



Federation of Victorian
Walking Clubs Inc

A2548 ABN 88 344 633 037

VicWalk News

October 2006

No. 165

\$1.20

WALKING & TALKING WITH YOUR PRESIDENT

DRAFT CONSTITUTION

Although the deadline for your comments doesn't close until 2/10/06, we have received comments from clubs that indicate general support for the changes proposed in the draft of the new constitution.

Several clubs have raised issues, one in particular being access to club member registers by your peak body. Most concerns expressed relate to protection of privacy. This and other issues raised will be discussed at the October Council meeting with the aim of reaching a consensus on these issues to feed back to you in a report by the middle of October. The Executive would welcome other ideas as to how we can achieve the objectives outlined in the explanatory notes as the reasons for needing access to club membership details.

Suggestions have also been made for some additional matters to be included in the new constitution. We are examining these to establish those that are appropriate for inclusion in the constitution and those that are probably matters for the bylaws.

WALKTOBER

As mentioned last month, Walktober is a new initiative to lift the profile and benefits of walking. It will be an annual event. If your club has a special walking event this is a good opportunity to make it more widely known.

This is more information on page 4.

CLEAN UP THE ALPS

There is an insert brochure in this edition about Clean up the Alps weekend. The Alps is an area we all love whether we ski, walk there overnight or on day walks. This is a good

opportunity to help clear our beloved high country of rubbish.

There is more information on page 7.

THE LONG WALK

Here is another wonderful opportunity for us bushwalkers to contribute to the wider community. See article on page Have a look at the website of the Sir Doug Nicholls Fellowship. It is really inspiring to see the positive work being done to help develop leaders in the indigenous community, and a refreshing change from the sometimes negative media.

There is more information on page 10.

FIRST AID

Once again we are offering a subsidy of \$40 to those members who successfully complete a recognised first-aid course. Please take advantage of this opportunity to gain a first aid qualification for the first time or renew your expired certificate. Full details available from Jenny at the VicWalk office.

TRACKS

As I write this column and check my diary I realise that next weekend I will be working at the Condons Track clearing day. This famous and well used track near Maroondah Reservoir was destined to become overgrown until VicWalk adopted it. Another good example of the way bushwalkers are putting something back to maintain the amenity of our parks and reserves system.

Whilst on the subject of tracks – recent severe storm damage made a section of the Australian Alps Walking Track impassable near Stronarchs Camp. Our project officer, Dave Rimmer was on the job quickly, inspected the area with DSE personnel and was able to arrange a temporary detour until the track can be restored. Our thanks are due to Dave for providing his expert input into fixing this problem. How fortunate we are to have our volunteer project officers to help sort out track problems.

David Reid

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Who's Who at VicWalk

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TAKING STEPS TOWARDS SPINAL INJURY RESEARCH

The Waverley Bushwalking Club, as part of the celebration of our 20th anniversary, invites you and your members to participate in the following walk to help us raise money for Spinal Injury Research.

- Sunday 15th October
- Jells Park in Glen Waverley
- Walk 3 or 5 (or more) kilometres
- Flexible start times between 10am and 3pm
- Donation \$5 per adult, \$1 per child, \$10 per family
- All money raised goes to Austin Health Spinal Injury Research
- Invitation is open to all members of the general public

Regional clubs may be unable to come to Jells Park but could participate by organising a walk on that day at a venue closer to their base. We may be able to help you get the required publicity.

For more detailed information contact Jim Ray:

Phone: 03 9802 6197

Email: homedec@bigpond.com

We hope to see you and representatives of your club on October 15th!

