



# Ben Cruachan Walking Club

ISSUE 173 - THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB INC - JUNE 2014



Photo taken by Ken Free

***In 1958, Flight Lieutenant Ralph Osborne was flying from NSW to Sale RAAF base in a Avon Sabre Jet fighter when his engine flamed out. Osborne was forced to eject at a low altitude of 500ft suffering only minor injuries. The 9 enthusiastic walkers that tackled the "Plane Crash Loop" located just north of Bruthen had a cracker of a day with the sun shining, birds singing and a great variety of fungi on display. Check out the full report on Page 16.***

# Ben Cruachan Walking Club

affiliated member of

**Bushwalking  
Victoria**



Club Postal Address — PO Box 70, Maffra 3860 — Incorporation No A0004849G

[www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com](http://www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com)



View of Ben Cruachan from Gable End

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS for 2013 / 2014

<b>PRESIDENT:</b>	<b>Andrew Stevenson</b>	<b>5147 2225</b>
<b>FIRST VICE PRES:</b>	<b>Margaret Beckett</b>	<b>5148 2237</b>
<b>SECRETARY:</b>	<b>Ken Free</b>	<b>5144 1195</b>
<b>TREASURER:</b>	<b>Monica Scicluna</b>	<b>5144 6713</b>
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<b>TRACKS &amp; HUTS:</b>	<b>Michael Dowe</b>	<b>5147 3075</b>
<b>WALKS CO-ORDINATOR:</b>	<b>Oliver Raymond</b>	<b>5174 3455</b>
	<a href="mailto:oliverraymond@wideband.net.au">oliverraymond@wideband.net.au</a>	
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<b>Jack Winterbottom</b>	<b>5143 0903</b>
	<a href="mailto:jackwin27@gmail.com">jackwin27@gmail.com</a>	

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**CLUB MEETINGS — SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH (EXCL. JANUARY) @ 8 PM**

**NEXT MEETINGS: 9TH JULY, 8:00PM, MAFFRA VET CENTRE**

**13TH AUGUST, 8:00PM, MAFFRA VET CENTRE**

***Welcome to our Newest Members:***

***Anna Janca (Lakes Entrance) Caroline Michalski (Sale) Bev Beard (Sale)***



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## Presidential Ramblings - Andrew Stevenson

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### BCWC PRESIDENT'S REPORT JUNE 2014

2013-14 has been a consolidation period for the Club and builds on the work of the previous 12 months. Membership continued to steadily increase and participation rates on walks and social activities also grew.

The Club continues to grow across the region and the two meetings/social evenings held in Bairnsdale this past year were an outstanding success. Along with the two meetings held in Traralgon the committee travelling roadshow gives widespread members access to the committee in a social setting.

It is most pleasing to see that newer members of the Club are now experienced and confident enough to step up and lead walks and volunteer for committee roles. This fresh input of energy and ideas has been (and continues to be) a real fillip to us 'rusted on' older members of the Club.

Many members have updated their First Aid and CPR qualifications during the year and a big thank you goes to Monica Scicluna for organising this.

The walks program continues to evolve with more day walks closer to population centres as well as tougher and more adventurous trips up into the high country.

Planning for the 2013-14 Walks Program began many months ago and your Walks Coordinator, Oliver Raymond, has developed a very exciting program with something for everyone.

2014-15 will be a busy year for the club with the Federation Weekend based in Rawson in November, the club's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in June 2015 and the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the McMillan Track.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the 2013-14 Committee for all of their hard work over the past 12 months.

I have enjoyed my twelve months as President, but would have achieved nothing without the committee and the members. We leave the club financially sound, with a growing and active membership and, I believe, a bright future.

*Andrew Stevenson*



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# Club News

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## Next BCWC Committee Meeting

Wednesday 9th July 2014

The next meeting of the BCWC will take place on Wednesday 9th July at the Maffra Vet Centre commencing 8:00pm. The vet centre is located at 10 Johnson Street, Maffra.

All members and guests are welcome.

## BCWC AGM

The AGM of the BCWC took place at our regular meeting, held on Wednesday 11 June 2014.

With all positions declared vacant, Andrew Stevenson was re-elected President for another term and resumed the Chair whereby he congratulated and welcomed the newly elected committee. Which remains as per the previous elections. He undertook to have all committee member contact details circulated as soon as possible.

Our Secretary Ken Free circulated these details in an email to members on 15th June.

At the June meeting the Committee agreed to waive visitors fees for under 18 year olds in an effort to encourage more young people to participate in club walks. If any member has contact details for schools, scouts or sporting organisations who you think may be interested in joining us on a walk, please forward details to Oliver Raymond at:

[oliverraymond@wideband.net.au](mailto:oliverraymond@wideband.net.au) .

## Ben Cruachan—50th Anniversary



The Ben Cruachan Walking Club was officially established on 16 June 1965. Therefore next year will represent a celebration of fifty years of bushwalking for the club. We wish to set up a small committee to oversee the organisation of events for the year. Enthusiasm and inspiration are the most important ingredients. Length of club membership is not. Please contact Jack Winterbottom [jackwin27@gmail.com; 0408 411 079] if you wish to participate and/or contribute, Thank you.

## Xmas in July

DATE : SATURDAY 26TH JULY

VENUE : COMMERCIAL HOTEL - HEYFIELD

TIME: 12 NOON

COST : \$27 PER PERSON

RSVP : WED. 23RD JULY

MONICA 51446713 OR EMAIL  
[joe.monica@hotmail.com](mailto:joe.monica@hotmail.com).

Hope to see you all for a great lunch and get together. If you can wear something relating to xmas. that would make it more festive.

## Annual Subscriptions

Just a friendly reminder that Annual Subscription fees were due way back in April for the 2014/15 year. IF you wish to continue your membership (and have not paid) here are the current dues:

\$54 PER FAMILY & \$42 SINGLE

MEMBERSHIP & INDEMNITY FORMS also need to be completed and signed. You can find them attached to this newsletter.

If you wish to pay directly into the BCWC bank account, please send your completed forms to our postal address. Thank You

Monica / Treasurer

## McMillan Track-update

For the latest update on developments wrt The McMillan Track, please refer to Ken Free's email dated Sunday 8th June sent to all members. This makes for interesting reading.

## LARAPINTA TRAIL

Final preparations are underway for the trail in what should be an exhilarating experience—for 5 members of the club. We look forward to seeing the walk report in the August issue of the newsletter.

## 2014 /2015 WALKS PROGRAM

Check out the latest copy of the BCWC Walks Program on Page 18. The forward schedule for the next 6 months should assist members plan their future!!



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# Bushwalking Victoria News

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## New Image for Bushwalking Victoria



Bushwalking Victoria launched its new image on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2014. The new image is a design scheme that creates a distinctive look and feel which will make Bushwalking Victoria instantly distinguishable from other organisations. The design scheme includes:

- ♣ Logo
- ♣ Updated & re-organised website
- ♣ New Letterhead
- ♣ Banner to be used at BV events e.g. Federation Walks
- ♣ New design templates
- ♣ New format & design for Bushwalking News Victoria and On The Tracks
- ♣ New plastic membership cards
- ♣ Car stickers

Bushwalking Victoria will progressively implement the new image over the next few months. Once the image implementation and website improvements are completed Bushwalking Victoria will develop a campaign to promote bushwalking as an enjoyable life-long recreation suitable for all ages.

## BTAC Magazine—On The Tracks

By now, many Bushwalking Victoria members will have seen our new BTAC newsletter *On the Tracks*. There have been two issues (January 2014 and March 2014) full of information about BTAC's activities past and future.

BTAC covers not only track maintenance and invasive plant removal activities, but also issues concerning advisory work and submissions relating to bushwalking and land management. BTAC depends on its hard-working group of Field Officers, who between them cover virtually all of Victoria. The Field Officers are our eyes and ears to local issues.

*On the Tracks* should be of great interest to all bushwalkers even if not directly involved in BTAC activities. If you haven't had a chance to read an issue, you can find them on the Bushwalking Victoria website at <http://bit.ly/1nZbbDL>

## Federation Walk Weekend 2014

### Rawson & Surrounds

**Fri. Sat. Sun. 7th,8th,9th November, 2014**

The Fed 2014 Walks Committee is busy planning and receiving the walks for the program. With The Ben Cruachan and Strzelecki Walking clubs playing host for this year's event.

Registration opens on 1 July and close on 10 October 2014. An all-inclusive accommodation and meals package is available for the weekend. The event registration fee is included in the accommodation-meal package.

People do not have to register via clubs. They can register online as an individual or a group by downloading the forms and paying by EFT.

Full details for this year's event can be found on the BV website at: [www.fedwalks.org.au](http://www.fedwalks.org.au).

## Cattle Grazing in the Alpine National Park Writ Filed

On 16 May, the Victorian National Parks Association (VNPA) filed a writ in the Supreme Court claiming the Victorian state government had failed to meet its obligations under national park laws by allowing a grazing trial to go ahead.

Sixty cattle had been grazing the Wonnangatta Valley in the Alpine National Park under the first year of a three-year trial. In the trial's second and third years, as many as 300 cattle may be grazed in the park.

The VNPA is seeking to have the trial declared unlawful, as well as seeking an interim injunction to stop cattle from grazing in the park.

Check out Bushwalking Victoria June 2014 Newsletter for more details.

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# WALK REPORTS

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## Briagolong

### Red Gum Reserve

**DATE:** Wed 12th March

**GUEST LEADER:** Wendy Philbey (standing in for Ken Free)

**REPORT:** Wendy Philbey

A group of 9 people, 6 visitors and 3 members joined together for a pleasurable walk in the Briagolong Red Gum reserve on Wednesday 12th March. One keen lady had driven all the way from Balook. The weather was cool and perfect for strolling along, admiring the wonderful Red Gums and the surrounding bush, and spotting plenty of birdlife.

The Reserve is located immediately south of the township of Briagolong and comprises two adjacent blocks of plains grassy woodland. These are of high conservation significance in the Gippsland region as the woodlands are the largest remnants of endangered areas.

Jessie Walker gave us some interesting historical and geographical facts on her lovely town, and we enjoyed a pleasant lunch at the Riverstone café in Briagolong.

Thank you Ken for organising a relaxing mid week walk.



Graeme & Wendy Philbey, Jessie Walker, Sally Allen, Margaret McDonald, Geoff Proudfoot & Alister Buxton taking in the sights & sounds at Red Gum reserve

## AAWT - Stronachs to Walhalla

**DATE:** Sat 5th - Mon 7th April

**LEADER:** Oliver Raymand

**REPORT:** Philip Davis

The intrepid trekkers who set out on the north /south walk along the first section of the Australian Alps Walking Track over 3 days had shrunk from an ambitious half dozen to only two by step off time. Perhaps illness, injury, weather forecasts and logistics had defeated their well laid plans. Or maybe someone cried "let loose the leaches of the Baw Baws ". The remaining hikers had obviously not been deterred by such tiny challenges ..

Assembling in Traralgon , Carolyn Raymond was the designated transport officer for the first road leg . Nearly two hours to the Northern edge of the Baw Baw NP on the Thompson Valley Road at Stronachs camp the party disembarked and most gratefully took the usual refreshment of hot coffee while adjusting their gear. Without delay the transport officer returned to base while our dauntless pair of trackers headed up to the Baw Baw plateau in search of the elusive Baw Baw Man.

Initially following a former fire trail, gently but steadily rising toward Mount Whitelaw, the pair were blessed with overcast but dry skies. Regrettably, shortly after lunch-time while moving up the narrow but well maintained section of the track on the approach and beyond Mt Whitelaw, a slow steady light drizzle commenced which persisted for nearly a day and a half. On arriving at the remnant chimney of the historic circa 1920's Whitelaw Walkers hut, destroyed by wildfire on Black Friday 1939, the hikers came upon a gaggle of mountain maids trembling with cold. These were an organised Melbourne girls school group , one of a pair walking from either end of the NP. They were convinced by our intrepid pair that if they kept moving they would be warmer and as a result overtook our party and left them for dead. Naturally the girls became witnesses to the confirmed sighting of the Baw Baw Man.



Philip & Oliver with the elusive Baw Baw man

Walking on to Mount Saint Phillack, reluctantly passing the turn off to the Baw Baw Resort Village track, dry beds, hot food and warming drinks, our trekkers arrived at the Rock Shelter on Camp Saddle . As this was the last campsite with access to water and given the declining daylight our pair made an early camp . Presuming they were alone, however a group of 3 girls walked thru looking for their own campsite . It seemed the girls had the numbers in the NP! There were at least four separate girls' groups , two school and two university student groups, on the trail within the park . Surprisingly the only evidence of males was a father and son. This is an interesting development for bush walking and may require some social research for an explanation.

Following an early dinner, the protection of well-pitched tents was inviting, so an early night was compelling. Similarly an early and quick breakfast led the team back in harness on the track toward Mount Erica, a grinding almost continuous climb interrupted only by a pause at the again historic walkers hut ruins of Talbot hut which has the best and most accessible water on the plateau. From Mt Erica the trail is generally on a downhill slope and any climbing is simply trekkers imagination.

Passing the bold and well known Mushroom Rocks the walk descended out of the bewitching Snow Gums of the Baw Baw Plateau thru the majestic Mountain Ash and further on through the mixed species forests. Lunch and a little personal adjustment at the Erica Car Park provided some relief before the rather tedious road walk to the top of the descent to O'Sheas Mill site following Fire Break Track . The name creates a false impression as it must be decades since any vehicle traffic impacted what is a quite steep, narrow, overgrown and leach ridden section of trail passing thru a very damp mixed species forest with an understory of native cherry trees and several huge mountain ash. This track runs for some distance on what is apparently a part of the original bush tramway for the retrieval of these massive logs for the mill. One can only be in awe of the efforts of our forebears who carved an existence out of the bush.

Crossing the East Tyers River, the expedition arrived at O'Sheas Mill Site camping area with excellent water, fire place with good wood supply, table and seats and a very fine bush toilet. While initially alone the party was soon joined by a father / son combination who were car camping and apparently for the first time as they needed advice on pitching their tent on the flat rather than the slope and that the creek bed did not provide the most suitable place for refuge. In the morning they displayed some considerable surprise that anyone would actually walk into or out of that picturesque valley.

The drizzle but not the leaches had stopped overnight. A good start to finish the task of walking into Walhalla around lunch time, but first the long grind up the ridge to the Thompson Valley Road and then a careful downhill shuffle to the Thompson River Valley. Once the steep descent has been negotiated the remainder of the walk to Walhalla is a gentle rise and fall consistent with the original tramway which now provides the basis of one of the area's tourist walks .

It is a delight to cross the river on the Old Steel Bridge at Poverty Point as this is the home stretch and like a stock horse at end of a day mustering, once turned toward home the walkers don't need any guidance or encouragement to establish a good clip.

Arriving in the village at lunchtime it is surprising how quiet the main street appears given the school holidays have commenced. This however suits the pair of hikers who are able to refresh themselves at the only café which is open. Elizabeth Davis provides the motor transport to return the walkers to hot showers and clean sheets. The intrepid walkers have completed a very agreeable stroll with only tiny irritations to detract from a most enjoyable walk. Oliver Raymond and Philip Davis enjoyed hours of uninterrupted discourse on their journey and found a good deal of common interest.

## Licola to Ben Cruachan

### Via Tarli Karng

**DATE:** Friday 18th—Sunday 20th April

**LEADER:** Michael Dowe

**REPORT:** Chris Lockwood

First, thanks to our drivers: Cheryl Lockwood, who drove us to Licola and Janice Dowe who picked us up from Ben Cruachan Rd.

Day 1. Travelled via Maffra toward Licola. Upon reaching Licola bridge which crosses the Macalister River, turned right and headed 4 Km along Tamboritha Rd to the Mt Margaret walking track. The first section of this track is not named on either the Tali Karng Special map or the Wellington map, but there is a sign with that name in the grassed area adjacent to the road. At the starting point of the track there is a lovely little camping spot next to a creek (again no name on map) set back from the road about 300m.

We headed roughly east 8:30am, rock hopping up the creek bed as the track has mostly disappeared for the first Km or so. Some water in the creek after recent rain. Having walked to Mt Margaret previously, we knew the track re-appeared at a creek junction around the 1Km mark. From this point we climbed a spur (very steep in sections) for 2.5Km or so and dropped down into a saddle before ascending toward Mt Margaret 4WD track, which heads roughly north/south. Scrub in the saddle on descent, was so thick in places it could support a person and their pack, making progress slow and at times challenging! At this point the track had disappeared entirely. No matter, as the ascent from the saddle is fairly straight forward, with scrub thinning substantially.

The east end of the first section of the walking track is clearly marked (knowledge from previous walk) and navigable for a couple of hundred metres when heading west from its junction with Mt Margaret 4WD track, before disappearing. We were aiming for a point north of a junction where the second section of



Mt Margaret walking track heads east from Mt Margaret 4WD track. This track is on the north-west shoulder of Mt Margaret and about 150m south east-east of the first junction.

However, we had tracked a little too far south and found ourselves looking straight up what appeared to be Mt Margaret. After confirming this peak ahead was in fact Mt Margaret, we headed north-east until emerging on Mt Margaret 4WD track, a little south of the second track junction. From our emerging point, we headed Nth to the second track junction. From there we turned right, heading east, past the Nth side of Mt Margaret, followed the track, almost non-existent in some places; though navigation was mostly straight forward along an undulating ridge line, to the old Chromite Mine site at the Dolodrook River. There were a couple of very steep descents along this section which was by this time a clear 4WD track.

On leaving the chromite mine site (which boasts some very nice camp sites), we climbed north to north east up Brandy Pinch, then over a low ridge and down a long spur to the Wellington River track. Turning right, we headed east along the Wellington River track toward Lake Tali Karng, through the Valley of Destruction. The last little Steep climb up to the Lake added to the anticipation, as this was Christopher's first visit to Lake Tali Karng. We arrived at our camp spot at the Lake at precisely 1550. Total distance 21 Km. During the last 12 Km or so light rain had fallen intermittently. On arrival the sweat from the last ascent coupled with the rain, left us quite wet. We set up camp for the night. The sun came out for one last hurrah just ½ hour before setting. An early dinner and bed around 1830 without a campfire was somewhat lonely and character building. 12 hours in the sack!!!!!!! Aghhhh!!!!!!

During the first day, most watersheds contained a reasonable amount of water and the larger creeks were flowing well.

Day 2: 0630 Rise. Breakfast and and preparation for the day, which was to be another 20 plus Km with steep ascents and descents.

We left Lake Tali Karng around 0800 and headed to Millers hut via Gillious track. The ascent out of the lake was quite steep and at times the track was severely eroded. There were the usual fallen trees and evidence of relatively recent fires.

One surprising aspect of the weekend in general, was the relatively small number of campers and walkers, probably the result of wet weather forecasts. A real positive outcome of the rain was the abundance of water up in the higher country toward the Wellington Plains, which lie to the north of Lake Tali Karng. All the creeks were flowing well, even the smaller ones. We took water from Nigathoruk Creek which flows from Moroka gap, then between Mt Wellington and Mount Spion Kopje and down to Lake Tali Karng. For the long haul south, this was likely the last available water until Ben Cruachan Creek a further 27 or so Km through some extremely rugged country.

The surrounding higher areas were covered with alpine vegetation. Snow gums and alpine meadows the main feature. There are several signed designated camping areas, indicating the potential for large numbers of walkers and campers in more favourable weather. One of these camp sights has a serviceable composting type toilet.

The next landmark along the route would be Miller's hut, a cattleman's hut used mainly for the first 30 years of the twentieth century, by Cattleman Henry Miller. We stopped briefly for a chat with a group of about eight walkers, planning a day walk out on the Wellington Plateau to the south. The Wellington Plateau stands tall among the surrounding land forms. A short 2.5Km walk between Miller's Hut and the north eastern end of the Wellington plateau is made along a four wheel drive track. At the north-west end of the plateau there is a group of rocks known as The Sentinels. The Sentinels are approximately 4.5Km from Miller's hut. Lake Tali Karng is said to have formed some 1500 years ago from a landslide which dammed the upper Wellington River with rocks from The Sentinels.

We walked to a junction in the track at the north end of the Wellington Plateau and left our packs leaning against a sign indicating track names and the like. A 3Km round trip out to the Sentinels provided us with a spectacular view of the many valleys and ridges below and to the west. The previous day's route was clearly traceable all the way from Mount Margaret, Lake Tali Karng just visible directly below. Satisfied with our view, we turned back, picked up our packs and headed south to Gable End, which is the southern end of the Wellington Plateau. Just a couple of hundred metres before Gable End, there is a trig point, marking the high point of the Wellington Plateau. The views west are expansive.

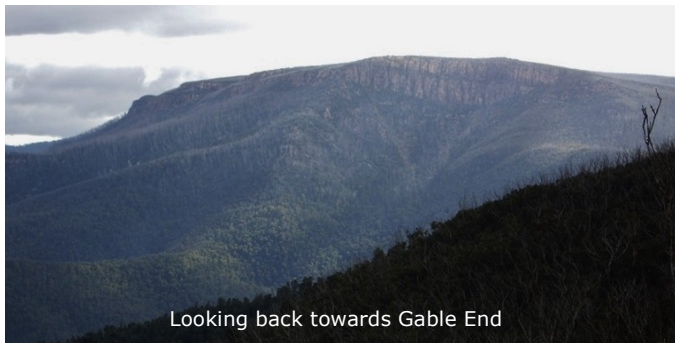
The track disappears just before Gable End, but with our extensive navigational experience; a GPS handy and a well-defined ridge line in the form of the Razor-Back, what could go wrong? So off we headed, down Gable End toward the Razer-Back. The decent proved very steep and rocky, coupled with thick ground cover and small trees (conducive to ankle twisting). Thank goodness for the trees; which served as hand-holds, in what seemed like a rock slide suspended in time.

Our decent took us through a gully and up to the start of the Razor-Back, which was very narrow and rocky at this point. The weather had been intermittently sunny, with the occasional threat of rain. But generally the air was clear and views remained spectacular. The ridge line proved very rugged, tearing chunks from the soles and toes of our boots. The vegetation at times was challenging to say the least, but occasionally gave way to rather pleasant little slopes. There were well defined deer tracks in many places, often as clear as a walking track.

