



GRAMPIANS BUSHWALKING CLUB

A member of:



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NEWSLETTER



Grampians
Bushwalking
Club Inc.
No. A0031111E
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(Top): View across towards Mt Buangor from the summit of Mt Gorrin. Grampians bushwalkers on Mt Gorrin (middle) and at the Christobel Ruin (bottom).

Walk Reports

SATURDAY 13 JANUARY CLEMATIS FALLS & HEATHERLIE QUARRY

Walkers – 7: Graeme (leader & report contributor), Alex, Anna, Greg, Jenny C, Julie & Maureen
Distance: 4.8km Rating: Easy

What can we learn in the New Year? Always write the time of departing from the various points or starting the walk (Lorraine misunderstood the departure time from Ararat and missed the walk altogether). Also, always check the condition of the walking track you are going to lead others along. Oops, sorry, I forgot. Chatauqua Peak track was officially closed from the junction to Clematis Falls, as we found out when we arrived. So, we continued on to the falls – and it was dry too. Our first U-turn for the year. Then the rain started on the way back to the cars so on came the jackets.

On returning to the cars we drove to Heatherlie Quarry. This alternative was two-fold - check the condition of the track for maintenance and enjoy the wildflowers along the track to the picnic area at the Quarry. There are a few fallen trees that need cleaning up and some minor maintenance required on the track.

The track was easy walking – whoever cleared the track last time did a fantastic job! Even the sandy parts were declared great by the one who enjoys walking in sand. Greg and Alex were quick to pick out flowers alongside the track and the cameras were out again.

Picnic table and seating were available for us for our evening meal. Afterwards we strolled down the 4WD track in sunshine to our cars for the drive home via Halls Gap.

*Spotted Hyacinth
Orchid*

Fan Flower

*Every walk
leader's worst
nightmare ... an
unexpected
closed-off track
requiring a quick
change of
walking plans!*

*Walkers at the
Heatherlie
Quarry huts*

SUNDAY 21 JANUARY MT STURGEON

Walk cancelled due to extreme heat

SATURDAY 3 FEBRUARY BEAUFORT LAKE & FOREST

Walkers – 9: Alex (leader & report contributor), Brett, Graeme, Greg, Harry, Joy, Maureen and visitors Fiona and Rossanne
Distance: 11.4km Rating: Easy

We started by meeting the Stawell group at Ararat Library and waited for a new walker, but she did not show up.

With Graeme, Rossanne, Joy, Maureen and Greg in the car from Stawell and Harry and I in my car, we travelled to Beaufort and met up with Brett from Bendigo and Fiona; a walker from the Ballarat Bushwalking Club at the northern end of Beaufort Lake.

We checked out some exercise equipment along the way around the lake – the fellows did chin-ups - then we all headed up Mopoke Gully Lane into the forest. We came across a wonderful sample of yellow box trees, some still flowering, and small unusual bushes with seed capsules that looked like cones. A prospector and his guard dog were camped in the bush, looking for that elusive yellow metal, gold.

Lunch on the mullock heap of a disused mine made us look at all the quartz lumps strewn about, wondering which one has the gold? We also found an interesting ground cover plant that had us thinking - Brett will usually come up with its name.

We crossed a bitumen road; then into Bree Track which was a bit uphill before rejoining Mopoke Gully Track and following it back to the lake. I had chosen a different way to my recognisance walk that turned out to be quite hilly (sorry Joy), though to her credit, Joy managed it remarkably well.

The walkway across the lake was surprisingly good for bird watchers, as on the island next to us there were ibis, cormorants, herons and plovers all keeping an eye out for us, but we managed to get some pictures.

We had a group photo taken for us near the lake by a man walking his dog, then the nine walkers all headed for an ice-cream at the local milk bar.

Walk Reports

P.S. Comment from Joy.

A bit uphill is quite an understatement as there were a few hills and I think Alex was trying to outdo Graeme's effort on our beach walk last year!

*Mural of
local features
by Beaufort
Secondary
College
students*

*Beaufort Lake
from the
southern end*

*Mt Buangor &
Mt Cole from
Mopoke Gully
Lane*

*Walkers at
Beaufort Lake*

**SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY
HALLS GAP CIRCUIT**

An unofficial walk was conducted with only 3 walkers in attendance.