Contributions

Email or post news, views, club profiles, articles, photographs, sketches and letters on any subject of interest to bushwalkers (subject to editorial approval) to ekerlin@optusnet.com.au or 2 Glenwerri Court, Vermont South 3133

Deadline for November:
Monday, 16 October

Editor: Eileen Kerlin
 Design & Layout: Joslin Guest

VicWalk News

Advertising Rates

1/6 page advertisement	\$25.00
1/4 page advertisement	\$40.00
1/3 page advertisement	\$50.00
1/2 page advertisement	\$75.00
Full page advertisement	\$150.00
Address list of affiliate clubs	\$50.00
Insert for Newsletter*	\$50.00

Note: Advertisements must be artwork ready.

*Advertiser to supply 300 printed inserts each edition

Calendar

EXECUTIVE MEETING

Tuesday 10 October 2006

Community Room, Powlett Reserve, East Melbourne
 Melway Map 2G F2 (44 C7)

COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday 3 October 2006

Address as above

BUSHWALKING SEARCH & RESCUE MEETING

Monday 20 November at 6pm

Police Search & Rescue,
 100 Nelson Place, Williamstown

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

4th Wednesday each month except December at 7.30pm

St Martins Anglican Church
 27 Cromwell Rd (cnr Wilson St)
 South Yarra
 Melway Map 58 F4

FEDERATION WEEKEND

17-19 November 2006

Bright & Beyond

CONSERVATION

The month just past was again an active one for the Conservation Committee.

MT HOTHAM

Initially both Bill Metzthen and I were actively engaged with submissions regarding the proposed Mt Hotham redevelopment and subsequently VicWalk became involved in both the Bright/Hotham and Melbourne Panel Enquiry meetings over four days. Briefly, VicWalk's main concerns were:

- visual impact when our members are within the Alpine National Park looking back to Hotham, and
- the proposed reduction of car parking facilities, particularly at Loch car park for all season use.

Although the anticipated redevelopment is within the Alpine Resort, there are strong concerns with respect to our amenity within the Alpine Park.

CHAINSAW TRAINING

This training has been provided by Parks Victoria and was attended by five members of the Track Maintenance Group in early September. We see this as a positive for all Clubs to utilise these people on their track activities as well as Track Maintenance Group specific activities.



LILYDALE TO HEALESVILLE – RAIL TRAIL

VicWalk made a submission supporting a shared walking/cycling path on this trail. It is also interesting to note that a feasibility study is to be done on a shared walking trail alongside the Puffing Billy Line.

AUSTRALIAN ALPINE WALKING TRACK

It was reported that in an area between Stronarchs Camp and Upper Thomson Road that there had been considerable wind throw damage from the edge of a logging coupe onto the track. After investigation with DSE two members, Dave Rimmer and Robert Pratt, visited the area and agreed that due to severe damage this portion of the track should be re-routed. DSE will follow through on this matter.

TRAIL-BIKE INITIATIVE

Two members of the Committee have indicated their support in attending DSE Trail Bike Initiative Workshops to assist in the education and control of trail bike users in our Parks. This flows on from the receipt of Government Grant Money following initial workshops held some 15 months ago.

We have slowly been selecting appropriate equipment to purchase with the approved Parks Victoria Community Grant Money.

CONSERVATION AND TRACK MAINTENANCE

Individual as well as Club involvement in VicWalk's Conservation Committee and Track Maintenance Group is encouraged. Whether you help in a track clearing activity, committee involvement, Conservation Policy Review or just as importantly, sending in your views, comments or concerns, I welcome it all. We need your involvement.

I look forward to hearing from you soon on any matter.

Steven Robertson

Track Maintenance Event	Date	Contact
Freemans Mill Track Clearing	Sunday 26 November	Graeme Kidd on 5629 8515 or email gandjkidd@nex.com.au
Bogong High Plains Track Work	Saturday 2 and Sunday 3 December	Bill Metzthen on 9578 1062 or email billm@melbpc.org.au
Alpine Mossbed Rehabilitation, Bogong High Plains, Alpine National Park Work	Friday 26 to Sunday 28 January 2007	Steve Robertson on 9762 5367 or email srob7859@bigpond.net.au