The Razor-Back widens in several sections giving way to spurs on either side. There are several small peaks interspersed with saddles. Generally, the further south, the wider the ridge. It was in one of these wide

areas a bit more than 1/3 of the way along the Razor-Back, we decided to pitch camp in fading light. The chosen site was in a nice gentle sloping grassed area among fairly tall trees. There are many areas in this section of the Razor-Back, suitable for camping. That evening we cooked with our Trangias and talked of the walk to date, the next day's expected progress and general world issues, science and technological developments.

Day 3: Once again a fairly early start to the day. The weather had cleared substantially and the views along the west side of the razor-back were spectacular. Fog rested in the valleys below and the sun filtered through gaps in the trees and land forms, intensifying the redish/orange colour of landscape. At one point we looked back to Gable End, which still appeared quite close, though it was a substantial distance behind us.



We were heading for a peak called Mt Hump, which is as the name suggests, a large dome like formation. This section of the Razor-Back is quite wide and undulating with several smaller hump like peaks. Since there are no tracks and no signs, the only way to confirm which was Mt Hump (apart from the elevation and size) was from map and land form recognition. Oh and the GPS.

The editor is collecting pictures of Ben Cruachan for use in the club newsletter. This walk afforded several views of Ben Cruachan from the north, the first of these locations being Gable End. (refer page 2 for view of Ben Cruachan from Gable End) Photographs were taken at several points en-route, the second point being Mt Hump. Mt Hump is the last significant peak along the Razor-Back, which ends at Purgatory Spur.



Three weeks prior to this walk, Michael Dowe and Myself had conducted a recon walk from Golden Point

track, roughly on the north west shoulder of Ben Cruachan, up Little River creek (a tributary to Ben Cruachan creek) and finally up Purgatory Spur toward Mt Hump. This was to confirm the feasibility of this route as the final stage of the Easter walk. A track called Mt Hump South track, which straddles the top of Purgatory Spur at the southern end of the Razor-Back and heads west for approximately 6 Km and then south to Ben Cruachan creek, provides an alternative to the Purgatory Spur/Little River creek route.

During the Easter walk, upon reaching the Mt Hump South track, a decision had to be made as to which route would be taken to complete the walk. Mt Hump South track route would mean completion of the walk on that third day. Alternatively the Purgatory Spur/Little River creek route would add an extra day. Since we had already been down that route, and not Mt Hump South track, the decision was made to follow Mt Hump South track. Although this route would be completed in substantially less time, it is in fact about 7 Km longer, indicating the rugged nature of this country.

So the final 16 to 18 Km was completed on the track. In order to reach the pick up point; at the junction of Golden Point track and Avon track on the North shoulder of Ben Cruachan, by the agreed time; organised via mobile phone from Purgatory Spur, the pace had to be increased. The first part of the track was nice and soft, providing impact absorption on the steep descents of this highly undulating route. A couple of motor bike riders passed us on the national park section of the track. Although they showed high a degree of courtesy, they should not have been there. We were however impressed by the way those bikes climbed the extremely steep section of track we were on. Finally after what seemed a considerable length of time, we reached Ben Cruachan creek. The water level was reasonable and stream flow quite high, almost impossible to cross without wet feet.

The final 4 Km was completed up to the Golden Point junction along the steeply ascending Avon track. Reaching our destination at approximately 4:30 pm, about 1 ½ hours before the arranged pick-up time, there was plenty of time for cook up and cuppa whilst we awaited our transport. Total distance completed was about 65 Km. The walk had been extremely satisfying from an accomplishment point of view. These types of walks really emphasise the conditions the explorers and cattlemen faced in the early days. Aside from the existence of tracks in some areas, conditions were very much as they would have been back in those pioneering days.

I have written a song telling the story of this walk and sang it at Lake Tali Karng two weeks after Easter. I hope Michael Dowe and Andrew Stephenson, who were my companions on that walk, appreciated my musical talent!

## Billy Goat Bend to Angusvale

**DATE:** Saturday 12th April

**LEADER:** Ken Free

**REPORT:** not submitted



Survivors of this event pose for a group photo at the end of their walk. Sally can be seen sending an SMS to emergency services advising the group was not lost as originally reported!

Of special interest is the tree behind the group as this is an olive tree that (in the editors opinion) would have to be in excess of 100years old!

## Wingan Inlet

**DATE:** Sat 26th—Mon 28th April

**LEADER & REPORT:** Helmut Tracksdorf



Wingan Inlet jetty

For whatever reason, the Wingan Inlet car camp did not generate much interest from members but nevertheless 2 members and 2 guests turned up for what proved to be a most enjoyable and relaxing weekend of walking and sightseeing.

After turning off the highway approx 15km past Cann River, the West Wingan Rd winds its way through 30km of forest along a well defined dirt road until it reaches Wingan Inlet located within Croajingolong National Park. But be aware logging trucks inhabit this road and can literally force you to take evasive action if you meet them on a blind corner!

Arriving at the Inlet at 5:00pm there was not much daylight left to set up camp and start cooking the evening meal. Anna and her two friends, Jenny and Sandy were already safely ensconced at their chosen

campsite having arrived earlier and set up a spacious tent.

After dinner when it was dark we wandered down to the Wingan Jetty to observe the night sky which was full of stars that reflected off the still waters of the inlet. We thought that looked great but it was only when we switched off our torches that the true magnificence of this location became apparent. On the edge of the Inlet small ripples of water were generating luminescence along the shoreline. We were entranced by the patterns generated and the intensity of light that could be provoked simply by touching the water. We spent the next half hour provoking light from the micro organisms in the water by throwing sand and dunking our hands into the Inlet. The intensity was amazing whereby when you withdrew your hand from the water it would continue to glow in the dark! Without further ado we adjourned for the night hitting the sacks around 9:30pm.

### Day 1 – Fly Cove & Elusive Lake

There are a variety of walks around Wingan but the one that sets the scene is Fly Cove Walking Track which skirts the Inlet and takes you out to the mouth of the Wingan river and gives you a great view of The Skerries, a group of low lying granite islands that act as home for a colony of fur seals.



Fur seals relaxing on the Skerries

This was our first scheduled walk and a relatively easy one at that. The track gently wanders thru tea tree and banksias along a boardwalk until you arrive at the main beach. Is this the Tasman Sea or are we still technically in Bass Strait? I'm not sure but nevertheless the sound of the waves is always appealing. We turned left along the beach and strolled towards the mouth of the Wingan River which can be a formidable obstacle to cross for hikers intending to walk towards Mallacoota. Today this was not our concern as we were not intending to attempt a crossing. After observing the fur seals relaxing on the Skerries we headed back to camp.

After lunch we drove back along West Wingan Rd approx 4km and parked at the Elusive Lake carpark. Elusive Lake is a naturally occurring lake hidden within the landscape of Croajingolong NP. There is no surface water flowing in or out of the lake and its sole source of supply originates from rainfall combined with groundwater. Once again this was a relatively



easy walk along a well defined track with abundant coastal banksias lining the track. At this time of year various fungi and orchids were also on display. Upon arrival at the lake we were greeted by a tea coloured lake surrounded by white sand.

This was the perfect spot to settle down for a cuppa tea. Anna and Jenny stretched out on the sand to take in the view while Helmut boiled the billy. However our stay was cut short as it soon became apparent a change was coming with dark clouds rolling in and the temperature dropping. So after our cuppa we promptly packed up and set off back up the track. Within an hour we were back at the car park. That night it rained lightly.



Anna & Jenny relaxing at Elusive Lake

#### Day 2 – Rame Head and Wingan River Rapids

After a hearty breakfast of bacon and eggs washed down by coffee we gathered our gear and headed off back towards the beach. En route we spotted a red bellied black snake soaking up the sun, so it was clear we needed to stay alert. Upon reaching the beach this time we turned right and headed towards Rame Head a high point along the coast line. This section of the coast is very picturesque with coastal heaths and granite boulders along the shoreline.

At the western end of fly cove the track leaves the beach and meanders up and over a headland. After approx 1hr we arrived at the intersection of Rame Head and Petrel point. Taking the left fork we were soon approaching Rame Head clearly marked by a steel trig point.



Anna, Sandy & Jenny at Rame Head

From this point we enjoyed clear views of Wingan Inlet and the Skerries to our North and Point Hicks to the South. Once again it was time to boil the billy and enjoy a cuppa supplied by Helmut. After taking in the views we headed back towards Fly Cove and our campsite via the same route.

Upon our return we spotted a bower bird nest next to the track which was an interesting sight with its blue artefacts laid out to attract females. This didn't help explain why wealthy men with red cars attract women!



Bower bird nest

Upon our return to camp we had lunch and then packed our tents and gear in preparation for our return trip home. However we had one more walk to complete and this was the Wingan River Rapids, which is located off a side road back along Wingan West Rd.

So after we had finished packing we left Wingan Inlet and drove approx 10km and parked the cars at the start of the Wingan Rapids walk and headed off along another well defined track. This time the track went down, down down with the last leg dropping off very steeply to the Wingan River and a set of rapids that in full flood would look very spectacular. However on this occasion with the river flowing gently the scene was very peaceful with only a small drop creating a gentle rapid along this section of the river. After a short break we took our time returning to the cars making sure that everyone was comfortable with the pace as it was effectively uphill all the way back. After a 3hr round trip we were back at the cars. This represented the end of our combined activities at Wingan and as such we said our goodbyes and headed back to the highway and civilisation.

All in all a very relaxing weekend with lots to see and lots to do. Apart from the walks, the highlight for me was the fluorescence of the water at Wingan Inlet. This is a seasonal thing and not always visible so it was good to see this unusual sight and the intensity of light that was able to be generated from the water.



## Viking circuit

**DATE:** Thursday 24th—Sunday 27th April

**LEADER:** Michael Dowe

**REPORT:** not submitted



The Viking



Heading down into the Wonnangatta Valley



Michael & Andrew relaxing on the Wonnangatta River

## Lakes Entrance Walk

**DATE:** Saturday 3rd May

**LEADER:** Monica Scicluna for Bill Morrison

**REPORT:** Monica Scicluna

After I picked up Mary, Wil and our new member Caroline we took the back road to Lakes, where we arrived at 10am to be met by Leigh, Sally, Marian, Piero and Rose.



The walkers who braved the wet conditions at Lakes Entrance

The weather didn't look promising but after we had a hot cuppa and put on our wet weather gear we set off towards the entrance. Piero and Rose set the pace. They have been busy putting up new signage and walkways which were amazing.



Piero & Rose inspecting the new signage

We met a gentleman who was repairing his wife's family home, he invited us to take shelter on the front porch as he gave us insight into the history of the entrance, it was so interesting, it was time to soldier on to the entrance where we had lunch and spotted some seals playing.

The weather was not improving so we headed inland again and then Sally showed us her family home and gave us a bit more history.

When we got back over the footbridge it was decided to go and have a hot cuppa together and say our farewells.

Thanks everyone for making it such an enjoyable day.



## Mt Wellington/Tali Karng

**DATE:** Saturday 3rd—5th May

**LEADER:** Michael Dowe

**REPORT:** Andrew Stevenson

What started out as a pleasant, if somewhat chilly, morning in Maffra had become altogether more wintry by the time we arrived at McFarlane's Saddle. After dropping Michael's vehicle on the Wellington River we made the short trip to the saddle in Jack's vehicle. Upon arrival we ate lunch in the car out of the weather. As we demolished our sangers it became colder and foggier .... and then it started to rain ..... which turned to sleet ..... which tried very hard to turn into snow.

When all excuses to remain inside the vehicle had been exhausted, we dismounted, put on the wet weather gear, hoisted packs on shoulders and trudged off across the plain towards Mt Wellington.

After 6km we reached the Mt Wellington track and Jack left us to return to his vehicle. He had very generously offered to help us with the car shuffle and also get in a 12km training hike for the upcoming Larapinta Track walk in Alice Springs. We covered the 6km in about an hour - it was too cold to dawdle.

We reached the Mt Wellington summit not long after and were universally underwhelmed by the view - we knew we were on the top because a sign said so but we could hardly see each other through the mist.



Andrew on top of Mt Wellington

Another hour or so, mostly downhill, and we arrived at Miller's Hut. The hut provided shelter from the rain/sleet so we got a fire going, erected our tents and got a good supply of wood to last us a few hours. Just before dark it became cold enough for the sleet to turn into snow. Tea was prepared, eaten and forgotten. After a very welcome port (thank you Chris) and a Tim Tam (thank you Michael) I turned in for the night leaving the young fella's to party on. Walked 13km today.

Morning saw about an inch of snow on the ground and on the tents - very pretty if one ignored the temperature ..... quite romantic if one ignored the hairy company.



Miller's Hut dusted in light snow

After breakfast and a cuppa we left all of our gear where it was and travelled light up the road to The Sentinels.



En route to the Sentinels

For a long time it looked like the view would rival that from Mt Wellington yesterday, but just as we scrambled up the last rocky face, the mist parted and we could see Lake Tali Karng below us. It was probably less than a km away as the crow flies ( admittedly it would have to be a dive bombing crow ), but we were going to take the longer, easier route - down Gillio's Track. But first it was back to Miller's hut to pack up.

All packed up and with a warm cuppa in our bellies we headed out of camp to Gillio's Track. It was overcast with light snow/rain but the sun was trying to break through the clouds.

Halfway down Gillio's Track I began to wonder whether a swan dive off The Sentinels might not have been a bad idea ....?

We reached the banks of Lake Tali Karng bang on lunch time, so we had lunch. Chris and Michael had been here only weeks before on another trip and Chris was so impressed that he penned a song about the Lake, the mountains and his love of being in wild places with like minded souls. It was quite something to be sitting on the edge of the lake listening to his soulful rendition.

After lunch we saddled up again and skirted around



the lake to take the Clive Lanigan Track down through the Valley of Destruction ( Valley of Knee Reconstruction? ) to our campsite on the Wellington River.

My previous two trips into Lake Tali Karng had been walk into the lake in one day, camp, then walk out the next day. This was my first attempt at completing Gilio's Track and the Clive Lanigan Track all in one day. Apart from a couple of bruised toenails and general exhaustion I think I managed ok.

The rain stopped after lunch but we kept our rain gear on as the close scrub was saturated. As the track widened as we got lower and closer to the river it got warmer and we were able to strip off the rain gear. Our camp for the night was a delightful spot right on the river with a plentiful supply of wood and a sheltered fireplace. The place was alive with critters but their howls and screeches didn't stop us sleeping the sleep of the dead. Walked 21km today.

Morning saw the sun out and it took plenty of stretching over breakfast and while packing up to get the legs moving again. Today was a different proposition as it had very little in the way of climbs or descents but it did have multiple river crossings. Boots, gaiters and shorts and just plow on through was the agreed method of attack.

After leaving camp it seemed to take ages to reach our first crossing, but then they came thick and fast. The forest along the river was much more open and there were some spectacular cliffs and escarpments. After a brief stop at around crossing number 8 or 9 (?) we made good time and spotted the road around noon. That made 13 river crossings ( 14 if you include the road bridge ) and we were back at Michael's car.

I did feel a little guilty that I was holding up Michael and Chris at times. I don't think that I am slow - it's just that their natural pace is to cover the ground very quickly. It was a bit like a Disney adventure in the wilderness where the characters are two gazelles and a warthog. I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend though and thanks to the young fella's for waiting for me.

Thanks to Jack for the car shuffle and his company on day 1 and thanks to Michael for leading a great walk. Walked 12km today.

## Grand Strzelecki Track

### Mt Tassie Loop

**DATE:** Sunday 11th May

**LEADER:** Andrew Stevenson

**REPORT:** Jack Winterbottom

The last time this loop was scheduled was in December 2013. There had been a large land slip on the West Face Track so the intended 18 km loop walk became a "quick" 8 km to Mt Tassie from Balook and then a car ride back BUT because the car shuffle driver forgot to bring the car keys, we all walked back to Balook along the main road. No one seemed to mind.

With the landslip having been dealt with and the whole loop open, this time it was on for real. We assembled at the usual place in Traralgon at 8am, signed in and drove south of Traralgon to the Tara-Bulga NP car park at Balook. It was cold, foggy and damp. We rugged up for a wet walk with various permutations of rain weather-gear, shouldered our loads and moved off about 9.15. Four of us were in training for the Larapinta Trail in June/July so had full packs of between 14-18kg. From the car park we did a little loop to the Tarra-Bulga entrance, crossed the road and went into the rainforest of Telecom Track. This was a kay of gentle uphill through towering Mountain Ash and tree ferns We popped out onto Drysdale Road, turned right then went across the main road onto the DSH Track. This is a delightful meander through temperate rainforest, up, down and around, across creeks crowning peaks all the while through leech-infested bracken, dogwood and tree-ferns both rough and smooth. At the first pause, waiting for Jack and Bev - the white-haired old people with sticks at the back being tail-end-Charlie - to catch up, a leech search was initiated and just a few were brushed off. We didn't see a leech again. Once the tortoises arrived, the hares set off again and were seen by Bev and myself "occasionally" during the rest of the day.

DSH Track is about 4 kays; very pretty in the mist and fog. We came out onto a side road which has the biggest stump you have ever seen [a relic of the timber industry] and then turned right onto a misty 4WD track which took us under the northern aspect of the Mt Tassie towers to our lunch spot on a bench out of the wind. The bench faces north and would have a beautiful 270° panorama of the Latrobe Valley but that was not to be as the low cloud persisted until just as we left for the afternoon section.

We went down and crossed the Balook-Traralgon Road taking a path for about 700 metres to the south that came out on the West Face Track. We headed downhill on this fully-benched logging track [very nice indeed - great surface, small gradient] for about 3 kays to it's lowest point at an altitude of ~400 metres where it did a sharp hairpin bend over a creek which had eroded a fair bit of the road. It then started up and shortly after, we came upon the landslip from 2013.



There had been a lot of dozer work indeed. We went past that then turned left [east] heading very sharply uphill for an alleged 4.5 kays [so the sign said but it was real 2.2]. Soon the foot track came into a logging coupe which we walked through [on the marked GST Track with accompanying yellow echidna signs] forever heading upward with no relief until we got to the old Drysdale Homestead site "Morningside" with deciduous trees and a fantastic view both west towards Melbourne and south towards Yarram and the sea. It was still cloudy and very hazy/misty so our views today were not so good. We continued along Drysdale Road until the point where we had come out from Telecom Track in the morning thus completing our loop and meeting Andrew "The Hare" Stevenson with snakes. Yum. From the West Face Track, it was a rise of 290 metres in all taking us 50 minutes over 2.2 kays. We turned right and made our way back to the car park. We walked 10 kays in the afternoon and 8 kays before lunch.

We tidied up at the cars then walked to the tearooms for a drink and sustenance. We had a great day; thanks go to Andrew for a great job and the walkers for completing a hard walk.

## McMillan Track

### Moroka River to Moroka Rd Via Beth's Peak & D4 Track

**DATE:** Sat 17th–18th May

**LEADER:** Mike Dowe

**REPORT:** Oliver Raymond

Over the weekend 17-18 May, Mike Dowe, Joe van Beek and Oliver Raymond walked the section of our track that takes the walker from the Moroka Road down the D4 track and along the Moroka River – only they did it the hard way – uphill. The weather couldn't have been kinder. Mild sunny days, just warm enough to raise a healthy sweat and a bracing night, made for sitting around a camp fire.

Saturday saw the trio leaving Mike's vehicle at the top of the Moroka River Track on Doolans Plain and start down the hill. En route they met a very disillusioned fisherman toiling back up the track, full of tales of "There are no trout in the Moroka. I have fished it for hours and never even **saw** one". That made a change for the cautious trio picking their way down the steep, slippery 4WD track. Eventually, they reached the bottom and found a magnificent river, with crystal clear water burbling over rounded rocks. After a rest, they pressed on up the river along what was now part of the McMillan Track.

Oliver had walked this about 8 years ago, but couldn't recognise it due to the vigorous regrowth that had sprung up along the banks of the river. Last time,

there had been a clear jeep track to follow. This time it was a case of following deer trails through the largely wattle scrub. Parks had done a great job of spraying blackberries, which made the going slightly easier. At one stage, we came across a large deer wallow where the animals had created two mud pools and pugged up the ground around them thoroughly. Shades of the trouble Parks are having with feral horses elsewhere in the Alps! Our camp site at Higgin's Yards was reached by about 2.30, and while Joe and Oliver were setting up their tents and getting the fire going, Mike went off to see if the lack of trout in the river was correct. As you can see from the photo, it wasn't, so he enjoyed trout for tea that evening



A cool night followed and, after a hearty breakfast, the trio set off to follow the track markers up the hill. The area was unrecognisable from when Oliver had been there on the last track marking trip about 7 years ago. The eucalypt regrowth was prolific, making it hard to find the markers. However, while Mike was fishing the previous afternoon, Joe and Oliver had scouted around and had found the markers at the start of the uphill route. They had also found two disgusting camp sites where people had left rubbish scattered all round their camp, and in one case hadn't even bothered to take down their tent, which was slowly rotting away, with rubbish strewn over its floor and the surrounding area.

It soon became impossible to find markers in the scrub, so a general line was followed up the hill. With the aid of two GPSes and Andrew Norman's downloaded track information, the markers were found again well up the hill. Andrew Stevenson had done a great job of thickening up the number of markers on the last marking trip 7 years ago, so once we re-found the track we were able to stick to it without too much difficulty. We noticed that Andrew's technique of nailing the markers top and bottom and only hammering the nails half way in was superior to the way the old markers had been nailed. The nails had been driven right in to the trunk, and in growing, the trees had often bent the markers so that they became hard to see.

At the saddle near Beth's Peak, the party met Jack



Winterbottom who was training for his upcoming trip on the Larapinta Trail out from Alice Springs. He accompanied them up the D4 track back to his new vehicle (the old Prado had been pensioned off after many years of faithful service) and Jack drove them back to their vehicle at the top of the Moroka River Track.

A great weekend's walk. Thank you Mike, for leading it.

## Bruthen Walking Trail

### Fairy Dell

**DATE: Wednesday 21st May**

**LEADER: Ken Free**

**REPORT: Marian Matchan**

What a cracker of a day, sun shining, birds singing as 9 enthusiastic walkers set off to tackle the "Plane Crash Loop" just north of Bruthen, on Wednesday 21 May.

We ambled along winding forest paths with tall straight trees then descended into a gully passing pretty fishbone water ferns, then up a steep incline and along the ridge, we sighted small yellow belly wren, brown hooded green orchards and fungi by the hundreds, just ask Ken & Josie as they photographed each specimen. Amazingly there were so many different fungi's growing on trees or just pushing their way up through the ground. We sighted pink, purple, red, green skinhead, orange, frilly, white topped with orange undercarriage fungi.

