

# New Zealand

THE REMOTE SOUTH - 19 TO 27 FEBRUARY 2011

Join Linda Daniels and friends of the Bibbulmun Track Foundation with Peregrine Travel on a 9-day discovery tour of NZ's South Island's Fiordland National Park and remote Stewart Island.

This special tour includes the best of the tracks Fiordland National Park has on offer. Departing from Queenstown we will travel to Te Anau, which will be our base for two nights while we trek along sections of the famous Kepler Track (full and half day options available).

Following this we will drive to Tuatapere, gateway to the less renowned but equally scenic Hump Ridge Track. The Hump Ridge has all the qualities of a great walk. The three-day track winds across some of New Zealand's wildest land, leading trappers through parts of Fiordland National Park, along an alpine ridge, through forest, across Maori land and along deserted beaches of the south coast of the South Island.

Finally, before returning to Queenstown, the trip ends with two nights on Stewart Island - an unspoilt, eco-friendly wonder that is a paradise for walkers and home to an abundance of marine and bird life.

Enjoy stunning views of towering mountain landscapes, rugged coastlines, rocky outcrops, golden beaches, and thick forest - this region has it all!



FOR MORE DETAILS CONTACT:

Nerida Roberts Phone: 9321 1259 Email: Nerida@peregrinewa.com.au



# Bibbulmun NEWS

APR-AUG 2010  
ISSUE # 53  
RRP \$6.00



Newsletter for the friends of the Bibbulmun Track

## Mt Clare Campsite Rejuvenated

### The Mission:

To rejuvenate the Mount Clare campsite.

### The Protagonists:

Two people from DEC and six Bibbulmun Track Volunteers.

### The Execution:

We arrived at the campsite at around 9am on Monday morning, when Scott Hunter, DEC's Construction Supervisor, told us that the programme for the week would involve replacing guttering, installing a new water tank, replacing the sleeping platform, rejuvenating the two tables and benches and moving the toilet to a new location.

Work commenced almost immediately with Alex Williams ripping down the old gutters while David Woodworth and Jason (also from DEC) ripped up the old sleeping platform. Meanwhile Jenny Rutter and I worked on the benches and tables, removed all the jarrah timbers and planed them smooth, ready to be reinstalled and oiled.

We all helped to remove the old water tank and install the new one; held lengths of gutter while measuring and cutting took place; gave a lift here and lent a hand there. The marine ply platform was successfully installed and given a couple of coats of polyurethane to complete the job.

Next task was the toilet. First a hole had to be dug -1.5m x 1.5m x 2m deep. To be honest a mechanical digger was employed for this, although the hole had to be finished by hand, which made for a most impressive photo. Then the toilet



The refurbished Mt Clare campsite

itself was lifted from its original site and moved to its new location over the tank that had been lowered into the hole. By this stage Jenny had been replaced by Alan McGregor and his wife Sandy, who helped in the final clean up, oiling the building and spreading wood chips around the campsite.

The whole job was finished one and a half days earlier than anticipated and it has to be said that the campsite now looks an absolute picture. This is the first upgrade of a camp site undertaken using volunteer labour, and from our point of view was well worth the effort, as we had a lot of fun and were well rewarded with a sense of satisfaction and pride in a job well done.

Enjoy your next visit to Mount Clare.

Alan Barker  
BTF volunteer.

## The 'Waugal' is saved!

We are VERY pleased to announce that,

following on from the overwhelming feedback received from walkers, members and volunteers, DEC has reconsidered its proposed new guidelines for marking the Bibbulmun Track and that the predominant trail marking will continue to be the triangular Waugal trail marker as currently used.

Thank you to everyone who responded to our survey - it is great to know that so many people feel so passionately about the Track!

FOR MORE DETAILS, SEE THE ARTICLE ON PAGE 20.



Alan Barker in the dunny hole



Replacing the guttering



Replacing the old platform with marine ply



The new bedboards should withstand the weather

### With grateful thanks to our sponsors:

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### THE BIBBULMUN TRACK FOUNDATION

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Printed on environmentally-friendly paper

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100% OF FUNDS RAISED WILL GO TOWARDS FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO THE TRACK AND CAMPSITES.



# Adventure Raffle

Only \$20 per book

FIVE FANTASTIC PRIZES TO CHOOSE FROM

The 2010 Adventure Raffle is our major fundraiser for the year and with your help we can make it a huge success! The lucky winner has the choice of any one of the prizes. The 2nd prize winner may select from the remaining four prizes and so on.



### Six-day Cradle & the Walls of Jerusalem Trek

Experience the majesty of the Tasmanian highlands on this wonderful all-inclusive guided trek.

Stay in cabins nestled in enchanting cool temperate rainforest inside the Cradle Mountain Lake St Claire National Park and discover the surrounding alpine plateaus and dramatic glacially carved lakes. On the 3rd day don backpacks to base camp and spend the next few days discovering the magical tarns and peaks forming the Walls of Jerusalem. The prize includes \$1000 for airfares, for a total prize value of \$4,390.



### Ranger Outdoors Family Camping Package

Take the family camping in style with this great range of gear including a family tent (valued at \$850 alone) plus chairs, table, stove, lantern coolers, gazebo and lots more. Total value \$3,000.



### Mountain Designs Outdoor Equipment Package for two

This package has all the essentials for an overnight hike on the Bibbulmun Track for two people including a two-man tent, backpacks, sleeping bags, self-inflating mats and a portable stove. Valued at \$2,000



### Sea to Summit Gear Freaks Package

Have fun choosing whatever you desire from a selection of the latest high quality, high-tech and lightweight gear from Sea to Summit. Up to the value of \$1,700.



### Wilderness Getaway - Two-day Taste of the Bibbulmun Walking Tour

Get away from it all with expert guides from Out of Sight! Tours. You will be introduced to the best walks along the south-western sections of the Bibbulmun Track. Carry only a small day-pack and water on each walk returning at the end of the day to your accommodation in the peaceful forest surroundings of Karma Chalets near Denmark.



Tasmanian highlands



Karma Chalets near Denmark - Wilderness Gateway



Mountain Designs outdoor equipment package



Ranger Outdoors family camping prize



### Sellers' Prize

For each book sold your name goes into the draw for a Beach and Forest Eco Adventure Tour for two, donated by Pemberton Discovery Tours - so increase your chances of winning and order more books today!

REMEMBER all sold ticket stubs/unsold tickets need to be returned with the remittance slip to the Foundation by 4th JUNE 2010 - AND... the more books you sell the more chances to win the draw prize!

If you are having difficulty selling the tickets please return them IMMEDIATELY so that we can sell them OR if you can sell more books please let us know - Phone 9481 0551 or email: events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au



## FROM MY Desk



### Welcome to the Autumn Edition of Bibbulmun News.

If anyone ever doubted the depth of feeling our members have about the Bibbulmun Track, they would only have to read the feedback received from the trail marking survey to be convinced.

In addition to answering the questions, over 300 people wrote comments ranging from a couple of lines to a few paragraphs. Many of these comments emphasised the point that the Waugal trail markers have become as much a part of the experience as the Track itself. Finding the next Waugal, be it on a tree, a fence post or a fallen log is part of the enjoyment and brings a feeling of comfort and familiarity unique to the Bibbulmun Track.

We are incredibly relieved and happy that common sense has prevailed and that the marking will remain pretty much as is. So, what other elements make the Bibbulmun Track unique? We have a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to try and capture the qualities and character of the Track in a new 'entry statement' in Kalamunda.

The Shire is building a new cultural and community centre between the library and the History Village at the top of Stirk Street. The centre will include a visitor information centre (VIC), a café, toilets and showers open 7 days a week. Both the Shire and the Foundation are keen to improve the connection between the VIC, which will house the Track register book, and the Northern Terminus, some 150 metres away. Part of this will be a sculpture or other art installation half-way between the two, to interpret or represent the Bibbulmun Track. We also hope to landscape the area around the Northern Terminus and install stone or wooden bollards along the path. If you feel inspired, feel free to email your ideas to me at friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au. Of course, funding will determine just how much can be done.

I'm sure that everyone reading the front page and Recreation and Trails Unit articles will be delighted at the progress being made with the Track upgrades this year. Scott Hunter at DEC is doing a fantastic job and we hope that the positive outcome at Mount Clare will encourage the Department to enlist the help of our volunteers more often.

Finally, a big thank you to everyone who has already sold raffle books, and to our sponsors for donating such great prizes. We're off to a good start and we guarantee you that 100% of the funds raised will be used directly on Track projects. While a great deal has already been done, we still have a long way to go and there will always be work to be done. As Steve says at the end of his article on the end-to-enders gathering, "It takes money to keep a free resource free".

In the meantime, I look forward to receiving some inspirational ideas for Kalamunda! 🌟

**Linda Daniels**  
Executive Director

## 2010 'Best of the Bibbulmun' Tours

### TOUR 1 - BIBBULMUN & BEYOND, 10 - 17 MAY 2010

Walk the very 'best bits' of the Bibbulmun Track then venture into the Stirling Range National Park to experience spectacular 360 degree views from the top of Bluff Knoll.  
Cost: \$2,400 Maximum 16 people (Be quick only 3 places available)

### TOUR 2 - 8-DAY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BIBBULMUN TRACK, 6 - 13 SEPTEMBER 2010

Wonder at the changing landscapes on the Bibbulmun Track at the very best time of the year, in the midst of the spectacular wildflower season.

- Comfortable motel & chalet accommodation
- All meals & transfers included
- Selected full & half day walks
- Spectacular coastal, forest & wilderness areas

Cost: \$2,450 Maximum 16 people

**Bibbulmun Track Foundation**  
(08) 9481 0551  
events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au  
www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Thank you!  
Thank you!

A sincere thank you to the following walkers who have generously made donations to the Foundation.

**Brigita Ferencak**  
**Nigel Harris**  
**Christine Kennea**  
**G Kraan**  
**Johanna Pringle**  
**Graham Reeks**  
**Ria Vankempen and David Ross**  
**Jennifer Wilksch**

### DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE!

Through the National Trust, donations made to the Foundation are put into a special account and assigned specifically to projects which enhance the environmental sustainability of the Bibbulmun Track. The National Trust provides this service free of charge so you can be sure that 100% of your donation is used for Track projects.

To make a tax deductible donation, cheques need to be made out to The National Trust and sent to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation with your name and address. Cash and credit card donations are also welcome of course! We will then provide you with a receipt from the National Trust receipt book which indicates the donation is specifically for the Bibbulmun Track.

All donations, large and small, are gratefully received and all help to preserve our beautiful Bibbulmun Track. 🌟

# Walker Story...

## End-to-End BY JAN PRICE (TRACK NAME "JAN")



Jan Price

My walk began on the 30th June, ending on 30th September 2009. The picture is of me setting off on my last day from Hidden Valley.

Essential advice to anyone doing this is to keep a diary of your journey. I have read mine a couple

of times and despite only the short amount of time that has past, I have found I had forgotten some things... or "misremembered" them.

I first did a section of the Track (Albany to Boat Harbour) with the inaugural walk group in 1998. I was to do the entire walk, but unfortunately had to pull out. I won my spot in a competition and was given a backpack along with the walking honours. I am now very happy to say that both the backpack and I have finally done the entire walk.

My pack weighed 20kg and I lost 18kg over the walk, so at the end, I was carrying my pack for free! When I started I was massively overweight, frighteningly unfit and totally unprepared - no pre-training, no pre-walk planning. I just packed up the gear and hit the Track. Thank you, thank you, and thank you for the campsites being only 10km apart at the beginning! Kalamunda to Dwellingup was my preparation.

I did this walk as therapy. My husband of 30 years died in May 2009 after a long and painful illness. I laughed, I cried, I threw some major tantrums, but most of all I sang, was struck speechless and immobile by the absolute beauty and timelessness of our bush and altogether had the time of my life.

Because of my need for solitude, I walked solo and I highly recommend it. I had some wonderful experiences when I shared campsites

(Hi to the Pirates), but I really treasured the nights alone. I didn't share a campsite in the entire Dwellingup to Pemberton section, and only passed three other walkers going in the opposite direction. Bliss!

I took a personal locator beacon with me (happily unused), called a "SPOT" tracker ([www.findmespot.com](http://www.findmespot.com) if you're interested), which was a wonderful piece of equipment. It has three functions; an EPIRB, a locate me function for nominated friends in case of a non-life-threatening emergency, and an "I'M OK" message delivered to nominated friends. If you send the OK message to an email address, a link to Google Earth is included in the body of the email so your friends can track your progress. This kept family and friends in the loop and made them far happier about me being out there "all on my own".

My walk was a slow amble. I got very miffed on the big days because I couldn't take time out to smell the roses. However, in the end, I guess it's all a part of the challenge and one of the reasons I am so proud to say "I've walked the Bibbulmun Track!"

The biggest thank you is to all the vollies who do such an awesome job, and thanks so much for "The Track". It restored my health, my happiness and my overall wellbeing. How lucky are we? 🌿



View from Mt Cooke



Close encounter with a tiger snake on the south coast



Jan under her mozzie net at Hidden Valley campsite

# YOUR LETTERS

Hi,

Terry Stone and I completed the end-to-end between 5 Sept and 6 Nov when we arrived in Albany. We thought it was fantastic and most of it world class.

We'd like to thank the Bibbulmun Track Foundation, Mountain Designs for our great gear and all the vollies for keeping such a great track. We would like to become vollies and care for part of the Track now.

For me the best part of the whole thing was being in wild nature all day, every day.

WA is a superbly beautiful and diverse state.

**Frances Brewer**

**ED** - It's always great to hear when walkers are inspired to become maintenance volunteers.

Dear Gwen,

I am writing on behalf of Adelaide ARPA Bushwalkers as we have completed a camp led by Milton and Jan Turner.

ARPA walked the first half of the Bibbulmun Track in 2008 and sent a donation in appreciation. This year having walked the rest of the Track to Albany, we are sending a further donation of \$170.

We enjoyed the towering forest, the stunning coastline and the wildflowers were amazing, giving great pleasure to many members. You could almost call it a photography walk.

Thank you for building such an easy to follow track which made these two camps possible.

Yours truly

**Frances Brewer**

**ED** - ARPA is the Australian Retired Persons Association.

Hi,

A huge thanks to all at BTF who contribute to the wonderful Bib Track. I recently had a few days on the track - so healing and restorative and from now on will each year have 1-2 weeks on the track or in the bush, it so grounds me in what's important and what's not.

**Sabena**

Hi,

Just an email to say, like a lot of people, a big thank you to every volunteer and all the people who work for the Bibbulmun Track.

I started at Kalamunda on the 25th of September and arrived just yesterday at Albany.

I had just one night by myself, so I am very glad to have met a lot of people...and to the question "what have you learned after two months on the track?" I reply "I have one muscle which is never tired... my tongue!

I have loved it, what a wonderful experience!

Thank you for your great job

All the best for the team

**Marina Duarte**

Greetings,

Thanks for your calendar of events.

As you can see from the address I am in new lodgings. I also wish to advise you that on Dec 17th 2009 I turned 100, so I'm a good advert for walking!

I am still getting about with the help of a four-wheel frame.

All my best wishes to the walkers.

Cheerio,

**Gordon Hughes**

**ED** - Gordon completed an end-to-end walk in 1988 at the age of 79!

Dear generous West Australians,

Thanks for the piano practice!

In October 2009 my husband Bryan and I completed an end-to-end trip, walked over spring 2008 and spring 2009.

The whole trip was wonderful but for me the highlight was the amazing generosity of the West Australian people who responded to my requests for access to a piano. I carried a few pages of music with me in case I got a chance to practice for my Grade 2 music exam scheduled for the 23rd November after I got home to New Zealand.

In Pemberton, a farmer's wife drove 7 kilometres into town with her young children, to pick up myself and my friend. She then gave Jenny coffee and a tour of the farm while I played on the family piano, before returning us to town.