**SATURDAY 3 MARCH
MT GORRIN**

Walkers - 8: Julie (leader), Brett (report contributor), Alex, Graeme, Marg and visitors Andrea, Fiona & Jan
Distance: 9.5km Rating: Medium / Hard

After converging at Ararat Library from a variety of locations (most notably a flight from Tasmania and early morning drive from Melbourne for Jan!) we headed out to Mt Langi Ghiran State Park and met up with Fiona from Ballarat at the start of our walk. Rather than the familiar and well-trodden path up to the top of Mt Langi Ghiran we were instead about to tackle its neighbour closer to the Western Highway - Mt Gorrin - that forms the "head" of the "pregnant lady" when the profile of the two mountains is viewed from Ararat and other locations to the west.

It was already a mild sunny morning and we soon worked up a sweat as we headed up the hillside track to the saddle before continuing along the ridgeline to Hidden Lagoon. One thing that we would have preferred that it had stayed hidden was a small snake that slithered across the path in front of the leading walkers, but it didn't cause us any hassles and we soon found that the main thing that was hidden was the water, as the long hot dry summer had rendered Hidden Lagoon bone-dry.

Retracing our steps back to the saddle and track junction, we then embarked on the adventurous part of our hike by leaving the track and heading bush up through a beautiful granite boulder-lined gully that led us close to the top of Mt Gorrin. There were large patches of disturbed ground that had been caused by feral pigs and also evidence that wild goats and deer had frequented the area, but we didn't come across any of them in person as we made our way through the scrub.

We came across a large open rock ledge that had terrific views across the valley to Mt Langi Ghiran and also over towards Ararat and Green Hill Lake and initially thought that it would make a good lunch spot, but a bit more exploring along the ridgeline led us to a cluster of boulders that was the true summit of Mt Gorrin and it featured wonderful views in all directions; especially east and north-east towards Mt Buangor and Mt Cole.

Our lunch at the summit featured two notable wildlife experiences; with the first one being a curious skink that popped its head out of a hollow log and kept a very close eye on me while I was eating my sandwich. I could hear quite a bit of excited clamour coming from some of the other walkers about 20 metres away and went over to find that they had a big furry koala parked in the treetop right in front of where they were sitting, so the cameras and mobile phones all got a good workout capturing the animals and the wonderful views.

The law of "what goes up must come down" applies to bushwalking just as much as it applies to gravity and after lunch we had the sometimes tricky task of negotiating our way back down the south side of Mt Gorrin through the boulders and scrub until we eventually hit the access road near the art shelter carpark and then took a welcome breather in the shade while the drivers fetched the cars and came back to collect us. Ice-creams and cool drinks at the Ararat Cinema were the order of the day after another fabulous walk to a spot not far from home that very few people would ever get to see. A big thank-you to Julie for taking us up there to enjoy the excellent views and beautiful bushland.

Walk Reports

*The dry
Hidden Lagoon*

It was at this stage that the track became overgrown and our little team started with Graham Parkes on the brush cutter doing the initial clearing, Alex and Jenny C followed along with the loppers further trimming the vegetation, then came Graeme raking to clear the track and Anna our “quality controller” doing a final sweep of the track.

There were quite a few walkers on the track and we got a lot of very positive comments and thanks for our work. Our lunch break was had on the side of the track as we approached Mt Victory Road and after lunch we continued on across the road and up the track. Thankfully the track on the other side of the road was not quite as overgrown so work progressed quickly and we were able to finish mid-afternoon.

*Mt Langi
Ghiran across
from
Mt Gorrin*

Although the day was really warming up, Graham took us up to Chautauqua Peak and with permission from Kyle at Parks Victoria we were allowed to inspect the improvements to walking track on the other side that is being developed as part of the Grampians Peaks Trail. A lot of work has been put into the track with quite a few improvements and it is all looking very good. Our day ended with a much-needed and welcomed ice-cream before saying our goodbyes and travelling home. Thank you to those who gave up a day of their long weekend to help out - a good days work was accomplished.

*The curious
skink keeping a
close eye on my
lunch!*

*Koala sightings are
pretty rare on
our bushwalks
nowadays*

**SATURDAY 10 MARCH
TRACK MAINTENANCE - BULLACES GLEN**

On what was promising to be a very warm day, Graeme and Jenny C met Alex, Anna and Graham Parkes at the Botanical Gardens carpark, near the tennis courts in Halls Gap. After our usual safety talk, armed with loppers, rakes and a brush cutter we made our way up through the Botanical Gardens to the track to Bullaces Glen.

