

## Aire River ↔ Castle Cove: Sunday 7 July

Guests: Rob 📷, Coralie, Lothar 📷 and Dina

We invited ourselves on this Camperdown Bushwalkers' walk—many thanks to them for a very enjoyable day.

It was a cold start for the two hour drive to the Aire River West campground—minus 2 according to the car at one stage. A bit warmer, but still chilly, as we started our easy stroll along the Great Ocean Walk. The first kilometre or so was in a “tunnel” through bushes but thereafter views of the coast abounded.

After two hours we were at the Castle Cove lookout with views both ways along the coast and down to the beach, our lunch spot. The sun was out, there was no wind, and it was with great reluctance that we started on our return walk, even more pleasant than earlier because of the sun's warmth. An assault by the walkers on the vanilla slices at Yatzie's in Lavers Hill was a success. *Rob*



## West of Port Fairy: Saturday 13 July



*Participants: Coralie, Rob, Dina, Ali and Janice (leader)*

It was an act of supreme optimism to schedule a coastal walk for the middle of winter, and a small bunch of even more optimistic walkers signed up for this ramble along the wild coast to the west of Port Fairy.

Whilst the date had been determined by favourable tides, the temperature, rain and wind forecasts for Saturday morning were also kind and offset the predicted high seas and large swells.

This walk was really one with the lot: the route included basalt, sand, calcarenite and dunes, with a bit of bush bashing thrown in for good measure. Sporadic showers kept us guessing and our rain coats were constantly at hand.

The conditions made for slow progress as we navigated our way gingerly across large boulders, up and down short cliff faces, over soft sandy beaches, and followed Rob's route finding through coastal scrub.





All morning we enjoyed stunning views of spectacular surf rumbling and crashing in. Deen Maar was a constant companion on the horizon. A convenient seat beside a calm bay protected by offshore reefs was an ideal spot for morning tea and we had lunch sheltered from the wind in the lee of a large sand dune.

A high point gave us a dress circle view of a pod of 4 or 5 whales as they moved east towards Warrnambool where they were spotted at Logans Beach later in the day.

Thank you to my fellow hardy souls who resolutely pushed through the various challenges on the walk and to the generous land holders who shared their knowledge of the area and let us access the route.

*Janice*



## Christmas in July and wattle walk: Saturday 27 July

Participants: Ali, Chris S, Coralie, Dina, Gwenda, Irene, Linda, Lothar, Rob, Rosalie

For lunch, because of the rain, we opted for the newish undercover BBQ facilities at Koroit Station—under the watchful eye of the new Secretary of the Rail Trail Committee. BYO, plus Ali's bonus pumpkin soup for all, and cakes from Chris and Rosalie.

Afterwards, we moved to Tower Hill for a couple of flattish circuits (and a short burst of rain). The wattles were in full bloom, and we saw four koalas in the picnic area and two near the peak climb.

Lothar





## Otway Waterfalls: Saturday 3 August

Ali 📷, Christine, Dina, Lothar, Mabel and I (Rob 📷) had perfect weather for our day of impressive waterfalls, towering mountain ash, and lush tree ferns. It's a two hour drive to Beech Forest, whether you go via Colac or via Lavers Hill. Both cars made the drive into a loop—one going clockwise and the other anticlockwise.

First falls were on the Little Aire River, replete with a viewing platform with a mesh floor. Warning: a walking pole will fit through the mesh, with no trouble at all. Fortunately Ali could retrieve Christine's errant pole.



Next on the agenda were the Triplet Falls, so named because the cascading Youngs Creek splits three ways at this plunge. All the while we were among many tree ferns and many very large, tall trees, including one labelled as 300 years old. Just before we returned to the carpark and the end of our 7.8 km morning walk there was an on old boiler and some tramway gear marking the site of [Knott's Mill No 1 \(useful info midway through this link\)](#).





We drove to the Beauchamp Falls picnic area for lunch. A couple of Jacky Winters seemed to cope with the picnickers very well. Alas, waterfalls are often in valleys, and so our post-lunch 1 hour 3 km walk had a 90 metres descent to reach Deppler Creek and the Falls themselves.



It was a short drive to the Aire River's Hopetoun Falls, our last. Those satisfied to look down at the top of falls need only a 50 metre walk here. Decidedly inferior compared to the view from the bottom, many steps and 40 metres below but doable in 20 minutes.

That only left us with the just-down-the-road bonus: a [Californian Redwood plantation](#). We were dutifully impressed by these 60 metre, 88-year adolescents.



## Lake Purrumbete: Saturday 10 August

Thirteen was not an unlucky number for this ride and all members and guests arrived on time. Bikes were unloaded, helmets donned, the 'official' photo taken, and we were cycling by 10 am. By then the fog had lifted and, although cloudy, the day promised sun.