Full Moons

Sat 7 October; Sun 5 November;
Tues 5 December; Wed 3 January;
Fri 2 February, Sun 4 March,
Tues 3 April

Sunrise & Sunset

Friday, 8 Sept..... 6.31am 6.04pm
Friday, 22 Sept.... 6.09am 6.16pm
Friday, 6 Oct 5.48am 6.28pm
Friday, 20 Oct 5.28am 6.42pm
Daylight saving starts Sun 29 Oct
at 2am
Friday, 3 Nov 6.11am 7.56pm
Friday, 17 Nov 5.58am 8.12pm
Friday, 1 Dec 5.51am 8.26pm
Friday, 15 Dec 5.52am 8.38pm
Friday, 29 Dec 5.59am 8.44pm
Friday, 12 Jan 6.11am 8.44pm
Friday, 26 Jan 6.26am 8.37pm
Friday, 9 Feb 6.42am 8.25pm
Friday, 23 Feb.. 6.57am... 8.08pm
Friday, 9 Mar 7.11am... 7.49pm
Friday 23 Mar ... 7.24am... 7.38pm

Sources

www.ga.gov.au (Geoscience Australia)
www.timeanddate.com/worldclock

MOSSBED REHABILITATION

Feel like a break from the usual routine, and have a satisfying holiday?

VicWalk will again be participating with Parks Victoria on Mossbed Rehabilitation on the Bogong High Plains in January 2007. This is a very rewarding activity where you actually see at the end of a day's work the results of rehabilitating the *sphagnum* mossbeds that have been damaged over time. Over 25 VicWalk participants thoroughly enjoyed this endeavour over the Labour Day weekend in March this year.

When: Thursday night 25 January 2007 – Sunday PM 28 January 2007 (an official long weekend to celebrate Australia Day)

Where: Bogong High Plains – based at Alpha Ski Lodge in Falls Creek

People required: we need 30 (places will fill quickly)

Cost: A rather complicated formula, but to simplify

- You will receive three nights accommodation at Alpha Ski Lodge at NO CHARGE
- You will be invited to partake in one BBQ Dinner for Free
- Each participant will receive \$22.00 subsidy toward fuel costs

Doesn't this sound great, and an opportunity not to be missed?

WALKTOBER

Walktober is a program developed by Kinect Australia in collaboration with VicHealth, which aims to link a number of existing, disparate events under a common brand to promote walking. It will run for the first time in October 2006. It aims to raise the profile of walking in the broader community as well as provide a lead in to the **Melbourne Walk21** international conference being held 23-25 October. www.melbournewalk21.com.au

A number of high profile events will be held in Walktober.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| ▪ Community Safety Month | October |
| ▪ Seniors Festival | 1-8 October |
| ▪ National Walk to Work Day | 6 October |
| ▪ The World's Greatest Pram Stoll | 7 October |
| ▪ Foot Health Week | 9-15 October |
| ▪ Walk To School Day | 18 October |
| ▪ Planning Week | 16-20 October |
| ▪ Melbourne Walk21 Conference | 23-25 October |
| ▪ VicHealth Walk to School Symposium | 27 October |
| ▪ Prostate Cancer Awareness Walk | 29 October |

As well, there will be a number of other walking events held across Victoria in October. An updated list of events in **Walktober** will be available on www.walktober.com.au

VicWalk member clubs are invited to register any special event bushwalks which occur in October to be included on the Walktober calendar of events/walks on the website – email details to Jan Jacklin janjacklin@jigstrat.com.au

UPDATE – BRIGHT & BEYOND FEDERATION WEEKEND: 17-19 NOVEMBER 2006

Hi to all my fellow bushwalkers. It has been a while since I last talked to you but be assured that planning for Bright & Beyond is well and truly under way.