We passed the vicinity of the crash site of the RAAF Avon-Sabre fighter jet that crashed in 1958. Flight Lieutenant Ralph Osborn was flying from NSW to Sale RAAF base when his engine flamed out, Osborn ejected at 500ft suffering only minor injuries.

We returned to our start point after covering 7.5 kms just on lunch time. We drove back towards Bairnsdale to Fairy Dell where we enjoyed lunch in a nice picnic area.



We took the Fairy Dell walk through a damp shady rain forest floor with plenty of moss covered trees and

lovely ferns. The atmosphere in this area was quiet and eerie and just so beautiful. And yes there were more fungi, we were lucky to have some good fungi spotters with us on this walk. We sat at the far end of the track and chatted before returning through the wonderful fairy land walk to our vehicles.

A truly great day had by all, so a big thankyou to Ken for his organising.

## Lonely Bay walk

### At Lake Tyers

**DATE: Sun 1st June**

**LEADER: Ken Free**

**REPORT: Caroline Michalski**

Ken did a fabulous job of not losing any of the 6 walkers who met at Lake's Entrance on Sunday morning and travelled East to start the short but lovely Lonely Bay Walk. Leigh had tried out the walk the week before and wisely suggested we park at the waterside picnic spot. That way, we could end the walk there and not have to traipse back up the road after lunch. Anna & Caroline set off at a cracking pace, but the damp forest and its abundance of plants & birds soon soothed the whole group into a more languid pace. A very distinctive call from a lyre bird close by amused us all. Josie pointed out flowering goodenia, hibbertia, hop bush, heaths and the fragrant carpets of eucalypt blossom under each of the towering ironbarks. Ken's fascination with fungi was infectious and many stops were made to admire vivid orange, red and purple mushrooms, yellow and transparent bracket fungi, mosses and a tiny, flower-shaped fungus. Anna gave a lot of trees a hug.



Trevor found a good spot for our morning snack and we looked out across the water towards Lake Tyers Beach. The cormorants, swans and pelicans were having a slow start to their Sunday morning, the water was still and the weather was kind to us for the duration of our walk.

Back at Lakes Entrance, Anna's work commitments called her home, while the rest of us took the chance to walk up the hill to Kalimna and back along the Reeve channel pathway as the rain slowly drifted in. Leigh had us back to his place for a hot drink & his 93 yr old mum's delicious biscuits. A brilliant day, thanks Ken!



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# WALK PREVIEWS

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## Avon River Trail

**DATE: Sunday 22nd June**

GRADE: S-5-3 (about 9 kms all on well-made tracks)

**LEADER: Marian Matchan** — 5152 3287  
or 0448 523 287

MEETING POINT: TINAMBA HOTEL—8:00AM

This walk follows the southern shore of the Avon River from Dermody's Camp to The Channels and return, a total distance of approximately 9 kilometres. The track is high above the river following the ridge lines and dipping in and out of dry creek gullies, so we will have great views of the river and the mountains to the North, including Ben Cruachan. The Channels is so named because at this point the river has carved its way through solid rock, thereby creating a channel. For those with plenty of energy, during the lunch break a short side trip to the lookout above the Channels provides great views of the surrounding countryside. There'll be plenty of photograph opportunities.

## Newlands Arm

**DATE: Wednesday 9th July**

GRADE: S-2-2 (well defined track)

**LEADER: Wil Streckfuss** — 5144 2183

MEETING POINT: STRATFORD—9:00AM

The walk follows hugs the shoreline at Newlands arm and is a very pleasant stroll for those wanting to view a quiet cul de sac of the Gippsland lakes. There should be an abundance of bird life and If time permits we can visit Paynesville for a coffee & cake to wrap up the day.

## Xmas in July

**DATE: Saturday 26th July**

GRADE: S-1-1 (will need to walk from car to pub!)

**LOCATION: HEYFIELD HOTEL**

**CONTACT: MONICA** on 51446713

Refer full details Page 4



## Mt St Gwinear—Snow Shoe Walk

**DATE: Saturday 9th August**

GRADE: L-10-7

**LEADER: Michael Dowe** — 5147 3075 or 0427 523 647  
MEETING POINT: TYERS KINDER CARPARK—8:00AM

Ideally there should be lots of snow for this event otherwise we will be walking in thongs!

This walk starts from the Mt St Gwinear carpark and follows the ski trail towards Mt St Gwinear itself. From here we will follow a section of the Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT) across the Baw Baw Plateau. IF it is a clear day we should catch glimpses of the Thompson Dam to the East and the mountains beyond.

## Knott's Siding—Horseshoe Bend Tunnel

**DATE: Saturday 16th August**

GRADE: S-4-4

**LEADER: Jim Stranger** — 5191 8312  
or [strangers1@westnet.com.au](mailto:strangers1@westnet.com.au)  
MEETING POINT: TYERS KINDER CARPARK—9:00AM

DISTANCE: 8KM

DURATION: 3 HRS

The walk mainly follows the old Moe -Walhalla rail line and includes a side walk to Horseshoe Bend Tunnel. It passes through heavily forested terrain and is rich in wildflowers over much of the year.. The area was largely denuded for timber for gold mining at the end of the 1800s and commencement of the 1900s. The tunnel exit is quite spectacular as the full force of the Thomson River comes rushing out of a sheer mountain side. The tunnel was constructed in 1911 to divert water to enable gold mining from the dry river bed. This is a one-way walk, so a short car shuffle is required.

## Gippsland Plains Rail Trail—Bike Ride

**DATE: Sunday 26th August**

GRADE: X-3-3

**LEADER: Jim Stranger** — 5191 8312  
or [strangers1@westnet.com.au](mailto:strangers1@westnet.com.au)  
MEET: McDONALDS CARPARK, TRARALGON—9:00AM

DISTANCE: 30KM (ALLOW 4HRS)

The ride passes through pleasant, gently undulating agricultural country along the recently opened Gippsland Plains Rail Trail. The first section includes four extensively and expensively refurbished bridges over the Latrobe River flood plain. First stop is Glengarry (coffee anyone?) and then on to Toongabbie where we will stop for lunch before returning to Traralgon the same way.

Ben Cruachan Walks Program,  
2014/15

DATE	WALK AREA	GRADE	ASSEMBLY POINT	TIME	LEADER	PHONE/EMAIL ADDRESS
2014 JUL						
5&6 Wed 9 12&13 (school starts) 19&20	Larapinta Walk Newland's Arm  Larapinta Walk	X/9/8 Easy  X/9/8	TBA Stratford  TBA	0900	Andrew Stevenson Wii Streckfluss	51472225 or 0417972831 51442183
26	Christmas in July	Yum	Heyfield	1200	Monica Scicluna	MONICA PH. 51446713 OR EMAIL joe.monica@hotmail.com
AUG						
2&3 9	Snow shoe walk, St. Gwinear Knott's Siding/Horseshoe bend/Thomson Station	L/10/7	Tyers Kinder car park	0800	Michael Dowe	51473075 or 0427523647
16	Blore's Hill	M/5/4	Tyers Kinder car park	0900	Jim Stranger	strangers1@westnet.com.au MONICA PH. 51446713 OR EMAIL joe.monica@hotmail.com
Wed 20 23&24 30	Roaring Mag Falls	S/3/3/3 M/6/6/7	Tinamba Stratford	0900 0800	Monica Scicluna Ken Free/Andrew Stevenson	
6&7 13&14 & 15 20 (School finishes) 27	Angusvale Car camp  Wirilda Walk - combined clubs	Variable M/7/7/7	Stratford Wirilda Environment park	0800 0900	Andrew Stevenson Joe van Beek	51472225 or 0417972831 51765302 joevanbeek@bigpond.com
OCT						
4&5(Daylight Saving) Wed 8 11&12 18 17 & 18 & 19 26	Eden Lighthouse walk  Nyerimilang Sealer's Cove, Beginners overnight Marble Quarry Wilson's Prom Traralgon to Toongabbie return, Bikes	S/3/1/1 M/6/3/3/3 M/4/3/3 S/3/2/2 X/4/2/2	Stratford By arrangement Tyers Kinder Own Arrangements Maccas Traralgon	0900 TBA 0900 0900 0900	Piero Baglioni Wii Streckfluss Joe van Beek Oliver Raymond Corinne Klein Jim Stranger	51765302 joevanbeek@bigpond.com olliveraymond@wideband.net.au 04 29445304 strangers1@westnet.com.au
NOV						
1&2 Wed 5  7&8&9 22 & 23  Wed 26	Bruthen/Buchan Port Albert Rawson, Walhalla, Federation Clubs Weekend Howitt/King Billy  Loch Sport	Easy Easy Various X/8/6/5 S/3/3/3	Stratford Sale 0900 or Yarram 1000 Rawson Motel Heyfield Longford Hall	0900  all w/e 0900	Monica Scicluna Wii Streckfluss various Philip Davis Monica Scicluna	MONICA PH. 51446713 OR EMAIL joe.monica@hotmail.com 51442183
22 29 & 30	Billy Goat Ben to Den of Nargun Tamboritha, Crinoline, Breakfast Ck.	M/6/4/4 X/9/9/7	Stratford TBA	0800	Ken Free Michael Dowe	MONICA PH. 51446713 OR EMAIL joe.monica@hotmail.com 51441195 or freestyle2@optusnet.com.au 51473075 or 0427523647
29	Morwell Nat Park	S/3/3/3	Maccas Traralgon	0930	Monica Scicluna	MONICA PH. 51446713 OR EMAIL joe.monica@hotmail.com
7	Christmas Breakup	Yum	Heyfield	1200	Monica Scicluna	MONICA PH. 51446713 OR EMAIL
DEC						

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISKS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN  
BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB ACTIVITIES

To be completed by new and renewing members — see subscription form on the back

In voluntarily participating in any activities of the Ben Cruachan Walking Club, I am aware that my participation in these activities may expose me to risks that could lead to injury, illness or death or to loss or damage to my property. Those risks may include, but are not limited to, slippery and/or uneven rocks, rocks being dislodged, cliffs, exposure to weather and white out conditions, falling, hypothermia and hyperthermia.

To minimize these risks I have endeavored to ensure that-

- (1) These activities are within my capabilities.
- (2) I am carrying food, water and equipment appropriate for these activities.
- (3) I have advised the activity leader if I am taking any medication or have any physical or any other limitation that might affect my participation in the activity.

NAME:

TELEPHONE:

ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

I will make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during any activity and accept the instructions of the leader of the activity.

BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB INC, PO Box 70, MAFFRA VIC 3860

**Membership Application / Renewal**



Name: .....

Postal Address: .....

Email Address: .....

Phone: .....

Membership Type (circle) Family or Single

Date: ...../...../2014

Month of Joining	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<b>Full Months until 30 April</b>	0	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Single Membership</b>	\$42	\$39	\$36	\$33	\$30	\$27	\$24	\$21	\$18	\$15	\$12	\$9
<b>Family Membership</b>	\$54	\$50	\$46	\$42	\$38	\$34	\$30	\$26	\$22	\$18	\$14	\$10

Please fill out the details on the reverse side of this form also—thanks.

**EFT:BSB 013713: A/C 278934713: Ben Cruachan Walking Club: Surname as identifier please, notify Treasurer by email**



## EMERGENCY CONTACT AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

This information is for emergency use only and is to be carried in your pack at all times in a sealed plastic envelope. It is your responsibility to update the information if there is a change in details.

NAME:

HOME ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE HOME:

MOBILE:

### Medical Information

MEDICAL CONDITION/S:

CURRENT MEDICATIONS:

ALLERGIES:

DO YOU HAVE CURRENT IMMUNIZATION AGAINST — TETANUS Y / N — HEPATITIS A Y / N — HEPATITIS B Y / N

MEDICARE NUMBER:

AMBULANCE COVER Y / N

PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE FUND NAME:

### Emergency Contact

NAME:

HOME ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE HOME:

MOBILE:

RELATIONSHIP:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

**Privacy Statement:** The information contained on this form is for emergency use only and will be used if you are ill or injured whilst participating in an activity of the Ben Cruachan Walking Club. The information will only be accessed by the walk leader or their delegate and given to the relevant medical or emergency services personnel.



# Ben Cruachan Walking Club

ISSUE 174 - THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB INC - AUGUST 2014



Photo courtesy of The Ed

***17 members and 2 guests turned up to attend the Channels walk located in the Avon-Mount Hedrick Scenic reserve north west of Maffra. This walk never fails to please as the scenery and river is always a welcome sight. The only downside was a bunch of redneck trail bike riders who we met on the track! Check out the full report on Page 6 & 7***



# Ben Cruachan Walking Club

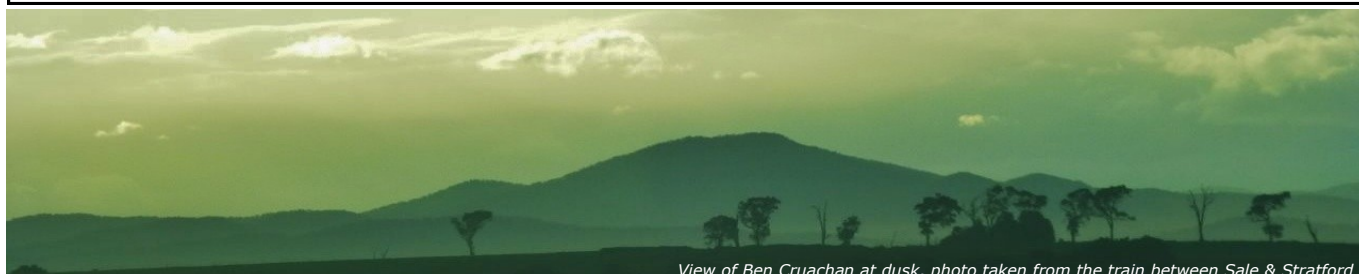
affiliated member of

**Bushwalking  
Victoria**



Club Postal Address — PO Box 70, Maffra 3860 — Incorporation No A0004849G

[www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com](http://www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com)



View of Ben Cruachan at dusk, photo taken from the train between Sale & Stratford

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS for 2013 / 2014

<b>PRESIDENT:</b>	<b>Andrew Stevenson</b>	<b>5147 2225</b>
<b>FIRST VICE PRES:</b>	<b>Margaret Beckett</b>	<b>5148 2237</b>
<b>SECRETARY:</b>	<b>Ken Free</b>	<b>5144 1195</b>
<b>TREASURER:</b>	<b>Monica Scicluna</b>	<b>5144 6713</b>
<b>PUBLICITY:</b>	<b>Piero Baglioni</b>	<b>5156 7034</b>
	<a href="mailto:pbaglioni@bigpond.com">pbaglioni@bigpond.com</a>	
<b>NEWSLETTER:</b>	<b>Helmut Tracksdorf</b>	<b>5156 6763</b>
	<a href="mailto:helmut.tracksdorf@bigpond.com">helmut.tracksdorf@bigpond.com</a>	
<b>TRACKS &amp; HUTS:</b>	<b>Michael Dowe</b>	<b>5147 3075</b>
<b>WALKS CO-ORDINATOR:</b>	<b>Oliver Raymond</b>	<b>5174 3455</b>
	<a href="mailto:oliverraymond@wideband.net.au">oliverraymond@wideband.net.au</a>	
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<b>Jack Winterbottom</b>	<b>5143 0903</b>
	<a href="mailto:jackwin27@gmail.com">jackwin27@gmail.com</a>	

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**CLUB MEETINGS — SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH (EXCL. JANUARY) @ 8 PM**

**NEXT MEETINGS: 13TH AUGUST, 8:00PM, MAFFRA VET CENTRE**

**10TH SEPTEMBER, 8:00PM, WAN LOY CHINESE RESTAURANT, TRARALGON**

**(PRECEDED BY MEAL AT 6:00PM)**

***Welcome to our Newest Member:***

***Christine Marshall (Maffra)***

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## Presidential Ramblings - Andrew Stevenson

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BCWC PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST 2014

*Greetings and salutations and welcome to a new walking calendar. It was great to see a small but rowdy group of members at the Commercial Hotel in Heyfield at the annual Christmas in July luncheon. A big thankyou to our very own Masterchef, Brett Jarvis, who once again looked after us with lashings of festive fare.*

*I had the very great pleasure of walking the Larapinta Trail along the West McDonnell Ranges in July with fellow members Jack Winterbottom, Rose De Leeuw, Piero Baglioni and visitor Shayne Boyle. We walked through some spectacular scenery, saw some amazing plants and birds and had many all too brief interactions with fellow adventurers. The most remarkable aspect of the trip for mine was how well we all got on. This was due in large part to how evenly matched in capabilities we seemed to be, but also how we respected each others opinions and differences and rejoiced in the group challenge. We were friends before we embarked on the trip but we became something more when we all stood on the summit of Mt Sonder on our last day. Shayne and I have shared many adventures over the years and he is my brother by another mother ( and father ) ..... and now the others are too. I hope you all enjoy being part of my extended dysfunctional family as much as I am going to enjoy being part of yours.*

*A full report of the expedition will be published in a special SEPTEMBER edition of the Newsletter.*

*Many thanks to Ken Free and the other committee members for keeping the wheels turning in our absence. Thanks also to Oliver Raymond for all of the work he has put into preparing the walks program for the Federation Weekend. Oliver has now stood down and the reigns have been taken over by Joe Van Beek who is also driving valuable work on McMillan's Walking Track. There is much valuable work being done by members and many exciting walks and activities coming up as you will see elsewhere in the newsletter. I very much look forward to catching up with you all soon.*

*See you on the track.*

*Andrew Stevenson*



**Sheep Walking**



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# Club News

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## Next BCWC Committee Meeting

Wednesday 13th August 2014

The next meeting of the BCWC is scheduled for Wednesday 13th August at the Maffra Vet Centre commencing 8:00pm. The vet centre is located at 10 Johnson Street, Maffra.

All members and guests welcome.

## Ben Cruachan—50th Anniversary

In 1965 a group of walkers found themselves standing on top of Ben Cruachan admiring the views and taking in the scenery. Sharing a common love of the great outdoors they decided to form a bushwalking club. Standing atop this well known local peak it seemed only appropriate to name the walking club, The Ben Cruachan Walking Club.

From these humble beginnings the club has grown into a formidable walking club with a lot of history and many colourful characters over the years.

Jack Winterbottom is keen to hear from you if you have any stories, anecdotes or historical photos of the clubs activities that we can use to celebrate the clubs 50th Anniversary, next year

Please contact Jack Winterbottom [jackwin27@gmail.com; 0408 411 079] if you wish to participate and/or contribute.

## Walk in her Shoes

Back in March, Marian Matchan and Marjorie Kanagaratnam took part in the 2014 Walk in her Shoes Challenge which is an annual event that encourages Australians to walk and raise funds to support women and girls living in poverty.

Since Walk In Her Shoes launched in 2011, more than 8,000 Australians have joined the Challenge, raising almost \$1.7 million. Marian and Marjorie would like to thank all their sponsors who helped them not only raise funds for this worthy cause but also kept them fit at the same time—a win win for all concerned. Thank You!

## Federation Walks—2014

Update

It is now just 3 months to FWW14, so time to get organised. The website: <http://www.fedwalks.org.au/> provides information about the weekend including guidelines specific to Leaders and TECs. Please make yourself familiar with this information. Check the site from time to time as information may be adjusted and further information added as details are being finalised.

Please refer to Joe van Beeks email dated 31st July for details of the walk(s) you are involved with and advise Joe by 14<sup>th</sup> August of any changes that should be made to the descriptions or maps.

## LARAPINTA TRAIL

From all accounts the Larapinta Trail walk proved an outstanding success, unfortunately the final report was not available for inclusion into our August Newsletter. Therefore a SPECIAL EDITION of the Newsletter will be published in SEPTEMBER to highlight the full report and photos associated with this exhilarating adventure.



A sneak preview of what's to come!!!

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# Bushwalking Victoria News

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## Bush Search & Rescue (BSAR)

### South Viking Call-out

A 43 year old lone walker was reported missing in the South Viking Area on Friday, 21 March. She had set off from View Point car park on the previous Monday and her last contact was via phone to her husband on Wednesday, 19 March.

Her husband raised the alarm as did another walking group who noticed her car was still in the View Point car park on Friday. Air reconnaissance on the Saturday revealed nothing. Water in the area was scarce; even the upper Wonnangatta River was dry.

Early Sunday morning 14 BSAR searchers departed Melbourne. At Traralgon an extra searcher was picked up. Beyond Licola progress slowed as the road became windy and then unsealed. Five minutes before arriving at search base, View Point car park, police radio announced that the missing woman had been spotted with her tent and a campfire. She was in the dry bed of the Wonnangatta River.

The woman was successfully evacuated by helicopter, so the BSAR members stood down and returned to Melbourne.

An interesting aspect to this event was that the woman was encouraged to undertake the Howitt-Viking circuit in the knowledge that two other parties would be behind her on the circuit. But neither party completed the circuit. One turned back and the other was airlifted from the Viking area after succumbing to dehydration.

The moral to this story is that when walking alone don't assume all will go as planned and take a EPIRB or PLB with you to assist search teams in the event of unforeseen circumstances.

## Bush Track & Conservation

### Wilson's Prom

#### Track Report for the South East Track to Waterloo Bay

On Friday 27th June, participants met at Tidal River where they transferred into three 4x4's to take them and their gear to the end of the peninsula, where they were met by an accompanying Ranger—Cathy. With a total of 12 volunteers, packs and gear were transported to the junction on the track where we dropped the tools and continued on to our base camp for the weekend. There was not much time to start work on day one, so they enjoyed the area and its views and shared a communal meal.

Next day they were up and away early with the party split into two teams. Team 1, With brush cutter, loppers and a hoe-rake in hand set off for the helipad some 6kms from the start and 4kms from Waterloo Bay, the high point on the track to start and work back. Initially there were some issues with the brush cutter but they were resolved and the team did a great job of attacking the scrub which has started to encroach on the track. Team 2, with similar gear did a great job clearing the run-off drains. Cathy followed behind cutting growth at ground level with a brush cutter. The rest of the team followed clearing the drains and removing cut material out of the way.

A good days work was put in with the lower part of the track cleared of overgrowth, however at the other end of the track, although a valiant effort was put in, there is still some 500 meters+ to clear off the invasive scrub.