The first stop was a lakeside visit to the campground where we admired the waterbirds and the fishermen's facilities. It was then on to the hamlet of Koallah with a minor detour involving a short climb towards the highway due to leadership inattention. Error rectified, we then made our way to the locked gate at the base of Mt Porndon.

After admiring the hill's shape and posing for more photos we backtracked a short distance to the Carpendeit turn off. We rode through countryside of rolling verdant hills, dry stone walls, glossy cattle and plump sheep. By the time we reached the Cobden Stoneyford Road a few riders had left the main bunch to return to the [Lake Edge Café](#) for a coffee.

Nine cyclists pushed into the breeze and continued to the Carpendeit Hall. Here sandwiches and muesli bars were consumed by a few of the riders intending to complete a 55 km loop encompassing Purrumbete South and Tesbury. Four riders satisfied with a more modest ride of nearly 40 km retraced the route from the hall to the café.

Our veranda table for lunch at the café had a beautiful view of the lake and caught the afternoon sun. Here we were joined by a party of four non-riders. A buzz of conversation accompanied the delicious food and coffee. The loop riders eventually trickled in to enjoy hot drinks on the lawn.

As people drifted off home, it was declared a very successful event; one sure to be repeated next year.

*Coralie*





## The Old Beechy Line and Colac: Sunday 18 August

Walkers: Ali, Coralie, Helen, Mabel, Pauline and Rob

A pleasant Sunday walk along the [Old Beechey Rail Trail](#) was enjoyed by all of us. We skipped the initial rail trail "road" sections between Colac and Barongarook, and started walking at the 103 mile marker, finishing some 8.3 km later at the old Kawarren station site.



Being semi locals we wisely chose to walk south along the trail—thus only having one slight upward section! A number of signs along the way provided us with some of the historical background of the rail line and logging camps but little actual evidence remained.







Rob did venture off track to investigate an old culvert under the track at one stage — the rest of us opted to watch rather than risk possible leech attack.

After lunch at the Kawarren picnic ground it was off to Colac for a stroll through the sculpture park and along a short stretch of Lake Colac before a mandatory coffee stop. A quick walk back through the Botanic Gardens rounded out a pleasant Sunday. But there was more: just past Camperdown on the way home a fledgling VLOCITY train was seen.

Ali



## Ralph Illidge Sanctuary and Cobden: Saturday 24 August

Participants: Rosalie, Coralie, Rob, Lothar and Chris, Shea, Mary, Jim, Christine, Dina

Ralph Illidge Sanctuary is a [Trust for Nature](#) reserve about half way along the Warrnambool Cobden road. Ten of us explored parts of the area, starting at a good pace along the central loop trail. Then the four more sedate people veered off through rain forest to complete a loop trail to the western boundary. On returning to the carpark, we met the 'galah man': on several dawn trips to the Otways Rob had seen the man walking along the road with a galah on his shoulder. The poor bird had a broken wing when retrieved from the road by this man 28 years ago, and it demands its daily 5 km walk!



The more energetic six ventured across the busy road to explore the northern 'extension' through open forest and remnants of former farming occupation. Their exploits were curtailed by the need to return to the carpark by an agreed time. While returning across a damp grassy hillside, some picked up undesirable passengers, most discovered quickly but others much later, near the carpark, and worse, in the car—leeches, eek!





Then it was off to Cobden for refreshments, followed by a pleasant one km walk around the pretty lake in Apex Park.



The final stop was a surprise and a treat. The Pioneer Park has a large, fascinating collection of domestic paraphernalia, artefacts, machinery, and equipment from early days in the Cobden area, some of it lovingly restored, but all carefully displayed throughout several buildings.



The opening hours (not obvious from Google) for it and the miniature railway were alas the third Sunday of the month but more often in school holidays. Fortunately two volunteers were on site and kindly opened the sheds for us to peruse and admire the displays.

An enjoyable morning highlighting some opportunities to discover more of our local region.

*Rosalie*



**Four little pigs contemplate their trip to market**

### Take 3! East of Radfords Rd: Saturday 7 September

Dina, Mabel and I (Rob) had a glorious morning escorting Lee, Gemma, Trish and Noel from the Camperdown Bushwalkers on this figure-of-eight clifftop walk.

After visiting the Antares plaque we set off cross country on a mixture of old vehicle tracks, kangaroo tracks, and ad hoc routes. Superb views of the cliffs and swell to both the east and west were the features from the five clifftop vantage points we visited on this first quarter of the walk—plus a bonus large “puddle”.



Part 2 of the walk started with a rest on a conveniently placed wooden pallet. We then sauntered along the maintenance track before outwitting the encroaching coastal wattle along an old vehicle track to reach the most easterly viewpoint of the walk.