Registration will open in early September and for those clubs that have given me a contact email address you will have already received the registration forms. The forms will also be able to be downloaded from the VicWalk website. The cost of registration has been set at \$15 per person and I'm sure that you will agree that this represents excellent value for what has been planned. If you decide to join in on the official function on the Saturday night then there is an additional charge of \$10 to cover the cost of the Barbecue dinner. These fees need to be paid in advance. You also have the ability to pre-order the official Bright & Beyond polo shirt for \$25. We do ask that we get only one registration form from each club to assist with us with the ease of administration.

We also ask that all participants bring their emergency contact information and carry this with themselves at all time – I carry mine in an empty film canister in my first aid kit.

Please note that if you want to do the paddling on Lake Buffalo on Saturday that you do need to tell us when you register. All other walks will be booked at the event on a first come first served basis.

Event registration will open at 1.00 pm on Friday at the River Lodge (Bright Caravan Park) which will be well sign posted but is in the heart of the Bright township. Coffee will be available but please bring your own mug. We have organised 3 or 4 short walks around Bright for Friday afternoon as well as a bike ride to the Buckland Valley for those wanting to start early. Or you can explore Bright on your own checking out the many lovely cafes and restaurants.

All walks will be departing from the River Lodge on Saturday morning and you will be told the meeting time when you book in on Friday. For people not arriving till Saturday you will need to be at the Lodge by 7.30 am. We have a total of 22 walks arranged for Saturday including 2 at Falls Creek and 5 at Mt Hotham. The balance is a mixture of half day walks and day walks on Mt Buffalo. Your entry fee into the parks is covered in the cost of your registration. On Buffalo we have arranged for buses to shuttle people to and from walks.

Saturday night we have arranged for a barbecue dinner at the Bright Sound Shell on the banks of the lovely Ovens River. We also have a guest speaker for the night. Mr Ian Stapleton is one of the founders of the outdoor education centre at Mittagundi as well as the author of 4 books on the Victorian Alps. Ian will be talking about some of the true characters of the high country. You will need your own fold up chair and a glass of wine to enjoy.

Sunday we have arranged for about a dozen walks, some full day walks and others that will end around lunch time for those wanting to head off early. We also have a bike ride to Myrtleford on the bike trail.

We are compiling all the walk details for the official Bright & Beyond booklet that you will receive when you register on the Friday. We plan on having this available on the VicWalk website by late October so that you can have a look at the walks you want to do prior to arriving at the event. Remember to have a think about second and third options as some walks will full up pretty quickly.

Bright also offers some other fun activities for those wanting to try something new. There are private companies offering underground river exploration, hang gliding and abseiling. So there is plenty to do.

Hopefully those people coming to the event have already booked their accommodation. All but one of the cabins we reserved at the Bright Caravan Park have been taken but there are still plenty of tent and caravan sites available. You can view more details or book directly with the park at

www.brightcaravanpark.com.au.

There are plenty of other accommodation options available in Bright and you can check these out via

www.brightescapes.com.au.

So – you can see that it is all go. This is a lovely part of the country and for those who haven't visited this area before I can guarantee that you won't be disappointed. I'm looking forward to seeing you all in November.

David Gordon

Club representatives should by now have received their booking sheets from David, to be returned to him by November 3.

If not, contact David by email: david.gordon@fmq.co.nz

Editor

Country Action Grants Scheme 2006

Call for applications for these grants has been delayed. Currently the website only shows last years dates. Eligible clubs should keep checking the website www.grants.dvc.vic.gov.au for the 2006 opening and closing dates.

VALE WESTE, GRETNA AM

The Melbourne University & Alumni Bushwalkers are deeply saddened by the death of our founder, walks leader and life member, Gretna Weste.

Gretna's vast botanical knowledge and enthusiasm enriched the wide variety of walks she initiated and led for over 25 years.

Her strong leadership was laced with informality and fun. Her spirit lives on in our active, friendly group.

Our sympathy to Gretna's family and friends.