**SUNDAY 18 MARCH
TUCKERS HILL**

Walk cancelled

Walk Reports**SATURDAY 24 MARCH
CHRISTOBEL RUIN**

Walkers - 7: Brett (leader & report contributor), Alex, Anna, Graeme, Joy, Marg & Yvonne
Distance: 9km Rating: Easy

When I first looked at putting this walk on the program, I kept in mind that my previous walk to the Christobel Ruin had taken place in springtime and there were a couple of spots along the way where water had been flowing right across the track, making for tricky creek crossings over narrow concourses. I therefore settled for a timeslot in mid-autumn – figuring that this would be when the valley would be at its driest – and this proved to be the case right up until the very morning of the walk when the March rainfall total of zero got given a big size 10 boot up the backside by Mother Nature with a band of heavy showers and crackling thunderstorms rolling in from the south-west.

Based on the miserable weather conditions that greeted me when I arrived in Stawell around 9am, I could have probably abandoned the walk without too many second thoughts; however we decided to still meet out at Halls Gap at 10am and make a decision on the walk from there. It was still grey and showery when we got to Halls Gap, but with the weather radar giving cause for optimism that the rain and thunderstorms were clearing from the west, we decided to drive down south to the start of the walk and see what conditions were like before making a final call on whether to do the walk or just head back to the bakery or ice-cream shop for morning tea instead.

We were pleasantly surprised to find that the storms had indeed headed east and our walk along Lynchs Track into the Christobel Valley took place in mild pleasant conditions with the sun even managing to pierce the steadily-lifting cloud cover every now and then. There were plenty of puddles pooling on the track after the early morning rain – a novel experience after all of the other dry dusty walks that we've done over summer – but it was easy enough to dodge around them and the two creek crossings were still essentially dry and easy enough to contend with after all.

After a tick over 4km of walking through open forest that was freshly-scented from the recent rain, we arrived in the scenic Christobel Valley and our lunchtime destination of the interesting Christobel Ruin. The half-built structure was intended to be the hall of a school camp and had been designed in the shape of the Grampians range with a sharply-angled roof and long steel beams on the west side in the late-1990s. However when the owners applied to the local council to extend their building permit it got knocked back on the basis that the only access roads were seasonal 4WD tracks through the adjacent national park and eventually they sold the

property to the government and it was later added to the national park with the "Christobel Ruin" left unfinished. Parks Victoria is planning to demolish the ruin later in the year and return the area to natural habitat, so it may have been our last opportunity to have a look at it on a club walk.

Following our lunch break a number of our group did an additional short walk to near the top of the ridge at the back of the ruin for a terrific view along the valley and across to the Serra Range before we all retraced our steps along Lynchs Track as the sun properly broke through the cloud cover and the heat and humidity quickly jumped up a notch or two. We were having more success negotiating the puddle-strewn track than a pair of 4WD enthusiasts that we encountered along the way as the less-experienced driver of the two had got himself bogged in a large deep mud puddle and had to be towed out by his more experienced counterpart. As we passed by them and headed along the track we saw the novice driver throw a U-turn and have a second crack at driving through the mud puddle, only to get himself stuck even deeper in the mire. After we had disappeared well around the bend we heard a loud metallic clang that sounded rather like the towing chain cable snapping, so maybe they're both still stuck out there!

By the time that we returned to the cars we had worked up a bit of a sweat in the humid conditions, so a stop-off at the ice-cream shop back in Halls Gap was very welcome indeed before we all made our way back home again. For a walk that was very nearly called off before it had even started when the thunder was booming and lightning was zapping away, we were all very pleased that we were able to do it in its entirety while staying dry from above and below (though there was just enough mud underfoot for Joy to nicely christen her brand new comfy hiking boots!)

*At the
Christobel Ruin*

*View west
across
Christobel
Valley to the
Serra Range*

PHIL'S TRAVELS - SCHLIERSEE, GERMANY*by Phil Brotchie*

When Lynne and I were in Bali in August 2015, we won a week's free holiday in the Karma Bavaria (Aspen Club) Resort, Schliersee, Germany, which we had to take within 2 years. We began to take advantage of that opportunity when we checked into the resort on 21 August 2016, having just arrived in Schliersee at 2.56pm on the 2.05pm train from Munich.