In both Northcliffe and Walpole I was twice given the keys to the Town Hall and trusted to return them when I finished practising on the precious community piano.

Finally, in Denmark, the Anglican minister and organist allowed me to use the exquisite church organ offered me a cup of tea while I practised and only asked in return that I minded a handbag while they had their own cup of tea!

For me, these people made my "Bibbulmun" experience unforgettable and I'm happy to report that with your help, the exam was a success.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you all.

**Anne Dudley**

For updates, refer to the "Latest Track News" accessible from [www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au](http://www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au).  
Or contact the appropriate DEC District (see contact details below).

**Before heading out on to the Bibbulmun Track it is important that you check the current conditions and are aware of any changes that may impact on your journey.**

There may be maintenance or construction projects near or on the Track that result in temporary diversions or changes. These will not be marked on your maps. Temporary diversions are marked with white waugal trail markers (black serpent on a white background). If you encounter these when walking, follow the temporary markers, not your map. The Waugal Trail Markers will revert to the normal black on yellow when the diversion rejoins the main Track again.

Please remember the Bibbulmun Track is a walking track only. No wheeled vehicles, including trolleys, wheelbarrows, prams or bikes should be on the Track. Please help to preserve the Track and the environment by keeping to 'boots only'.

#### Prescribed Burning Operations

DEC conducts a program of prescribed burning operations each year. Prescribed burning operations are undertaken for a variety of reasons, including property protection, fuel reduction and biodiversity management.

These burns are carefully planned but may cause some disruption to Track users. Where prescribed burning operations impact on the Track, temporary diversions will be put in place. Prescribed burning operations are dependant on appropriate weather conditions and for this reason dates of burns are not available in advance. For information regarding prescribed burns, please contact DEC District offices.

#### Groups on the Track

Non-commercial groups of walkers with eight or more members that are staying overnight on the Track are requested to fill out a Notification of Intent (NOI) form and submit it to the DEC Recreation and Trails unit. NOI forms can be obtained by phoning 9334 0265 or by emailing [tracksandtrails@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:tracksandtrails@dec.wa.gov.au)

#### Car access to the Track

Walkers are reminded that vehicles can only access the Track at designated points. These are marked on the maps and guidebooks as red or green car symbols. Other roads that lead towards the Track might be restricted or have locked gates as they enter disease risk areas. Attempting to access the Track at non-designated points can spread disease or damage wildlife. Please use only the access points marked on the maps and guidebooks.

## Shopping Centre Promotion – Can you spare three hours?

Thank you to all those who have already helped man displays at five major shopping centres. In addition to selling raffle tickets, the shopping centre displays are a great way to promote our calendar of events and other services.

We still have two more to go – Lakeside, Joondalup from 13th – 15th May and Floreat on 21st and 22nd May. If you can help, please phone Jean on 9321 0649 or email [marketing@bibbulmuntrack.org.au](mailto:marketing@bibbulmuntrack.org.au)

Rosters of 3 x 3 hour day shifts with an additional evening shift on Thursday night will be made up.

#### DEC CONTACTS:

##### Perth Hills District

*Kalamunda to the Harvey-Quindanning Road  
Map 1& 2 or Sections 1 to 20 in the Northern Guidebook  
Contact Glenn Hagen (08) 9538 1078 or [glenn.hagen@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:glenn.hagen@dec.wa.gov.au)*

##### Wellington District (Collie and Harvey)

*Covers Harvey -Quindanning Road to Mumballup  
Map 3 or Section 20 to 25 in Northern Guidebook  
Contact Leon Price (08) 9734 1988*

##### Blackwood-Balingup District

*Covers Mumballup to Willow Springs  
Map 4 or Sections 25 to 30 in the Northern Guidebook  
Contact (08) 9731 6232 or [blackwood@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:blackwood@dec.wa.gov.au)*

##### Manjimup and Pemberton - Donnelly District

*Covers Willow Springs to Pingerup Road  
Maps 5 and 6, Section 30 in the Northern Guidebook and Sections 31 and 42 in the Southern Guidebook  
Contact John Hanel (08) 9776 1207 or [john.hanel@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:john.hanel@dec.wa.gov.au)*

##### Walpole - Frankland District

*Covers Pingerup Road to Denmark  
Maps 6, 7, 8 or Sections 42 to 53 in the Southern Guidebook  
Contact Chris Stewart (08) 9840 0400 or [chris.stewart@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:chris.stewart@dec.wa.gov.au)*

##### Albany District

*Covers Denmark to Albany  
Map 8 or Sections 53 to 58 in the Southern Guidebook  
Contact Luke Coney (08) 9842 4500 or [luke.coney@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:luke.coney@dec.wa.gov.au)*

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Steve Gurney  
Multi-sports Champion  
New Zealand



**Stuart Harrison, Recreation and Trails Unit Coordinator**

Locked Bag 104 Bentley Delivery Centre 6983 Tel: 9334 0265 Email: [tracksandtrails@dec.wa.gov.au](mailto:tracksandtrails@dec.wa.gov.au)

## DEC Recreation and Trails Unit

The Recreation and Trails Unit staff and various District staff have been busily working on a number of projects along the full length of the Bibbulmun Track. Some of the key projects include upgrades of aging campsites, the development of new group orientated campsites for schools and other groups using the Track, finalising the Operational Guidelines for managing the Track, and the development of a new Volunteer Maintenance Handbook.

DEC committed \$400,000 for the 2009/10 financial year for major maintenance on the Track. Project Manager Dave Lathwell and Construction Supervisor Scott Hunter have been working with all of the Districts and the Foundation to plan and undertake the priority works. Numerous campsites have received major maintenance and refurbishment, including :

- Gringer Creek
- White Horse Hills
- Possum Springs
- Yourdamung
- Woolbales
- Long Point
- Mt Clare
- Rame Head
- William Bay
- Boat Harbour
- West Cape Howe
- Hidden Valley

These refurbishments have included toilet relocation and rebuilding, rainwater tank replacement, guttering maintenance, bunk maintenance, drainage improvements, retaining wall maintenance, step replacement, handrail replacement and dust control (woodchips).

One of the particular problems being faced along the South Coast is the rusting of metal fixtures in the campsites from the salt laden air. In this area, Scott has been installing new stainless steel frames in the toilets and replacing rusted fittings and bolts with stainless steel ones to combat corrosion.

Recently, Foundation volunteers attended a maintenance week at the Mt Clare campsite, working alongside Scott in completing refurbishment works. Scott was extremely pleased with the quality of the work that was achieved, with the week declared a huge success; a big thank you goes out to those involved. (Ed: See our front page article.)

Next time you visit these campsites we think you will be pleasantly surprised. Scott says that over the next few months the campsite refurbishments will continue, as well as the installation of numerous new bridges.

The first of the new "group use" campsites is soon to be constructed adjacent to the Mt Cooke campsite. The site has been pegged out,

including a basic shelter (no beds, just tables), a cleared area for group activities and a dual toilet. The shelter and toilet designs are intended to be harmonious with the current Bibbulmun Track features. As with much of the original Track construction, DEC has enlisted the Department of Corrective Services (DCS) crews from Karnet Prison, who will be undertaking the groundwork and installing the shelter with the Perth Hills District staff.

One of the unit's Project Officers, Danielle Stone, is finalising three publications that will be of great benefit for the management of the Track. The new publications include the Operational Guidelines, the new Volunteer Maintenance Handbook and a weed identification booklet to assist volunteers in identifying problem weeds along the Track. The weed booklet is currently in the graphic design and production phase and the Operational Guidelines and Volunteer Maintenance Handbook are not far behind.

Finally I would like to thank the Foundation, volunteers, and DEC staff for their individual contributions to the management of the Track, as without this combined effort the Track would not be maintained to the standard it is today. 🌿



DEC Construction Supervisor Scott Hunter with volunteers at Mt Clare campsite

## Kellee McDougall Walk for Cancer Cure

Linda Stanley and Peta Hughes are walking end-to-end to raise money for cancer research. The pair will set off from Albany on April 4th and expect to reach Kalamunda on 30th May 2010. Their goal is \$6000. For more information or to make a donation,

**visit the Australian Cancer Research Foundation website**

[www.everydayhero.com.au/linda\\_stanley](http://www.everydayhero.com.au/linda_stanley)

## BODDINGTON GOLD

# Eyes on the Ground

## MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

Routine reports from our maintenance volunteers are of course an essential means of conveying information about the state of the Track and infrastructure along the way. We also encourage walkers to let us know about any problems they encounter - please feel free to pop in, telephone or email us with any comments you have.

Many volunteers will be delighted by the amount of work being carried out by DEC this year which should rectify many of the problems reported over the past 12 months or so - particularly at campsites.

The report below was sent to us by two of our maintenance volunteers and veteran walkers, FOFs - perhaps they may be taking things a little too far...

Notes for the Nerang Maintenance VOLLIE:-

Upon our arrival at the Nerang shelter, the following observations were made by the FOFs - with 45 days and 38 shelter experiences behind them on this journey.

- Dusting has not been done adequately.
- New varnishing job appears incomplete - only on the tables, not the bed boards.
- Chrome taps have not been polished for the delicate FOFs' hands to use.
- Fly screens are totally inadequate. This allows half of the WA population of blow-flies to hold their conventions inside the shelter.
- The air conditioner appears to have been removed for servicing and not replaced.
- The spa 70m in front of the shelter has been neglected and allowed to run dry.
- Stones from the floor have been permitted to migrate from the shelter allowing snake trails to be visible in the dust when delicate ladies such as the FOFs arrive.
- The enclosure for containing pet snakes appears to have been stolen, allowing them to slither rampantly around the environs.
- Inferior wooden pegs are placed too high for FOFs' arms to reach.
- The sunscreen awnings for covering the Perspex roof appear to have been stolen.
- A definite lack of effort in the garden has resulted in a complete lack of wildflowers.

- Nothing has been done to alleviate the noise pollution from vehicles on Pike Road and helicopters overhead.
- There is a definite lack of reading material in the box.
- The clothesline has not been installed, the FOFs had to supply their own.
- Failure to collect roo poo from the floor daily has resulted in a health hazard.
- We are disappointed in the failure to clean all nearby tree trunks of blackened bark. This lack of consideration meant we had to wash our clothesline - then there was no clothesline to hang it on to dry.
- The scene in front of the shelter remains static and the FOFs become tired of the same view for several hours. We suggest that you update your technology to ensure changes of scenery occur.
- Did you fail to pay your last Telstra bill? The phone appears to have been cut off.
- Where is the warning sign telling walkers that they should carry at least two liters of water for the long hike to the loo, and the necessity of wearing sunscreen and a sunhat for the long journey?



Nerang campsite

- Has the hot water urn also been sent for servicing? We couldn't find it.
- Where do you store the inner-spring mattresses for delicate FOF bodies to lie upon?

Note: We shall be inspecting these premises again in the near future, by which time we expect that you will have successfully attended to all the above points.

Thank You.

The wonderful FOFs - Charmaine and Wendy

As the volunteer who looks after this section is well-known to the FOFs, the report was accepted with good spirits and gave us all a good laugh.

Sadly a number of our longer serving volunteers have retired recently and we thank them sincerely for their great contribution over the past 12 years. Of course, their departure has left us with some sections to fill, so if you have been thinking of helping to maintain the Track, please give me a call. We currently need volunteers in the Albany, Frankland (Walpole/Denmark) and Donnelly (Pemberton) districts. If you live in these areas, we may be able to find you a spot close to home.

**Gwen Plunkett**  
Volunteer Coordinator

## Maintenance Volunteer on Sponsored Walk



Maintenance volunteer Richard Prince is planning an end-to-end walk beginning in May and ending in July this year to raise funds on behalf of the Motor Neurone Disease

(MND) Association of WA. Events are being held at each of the Track towns along the way and support groups are being formed at each location to organise minor fund raising.

The support people on the walk will be carrying sponsorship forms and the MND will contact anyone who fills out a form for their contribution.

Alternatively donations can be made directly through the MND website: [www.mndawa.asn.au](http://www.mndawa.asn.au)

Anyone wishing to know more about the walk or who wishes to sponsor Richard can email him at [roma.prince1@bigpond.com](mailto:roma.prince1@bigpond.com)

# Thank you to our volunteers

With around 400 volunteers currently involved in a range of different activities it is hard to keep in regular contact with everyone, so I always look forward to the "volunteer thank you" days.

This year our Perth gathering was held at Point Walter. It was a glorious day on the shady lawns where we enjoyed a picnic lunch.

Cliff Morris from Western Power, a BTF Diamond Sponsor, joined us to present the volunteer rewards. Cliff is a volunteer himself with the Western Power maintenance team and, having just completed an end-to-end, he was able to appreciate the work done by the volunteers all the way along the Track.

In November I met with Frankland District volunteers in the wonderful gardens at the home of Peter and Kathy Burgess in Denmark. We were delighted to welcome a number of new volunteers and to be able to thank everyone for all their help.

The following day Albany volunteers enjoyed a BBQ lunch with Bev and Gerry Visser and again we were joined by new volunteers. Sadly four of our original Albany volunteers have now retired and we missed seeing them. Our sincere thanks to Paul Mackay, Ron Fisher and Murray and Sophia Gatti.

In December, ten Foundation volunteers attended the annual thank you morning tea hosted by DEC at Matilda Bay, where Tony Jennings' Outstanding Service Award was announced. (see Bibb News issue #52).

There is no doubt that our nearly 400 volunteers are an amazing group of people who give their time and talents so generously to assist the Foundation. Their help is fundamental to the upkeep of the Track and smooth running of the organisation and the "volunteer thank you" days are a small token of appreciation. We know that their efforts are also greatly appreciated by walkers who write their thanks often in the campsite registers and in correspondence to the Foundation.

**Gwen Plunkett**  
Volunteer Coordinator



Bibbulmun Track volunteers gathering at Point Walter

### REWARD RECIPIENTS

Many volunteers work full time or have other commitments and we appreciate that it is not always possible to volunteer on a regular basis. Whether you volunteer for three hours once a year at the Royal Show or come in to the office for a day each week, it all helps and is greatly appreciated.

Here we recognise those people who accumulated many hours over the year and received Awards generously donated by our Diamond Sponsor, Mountain Designs.

### THANK YOU TO YOU ALL!

#### 500 Hours

Jim Freeman  
Charmaine Harris  
Chris Plunkett  
Edith Thomas



Cliff Morris from Western Power



Bill Ginbey and Barry Goldsmith

#### 300 Hours

Jim Baker  
Trish Bird  
Isabel Busch  
Colleen Clayden  
Richard Clayden  
Peter Dear  
Elsie Grygiel  
Peter Sweetman

#### 100 Hours

Alan Barker  
Geoff Bell  
Julie Bessant  
Malcolm Ferrier  
Dave Foster  
Colin Gee  
Mary Gray  
Stuart Gray  
Hans Hoette  
Tony Jennings  
Gayle Kealley  
Ce Kealley  
Lesley Kerr  
Caro Knight  
Heidi Martin  
Kevin Martin  
John Murphy  
Wendy Nelson  
Chris Piggford  
Gwen Plunkett  
Peter Whittle  
John Wynn



Robyn Graham and Christina Stephens



Colin and Carol Pickles



Gwen Plunkett with Bev and Gerry Visser

# Rick Clare

## BTF Life Member



Rick Clare is a life-member of the Bibbulmun Track Foundation who believes in leading a very active life. Last year he climbed Mount Kinabalu (Borneo, Malaysia) and next year he plans to cycle around Vietnam – and the Kokoda Trail is somewhere on his list of things to do.

In the meantime he completed an end-to-end walk of the Track this year and raised almost \$3000 for charity. Rick has been a St. John Ambulance volunteer for eleven years, and used his walk as an opportunity to raise funds for the purchase of defibrillators and oxygen therapy machines.