The following profile of Gretna was written by Christina McCallum

GRETNA WESTE

The group's greatest 'character' is its spirited, warm-hearted founder and the walks leader for most of its history, Dr Gretna Weste, Associate Professor and Principal Fellow in the School of Botany at the University of Melbourne.

When Gretna Weste broke her ankle at the age of 82 the specialist at her hospital bedside announced, 'You will never walk again.' and showed her the wheelchair he had ready for her. Did he know he was speaking to a woman who in the last twenty years had hiked hundreds of kilometres on five continents, over time undeterred by two hip replacements? 'I beg your pardon,' Gretna replied, 'I am Doctor of Science and I don't *understand* language like that!' She discharged herself from the hospital and through her networks found herself another specialist.

At 83, she was possibly the oldest person ever to walk the Inca Trail, climbing over Dead Woman's Pass at 4,200 metres and finally arriving at the legendary Machu Picchu.

Such is the spirit of the founder of the Melbourne University and Alumni Bushwalking Group whose feisty



authority has guided the group for over 25 years. Her distinguished career as a scientist includes, among other achievements, her acclaimed thirty years of research into the biology, pathology and control of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (cinnamon fungus). She took out her PhD at the University of Melbourne in 1968 on a fungal disease on cereal roots. Fifteen years later she was awarded a DSc for her study of the cinnamon fungus on the roots of Australian native plants growing in open forests and heathlands in Victoria. Gretna Weste was made a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1989 for her 'service to science, particularly in the field of botany'.

Mary Wheeler, Gwen McDowall and Dick van der Molen are colleagues and friends who have shared experiences with Gretna over many years.

Mary and Gretna met in 1935 as first year science students at the University of Melbourne. Gretna invited Mary to join the bushwalking group. Speaking of those early days, Mary observes, 'Gretna wanted to keep things *informal*. She liked people to have suitable clothing and first aid equipment and didn't like it when people came ill-prepared. Those were the things that really mattered – not some protocol.'

Like others, Mary comments on

Gretna's contagious enthusiasm and the way in which her botanical knowledge enriched the wide variety of walks she initiated for the group. At Gretna's instigation, Mary and she shared many other adventures together from trekking in South America, exploring the national parks of the west coast of North America, discovering Borneo, laughing through near misses (like the time, covered in mud from a bogged bus, they almost missed their next plane), to rattling over dreadful roads in the Northern Territory on a camping holiday.

Gwen McDowall proposed a toast to Gretna at her eightieth birthday, celebrated at a Bushwalkers' dinner at University House:

Gretna has led us on hundreds of wonderful walks ... In Africa she has climbed Kilimanjaro's 19,000 feet. [She has] walked in Iceland, gone down into the Grand Canyon, taken photos of Alaskan wildflowers and traversed the steep path leading to the slopes of Annapurna. In fact she is a multinational walker.

Now she is 80, she qualifies for the OBE, not the Order of the British Empire, but Over Bloody Eighty. In her case, she is eighty years young, and still is going strong. Please join me in the toast to Gretna: Our Leader!

Dick van der Molen remarks on Gretna's strong leadership. 'She is intensely practical in the limits that she sets the group,' he says. 'If it was a difficult walk it would be a difficult walk. If it was easy, it was easy. She talks about botany just long enough to keep your attention and uses language we all understand. She has an intuitive feel for the capacity other people have to understand and for what they can achieve physically.'

Dick speaks warmly about other events apart from the monthly walks shared by the group, often at Gretna's home where she would show slides of her latest trip with a riveting commentary. 'It created a bond between the bushwalkers and a wider context

Continued on next page...

VALE GRETNA WESTE AM

about what you can do when you bushwalk.'

And what does bushwalking mean for Gretna?

'When you are walking you can walk along and talk to others. But you can listen too. You're still in company, you're not lonely,' she says. 'Walkers are travellers – you can listen to and enjoy their adventures. Bushwalkers usually talk about travel or about food.'

