



OLD SCOTCH BUSHWALKING CLUB

Tracknotes

December 2023

Number 106

OLD SCOTCH
BUSHWALKING CLUB

Visit the Bushwalking Club's page on: www.oscanet.com.au.
Click on 'Clubs and Societies', then 'Recreational Clubs'.

OSCA Merit Award to Richard Piesse

One of the founders of our club, Richard Piesse, has been awarded an Old Scotch Collegians' Association Merit Award, in recognition of his outstanding service to our club, and to the Old Scotch Tennis Club. Richard received his award at the 2023 OSCA President's Dinner, held at Scotch in the Cardinal Pavilion's Boykett Room on Wednesday 15 November. On hand to congratulate Richard on his award were his two daughters, Fran and Celia, as well as several of our club members. For more about Richard's award, please turn to page 3.



To all our members ...

**A very merry Christmas and
a happy and safe
new year of walking**

**from
President Neil Hart-Smith**



and the club committee

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Next issue: March 2024
Deadline: 4 March 2024



Ten questions – Jan Ward

How long have you been a member of the bushwalking club?

Since approximately 1996.

How did you find out about the club?

I found out about the club while wrapping Christmas gifts for Vision Australia at Chadstone with Micky Ashton in about 1996.

What are your links to Scotch College?

My son, Cameron, was at Scotch from 1983-95.

What has been your favourite walk within Australia?

The Overland Trail in Tasmania, which I walked in 2000. It was a 65km guided walk, from Cradle Valley to Lake St Clair. We carried only our clothes and water, and we stayed in very comfortable huts, eating tasty meals accompanied by Tasmanian wines.

Have you walked while overseas? If so, what has been your favourite walk?

I walked the Annapurna Circuit Trek in Nepal in 2001. It was the most amazing experience I have ever had: stunning scenery, extremely basic accommodation and charming locals. I actually met Celia Dynon during the trek and we have since had a lot of adventures!

I walked the Camino De Santiago in 2011 – the Spanish part, beginning in Pamplona and ending up in Santiago De Compostela – followed a few years later by part of the French section, including climbing in the Pyrenees, then into Spain again. We did use buses occasionally, as 700km sounded a long way!

What has been your favourite overseas holiday?

See above



What are your hobbies and interests other than bushwalking?

One of my hobbies is helping a friend sell junk (mostly) at Camberwell Market, to raise funds for her project in Nepal

What was your occupation?

I was a teacher.

What football team do you barrack for?

Geelong

What is your favourite local restaurant?

Augello's, in Whitehorse Road, opposite the Balwyn Cinema.



At the OSCA President's Dinner – Richard with his daughters Fran (left) and Celia



Richard receiving his OSCA Merit award from OSCA President, Stephen Webster



President's Tree-Stump



As I sat here looking out the window on a very rainy day, I was looking forward to summer, at the time just a few days away, to warmer weather and getting out on the track!

Much has happened since I wrote my last *Tracknotes* article. Congratulations to one of our 'Founding Fathers', Richard Piesse, who received a well-deserved Award of Merit at the recent OSCA President's Dinner. Over the years Richard has led many walks, particularly in the central goldfields area of Victoria, where he has passed on his extensive knowledge of the local flora and fauna. Congratulations, Richard – your award is well deserved.

We had many well attended and interesting walks in October and November culminating in our weekend away at Cobram on the Murray River. Special thanks must go to the weekend's organisers and leaders, Laurine Symington, Chris Moss and Norrie McLeod, and to the several koalas who waved to the walkers as they went by.

On the Saturday night the group dined at Sporties club in Barooga, where a trivia contest was organised and very ably led by Pam and Norrie McLeod. It was very impressive to see the well-oiled team at work. One of the intriguing trivia questions was: 'what ingredient is now added to concrete to increase its strength?'

Our final event for 2023, our Walk and Dine on Sunday 10 December, has been well organised by Bee Moignard and her team. The walk is through the Burnley Gardens with our Christmas dinner being held at Element Hotel, Richmond.

I would like to again give a very special thank you to all of our committee for their tireless organising and work. Also thanks to our team of walk leaders for their efforts – our club would not be the success that it is without them.

Last time I mentioned how spring tends to lift one's spirits. I feel even more uplifted by the approaching summer. I strongly encourage members to consider nominating for the committee or to volunteer as a walk leader during the coming year. Our AGM is just around the corner in March 2024. Please think about it.

Until next time, or when we meet 'out on the track'.