“Walking is a passion and I love the bush,” Rick said. “I like challenges and when I told people I was going to do this walk they offered to sponsor me to raise some money.”

A fall meant that Rick was unable to accomplish the trek in one go, as he had to have treatment on an injured knee, but nevertheless he completed his walk in sections.

Rick, who is 67 years young, arrived in Perth in 1953 and immediately fell in love with the bush. “I’ll never forget the smell of the bush and the sense of space and freedom that it gave me,” he said. “We are so lucky to have a track like the Bibbulmun. It’s beautiful and safe to walk along. While walking parts of it over the years, I have met the most amazing people from all over the world.”

**The Bibbulmun Track Foundation congratulates Rick on his effort and wishes him many more years of happy walking.**

# The Compleat Hyker

The compleat hiker does everything by the book  
He puts puratabs in his water, making it taste crook  
He fills up with lots of water like all good hikers should  
Then spends the rest of the morning, peeing in the woods  
He has a PLB and a sat phone, even a GPS  
He always know just where he is, he doesn't have to guess  
He rises early every morning, sometimes before first light  
Even sometimes around midnight. If the moon is very bright  
He picks up other people's rubbish, to put in his bin at home  
Sometimes he has too much, and has to leave some of his own  
He always lights a little fire, to preserve the supply of wood  
Sometimes it's so small, it doesn't cook his food too good  
He always dresses up in layers, to keep the temperature right  
And always uses a silk liner, in his sleeping bag at night  
His raincoat is real goretex, of very vivid hue  
But this doesn't always stop, the rain from coming through  
He has the latest cooker, runs on gas, metho and shellite  
Every time he lights it up it gives him a big fright  
His natty little one man tent, he backs in on hands and knees  
Leaving all his gear outside, to get wet or to freeze  
His torch is the very latest, such high tech you never saw  
It throws a light, tells the time, and gives the latest cricket score  
His walking poles are top of the range, with springs to absorb the shocks  
It even has some little bells, so you know when you're walking on the rocks  
His socks are very special, with grooves running up and down inside  
So that when the sweat collects, it runs out over the sides  
His boots are very special, with sole pattern that won't slip nor slide  
In fact they are so special, he can't wear them anywhere outside  
His walks are timed like clockwork, has a rest break every hour  
No matter if the sun is shining, or there's a heavy shower  
He is an expert on animals, birds and even on plants too  
You'll be bored to tears if he starts describing them to you  
There is one other little thing, one of his greatest joys  
The zipper on his sleeping bag, it doesn't make a noise  
He always cooks up meals, like a gourmet epicure  
With loads of herbs and spices, even a touch of liqueur  
The time it takes to eat his brekky, and pack up all his gear  
He looks around and says "Gee it's late, I might as well stay here"  
You will not often see him, carrying his pack  
He's too busy getting fit, to go out there on the track  
If perchance you see him coming, duck behind a tree and out of sight  
Or he will spend hours talking, and keep you out of bed at night

*Jim the Mad Axeman*

# END-TO-ENDERS GATHER ONCE MORE!



On 12 March 2006, the Bibbulmun Track Foundation held its first picnic for end-to-enders. On Sunday 14 March 2010 we gathered together again. Between these two events, a further 400 walkers registered their end-to-end journeys.

End-to-enders, their families and friends gathered at Point Walter Reserve. Many of those present had participated in various commemorative end-to-ends including the Track opening in 1979, the realignments of 1988 and 1998 and the 10th Anniversary Walk in 2008. It was great to meet these walkers, and especially satisfying to reunite two people who participated in the 1979 walk.

For those who may be unaware of the history of the Track, the original trail in 1979 took walkers from Kalamunda to Northcliffe, approximately 520km. The 1988 alignment continued on to Walpole, extending the Track a further 130km and the current alignment, opened in 1998, takes walkers all the way to Albany, a little short of 1000km.

Walkers were very excited to meet fellow end-to-enders who they had never met, but nevertheless “knew” through word of mouth or from reading their entries in the campsite books. Many indulged in telling their Track stories, such as the biggest tiger snake ever encountered,

the most rain on their walk, where and when they got lost, the hardest day on the Track, and everything else except the story about the fish that got away! Some were reunited with walkers they had met on the Track and had not seen for years. Others brought their photo albums with fabulous displays of wildflowers, birdlife, and the overall beauty of the bush.

The end-to-enders had the opportunity to re-visit memories of their walks through the various campsite registers and diaries from each of the commemorative walks. The 1979 and 1988 guidebooks were also on display along with the current editions.

For the first time, a pin-up board displayed our end-to-ender rogue gallery – a constantly increasing hall of fame! We also had past editions of Bibbulmun News magazines where details of each individual end-to-ender's achievements are logged in the “Yes – They Did It!” section.

Some people had the chance to show off their latest gear, especially footwear. One person was exposed who had never set foot on the Track and one end-to-ender was found who had trekked to the venue with a full sized pack. Then there were the notorious double end-to-enders attacking with their yummy cheesecake. I don't mind that sort of attack!



In a very relaxed atmosphere, cool summer breezes and the comforting feeling of being surrounded by over a hundred like minded people, the day was a great success. Many end-to-enders, including myself, are looking forward to the next get together where we would welcome many more people who have experienced what it means to have discovered the satisfaction of walking the whole length of the Bibbulmun Track.

### A final thought.

If you have completed an end-to-end and you were not invited to the picnic it is probably because you have not registered your walk. Please register with us by contacting the office. We will send you the form to complete.

### Why register?

Not for the fame. Not for the glory. We need to be able to show potential sources of funding that the Track is ever popular. Your input will help us to do that.

It takes money to keep a free resource free. 🌿

### Happy Walking!

**Steve Sertis**  
End-to-End, Lead Guide and Events Manager

# Yes, THEY DID IT!

By the end of January, 70 more walkers had registered their end-to-ends - 47 from WA, 9 from interstate, and 14 from overseas.

48 OF THE END-TO-ENDS WERE CONTINUOUS WHILST A FURTHER 22 WERE SECTIONAL.



It's been a super highway up and down the Bibbulmun Track over the past few months as walkers have taken advantage of our excellent spring weather and a wonderful display of wildflowers.

## CONGRATULATIONS to you all!

**Kathleen Weston** (60) and **Margaret Leake** (67) from New Zealand walked as "The Endless Step Club" (N-S, 04.08.09 to 23.09.09) and were appreciative of the good trail markers and maps. Margaret's highlights included the huge granite outcrops, karri and tingle forests, high river levels and the Tree Top Walk. Her favourite section was Balingup to Blackwood. Kathleen's highlights included the people they met along the way, and her favourite parts were Monadnocks and Balingup. Their advice is to make arrangements for food supplies before setting out and to pack as light as possible.

**Kristine Beach** (56) and **Ken Smith** (65) also came from New Zealand to walk the Track (N-S, 09.08.09 to 13.10.09). They had a very good overall experience, enjoying the great shelters and good water supply. Their favourite section was Monadnocks to Mt Cooke. Kristine particularly liked the wildflowers, sheoak forests, granite domes, and Beedelup National Park. Ken liked the areas of virgin forest and the snakes. They also saw wallabies, kangaroos, bandicoots and emus. The Bibbulmun is easy compared to some of the tracks they've walked in NZ, but they advise you still need to be fit.

**Robert Hart** (42) from the USA was better known as "Robert Rickshaw" during his walk (N-S, 09.10.09 to 16.11.09). He came to

Australia just for the Bibbulmun, and loved it. Highlights were seeing kangaroos on the beach at the Irwin Inlet mouth and sharing campfires with other hikers. Robert met many other end-to-enders as he overtook them along the way. Walpole to Denmark was his favourite section. He thought food supplies were good, provided you weren't choosy. His best equipment was a cheap fly net he bought at Walpole. He says he would rather have lost his sleeping bag than this net. He suggests organising a food drop at North Bannister instead of carrying supplies all the way from Kalamunda to Dwellingup.

**Daphne Koster-Bloemkolk** (31) and **Lennard Koster** (29) planned their walk (N-S, 20.09.09 to 21.11.09) from the Netherlands, overcoming a few obstacles in their desire to walk the Bibbulmun. They had a truly magnificent adventure, saying it was worth all the effort. It was a great wilderness experience for Daphne, and Lennard managed to just go by the sun and forget his watch. Daphne's highlights were the sunsets from Mt. Chance, Woolbales and along the cliff-tops; the wildflowers and the wildlife. Lennard also liked the plains, the coastal vistas and seeing breaching whales and surfing dolphins. In comparison with other walks, the Bibbulmun is well sign-posted, organised and maintained - and the water tastes better.

**Michelle McCormack** (26) from the USA walked with Aussie **Ben O'Neill** (27) from Queensland (N-S, 16.10.09 to 09.12.09). It was Michelle's first big walk and she loved being a part of the Bibb Track community for two months. She found it a great challenge, both mentally and physically, and was very impressed with the shelters. Ben also thought it was a great walk, challenging length-wise, but not spectacular in comparison with others. Michelle's favourite section was Walpole to Denmark, and she enjoyed camping along the river between Tom Road and Boarding House. Ben's highlight was hitting the south coast for a swim. They advise posting food parcels (Ben has seen quite enough dehydrated food for a while), taking a mozzie net and packing light.

Norwegian **Marinus Van Der Zande** (61) was "Sjosproyt" as his long-lived dream came true (N-S, 27.10.09 to 13.12.09). This was his first back-pack hike and he found it tough at the start, but very pleasant by the end. The highlights of his amazing trip included a close encounter with a tiger snake at Woolbales and his first sight of the Southern Ocean. He was appreciative of help

and advice from other walkers, but disappointed in the lack of supplies between Kalamunda and Dwellingup. His biggest problem was initially having the wrong fuel for his stove. Somehow he managed to walk past Northcliffe without even noticing it!

**Margaret** (62) and **Barry Bryan** (67) from England are "The Silvertops" and returned to complete their third end-to-end (N-S, 18.10.09 to 16.12.09). Barry found it tougher than their previous walks, and Margaret still loved it all - despite the Track becoming more crowded. Margaret's favourite section was Northcliffe to Walpole and Barry liked Mandalay Beach to Long Point with its ocean views. The Bibbulmun ranks highly with other walks they've completed. Barry's best equipment was his fly-net ("I would have gone mad without it!").

**Michael Kalt** (42) from Germany found his second end-to-end (N-S, 05.11.09 to 21.12.09) much easier than his first as he knew what to expect and was able to plan for it. He bought all food supplies in towns along the Track but found variety was limited. The karri forest around Pemberton was his favourite section, but the good weather was his main highlight - only 1 day of rain in 46 walking days. Michael found his second 'finish' to be less emotional than his first, but felt immensely proud of his achievement. He advises common-sense, determination and walking it "your way".

**Constance Faller** (24) and **Michael Cizmadia** (25), both came from Germany for their first ever long-distance walk (N-S, 19.10.09 to 23.12.09). They were disappointed to find that North Bannister wasn't a town with supplies, but other walkers saved them from starving. Michael saw his first ever "real" kangaroo on the track, and Connie was surprised at how big it was. Connie's highlights included encountering a snake at Long Point and canoeing across the Irwin inlet. Michael says the snakes were no big deal, but the March flies almost killed him. He wished he'd left his laptop at home, and Connie wishes they hadn't brought the shower that Michael "really wanted"! Advice for others is to pack only what you really need!

**Cheryl** (53) and **Graeme Casey** (59) are from South Australia, and found the Bibbulmun Track to be well set up and maintained, and a model that other States would do well to follow. (N-S, 01.09.09 to 29.10.09). They had no problems restocking in track towns, but found variety in food to be lacking. The walk lived up

to their expectations and highlights were the wildflowers and the friendly, interesting people they met. Their favourite section was Northcliffe to Walpole. They say to prepare well, pack light, and enjoy it.

**Heidi Wedd** (33) from the ACT was "Wildflower Walker" during her wonderful, wildflower filled walk (N-S, 21.09.09 to 23.11.09). She loved all of it, saying the bad parts made the good parts even better. A highlight was the wildflowers near Mandalay and Yourdamung. Heidi saw a variety of wildlife, including a dugite which joined her for a nap in the sun at Maringup! Her worst equipment was a cold sleeping bag, but it was made better when she bought a thermal liner. Her advice is to take a break when you stop enjoying yourself.

**Virginia de Santis** (60) and **Gordon Craig** (66) from NSW were simply "Gordon & Virginia" during their first-ever long walk (N-S, 25.09.09 to 23.11.09). Virginia was amazed at how, through the registers, they became part of a family out on the Track, "knowing" other walkers before they met them, and vice versa. Gordon rates it as the best walk he's done anywhere. They delivered most of their food drops prior to starting their walk and found that worked well. Highlights included amazing wildflowers, spectacular black cockatoos and wonderful evening conversations around the campfires. Wildlife included a snake under the floor at Blackwood, and bag-eating rats at Beedelup! Gordon's best equipment was his walking poles, and Virginia loved her pillow made up of clothes - 'cos it meant warm clothes in the morning.

**Peter Jacob** (66) from Victoria (N-S, 08.10.09 to 03.12.09) wasn't alone in searching for the exit from Little Quarram Beach (Ed: this has since been fixed) but overall thought the trail marking and the shelters were very good. He found it to be totally different to his usual alpine walks - much easier and less experience needed. His favourite section was Walpole to Frankland River, and highlights included the camaraderie of the Track, friendships made on Track, the tingles, the wildflowers and the escape from the modern-day need to be "switched on". He advises everyone to take adequate protection against the flies and mozzies.

**Valerie Preston** (57) from Bicton found every day was a challenge of some sort during her winter walk (N-S, 03.06.09 to 30.07.09) but loved the time to herself and now appreciates every minute of her life. A highlight was arriving

at Murray campsite in the dark and listening to the river sounds as she cooked her dinner under the stars. Fixomul was amongst her best equipment, and a very expensive, leaky rain-jacket was her worst. She says preparation is important. Think weight and waste and keep both to a minimum.

**Richard** (49) and **Tina Szczybrocha** (47) from Rockingham were "T&R" during their trek (N-S, 09.07.09 to 02.09.09). They appreciate the efforts of all the volunteers in maintaining the Track and shelters. Planning menus, dehydrating and vacuum sealing their meals was worth the effort. Tina described their walk as a proud, emotional experience and loved sharing it with her husband. They saw just about all wildlife from the smallest insect on the forest floor to the majestic whales in the ocean. They've walked in the UK, NZ and Poland and rate the Bibbulmun Track highly. They advise planning well, training, buying good equipment and enjoying every moment.

"The Bibb is brilliant - I think the balance between too comfortable and accommodating to 'soft' walkers and a track that gets people back to nature is perfect. I believe the amount of support and information provided by the Foundation and vollies is tremendous. Nine years in sections and all of it was a great challenge and enjoyment. THANKS.

**Pip Milton** (28) from Carlisle enjoyed her walk (S-N, 03.08.09 to 25.09.09) so much that she wanted to turn around and walk back to Albany. The wildflowers, orchids and fungi were highlights and she took many photos. Wildlife was also abundant and an owl showed her the way to the dunny at Swamp Oak. Pemberton, Donnelly River and Dwellingup were her favourite places, and she especially enjoyed the great diversity the Track offered. She says to take your time, and always pack enough chocolate!

**Jan Price** (49) from Mandurah was another solo walker (N-S, 30.06.09 to 30.09.09) and broke her journey by having some time off in towns along the way. She bought her food supplies in towns, with Balingup being the only difficult spot. (Ed: The new owners at the General Store have greatly improved supplies for walkers). A highlight was wading the Pingerup Plains in full flood with the flowers beginning to bloom. Jan described her walk as a "journey of healing" after her husband passed away earlier in the year and says it was the "best ever therapy". (Read Jan's story on page 4.)