### Camping & Accommodation Fee Schedules

The camping and accommodation fee schedule is now on [Parks Victoria website](#) effective July 1, 2014.



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# WALK REPORTS

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## Walhalla-Poverty Point

**DATE:** Saturday 31st May

**LEADER:** Monica Scicluna

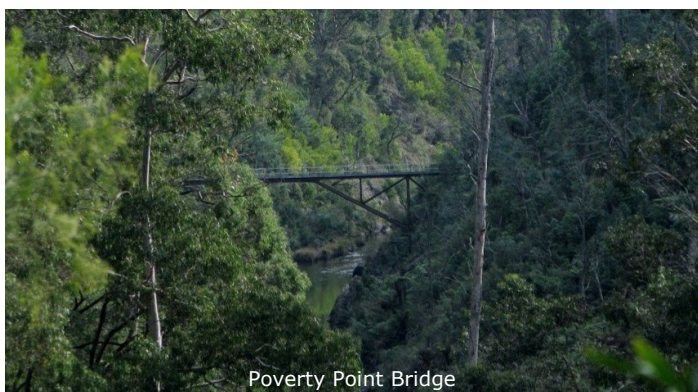
**REPORT:** Jim Stranger

Fortified by the customary tea and coffee eleven of us set off in ideal walking conditions. The walk followed the old tramways, which in the gold rush days, radiated out in all directions from Walhalla. This historic town is the jewel in the crown of Gippsland's colorful past.



Walhalla Township

Passing through the old Long Tunnel gold mine and admiring the original buildings from above the town, we followed the Australian Alps Walking track along the edge of the Stringers Creek gorge until we rounded a spur in to the valley of the Thomson River and headed north to the Poverty Point Bridge.



Poverty Point Bridge

The bridge was built across the Thomson in 1900 to allow access to timber on its western side. It is estimated that 70,000 tonnes of timber were used annually at the peak of the boom to fuel the stampers and shore up the mines. Although the hills were largely denuded, it is certainly not obvious today. Following a number of

wildfires in the area over the past decade, the track suffered from many fallen trees, heavy regrowth and landslips. Fortunately there has been significant work done recently to clear and restore the track. Parks Victoria, DEPI and the contractor involved are to be congratulated for these works. They are of particular significance given that the Federation walks weekend is around five months away and many of the tracks in the area will be receiving heavy usage at that time. Thank you Monica for leading a most enjoyable walk.



The walkers who tackled the Poverty Point walk

## Avon-Mt Hedrick Scenic Reserve

### The Channel

**DATE:** Sun 22nd June

**LEADER:** Marian Matchan & Marjorie Kanagaratnam

**REPORT:** Karl Tracksdorf

19 keen walkers turned up on a chilly morning at 8:00am at the Tinamba Hotel to participate in the Avon River, Channel Walk. Unfortunately the Hotel was closed so Marian convinced the group to continue on into the Avon-Mt Hedrick scenic reserve located just 30 minutes NW of Tinamba. Arriving at Dermody's Camp the cars were parked and by 9:00am we were on the track heading towards the Channel.



Walkers on the track



The well defined walking track follows the Avon River upstream which winds its way through the reserve. From various vantage points we were able to get great views of the surrounding landscape and the river.



The chilly morning quickly disappeared to be replaced with brilliant sunshine and clear blue skies. Perfect walking conditions.

Within 2 hours we had arrived at the Channel, a distinctive narrow gorge formed by the Avon River carving its way through silt and sandstone over the millennia. Taking in the scenery we marvelled at the colour and smoothness of the rock forming the gorge, a testament to the power of water over time.



The Channel

Located above the Channel is a lookout which served as our lunch spot as tables and chairs were provided. Thanks to DEPI. After lunch we found an ideal spot at the Channel for a group photo and then set off back along the trail we had come.

Unfortunately our return journey was partially spoilt by the presence of a dozen trail bike riders with no regard for the park regulations. We observed them from above the Avon, bush bashing their way along the river bank and then crossing the shallows to finally reach the walking track. In open defiance of the NO TRAIL BIKES, they roared past us waving and attempting to greet us in a friendly manner. We tried not to let their activities detract from our walking experience.



Trail bike riders blazing a trail up the Avon River



And flagrantly ignoring the signs

Soon after this encounter we returned to Dermody's camp safe and sound.

Someone mentioned that Joe Scicluna managed to get himself lost on the way back. But luckily we had a tail end Charlie to pick up any stragglers.

Thanks to Marian and Marjorie for leading the walk and thanks to Ken for keeping the group together, albeit over a long distance!

## Newlands Arm Walk

**DATE:** Wednesday 9th July

**LEADER:** Wil Streckfuss

**REPORT:** Josie Paterson

The meeting place was the boat ramp, off the circuit road. It wasn't long before a group of us got together and wondered what the weather would be like. We decided to forego morning tea and head off along the track which meanders along the foreshore.

Wil was our trip leader and had visited the area recently. Noel is a 'local' and was able to point out areas of interest on the way.

We walked along the backyards or sometimes the front yards of houses, all of them trying to get a view of the water. Some in the group admired the gardens; many had interesting flowers and many with lawns with uninterrupted views.



We headed west following Newlands backwater, eventually to where Forge Creek enters the Lake.

There were numerous Black Swans in the water and various flying birds. Along one section of the path plenty of mozzies came to meet and greet us!

Lunch was near where the creek flowed into the lake. There were two wooden tables with bench seats under a shelter. Fortunately the mozzies didn't follow us here. Nearby was a toilet which unfortunately vandals had rendered unusable.

After lunch, Noel pointed out a large cormorant roosting site. The good weather persisted much to our delight, as we returned following the same route back to our cars.

We stopped for a coffee (and some a cake), at the newly re-opened Newlands Arm General Store. After a relaxing time, we said our good-byes and went our separate ways.

Thanks to Wil for being trip leader and thanks to Marian, Ken, Noel, Bev, Monica and Joe for the company.

Josie & Rob

## Billy Goat Bend to Angusvale Mitchell River National Park

**DATE:** Saturday 12th April

**LEADER:** Andrew Stevenson stepping in for Ken Free

**REPORT:** Marjorie Kanagaratnam

**NB:** This report missed out on being included in the June Newsletter, hence it has been added to the August edition.

The bush was wet, wet, wet due to plenty of rain in the days preceding the walk. We got off to a late start, eventually deciding to wait no longer: Sally caught us up at the lunch stop. Ken very kindly drove to Angusvale after waving us off, so we only walked one way – a blessing as most of us were sopping by the time we got there! Rain fell often during the walk; soaked foliage sloshed piles of water into our clothes and shoes; Bridget sat on the ground with no protection at lunch-time, gaining an interesting wet patch!

We were seeing hard black seed pods along the track which aroused our curiosity. Eventually Rose and Andrew identified them as *Brachychiton*. Though hard to see in the rain, there were quite a few trees nearby – common name Kurrajong. Kurrajong trees (*B. populneum*) have a dense canopy so are great for shade. Their shiny green leaves are very fire-resistant: a home among the kurrajongs could be safer than a home among the gum trees! Kurrajongs are related to the spectacular Illawarra Flame Tree (*B. aceri-*

*folius*). If you want to propagate *Brachychiton* species, strip the seeds out of their pods carefully because they have fine hairs that can cause skin irritation. Pour near-boiling water over the seeds and soak overnight, discarding those that float. Lay seeds on free-draining seed- mix eg half river sand/ half vermiculite. Cover lightly with sifted sand so each seed is buried to a depth equal its thickness. Water gently, keep warm and moist, and when the first leaves appear, transfer into potting mix; when big enough, plant into the ground.

Close to the Angusvale end of the walk, our track was the stony bed of the river's course in flood. Branches, logs and debris from old floods lodged high in the trees way above our heads. Further on, in an open spot, a mother wallaby with joey nibbled serenely on small vegetation close to the track. She appeared unfazed by our near presence as we stood watching for a good ten minutes. The joey came out of the pouch for a look around.



Mother & child at Angusvale

Some interesting facts about *macropods* (big-footed marsupials):

- A newborn wallaby is undeveloped – blind, hairless, about the size of a bean. When born, it crawls into the mother's pouch and attaches to one of her teats which swells inside the joey's mouth so the baby can't get dislodged when she hops around.
- A mother can simultaneously produce milk of two different compositions, suitable for a joey that has left the pouch but isn't weaned and for a newborn. Young stay in the pouch for 6 – 7 months.

Wallabies and kangaroos often mate the same day they give birth and can be permanently pregnant. A mother can have a weaned joey at foot, a suckling in the pouch and an embryo in utero. Normal gestation is short, 31 to 36 days, but macropods have a reproductive strategy called *embryonic diapause* that allows development to be suspended for up to 11 months. This means the mother can control the timing of birth according to whether the environment is conducive to survival.



Take 2—Happy trampers at the end of the walk

Thanks for another fantastic walk along the Mitchell River enjoying its timeless grandeur.



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# WALK PREVIEWS

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## Mt St Gwinear—Snow Shoe Walk

**DATE: Saturday 9th August**

GRADE: L-10-7

**LEADER: Michael Dowe** — 5147 3075 or 0427 523 647  
MEETING POINT: TYERS KINDER CARPARK—8:00AM

After recent cold snaps, there should be plenty of snow for this event.

This walk starts from the Mt St Gwinear carpark and follows the ski trail towards Mt St Gwinear itself. From here we will follow a section of the Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT) across the Baw Baw Plateau.

IF it is a clear day we should catch glimpses of the Thompson Dam to the East and the mountains beyond.

## Knott's Siding—Horseshoe Bend Tunnel

**DATE: Saturday 16th August**

GRADE: S-4-4

**LEADER: Jim Stranger** — 5191 8312  
or [strangers1@westnet.com.au](mailto:strangers1@westnet.com.au)  
MEETING POINT: TYERS KINDER CARPARK—9:00AM

DISTANCE: 8KM

DURATION: 3 HRS

The walk mainly follows the old Moe -Walhalla rail line and includes a side walk to Horseshoe Bend Tunnel. It passes through heavily forested terrain and is rich in wildflowers over much of the year.. The area was largely denuded for timber for gold mining at the end of the 1800s and commencement of the 1900s. The tunnel exit is quite spectacular as the full force of the Thomson River comes rushing out of a sheer mountain side. The tunnel was constructed in 1911 to divert water to enable gold mining from the dry river bed. This is a one-way walk, so a short car shuffle is required.

## Blores Hill

**DATE: Wednesday 20th August**

**LEADER: Monica Scicluna** — 5144 6713  
or [joe.monica@hotmail.com](mailto:joe.monica@hotmail.com)  
MEETING POINT: TINAMBA HOTEL — 9:30AM

DISTANCE: 9KM (EASY/MEDIUM)

GRADE: S-3-3

We will meet at Tinamba Hotel where we will car pool to the base of Blores Hill.

There are a few gentle up hill climbs as we will be walking mainly on mountain bike tracks. At the highest point there is a trig point with great views of the Macalister Valley and surrounding dairy farms.

## Roaring Mag Falls

**DATE: Saturday 30th August**

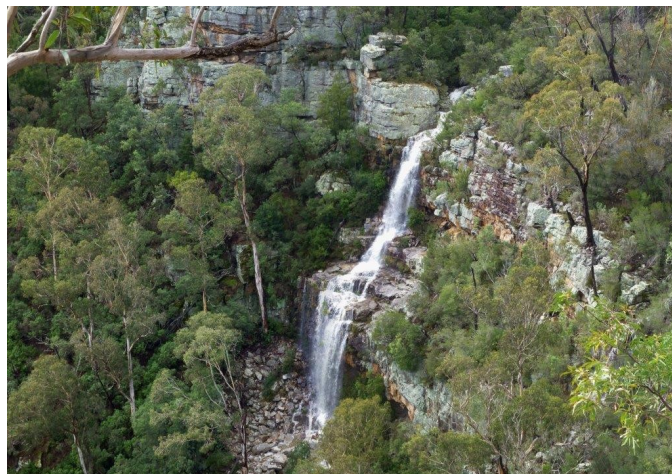
**LEADER: Ken Free** — 5144 1195  
or [freestyle2@optusnet.com.au](mailto:freestyle2@optusnet.com.au)

GRADE: S-6-8

DISTANCE: ~ 10 kms

MEET: STRATFORD @ 8:00AM;

ALTERNATIVELY: WUK WUK BRIDGE @ 9:00AM



This will be the club's annual visit to Roaring Mag Falls in the magnificent Mitchell River National Park. The walk is partly on well-made forestry tracks and partly off-track through a mix of open forest and thick regrowth scrub with some clambering over and/or under fallen logs and some rock hopping around the Falls. Roaring Mag Falls is situated east of the Mitchell River and is in a location that provides spectacular views across the river valley to the escarpment beyond. The natural beauty of this location is guaranteed; water coming over the falls is an optional extra, dependent on heavy rain preceding the walk. If you enjoy being in the thick of the bush in seldom seen locations, this is a must do walk.

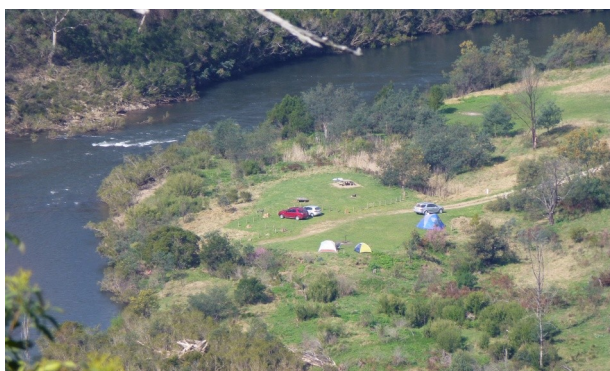
## Angusvale Car Camp

**DATE:** Sat/Sun/Mon—13th, 14th & 15th Sept

**GRADE:** Variable

**LEADER:** Andrew Stevenson — 5147 2225 or  
Mob: 0417 972 831

**MEET:** STRATFORD — 8:00AM



We will set up a permanent camp on the grassy banks of the Mitchell River at Angusvale. From there we will head off on easy to medium day walks to explore the surrounding area before returning to camp for an evening around the campfire.

## Nyerrimilang—Homestead

**DATE:** Wednesday 8th October

**GRADE:** Easy

**LEADER:** Wil Streckfuss — 5144 2183 or 0407158300

**MEET:** STRATFORD PARK — 9:00AM



Nyerimilang is an aboriginal name, meaning "Chain of Lakes" or "Many Lakes". It is a beautiful property, there are lovely gardens and many walking tracks with splendid views of the Gippsland Lakes.

The shady trees provide shelter for many birds and you'll hear the sound of them, especially the often invisible bellbirds.

The temperature is always moderate at Nyerrimilang, due to the majestic shady trees throughout the park and the always present breeze from the Lakes. Also in October there will be an abundance of wildflowers about, I can guarantee it will be a delightful day!

## Marble Quarry

**DATE:** Saturday 18th October

**LEADER:** Oliver Raymond — 5144 1195  
or [freestyle2@optusnet.com.au](mailto:freestyle2@optusnet.com.au)

**GRADE:** M-4-3-3 (Easy)

**DISTANCE:** ~ 8km

**MEET:** TYERS KINDER @ 9:00AM

The start of this walk is on a jeep track that goes through an area that was clear felled many years ago for sawlogs and pulpwood for the Maryvale Pulp and Paper mill. The walk also winds its way via a section of an old tramline track leading down to the quarry that was discovered in 1873.

At the Quarry there are some boulders of black marble with clear surfaces showing many fossils. An interesting spot with an interesting history.

## Wirilda Track

### Maintenance Day

**DATE:** Saturday 25th October

**LEADER:** Joe van Beek — 5176 5302

**MEET:** TYERS KINDER CARPARK, 9:00AM

A track maintenance day is planned for Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2014 to prepare the track for the Federation Walks Weekend 8-10 November. There will be tasks to suit all abilities. Brush cutting spring growth to allow for easier walking is likely to be the main activity. The place to meet is the Tyers Kindergarten car park at 9:00am. Please contact Joe van Beek if you can help. Telephone 03 5176 5302 or Email [joevanbeek@bigpond.com](mailto:joevanbeek@bigpond.com)

Power and hand tools along with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will be provided. Volunteers will need to bring lunch, water, gloves and their favourite hand tools.

## Gippsland Plains Rail Trail—Bike Ride

**\*\*Note Revised Date\*\***

**DATE:** Sunday 26th October

**GRADE:** X-3-3

**LEADER:** Jim Stranger — 5191 8312  
or [strangers1@westnet.com.au](mailto:strangers1@westnet.com.au)

**MEET:** MCDONALDS CARPARK, TRARALGON—9:00AM

**DISTANCE:** 30KM (ALLOW 4HRS)

The ride passes through pleasant, gently undulating agricultural country along the recently opened Gippsland Plains Rail Trail. The first section includes four extensively and expensively refurbished bridges over the Latrobe River flood plain. First stop is Glengarry (coffee anyone?) and then on to Toongabbie where we will stop for lunch before returning to Traralgon the same way.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISKS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN  
BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB ACTIVITIES

To be completed by new and renewing members — see subscription form on the back

In voluntarily participating in any activities of the Ben Cruachan Walking Club, I am aware that my participation in these activities may expose me to risks that could lead to injury, illness or death or to loss or damage to my property. Those risks may include, but are not limited to, slippery and/or uneven rocks, rocks being dislodged, cliffs, exposure to weather and white out conditions, falling, hypothermia and hyperthermia.

To minimize these risks I have endeavored to ensure that-

- (1) These activities are within my capabilities.
- (2) I am carrying food, water and equipment appropriate for these activities.
- (3) I have advised the activity leader if I am taking any medication or have any physical or any other limitation that might affect my participation in the activity.

NAME:

TELEPHONE:

ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

I will make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during any activity and accept the instructions of the leader of the activity.

BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB INC, PO Box 70, MAFFRA VIC 3860

**Membership Application / Renewal**



Name: .....

Postal Address: .....

Email Address: .....

Phone: .....

Membership Type (circle) Family or Single

Date: ...../...../2014

Month of Joining	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<b>Full Months until 30 April</b>	0	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Single Membership</b>	\$42	\$39	\$36	\$33	\$30	\$27	\$24	\$21	\$18	\$15	\$12	\$9
<b>Family Membership</b>	\$54	\$50	\$46	\$42	\$38	\$34	\$30	\$26	\$22	\$18	\$14	\$10

Please fill out the details on the reverse side of this form also—thanks.

**EFT:BSB 013713: A/C 278934713: Ben Cruachan Walking Club: Surname as identifier please, notify Treasurer by email**



## EMERGENCY CONTACT AND MEDICAL INFORMATION

This information is for emergency use only and is to be carried in your pack at all times in a sealed plastic envelope. It is your responsibility to update the information if there is a change in details.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE HOME: \_\_\_\_\_

MOBILE: \_\_\_\_\_

### Medical Information

MEDICAL CONDITION/S: \_\_\_\_\_

CURRENT MEDICATIONS: \_\_\_\_\_

ALLERGIES: \_\_\_\_\_

DO YOU HAVE CURRENT IMMUNIZATION AGAINST — TETANUS Y / N — HEPATITIS A Y / N — HEPATITIS B Y / N

MEDICARE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

AMBULANCE COVER Y / N

PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE FUND NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

### Emergency Contact

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Ben Cruachan Walking Club

ISSUE 175 - THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB INC - SEPTEMBER 2014

SPECIAL EDITION—LARAPINTA REPORT



*Jack Winterbottom, Andrew Stevenson, Shayne Boyle, Rose de Leeuw, Piero Baglioni striking a pose on the summit of Brinkley Bluff*

***4 members and 1 guest took up the challenge to walk the 223km long Larapinta Trail which is one of Australia's most spectacular bushwalking and trekking experiences. Located in the West MacDonnell Ranges National Park the trail is one of Central Australia's most unique attractions traversing a variety of different landforms such as large valleys, mountain ranges, gorges and open plains, all within a desert environment. Check out who survived the experience starting at page 4.***



# Ben Cruachan Walking Club



Club Postal Address — PO Box 70, Maffra 3860 — Incorporation No A0004849G

[www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com](http://www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com)

*Looking towards Mount Sonder*



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*Heavitree Range from Chewings Range*



**CLUB MEETS — SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH @ 8 PM**

**NEXT MEETING: 10TH SEPTEMBER, 8:00PM, WAN LOY CHINESE RESTAURANT, TRARALGON**



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# The Newsletter Editor—Ramblings

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SPECIAL EDITION - SEPTEMBER 2014

*This month we're giving our President Andrew Stevenson (aka Smiley) a well earned rest after his epic walk with 4 other adventurers on the Larapinta Trail. This SPECIAL EDITION—SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER is primarily dedicated to Larapinta because the walk and the report are both long, hence it was decided to generate an additional newsletter for your enjoyment or inspiration!*

*Back in July, Andrew Stevenson, Jack Winterbottom, Rose De Leeuw, Piero Baglioni and visitor Shayne Boyle trekked, tramped and tripped their way along the 223km long Larapinta trail which takes in some of Australia's most spectacular scenery. Not only did they survive the experience but they also managed over 14 days to get on well, which is an achievement in itself considering showers were a rare luxury. Who doesn't love the smell of BO in the morning!*

*This long distance walking track is divided into 12 sections, each a 1-2 day walk. The Trail encompasses some of the key attractions of the West MacDonnell Ranges including Simpsons Gap, Ellery Creek Big Hole, Standley Chasm, Ormiston Gorge and Glen Helen. The Larapinta Trail begins at the old Alice Springs Telegraph Station and meanders through many gaps and sheltered gorges, climbs steeply over the rugged ranges, and has numerous stunning views and opportunities to photograph or admire the spectacular landscape. The Trail takes in a variety of desert habitats before rewarding walkers with 360° vistas from Mt Sonder – the highest point and end of the Trail.*

*From all accounts the group enjoyed a wonderful camaraderie which made the experience that much more rewarding. Meeting and sharing stories with other hikers along the trail also added to the adventure. No doubt one of the highlights of this trail experience was being able to camp out under a sea of stars in the outback and not have a worry in the world. (Fortunately Wolf Creek is a long way away!)*

*Whatever the motivation for walking the trail... The spectacular sunrises and sunsets, the inspiration, the challenge or the window it provides to the varied and fragile ecology... the beauty and grandeur of the Larapinta Trail has left our members with a lasting impression of their visit to Central Australia. We look forward to sharing in their adventure with a slide night (to be scheduled) when other members of the club can soak up the tall tales and adventures enjoyed by the famous five.*

*Next month we return to our "normal newsletter" where you can look forward to the return of the Presidents Ramblings and other walk reports.*

*See you on the track.*

*Helmut Tracksdorf*



**Andrew demonstrating his unusual walking technique on the Larapinta Trail, which resulted in sore toes!**

*(With apologies to Monty Python)*

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# Larapinta Report

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## The Larapinta Trail West MacDonnell NP Northern Territory

**DATE:** Sunday 29th June —Saturday 12th July

**LEADER:** Andrew Stevenson

**REPORT:** Jack Winterbottom, Andrew Stevenson & Piero Baglioni

### Introduction - pre walk activities

The walkers arrived in Alice in 3 waves. Jack arrived on Friday morning by car having driven the 2,500 kms from Sale with all the packs and food. Andrew, Piero and Rose arrived courtesy of QANTAS about 10hr30 and Shayne, Andrew's good mate from Perth who you may recall participated in the McMillan Track walk of 2009 arrived courtesy of Tiger from Perth at about 16hr40. It was then into shopping mode to purchase the last few items. Saturday was an early walk around the botanic garden [not exciting at all as there was nothing except native trees on the Todd River bank].