Gretna always carries a camera while walking and her photos inspire her to write notes which become a diary of the people, plants and places she remembers best. Her detailed albums are witness to many treks. What does she see that others might not? 'Beauty!' Gretna exclaims. She revels in the interplay of light and colour and landscape. While her scientist's eye sees the detail, her imagination sees much more.

Characteristically Gretna brings a hand lens which allows the tiny details of plants to be revealed. This has led others to use a hand lens also and so discover another world hidden in the largeness of the scenery.

Officially retired in 1982, Gretna continued to supervise PhD students. In 1995 she was awarded the Medal of the Australasian Plant Pathology Society, an organisation which has made her an honorary member. At the beginning of 1999 she was appointed Patron of the Australasian Mycological Society. Gretna says that the move to Tasmania in 2003 was another attempt to retire but claims on her expertise continue. At the time of writing this, she has just been asked to be on a centre of excellence advisory board for controlling jarrah dieback disease (a root rot that attacks the plants of open for-

In addition, as the 'overseas guest', she will give the McAlpine Lecture at the biennial Plant Pathology Conference in Geelong, 2005. She is also about to embark on another walking venture – this time the parks of Eastern Europe.

To know Gretna Weste is to be in contact with a strong and multifaceted person, independent, wiry, definite, inspiring – a trail blazer in both personal and professional life. On three walls in her bedroom of her Tasmanian house are photographs of the mountains she has climbed since she turned sixty. Who knows where the next mountain will be.

Extracted from Chapter 2 of *Amblers, Ramblers and Scramblers: a history of the Melbourne University and Alumni Bushwalking Group* by Gretna Weste and Joan M Kenny (published by the Melbourne University and Alumni Bushwalking Group in 2005).

A FRESH START – A HEALTHY FUTURE

Clean Up the Alps Weekend – November 11 & 12 – will signify a fresh start for the fragile alpine environment. Alpine moss beds guarantee the delivery of quality water to the catchments. Over the years they have been severely damaged. Introduced weeds and pests threaten the native flora and fauna of the Alps, which is one of the most diverse regions in Australia.

We need your help to save the Alps. Discarded rubbish is a serious threat to the sensitive alpine environment and Victoria's fresh water supply. Cleaning up is easy and you can make a big difference by volunteering for Clean Up the Alps Weekend on November 11 & 12.

Round up your friends and family to help clean up Falls Creek and Mount Buffalo. Enjoy the spectacular spring time surroundings and play an active role in preserving the environment.

Get involved – It's as easy as:

1. Visit www.cleanup.com.au/alps and select one of seven sites at Falls Creek or Mount Buffalo.
2. Register yourself/your family/friends to volunteer. You will be sent a reminder with all the information you need closer to the weekend.
3. Turn up on the day, help clean up and make a difference.

In addition to removing rubbish on Clean Up the Alps Weekend, you can participate in a number of long term restoration projects run by Conservation Volunteers Australia. Activities may include construction of small weirs, erosion control and weed removal.

Clean Up Australia is working with Parks Victoria, Conservation Volunteers Australia and the local resorts to Clean Up the Alps.



AROUND THE TRACKS

NEWS AND ARTICLES FROM CLUBS

Ballarat Bushwalking & Outdoor Club

Jan McCallum reports on a joint activity with Warrnambool:

"The weekend of August 4th to 6th we were invited to join the Warrnambool Club for a weekend of bushwalking and whale spotting. The advance party, Barb and John ventured down on Friday and were rewarded with a viewing of the whales. Debbie, Steve, Marianne, Jan and Bob arose early Saturday morning and were down in Warrnambool by 9.30 to embark on the activities. On Saturday we were joined by 4 members of the Warrnambool Club, Helen, Margaret and the two Di's. We also enjoyed the company of a couple from the **Geelong Bushwalking Club**, Janet and Richard.