**John** (59) and **Marilyn Beard** (57) from Woodlands were known as "Jabes & Maz" as they had a wonderful time fulfilling their dream of journeying along the Bibbulmun Track (N-S, 04.08.09 to 09.10.09). Highlights included sharing the experience with other walkers, and simply living, walking, sleeping, eating and being in the fresh air. They feel that all the hours spent dehydrating their meals, before their walk, were worth it. They were lucky enough to spot an echidna along the Track, and to watch dolphins



surfing on their last day into Albany. Woollen layers of clothing and socks were their best gear and they urge others to "just do it!"

**Judith Stokes** (68) and **Robert Clark** (59), both from Wagin, were "Short Legs" and "Lost Bob" (N-S, 12.08.09 to 17.10.09). For Judith, it was an unforgettable experience that will stay with her for life. Bob lost 16kgs on a walk that gave him plenty of time to reflect on the important things in life. They thought the shelters were excellent and Track well-defined in most places. Bob loved the flowers and scenery between Peaceful Bay and Albany, while Judith also enjoyed the magical trees and breathtaking coastline between Walpole and Albany. Judith says her walking poles saved her from many falls. They advise others to look after their feet and carry no more than 25% of their body weight.

**Ron** (62) and **Kaye Heelan** (62) from Huntingdale found the whole Track was both challenging and exciting (N-S, 24.08.09 to 26.10.09) and can't wait to do it again. Their favourite section was Donnelly River to Pemberton, but they also enjoyed the spectacular coastal views after days inland. They had a lot of rain during their walk and had to negotiate many fallen trees. They met wonderful people along the way, and also met an enormous kangaroo that refused to move off the Track. Walking poles and gaiters were good equipment, but a Goretex jacket and poncho were useless. They urge others to give it a go, take your time and, most importantly, keep your sense of humour.

**Matt Cunningham** (20) of Woodvale (N-S, 01.09.09 to 31.10.09) discovered that cheese, crackers and sliced apple make the best ever lunch, and Gatorade powder is man's best friend. Balingup to Pemberton was his favourite section but he also enjoyed Mt. Wells, Monadnocks and the massive karri trees. Matt saw an echidna near

Have you got your  
End-to-End BADGE?

FREE when you register!





Dwellingup and watched it as it crawled up a hill to where he was sitting. His rain skirt/wrap and his down jacket were very useful in the cold. He suggests taking a mobile phone and charger, being prepared for cold weather and wearing boots (not shoes) for ankle support.

**Terry Stone** (50) and **Frances Brewer** (58) from Scarborough were “Craggy Stone” (N-S, 05.09.09 to 06.11.09) during their amazing and challenging adventure. A favourite section was Woolbales to Long Point and a highlight was watching dolphins below the wind farm. It was a long haul from Kalamunda to Dwellingup with no supplies available at North Bannister. Both loved the majestic karri forests and the south coast, and found the snakes were okay, once they’d seen a couple. Their advice is to be thorough in research and preparation, and to take advantage of advice available from the BTF.

**Peter Bennetts** (71) from Applecross experienced a marvellous adventure, good weather and wildflowers at their peak (N-S, 16.09.09 to 06.11.09). Highlights for him included walking over the domes of Mts Vincent, Cuthbert, Cooke, Boonerring Hill and White Horse Hills; the first view of the Southern Ocean and climbing into the karri and tingle forest at Mt. Clare. He also spent a magical afternoon at Blackwood. Peter walked the entire distance in his Teva sandals, finding these far more satisfactory than boots. Peter is appreciative of everyone who helped to make his experience possible. He also appreciated losing 10kgs during his walk!

**Barbara Couden Ochs** (63) from Nedlands was known as “Snowcat” during her solo walk (N-S, 10.10.09 to 10.11.09). Her favourite section was south of Northcliffe and highlights included a ‘roo hopping past the shelter in the middle of the night, the southern beaches, granite outcrops and the tingles. Barbara rates the Bibbulmun Track as being one of the easier walks she has done but felt there was “too much bush for me in the middle two weeks”. She says it’s important to pack light and always take care of your feet first.

**Janey Glauser** (47) from Victoria Park also walked solo (N-S, 27.08.09 to 11.11.09), but had to break her walk due to a foot infection. She loved the whole journey, particularly the southern half. Coming across a very large kangaroo on the Track was a highlight. Janey carried lightweight, fresh vegetables that lasted three to four days, and preferred these to dehydrated ones. For her, the walk was a great time to reflect on the past and enjoy the present, and she appreciates having such a fantastic trail right on our doorstep. A mozzie net, gaiters and walking poles were best gear. Janey advises to never put your walking boots close to the fire or you might be forced to finish your walk in shoes!

**Michael Marsh** (68) of Waggrakine was “Mike M” (N-S, 1.10.09 to 13.11.09). He loved the solitude and being able to get away from civilization on his walk. The wildflowers were amazing, as were the views from the tops of Mts. Vincent and Cooke – but some of the hills were real “grunters”! Donnelly River to Northcliffe was a favourite section and Mike enjoyed the karri forests and seeing the ocean. He carried self-prepared dried meals and also posted some forward. He says the Track varied in condition, but was so much less strenuous than treks in New Guinea.

**Jennifer Wilksch** (50) from Kununurra celebrated her 50th birthday by walking for fifty days (N-S, 08.10.09 to 02.12.09), enjoying the different landscapes and sharing the journey, shelters and stories with all the wonderful people she met along the way. She posted dehydrated meals ahead of her, and purchased the rest of her supplies in towns. Walpole to Denmark was her favourite part and she also enjoyed Mts. Cuthbert, Vincent, Cooke and Hallowell. Jennifer saw 25 snakes without stepping on them, but it was the one she didn’t see that she actually stepped on – luckily, no bite! She also saw a seal on the Muttonbird steps. Her advice is to work out what you really need on the Track, and leave the rest at home.

**Robyn** (52) and **Mike Parry** (56) of Kensington walked with **Godfrey Lawson** (62) of Kallaroo as “The Plods” (N-S, 30.09.09 to 02.12.09). All agreed the Track is a fantastic facility, but hold concerns about the numbers of walkers that can be sustained. The wildflowers and orchids were a common highlight, with Godfrey also citing the tingle forests and Conspicuous Cliff. Many, many meals were dehydrated and Robyn felt they became a little bland over the two months. Great feeds were enjoyed in the towns. Godfrey was pleased with his achievement; Robyn was amazed at the number of “mountains” and Mike thought every day was hard. The Bibbulmun Track is world class and less commercial than many other walks according to Godfrey.

**Paul Gorman** (61) from Cloverdale (N-S, 13.10.09 to 13.12.09) thought the shelters and the water supply were fantastic, but was concerned at the erosion and overgrowth of vegetation in some of the southern section. (Ed: The issues on the south coast are being addressed.) He used food drops but found all towns had adequate supplies for walkers. Paul didn’t quite know what to expect when he started from Kalamunda, but was able to always remain positive, and felt a sense of achievement by doing it on his own. Seeing the Southern Ocean for the first time was a highlight. He says to keep things simple – an end-to-end is just like a weekend walk that keeps on going.

**Ursula Andinach** (27) from Maylands, **Jo Bishop** (45) from Warnbro and **Tracy Sue** (42) from Secret Harbour walked together as “Just Cause Chicks” (N-S, 27.10.09 to 22.12.09). All agreed it was a huge, enjoyable experience and they met some wonderful and interesting people along the way. They would be one of the few groups who didn’t cook on Track – they carried dry foods and resupplied in towns. Tracy loved relaxing in the peace and quiet, Ursula enjoyed seeing the towns and Jo loved the feeling of being immersed in nature. For Tracy and Ursula, this was their first long-walk experience. Jo feels her Bibbulmun adventure would be hard to beat – or even matched by other walks!

**Charmaine Harris** (57) of Maida Vale and **Wendy Nelson** (58) of Mt Helena, also known as FOF#1 and FOF#2, walked over summer (S-N, 06.12.09 to 27.01.10) to complete their 4th and 5th end-to-ends respectively. For Wendy, it was a laughter filled dose of Bibbulmun therapy and good for the soul, and both felt it was the most enjoyable of all their end-to-ends so far. Food drops worked well, supplemented by purchases in towns. Highlights were many – an amazing sunrise on Mazzoletti Beach, wine in the Schafer dam on Christmas Day, leaving camp each day at 3am to walk and listen to the forests wake up, arriving early at each camp to have a “rest day every day”, meeting other mad summer walkers and a memorable skinny-dip! A variety of wildlife was seen, including snakes at 3.30am. A snake wanted to share Yabberup shelter with them, so they packed up and headed to Collie at 7.30pm. Their advice is to laugh at yourself, keep a journal, take plenty of photos and walk with a friend who shares your sense of humour.

## Sectional end-to-enders

**Beth** (73) and **Joe Gilks** (75) from Victoria have spent the last three springtimes on the Bibbulmun Track enjoying the wildflowers (10.09.07 to 08.10.09). They both loved the great sense of well-being that enabled their minds to be “cleared of clutter”. They dehydrated their own food and sent food drops to towns, supplementing with extra supplies when needed. Joe liked the Denmark to Albany section. Beth found that each day on the Track provided some special delight. Native orchids, giant trees, meeting other people and the wildlife in the Showgrounds were among their highlights. Beth says it’s the best long distance walk she’s done and Joe added that its remoteness makes the Bibbulmun Track special. They suggest training with shorter walks first.

**Andrew Poor** (31) from Belmont found the Track provided a wonderful perspective on WA’s South West (15.09.08 to 01.01.09). He said it was easy to resupply along the way, finding some small town stores to be surprisingly resourceful. Andrew couldn’t decide on a favourite section, having many highlights during his walk. He feels the Track is too unique to compare fully with others, but it’s streets ahead of most long trails. A variety of wildlife was seen. His metho stove made from a tuna can and a tealight was his best equipment.

**George Kammann** (73) from Manjimup (29.03.06 to 01.12.09) can’t wait to do it again. He prepared his own food beforehand. George’s highlight was sharing experiences with other hikers each night, and his favourite section was Walpole to Northcliffe. He saw bandicoots, possums, quokkas, snakes, kangaroos and many birds. He liked his walking stick and advises others to train, with a pack, before they start.

**Mike Allanson** (53) from Hillarys began his end-to-end as a parent helper on a school camp (2002 to 2009), with very little “hiking” gear but plenty of enthusiasm. Over the next seven years he steadily chipped away at sections and accumulated more gear. It was brilliant when he discovered the benefits of walking poles. Highlights have included sleeping on the top of Mt. Chance where, in 12 hours, he watched the sun set, the moon rise, the sun rise and the moon set! A walk from Broke Inlet Rd to Walpole finished his end-to-end, so now he wants to do it all over again in the opposite direction (just because it’s a really good excuse to go bush for a few days).

**Liz Grow** (52) from Wattle Grove described her end-to-end (22.06.07 to 26.04.09) as “a test”. She enjoyed the sunrises and sunsets every day. Liz was amused when she walked up to the Albany VIC and saw a Johnny Walker whisky ad that advised all to “keep on walking.” Highlights included seeing an echidna hiding in a burnt out stump, and becoming closer to her family through the Track. Liz loved her walking poles and fly-net, and advises everyone to never ever pack washing powder anywhere near food!

**Kelvin Shem** (43) and **Geof Cope** (43), both from Quinns Rocks, took several years to complete their end-to-end (29.09.00 to

30.09.09) which they described as “overall, absolutely brilliant!” The southern half was their favourite, particularly the Northcliffe to Albany sections. The Bibbulmun Track rates highly with other completed walks. They say the best time to walk is between April and November.

**Ray** (68) and **Winsome Richards** (62) of Viveash walked with **Jo Roworth** (59) of Duncraig as the “Hare, Snail & Tortoise” on their end-to-end (30.07.05 to 30.09.09). They loved the huge variations in land and seascapes that they found unique and wonderful. Walpole to Denmark was the unanimous favourite section, and highlights included the camaraderie between walking mates, watching whales frolic in the ocean and the satisfaction felt at the end of each day’s walk. Jo loved the personal challenges the walk offered and the feeling of achievement after each section was completed.

**Ken Graham** (61) from Mahogany Creek enjoyed meeting other walkers and sharing experiences with them on his walks (Easter 2001 to 02.10.09). His favourite section was Giants to Rame Head and he liked the ever changing forests and amazing wildflowers. By walking in sections, Ken was able to enjoy the Track in different seasons. A magic moment was when a pair of birds sang for him, only a metre away, while he sat on a log eating lunch. Ken is thankful his cooking skills improved over time. There is good reason to be proud of the Bibbulmun Track according to him – shelters and signage are second to none! Ken is also in awe of those walkers who complete an end-to-end on their very first walk.

**Wendy** (70) and **Ralph Buffham** (71) of Wembley Downs had a marvellous time over twelve years (1997 to 13.10.09) and liked the isolation of the Bibbulmun Track when compared with other walks. Ralph loved the peace and tranquillity of the forests and the magnificence of the karri, jarrah and wandoo trees. Wendy’s particularly favourite section was Mt. Wells to White Horse Hills. The wildflowers in colourful bloom, an eagle in full flight, and red-tailed black cockatoos added to the experience, as did the ticks, according to Wendy.

**Terry Landers** (59) from Esperance found he just kept coming back each year until he walked the whole Track. (S-N, 04.11.03 to 20.10.09) He enjoyed meeting many other walkers as most tend to walk from North to South. He was impressed with the Track itself and the availability of shelter and water each night. The south coast and Pemberton were his favourite sections. He advises not to buy a large (over 65ltr) pack as it would be too tempting to pack more than you need.

**Rob** (65) and **Kaye Sheardown** (60) from Mahogany Creek enjoyed their whole walk (07.10.07 to 24.10.09) with its fantastic coastal views, huge trees and wildflowers. Highlights included Blackwood and all shelters along the rivers, and meeting and talking with walkers from all over the world. They both felt a great sense of achievement and finished a lot lighter and fitter. Their best advice is to take time to enjoy the walk.

**Terry Moore** (60) of Dunsborough was “Tezza the Tortoise” as he completed his second end-to-end (S-N, 08.10.01 to 29.10.09). It didn’t produce the same sense of accomplishment for him that his 1999 “through” end-to-end had, but was still a good achievement. His favourite section was Denmark to Walpole, and a highlight was meeting such a diversity of people. Terry says a few days of bush-walking is a sure way to quieten the “mind chatter”.

**Kerry Hill** (63) of Roleystone walked with her husband, **Don** (N-S, 19.08.06 to 01.11.09) and found the beach walks challenging, but the cliff top views spectacular. Her favourite section was Walpole to Albany and a special highlight was being chased by an emu. They had no trouble buying food supplies in the Track towns. Much wildlife was seen and Kerry enjoyed the bird calls in the forests. The shelters on the Track make the Bibbulmun Track easier than walks in Tasmania, South America and Vietnam.

**Edith Thomas** (67) from Heathridge was a part of several groups – “Super Six”, “Gem” and “Nine Nifty Nomads” during her walks (01.06.02 to 03.11.09). Edith wanted to be able to provide good advice about the Track to people who enquire at the BTF office where she works, so this was her motivation to walk the whole Track, even though she had second thoughts after her first section. She especially liked the wildflowers and sharing the journey and experiences with other walkers met along the way. Edith has walked extensively but says “there is only one Bibbulmun Track and it gets into your blood.” Being a sectional walker, she was able to carry all her food supplies and her new backpack was her best equipment. She says listen to advice and pack only the essentials.