Schliersee refers to both a lake and its adjoining town. The lake is quite large - 7km around. The town, about 50km south of Munich, is 785m above sea level, and the lake 777m. Surrounding them are wooded foothills and rock-capped mountains that culminate in this area in the Hinteres Sonnwendisch (1986m). Elsewhere the Bavarian Alps reach their highest point in the Zugspitze (2963m), which is also the highest point in Germany.

The Bavarian Alps dominate the landscape throughout this region. We saw range upon range of jagged bare-rock mountains rising from the plains as we took trains or were driven around southeast Germany. We took trips to Mad Ludwig's Castle and Salzburg on 25 and 26 August respectively, but on the other days spent our time exploring the Schliersee area itself.

On 22 August, after a morning spent sorting out our suitcases and catching up on washing, Lynne and I walked from the resort down to the lake and around the edge of it to Seestrasse, where there is a bank, at which we topped up our Euro supply. This was a return walk of about 4km, in the course of which, on the way back, we stopped at the Clarivari, a restaurant that overlooks the lake, and had coffee and cake, a very civilised interlude in a nice walking experience.

On 23 August we took the 8.59am bus south to Spitzingsee (1090m), arriving there at 9.24am. Spitzingsee is a snow resort (in the season) beside the lake of the same name (1064m), and we walked the 2.8km around it, a flat but pleasant hike in excellent weather and gorgeous mountain surrounds (Stolzenberg [1609m], Rotwand [1884m], Jagerkamp [1746m]). From Spitzingsee you can take a chairlift to Stumpfling (1506m) and/or a cable car to Raukopf (1689m), though we did neither of these, but stuck to our plan, which was to return to Schliersee and take the gondola to the Schlierbergalm, a restaurant high on the slopes of the Schlierberg (1256m), where, from about 12.30pm, we were enjoying a sumptuous lunch, washed down with a stein of very acceptable local beer, while absorbing a fabulous view of Schliersee town and lake and encircling high mountains like the Brecherspitz (1683m). You can take small trolleys back down on a zig-zagging metal track, but we gave that a miss, while noting that it was extremely popular with younger folk.

On 24 August, while Lynne relaxed at the resort, I walked the flat 7km around Schliersee lake plus the 2.6km return walk getting to and from it, so a round trip of 9.6km, which I completed in 1 hour 48 minutes at 5 ¼ kph – nothing startling, but encouraging in terms of my ongoing problems with stamina. That night we dined wonderfully at the Rathaus, which (despite the name), came highly recommended by people at Karma, and it more than lived up to that reputation. The restaurant was a 2 to 3km return walk north from the resort in rural surrounds and balmy weather which we both enjoyed.

As noted, we were away from Schliersee on 25 and 26 August, but on 27 August I walked to Oberleiten, some 6 to 7 km return from the resort, a high point to the east of the lake, again overlooking Schliersee and surrounding mountains. There is a large house and an outdoor dining setting at the top, but the house and grounds are not open to the public, although I sat in the dining area and took in the view without incident. The signage to Oberleiten was poor, and I spent considerable time track-finding, including bailing up other walkers and traversing the odd backyard. Rather pointlessly at this stage, I worked out the best route up while on the way back! Other walkers were hiking up to the Schlierbergalm, and although they were within half a km of Oberleiten, they had no idea where it was!

That night Lynne and I dined handsomely at the Clarivari restaurant (where we had had coffee and cake before), washing our food down with some excellent pinot grigio. The 2.6km return stroll went felicitously.

We left Schliersee on 28 August on the 8.59am train bound for Munich, which we reached by 10.00am, then boarded the Airport Bus at 10.12pm heading to Munich Airport, where we caught an Air Singapore flight at 1.25pm, and subsequently another in Singapore which arrived in Melbourne at 8.10pm on 29 August after what had been for Lynne and I a very memorable and happy overseas trip.

*Schliersee
lake and
township*

Spitzensee

*Gondola ride to
Schlierbergalm
restaurant*

Grampians Bushwalking Club walks for 2018

Please contact the walk leader no later than two days before the walk date for starting times, meeting points and more information on the walk if you are interested in participating.

