary, Jim, Kim, Rosalie ☺

A brochure available at the Warrnambool Visitors Information Centre '*A walking trail to discover the history and scenery of South Warrnambool*' provided the basis of our almost three hour ramble. Besides the litany of facts and memories in this brochure, we discovered some of our own. We checked out parts of the breakwater re-opened after the damaging storm a month ago. The former version of Lady Bay resort was the venue for Mary's wedding reception and also Jimmy Barnes concerts attended by both Jim and Simone.

As we passed the former Jetty Flat, Jim remarked that a DC3 plane is reputed to have landed there. We diverted towards the station along the former horse-drawn tramway between Merri St and the jetty and returned by the upper former railway track. Near the station, Kim pointed out a newish drain constructed to capture rubbish from stormwater entering Lake Pertobe. The well-used Harris St recreation grounds was formerly a tip.



We viewed the remaining buildings of the Railway Precinct—the 1892 Station, the former Station Master's residence, and the vacant Gas works manager's residence which together with a large parcel of potentially useful lawn is unfortunately closed to the public.



We admired the Woollen Mill residential development, noting the war memorial, community garden, and preparations for the construction of a further 19 apartments. Through some of the streets of South Warrnambool, we identified many properties which once were sea captains' houses, lightermen's cottages, shops, churches, a police station, and a seamen's mission. Gwenda led us to the ex-South Warrnambool State school which her children attended until it closed. The trotting track, on the way to Thunder Point was once a quarry and then another tip! As we neared Thunder Point, by good fortune a mobile coffee van, C U LATTE, drove past, so we took advantage of it rather than waiting at the Pavilion. On the way back to the breakwater carpark the forecast rain finally came as a temporary mild drizzle.

Rosalie



Signal Peak by the new GPT track: Saturday 15 May

Pioneers: Rob and Mike

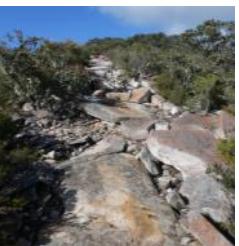
Advice that the track from the Mt Abrupt car park to Signal Peak was open arrived on the Friday. What else to do but immediately add it to the by-chance empty program. Four signed up but attrition reduced that to two. It's a thoroughly recommended 3 hour there-and-back walk. A shorter version will be possible once the track is open to Cassidys Gap, though at the expense of a car shuffle. Other options will abound once the GPT is opened.

The walks to Signal Peak and Mt Abrupt are very similar: in distance (7.6 km and 400 metres up for Signal Peak, 6.4 km and 450 metres for Mt Abrupt), in track surface, steps, and gradient, and both have expansive views over the surrounding plains.

The track to Signal Peak leaves the Mt Abrupt track at a prominent, already graffiti-ed sign. Soon after we reached Signal Peak, two others arrived,



pointed to Mt Abrupt, and said "That's where we were going but took the wrong turn". The final 200 m to Signal Peak is mainly "slabs" rather than steps—flat rocks that look like they have been extracted by a dentist from the ground and laid flat to show both the above and below ground portions.



Naroghid ↔ Timboon: Saturday 22 May

Jim picked a glorious autumnal day for cycling the Naroghid to Timboon Rail Trail. Seven riders fronted up in all; four non club members from the Wednesday group joining in.

Riding early in the day was cool with a heavy sprinkling of dew on the grass. As it was mostly downhill from Naroghid the ride to Cobden was a breeze. We quickly covered the section to Glenfyne. We stopped at the picnic ground beside the hall to refuel and luxuriate in the sunshine before the trickier sections along Power Creek were encountered.



The section from Glenfyne to Timboon is the most scenic part of the trail and is often walked as a club trip. It is a more difficult proposition on a bike. We were able to ride down some of the ramps to the small bridges across the creek, but in most cases it was wiser to dismount and walk. It did prompt Mabel to seriously consider writing a report on the dangers to the Corangamite Shire. Slowing down, however, did give us time to admire the old railway trestle bridges looming above and currently covered in ferns.

At Timboon some headed off to check out the works on the new Timboon-Port Campbell Trail, while Jim, Barry and Coralie headed to the *Provedore* café to organize lunch. Sated, it was then time to 'fix' the non-functioning battery of Jim's borrowed ebike. A simple turn of the key to lock in the battery solved the problem and it was then time for the return journey.



The trip home was more arduous with more uphill sections to test tired legs. We enjoyed a drink stop in Cobden before the last push back to the cars. There was general agreement that it would be hard to have a more perfect day for cycling.