**Keith Lethbridge** (63) from Armadale was known as “Cobber” during his walk (N-S, 04.10.08 to 28.11.09). He called himself “a disorganised bloke” who was always looking for more Waugals. He would have preferred more consistency in their placement and numbers. Keith liked the Balingup sections and also the Southern Ocean. He was amazed at the size of the ‘roos and emus in the sand-dunes. He advises others to take their time, relax, enjoy the experience and don’t let the Track beat them. 🌸

Compiled by Charmaine Harris  
BTF Volunteer and End-to-Enders

### Balingup General Store stocks up for walkers

The new owners of the Balingup General Store have done a great job in turning the store into a treasure trove for the weight-conscious traveller!

They have increased their stocks of walker-friendly products including gas canisters, individual-sized foods, small personal care/first aid products, such as individually wrapped toilet rolls, and even 10 tea bags in a snap lock bag for \$1!

Peter and Doreen welcome your feedback.  
Phone: (08) 9764 1051

Please support the towns along the Track by getting your supplies from the local stores and businesses!!



# Accommodation, Tours and Services

The following business have supported the Track by becoming an Affiliated member. Please take a look and remember them when you next book a tour or accommodation. The Foundation is happy to welcome GRANDVIEW B&B, THE GOODLIFE B&B, DWELLINGUP B&B and CHALETs, BALINGUP BLISS RETREAT, WESTLINGTON BROOK WINERY and BLUE HOUSE DENMARK who have joined recently. Thanks to all our Affiliated Organisations for their support!

| BUSINESS NAME                                  | TOWN           | TYPE OF BUSINESS      | PHONE NO.  | DISCOUNT OFFERED TO MEMBERS                     |
|--|----------------|-----------------------|--|---|
| ADVENTURE WILD                                 | PERTH          | Tour operator         | <a href="http://www.adventurewild.com.au">www.adventurewild.com.au</a> |   |
| ADVENTUROUS WOMEN                              | PERTH          | Tour operator         | (08) 9467 7304   |   |
| ESCAPE DAY SPAS                                | PERTH          | Health                | (08) 9383 4328   |   |
| ON TRACK HIKING HIRE                           | PERTH          | Equipment             | 0401 625 668   | 10%.  |
| GRANDVIEW B&B                                  | KALAMUNDA      | Accommodation         | (08) 9293 2518   |   |
| THE GOODLIFE B&B                               | KALAMUNDA      | Accommodation         | (08) 9291 3106   |   |
| MUNDARING WEIR HOTEL                           | MUNDARING      | Accom/Rest-café       | (08) 9295 1106   | No.   |
| DWELLINGUP ADVENTURES                          | DWELLINGUP     | Tour                  | (08) 9538 1127   | 10% on self-guided walk & canoe tour.           |
| DWELLINGUP B&B & CHALETs                       | DWELLINGUP     | Accommodation         | (08) 9538 1155   |   |
| DWELLINGUP CHALETs & CARAVAN PARK              | DWELLINGUP     | Accommodation         | (08) 9538 1157   | No.   |
| DWELLINGUP OUTDOOR & LEISURE SUPPLIES          | DWELLINGUP     | Equipment             | (08) 9538 1049   |   |
| TADDY CREEK                                    | DWELLINGUP     | Accommodation         | (08) 9285 1727   | On application.                                 |
| COLLIE RIVER VALLEY TOURIST PARK               | COLLIE         | Accommodation         | (08) 9734 5088   | 10%.  |
| COLLIE VISITOR CENTRE                          | COLLIE         | Tourist Bureau        | (08) 9734 2051   | 10% on souvenirs.                               |
| WHISPERING PINES B&B                           | COLLIE         | Accommodation         | (08) 9734 3883   | 10%.  |
| GLEN MERVYN FARMSTAY                           | MUMBALLUP      | Accommodation         | (08) 9732 2208   | To groups of ten or more.                       |
| BALINGUP BLISS RETREAT                         | BALINGUP       | Accommodation         | (08) 9764 1467   |   |
| BALINGUP BUDGET ACCOM. - 'THE HIKERS HIDEAWAY' | BALINGUP       | Accommodation         | (08) 9764 1049   | Special rate of \$24.                           |
| BALINGUP HEIGHTS HILLTOP FOREST COTTAGES       | BALINGUP       | Accommodation         | (08) 9764 1283   |   |
| BALINGUP LAVENDER FARM                         | BALINGUP       | Attraction/Café       | (08) 9764 1436   | 10% off essential oil of lavender.              |
| CHESTNUT BROOK COTTAGE                         | BALINGUP       | Accommodation         | (08) 9764 1606   | 10% (direct bookings only).                     |
| JALBROOK COTTAGES - KNITWEAR GALLERY           | BALINGUP       | Accom - Attraction    | (08) 9764 1616   | Sun-Thu only, outside school holidays.          |
| OAKFIELD COUNTRY HOUSE B&B                     | BALINGUP       | Accommodation         | (08) 9764 1641   | 10% off standard rates (direct bookings only).  |
| WESTLINGTON BROOK WINERY                       | BALINGUP       | Winery/Accom          | (08) 9764 1204   |   |
| NELSONS OF BRIDGETOWN                          | BRIDGETOWN     | Accom/Rest-café       | (08) 9761 1641   |   |
| YOHU PIZZA                                     | SOUTH WEST     | Catering              | (08) 9756 0616   | 10% off orders over \$150.                      |
| DONNELLY RIVER HOLIDAY VILLAGE                 | DONNELLY RIVER | Accommodation         | (08) 9772 1244   | From \$20 pp.                                   |
| SOUTHERN FORESTS WA                            | MANJIMUP       | Information Provider  | (08) 9771 7777   |   |
| OLD PICTURE THEATRE HOLIDAY APARTMENTS         | PEMBERTON      | Accommodation         | (08) 9776 1513   | Sun-Thu (direct bookings only).                 |
| PEMBERTON BREAK-AWAY COTTAGES                  | PEMBERTON      | Accommodation         | (08) 9776 1580   | 10%. More for stays of four days or more.       |
| PEMBERTON CAMP SCHOOL                          | PEMBERTON      | Accommodation         | (08) 9776 1277   | No.   |
| PEMBERTON DISCOVERY TOURS & CAR HIRE           | PEMBERTON      | Tour/Transport prov.  | (08) 9776 0484   | 10% off tours, Track transfers and car hire.    |
| PEMBERTON FARM CHALETs                         | PEMBERTON      | Accommodation         | (08) 9776 1290   | 10%.  |
| PEMBERTON VISITOR CENTRE INC                   | PEMBERTON      | Tourist Bureau        | (08) 9776 1133   |   |
| PUMP HILL FARM COTTAGES                        | PEMBERTON      | Accommodation         | (08) 9776 1379   |   |
| BIBULMUN BREAK MOTEL                           | NORTHCLIFFE    | Accom/Transport prov. | (08) 9776 6060   | No.   |
| RIVERWAY CHALETs                               | NORTHCLIFFE    | Accommodation         | (08) 9776 7183   | 10%.  |
| WATERMARK KILNS                                | NORTHCLIFFE    | Accommodation         | (08) 9776 7349   | 22%.  |
| CHE SARA SARA CHALETs                          | WALPOLE        | Accommodation         | (08) 9840 8004   |   |
| COALMINE BEACH HOLIDAY PARK                    | WALPOLE        | Accommodation         | (08) 9840 1026   | 10%.  |
| NATURALLY WALPOLE TOURS                        | WALPOLE        | Tour/Transport prov.  | (08) 9840 1019   |   |
| STARGAZERS B&B                                 | WALPOLE        | Accommodation         | (08) 9840 1553   | \$5 on accommodation.                           |
| WOZZ & SUZ CAFÉ                                | WALPOLE        | Restaurant/Café       | (08) 9840 1214   | No.   |
| NUTKIN LODGE                                   | PEACEFUL BAY   | Accommodation         | (08) 9840 8650   |   |
| PEACEFUL BAY B&B                               | PEACEFUL BAY   | Accommodation         | (08) 9840 8353   | Afternoon tea on arrival.                       |
| PEACEFUL BAY CHALETs & BACKPACKERS             | PEACEFUL BAY   | Accommodation         | (08) 9840 8169   | Accommodation at \$20pp.                        |
| BLUE HOUSE DENMARK                             | DENMARK        | Accommodation         | 0438 339 071   |   |
| BLUE WREN TRAVELLERS REST                      | DENMARK        | Accommodation         | (08) 9848 3300   | 5%.   |
| OUT OF SIGHT! TOURS                            | DENMARK        | Tour/Transport prov.  | (08) 9848 2814   | 10%.  |
| DENMARK VISITOR CENTRE                         | DENMARK        | Tourist Bureau        | (08) 9848 2055   |   |
| DENMARK WATERFRONT MOTEL                       | DENMARK        | Accommodation         | (08) 9848 1147   | 5%.   |
| KARMA CHALETs                                  | DENMARK        | Accommodation         | (08) 9848 1568   |   |
| THE COVE                                       | DENMARK        | Accommodation         | (08) 9848 1770   | 10%.  |
| WINDROSE B&B                                   | DENMARK        | Accom/Transport prov. | (08) 9848 3502   | 10%.  |
| CAPE HOWE COTTAGES                             | LOWLANDS BEACH | Accommodation         | (08) 9845 1295   | 10% off standard rates. Free Track dropoff.     |
| BAYVIEW BACKPACKERS YHA                        | ALBANY         | Accommodation         | (08) 9842 3388   | 10% off full pricing. Plus free 30min Internet. |
| ALBANY VISITOR CENTRE                          | ALBANY         | Tourist Bureau        | (08) 9841 1088   | No.   |
| FREDERICKSTOWN MOTEL                           | ALBANY         | Accommodation         | (08) 9841 1600   |   |
| NORMAN HOUSE                                   | ALBANY         | Accommodation         | (08) 9841 5995   | 5%.   |

## Balingup

### BALINGUP BLISS RETREAT



Balingup Bliss Retreat is the space you want to return to after a day's, week's or month's walk. Balingup is nearly the halfway destination and Bliss Retreat is the reward. Close to town and the Track, it offers a luxurious deep bath with valley views, the most comfortable bed in the south west, breakfast provided and other meals optional. Come relax and put your feet up in this nurturing environment!

44 De Lisle Street, Balingup  
Phone: 9764 1467  
[www.balingupbliss.com.au](http://www.balingupbliss.com.au)



## Pemberton

### PEMBERTON OLD PICTURE THEATRE APARTMENTS



We are right on the Bibbulmun Track. Situated Cnr Ellis & Guppy Street in the centre of Pemberton, the Track passes our front door.

Stay over night and use our hot tub at our four and a half star fully self contained accommodation from \$132.00 for 2 people per night. Walk In Walk Out

Drop Offs - Pick ups can be arranged

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[www.oldpicturetheatre.com](http://www.oldpicturetheatre.com)  
(08) 9776 1513



## Denmark

### THE BLUE HOUSE DENMARK



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Craig & Genny Wallace  
8 Harpendene Rise Denmark  
0438 339 071  
[info@bluehousedenmark.com.au](mailto:info@bluehousedenmark.com.au)

## Perth Hills

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## Welcome to Grandview B & B

Nestled on the escarpment overlooking Perth city and surrounding areas. Just 15 minutes from both the international and domestic airports and transfers can be arranged.

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Should you have any queries regarding the above, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Geoff Telford, Grandview B&B, 30 Girrawheen Drive, Gooseberry Hill.  
Phone (08) 9293 2518 [www.grandviewbandb.com.au](http://www.grandviewbandb.com.au)

## ADVANCED WILDERNESS FIRST AID TRAINING COURSE

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Cost: \$560 plus + venue hire fee (\$59) + accom. (\$25/n) + self-catering (BYO). 'FREE' BBQ supplied on Saturday night of the course.

For more information call: Andrew Stuart (WYLD) on 0488 683 201 (or Mon - Wed 9526 1147) [www.wyld-project.org.au/training.htm](http://www.wyld-project.org.au/training.htm)



# Walker Story...

## End-to-end or bust!

BY MIKE ALLANSON

Mike Allanson has finally become an end-to-ender after seven years of solid effort. His account is a wonderful synopsis of determination, family support, and fun, and his walk epitomises the concept of doing an end-to-end every which way over a long period of time. He describes it as:-

“Leap-frogging and hop-scooting your way up, down, backwards and forwards along the track, and all the while trying very hard not to finish it too soon”.

**(Ed: Leap-frogging while carrying a 20kg back-pack? Could lead to serious mischief in the nether regions. Please note that the BTF does not recommend this as an “on Track activity”).**

### This is Mike's story:-

It has taken me seven years to finally become a genuine Bibb Track end-to-ender. Now what am I going to do? (Ed again: Become a volunteer, Mike?)

This is how it all started. My daughter Cindy was a student at Kingsway Christian College, and I was invited to participate in the annual year twelve student excursion, so my first intro to the Track was in 2002, via a rattling school bus, to do the stretch from Dwellingup to the Harvey-Quindanning Road. I can still remember the kid who brought along a full size stainless steel thermos flask, saucepan, a litre of cooking oil and a baking dish!

Six months later, at the end of the school year, we all came back again and did another section from Quindanning Road to Collie, and the kid had trimmed his utensils, so his pack was now only 25 kg.

The following year we did Balingup to Pemberton, when we caught the last hot spell of summer and had a cool 40 degrees slogging the hills out of Balingup.

By now I was starting to get into the groove of it all, so I bought a new pair of Zamberlan boots and broke them in by walking with my son from the Brookton Highway to Sullivan Rock. (30km in new boots - yeowch!).

Next I had my parents drive me out to the Brookton Highway so I could walk back to the Mundaring Pub. The new boots absolutely pounded my feet, and I had to get my son to drive all the way up to Mundaring to collect me. Thinks...for a pleasant walk in the bush, there's an awfully big amount of driving being done here...

Then I got my brother-in-law in on the act and we did Mundaring Weir to Kalamunda - the Northern Terminus (so there... now officially I'd walked in from the south, but I still hadn't seen Albany).

After that I went with mates from Kingsway to do Northcliffe to Broke Inlet Road. We slept on top of Mt Chance and watched, within the space of twelve hours, a big sun-set, a full moon-rise and a magnificent sun-rise.

My mate Trevor and I then tackled Sullivan Rock to Gringer Creek (his long suffering wife drove us all the way out there early one morning,



and then my son came all the way to North Bannister to collect us).

It was at this stage I became aware of the best and biggest secret of all - TransWA. From here on we made a pact that no more would we use motor cars but instead plan all trips away by making full use of the public transport system.

Trevor and I took the bus from East Perth to North Bannister Roadhouse, had a pub dinner then walked the Track to Dwellingup. Following that, with the Kingsway mob again, I walked from Denmark to Albany and then from Walpole to Denmark with Trevor. On this stretch I invested in heavy duty gaiters when I saw what seemed like a million snakes!

Then my son and I did the stretch from Northcliffe to Pemberton this year and finally the big one - my end-to-end was completed, again with my son, when we walked from Broke Inlet Road to Walpole.

It's all good! Now all I have to do is each section again, but in the reverse direction that I've already walked them. It'll keep me busy for another seven years.

For me the best part about the Bibbulmun Track is to have a really good excuse to just “go bush” for five to seven days at a time. ⚙️

**Mike Allanson**



The World's largest barometer is located within the Denmark Visitor Centre. The twelve metre high instrument is officially recognised in The International Guinness Book of Records. Access is free and it's definitely worth taking a look.

## TRACK TOWN Denmark

### PASSIONATE ABOUT THEIR ENVIRONMENT AND THEIR WALKING TRAILS

Denmark is a small, welcoming township filled with locals passionate about their environment and their walking trails. It is a perfect location for a walking holiday, especially along the Bibbulmun Track. In addition there are plenty of activities to fill your rest days, whether you are looking forward to a little R&R in the surrounding vineyards, tasting locally grown fresh produce, or taking time out to rejuvenate at one of the many spa and wellness retreats.