The day started with a car shuffle and we then commenced our stroll to Childers Cove. Despite Warrnambool's reputation as a windy location, Saturday was a perfect, sunny day with very little breeze. We enjoyed a beautiful cliff top walk and were rewarded with staggering views of the coastline. You don't need to travel a great distance from home to experience really magnificent scenery. Saturday night Di booked us into the Shamrock Hotel at Dennington, a nearby town, where we enjoyed a heart country meal.

Sunday we awoke to another beautiful morning. We drove the cars around and parked near Proudfoot's Boathouse Restaurant. Coralie and Ken joined us for Sunday's walk. On this occasion we decided to walk along the beach, rather than along the cliffs. Walking down to the beach we were rewarded with a brief glimpse of the whales. We had an enjoyable walk along the beach until lunch time when the incoming tide forced us to make a hasty retire to the cliffs where we consumed our lunch and were again rewarded with

panoramic coastal views. In the afternoon we returned via a viewing platform at Logans Beach and had a further fleeting glimpse of the whales. The day ended with coffee and cakes at Proudfoot's Restaurant. The coffee was great and the location magical. Bob managed to acquire two coffees for the price of one. It made his weekend. Thanks Di for organising a great weekend. We shall never call Warrnambool windy again."

VMTC

From **VMTC's** September *Trampalong*, I thought Helen Geddes account of their **Lake Mountain – Koala Creek** walk (done in March) was very different to the usual Lake Mountain summer walk:

"Whilst waiting on the drawn out placement of the retrieval vehicles, a few ill-at-ease walkers whiled away the time examining the new visitor facility at Lake Mountain trail head. Often architectural commissions of such importance are squandered to mediocrity, and this is no exception. Great pity, as this was a rare and important moment to do something unique, linking the man-made to its environment.

Finally we were assembled and Judith led her party out along the Jubilee Ridge Track to the edge of the escarpment. On a bearing to intersect Koala Creek we clambered into dense, prickly undergrowth. Pushing downward we slithered through neck-high, wet, leech-trimmed fern banks heaving ourselves over partially submerged fallen Alpine Ash. Every down, all the while ensuring and confirming our presence on the elected spur, till at last we bottomed out on a tight stream and the undergrowth dematerialized into a lichen bedecked open fairyland rainforest.

Eats, drinks and conversation and we proceed downstream. The going was arduous, the senses constantly titillated with feasts of picturesque

glades, fern encrusted boulders, mountain stream vistas. We happened on a multiple headed waterfall and dispersed to various vantage points to digest its bounty. Regrouped, we plundered on. The going slowed as the stream flattened and fattened into impenetrable sedge. Maintaining our passage parallel to an elusive stream we fought fatigue, whilst eking away the meters.

An abandoned "crime scene" fenced out with blue and white tape lay across our right of way, so we crawled through it. (This we realized was the place where the Lake Mountain search of a couple of years ago terminated.) As the light began to lessen we glimpsed our objective, the Cambarville Road, on the far side of a monumental log jam. Breaking through this proved one of the most difficult tasks of the day.

What an adventure. Thank you Judy for leading such a demanding trip. It was a tough one and you rose to the occasion as we thought you would. Thank you Chris for your mentoring of one of our new navigation graduates. The club is the wealthier for having such fine leaders."

Another **VMTC** write up from their August *Trampalong* (mysteriously turning up with my September copy!), which took my fancy was the following memoir from Peter Irish of a pack carry in the **Isdell River region of the Kimberleys** in June/July this year:

"It's over 20 years since I'd last been on a trip led by Damien, yet I still remember those long days searching for new and mysterious destinations in remote locations. If we got to camp before 8pm it was a slack day! The good news is that Damien's desire for adventure in obscure places is still strong, but the days are much, much shorter which left ample time for swimming, relaxing, reading, fishing, etc. on this epic Kimberley adventure.

We left Broome in a 17-seat 4WD bus on Sunday morning and arrived tired and dusty at Mt Hart Station,

More on the next page...