Coralie & Jim



"Here we go again" thought the burn pile: Saturday 5 June

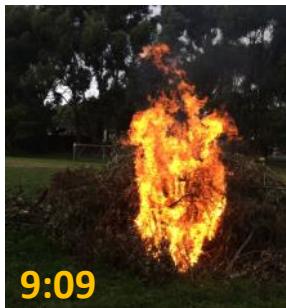
Collectors: Rob, Ross, Geoff, Mabel, Jim, Rosalie, Dennis and Kathy, and, in the advance party, Linda.

The story so far: Linda had mowed the eastern side of our section of the rail trail and reported much debris thereon.

Now read on: Movement restrictions had been eased, a dry morning was predicted, and a burn pile was just waiting to do its phoenix impersonation. And so the aforesaid mentioned met at 9 am for a hastily convened working bee to play a real life game of Pick-up-sticks. Except for Ross who spent his time creating sticks to be



9:07



9:09



9:51

picked up—no branch that was dead or likely to hit the face of a mower was safe from his chain saw. The fire thrived, the sticks met their fate, and by 10:15 all was done and all was good.

Thank you all for coming. One gets a warm inner glow from volunteering, although in this case it was probably a warm outer glow from standing too close to the burn pile. *Rob*



9:24



9:40



11:06



First port of call was the Botanic Gardens with their bats and Moreton Bay figs. Next was an architecture discussion—doctors' houses and when were the blocks of land divided—while going along Nelson St on the way to Albert Park and its colourful loo.



A grassy stroll through the park ended with a view over the race course and a visit to the Japanese Garden. The grass between McGregors Rd and the racecourse took us most of the way to Brierly Park. Hatched plans for a retirement-home-based walk.



All to be done was to follow Russell Creek to our starting point at Bromfield St. One slight diversion to the planned walk though: for her pre-walk coffee Mary had sussed out the Piccolo van in front of St Joseph's. Need I say more as to where we went?

Skipton-Ballarat Rail Trail: Sunday 20 June

Cyclists: *Coralie, Clive, Jim (members) and Jack, Fred, Jeff (visitors)*

The group converged at the old Linton Station just after 10 am. Jack and Fred had ridden from Skipton and reported that recent rain made some sections tough going.

After morning tea in the surrounding park, six cyclists set off in decidedly cool but clear conditions. It didn't take long to discover that one needed to be very careful on the wetter parts of the track. On some sections it was like riding through treacle.

Making good time we were soon peering down from Nimons Bridge, then approaching Scarsdale and skirting around the Woody Yaloak oval. We stopped briefly at the Smythesdale Station and discovered two other bike paths, the Rainbow Bird Trail and the Kuruc a Ruc Trails, that could be worth exploring for future rides.

Arriving in Haddon, some elected to dine in style at the *In the Sticks* café at the Avalon Nursery, while others opted for a picnic on the seats near the Haddon Station.

We reconvened just before 1 pm and enjoyed a small rosé wine tasting, compliments of Fred's home brewing efforts. On the return journey, we met a couple known to Clive on e-mountain bikes. After admiring their machines, we continued, making the cars shortly after 3 pm.

Thanks to the group for a very enjoyable day on the bikes. *Coralie*



Around Koroit: Sunday 27 June

Historians: Mary, Coralie, Rosalie, Dina, Kim, Irene, Theresa, Gwenda, Hugo, Rob and, for coffee, Linda

It was indeed a pleasant Sunday for a walk and we all enjoyed our 7 km jaunt around the little village of Koroit. Many thanks to The Koroit Historical Society whose Heritage Trail brochure provided an excellent guide for us to follow.

Starting in Anzac avenue we made our way past many National Trust listed buildings to the heritage listed Botanic Gardens. After a brief self guided look at the gardens and their amazing trees and shrubs, we moved northward admiring many more notable structures.

Eventually we arrived at the Koroit Railway Station Precinct. The ongoing restoration of the railway buildings was evident and this does provide a focal point for Koroit, as well as the Warrnambool to Port Fairy Rail Trail. The amazing work of volunteers who maintain the surrounding grounds was evident by the neat, tidy and well designed Station precinct.

Leaving the Station, we headed southward past more historic buildings and homes and the remnants of workers' (small) cottages. Significant among these was the original Post Office. This was home to the famous author, Henry Handel Richardson, from 1878 to 1890.

Finally we made our way up Horne Street to Tower Hill's rim and coffee awaiting us at The Garden Cafe.

Mary