Per capita, Denmark has one of the highest numbers of natural and alternative therapists of any town in Western Australia. You'll never have trouble finding a massage to soothe those weary muscles. The bustling arts and music scene will ensure you are never short of something to do. There are gigs on most nights of the week, and a vibrant festival culture that showcases the best national and international artists. If you can't get enough of the scenery, there are opportunities to hire mountain bikes, or canoes and kayaks and indulge in a little further adventure.

The area offers spectacular walks of varying lengths with diverse landscapes, flora and fauna. The wonderful thing about Denmark is that it is equidistant between Albany and Walpole and a great place to base yourself to experience the walks towards Albany through the West Cape Howe National Park, or along the coast and up

through the forest towards Walpole and the Valley of the Giants.

Taking the route towards Walpole allows visitors to enjoy two of the region's amazing icons: Greens Pool in William Bay National Park, and the Tree Top Walk in the Valley of the Giants. The Bibbulmun Track passes close by both locations.

The red tingle trees in the Valley of the Giants are found nowhere else on earth, and the most magnificent specimens are located in the heart of the forest. There's no better way to experience these silent giants than on a walk through the forest on a misty day, with the raindrops clinging to the leaves and branches.

The coastal heath land of Conspicuous Cliffs, Quarram Nature Reserve and William Bay National Park are a sharp contrast to the deep green of the tingle forests. I particularly enjoy the section near Boat Harbour, where the sculptured cliffs give way to enormous granite rock sheathes. It's hard to pick a favourite walk along the southern coastline - deserted white sandy beaches dotted with sooty oyster catchers; the spectacular wildflowers of Quarram in spring, or the banksia blooms that surprise all year around.

Closer to Denmark, a favourite walk is the section of the Track from Ocean Beach Road, over Mt Hallowell, down to Lights Beach and

William Bay. Mt Hallowell's mixed forests of karri, marri, sheoak and jarrah are stunning all year round, and the view from the top out over Wilson Inlet and the surrounding coastline is amazing. I especially like the contrast between this challenging hike and the gentle undulating walk through the coastal heath of William Bay National Park. After a tea break at Tower Hill - giant granite torrs that stand testament to thousands of years of geological evolution along the coastline - I always recommend a detour from Mazzeletti Beach to Greens Pool.

So much to do, so much to see. Is it any wonder that I'm happy to call the beautiful town of Denmark my home? 🌿

**Lenore Lyons**

*Lenore is Deputy Chair of Denmark Tourism Incorporated. She runs Out of Sight Tours & Eco-Discovery Shop with her husband, David Bomba. Together with Beverley and Don Ford from Karma Chalets, they operate Wilderness Getaways, specialising in walking tours along the south coast.*

**For more information about Denmark visit:**

[www.denmark.com.au](http://www.denmark.com.au)



Denmark's main street - Strickland St



Sea views near Torbay

## TRAIL MARKING UPDATE

We were overwhelmed by the response to the trail marking survey in December, with over 500 people responding within a week.

The vast majority of you (89%) opposed the change from triangular tree markers to metal ezi-drive posts. Of the 11% who were in favour, it was generally only when an existing tree marker required replacing and no other viable option was available.

Overwhelmingly, people preferred the red posts to the grey - around half because they find the red posts are easier to see, and around half because the colour is already associated with the Track.

Almost 300 people also wrote comments. The following comment is a good reflection of the feedback received ...

"I think it is a disastrous idea to replace wooden posts and markers on trees with something so environmentally unfriendly (both visually and in terms of the embedded energy and emissions produced to make the posts). We love it the way it is. The red wooden posts are simple and reflect not only the colours of the Bibbulmun Track but they are not industrial like the posts are - it is a bush track not a road way. The red wooden posts and the triangle metal waugals ARE the Bibbulmun Track.

Also as a maintenance volunteer I feel massively disempowered with not being able to nail up a small unobtrusive but very significant trail marker. I feel very special having that privilege and now it looks like I will just be a gardener doing the occasional pruning of overgrowth and sweeping of the shelter. I can stay home and do that. What's the point? Please, please - don't do this."

All your feedback was passed on to DEC and we are pleased to say that they listened, reconsidered, and provided the following response to the Board:

Marking for the Bibbulmun Track will be based on the following principles -

1. The predominant trail marking of the Bibbulmun Track will continue to be the triangular 'waugal' markers as currently used.
2. The square post markers may only be used:
  - In recreation sites where the new thematic sign system has been developed and implemented (e.g. the Walpole Wilderness Area) or
  - there is a dual alignment with another trail that is marked with posts.

Given these basic principles, it is expected that more than 97% of the trail's total distance will continue to use the existing triangular trail markers, and less than 3% will use the square post markers. All sign support structure, including ezi-drive posts, will be painted in Bibbulmun Red.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to voice their opinions - and to DEC for listening!



# 2010 GREAT AUSSIE CAMP OUT

**The Great Aussie Camp Out (GACO)** is an initiative to bring together thousands of Australians for one big night on 17 April 2010 where you can share the experience of camping out under the stars ... in your back yards, on a river bank, in a camp, a National park, a caravan park - in fact, anywhere you might feel like! Why not You!!

With the long term goal of promoting healthy active lifestyles by encouraging individuals, families, friends and clubs to enjoy the great outdoors, GACO is a a one night 'camp-out' across the country with the aim of introducing people to the fun and adventure of camping out.

For more info visit [www.greataussiecampout.org.au](http://www.greataussiecampout.org.au)

## SEA TO SUMMIT'S THERMOLITE REACTOR LINER RANGE

**Want to turn up the heat in your sleeping bag this winter? Two new additions to the Sea To Summit Thermolite Reactor liner range include the Reactor Compact Plus and Reactor Extreme. Both are incredibly light in weight and compact, adding up to 14 degrees of warmth to your sleeping bag. Perfect for those fresh, crisp nights at Monadnocks Hut!**



◀ The Reactor Compact Plus uses 80g/m2 of Thermolite fabric throughout, with 110g/m2 in the foot and torso areas for added warmth. It's shorter in length to the Reactor Extreme, making it a great choice for women who sleep cooler than most men.

RRP **\$69.95**



▶ The Reactor Extreme uses 110g/m2 of Thermolite fabric throughout the entire bag.

RRP **\$74.95**

[www.seatosummit.com.au](http://www.seatosummit.com.au)



Sea to Summit Gear is available from our sponsor stores  and 

## Getting into Gear

### Sleeping Bags in the Bush



**How many times have you lain awake all night freezing in a very thin sleeping bag that you thought would live up to the adventure you had planned? It should only happen once before you make the promise to buy yourself a decent, warm sleeping bag.**

Sleeping bags are a minefield of choice and it needs some real thought to decide which one to settle on - and no, there is no sleeping bag that's the size of a loaf of bread, weighs 100gm and costs only one dollar. If you have many different tasks for the sleeping bag, travelling, bushwalking, summer camping, then you may need a couple of bags. In much the same way that one jacket won't be suitable for every occasion, nor will just one sleeping bag.

When deciding on a sleeping bag, first determine whether you want a synthetic or a down filled bag. Synthetics are normally cheaper because they are easier to manufacture, as the fill comes in sheets that are cut to size. They are generally larger in size than down bags when they are in the stuff sack, particularly some of the older fills like Hollofibre, although they are getting smaller as the technology gets better. Some newer synthetic insulation fills such as Micro Thermic are now challenging down in size, weight and performance. However, if you put a cheap, old synthetic bag in your pack or bike pannier it will seem to take up half the space available.

Down filled bags tend to be more expensive because of the labour that goes into making them, and because down itself has different grades of quality. The trade off is that down bags stuff to a small size and people are often prepared to pay the price to get that size reduction.

To understand down quality you have to know about the "Loft" system of measurement. This is an international standard used by all manufacturers; the old ratio system of measuring the percentage of down to feathers in the fill is now banned from use by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) as it was deemed to be extremely inaccurate.



**Let me try and explain the concept of "Loft":**

The down supplier takes one ounce of down, puts it in a clear Perspex cylinder under standard conditions of humidity and temperature and then measures how much that one ounce has expanded and "lofted" up. Measurement is made in cubic inches (don't ask me why they use imperial measurements).

So for example if one ounce of down lofts and fills 600 cubic inches it's called 600 Loft, which is considered a very good quality of down. If it lofts to 500 cubic inches it's called 500 Loft and is considered very average. There is down available at 800 Loft and that is considered the best quality.

If you increase the quality of the down then you need less of it to do the same job as a cheaper down. For instance a bag that has 600 grams of 650 Loft down in it will be warm to about minus 5 degrees Centigrade. My own bag, which has 600 grams of 800 Loft in it, will cope with minus 15. The bags are the same total weight, pack to the same size in the stuff sack but the 800 Loft bag performs much better.

However, you may never need a bag that goes to such low temperatures so don't spend lots of money when you don't need to! Remember also that overheating can be just as uncomfortable as freezing.

In WA the most you will need is a three season bag rated to somewhere between minus 5 and minus 10. Also take into account whether you are a "cold sleeper" or not. Some people radiate much more heat than others. Also consider adding a liner to the bag, which will give you more temperature variation. All liners are good for the longevity of a sleeping bag and not only do they add extra warmth, they also protect the bag and keep it clean. It's much easier to wash a liner than the bag itself.

Liners come in different fabrics; cotton is the cheapest which also means it's the heaviest and packs up with the largest volume. Remember the old rule of thumb, the lighter and smaller something is in the outdoor field, the more expensive it is. Next comes silk, light, cool, and good for summer climates. It also tangles less easily than cotton. There is also a mix of cotton and silk available. Finally there are some technical fibered liners that can add 4 or 5 degrees to the performance of your bag.

The last thing to be mindful of is your sleeping mat. Self inflating mats will give you a much better night's sleep than anything else on the market. They are also warmer than air beds or closed cell foam mats and certainly warmer than sleeping on the ground. You must have something between you and the ground to insulate you or the bag will not perform properly. Most importantly self inflating mats are incredibly comfortable to sleep on. They come in a variety of thicknesses, 2.5cm, 3.8cm and 5.0cm; the thicker are the more comfortable but also heavier and bulkier.

In essence, you don't have to freeze in your sleeping bag ever again if you do some research and get a bag that suits your needs. ⚙️

Mike Wood,  
Mountain Designs WA



## NEW MOUNTAIN DESIGNS STORE

### NOW OPEN ON JOONDALUP DRIVE IN JOONDALUP\*.

VISIT MOUNTAIN DESIGNS WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS ON THE SEVEN MD STORES IN WA

\* Replacing the one in Whitford City

## WALKING IN SUMMER—A PRACTICAL ‘FOF’ PERSPECTIVE



Walking buddies Charmaine (left) and Wendy, aka the FOFs

**Walk an end-to-end in summer? Why not? Despite some misgivings voiced in the last Bibbulmun News about hiking in summer, it's safe to do so provided you are aware of the risks, follow some sensible precautions and take care. Here's how two experienced walkers planned and managed a summer adventure and completed their most enjoyable end-to-end so far.**

It was late October when we made the decision to walk another complete end-to-end on the Track rather than filling in the gaps to complete a sectional one. The summer school holidays, along with a bit of extra leave thrown in, determined our schedule, so we thought about what would make the hike enjoyable, comfortable and memorable. We're both experienced walkers, are volunteer Track guides and maintenance volunteers, we know the Track very well, have accumulated the necessary gear over the years and are crazy enough to contemplate it. So here's how we did it.

**Which direction?** We've previously completed end-to-ends in both directions, so our decision to walk south to north was determined largely by the weather. We'd start (hopefully) in cooler weather and become more 'Track-fit' as we walked toward the hotter weather in the north. This proved to be a wise choice and we left Albany on an overcast, cool day in early December. The hot weather only met us in the last couple of weeks in January as we neared Kalamunda. We also took into account our anticipated locations on Christmas Day and New Year's Day, and walking from the south provided the more attractive alternatives.

**How we avoided the heat:** We walked in the coolest part of the day. This meant rising at 2am and usually walking out of camp around 3am. Believe it or not, we actually enjoyed this and would do it again. We met several other walkers using a similar strategy. Walking by head-torch for the first couple of hours and then listening to the forest wake up was magical—the birdsong was amazing! Early starts meant we were in the next campsite by mid morning at the latest—and even by 7am one morning. We weren't tempted to walk on, but instead enjoyed a “rest day every day”—lazing around camp, snoozing, reading, eating, completing Sudoku, playing cards,

filling journals and registers and exploring the surrounds. By not walking in the heat of the day, we didn't experience the drained feeling that heat can cause. We single-hutted predominantly, only doubling up when we reached the Perth Hills where campsites are much closer together. We looked for as many dips or swims as possible, even if it meant making a short detour off-track. Sitting in the Schafer dam on Christmas Day while enjoying some wine was memorable, as was skinny-dipping in a pine plantation lake near Noggerup. The ocean and the Murray River were also enjoyable. Once in camp, a wet T-shirt (or few clothes) helped to cool us down.

**How to be as lightweight as possible:** Our packs are lightweight (Osprey Ariel 62ltr and Aarn 55ltr), well-used and familiar. We carried a minimum of clothes—shorts, T-shirt, long-sleeved shirt, thermals, fleece, two pairs of spare knickers and socks, spare bra and 'Skins'. (Ed: 'Skins' is a trade name for compression sports clothing).

Merino tops were the go—they absorb moisture and don't smell. They're soft to wear and, when tucked into your shorts, provide a bit of padding for the hip bones. We also shared as much gear as possible so we didn't duplicate items. e.g. Wendy carried the stove and the tent poles while Charmaine carried the gas and the tent shell. Meals were planned together and the weight of the food shared. Food drops were prepared before we left so that family members could post them ahead of us to visitor information centres or pre-booked accommodation. Food drops were arranged at North Bannister and Brookton Highway to avoid our carrying heavy packs as the weather warmed up. If we felt we no longer needed some gear, it was sent home. e.g. we exchanged our tent for mozzie nets, sent home gaiters, surplus food, used maps and rain gear along the way. Before leaving we packed, unpacked and repacked a few times to ensure we only carried what was really necessary. “If in doubt, leave it out”—you will find that you can make do with what you have.

**How to avoid the beasties** (flying, creeping, crawling, munching and slithering): Fly-nets and repellent were a must, especially along the south coast. The flies seemed to disappear after we hit the forests. March flies were a big problem in the first week, but we amused ourselves at West Cape Howe by feeding some dead marchies to an appreciative skink. Mozzie coils were well-used and worth carrying. We thought we'd avoid the snakes by walking in the cool mornings, but this theory was blown away when Charmaine nearly stepped on a tiger snake that was out hunting at 3.30am, but in 53 days of summer walking, we saw only 17 snakes. There were many reports in registers of hungry rats, possums and mice so we kept our food bags secure at night by either keeping them in our packs in our tent, or in our packs used as headboards after we'd sent our tent home. Our only casualty to a mouse was Charmaine's Sea-to-Summit X-bowl (left out on the table) which had holes chewed in it by the resident rodent at Possum Springs. In the northern sections, frequent checks for ticks were made. (If anyone has discovered a sure-fire tick repellent, Charmaine would love to know about it.) We startled many kangaroos in the dark mornings and heard lots of noises in the bush at various times. We're sure that Wendy's loud impersonation of a fierce pig-dog scared off a feral pig one dark morning along Dog Road!

**How to remain safe:** We always carry a PLB on our walks, plus maps, Track notes and compasses—and we know how to use them. These can help to provide an escape route if necessary. Copies of our itinerary were left with family and friends and contact was made regularly via mobile phone or text message. Phones were normally turned off, but regularly checked for messages, and re-charged in each town. We carried emergency phone numbers with us, including each District DEC office. This was wise, as we contacted Walpole DEC when we were a little concerned about billowing bushfire smoke in the direction we were planning to walk the following morning. We pre-booked accommodation in the towns and provided these contact details on our itinerary so that our families knew where to contact us or leave any urgent messages. Quizzing walkers coming from the other direction was always a good way of finding out about Track conditions or hazards ahead. Even though we weren't walking in the heat of the day, we always carried two litres of water, with added Gatorade powder, and kept

tabs on each other to ensure we were drinking it. Hats and sunscreen were used, and we both wore “Skins” which helped prevent muscle soreness and sunburnt legs.