We continued south to the Olive Pink Botanical Garden which had labeled plants and a café! As we were well organized [so we thought] Jack went to the Desert Park for the day and the others decided to walk the 3 km to the Old Telegraph Station, where the walk would begin in earnest on the following day. On their return they were drawn to the intricacies of a local rugby match, whilst Rose headed off to the local pool for a quick fire 100 laps.



Richard from Trek Larapinta arrived about 5pm to have the food drop boxes filled. We were anticipating an unlimited number of 100L boxes. Richard gave us 3 x 60L boxes and said, "That's it". We had planned to have a communal dinner and breakfast at each food drop site [Standley Chasm, Ellery Gorge and Ormiston Gorge] so had purchased a frying pan for each spot, tins of stuff, extra knives, all sorts of

goodies plus changes of clothes/undies/socks etc. A vast volume. We had at least 100L for each drop. We took the three boxes and had a major rethink about what we could include with the communal meals taking the most reduction. When we took the first box back, he said we could have a fourth box to place at whichever drop we wanted. Humph.

We put everything in for the second drop at Ellery. Shayne ended up carrying a frying pan to the first drop at Standley Chasm. After that we dined in style [carbbed up] at the Italian Restaurant, followed by a stroll down the Todd Mall and then to bed with excited anticipation for the morning when all our plans would come to fruition.

### Weather

During the trek we did not see a single cloud until we returned from the final day's climb to Mt Sonder! The minimum temperatures reflected this and varied from -3°C to +5°C and the maximums from 16°C to 25°C. End of weather report! It was fantastic.

### Overview

Giving a step-by-step report would be a long-winded process [and boring]. Especially as Jack recorded 306,935 steps on his pedometer! Our days quickly became a routine. Up at dawn, say 6.30 to 7am. The sun rose about 7.20. We would have our breakfast, get dressed, pack up and leave; but not necessarily in that order. Breakfast was usually cereal and milk powder plus a sachet coffee or niche tea [Russian garlic with earl grey was the most exotic]. Walk for a while [sometimes a fair while] then have a break, walk again, lunch, walk again, afternoon break then finish. Upon arrival in camp we mostly collapsed and recuperated over various lengths of time then set up tents, cooked tea and went to bed. It would be dark by 6.30pm and getting pretty chilly so it would be tent-time soon after that. The latest we stayed up was 8 [!] although conversations could continue between tents. There were no super-snorers so our tents were usually close together.

There were three shelters with platforms at campsites on the trail. They were all new with two sleeping areas with a shelf above each and a dingo-proof cupboard in which to place everything. Apart from food, dingo's would take boots and socks etc so everything was crammed into the tent with its occupants.

We had three food drops. Standley Chasm on Day 4, Ellery Gorge on Day 8 and Ormiston Gorge on Day 11. For each of these places Piero and Rose organized a communal evening meal and a special breakfast. A sweet potato curry and apple crumble at Standley Chasm, spaghetti bolognese and tinned fruit at Ellery Gorge and a brilliant minestrone soup/stew at Ormis-



ton Gorge. For breakfast at each place we had pancakes with fruit and condiments including lemon juice, sugar and maple syrup. All very very yummy. Amazing how everything tastes sweeter, richer "the best we've ever eaten" when the standard fare is slightly less enticing. Delicately breaking the succulent flesh of an orange and savouring the trickle of sweet nectar can be an exhilarating experience.

Each of the twelve sections had walk notes and a rating. We probably did the walk in the best direction as our first three days were rated medium so we could [relatively] gently ease into the walk gaining fitness as we went. As a group we were pretty even with Shayne being the dark [race] horse who was consistently ahead of the pack, closely followed by Andrew then a short distance to Rose and Piero. Jack spent 95% of the walk by himself as he would hang back to take photos or chat to the people we passed walking in an easterly direction. The others would be caught up when they stopped for a break – he was never too far behind.

It would be fair to say that everyone was evenly matched in temperament and there was nothing remotely approaching a 'vigorous discussion' for the entire trip. Life experiences were freely shared and regular outbreaks of silliness ensured everyone maintained their sanity and enjoyed the shared challenge.

### Day 1 – Sunday 29 June

Camp: Wallaby Gap 16hr30  
 Distance: 17km Total: 17km  
 Steps: 20,666 Total: 20,666  
 Rating: Medium

We were up at 0730. It was Shayne's birthday. Song, card and present of chocolate bullets for scroggin. We retraced our steps of the previous day to the Todd River then north to the Telegraph Station where the Trail officially begins. A bit of pack realigning and away we went at 11hr00.

We went past an outback cemetery then under the Stuart Highway and we had lunch at 13hr00 just over the Ghan railway line; no rail traffic seen. After lunch we climbed to Euro Ridge with lovely views of the Heavitree Range on the southern side of the valley being lit by the setting sun. We walked off Euro Ridge into Wallaby Gap campsite. We found plenty of space and had a wooden platform to use as a table.



Happy campers at Wallaby Gap

### Day 2 – Monday 30 June

Dep: 08hr45 Wallaby Gap  
 Arr: 17hr30 Arrenge Bluff creek bed  
 Distance: 21km Total: 38km  
 Steps: 34,453 Total: 55,119  
 Rating: Medium

Weather: Cloudless. Min 1°C High 17°C

In Alice we had purchased some methylated spirits for the Trangias in addition to the white meths brought up from Victoria. This morning we discovered that the purple meths doesn't ignite and burn quite as well as the southern stuff. We bought the meths from the service counter in Coles where we had to specifically ask for it. The staff gave us a light grilling before selling. It is to do with the local indigenous population abusing meths. I guess the purple additive makes it less appealing [?]; a bit like Opal petrol. Also you can't buy port [a fortified wine] before 6pm but you can buy spirits. Perhaps affordability comes into the picture too.

It wasn't too cold this morning; just a light frost on the tents. Within an hour we had the sun on our backs as we walked out of the shadow of Euro Ridge. Jack started with no jumper on, a good decision. The others had to stop after a kay or so and disrobe from their thermals and woolies.

We got along at a good pace following the southern edge of the Chewings Range; in and out of valleys. Nothing was straight or level. It was all up and down but nothing onerous at all. A sweat was not raised. There were beautiful vistas of Heavitree Range to the south. We went around Hat Hill and then into Simpsons Gap for lunch at about 11hr15 having done 10.3km.



Simpsons Gap

After a look at the gap we headed off towards Arrenge Bluff where we planned to have a dry camp so we fully watered up with about 6 litres each. Jack kept on taking photos so ended up walking by himself for most of the time affording plenty of opportunity for personal contemplation. The others stopped occasionally and he caught up, usually for a scroggin break. We walked

through casuarina woodlands and buffel grass stands and lots of flowering grasses, flowers and bushes and trees and plenty of nice views.



Jack at Arrenge Bluff

Towards the end of the afternoon we neared the proposed campsite and admired the western side of Arrenge Bluff that was beautifully illuminated by the setting sun. We set up camp in a dry creek bed at about sunset [17hr30] about 1km east of Mulga Creek. It was a big day for us, about 24km. Jack was sure his legs would cramp up that night and his feet were aching.

### Day 3 – Tuesday 1st July 2014

Dep: 08hr45                      Arrenge Bluff creek bed

Arr: 13hr00                      Jay Creek

Distance: 12km                Total: 50km

Steps: 16,176                 Total: 71,295

Rating: Medium

Weather: Cloudless. Min -2°C High 17°C

Cattle were heard bellowing overnight. Sound either travels an awfully long way out here or the fences between the National Park and the surrounding properties were less than optimal??? We awoke about 07hr30. Jack had a great night's sleep with not a smidge of cramps. It was very, very cold with frost on all the tents. The creek bed was obviously a frost hollow. Today was Andrew's birthday – 53 and he still doesn't know what he wants to do when he grows up. Song and congrats.

Some birds were about in the predawn light of 7am; a butcher bird, wrens and two red-tailed black cockatoos flew overhead. A very pale dingo appeared from "upstream" of the camp. He/she took a look from 20 metres, went around us then loped off up a gully. A fellow walker appeared about 07hr30. He was in run-

ning gear and had a light pack and two drinking tubes protruding from his pack straps. He was a "through runner". He didn't stop for long – 20 seconds – then walked/ran on towards his goal of Serpentine Gorge. That would make it 150km. Last Friday/Saturday/Sunday another chap had run the entire track; or at least planned to. We don't know if he made it.

The sun dried the tent flies and we pushed off about 08hr45 to have breakfast at Mulga Flat which was meant to be only 1km away. However, the campsite had been relocated [in the previous few weeks] a further 1km west which we quickly reached.



Rose enjoying breakfast at Mulga Flat

It had a new toilet, water tank and tables just 200 metres off the trail. We had breakfast and continued on, walking up a creek bed through Spring Gap which had two waterholes, beautiful trees [Ghost Gums] and birdlife including Willie Wagtails, White-plumed Honeyeater and a raven/crow. One pool would have made a great swimming spot. Also saw a dingo [much redder than this morning's one] on the track out of Spring Gap. After ascending to the northern side of the range, the trail continued through strands of Witchetty Bush [*Acacia kempeana*] and Mulga [*Acacia aneura*] with Mt Lloyd to our south.

At one point everyone was startled to the hysterical shout of "snake". Piero had almost stepped on one and backed up into everyone else. The Mulga snake was quietly going about his business putting his head into spinifex bushes to see if there was any eating to be done but not that we saw. We got some good photos and a video.

Arrived at Jay Creek by 13hr00 – an easy day, about 12km. Jay Creek had a brand new toilet, water tanks and shelter with elevated floors and shelves and a lockup cupboard [anti-dingo]. We had lunch, settled in then Jack had a wander around with the binoculars and camera whilst Andrew and Shayne walked to the fish hole and Piero and Rose lounged by the tents. Jay Creek was lovely, with ghost gums on the side walls, red gums in the creek [lots of young ones – obviously no BIG flood here for a year or two], Willie Wagtails, White-plumed Honeyeaters and lots of zitting Zebra Finches. ZFs are pretty common. We saw them everywhere every day. They are nice to see with distinctive pretty plumage.

Our route tomorrow involved a decision as to a high route or a low route. The high route was rated very hard. All the walkers we had met so far had done the low route after their experience of having so many



fabulous views further to the west and not needing any more. We decided to do the low route too. Towards dark a party of about 19 walkers arrived in dribs and drabs. There were youngsters from 12 to 17 and three leaders – Chris, Dan with dreads and Kylie, earth mother and supreme leader. The kids looked pretty done in, but after setting up camp in the creek [100 metres from the shelter] and having tea, they got their voices back. We were all in bed by 20hr00. Slept well on the platform but woke a few times. Piero and Rose placed their tent on the platform – a veritable Taj Mahal. Despite the kids looking deadbeat when they arrived, they kicked on until at least 10pm, chatting away.

**Day 4 – Wednesday 2nd July**

Dep: 08hr15                      Jay Creek  
 Arr: 17hr30                      Standley Chasm  
 Distance: 14km                      Total: 64km  
 Steps: 19,407                      Total: 90,702  
 Rating: Hard  
 Weather: Cloudless. Min -2°C High 17°C

We awoke about 7 and marveled at the colours in the eastern sky. Jack’s Star Chart app on the phone told us that the last two bright stars remaining were Venus and Aldebaran. The colours were just beautiful. Black, purple, indigo, deep blue, orange, then red and yellow and finally the sun itself. Still no clouds in the sky. The sun was up at 07hr15. A Hooded Robin was patrolling the bushes nearby. We left about 08hr15 having had a chat to the kid’s leaders, Dan and Chris. Dan told Jack they were a group of mostly staff’s kids from Cornerstone Community, a Christian organization. The kids came from Bendigo, Swan Hill, Newcastle, Melbourne, Sydney, Dubbo [where the leaders were all based] and Ali Curung. It transpired that Jack knew the family of two of them from mission trips he had been on



Jay Creek— Fish Hole

over the years. Small world indeed.

After we departed, we walked down Jay Creek through the gorge running north-south through the ridge, towards Fish Hole, a sacred place for the Arrernte peo-

ple. The walking on sand [easy] and round river stones [harder] ended with a steep climb and descent to avoid Fish Hole. The gorge/gully was just beautiful with red gums in the creek bed and ghost gums on the sides plus the dappling of spinifex, witchetty bushes and Mulga on the slopes.

We went on to Tangentyere Junction through woodlands of witchetty and Mulga – easy going. Here we chose to walk the low route [even the guide notes weren’t enthusiastic about the high route] which was up to a saddle after 6km then down to Cycad Creek which we walked up for 2km then good walking to Millers Flat where the western end of the high route joined from a very steep gully to the north. We then walked up an easy and nice creek to our lunch spot.

We then had a tall jump-up into a valley reminiscent of USA western movies with the hills dotted by spinifex, witchetty and Mulga. It was then quite a haul up that valley using the steps that had thoughtfully been cut into the cliff to Gastrolobium Saddle [Gastrolobium is a member of the pea family and usually poisonous] and a long descent to Angkale Junction where two ends of a valley meet to then descend into Standley Chasm.



Standley Chasm

We didn’t go straight into the Chasm but went along its western edge up up up to a superb lookout then down down down 450 steps to the chasm itself. At the bottom we turned left and walked a few hundred metres to the rock split at the top of which was Angkale Junction, took some pics [there were PEOPLE there, tourists even, who had DRIVEN there, what lazy people] then went back all the way to the camp area. This



camp area was excellent. Grass, toilet block and showers. 30 metres away was the kiosk [coffee, cold drinks, meals] and our first food drop. We had to pay \$15 each for entry to the chasm and camping.

It was very satisfying to get to Standley Chasm. There had been lovely views and landscapes today. We rescued our food box from the kiosk. Had to get there before 5pm to get it, otherwise they were closed. It was great to get fresh clean undies and socks plus all the food for the next 4 days, plus the ingredients for the communal dinner and breakfast. Yum.

Our experience the previous night with the kids meant we camped as far from the toilet block as we could. This meant that we wouldn't have anybody traipsing through our camp to go to the loo or get water. Another group walking the same direction as us were there too and had the "middle" ground and we left the area closest to the amenities for the Cornerstone Mob. We became quite friendly with our neighbours to the point of swapping some excess food, even sharing dishwashing water and an electric kettle. In the midst of all this, the Cornerstone Mob arrived in dribs and drabs to meet their support crew, Gus and Fiona, in the Gus Bus. These were the parents of three walkers and very friendly folks. We had a killer tea, masterminded by Piero and Rose. Fresh sweet potato was the base for a delicious curry and rice and we had apple crumble for dessert! All cooked on the gas BBQ hotplates for free. We did use the two Trangias [meths powered stoves] for the rice.



Shayne, Andrew, Piero & Rose preparing the evening meal

Most of us had a shower but the hot water had run out for Jack so a cold water top half bath in the loos would have to do. Still felt pretty good. It seems that when camping all modesty can be forgotten/forgiven, as the shower cubicles were quite open and unisex. No one seemed to mind each others nakedness. Like to see that happen in the civilized world! We were all in bed by 20hr00 but the kids talked on, not too intrusively, until much later, the generators kept buzzing all night, a baby was crying and our sleep was quite broken.

## Day 5 – Thursday 3rd July

Dep: 08hr00                      Standley Chasm  
Arr: 17hr30                      Birthday Waterhole  
Distance: 18km                      Total 82km  
Steps: 24,567                      Total 115,269  
Rating: Very Hard  
Weather: Cloudless. Min -3°C High 20°C

Today the hard stuff was to begin. Just a gradual 10km ascent to Brinkley Bluff then a very steep dash downhill. The people going east told us that the descent to Birthday Waterhole was very hard indeed. But that didn't deter us arising at 06hr30 for a beautiful pancake breakfast with lemon, sugar, raspberries and peaches. It was more like flapjacks but very nice indeed. We were away at 8. The start was a doddle; 700m along the bitumen road to a creek. The trail went up the creek for 2km. It was gradual and very nice indeed with river stones not too big at all, through red and ghost gums, wattles and other flora.

We kept winding our way upwards. It was sheltered and in shadow until 10hr30. Towards the top the incline became steeper until at the 5km mark we came to Reveal Saddle with gorgeous views back, forward and into a valley to the east. It took another 5km along the Larapinta version of the Crosscut Saw to reach Brinkley Bluff. In Victoria, such a lookout would be surrounded by cyclone fences with razor wire and signs warning walkers that the government would not be held liable for any injury would have been erected to save walkers from themselves. No such niceties on the Larapinta! The views were stunning in all directions and we gradually climbed higher to the bluff itself. At the bluff there was a phone signal. Phones were switched on, messages sent and received and phone calls made. Despite being in the middle of the continent, miles from anywhere, technology and attachment to the outside world could not be shaken.

We arrived about 11hr30 and left at 12hr30 having had lunch and taken lots of photos. The trail went instantly straight down a very steep slope for about 1km. There were plenty of steps and the scree and rocks were no trouble at all. Some of the trail was in a creek with cycads and pines. One advantage of being last was that Jack, being a little way behind, could see where the rest of the team were and on a couple of occasions found some had gone one way and others another so was able to pull everyone up and sort out where the trail really went. Although the trail was very well marked, you one didn't need to go too far off track to be in a spot of navigational bother. We went up a steep track to Stuarts Pass then down very steeply [lots of steps] to the riverbed and valley of Birthday Waterhole. Just where the trail came to the river was a pool with lots of life – tadpoles and frogs, skimmers and a shield shrimp. Then it was 4km through Mulga and witchetty woodlands on the river-side, past Mint Bush Spring and a weird place with several skulls and pelvises of cattle on trees on the trailside.



Camp at Birthday Waterhole

Just before Birthday Waterhole, we met a party of 5 VMTC [Victorian Mountain Tramping Club] members relaxing on the side waiting for their companions to arrive. Then we met four members of Melbourne Bushwalking Club. Small world. We camped by the water on the sand near the water tank. Across the hole was a carpark [3 vehicles resident] and plenty of campers including bushwalkers who had pulled the pin. The waterhole had a resident family of grey teal ducks with nine ducklings. They seemed quite used to human activity. It wasn't too hard a day at all (for some). Others were starting to feel the effects of 5 days on the trail. It would have been harder going east and harder still carrying extra water if camping at Brinkley Bluff which quite a few folks did.

### Day 6 – Friday 4th July

Dep: 08hr00      Birthday Waterhole

Arr: 16hr00      Hugh Gorge

Distance: 16km      Total: 98km

Steps: 19,342      Total: 134,611

Rating: **Very Hard**

Weather: Cloudless. Min -1°C High 20°C

**Jack:** *Today was one of the hardest bushwalking days I have ever done. It wasn't hot and it wasn't far but the geography made it a ripsnorter. The trail notes stated 19 hours for 16km and recommended allowing 2 days to complete the section!*

We decided to do it in one day. What a day it was. We walked from 08hr00 to 16hr00 with stops of about 1.5 hours. We arose in the dark at 06hr30 – but still took 1½ hours to get ready.

The first 3km to Spencer Gorge followed the creek back towards Brinkley Bluff then went west for a couple of kays undulating gradually uphill along the edge of another creek. We then turned right [north] and rock hopped for 2km up the gorge. It was beautiful. Nice and cool, mostly in the shade, lots of red and ghost gums, cycads, tea-trees and poison-bushes. It is a place that obviously gets a bit of rain and the orientation of north-south with high walls means staying cool most of the time. At Rocky Talus we turned left

[west] and did the part that requires 1 hour to do 600 metres. It was fairly steep but in a creek, canyon way with some big jump ups which were easier to handle than the notes suggested. We came out at the top of the canyon after 30 minutes in total although there had been some serious exertion. From the top it was 30 minutes to Windy Saddle which lived up to its name. Then we zigzagged to Razorback Ridge – the summit of the Chewings Range. The views were majestic.



The Razorback on Chewings Range

On the ridge we spotted and photographed Mountain Grevillea. It turned out that Andrew is not that comfortable with heights but managed narrow Razorback Ridge without problem. As we carried on westward we could see a massive headland in front of us on the other side of Fringe Lilly Creek and a U-shaped valley to its north where the trail went. The descent to FLC was very steep indeed with some rocky outcrops to edge around [with a vertical 200 metre drop] and very steep and shaley zigzags down to the bottom. Eventually we got there for lunch. We continued on to Rocky Saddle where we rested and it was obvious Andrew was showing signs of wear and tear. He even had a sleep. The Cornerstone Mob caught up with us there for their lunch. We continued along, down a creek bed to Hugh Gorge Junction and carried on to Hugh Gorge along a final 3.5km of river stones.



Negotiating Hugh Gorge



The feet were definitely sore and tired. We met Nicole from Sydney here at the water tank – as you do – who was able to tell us that the next section to Ellery Gorge was not too bad. We found some good campsites, set up and had tea. Bed at the usual time and no cramps at all – again. The legs were feeling not bad.

