



OLD SCOTCH
BUSHWALKING CLUB

Old Scotch Bushwalking Club

Tracknotes

September 2021

Number 97

Visit the bushwalking club's page on the OSCAnet website: www.oscanet.com.au. Click on 'Clubs' at the top of the home page, and then on 'Bushwalking Club'.

Walking in winter on Phillip Island



Club members took full advantage of a beautiful, mild winter's day to enjoy an 8km walk on Phillip Island from Oswin Roberts Reserve in the middle of the island to Rhyll, on the north-eastern coast.

The walk, on Sunday 20 June, was very well led by Neil Hart-Smith, who, in his inimitable way, described topographical, historical and vegetation features the 29 walkers encountered along the way. This photo was taken at one of the highest points of the trek, overlooking Rhyll Inlet.

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Old Scotch Bushwalking Club*

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Ten questions – Anne Hewett

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

I'm a new member, and in COVID times I'm also happy to say I'm fully vaccinated!

How did you find out about the club?

A friend of mine and I were chatting to Beatrice Moignard following a presentation about the current NGV French Impressionist Exhibition. Bushwalking entered the conversation. As I was interested in joining a walking club, Beatrice welcomingly facilitated my introduction to become a member.

What are your links with Scotch College?

Very tenuous, so I hope this doesn't rate me poorly!

I have an old friend who boarded at Scotch for all of his school years, my niece performed in a production in the fabulous school theatre, I have friends whose brothers attended Scotch, and I'm sure I would have interacted with Scotch boys years ago at the Head of the River!

What is your dream walk within Australia?

I'd like to walk some of the trails on Cradle Mountain or Bruny Island.

What is your dream walk overseas?

I love the mountains, and until recently I skied. I would like to walk in the Italian Dolomites in autumn for the colours (or spring for the snow-capped mountains and flowers). There are spectacular walks, I understand, not all difficult despite the altitude. Otherwise, in New Zealand where the South Island scenery is similarly impressive.

What is your dream holiday in Australia or overseas?

My dream holiday is to visit the Canadian Rocky Mountains. Perhaps also to take the train trip, but I feel I might feel detached from the countryside, so it might be preferable to drive and stay wherever possible.

In Australia, I'd like to spend some more time in the outback.

What are your hobbies and interests, other than bushwalking?

My hobbies are painting, usually in oil, but I'm also learning watercolour. I sing in a choir, and am in two



Anne pictured at St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, near Nice, during a painting and walking holiday.

groups, speaking and trying to improve my Italian. I enjoy the theatre, opera and ballet and some concerts, and try to keep fit. I'm also in a biography reading group.

What was your occupation?

My original qualification was nursing (Royal Children's Hospital) later specialising in cardiothoracic care (Alfred Hospital) and later again I completed two business-related degrees (La Trobe and Monash Universities).

I have always worked in the health care profession, for many years at Epworth. My last permanent appointment was managing an aged care facility for St Vincent's Health.

What football team do you barrack for?

I've never been a great footy follower. I have, interestingly, over the years had a connection through friends or colleagues with the Hawthorn Football Club; so I would often say Hawthorn, just to have a team and to gauge if my friends might be happy or grumpy.

What is your favourite Melbourne restaurant?

I don't really have a favourite Melbourne restaurant. I like Italian food, and my favourite restaurant is in Cheshunt in the King Valley at Chrimont Cellar Door and Winery. Delicious food and beautiful views across the vineyards to the other side of the valley. Worth a visit.





President's Tree-Stump

I have just re-read my 'tree-stump' in the June issue of *Tracknotes*, written at a time when we were free to walk. Sadly at the time of writing we are continuing in a lockdown state, and many walks have had to be either postponed or put forward to a future time.

Many of our members continue to pound the pavement each day for their 5km walks. Some have met neighbours that they did not know before the current state.

Richard Piesse continues his recovery and is almost up to his own 5km each day. The good news for Andrew Gibson is that he is home from hospital and recovering steadily. Perhaps it's not quite such good news for Jane, as Andrew does the daily rounds of the living area and kitchen. I hear that Peter Williams and daughter Lisa are keeping fit by doing laps of Central Park in Malvern cheered on by Jill.

As we enter spring and at last can enjoy longer and warmer days, we have walks to look forward to, including a weekend away at Rawson and our end of year dinner at the Box Hill Golf Club.

I thank your committee who continue to soldier on with Zoom meetings efficiently organised by Sonia Gilderdale. I also thank the walks coordinators, and also Norrie McLeod, who has continually been updating and rescheduling our walks. I'm sure he will be very happy when we are free again.



Finally, I wish everyone well – keep fit, enjoy your daily short walks, and the company of your new-found neighbours.