Visitor information centres were happy to print out a local seven day weather forecast for us, and Wendy was also able to access a four day report on her mobile phone. But most importantly, we always looked out for each other whenever we were walking and we always stayed together.

**How to avoid the hassles of a hectic Christmas and New Year season:** We planned early for Christmas and sent out cards and exchanged presents back in November. But we still enjoyed the festive season on Track. Our packs were decorated with tinsel from Walpole to Pemberton, and we decorated each shelter as we overnighted along this section. Christmas Day at Schafer was memorable—by 9am we were in the dam drinking wine from our thermal mugs, and the enormous take-away dinner provided by the Northcliffe pub was a veritable feast! Being joined by friends at Donnelly River Village on New Year's Day provided much fun, food, wine and laughter. Thanks Gayle, Mark and Steve. Christmas and New Year messages were exchanged with families, and they all managed without their chief cooks and bottle-washers!

**How to have fun and enjoy the experience:** Be prepared to laugh at yourself, at each other and at everything else—often, long and loudly! We laughed every day, even over trivial matters such as putting toothpaste on the wrong side of the toothbrush, washing the clean knickers instead of the dirty ones, trying to pull on “Skins” at 2am in the tent without waking others in the shelter or reacting to a stick that looked like a snake. We took time to “smell the roses” along the way and sometimes explored a little way off Track—just for the fun of it and because we could. Sharing campsites and stories with fellow walkers always added to the enjoyment and the experience, and provided lots of laughs and memories. Don't forget to spoil yourselves with little treats—extra chocolate always works well, and still tastes good even if it's a bit melted. The odd tipple of port or wine can be worth carrying too! Be ready to make some impromptu fun as we did, with a semi-naked rain dance in a thunderstorm at Mt Dale, only to have the rain immediately stop. We found that we had to be flexible and prepared for the unexpected, such as walkers arriving at the shelter just as you're about to strip off for a wash, discovering a mishap in your pack, such as an exploding sunscreen tube, campsite toilets you can't force yourself to use, or even a snake wanting to share your shelter.

**Any disadvantages of our walk?** We've had to wrack our brains to find some. Our “rest day, every day” meant that we spent a lot of time in camp, which meant extra time for eating. So we needed more munchies which meant some extra weight in our packs. And it's probably also the reason that we didn't lose much weight. We spent lots of time reading, got through our books quickly, and so ended up carrying extra books on some sections. More weight!

**Our last word:** We will definitely walk in summer again. The Track is less crowded so you have more campsites to yourself. You experience more wilderness, there are still late wildflowers on the coastal section, lazy days in camp can be created, and there are no miserable cold, wet rainy days. Do some planning, pack some common sense, go with a positive attitude and enjoy yourself. We hope to see you out there. 🌸

**Charmaine Harris (FOF#1) and Wendy Nelson (FOF#2)**

### A foot-note from the Foundation:

*The FOFs certainly enjoyed their walk and have provided some excellent tips for staying safe in summer. However, as mentioned in their article, Charmaine and Wendy are both very experienced walkers, both very fit – and they know how to navigate properly.*

*The increased danger of bushfire in summer, along with heat exhaustion if you don't reach your destination in the early morning must be carefully considered. Your walking pace may not be as fast as theirs or you may become “geographically embarrassed” and have to re-trace your steps.*

*We strongly recommend that only experienced Bibbulmun Track walkers and early risers contemplate an end-to-end in summer.*



The fat skink we fed march flies to at West Cape Howe



Christmas packs on Track



Our boot prints on Madalay Beach



Wildflowers still out on the South Coast

# NOTICE BOARD

## Prize Winning Members

### December

Jacquelin Halberg won "Tuart Dwellers" a book by Jan Ramage, kindly donated by DEC.

2nd prize of a T-shirt and a bookmark went to Belinda Bolitho.

### January

Darren Colley won a Head Net and Nalgene drink bottle, kindly donated by gold sponsor Sea to Summit.

2nd prize of a T-shirt and an Australian Geographic compass went to Keith McLoughry.

### February

Rey Robayna won a Black Diamond Head Lamp, kindly donated by gold sponsor Sea to Summit.

2nd prize of an Australian Geographic compass went to Peter Bird.

### March

Peter and Jan Newman won a children's book "Jeemuluk, the noisy scrub bird", kindly donated by DEC.

2nd prize of an Australian Geographic compass went to Jean Cleaver.

### Life Member draw

The winner of the end of year renewal as a life member draw was Julie South.

### Annual prize draw

Lyndall Steed won the annual prize draw for our life members. Her prize was a lightweight outdoor seat kindly donated by gold sponsor Sea to Summit.

### WANTED – OLD BOOTS

Maintenance volunteer, Richard Price, is undertaking a fundraising walk and needs your old hiking boots to use for collection vessels. (See article on page 8) He'll paint them blue – the colour of MND's logo – and put them in strategic locations in the Track Towns.

Please email Richard on roma.prince1@bigpond.com

### GEAR FOR SALE

Osprey Luna 70-75L Women's Backpack. Eggplant colour. RRP \$540, now \$120 – 4 years old, heavily used, good condition. Excellent for comfort, Bioform hipbelt and Recurve harness system distributes weight well to hips. Scarpa 2610 hiking boots, size 41. Slightly shrunken so may be size 40 plus. RRP \$450 approx, sell for \$50. Has less than 12 months heavy use; okay condition.

Phone Khalin on 0488 088 675

### FEMALE WALKING COMPANION WANTED

Retired, active 61 yr old female needs a mentor to help realize a goal to walk the Bibbulmun Track possibly in the spring. As a novice, I need an experienced female walking companion (with a good sense of humour) to get out and about with and for heaps of guidance along the way. I live in the Kelmscott area.

Phone Dianne on 0409 291 544  
or email tranquill.gardens@bigpond.com

### HIKING BUDDY SOUGHT

Mature male seeking hiking buddy for walks on weekends day and overnights if weather permitting. Must be 30 degrees or less to walk. Starting from Mundaring Weir I am eventually looking at doing end-to-end.

Phone David on 0424 016 439

### BACKPACK FOR SALE

Mountain Designs Foxlight 50. Sell \$60. The bag is about 6 years old and in excellent condition. Top loading and holds 60litres (50 litres plus 10).

Phone: 0419912730  
Email: rosemaryg@arach.net.au  
Contact: Rosemary

## FREE Trip Planning Advice

### GOING ON AN EXTENDED WALK OR END-TO-END?

Our free trip planning advice service is just one of the many benefits of being a member.

Experienced walkers will help you to plan your journey. If you can't make it into the office, then this service is also available via email. This is particularly popular with our interstate and international visitors.

## Want To Advertise on our Notice Board?

Free for members—just send us an email with your details, membership number and your text. If you are not a member please phone or email us to arrange your advert. Cost is \$5.

Phone: 9481 0551

Email: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

## Guides Needed for Group Activities

Do you have the skills and experience to be a guide for corporate groups on the Bibbulmun Track?

The Foundation is looking for people who have:

- the skills and experience to facilitate team building activities
- enthusiasm and an outgoing personality
- a sound knowledge of the Bibbulmun Track

If you think you fit this description and you are available to assist with programmes on weekdays, please contact Steve for application details on:

events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au  
or 9481 0551



## TRACK TRIVIA

### HI FOLKS!

It took me until Christmas to recuperate from the ice and blizzards of Nepal – a great trek which I hope to describe to you in a future edition

Since then the hot, dry weather hasn't been very conducive to bush walking, given my advanced years. Sadly therefore I've not been on the Track since October, but I do have plans to walk between Gringer Creek and Balingup in April.

I've not been idle though, I have finally completed my book about the Bibbulmun Track, entitled "The Bibbulmun Track, its History, its Beauty & its Walkers", which I hope to have printed within the next couple of months.

While collecting material for the book, which contains almost 100 photographs of the Track and its infrastructure, I was struck by the important part that bridges, of all shapes and sizes, play in the functionality of the Track. Some of them are simple planks across streams, others are longer, sturdier constructions of wood or metal, perhaps with handrails, and in other cases the Track is carried across major bridges of historical importance.

Walkers generally take them for granted – until they're not there, or impassable! I can recall having to make detours on more than one occasion, in one case a long trek between Long Point and Mount Clare when the suspension bridge across Deep River was out of commission.

Incidentally, a question for the writers of the Track guide books: what is the difference between a significant bridge and a substantial bridge? And perhaps I might go on to ask what would constitute an insignificant bridge and trust we have no insubstantial bridges along the way, given that my dictionary defines insubstantial as "having little or no solidity".

Just to digress a little, the use of language in the guide books often gives rise to comments in the famous "red books" in the camp sites, as I am sure most of you know. One I saw recently commented on the description of the section from Boarding House to Beavis, which reads: "one of the more challenging sections of the Track". The comment in the book read: "One of the more challenging!? You mean there are more bits like that? God almighty, I'm going home!" (For those of you that don't know the section, the hill is a bit steep).

It was the history of some of the major bridges that caught my interest and while there is not sufficient space here to go into details, for those interested delving into the stories behind just a couple of examples makes fascinating reading. These are One-Tree bridge, and Long Gully bridge, both pictured below. There are several others of equal interest along the way – maybe someone could write the "History of the Bibbulmun Bridges".

Going back to the red books, it is not always clear whether the writers are being serious or whether their contributions are "tongue-in-cheek". Some are fairly obvious, such as the suggestion to set up technology to enable the scenery around the hut to change periodically to offset boredom, but how about the idea of having artificial turf around the shelters? This was proposed by a walker somewhere down around Pemberton—was he or she being serious? I'm afraid that artificial turf is somewhat against the principle of "minimal impact!"

Enough of my rambling. Hopefully the weather will cool down soon and be more "walker friendly". ☺

Happy Walking!  
Wrong Way Jim (aka Jim Baker)



Long Gully Bridge



One Tree Bridge

## Pemberton Autumn Festival

A FREE FUN DAY OUT FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!  
SATURDAY 1ST MAY 2010

Entertainment for all tastes from 10am till dusk. The main street of town will come alive with the vibrancy of music and sparkle with the popular vintage cars and motor bike parade.

The ever growing festival offers the opportunity to the community to showcase their talents and produce. There will be culinary delights to satisfy all taste buds along with the chance to sample produce from the local wineries, cideries, breweries and distilleries.



festival.pemberton.org.au

## MOTHERS DAY GIFT IDEAS

Short of ideas for Mothers Day? Has Mum been threatening to walk on the Track, but never found the time to organise anything for herself?

### How about...

- A ladies White Fitted T-Shirt - Mothers Day special \$18.00 (normally \$24.95).
- A gift voucher for one of our exclusive 'Women Only' events. Ranging from pure indulgence to 'get your hands dirty' overnight adventures. Visit the events page at [www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au](http://www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au) to find out more.
- The gift that lasts the whole year! Buy her a Bibbulmun Track membership for \$40.
- Last but not least, fossick through our array of merchandise – day-packs, map-packs, hats, waugals, water bottles & more - see our merchandise page online for a full list.

### But let's go a bit special...

Every mum deserves a break, so why not spoil her with a Bibbulmun Walking Break Gift Voucher? Let us organise her escape to the peace and tranquility of the Bibbulmun Track with our stress free, backpack free self-guided walking and accommodation packages.

We'll arrange transfers to the Track where she will enjoy a few days of walking and soaking up the beauty of the bush only to return each night to a warm welcome, a hot shower, a home cooked meal and a comfy bed – every mother's dream come true! Call Millie on 9321 0649 or email [tourism@bibbulmuntrack.org.au](mailto:tourism@bibbulmuntrack.org.au).

For more details visit our website.

## Entertainment™ Book!

- reserve yours now!!

Get your 2010/11 Entertainment™ Book through the Bibbulmun Track Foundation and support the Track!

Packed with hundreds of valuable offers from restaurants, cafés, takeaway chains, activities and accommodation.

Each Book also comes with the Entertainment™ Gold Card, for more special 25% to 50% off and 2-for-1 offers from many of the best businesses in your area.

Only \$65 collected from the BTF office, plus \$8 for regular postage or \$10 for registered post\*, you only have to use the Book a couple of times and it's paid for itself.

**Order your copy now as they are sure to sell out quickly!**

**Call 9481 0551, email [friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au](mailto:friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au) or visit our website, and start using your Gold Card and your vouchers mid-May when the books arrive.**

*\* as we cannot replace books lost in the mail, we strongly recommend choosing registered post*



## HIRE EQUIPMENT prices

| ITEMS                | MEMBERS  | NON-MEMBERS |
|----------------------|----------|-------------|
| Backpack             | \$27.00  | \$33.00     |
| Sleeping Bag/Liner   | \$20.00  | \$25.00     |
| Sleeping Mat         | \$ 3.00  | \$ 5.00     |
| Stove                | \$22.00  | \$27.00     |
| Tent                 | \$37.00  | \$42.00     |
| *PLB                 | \$35.00  | \$45.00     |
| *PLB end to end hire | \$170.00 | \$200.00    |

\*PLB = Personal Locator Beacon

All prices include GST and are for one to seven days

| PACKAGE A | \$60.00 | \$80.00 |
|-----------|---------|---------|
|-----------|---------|---------|

INCLUDES: Backpack, sleeping bag/liner, sleeping mat, stove

| PACKAGE B | \$90.00 | \$115.00 |
|-----------|---------|----------|
|-----------|---------|----------|

INCLUDES: Backpack, sleeping bag/liner, sleeping mat, stove, tent

## Have you moved?

(online or off!)

Help us save time and postage and let us know if you have moved house - or changed your email address

**Email:**  
[events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au](mailto:events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au)  
**or call: (08) 9481 0551**

## WALK with the friends

A SERIES OF SOCIAL WALKS WITH FOUNDATION VOLUNTEERS.



A PHOTOCOPY OF THIS FORM IS ACCEPTABLE

### BOOKINGS WITH THIS FORM ESSENTIAL

(PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU SIGN THE EVENT CONDITIONS BELOW)

#### PERSONAL DETAILS

Name:  Membership No:   
 Address:  Postcode:   
 Home Phone:  Work Phone:  Mobile:   
 Email for confirmation to be sent:

Tick here if you wish to car pool. Your first name, phone & suburb will be given out to others wishing to car pool.

**FREE for members – conditions apply\***  
**\$15 for non-members.**

*\*A \$15 bond is required for each WWF booking. This is fully refundable if you attend the walk. Members who do not show on the day, or cancel after the Tuesday immediately prior to the walk, will be charged the \$15. This is to reduce the incidence of members not turning up simply because the event is free, whilst others miss out on the opportunity. **Up to two walks can be booked at a time.***

Please complete and sign payment details below and sign the Event Conditions.

#### PAYMENT DETAILS:

(\$15 payment or bond pp/per walk)

Please also join me as a member, I have included

- \$30 concession     \$30 Senior  
 \$40 individual     \$60 Senior plus (couple)  
 \$65 family     \$600 Life Member

Cheque enclosed to the value of \$

*(Please make cheques payable to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation.)*

or debit my  Visa  Mastercard

.  .  .  .  Expiry Date:  /

Card name:  Signature:

#### EVENT CONDITIONS

I acknowledge & assume all risks associated with participation in any events being conducted by the Bibbulmun Track Foundation & will hold the Board, Executive Director, employees, servants & agents free from all liability, caused of action, debt claims, & demands of every kind & nature whatsoever which may arise out of, or in connection with the use of facilities, equipment, &/or participation in the events I have chosen.

Walks are based on conditions at time of printing & may be subject to change. Event details will follow via email or post.