Tuesday 27 March	GENERAL MEETING - SES Hall, Sloane St, Stawell, 7:30pm	ALL WELCOME	Greg Dryburgh Secretary	5358 2777
Saturday 14 April	BRIGGS BLUFF A chance to check out the new walking track up to a fabulous Northern Grampians peak	Medium / Hard	Julie Andrew	0407 561135
Sunday 22 April	MT BOLANGUM A walk for the Wimmera BWC but Grampians members are most welcome to come along too	Medium	Brett Allender	0438 852773 or bretta5@bigpond.com
Tuesday 24 April	GENERAL MEETING - SES Hall, Sloane St, Stawell, 7:30pm	ALL WELCOME	Greg Dryburgh Secretary	5358 2777
Sunday 29 April	WARRENMANG A walk on hilly private property in the Moonambel area	Medium / Hard	Graeme Edwards	5358 4719
Mon - Sat 7 - 12 May	BRIGHT A base camp with walks in the beautiful High Country of north-east Victoria	Various	Alex Orszaczki	5352 2953
Sunday 27 May	MT STURGEON Take Two at climbing this great southern peak after hot weather saw the first walk cancelled	Medium / Hard	Marg Farrar	5352 2127
Tuesday 29 May	GENERAL MEETING - SES Hall, Sloane St, Stawell, 7:30pm	ALL WELCOME	Greg Dryburgh Secretary	5358 2777
Saturday 2 June	LAKE FYANS A chance to check out the newly upgraded walking track around the lake	Easy	Alex Orszaczki	5352 2953
Sunday 17 June	ONE TREE HILL, ARARAT In search of the missing ruins of Father Leyden's hut	Medium	Marg Farrar	5352 2127
Tuesday 26 June	GENERAL MEETING - SES Hall, Sloane St, Stawell, 7:30pm	ALL WELCOME	Greg Dryburgh Secretary	5358 2777
Saturday 30 June	CHIMNEY POTS A spectacular Grampians walk that we haven't done for many years now	Medium	Graeme Edwards	5358 4719

VALE JUDY SPITTLE

The year started on a sad note as we learnt that Judy passed away on 3 January 2018.

Judy joined the club in 2001 and was a regular walker up until 2008. She also led a couple of walks and joined us in March 2007 on our two week journey walking in Tasmania.

Judy was well known for her sudden take-off as soon as the end of a walk loomed into view.

Joy Harrington



NOTES . . .

WALK RATINGS . . .

FAMILY - generally suitable for your children and older persons.

EASY - generally suitable for family groups, walking on tracks.

MEDIUM - longer walks, some climbing involved, walking may not always be on tracks.

HARD - as for MEDIUM but longer distances, more climbing, creek crossings, etc.

OVERNIGHT - as for MEDIUM and HARD but with overnight packs to be carried unless otherwise stated. (2 day walks are overnight walks.)

All walks are free to members of the Grampians Bushwalking Club, unless otherwise stated. Visitors are welcome. Visitors are encouraged to join the club if they intend to walk more than three times.

NOTE: If you wish to know more or participate in an activity, please phone the leader to ask and notify him/her no later than two days prior to the activity as detail; may change from what is initially published in the newsletter.

If less than 4 members attend an activity, then the activity will not be an official club activity. In this case no public liability insurance cover applies.

It is the responsibility of all walkers to ensure that they advise the walk leader of any medical conditions/ allergies and carry any medications that they may require.

If the day is a **DAY OF TOTAL FIRE BAN** (in the designated walking area) - there will not be a walk, but check with the leader, as he/she may change the walk location or day.

If you want to know more about the Grampians Bushwalking Club or want to hear what's happening with other clubs, come along to the **General Meeting on the last Tuesday of each month (unless otherwise stated)**

INTERESTED IN BUSHWALKING?

If you know of someone who is interested in bushwalking, maybe you can talk them into joining us on a walk and consider becoming a member of the **Grampians Bushwalking Club**. Our walks are mostly easy going and a great form of exercise and social interaction with a friendly group of fellow walkers. The scenery is always interesting and there is plenty of knowledge among the group on the various wildflowers, birds, geological and historical features that are spotted along the way.

Sunday walks are held close to home in the Grampians or Stawell / Ararat area, but the Saturday walks often take us further afield to places like Mt Arapiles, the Golden Triangle, Bendigo, Ballarat and the Western District. Weekend base camps have been held in recent years at Hattah, Wyperfeld, Lower Glenelg NP and Heathcote, while biennial club trips have been made to the Flinders Ranges, Tasmania, Wilsons Promontory, the Sunshine Coast, Sydney and most recently to Fleurieu Peninsula.

Do you have any suggestions or items that you would like included in this newsletter? Contact Brett on 0438 852773 or email your suggestions to bretta5@bigpond.com



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