Until next time, or when we meet out on the track – and at this time, any track will do!

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Christmas Dinner

with Optional Walk

12 December 2021
Box Hill Golf Club

Bookings open on 1 November for our Christmas dinner and optional walk on the afternoon and evening of Sunday 12 December 2021.

Watch for the notice with full details of this very popular annual event, previously known as 'Walk and Dine'. It will be a great way to wind up our rather COVID-interrupted year.

Our midweek walks

Third time lucky at Portarlington

JOYCE ISAAC

On Wednesday 26 May, 23 club members met at Docklands to board the catamaran ferry to Portarlington. Fortunately it was a calm, if chilly, morning, as the previous day the ferry was cancelled due to bad weather.

After the one and a quarter hour trip, we were met at the pier by a bus to transport us to the Portarlington Golf Club, which had a large, airy eating area. The club provided a delicious two-course lunch and a drink. There was also an interesting photographic exhibition in an adjoining room.

Most people decided to walk back to the town after lunch, where all had a wander around the town. The ferry returned us to Docklands by about 5pm.

We all enjoyed this relaxing, social occasion, which we fitted in by the skin of our teeth, avoiding lockdown by one day. It was third time lucky, as this was our third attempt to make this trip.



The 400-seat Portarlington ferry



The Portarlington excursion attracted 23 club members



Portarlington scene

Our midweek walks

The perils of urban bushwalking

IAN HANSEN

We met at South Yarra Railway Station on a lovely, sunny winter morning (Thursday 24 June) in preparation for a walk to St Kilda beach and, eventually, the cake shops of Acland Street. Twelve walkers participated, joined by Michele McMichael and Lachlan McLean at lunchtime.

Our fearless leader (me) struck out along Toorak Road, only to discover that he had miscounted the number of walkers – a fact that was only discovered when we chanced upon Sue and Lachie McLean, who were heading east while we were headed west.

A stroll to and through Fawkner Park, across a number of Albert Park ovals, and along the St Kilda Foreshore Reserve, almost saw us arrive at our lunch stop without further incident. However Wendy Le Get stumbled and fell within sight of the historic St Kilda Botanical Gardens, luckily without suffering any injuries.



Gathering outside the St Kilda Botanical Gardens

Fully revived after lunch, we attempted to leave the gardens only to discover that:-

- (a) I had again 'misplaced' Lachie by forgetting that he had returned to his car and setting off without him; and
- (b) by the time we had exited from the gardens we had lost Margaret Inglis. After several reported sightings at different corners of the gardens, she was finally located and rejoined the group.

Afternoon tea at a continental cake shop was greatly appreciated by everyone, and we then dispersed to find our way home by public transport.



The Rain Man sculpture in the St Kilda Botanical Gardens' ornamental lake



Walking through an elegant avenue of palms near the St Kilda foreshore

Our weekend walks

Enjoyable Phillip Island walk on a sunny day

NEIL HART-SMITH

On Sunday 20 June, after a somewhat prolonged car shuttle, 29 very keen walkers headed out on Phillip Island to walk from Oswin Roberts Reserve in the middle of the island to Rhyll on the north-eastern coast, a distance of about 8km. It was a beautiful, mild and clear sunny day, with great views from the clifftop over the mangroves and estuary.



Neil and Norrie converse as they walk

A note of warning to all those who rely on a car GPS for directions: David Ashton, who was coming from his house on the Mornington Peninsula, had entered his proposed destination into the GPS and driven off, only to arrive at the Stony Point ferry terminal, where the GPS told him to take the ferry to Cowes. Unfortunately, the GPS did not



Angus, Margaret, Tom and Neil out front

know that the ferry only took pedestrians, not cars. David looked to the heavens for inspiration and eventually arrived safely at Oswin Roberts Reserve.

As we walked, Neil pointed out the different vegetation and that in the 1960s several local businessmen had proposed to open up a pristine conservation area for an exclusive housing development. That area is now listed in the Ramsar Convention and thankfully the development did not go ahead.

We also passed an area of gum trees which had been planted in the 1960s by the boys from Scotch-at-Cowes. As we walked, we encountered a wallaby, spur-winged plovers, Cape Barren geese and the hectares of land donated by the late comedian John Clark to the Phillip Island Nature Trust for future generations to enjoy.

Along the way the walkers passed David and Alison Tolstrup's house. David is a past President of the club, and we took the time to catch up with both Alison and David.

As we entered the Rhyll headland we sighted a memorial to Lt Grant RN, who had visited the area in 1805. On the Rhyll foreshore we passed the marina and a very interesting carved cypress tree butt. After that it was a short stroll to the local post office and a well-earned coffee.