AROUND THE TRACKS NEWS AND ARTICLES FROM CLUBS

50 kilometres off the Gibb River Road, in the last afternoon. The following day we had a day walk to acclimatize ourselves to the pleasant and dry 30-degree heat before commencing full pack carrying the next day. The wet season had well and truly finished and our walking was either along shady, pandanus-lined creeks and gorges or through rocky and dry savannah-like country with knee to waist height grass and scattered low trees. Progress was slow due to the rocky ground, plus we were always stopping to have a swim! We averaged about seven kilometres per day although through one particularly deep and tricky gorge we only managed three kilometres yet it was our longest day! Night times were cool, occasionally as low as 10 degrees, perfect for a good night's sleep. We only took tent inners and without stoves, parkas etc. some packs were as light as 15 kilos although others decided on the "kitchen sink" approach. Their packs were approaching the kind you'd expect on a 14-day Tassie trip

and included items like a 2-litre wine cask and an electric toothbrush! Campsites were generally on shady fast flowing creeks; usually on sand but sometimes on rock platforms, and firewood was always readily available, Damien had extensively researched and chosen a terrific route incorporating all the best features of the Kimberley region: towering cliffs, deep cool sandstone gorges with plunge pools, cascades and stunning waterfalls, aboriginal rock art sites, boab trees, crocodiles, river crossings, pack flats, fishing etc. The scenery was stunning with the cool mornings and sunny late afternoons providing fantastic dappled lighting that enhanced the beautiful reds and greens of the rocks and plants, perfect for the photography buffs. Considering the abundance of feed and water, we didn't see a lot of wildlife; a handful of wallabies, no kangaroos, a few hawks and parrots, three or four crocodiles, some water monitors, heaps of fishes and frogs, quolls, cattle, pigs and donkeys. The stray horns and no fear of humans.

We stumbled upon a herd in one isolating valley and the roars that the lone bull made to protect his cows had us all on edge. We quickly changed course to avoid a confrontation! We got a billy bag and a towel to the inquisitive nocturnal quolls, which frequented our campsites. I'm sure they made a lovely nest with them. We had a strange experience when a rock python fell off a high cliff and landed in a pool right in front of us. It seemed stunned so Adrian retrieved it and it eventually recovered and slithered under a boulder.

Naturally I supplemented the group's dried rations with a plentiful supply of fresh fish, namely Sooty Grunter (black bream), and some extremely large freshwater catfish including one which was close to 5 kilos. They were so aggressive that they tried to eat the bream when I was reeling them in!

We finally arrived safely in Broome with the usual assortment of cuts, scratches, bruises, sprains, bites and rashes, but nothing serious and went straight to the Cable Beach Bar & Grill for beer, steak and chips. Thanks to Damien for an excellent, well-planned trip and to the rest of the group for making it an enjoyable experience."



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The Long Walk 2006

On 21 November 2004, AFL legend Michael Long embarked an historic trek, setting out to walk from his home in the suburbs of Melbourne all the way to Parliament House in Canberra – more than 650 kilometres away. He was joined by other Indigenous leaders, and their walk became a **mission of hope** – they walked for change and they walked for a united Australia.

The Long Walk 2005 was a huge success with 10,000 people taking the first steps towards creating a united Australia. It was the start of a new tradition and in 2006 **the tradition continues**.

Join us – you are invited to walk alongside Michael and the original Long Walkers in Melbourne!

The Long Walk 2006
When: Sunday, 3 December
Where: Albert Park, Melbourne
Get involved: visit www.thelongwalk.com.au

All money raised through The Long Walk is donated to [The Sir Douglas Nicholls Fellowship for Indigenous Leadership](#), a charity committed to supporting Victorian Indigenous leaders, and improving the lives of all Victorians through those leaders' community projects.

“THIS ISN'T ABOUT INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIA AND WHITE AUSTRALIA – THIS IS ABOUT ALL AUSTRALIA.” Michael Long



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