**Day 7 – Saturday 5th July**

Dep: 08hr05                      Hugh Gorge  
 Arr: 17hr30                      Ellery Gorge  
 Distance: 32km                Total: 130km  
 Steps: 34,951                 Total: 169,562  
 Rating: Medium  
 Weather: Cloudless. Min -3°C High 20°C

We had originally planned to do this section in two days but at tea the previous evening decided that as there were no big ups and/or downs at all and the going was mostly sandy trail and Nicole from Sydney (who looked like she had just finished the Hawaii iron woman) had done it in one day, we would do it in one day then have a rest day. Although we were up early, the Cornerstoners were away well before us and we left at 08hr05. To our amazement we overtook them before arriving at Rocky Gully where we had lunch and a rest. The trail had been undulating with quite good tracks underfoot and the going was relatively easy.



Self explanatory?

The Cornerstoners caught us at Rocky Gully but pushed on to km22 for lunch [after spending about ½hr watering and toileting with us]. They may as well have stopped for lunch anyway. A couple, who had been left behind by four walkers we had met earlier, were camped and waiting for the woman’s tendons to repair enough to walk out to the road. He played a bright yellow, totally cheap and expendable ukulele providing us with background music over lunch. We set off about 13hr00 with Andrew not feeling too good. He had no lunch and vomited a few times on the trail to Ellery Gorge. Shayne was wondering why his food was decreasing but Andrew’s stash was not. Andrew could still walk at 4kph which was a bit quicker than me. Tough guy. The problem was his left big toe whose nail had died after the Tali Karng walk

had granulated causing a lot of pain when the nail moved with each step.

Off we went on the second half of the 32km and it was a slog. The trail remained the same, not hard at all but just a long way. We stopped every hour or so which allowed Jack to catch up. Andrew did a spectacular trip after one break. The loop on his boot lace caught in the hook of the other boot and over he went. Fortunately he only skinned his knees. We headed from the Chewings Range across the Alice Plain to Ellery Gap, inexorably approaching in the Heavitree Range. The Chewings were rounded and of varying heights, all a bit higgledy-piggledy. The Heavitree Range was quite even in height with lots of gullies, evenly spaced and lots of even lines of differing rock colours horizontally. There was a hard uphill for 60-80 metres from the plain to the gap where beautiful views were seen to the north with the descending westerly sun. The Cornerstoners [passed at km22] were close behind us approaching the ascent as we set off on the last 5km to camp. We arrived at 17hr30. It was getting dark so we set up tents in the river bed.



Andrew hitting the sack after a hard days walk

Andrew hopped straight in and went to sleep. He was cold so we put another sleeping bag on top of him as a doona. By the time we had tea it was dark. We raided the food drop boxes for a block of chocolate and a bottle of wine. The rest would happen tomorrow. In bed by 8. It was pretty cold. There were quite a few other walkers [mostly heading east] as well. One lad had a hutchie and two guys were just on a groundsheet. Looking forward to tomorrow. Rest day. Pancakes for breakfast! This had been the most challenging day on the trail thus far.

**Day 8 – Sunday 6th July**

Wakeup: 07hr30  
 Bedtime: 19hr30  
 Distance: 0km                      Total: 130km  
 Steps: 0                                Total: 169,562  
 Rating: Easy Peasy—rest day!  
 Weather: Cloudless. Min -2°C High 20°C

Shayne and Jack got up at 07hr30, fetched the boxes from the store [with our \$50 pink key] and took them across to the picnic shelter next to the gas-fired BBQ. The contents were divided up into individual portions and then the communal stuff.





Rose & Piero preparing pancakes for breakfast

Pancakes for breakfast. Rose and Piero masterminded the cooking and we were finished by 10! The pancakes were very nice indeed. Probably about 10 each. After the breakfast cleanup and putting our stuff in tents or the boxes, we ventured down to Ellery Bighole. Some had a wash standing in the very very cold shallows. Shayne and Piero went under and promptly succumbed to "brain freeze". Then everyone sat on the beach to thaw out.

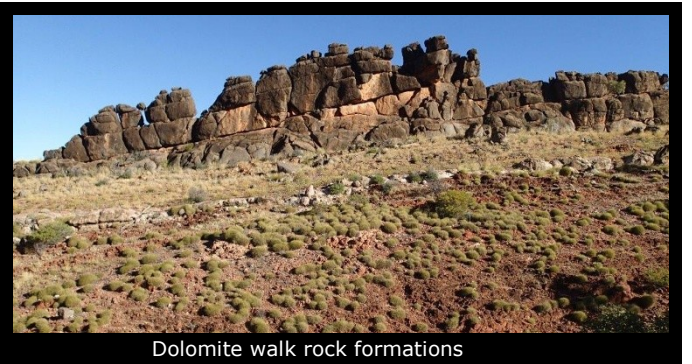
Lots of tourists visited, mostly with their cameras, mostly for less than 10 minutes. They didn't go for walks around to the sides or down the dry creek lines. Pretty disappointing. We reckoned there were 300 tourists in all, over the day. "Look! A black eagle", proclaimed one of the tourists while pointing at a raven. This provided much merriment and sightings of 'raptors' increased dramatically for the remainder of the trip. After lunch, all but Andrew did the Dolomite Walk [3km] to the west of the gorge. It wound in a circuit through the spinifex country.

We talked about lots of things, mostly botanical. We were intrigued by the diversity of flora and the diversity of species of families i.e. lots of acacias and lots of spinifexes. Once back at the campground, we talked to lots of people [Jeepman took our rubbish away for us]. Saw White-plumed Honeyeater, Crow/Raven, Yellow-necked Miner, Ring-neck Parrot, Pied Butcherbird, Dolly Bird, Inland Thornbill. The zip on Shayne's sleeping bag had broken and he was using it as a doona but it was quite cold most nights and he had "cold spots". We got the zips aligned and all was good. Shayne reported the next day that his nights had become a lot warmer. Success. We had a great spag bol for tea. Only 6 days to go.

**Day 9 – Monday 7th July**

- Dep: 09hr15                      Ellery Gorge
- Arr: 15hr30                     Serpentine Gorge
- Distance: 16km                Total 146km
- Steps: 16,456                  Total 186,018
- Rating: Hard
- Weather: Cloudless. Min -2°C High 24°C

Although only a short day of 15.5km, we were awake by 07hr00 but didn't get away until 09hr15. Talk about slow. But this was still quicker than the kids! We had our normal hiking breakfast but with peaches and pineapple and all rubbish in the two boxes. Jack's foot hurt badly for the first 2km but, suddenly, the pain went away and back to normal. Perhaps the day off hadn't helped. The day was spent walking along the southern edge of the Heavitree Range with the Macdonnell Ranges across the other side of the bitumen road to the south. The trail went up and down and along ridges of varying colours – red, white, grey, black, yellow with the ridge lines running mostly in our direction.



Dolomite walk rock formations

Some of the stones were grey/brown-coloured. This is dolomite, a fine-grained sedimentary rock rich in magnesium and calcium carbonates. Others were conglomerate in ironstone and occasionally white crumbly earth – maybe just a small rock. This is calcrete, a natural concrete, formed when sand and gravel near the surface are cemented together by naturally occurring calcium carbonate. Yet further are ironstone edges rising five to fifteen centimetres from the ground. The geology here is very mixed and interesting. Where was Helmut when you needed him! We were overtaken by the Cornerstoners and we walked into Serpentine Gorge campsite together.



Approach to Serpentine Gorge

The brand new shelter was left for them to use and we tented on the vehicle track to the water tank. The shelter wasn't quite where we expected it to be, about 800m short of the site on the map. We met Anna Dakin from Northumbria, UK, going east. A young artist, she was painting as she went for an exhibition in Sydney she had organized in August. She was a minimalist hiker with no tent, just a tarp to shelter under and a myriad of things attached to her smallish rucksack [including teddy]. She was wearing Doc Martin boots –

not the least sensible seen on the trail. Before tea Jack walked to Serpentine Gorge, climbed the lookout and took a few images. The night sky was magnificent and the kids were quiet by 8pm. All of us slept well.

### Day 10 – Tuesday 8th July

Dep: 08hr00                      Serpentine Gorge  
 Arr: 17hr30                      Waterfall Gorge  
 Distance: 27km                      Total: 173km  
 Steps: 32,996                      Total: 219,014  
 Rating: Hard  
 Weather: Cloudless. Min +5°C High 25°C

At 4am a dingo howled nearby. We were up at 06hr30, packed everything up, had brekky, chatted to Anna [quietly], filled up with water and headed off at 8am. We had a big day to do to Waterfall Gorge. We walked down the road to the old camp then west and north to the top of the ridge. That took about 3km and the views were spectacular. Jack's little Olympus camera, although Tough, did its best to take panoramas and f8s but he could have done with a DSLR. We walked along towards Counts Lookout with spectacular views then down, off the ridge, to Serpentine Chalet Dam where we had lunch at 12hr15. Thirteen kilometres down. It had a loo, water and campsites. We set off to Waterfall Gorge at 1pm – 14km to go – and arrived at 17hr30 towards dusk.



The group at Inarlanga Pass

We first walked a few kays to Inarlanga Pass which was a dry creek through a canyon – the usual river stone jumping and big rocks. It was very pleasant. At the top we were out into red rock country with ridge spurs all pointing down to us and worked our way up to a saddle then headed west. We could see a second saddle 6 kays away and seemed to take a long time to work our way to it. The two saddles were joined by a wide valley. We met a school group of 10 students and 2 staff from Brisbane. They were all girls bar one, doing their Duke of Edinburgh hike. Then about 3pm we met two girls who were resting. One had a huge blister on her little toe [just the biggest you have ever seen] and the quandary was to drain or not. The more they dithered, the closer it got to sunset and darkness

and they still had 8 kays to go to the next camp. We left them to it. We got over the second saddle then a few kays further to a third over which, on the right [north] was a drainage creek from the valley into Waterfall Gorge. It had some pretty big drops indeed and would have great waterfalls when wet. There were a few tent sites at the southern entrance but down in the gorge was a very small site near the plunge pool [water in]. The two guys camping on the tarp at Ellery Gorge, David and Greg, were already there but kindly moved their camp 50 metres downstream so we could camp there.



Campsite at Waterfall Gorge

Andrew was stuffed. His big toe was causing real pain and having an appetite reducing effect. By the time the others had set up their tents, Jack had "watered" his meal [Asian Laksa soup, Back Country Roast Chicken and Mashed Potato – 8/10] and while they prepared their meals, he put up his tent, basically in the dark. The waterhole water was boiled for tea and was fine. No-one got ill from it. The tent sites had a slope, were very dusty and most had a very restless night. It is hard to know if you disturb others. They are always too polite next morning to say so. We left the tent flies off and were still a bit hot. Jack's right knee was sore and didn't enjoy having the other knee resting on it nor being on top of the other knee. Everyone was filthy by this stage giving skin a feel which doesn't enhance the sleeping experience.

### Day 11 – Wednesday 09 July 2014

Dep: 09hr15                      Waterfall Gorge  
 Arr: 15hr00                      Ormiston Gorge  
 Distance: 15km                      Total: 188km  
 Steps: 19,700                      Total: 238,714  
 Rating: Hard  
 Weather: Cloudless. Min +5°C High 18°C

A short day was ahead so, whilst most were awake at dawn, we stayed in our sleeping bags for a bit. The gorge had no sun in it so was a bit chilly, even at 09hr15 when we departed. After 600m of river stones we turned hard north and went straight up to the top of the hill to the lookout zigzagging for 30 minutes or so. At the top the views were superb. From there we basically ambled 15 kays into Ormiston Gorge. It seemed the kilometre trail markers were spaced at intervals that seemed sometimes like 800m but more like 1500m! As we neared Ormiston Gorge, the trail



descended into the Finke River and on the other side Shayne, Andrew and Jack had a rest on the riverbank. We were beat, especially Andrew. When Andrew was asked how things were and what he might say to someone who had a toe like his, he said, "Give up" and that's what he decided to do; quite sensibly.

Once we had arrived at the Ormiston campsite and got the food drop box, we had a discussion and it was decided that Andrew would not do the last few days but would stay on in Ormiston for a couple of days. We arrived about 15hr00 and the kiosk was still open [shuts at 4pm] so drinks and Magnums were in order. Although nice we weren't craving them. That is one thing about long walks. It doesn't take long to lose the crave. This was our third drop and we had it sorted pretty quickly. This is also the place where the dingoes are hot on food so all went into packs in tents pretty sharpish. We all had showers. Most were cold, picked the wrong cubicle evidently. There was one cubicle with hot water. But still, it was great to wash off 12 days of dust. Cooper, one of the Cornerstone kids, had discovered that the 4WD toilet block contained 5-star showers when compared with those provided for the walkers and promptly spread the news. Rose and Piero made full use of this newly acquired intel and came out smelling like roses.

Gus and Fiona, the Cornerstone support crew, arrived about 17hr30. Most of the Cornerstone mob had arrived by then. Gus started their BBQ tea on the only working BBQ in the campground. We were cooking our communal tea – minestrone – on the pot plates; Gus used the hot plate. So all in all, it was a bit chaotic with all the cooking and all the chat going on in all directions. Rose and Piero made the most marvelous minestrone ever created. It contained cannelloni beans, chick peas, corn, tomatoes, pasta, one chopped red chilli, seven secret herbs and spices – and the best bit – chopped, boiled tinned ham. Gus offered us some of the residual BBQ stuff he had cooked, oranges [took one for next day] and apple crumble. At 7pm, Jack went across to the Amphitheatre where a ranger gave a talk about the local flora and fauna. It was interesting although quite a lot is in the Trail notes.

A plan developed during the evening as we were having tea alongside the Cornerstone Mob, Gus and Fiona. We had got to know them well over the preceding days. It eventually transpired that Andrew helped them move a vehicle, the Dan Van, around to Redbank Gorge for them taking himself, his gear and our food drop box to our pickup point with Trek Larapinta. All in all, a great plan that helped everyone out. We were in bed by 20hr30 and the kids quiet by 21hr00. Although the local dingoes were pigging out on dying fish in the de-oxygenating Ormiston Gorge waterhole, Andrew reported a dingo coming through the campsite during the night.

## Day 12 – Thursday 10th July

Dep: 07hr02                      Ormiston Gorge

Arr: 17hr30                      Rocky Bar Gap

Distance: 23km                      Total: 211km

Steps: 32,666                      Total: 271,380

Rating: Medium/Hard

Weather: Cloudless. Min -1°C High 16°C

We arose at 06hr00 and were away by 07hr02, doubtless our record breaking was because we were so quiet with the Cornerstoners just a few metres away! Andrew got up too and waved us goodbye. Jack's right foot was still hurting so he wore his Merrill track shoes as the trail was going to be relatively easy. It was 9km to the Finke River hut. The trail went up and over some low ridges through spinifex, ghost gums and Mulga on a pretty easy going sandstone track. We zipped along and were at Finke River by 09hr30. There were great views of our ultimate destination, Mt Sonder. Left Finke River at 10am, immediately crossing its dry riverbed about 150 metres wide. Mostly it was easy walking for a six kays across the rolling low undulating hills on the plain.

At one stage the track stopped on the edge of a billabong. We couldn't see where the trail went and were considering our options when a chap [sole, going east] appeared and promptly scurried off without a word. Every other walker was happy to have a chat. We went around the end of the billabong [a 200 metre detour] then back on trail. As usual, Jack was last. He had a good chat to the Aarn triplets, three girls all with new Aarn 50L packs, white hats and blouses. Took their photo with Mt Sonder in the background. We then started up to Hilltop Lookout. It was a beautiful benched track, from the 7km mark, that had only recently, in the last few weeks, been done. It took us right to the top. Jack recalled the ranger at Ormiston saying they had just done some work on this particular section of track.



Rose at Hilltop lookout with Mt Sonder in background

The view from the top was magnificent in all directions. At the western end of the ridge was a superb



view of Mt Sonder. Three walkers going our way took our picture and we took theirs. From there it was 4km downhill to Rocky Bar Gap. It was another big day. Rocky Bar Gap was a very nice campsite indeed with some tent sites and water tank. To the north, back through the gap, were other sites with great views of the eastern edge of Mt Sonder. Evidently it was worth staying at here for the sunrise on Mt Sonder. A dingo with a curly tail went past the camp before light failed. The moon rose, almost full. It was cold so we were in bed by 19hr02!

**Andrew back at Ormiston Gorge:** After sadly waving off my party in the dark I snuggled back into bed in Chateau Canvas and promptly drifted off to faraway places.

The Cornerstone kids had a very leisurely morning and eventually headed off to the Finke River around 1pm. I spent the next day and a bit cleaning gear, customizing my sandshoe to take the pressure off my troublesome toe and testing all of the showers to find the one with the hottest water.



Ben Cruachan members with the Cornerstone kids

**Day 13 – Friday 11th July**

Dep: 10hr00 Rocky Bar Gap  
 Arr: 12hr30 Redbank Gorge car park  
 Distance: 12km Total: 223km  
 Steps: 16,000 Total: 287,380  
 Rating: Medium  
 Weather: Cloudless. Min -2°C High 20°C

Although we were mostly awake at dawn, no-one ventured out until 8. It was a bit cold and we were all snug. The night had been quite lovely with the moon going down about 5am and the stars being spectacular. We left about 10am. Jack soon fell behind Shayne, Piero and Rose, as usual. He tootled along quietly but was soon overtaken by a party of 7 with 1 guide from World Expeditions who were a private charter from Sydney doing the entire walk with daypacks and spending each night off trail at a camp being full catered for! Jack called it glalking [pronounced glorking] as it is glamorous walking. Although expensive, it would be a great way to do the trail. The ladies were

wearing makeup and lippy! The trail to Redbank Gorge carpark was undulating but even underfoot and we were soon there about 12hr30. Whilst enjoying our lunch, a party of 4WDs were having their own on the next table. The comments ranged around why anyone would want to walk 240 kms when you could drive there!! How short sighted.



Campsite at Redbank Gorge

We set up in the riverbed and the Cornerstone Mob arrived during the afternoon. Some of us hobbled our way to the Redbank Gorge, washed in the very cold pool, chatted to few tourists who ventured that far. Gus, Fiona and Andrew arrived about 2pm. The 2-day rest had done Andrew the world of good. He had “operated” on his trainer, cutting out the solid piece above his toe and it had done wonders, although still sore. He felt happy to attempt Mt Sonder the next day. We decided to set off at 6am, view the sunrise at the lookout [halfway up] or higher and see the surrounding panorama from the top in the light. After tea we finished off the remaining pancake mix; Andrew attempting to heat hot oil in the aluminium lid of his Trangia and nearly succeeding in flambéing his tent as well as his eyebrows and the hairs on his arms. The pancakes did taste rather scrumptious, even though we were eating them in the dark.

**Day 14 – Saturday 12th July**

Dep: 06hr00 Mt Sonder  
 Arr: 12hr00 Redbank Gorge car park  
 Distance: 16km Total: 239km  
 Steps: 19,555 Total: 306,935  
 Rating: Hard  
 Weather: Cloudless. Min 0°C High 19°C

We arose at 05hr50 and were away at 06hr10. We set a good pace. The steepest parts were up to the saddle. Once at the saddle Jack started to fall behind but was soon overtaken by four/five Cornerstone kids. They were so energetic. They were even running! [but with no packs on]. The sun rose at about 07hr15. There were just a few slivers of cloud in the eastern sky. The colours were beautiful. Eventually Jack got to the top about 08hr15-ish. The others had been there



quite a few minutes and the wind was not warm so after a short while they all headed back down while Jack had breakfast. Plenty of clouds came rolling in but it seemed unlikely to rain. We were all down by noon. Jack literally went straight to bed as he was feeling rubbish and had a deep sleep for about an hour. Whilst asleep, the others had a mixed menu lunch eating all the remnant foods. Combinations included tuna and rice and pasta and beans. After we had taken group photos and farewelled the Cornerstone Mob, we went up to the car park about 14hr30 for our 15hr00 pickup to find the Trek Larapinta minibus waiting for us. The clouds had cleared to 8/8 of small, white, fluffy clouds. We picked up 5 others at Ormiston Gorge thus totally filling all seats in the minibus and back to Alice for 5pm.

Here ends the great adventure!

### Supplementary Photos



Jack en route to Mt Sonder



Group at Lookout near top of Waterfall Gorge



Piero & Rose recuperating at Redbank



Shayne finds his missing spoon at Arrenge Bluff



Andrew pointing to the preferred route



Andrews bandaged sore feet



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# WALK PREVIEWS

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## Walhalla to Thomson Station via Poverty Point

**DATE: Saturday 6th September**

**GRADE:** Easy – Medium

**LEADER: Monica Scicluna** — 5144 6713

or [joe.monica@hotmail.com](mailto:joe.monica@hotmail.com)

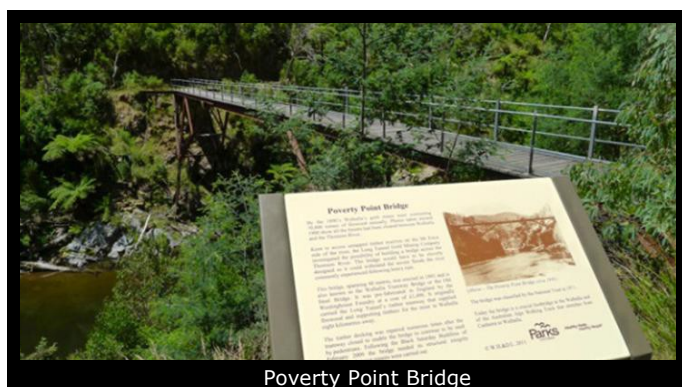
**MEETING POINT:** TYERS KINDER CARPARK—9:00AM

**DISTANCE:** 13KM

**DURATION:** 5 HRS

This walk starts in Walhalla by going up the steps opposite the general store (or the steps adjacent to the band rotunda) up to the old tramway above the town. From the tramway there is a good view of the Walhalla township strung out along the narrow valley of Stringers Creek.

The circuit walk follows the first 8 kilometres of the Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT) along the level bed of the tramway which winds its way past mine heads and through regenerated forest and ferny gullies. After 4 km the tramway crosses Mormon Town Track on the crest of a spur and turns north wards up the Thompson River Valley winding in and out of small gullies for some 4km till it reaches the Poverty Point Bridge (aka Old Steel Bridge). After crossing the bridge the walk departs from the AAWT and back tracks along the opposite bank of the Thomson River along a level track for 4km to the bottom end of Old Depot Road. From here it is a short walk which passes under the Walhalla Road to the Thomson Station.