*Neil takes a swig (of water!)
from a wine bottle*



Our weekend walks



Lunch in the mild winter sunshine



'The Ferry Captain' at Rhyll, carved from a fallen cypress pine, and depicting the close relationship Rhyll has with the sea

On the lookout at Phillip Island



"The main attraction of course, is our children can't afford to live anywhere near us"

Our weekend walks

Out of lockdown and into Kinglake National Park

IAN MCMICHAEL

On a crisp July Sunday morning, 20 Old Scotch bushwalkers, plus an apology from Richard Piesse, gathered at the west end of Silver Creek Road, Hazeldene to explore part of the western section of the Kinglake National Park.

As this section west of the Whittlesea-Yea Road is a water catchment area for the Yan Yean Reservoir, it is mostly inaccessible to the public. Nevertheless, in the north-east corner there is a 'buffer area' adjoining the main catchment area. Within this buffer area Parks Victoria has provided four colour-coded day walks – the Silver Creek Walks. Our 9km walk on 11 July was a mixture of the 'red' and 'yellow' walks.



Ros and Tom Morris prepare for the walk

Plenty River, but the water quality was variable and mostly poor due to contamination from human activities.

In the 1880s water shortages in summer in the higher elevation suburbs of Kew, Camberwell and Surrey Hills resulted in a series of aqueducts being constructed to divert water from the Goulburn River to the Yan Yean



Eve Ryder and Celia Cornick lead the way

Reservoir via Jacks Creek, Cascade Falls and Toorourrong Reservoir. This system is still in operation today.

On 9 June, gale-force winds came from the south-east, knocking down trees from Gippsland to Central Victoria. Our walk area was not spared, resulting in us scrambling through two fallen trees and navigating some fallen branches. A few fallen trees had been cleared prior to our visit, so it could have been more challenging.

Our walk was along management vehicle tracks and through part of the Kinglake National Park that was



A burst of winter sunshine warmed the walkers

Our weekend walks



Lunch in the forest, fanned by a cool wintry breeze



extensively burnt during the Black Saturday fires in February 2009. Some good regrowth was observed, but there is still a long way to go in most areas. The ferocity of the fire was evidenced by the many dead trees.

About 25 per cent of our walk was through an area that had been recently burnt – since July 2020, when the walk was first scoped for an August 2020 walk. It was thought to have been the result of a ‘controlled burn’. Even though the appearance wasn’t as attractive as unburnt bush, after four coronavirus lockdowns simply being in the bush was a great feeling.

Just being out in the bush with great company and good weather made for an excellent day.

(Thanks to Ian and the McMichael family for their work in organising the walk – Editor)

Fallen trees along the track created obstacles



Turning the clock back 10 years

Mud, glorious mud

MARION CONNELL

Eleven walkers met in the car park next to Mt Dandenong Primary School at the appointed time on 22 September (2011), and prepared for what was to be an extremely challenging stroll on some of the most beautiful tracks in the Dandenong Ranges.



Sue Stanley, Richard Piesse, David Ashton and Graham Stanley pause during the Olinda Creek walk

We trudged through the vibrant Olinda Forest, next to Olinda Creek for much of the way, and there was a short detour to see the upper Olinda Falls. The water was running noisily. There was a large amount of bird life: kookaburras, cockatoos and probably lyrebirds. Mountain ash rose majestically and spring flowers including prickly mosses, love climber and green helmet orchid were in abundance.



September 2011

The distance was about 9km and the degree of difficulty apparently medium. However the tracks were thick with slushy mud, making it a challenge to stay upright. One of our members managed to skid into a horizontal position not once but twice. There was also an excessively steep climb which felt interminable.



The group at Olinda Falls

However the satisfaction in finishing was truly worth the struggle.

We rewarded our efforts with a welcome lunch at Ranges, a cafe in the Olinda township. It was great to chat together and share experiences.

Thank you, David, for organising such an enjoyable day!



'We've moved a few things around. Travel books are in the Fantasy section, Politics is in Sci-Fi, and Epidemiology is in Self-Help. Good luck.'



Ecosystem engineers of great capability

If you were asked to name an Australian native creature that has the capability to move 155 tonnes per hectare of litter and soil each year, what would you nominate? A wombat? A bandicoot? Perhaps an echidna as it forages for ants?

You might not suggest a lyrebird, but research by LaTrobe University PhD candidate Alex Maisey has highlighted the extraordinary changes lyrebirds make to the ground layer in forests.

The research shows that Superb Lyrebirds act as highly efficient ecosystem engineers, as they displace leaf litter and soil when foraging for food. The birds use their powerful claws to rake the forest floor, exposing bare earth and mixing and burying litter, while seeking



invertebrate prey such as worms, centipedes and spiders.