Neil Hart-Smith
President

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Richard's well deserved OSCA Merit Award

Richard Piesse, one of the 'Founding Fathers' of the Old Scotch Bushwalking Club in 1994, and arguably the club's 'tribal elder' received his OSCA Merit award principally for outstanding service to two OSCA clubs – our club and the Old Scotch Tennis Club.

OSCA says its Merit Awards are 'bestowed on those whose commitment to an OSCA club or society has been, in the view of its members, of an outstanding nature'. Richard's service to the bushwalking club and to the tennis club certainly come into that category.

While our club was being set up, Richard provided valuable information about suggested walks, based on his experience of walking in many parts of Victoria. And, although he has never been a member of the committee, he has served the club by leading many walks over the years and he continues to provide this leadership role. He takes a particular interest in the goldfields area of central Victoria, and he has led several walks in this area.

During walks, his knowledge about native plants along the way is invaluable. He notices native plants such as tiny, delicate orchids which other walkers have overlooked.

Richard is a much-loved member of the bushwalking club who has provided excellent service to the club and to his fellow members.

Richard is also a leading member of the Great Dividing Trail Association, and in 2013 he won Bushwalking Victoria's Distinguished Service Award (gold) for his role in advancing the development of recreational bushwalking in Victoria, and for adding value to bushwalking for the wider Victorian community.

For the Old Scotch Tennis Club, Richard was a good player who was well respected and selected as Captain of his team on a number of occasions. He played in several premiership teams over the years, as well as serving as Treasurer and Vice President, as the club grew to more than 100 players and 11 competition teams, making it the largest club in the Past Students' Tennis Association.

As well as his participation in Old Scotch Bushwalking Club and Old Scotch Tennis Club activities, Richard also competed for the Old Scotch Athletics Club, particularly in cross country events.

Our midweek walks

Bushland in Bundoora

IAN HANSEN

A small group of us, including three new members of the club, met at Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary near Latrobe University on Wednesday 20 September for a quiet stroll around the pathways, lakes, and swamps of the sanctuary. We saw many species of regenerated flora local to the Greater Melbourne area, and heard many and varied birds while walking around the sanctuary's main lake.



Ian leading the walk



Walk leader Ian Hansen briefs the walkers

The day was fine but overcast, and after completing our tour of the sanctuary we returned to our cars for a short drive to the Gresswell Forest Nature Conservation Reserve. Our convoy inadvertently separated on the short but complex route between the sanctuary and the reserve, so we stopped for lunch at the reserve's entrance while the detached part of the group rejoined us.

'Extinct' orchid rediscovered



A tiny native orchid, thought to be extinct, has been rediscovered.

The Royal Botanic Gardens and a team of scientists have released a scientific paper showing that the previously presumed extinct species called *Prasophyllum morganii*, commonly known as mignonette leek orchid (above), has in fact been hiding in plain sight.

Prasophyllum morganii has not been collected since 1933, and was considered extinct. However, in 2000, a similar-looking orchid was described from Kosciuszko NSW, and named *Prasophyllum retroflexum*, commonly known as the Kiandra leek orchid – but the team has now shown that it is in fact *Prasophyllum morganii*.

Co-author of the paper and Senior Research Scientist at Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, Dr Noushka Reiter, said: 'It was a pleasant surprise to learn that *Prasophyllum morganii* is still in existence; however, it is still endangered, and we need to protect it'.

'It was amazing to be able to compare flowers collected over 90 years ago, to ones we just collected ourselves,' she said.



Walking in the Nangak Tamboree Wildlife Sanctuary

After lunch we followed several of the well laid-out and signposted tracks through the reserve and saw several magnificent river red gums and two large kangaroos.

No coffee shops were available at either of the walks, but we enjoyed a few hours of easy, relaxed walking in a bushland environment that was fairly close to home.



Our midweek walks

Midweek in Murrumbeena

MICHELE McMICHAEL

One very warm, unusually sunny and bright morning, 10 seniors assembled in the East Malvern Station carpark ready for a walk that would include an abridged amble through the early history of the famous artistic Boyd family

After leaving the station area we wandered through the East Malvern Urban Forest, which was originally part of the single line Outer Circle Railway from Oakleigh to Fairfield. The urban forest was opened in 1985 as part of a national bushland revegetation project by the former City of Malvern (now Stonnington).

On 19 October, the noisiest creatures in the forest were the frogs creating a din in the large pond at the northern entrance to the forest.



Michele with the brushtail possum carving on the rustic 'Possum Seat'

Wahroonga Crescent, Murrumbeena, is where the potter and painter Merric Boyd (1888-1959) and his family occupied an overgrown semi-rural double block called 'Open Country'. Here Merric, and his wife, Doris, drew inspiration for their well-known work featuring local flora and fauna, generally in the earthy, muted colours of the Australian bush.