Poverty Point Bridge

The 3pm train will take the walkers to the Walhalla Railway Station. The fare is \$15. The Walhalla Goldfields Railway is operated and maintained by volunteers and is one of the most spectacular rail journeys

in Australia winding through the spectacular Stringers Creek Gorge.

From the station there is a 500metre walk back to the cars. There is an opportunity to explore Walhalla or just relax in the village over a coffee or a beer before driving back to Rawson.

### Getting to the Start

Walkers will car pool the 12kms from Rawson into Walhalla.

## Angusvale Car Camp

**DATE: Sat/Sun/Mon—13th, 14th & 15th Sept**

**GRADE:** Variable

**LEADER: Andrew Stevenson** — 5147 2225 or

Mob: 0417 972 831

**MEET:** STRATFORD — 8:00AM

We will set up a permanent camp on the grassy banks of the Mitchell River at Angusvale. From there we will head off on easy to medium day walks to explore the surrounding area before returning to camp for an evening around the campfire.

## Wirilda Track

### Combined Clubs Walk

**DATE: Saturday 20th September**

**GRADE:** Medium - Hard (M/7/7/7)

**LEADER: Joe van Beek**— 5176 5302

or [Joevanbeek@bigpond.com](mailto:Joevanbeek@bigpond.com)

**MEETING POINT:** WIRILDA ENVIRONMENT PARK EDUCATION CENTRE - 9:00AM

**DISTANCE:** 14KM

**DURATION:** 5 HRS

This walk is conducted annually as a combined Ben Cruachan Walking Club, Strzelecki Bushwalking Club and Friends of Tyers Park activity. The Wirilda Track is one of Latrobe Valley's best kept secrets. The walk follows the valley of the Tyers River from the Moon-darra Dam Wall down to the Wirilda Environmental Park. The scenery varies from dry open forest through

to fern gullies and includes many river views and the Tyers Gorge. There are a few hills and a river crossing, so spare footwear is advisable if you want to finish the walk with dry feet. It will take 5-6 hours to complete so be sure to bring lunch, adequate water and a raincoat.

The meeting point for the walk is the Wirilda Park Education Centre. From Tyers, travel west towards Yallourn North for approximately two kilometres. Turn north off the Moe-Glengarry Road into Clarkes Road immediately west of the Tyers River and take the first road to the right. The Education Centre is the second building on the right-hand side. From this point it is a thirty minute car pool drive to the start of the walk. A car shuffle will be necessary at the end of the walk to get drivers back to their vehicles.

### Knott's Siding, Coopers Creek Circuit

**DATE: Tuesday 7th October**

**GRADE: L - 5 - 3**

**LEADER: Michael Dowe** — 5147 3075 (AH)  
0427 523 647 (BH)

**MEETING POINT: TYERS KINDER CARPARK—8:30AM**

**DISTANCE: 16KM**

**DURATION: 5 HRS**

Join Philip Davis and Michael Dowe on a reconnaissance of the Knott's Siding, Coopers Creek walk. The reconnaissance is part of our preparation for Federation Walks in November.

The following walk description is taken directly from the Federation Walks website.

*This circuit walk takes in the old Moe-Walhalla Rail line, the current township of Erica and surrounding farmland and passes through the old copper mining town of Coopers Creek.*

*Wildflowers may be seen at any time of year. The area has a rich gold and copper mining history. Much of the area was logged heavily during the gold mining era to provide fuel for crushing machinery and supports for tunnels. The rich red soil near Erica is used extensively for potato growing.*

### Nyerimilang—Homestead

**DATE: Wednesday 8th October**

**GRADE: Easy**

**LEADER: Wil Streckfuss** — 5144 2183 or 0407158300

**MEET: STRATFORD PARK — 9:00AM**



Nyerimilang Homestead

Nyerimilang is an aboriginal name, meaning "Chain of Lakes" or "Many Lakes". It is a beautiful property, there are lovely gardens and many walking tracks with splendid views of the Gippsland Lakes.

The shady trees provide shelter for many birds and you'll hear the sound of them, especially the often invisible bellbirds.

The temperature is always moderate at Nyerimilang, due to the majestic shady trees throughout the park and the always present breeze from the Lakes. Also in October there will be an abundance of wildflowers about, I can guarantee it will be a delightful day!



## THE LARAPINTA TRAIL -- SNAPSHOTS

*The Larapinta - Crosscut Saw*



Spot the odd one out!



Where has Mulga Flat gone?





# Ben Cruachan Walking Club

ISSUE 177 - NEWSLETTER OF THE BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB INC - DECEMBER 2014



Members pose for a Group photo at Tidal River with Mt Oberon in the background

***This years Wilsons Prom weekend proved a great success with 13 members (1 absent from photo) turning up to take part in a variety of activities and walks. The group focused on the Northern part of the Prom rather than the mainstay walks which proved just as interesting and gave a great insight to the variety of landscapes available at the National Park. The Saturday night Happy Hour also proved a hit with Doris Day making a guest appearance. Check out the full report on page 9.***

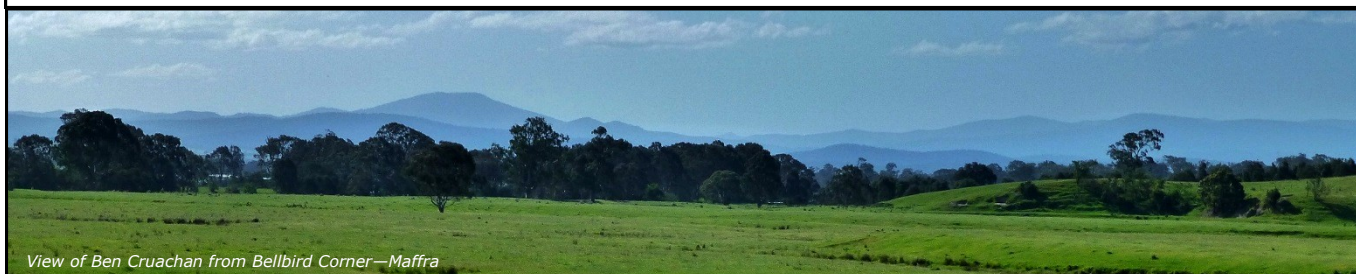


# Ben Cruachan Walking Club



Club Postal Address — PO Box 70, Maffra 3860 — Incorporation No A0004849G

[www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com](http://www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com)



View of Ben Cruachan from Bellbird Corner—Maffra

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS for 2013 / 2014

<b>PRESIDENT:</b>	<b>Andrew Stevenson</b>	<b>5147 2225</b>
<b>FIRST VICE PRES:</b>	<b>Margaret Beckett</b>	<b>5148 2237</b>
<b>SECRETARY:</b>	<b>Ken Free</b>	<b>5144 1195</b>
<b>TREASURER:</b>	<b>Monica Scicluna</b>	<b>5144 6713</b>
<b>PUBLICITY:</b>	<b>Piero Baglioni</b>	<b>5156 7034</b>
	<a href="mailto:pbaglioni@bigpond.com">pbaglioni@bigpond.com</a>	
<b>NEWSLETTER:</b>	<b>Helmut Tracksdorf</b>	<b>5156 6763</b>
	<a href="mailto:helmut.tracksdorf@bigpond.com">helmut.tracksdorf@bigpond.com</a>	
<b>TRACKS &amp; HUTS:</b>	<b>Michael Dowe</b>	<b>5147 3075</b>
<b>WALKS CO-ORDINATOR:</b>	<b>Oliver Raymond</b>	<b>5174 3455</b>
	<a href="mailto:oliverraymond@wideband.net.au">oliverraymond@wideband.net.au</a>	
<b>WEBSITE:</b>	<b>Jack Winterbottom</b>	<b>5143 0903</b>
	<a href="mailto:jackwin27@gmail.com">jackwin27@gmail.com</a>	

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**CLUB MEETS — SECOND WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH (EXCL JANUARY)**

**NEXT MEETINGS: 10TH DECEMBER, 8:00PM, MAFFRA VET CENTRE.**

**11TH FEBRUARY, 8:00PM, MAFFRA VET CENTRE**

***Welcome to our Newest Member/s:***

***Deb Sullivan (Swan Reach) & welcome back Shayne & George Boyd (Briagolong)***

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## Presidential Ramblings - Andrew Stevenson

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BCWC PRESIDENT'S REPORT DECEMBER 2014

The Federation Walks weekend in Rawson was an amazing success and the accolades continue to pour in about how well it was organised and what a spectacular part of Victoria to walk in. The organizing committee and four Gippsland Clubs did an outstanding job. As far as our Clubs contribution went, particular mention must go to Joe Van Beek ( 'Officer in charge of everything' it seemed at times ), Oliver Raymond, Jim Stranger and Ken Free. We also had many volunteers act as walk leaders and tail-end Charlies. A big Thank you to all for your contribution and the positive way in which you represented our Club. Outstanding work!

The annual Prom weekend has been and gone and Corinne Kleine organized everything perfectly - even the weather. Monica and Joe were missed and Wil seemed very relaxed after retiring from the organizing committee. Not sure which was the best bit - the spectacular walks, the evening bonding sessions or the deadly serious Rumikub challenge! The Lodge has already been booked for 2015.

The annual pilgrimage to Inverloch is about to come to an end (in its present form at least) as Alex and Gwenda Husson are selling their holiday home. Many members have very fond memories of partaking of Alex and Gwenda's generosity by opening up their family holiday home to the Club as we used it as a base to explore the Inverloch area. I remember Gwenda's legendary fruitcake, Alex winning every hand of cards and Joe Scicluna snoring so loud that the floorboards rattled.

On a sadder note, long time past member Les Hooker passed away and our condolences go to Vi and family. Many of the older members will have fond memories of spending time in the bush with Les whose knowledge of Victorian goldfields was legendary.

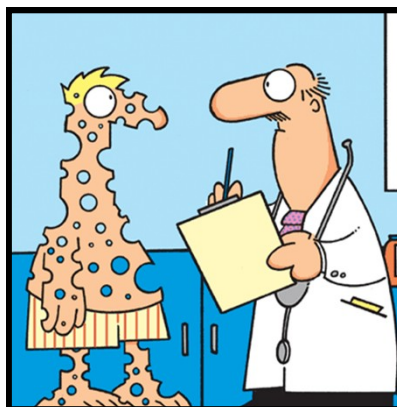
Long time contact at the Bairnsdale Advertiser, Jan Burrows, has retired. Jan's publishing of virtually every walk preview and press release that the club ever sent probably makes her personally responsible for about half of the membership of the club. Enjoy your retirement Jan and hopefully we will see you on a walk soon.

Boisdale member Helen Noble has completed some amazing walks in France, Spain and Italy and she has very kindly given me the itinerary for a Tuscany walking tour in May 2015. Contact me if you are interested.

As 2014 draws to a close I would like to thank all of our walk leaders for putting on their favourite walks, your committee for keeping the cogs turning ( especially Ken Free who is busier than a dog with fleas ) and all of you for supporting the walks. Hope to catch up with many of you at the Christmas luncheon where we can reminisce about the good times while we can still remember them. Seasons greetings to all, stay safe and may Santa's sack be overflowing with great hiking stuff when he visits your house.

See you on the track,

*Andrew Stevenson*



"Stick to walking Andrew, because that Swiss Cheese diet has some serious side effects!"



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# Club News

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## BCWC Committee Meeting



The next meeting of the BCWC is scheduled for **Wednesday 10th December** at the Maffra Vet Centre commencing 8:00pm. The vet centre is located at 10 Johnson Street, Maffra.

All members and guests are welcome.

## Ben Cruachan Website

Andrew Norman has been very busy at work, but recently got back to developing the Ben Cruachan Walking Club website. The example website <http://bencruachanwalkingclub.tumblr.com> now has more content and so far the feedback on its appearance and functionality is all positive. Check it out!

## Wirilda Track maintenance

On Saturday 25 October a work party consisting of Michael Dowe, Jim and Denise Stranger, Joe van Beek, Peter Bray (FoTP) and Craig Campbell (Ranger Parks Vic) undertook several projects to improve the walkability and appeal of the Wirilda Track in preparation for the Fed Walks weekend in November. They removed a large stump impeding the track, levelled and widened a section on a slip face, marked an emergency route should the Tyers River be uncrossable, cleared some large tree falls, collected rubbish along the section of W12 followed by the track and scrub cut and cleared a section of track that was overgrown. As a bonus, the group got to drive through sections of Tyers Park otherwise not readily accessible, thanks to Craig having the appropriate key. Friends of Tyers Park (FOTP) and Parks Victoria expressed their gratitude to the Ben Cruachan Walking Club for their support and input into the maintenance of the Wirilda Track."

## Walkie Talkies

The club is considering the purchase of 2 new walkie talkies to replace the two GME TX650 two way radios, which are probably past their use by date.

Committee members will be looking at the merits of purchasing more powerful replacements for the existing units at the next committee meeting.

## FEDWALKS 14

Joe van Beek issued a thank you note to all club members who assisted and helped make FEDWALKS 14 a great success. Here is an extract of Joes note:

*"Thank you so much for your contributions to making FWW14 a great success. I know you have put in a lot of time over the last year in preparation for the weekend; helping with walk descriptions, doing recognisances, providing feedback and in some cases doing track marking and scrub clearing. Also thank you for your tolerance in being changed about as the program evolved.*

*I was most impressed over the weekend as to how well you all dealt with your walks; looking after your walk participants, organising the car transport arrangements, dealing with the hot, trying conditions on Saturday and providing a very positive vibe. Thank you so much".*



Joe with Fedwalk14 participants at Petersons Lookout

The club would also like to Thank Joe, Jim, Oliver, Ken and others who assisted in co-ordinating the walks program and putting together a great weekend.

"THANK YOU"

Ken Free did an interview with Rachael Lucas from ABC Open about FedWalks14 which went to air on 8th November. Rachael asked Ken to write a few words about bushwalking which have been posted on the ABC website with a few photographs which Ken cobbled together. Here's the link: <https://open.abc.net.au/explore/82909>

Additional FEDWALK14 Photos highlighting Walk 3—St Gwinear to Erica carpark and Walk 16—Knotts Sid-ing to Horseshoe Bend tunnel can be viewed at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/116892533@N02/sets/72157648814366678/>

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# Bushwalking Victoria News

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## Fed Walks, 2014

Over the weekend of 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> of November, the hills around Rawson were alive with the sounds of 295 bushwalkers from across Victoria who'd come together for the annual Federation Walks Weekend. With guidance from Bushwalking Victoria, 4 Gippsland bushwalking clubs spent over a year planning and organising what has been the biggest bushwalking events in Gippsland's history. By all accounts it proved a huge success and is a credit to all those involved.

One of our most active local bushwalkers, Joe van Beek, co-ordinated a total of 44 different walks (22 each day), appointed competent leaders and 'tail-end-Charlies' and published walk descriptions and detailed maps for each walk - a mammoth task. Joe also found time to lead 2 walks himself. [see below]



Joe van Beek (RHS) with FEDWALK'ers on the Wirrija track

Other local bushwalkers, Peter Maffei, Judy Speedy, Pat Williams, Jim Stranger and Oliver Raymond worked hard to ensure that the management of the event resulted in a very professional example of what we can do in Gippsland.

The bushwalkers explored the historic Walhalla area, the snow gums and weathered beauty of Mount Baw Baw National Park and the wildflowers of Tyres Regional Park.

On the Saturday evening, the assembled bushwalkers paused to take in a presentation by acclaimed adventurer Tim Cope who grew up in Drouin South and has spent most of his adult life doing things most of us would only dream about: like retracing the steps of Genghis Khan from Mongolia to Russia. Tim had us enthralled with his tales of the people and places he encountered and the relationship with his loyal dog, adopted part way on his epic journey and which remains his trusted companion to this day.

We hosted bushwalkers from almost every corner of Victoria: from Wangaratta to Warrnambool, Mildura to Maldon, Geelong to the Grampians, Echuca to Essendon and all points in between. And the consensus was that the 295 walkers who experienced our ferny gullies, tranquil rivers and streams and majestic Alpine forests went away determined to return to further explore the natural beauty of Gippsland.



Andrew Norman (arrow) leading FEDWALK'ers at Mt Erica

If you missed this years event, don't worry because FEDWALKS 2015 is already being put together. The Weekend will be based around the Daylesford and Hepburn Springs area. Bayside Bushwalking Club and the Great Dividing Trail Association will be hosting the event.



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# WALK REPORTS

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## Nyerimilang Homestead

**DATE: Wednesday 8th October**

**LEADER: Wil Streckfuss**

**REPORT: Ken Free**

*According to the lore of the Indigenous people of East Gippsland, the name Nyerimilang means chain of lakes. To modern-day visitors to the Gippsland Lakes, it also means a tranquil and picturesque wildlife sanctuary, historic homestead, botanic gardens and coastal park.*



The history and heritage of Nyerimilang Homestead is an interesting read and can be viewed via the following link:

[http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/315531/Heritage-story-Nyerimilang-Tranquility-on-the-chain-of-lakes.pdf](http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0018/315531/Heritage-story-Nyerimilang-Tranquility-on-the-chain-of-lakes.pdf)

On a spring day which promised to be ideal for a relaxing walk, 5 of us met in the carpark at Nyerimilang Homestead and proceeded to take in the delights of this vantage point overlooking the Gippsland Lakes. We ambled past the historic homestead and adjacent gardens and at a lookout point paused to take in the tranquil views of Reeve Channel and Bass Strait in the distance.



A collection of old farm buildings and implements provided a few photo opportunities and an opportunity to reflect on just how tough life must have been 'way back then'.



We then followed the Cliff Top Track until we came to a side track which took us to the waters edge and an area which was once a great picnic area but was now in need of a lot of TLC. Retracing our steps, we picked up the Salt Marsh Track and after a couple of bird hide diversions, with nary a bird to be seen, we turned onto the Homestead Track which would take us back eventually to the historic homestead and lunch.

On the Homestead Track we photographed a couple of Currajong trees which must be the tallest of this species I have seen.



Josie Paterson dwarfed by a giant Currajong

Back at the homestead, we took the obligatory inspection tour, had a relaxing lunch under some shady trees, did another short walk and headed for home.

Thanks Wil for another great relaxing walk.



# Scott's Homestead "Reconnaissance Walk"

## Mitchell River NP

**DATE: Sunday 11th October**

**LEADER: Ken Free**

**REPORT: Helmut Tracksdorf**

Back in September during the Angusvale car camp weekend, participants struck out to explore Scott's Homestead located on a bend of the Mitchell River. Although led by an intrepid leader they somehow managed to get lost (according to a rumour picked up by our elusive reporter) and did not locate the homestead.

As a result a recce walk was organised to go back in and find the homestead. Thus 5 members found themselves heading off along the Tabberabbera track near Angusvale on a Sunday morning. The track is effectively a 4WD track that follows a spur down to the Mitchell River.

Upon reaching the river we turned left and headed up stream retracing the footsteps of the earlier expedition. The weather was perfect with conditions being just right for walking along the banks of the Mitchell. However the conditions were also perfect for snakes with long grass, water and wombat holes everywhere. Plus the track is not a clear path with lots of sections overgrown and indistinct. Sure enough with Piero & Rose in the lead they soon spotted the 'Mother Of All Brown' snakes and danced a little jig which could best be described as a panic attack!



**The MOAB snakes sizing up Rose, Corrine & Ken**

After this encounter we paid more attention to the ground and less to the river views. After approx 2hrs of walking we finally hit upon a more recognisable track alongside the river which lead up onto clear pasture land located on a long flat sweeping bend of the river.

The previous expedition had left the river prematurely and headed up a very steep spur. Apparently they didn't realise just how far upstream the homestead was and bailed out too early. Which meant they had to climb the steepest and most inhospitable spur in the whole of the Mitchell river NP. (Description based on a survivors account).

Scott's homestead soon loomed up and was a sight to behold with its ornate brickwork and timber construction dating back to the turn of the 20th century. The homestead oozed old world charm



**Scott's homestead**

We had a good look around whereupon Piero came across another big brown snake in the toilet! It was clear he had developed an affinity with reptiles! Inside Scott's hut the old world charm continues with knick knacks and other household items still to be seen. We also found an old photograph of the original Scott family. Which strangely appeared to resemble members of the walking group—Spooky!



**Scott Family 1814?**

(Note the uncanny resemblance!)

After a light lunch consisting of sandwiches under a canopy of elm trees next to the homestead we slowly made our way out following the road which officially leads into the homestead. This road affords a unique perspective of the area with amazing views and a steady gradient allowing for a pleasant stroll back to our cars parked up on the Tabberabbera Rd.

After the reconnaissance, it was decided this walk should be added to our walks calendar as an annual event. We all agreed this was a most pleasant location and a great walk.



## Marble Quarry

**DATE:** Saturday 18th October

**LEADER:** Oliver Raymond

**REPORT:** Jack Winterbottom

It was a beautiful morning as four Bairnsdaleites [Marian, Marj, Sue, Jill], one Saleite [Jack] and two Traralgonites [Carolyn and leader Oliver] gathered at the back of the Tyers Kindergarten for the Marble Quarry dash. Once formalities had been completed we carpoled to the start of the walk along the Wallowa-Cowwarr Road. We parked at the start of C22, had a cup of tea, prepared and set off. The sun was shining, the breeze was a zephyr, the bush birds were vocal, the flora was fresh and picturesque. What a marvellous day.



Egg & Bacon with a splash of Lady Finger orchid on the track

The walk is essentially along 4WD tracks apart from the final 350 metres where an old tram track drops from a saddle in the track to the quarry. Along the way we saw Silvertops, Messmate and Red Box; eggs and bacon of various species, dogwood, rice flowers and blue flowers. We heard and/or saw a goanna, Pardalotes, Whipbird, Currawongs, Kookaburras, and Whistlers. It was all going on.

After a time – how long I don't know because we were talking so much and admiring the environment – we got to a saddle near the end of the track and descended to the quarry. "Quarry" is a term usually invoking images of massive high vertical walls, machinery cutting and carting, noise, dust, worker bees.

*This* quarry has not been operational for many years. It is essentially a tunnel, filled in and no longer visible, into the hillside for a short way with a few large blocks of unworked rock at the quarry landing, and a ventilation tunnel some metres up the hillside.

We were able to assess the depth of the ventilation tunnel as 144 feet using our school physics formula of  $d=at^2/2$ . A stone took three seconds to hit the bottom. Thus depth =  $(32\text{fps} \times 9 = 288) / 2 = 144$ . The answer is imperial because the walkers were from the imperial age.