The study, undertaken in Victoria's Central Highlands, showed that on average, foraging by wild lyrebirds resulted in a staggering 155 tonnes per hectare of litter and soil displaced each year by each bird throughout these forests. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this is more than any other digging vertebrate, worldwide. This is equivalent to the load carried by five medium-sized 30 tonne dump trucks.



The megafires of 2019/20 resulted in approximately 40 per cent of the Superb Lyrebird's entire distribution being incinerated, according to a preliminary analysis by BirdLife Australia, changing the status of the lyrebird from 'common' to potentially 'threatened' from a single event, and this is deeply concerning. Without lyrebirds, eastern Australia's forests would be vastly different places.

Sorry, Aussie magpies – this bird outshines you in sheer beauty

The Australian magpie is a favourite bird – elegant, smart, and able to form friendships with people who treat them kindly. But, as *Australian Geographic* magazine reported, when it comes to beauty of plumage, our magpie has got nothing on the common green magpie, which is found throughout South-East Asia, including India, Thailand, Malaysia, Sumatra, and Borneo

Its jade-coloured plumage contrasts magnificently with its red beak and limbs, and a striking black band runs along its eye, giving the bird a bandit image. The magpie is noisy and highly social, and despite its beauty it's a voracious carnivore, seeking out insects, reptiles, small mammals and young birds and eggs as food.

Another fascinating feature of this bird is that it can change colours. When in captivity, green magpies have been seen to turn distinctly turquoise, possibly due to higher exposure to sunlight because of the lack of forest cover, or due to a lack of pigments that naturally occur in their food and affect their plumage.



The beauty of the green magpie is highly unlikely to affect our devotion to the black and white Aussie version, especially that of the Collingwood supporters in our ranks, such as Ian and Robyn Hansen.

The club's 2021 program

The dates for our 2021 walks are final, but the location of nominated walks may need to be changed.

Public Hol.	2021	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Feature	Walk (Proposed)	Leader
New Year						1	2	3	New Year		
	Jan	4	5	6	7	8	9	10			
	Jan	11	12	13	14	15	16	17		Camberwell	C Moss
	Jan	18	19	20	21	22	23	24			
Australia Day	Jan	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
	Feb	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		Hastings	T Morris
	Feb	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Valentine's Day		
	Feb	15	16	17	18	19	20	21			
	Feb	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
	Mar	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		Solomon's Ford	R Piesse
Labour Day	Mar	8	9	10	11	12	13	14			
	Mar	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		Mildura	J Moore
	Mar	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
Easter	Mar	29	30	31	1	2	3	4	Easter, Day save	Mud Island	N Foote
	Apr	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		Anakie Gorge	N&P McLeod
	Apr	12	13	14	15	16	17	18			
	Apr	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		Sandringham	R Kemp
Anzac Day	Apr	26	27	28	29	30	1	2	Anzac Day		
	May	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Mother's Day		
	May	10	11	12	13	14	15	16		You Yangs	L Symington
	May	17	18	19	20	21	22	23			
	May	24	25	26	27	28	29	30		Portarlington	J Isaac
	Jun	31	1	2	3	4	5	6			
Queen's B'day	Jun	7	8	9	10	11	12	13			
	Jun	14	15	16	17	18	19	20		Philip Island	N Hart-Smith
	Jun	21	22	23	24	25	26	27		St Kilda	I Hansen
	Jun	28	29	30	1	2	3	4			
	Jul	5	6	7	8	9	10	11		Kinglake	I McMichael
	Jul	12	13	14	15	16	17	18			
	Jul	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		× × ×	Stewardson
	Jul	26	27	28	29	30	31	1			
	Aug	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		× × ×	N McLeod
	Aug	9	10	11	12	13	14	15			
	Aug	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		× × ×	S Gilderdale
	Aug	23	24	25	26	27	28	29			
	Aug	30	31	1	2	3	4	5	Father's Day		
	Sep	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		× × ×	Ward & Dynon
	Sep	13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
	Sep	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	AFL	Kew	C Dynon
	Sep	27	28	29	30	1	2	3	Day save start		
	Oct	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		Boneo Park	M Ashton
	Oct	11	12	13	14	15	16	17			
	Oct	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		Brunswick	C Moss
	Oct	25	26	27	28	29	30	31			
Cup Day	Nov	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		Rawson	I McMichael
	Nov	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Rememb Day		
	Nov	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		Abbotsford	Stewardson
	Nov	22	23	24	25	26	27	28			
	Nov	29	30	1	2	3	4	5			
	Dec	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		Box Hill Golf	R Hoelter
	Dec	13	14	15	16	17	18	19			
	Dec	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	Christmas		
Christmas	Dec	27	28	29	30	31					

31 = School Holidays = Bushwalks

01-Sep-21