In the area close to Boyd Park we discovered some pretty, but understated, residences with personalised



Lunching in a quiet corner of Murrumbeena Park

decorative detailing, such as gargoyles in the form of Australian birds.

We took a morning tea break in the Springthorpe Gardens, relaxing on heritage garden furniture. The shade created by magnificent, elderly trees was very welcome. These gardens were once part of a large property owned by Dr John Springthorpe, a former physician, with an interest in neurological conditions. Merric Boyd suffered from epilepsy and Dr Springthorpe was a relative, as well as his physician.

Passing under the Pakenham and Cranbourne Skyrail, we headed south through residential streets with some interesting private gardens, leading to our sheltered lunch spot in one quiet corner of Murrumbeena Park. With empty lunchboxes we headed north back towards the start of our walk, stopping at a café on the way. The very obliging staff coped admirably with our many and varied coffee requests.



The carved ringtail possum appears to be staring at Ian and Peter

We then resumed our northerly walk through another section of Boyd Park, taking time to pause at the rustic 'Possum Seat' with a ringtail possum carved at one end, and a brushtail possum peering out at the other. Continuing towards the East Malvern Station, we passed through the open grassland and some more bushland in Boyd Park, then to the Urban Forest and East Malvern Station.

Good company, good weather, good exercise!

Our weekend walks

Boneo revisited

DAVID ASHTON

For the second year in a row the club headed down to the Mornington Peninsula for our October weekend walk. We had hoped to organise a walk through the wetlands within the Boneo Equestrian Centre, but as happened last year the track was too wet. So our plans changed and we organised a short foreshore walk followed by a delicious meal at the Arilla Restaurant, located in the heart of the Equestrian Centre.

Sunday 8 October was fine, but cool and cloudy, as 22 club members gathered at a foreshore car park near the end of Boneo Road. Eighteen people were walking and four others were driving to a designated point on the walk to do a short walk on a boardwalk to see the views and the swans on the Bay.



Ranger Brendan with his camera-on-a-pole

The walkers set off at 10.15am, and about one kilometre down the track, they met up with two rangers from the local Capel Sound Foreshore Committee of Management, Kristy and Brendan. What followed was a fascinating insight into the flora and fauna of the Capel Sound area.

Ranger Brendan had a pole about 3m in length, topped with a mini-camera and a small light. With this he was able to peer into nesting boxes along the foreshore maintained by the Capel Sound Foreshore Committee. The pictures could be transmitted to iPads supplied by the rangers and held by different walkers. In one box, we saw a crimson rosella sitting on three eggs, apparently unperturbed by the intrusion of the camera. We continued our leisurely



A briefing by Micky before the walk

stroll, with Brendan and Kristy identifying flowers, trees and grasses.

After only 2km, and owing to the fascinating commentary by Kristy and Brendan, it was time to turn back as we needed to arrive at the Arilla Restaurant by 1pm for our lunch appointment. After a group photo we bade a fond farewell to the two guides, and made our way back to the car park, having walked about 4km.

At the Equestrian Centre four more club members joined the group and we ate a delicious two-course lunch. Through the picture windows we could see riders participating in equestrian events. We took our time to enjoy the meal and the company before it was time to head back to the big smoke.

Thanks to Micky for all the work she put in organising the walk, engaging the rangers, and liaising a menu with the Arilla staff for our lunch. Perhaps we can return for a midweek walk in autumn when the track should have dried out.



Our weekend walks



The group poses with rangers Kristy and Brendan



Valma Angliss and Neil Hart-Smith



Carolyn Koger and Graham and Sue Stanley at Arilla



The chips were particularly delicious at Arilla



Our weekend walks

Our Castlemaine township and bushland walk

RICHARD PIESSE

On Sunday 10 September our walking party met behind Castlemaine's historic market building (completed in 1862), on a typical Central Victorian spring day – coolish weather with little sunshine, but fortunately no rain.

We walked along several streets in the centre of town, past many buildings dating back to the gold rush days of the 1850s and 1860s. We climbed up the steep hill in Lyttleton Street to the bushland along the eastern boundary of the town, known as Kalimna Park.



Folded rock strata visible in a road cutting

Most of the group detoured to the Burke and Wills monument – one of the town's excellent vantage points.

We walked approximately 3km through bushland sections of the Kalimna Tourist Road, and finally part of the Kalimna Park Circuit. Around the circuit approximately 35 species of wildflowers were in bloom – many fewer than the average for early September. The rainfall in recent months has been well below the average. Despite the lower than normal number of plants in flower, there were 12 different wattles in flower!