Carolyn pointing to fossils embedded within the limestone



Close up view of the fossils (Crinoids)

We made our way back to the top of the tramway, had lunch at the end of the track then walked back to the cars. I discovered two steep inclines on the way that I had failed to notice on the way in due to talking and gawping. Once back at the cars we had the group photo, the Bairnsdale car went east on the Cowwarr Road and the others made their way back to Tyers. A great day.  
Thank you Oliver.



Group photo of the Bairnsdaleites, Traralgonites and Saleite who took part on this walk



## Tidal River

### Wilsons Prom National Park

**DATE:** Friday 17th—Sunday 19th October

**LEADER:** Corinne Kleine

**REPORT:** Anna Janca

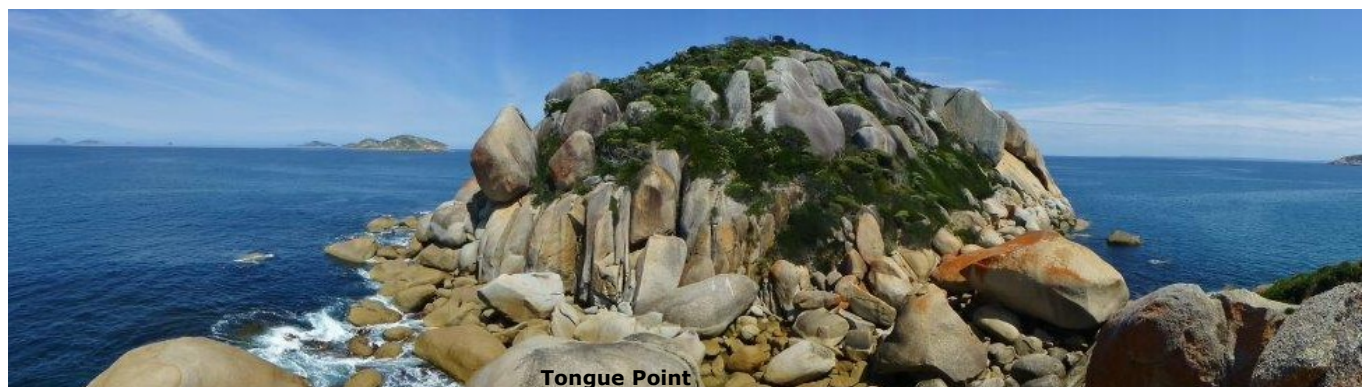
What a great weekend to explore The Prom. The weather was ideal; warm and sunny, but not too hot, and giving us magnificent views and lots of photo opportunities. The weekend started on Friday, with people making their way to The Prom and settling into the lodge and some exploring the beach and around Tidal River.

Saturday morning, we did the usual car shuffle then started our first walk from Darby Saddle to Darby River via Tongue Point and Fairy Cove. From the road at Darby Saddle the track climbed gently from the woodland of Messmate and Shining Peppermint through thickets of Scrub She-oak and Banksia. Following the top of the ridge and sheltered by the mountains, we walked through open forest with ferny ground cover. Lookouts along the way gave us fantastic views of Tongue Point, with Waratah Bay and Cape Liptrap in the distance.



Ken pointing to Tongue Point from Sparkes Lookout

The track just kept us in awe with great views and spring flowers. Then out to Tongue Point, and the amazing red colours of the rocks, the views either



Tongue Point

way, and watching the fishers off the rocks. We then backtracked along the top of the ridge of Tongue Point, with some of us going down to the beach and exploring Fairy Cove whilst others caught up. The path then climbed gently to the broad saddle and open scrub, with views across the Darby Swamp, and down to the Darby River and our cars.

After lunch back at the lodge, we set off to explore closer to Tidal River. Crossing the campground and walking a short way along the tannin coloured water, we crossed the footbridge and headed up Pillar Point for more breathtaking view across Norman Bay and beyond to the south, Mt Oberon, the islands and islets, and Leonard Bay and Squeaky Beach to the north. We then backtracked a short distance and took the Tidal Overlook track north-east through heathland and coastal scrub with great views of Tidal River. Heading towards Lilly Pilly Gully, we then wound our way back to Tidal River, and well-earned refreshments at the lodge.



Looking back towards Oberon from Pillar point

After a barbeque dinner and evening of frivolity, games, sing along and a 'serenade' by the 'singing sisters', who performed a string of Doris Day hits including Que Sera Sera we managed to find enough energy to tackle Mt Bishop on Sunday morning. The track started at Lilly Pilly Gully car park, but took 'the high road' winding up the side of Mt Bishop. It was a steep climb, but worth the effort with more magnificent views. Back tracking we followed the Lilly Pilly



Gully circuit walk with a steep climb down to the Gully. On the way, we were in awe at the force of nature with a large gully with trees and boulders washed away during recent floods a couple of years ago. In the gully, a boardwalk meandered through rainforest and magnificent tree ferns. We then followed the track along the nature walk, heathland, flowers and scrub back to the car park, and lunch and packing up back at the lodge.

With goodbyes said and hugs all around, those who still had some energy headed off to Millers Landing on the northern coast of the Prom at Corner Inlet.



**Charlies Angels or members working out which way to go!**



**Andrew, Anna, Piero & Rose taking a break at Millers Landing**

A short 2 hour flat walk, through heath land and nature trail to the mudflats and the most southerly mangrove trees in the world. (The mangroves are stunted because it is getting too cold for them this far south.) After exploring the mudflats, we headed back along a lower path and found an area which had been fenced off to allow regeneration – the regrowth was lush and amazing. More good-byes, and commitments to return next year.

Thank you so much Corinne for organizing.

## Traralgon to Toongabbie

### Bike ride

**DATE: Sunday 26th—October**

**LEADER: Jim Stranger**

**REPORT: Jim Stranger**

Although bike riding is not the usual activity of a walking group, a few soft back-sided souls met at Traralgon to give it a go. Unfortunately, poor Marian, who had travelled from Bairnsdale, succumbed to a lurgie of some description and declared herself unfit to ride. The rest of us set off in ideal conditions along the recently opened Gippsland Plains Rail Trail.

The trail follows the old Traralgon to Stratford rail line for around 80 kilometres through open farming land. Nevertheless the rail reserve supports significant stands of remnant vegetation with ancient Forest Red Gums and wildflowers such as Billy Buttons, Rice flowers and Milkmaids in bloom at the time of our ride.

We started on the trail in earnest by crossing the four recently refurbished bridges across the Latrobe River flood plain. The cost of these works alone was around \$800,000. The track surface of compacted gravel was of a high standard with few ruts to catch skinny bike tyres. Recent reports of damage to the track surface by vehicles near Toongabbie, horse riders near Heyfield and cattle near Tinamba is frustrating and disappointing both to riders and the volunteers who maintain the track.

The ride was most enjoyable and helped us appreciate how fortunate we are to have such an accessible asset on our back doorstep.

## The Old Port trail - Port Albert

**DATE: Wednesday 5th November**

**LEADER: Wil Streckfuss**

**REPORT: Wil Streckfuss**

Just 5 of us assembled at the car park in Sale for our walk at Port Albert. May be the weather forecast held people back, the forecast was for 'strong winds'.

Well, that prediction turned out correctly! The wind was gale force!

Fortunately the 'Old Port trail' is beautifully sheltered by coastal vegetation and we had a great time walking and admiring the many spring flowers.

Various types of orchids were in abundance, they were even growing on the track and we had to stop many times to admire and photograph these incredible beautiful blooms.

However, eating fish and chips at the jetty had to be abandoned because of the storm wind, so unfortunately we had to return to the car.



We still ate our fish and chips at the jetty, but inside the car!



Getting ready to hit the Trail



Looking for the "waterhole"?

On our way back we did a detour in search of the 'White Woman's Waterhole'. We were on the right track but missed it, but it was a lovely drive through beautiful countryside.

All in all we had a great day.

## Billy Goat Bend—Den of Nargun

**DATE:** Saturday 22nd November

**LEADER:** Ken Free

**REPORT:** Anna Janca

The Mitchell River National Park again showed us the rugged beauty and power of nature and the Mitchell River. After all 18 of us arrived at the meeting point, the convoy travelled to the Den of Nargun picnic area car park. There, after the usual quickies (toilet stop and cuppa) we left cars, car pooled, and drove on to Billy Goat Bend. It was a rough road through the forest and strewn with fallen trees along the side of the road – evidence of the strong winds and rough weather that aborted a club walk from Angusvale to Billy Goat Bend a few years ago.

This time, we had a warm sunny day to walk high above the Mitchell River valley, with the river glistening in the sunshine below. Scrambling up and down along the top of the steep valley, we followed the river along magnificent trees, into cool gullies, then up again, engulfed in the warm scent of trees in flower and the river below tempting us. We stopped for a long lunch at the join of the West Weir Track. Unfortunately, one of our group could not continue. So thank you to the 4 who walked to the cars quickly. While the rest of us had a long leisurely lunch, littering the track with snoozing bodies, and enjoying just stopping and taking in our environment, the rescue team bush bashed their way back in a 4 wheel drive along the West Weir Track and provided a ride out.

The remaining group continued on along the top of the gorge with the steep cliffs of the opposite bank in view. We then walked down into the cool gully of the Woolshed Creek, some rock hopping along the Creek bed to the cool waterhole into the Den. A magical and spiritual place. 'The Aboriginal people knew the area as the home of the Narguna, a fearsome creature believed to be made of stone but with human hands, arms and breast. The Narguna inhabited a cave beneath a small waterfall', which was trickling during our visit. After taking in the tranquillity of the Den, we tackled the steep climb to the end of the track and our cars. Thanks Ken for a great day and a great walk.

### Walk Leader's Footnote

*As Anna has reported, our walk didn't quite go as anticipated and I owe a debt of gratitude to all the participants who stuck together and were very patient and supportive. A special thanks to Philip, Andrew, Rose and Piero for walking ahead to bring a vehicle back and especially to Philip for volunteering to bring his 4WD down the West Weir Track so that our ailing walker could be transported out.*

Ken Free



Group shot taken near the Den of Nargun



# FEDERATION WALKS 2014

8th—9th September



Walk 16—Saturday Group at Horseshoe Bend Tunnel



Walk 3—Saturday Group at Mt Erica



Walk 16—Sunday Group at Thomson Station



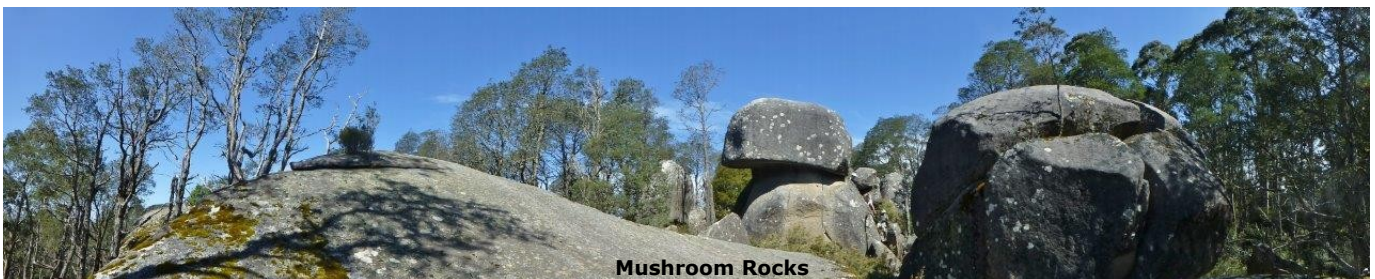
Walk 16—Saturday Group at Knotts Siding



Walk 16—Sunday Group at Horseshoe Bend Tunnel



Walk 16—Piero & Rose taking a break



Mushroom Rocks



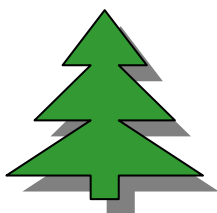
# WALK PREVIEWS

## Walk Gradings

Distance	Hills	Track
<b>S</b> – Short < 10 km	<b>1 – 3</b> Easy Suitable for beginners	<b>1 – 3</b> Graded open terrain Well formed tracks/paths
<b>M</b> – Medium 10-15 km	<b>4 – 7</b> Medium Reasonable fitness required	<b>4 – 7</b> Bush, minor scrub Some rock hopping, scrambling
<b>L</b> – Long 15-20 km	<b>8 – 10</b> Hard Strenuous. Fit walkers only	<b>8 – 10</b> Bush, thick scrub, Rock hopping, Scrambling, Creek crossings, Use of hands
<b>X</b> – Extra Long >20 km		

### Christmas Breakup

Commercial Hotel - Heyfield



### Bryce's Gorge

Alpine National Park

**DATE: Sat 13th–14th Dec**

**LEADER: Helmut Tracksdorf**

[helmut.tracksdorf@bigpond.com](mailto:helmut.tracksdorf@bigpond.com)

**or Mob: 0402 089 404**

**GRADE: (M-5-5)**

**DISTANCE: ~ 10km (over 2 days)**

**MEET: HEYFIELD INFO CENTRE. SAT: 9:00AM**

**DATE: Sunday 7th Dec.**

**GRADE: (S-1-1)** - *it doesn't get any easier than that!*

**COST: \$28 PER PERSON**

**CONTACT: Monica Scicluna Ph: 5144 6713**

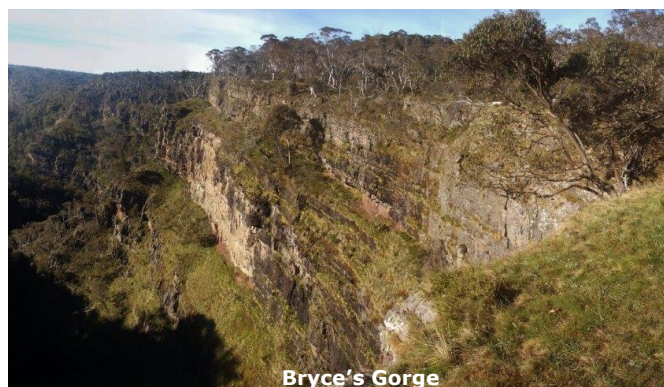
Or Email: [joe.monica@hotmail.com](mailto:joe.monica@hotmail.com).

**RSVP: Wednesday 3rd December**

Join us in Heyfield to celebrate another successful year of club activities.

Those of you who have attended previous club meals at the Commercial will be only too well aware of Brett's legendary hospitality. There will be lashings of festive fare followed by plum pud with drinks at bar prices. Come in your best Santa suit, as an Xmas fairy or just as yourself.

Contact Monica **ASAP** to reserve your seat.



Bryce's Gorge

This walk starts at the carpark on the Howitt Road, north of Arbuckle Junction (north of Licola). We will follow a well defined track across open snow plains to Guys Hut, built in 1940. The hut is an excellent example of bush architecture and well worth a visit. Continuing on through Black Sallee woodlands the track follows Conglomerate Creek arriving at Conglomerate Falls where we will setup our overnight camp and explore the area.

On Sunday we will head off on the main track and continue around the clifftops of Bryce Gorge to Pieman Falls. Then continue on and return to the carpark.

This is a relatively "easy" walk however some scrambling to reach the base of Conglomerate Falls will be required. This walk is a great introduction to the Alpine National Park.

Contact Helmut **ASAP** if you wish to attend.



## Maffra Town Walk

**DATE: Sunday 18th, January 2015**

**MEET:** Port of Maffra (Macalister River)

**TIME:** 10:00 AM (*NB: walk starts 1 hour later than originally planned*)

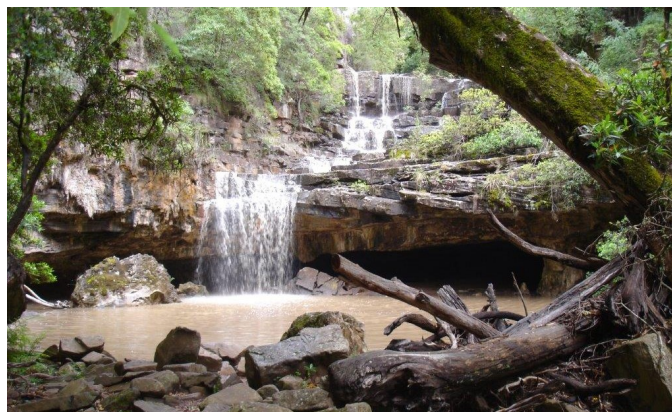
**GRADE: S-3-3** (EASY 5KM)

**LEADER: Andrew Stevenson** Mob:0417972831,  
Ph: 5147225 or [awstevenson@hotmail.com](mailto:awstevenson@hotmail.com)

Join Andrew for an easy stroll around Maffra before partaking of a BBQ picnic lunch on the banks of the Macalister River.

We will check out the main street, historic buildings and wetlands.

We will visit the den which is considered a special place for women of the Gurnai tribe and is found on Woolshed Creek .



From there we will follow the track to Deadcock Den downstream of Woolshed creek about 200m from where it joins the Mitchell River.

We will have lunch along the side of the Mitchell River.

## Morwell National Park

**DATE: Wednesday 21st January**

**GRADE:** Short (**S-3 -3**)

**LEADER: Wil Streckfuss** — 5144 2183 or 0407158300

**MEET:** MACCAS CARPARK TRARALGON — 9:30AM

We start our walk at the Kerry Road Picnic Area. With a bit of luck there will still be plenty of orchids in bloom. Especially the Tree Orchid.

We will proceed along the Foster's Gully Nature Walk at a leisurely tempo, because there is too much to see to hurry!

We will be back at the picnic area around lunchtime and after lunch we can do the Billy's Creek walk towards the old weir.

I particularly like these two walks because they show a different side of the Park. And how lucky we are to have this all on our doorstep.

## Den of Nargun

**DATE: Sunday 8th, February**

**VENUE:** Stratford

**TIME:** 9:00 AM

**GRADE:** S-3-3

**CONTACT:** Monica 5144 6713 or Email [joe.monica@hotmail.com](mailto:joe.monica@hotmail.com)

This walk is in the Mitchell River National Park, it is a loop walk about 5km, the track has some short steep sections, rough surfaces and steps.

## Lighthouse to Lighthouse walk

### Ben Boyd National Park—NSW

**DATE: 7th, 8th & 9th March 2015**

**GRADE:** (**X-5-7**)

**LEADER:** Piero Baglioni— 0408 446 299  
or [pbaglioni@bigpond.com](mailto:pbaglioni@bigpond.com)

**DISTANCE:** ~ 31km (over 2 days)

**MEET:** MACCAS CARPARK BAIRNSDALE ON SAT: 9:00AM

This walk takes in the southern section of Ben Boyd National park and hugs the spectacular coast line from the Ben Boyd Tower to the Green Cape lighthouse.

The views are stunning and ever-changing – from heathland to forest, tea tree groves to banksia woodlands, and sheltered coves to towering red-rock plateaus. Plus, with so many seafront vantage points, you can spot seals, seabirds and whales.

We will camp about half way at Salt water creek, giving those who do not wish to carry all their gear the opportunity to take day packs.

The campsite at Saltwater creek is very popular, especially during public holidays and needs to be booked with plenty of notice. This will be done by the walk leader at the end of November.

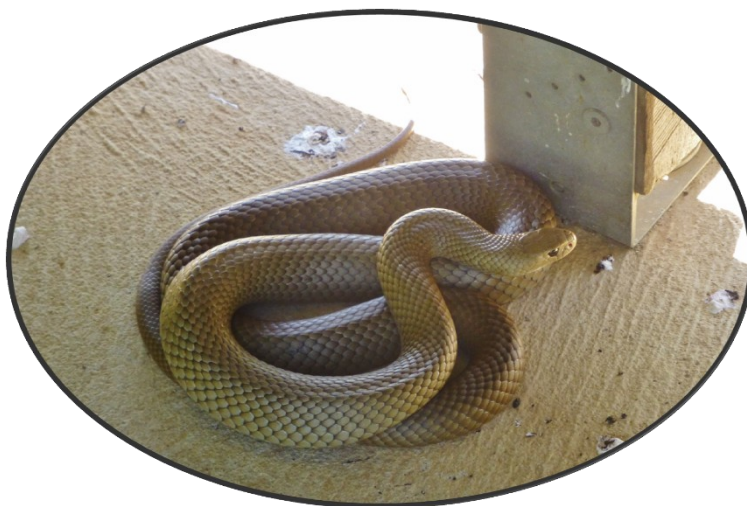
If you haven't booked by now you have probably missed out.

NB: Due to the advance booking required, Piero will need to Collect dues from interested members sooner rather than later. Stay tuned for more info. Please contact Piero **ASAP** if interested.

## WILD shot of the Month

We've all heard about the redback on the toilet seat, but how about the brown snake in the toilet!

Piero discovered this beauty when visiting Scott's Homestead recently. Needless to say he gave his usual ablutions a miss on this day!!!!





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISKS AND OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS PARTICIPATING IN  
BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB ACTIVITIES

To be completed by new and renewing members — see subscription form on the back

In voluntarily participating in any activities of the Ben Cruachan Walking Club, I am aware that my participation in these activities may expose me to risks that could lead to injury, illness or death or to loss or damage to my property. Those risks may include, but are not limited to, slippery and/or uneven rocks, rocks being dislodged, cliffs, exposure to weather and white out conditions, falling, hypothermia and hyperthermia.

To minimize these risks I have endeavored to ensure that-

- (1) These activities are within my capabilities.
- (2) I am carrying food, water and equipment appropriate for these activities.
- (3) I have advised the activity leader if I am taking any medication or have any physical or any other limitation that might affect my participation in the activity.

NAME:

TELEPHONE:

ADDRESS:

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

I will make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during any activity and accept the instructions of the leader of the activity.

BEN CRUACHAN WALKING CLUB INC, PO Box 70, MAFFRA VIC 3860

### Membership Application / Renewal



Name: .....

Postal Address: .....

Email Address: .....

Phone: .....

Membership Type (circle) Family or Single

Date: ...../...../2014

Month of Joining	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<b>Full Months until 30 April</b>	0	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
<b>Single Membership</b>	\$42	\$39	\$36	\$33	\$30	\$27	\$24	\$21	\$18	\$15	\$12	\$9
<b>Family Membership</b>	\$54	\$50	\$46	\$42	\$38	\$34	\$30	\$26	\$22	\$18	\$14	\$10

Please fill out the details on the reverse side of this form also—thanks.

**EFT:BSB 013713: A/C 278934713: Ben Cruachan Walking Club: Surname as identifier please, notify Treasurer by email**