The third quarter of the walk followed the cliff line west along the kangaroos’ most popular routes until we reached the maintenance track. The possibility of rain had been predicted for late morning. Almost on cue came a short, almost waterless, windblown burst.

The final leg returned us to the cars along the maintenance track, done in sunshine. Indeed everything was warm and sunny enough to have lunch overlooking the coast rather than scuttling off home. A good time was had by all.



## ***Terang Ramble and Mt Noorat: Saturday 14 September***

We four ramblers, Pauline, Coralie, Rob and Gwenda (leader, narrator) arrived at 9 am at the start of the Terang Public Park/Lions Walk Track, a circular walk of 4.5 km. The walk features 12 bluestone markers telling stories of the now dry Terang Lake and the history of the township.



From the croquet club we walked clockwise past the Bluestone Steps, Emu Creek Pony Club, the second St Thomas Catholic Church and manse (now privately owned), and the (empty) May Noonan Hostel for the Aged. After a diversion to the Cemetery we continued past the Chinaman's Hut marker then along the north side of the Golf Course and Bowls Club to arrive back at our starting point. I can thoroughly recommend this walk if you have an hour or two free in Terang.



We quickly headed into the Little Acorn Cafe, just missing a shower of rain. Again, I can recommend this cafe, great coffee, scones and service!

A look at the Terang tram before we climbed Mt Noorat. It was certainly a little windy in places, but we all managed to stay upright. One of the local falcons hovered over us as we walked, welcoming us back to the area.

A very enjoyable morning walk.



1870

1956

2022

1917

1931

1975

1974

1955

1993

1981

## Mildura and Hattah-Kulkyne National Park: 22–28 September

Over 5 days a group of ten Warrnambool Bushwalkers and one guest explored these parts of northwest Victoria. Two and half days were spent at each location. Here are some thoughts from the participants.

### Coralie:

Highlights: the flood height indicator pole at Lock 11 (1956 was BIG!), visiting the rose garden at the Inland Botanic gardens where my aunt was buried and the habitat variety on the Lake Mournpall walk.

Lowlight: the Warepil Lookout was a big disappointment.

### Mabel:

Highlights included the Inland Botanic Gardens, Mildura. Despite the drizzly weather the gardens were really worth visiting. Lots of native flowers and the seed pod roof, recently redone, was incredible. The history and geology of Lake Mungo was most enjoyable. Being woken by the bird chorus in the mornings and the lakes being filled were highlights at the Hattah-Kulkyne National Park. Great company!

Lowlights: walking on soft sand for about 2 kms beside Lake Mournpall. Trevor fishing all day and throwing the catch away.

### Pauline:

My highlights were all the wonderful bird and wildlife, especially the emus and pelicans. My lowlight was nearly standing on a brown snake sunning itself on the bank of the mighty Murray River.

### Christine M:

Highlights: Hattah-Kulkyne for peaceful tranquillity, watching a raft of pelicans float by on the lake, a flock of regent parrots soaring overhead, the communal campfire at night keeping us warm as the temperature plummeted to  $-2^{\circ}\text{C}$ .

Lowlights: Nature calls at 2 am, temperature  $-2^{\circ}\text{C}$ , damn, a trek to the loos or a bush wee—decisions!







**Rob:**

I did two bike rides: one on bitumen (with the low point being a flat tyre in the Botanic Gardens) and the other on bumumumpy gravel with its highlight being lunching on the bank of the Murray as a white goat wended its way along the opposite bank. As for the walks, hundreds of pelicans in a line almost spanning one lake seemed the certain high spot until I crossed to the other side of the point: a surprised flotilla of pelicans started furiously paddling away through the trees a few metres in front of me.

**Ali:**

Highlights: hard to choose one particular thing ... all was lovely and well organised. Just a few highlights were the company, the weather, Murray Riverside walk, and Lake Mungo. Lowlights: only thing I can think of was the leak in my air mattress at Lake Hattah.



**Lothar:**

My highlight was the 9.5–10.5 km Lake Mournpall loop walk. Great Mallee country, water in the lakes, and lots of birds. If there is to be a lowlight, it was of course the motel accommodation in Ouyen!

**Chris S:**

My highlight was seeing all the glossy native cockroaches busily working in the Hattah Lakes sunshine. My lowlight was just how cold it can get at night when the motel hasn't provided enough bedding.

**Linda:**

We were gathered around the picnic table, just as it was getting dark, enjoying a scrumptious meal. I noticed a rumbling noise in the background. I thought to myself, it must be a truck in the distance. As I turned around, I saw the tops of trees in the distance swirling around in the wind. It was the front of the change heading for us. Packing up was done at record speed before the wind and rain hit us. Everyone made a mad dash for tents and caravans. It was quite exciting. Then again we were in a caravan, I don't know how the tenting group fared.

**All:**

Many, many thanks to Coralie for organising this most gratifying week in places not normally on the club calendar.