We walked past the Castlemaine Secondary College on our way to the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens, where we enjoyed a break for lunch.



The first part of the walk was through the streets of Castlemaine

After lunch we left the gardens, and all enjoyed a coffee break at Das Kaffeehaus (Castlemaine's famous Austrian coffee house), where Micky Ashton and John Moore joined us. Our journey back to the starting point followed the western bank of Barkers Creek, through the main Castlemaine Oval Reserve.



Castlemaine's Burke and Wills monument



The walkers in the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens

Our weekend walks

A memorable club weekend at Cobram

Thanks to **LAURINE SYMINGTON, CHRISTINE MOSS** and **PAM McLEOD** for their contributions to this article

Laurine: Six weeks before our scheduled weekend of walks at Cobram, Neil and I travelled to Cobram to decide on the most suitable walks for our weekend away on 18 and 19 November.

The accommodation was perfect, the weather was OK, but the water around the Murray River was a bit of a worry. We met a walker who had just crossed the bridge to Quinn's Island and asked how far she had walked. The reply was not far at all, as the paths were covered in water.

The receptionist at Sporties club in Barooga, where we were confirming our dinner date for Saturday evening, was a local of Tocumwal. We told her of our challenges and she suggested Tocumwal as an alternative, the town being higher than Cobram.

So the plan was: let's hope that the river will be down and we can enjoy Cobram – but Tocumwal was the backstop.

Thankfully, once the weekend of our walks arrived the river was down sufficiently, so the plan could be put fully into action.



The mighty Murray in full flow

Christine: On Saturday morning in Cobram, Joyce Isaac and I led the (shorter) Quinn Island walk. It began in the car park before crossing the bridge over Scott's Creek to the pretty island. Twelve walkers began, and I'm pleased to say all finished despite the heat.

This interesting stroll around bends in the Murray River is only 2km to 3km in length but there were many stops en route to look at the remains of old charcoal pits, Cobrooga

Beach and the sighting of nine koalas. The latter was thanks to Joyce's keen eye: she seemed to know just where these cute marsupials like to sleep!

Once off the island we walked along the levee banks and under the main Cobram/Barooga Bridge to Thompson's Beach, where we all enjoyed delicious ice creams from the busy cafe after lunch.

Our weekend walks

Cobram cont..

Pam: On the fine, warm Saturday morning, the 13 walkers who had chosen the longer walk set off to see the beautiful country along the banks of the Murray. This was the first that the walk leader, Norrie McLeod, had seen this area, having had to design the walk online.

It was a hot day, forecast to be in the high 20s, and we started our walk at Thompson's Beach, reputedly the largest inland beach on the Murray. It is shaded by large river red gums and has plenty of picnic and barbecue areas and a busy café.

Near the start of the walk we passed under the Old Bridge (built in 1902) which linked Cobram and Barooga in NSW. It was the first bridge over the Murray to be funded by the Victorian government.

The track followed the twists and turns of the river through state forest and native bushland, and we passed seven or eight lovely sandy beaches with towering gums and grassy picnic areas. Many campers were enjoying the peaceful surroundings, and houseboats were moored in the river.



Walking on Quinn's Island

We crossed to Quinn's Island and looped around the 40 hectare haven for waterbirds.

After passing Scott's Beach we continued on to the Horseshoe Bend beach, where we had lunch in the shade by the river. Along the way we saw koalas, kangaroos, many different birds, and fortunately no snakes!

We finished where the track merged at the east end of River Road. We had walked 10km, it was becoming hotter, and everyone was happy when Layton appeared right on cue to take the drivers back to pick up the cars.

To walk through the bush alongside the great Murray River and see its beaches and small lagoons was a wonderful experience.



Approaching Horseshoe Bend Beach



Pre-dinner drinks at the RACV Cobram café

Our weekend walks

Cobram cont..

Laurine: Dinner was at Sporties on Saturday night. The courtesy buses were certainly a bit classy, the dinner was most enjoyable, and Pam's after dinner quiz was a win in particular for the football crowd! The evening temperature was a cool and pleasant 10 degrees.

Sunday was predicted to be 34 degrees, so an early start was planned. The goal was to walk to Barooga Botanical Gardens, stop for morning tea, and then return to Cobram and the cars which were parked at Thompson's



Setting off from Thompson's Beach on Sunday morning

As we have come to expect, help was at hand with three cars arriving at the Botanic Gardens. For all the walkers who chose not to walk back to Thompson's Beach there were seats in cars for the return trip. Thank you to our saviours – Layton, Micky and the McMichaels – who were there when we needed them.

Some chose to walk back the way we had come, and 10 others decided to stroll the scenic route along the Murray River opposite the Cobram Regional Park. The Murray Valley Regional Park has fewer thistles and appears better organised than the Cobram Regional Park, but to walk back to the cars required us to cross the highway, then climb through two fences to find the tracks we had used on our way over.

Lunch at the popular Thompson's Beach was a delightful way to finish our weekend away. Some members drove off towards Melbourne while others headed back to the resort for a swim.

Thank you to the Mosses and Isaacs for their initial approach to the Cobram RACV Resort. It is a very classy venue.



Enjoying the shade in the Barooga Botanical Gardens rotunda

Beach. John Isaac picked the best path across the mudflats of the Murray Valley Regional Park (NSW) and found the spasmodic shade until we reached the path into Barooga.

There was little shade, and as the day warmed up, a tempting hotel loomed up on a corner, but we continued. The Barooga Botanic Gardens were unexpectedly beautiful, with manicured lawns, colourful roses, interesting sculptures and a shady rotunda funded and built by local volunteers.



Norrie received a little advice during the Sunday longer walk



This slope proved a little slippery during the longer walk on Sunday



Almost back for lunch

The club's 2024 program

The dates for our 2024 walks are final, but the location of nominated walks may need to be changed.

Public Hol.	2024	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Feature	Walk (Proposed)	Leader	
New Year	Jan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	New Year			
	Jan	8	9	10	11	12	13	14				
Australia Day	Jan	15	16	17	18	19	20	21				
	Jan	22	23	24	25	26	27	28				
	Jan	29	30	31	1	2	3	4				
	Feb	5	6	7	8	9	10	11				French Island
Valentine's Day	Feb	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Valentine's Day	Ashburton/Deepd	J Stewardson	
	Feb	19	20	21	22	23	24	25				
	Feb	26	27	28	29	1	2	3				
	Mar	4	5	6	7	8	9	10				
Labour Day	Mar	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Labour Day	Sale	D Ashton	
	Mar	18	19	20	21	22	23	24				
Easter	Mar	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	Easter	Gardiners Creek	J Walpole	
	Apr	1	2	3	4	5	6	7				Day Sav Ends
Anzac Day	Apr	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Anzac Day	Queenscliff Boneo	M&D Hooper M&D Ashton	
	Apr	15	16	17	18	19	20	21				
	Apr	22	23	24	25	26	27	28				
	Apr	29	30	1	2	3	4	5				
Mother's Day	May	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Mother's Day	***	R Pugsley	
	May	13	14	15	16	17	18	19				
	May	20	21	22	23	24	25	26				
	May	27	28	29	30	31	1	2				
King's B'day	Jun	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	King's B'day	***	R Piesse	
	Jun	10	11	12	13	14	15	16				
	Jun	17	18	19	20	21	22	23				
	Jun	24	25	26	27	28	29	30				
Father's Day	Jul	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Father's Day	***	J&J Isaac	
	Jul	8	9	10	11	12	13	14				
	Jul	15	16	17	18	19	20	21				
	Jul	22	23	24	25	26	27	28				
	Jul	29	30	31	1	2	3	4				
	Aug	5	6	7	8	9	10	11				
	Aug	12	13	14	15	16	17	18				
	Aug	19	20	21	22	23	24	25				
Aug	26	27	28	29	30	31	1					
Father's Day	Sep	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Father's Day	***	L Symington	
	Sep	9	10	11	12	13	14	15				
	Sep	16	17	18	19	20	21	22				
	Sep	23	24	25	26	27	28	29				
Day Save	Oct	30	1	2	3	4	5	6	Day Save	***		
	Oct	7	8	9	10	11	12	13				
	Oct	14	15	16	17	18	19	20				
	Oct	21	22	23	24	25	26	27				
Cup Day	Oct	28	29	30	31	1	2	3	Cup Day	***		
	Nov	4	5	6	7	8	9	10				
	Nov	11	12	13	14	15	16	17				Rememb Day
	Nov	18	19	20	21	22	23	24				
Christmas	Nov	25	26	27	28	29	30	1	Christmas	***		
	Dec	2	3	4	5	6	7	8				
	Dec	9	10	11	12	13	14	15				
	Dec	16	17	18	19	20	21	22				
Christmas	Dec	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	Christmas			
	Dec	30	31									

31 = School Holidays = Bushwalks

04-Dec-23