The Bibbulmun Track Foundation reserves the right to cancel a tour with a minimum of 24hrs notice.

#### NO REFUNDS OR EXCHANGES

*(Except where an event has been altered or cancelled.)*

Signature:

In making a booking I acknowledge that I, and any other persons that I am booking for, understand and agree to the above conditions & I have included full payment for the event/s in which I wish to take part. I understand that many events have limited places & that if my application is not accepted, my moneys will be refunded in full.

**BOOKINGS CLOSE AT 12 NOON ON EACH THURSDAY PRIOR TO AN EVENT**

#### WALK RATINGS: BEGINNERS INTERMEDIATE EXPERIENCED

#### WALK BOOKINGS

|   | No. of Adults            |
|---|--------------------------|
| 13 June 10.30am   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7.5km return walk from Mundaring Weir to Ball Creek Campsite                                  |                          |
| 20 June 9.00am  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17km return walk from Brookton Hwy to Canning Campsite  |                          |
| 11 July 8.30am  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20km return walk from Kalamunda to Hewett's Hill Campsite (fit and experienced walkers only!) |                          |
| 1 August 9.00am   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15km return walk from Mt Cooke Pines to Nerang Campsite                                       |                          |
| 15 August 8.30am  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20km return walk from Dale Rd to Brookton Campsite (fit and experienced walkers only!)        |                          |

Send this back to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation, PO Box 7605, Cloisters Square, 6850 with cheque OR fax to 9481 0546 with credit card details. Bookings cannot be made over the phone or by email.

# Upcoming Events

THE EVENTS CALENDAR HAS BEEN AS POPULAR AS EVER, BUT THERE ARE STILL A FEW PLACES LEFT ON THE FOLLOWING EVENTS.

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL ON ALL OUR EVENTS

Book online at [www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au](http://www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au)

Email: [events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au](mailto:events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au) for a booking form or fax/post form from the events calendar brochure.

👤 beginners   👤👤 intermediate   👤👤👤 experienced

## DWELLINGUP DAMSELS 👤

Two days of bush rejuvenation for ladies with little or no previous overnight trekking experience. Join our experienced guides walking 17km over 2 days in the Dwellingup area.

Planning night: Friday 30th April, 6.30pm.

Date: Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th May.

Cost: \$185 members, \$205 non-members.

Includes return transport from East Perth rail terminal, experienced guides, foot balm, comprehensive planning night, trip preparation manual, map and equipment hire. BYO food.

## P-PLATES DAY WALK 👤👤

Feeling fit, done a few day walks and want to get into overnight trekking? This innovative and challenging 15km circuit walk will teach you all you need to know for overnight bushwalking. Experience breathtaking views while walking to a Bibbulmun Track campsite. Experienced guides will introduce you to the equipment they use for overnight trekking and answer all your queries. Own transport required (1½hrs from Perth). A reasonable level of fitness is required.

Dates: Sunday 9th May, 9am - approx 4pm.

Cost: \$30 members, \$40 non-members.

## MARCHING MAIDENS 👤👤👤

For those with overnight trekking experience, join experienced guides walking 41km over 3 days from Mt Dale to Mundaring. Wander through a section of bush undergoing nature's amazing process of regeneration after bushfire and experience some spectacular views from the scenic rim above the Helena Reservoir and Lake CY O'Connor. We finish our walk at the Mundaring Weir Hotel before returning to Perth.

Planning night: Friday 28th May, 6.30pm.

Dates: Saturday 5th to Monday 7th June (long weekend).

Cost: \$240 members, \$260 non-members.

Includes return transport ex Perth City, comprehensive planning night, trip preparation manual, experienced guides, foot balm, map and equipment hire. BYO food.

## PUB, PUMPS & PIPES 👤👤

Did you know that we have the longest fresh water pipeline in the world? On today's walk (approx 6.5km) we explore the history and controversy surrounding the construction of the Mundaring Weir, the pump stations and the pipeline which transports water a massive 560km! With our guide from the National Trust, we follow the O'Connor Trail, the Bibbulmun Track and the Weir Walk. Visit the No1 Pump Station and the remains of the No2 Pump Station. Our tour of one of Australia's most significant industrial heritage sites ends at the historic Mundaring Weir Hotel.

Date: Sunday 13th June, 9.30am - approx 2.30pm.

Cost: \$35 members, \$45 non-members

Includes National Trust guide, experienced Bibbulmun Track guide, entry and tour of No1 Pump Station and tea/coffee. Beverages at hotel not included. BYO lunch.

## WALKING WITH DAD WEEKEND 👤

A rite of passage for the kids! OK Dad (or Grandpa), it's time to get the kids out into the bush, camping like you used to do with your dad! Give mum a break and give yourselves the chance to spend 2 days with the kids (8yrs +) to rediscover each other and the bush by walking around 10km each day. Learn to set up camp and try out some of your own camp cooking. Max 2 kids per adult.

Planning night: Friday 11th June, 6.30pm.

Date: 19th and Sunday 20th June.

Check website for other dates.

Cost: \$170 (1 adult and 1 child), extra child \$45.

Includes return transport from Perth city, guided walk, map, comprehensive planning night, trip preparation manual and equipment hire. BYO food.

## FOOD IN A FUEL STOVE

Tired of eating the same old food when out on the Track? Join Lead Guide and End-to-Ender, Steve Sertis, for a fun and interactive evening learning exciting recipes and innovative ideas for preparing healthy food on a portable stove. Bring your own fuel stove to try out if you like! City location.

Dates: 6pm, Tuesday 22nd June.

Cost: \$50 members, \$60 non-members.

Includes ingredients, info pack, use of fuel stove and recipes. You will be cooking and tasting! Check website for availability and other dates.

The Bibbulmun Track Volunteer Guide Training Programme is sponsored by Western Power.



End-to-ender, Alex Shaw playing checkers with grandson Darcy at Murray Campsite

# Reflections from the Registers

## MOUNT WELLS

Can someone solve my problem - I keep wondering if I am walking "down" to Albany, how come I have to go "up" so much...?

Me & Gryglie's Bear 16/09/05

Day ten upon the Bibbulmun Track  
Another mountain to attack  
Mount Wells lies waiting like a hawk  
To swoop on those who take this walk.  
The weather does not help the task  
With pouring rain and winds that blast  
The forest trail was rather scary  
With "widow-makers" for the unwary.  
Despite these woes I'm pleased to say  
Mount Wells was climbed this very day.

J S Bark 21/09/06

## YABBERUP

Best thing I've ever done in the 53 years of my life....

John Hayes 30/06/09

## LONG POINT

This is the last night of our hike of 12 days. We began in Denmark and tomorrow will finish at Mandalay beach. What a BIG journey. This has been therapy for our bodies, minds and hearts, somehow stripping back all the confusion to reveal some peace. The trick is to retain that feeling even in the hustle and bustle of the big smoke. Thank you to the wild for showing me the way back to myself. You are the greatest teacher.

Selk (with Brendon) 16/01/07

## LONG POINT

Ahhh... the first day of June. 'Twas exactly two years ago that I quit my cushy corporate job and sold up everything I owned. Destroyed my career? Probably. Worth the view at Mandalay? Absolutely!

Robbie McKinney (aka Snarf) 1/06/08

## WOOLBALES

I guess only in Australia could you do something like this. No one within cooee! It's fantastic - think about it!

OBC 15/12/09

Walpole to Northcliffe. Was thinking today how this track must have come from a dream in someone's head to reality. A massive dream, a massive plan and a lot of work to be done. A lot of reasons not to do it, but here it is, and it is awesome. It is so good to sit and read of other people's adventures especially when hiking alone

Jules 05/05/00

I hope some wind comes up today and blows these bloody flies away!

Anon 13/11/00

## HELENA

I was planning to move on the Waalegh after lunch but the combined pulling power of my blisters and this view have convinced me to stay. The flies are drinking my insect repellent. This worries me.

Anon 31/10/01



Find out what's happening on WA's trails at Trailtalk.

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- Share your stories and photos
- Ask for, or give advice
- Find upcoming events

It's free to join - and easy to use.

[WWW.TRAILTALK.COM.AU](http://WWW.TRAILTALK.COM.AU)

## NEW VISITOR CENTRE IN BALINGUP

The Balingup Visitor Centre has relocated to new premises in the centre of town - opposite the war memorial on the South Western Highway.

### NEW!

Internet access now available daily from 10am to 4pm.

Look for the big blue sign and make sure you drop in when you are next passing through Balingup way.

Phone: 9764 1818  
[www.balinguptourism.com.au](http://www.balinguptourism.com.au)

## 2010 MOUNTAIN DESIGNS BIBBULMUN TEAM CHALLENGE

### A test of brawn and brains in the bush!

WANTED teams of four. Test your 'brawn and brains'

- Physical and mental challenges
- Walking 60km and camping out on the Bibbulmun Track
- 4 Heats to choose between October and November 2010

"The four days were the best organised activity-based event I have ever been on"

Rob, PBB Chartered Accountants

Meet the Challenge and the experience will stay with you forever...

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# TRAILING AROUND THE WORLD

## TREKKING IN CALIFORNIA ON THE JOHN MUIR TRAIL

by Bill Orme



*"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."*

— John Muir

The John Muir Trail in California may appeal to some of the hardier BTF walkers. This 400km route crosses plateaus high above the tree line and makes its way through passes which, even in mid-summer, remain snow-filled. It winds from the Yosemite Valley to the top of Mount Whitney, at 4,350m the highest point in mainland USA outside Alaska. In winter, it can be negotiated only on skis.

The trail remains mostly above the 3500 meter level, traversing three National Parks – Yosemite, Kings Canyon and Sequoia – and two Wilderness Areas, the Ansell Adams and the John Muir.

John Muir was born in Scotland in 1838 and went to America as an eleven year-old. He became a great, if largely uneducated, environmentalist who convinced president Teddy Roosevelt to declare Yellowstone and Yosemite as the first US National Parks. He helped to found the Sierra Club in 1892 and was its first President until his death in 1914.

In 1988 the US Congress declared John Muir Day to mark the 150th anniversary of the birth

of this great adventurer and observer. Four of his books, John Muir – The Wilderness Journeys, make fascinating reading.

I had been looking at this arduous route since 1990. My wife Nedra looked at it too, noting the continuous camping for three weeks, gruelling climbs and descents in extremes of weather, the risk of lightning and hailstorms, and the ever-present threesome – bears, giardia and mosquitoes. Wiser than me, she ruled it out.

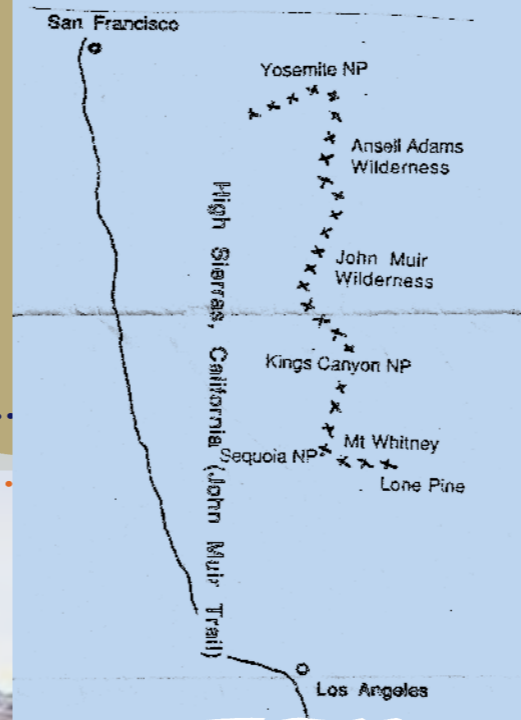
Elder son John, being braver, volunteered to accompany me and we set out in late July to miss high summer. Most people take 25 to 35 days to complete the trek, with multiple diversions for reprovisioning. We aimed to carry food for 20 days and to complete the route in one go, avoiding off-trail detours.

Initially I had not realised that the trail ends on the top of Mt Whitney, which leaves another 20km and 3,000m descent to get to Lone Pine down on the desert floor. This can be quite a trap for those who haven't read the small print.

Having studied the route, we decided to walk it from north to south rather than the more popular south to north route described in the guide book. It is easier to get to Yosemite from San Francisco and there is a convenient bus from Lone Pine to Los Angeles to get home. Also, starting at Yosemite makes it much easier to acclimatise.

Most of the route is common with the great Pacific Crest Trail which runs from Mexico to Canada. Only at one stage do the routes diverge, and at that point the Pacific Crest Trail notes say that the John Muir Trail is to be preferred.

We had three scares before the walk was properly under way. The first came when the quarantine officer at the airport considered confiscating our food. We had brought all our food from Australia, carefully wrapped – servings of homemade muesli and powdered milk, plus all the freeze-dried food, biscuits and dried fruit for the whole route. Maybe it was our jet-lagged hand-dog expressions, but the supervisor let us through. With careful packing, our packs, including food,



maps and fuel for the faithful Trangia for 20 days weighed only 17kg each, without water which was plentiful along the way.

The second scare came when we went to pick up our wilderness permit for our route at Yosemite only to find a big chalked sign stating John Muir Trail closed. However, there was no problem there either, as it was only the exit from the valley by the normal route that had been blocked by a huge rock fall. This was solved by an extra day's walk that involved climbing over Glacier Point and the almost vertical Half Dome the next morning.

The third scare was not so easily solved – our arrest and bail for entering a prohibited zone to see the rock fall and the devastation created, where great trees had snapped off at the base from the wind turbulence that the fall created. We skipped our court appearance but departed America without further arrest.

Our third morning brought violent vomiting which was first diagnosed by a passing doctor as altitude sickness from the two earlier large climbs immediately after the long flight, but which turned out to be an infected middle ear that cleared up in twenty-four hours.



From then on we wended our way over high pass after high pass, through ever changing valleys, beside and across raging streams and placid high marshes, always amongst ragged and interesting ridges. Lakes were everywhere, some massive, island-studded and placid, some blue, others emerald, ruby, sapphire and grey, tucked under the glaciers that descended into them.

We saw wild flowers, some new to us, others adaptations of familiar ones, aspen groves and forests of many kinds, and always birds, from soaring eagles to moth-sized blue-green humming birds, suspended while their tiny beaks darted from flower to flower.

The weather during the first week included thunder, lightning and hail which, while scary, gave great displays and kept the temperature reasonably warm. Camping high and alone on frozen ground under the lowering skies gave us angry red sunsets and sunrises – far better than watching TV.

The next eleven days saw clear skies that allowed the heat to escape at night, and brought temperatures see-sawing between 30 to 40 degrees at midday to -10 and -20 degrees at night. One morning I poured boiling water over the muesli to soak it and warm it up a bit, and in the two to three minutes that it took us to take down the tent it had all become solid ice.

The biggest problem was crossing the raging streams, which were carrying the snow melt. Sometimes there was a log to walk across, which was scary enough, but if not it was a matter of leaping from one slippery rock to another while carrying a full pack. One of the few other walkers we met was lying beside a crossing with a broken leg, awaiting two rangers coming with a stretcher to take him to the rescue helicopter. Had I been on my own there were a few occasions when I may have given up, but John got me through each of these incidents.

We thought snoring might be a problem as we were sharing a small tent, but it wasn't. Maybe we were just too tired to notice. John's skill and perseverance over a sometimes sceptical father kept the bears at bay. He was more successful than one chap who had his pack ripped open mid-morning while he got water from a creek. Giardia was repelled by 180 iodine tablets. John says he burped iodine for months after. Mosquitoes we didn't avoid, but we somehow got used to them.

We each finished twelve kilos lighter and John said I didn't pack food for twenty days, only twelve, which I spread out over twenty. Ungrateful son! We learnt many tricks, including cropping onion family grasses and simmering them as a vitamin soup.

The walk from Half Dome to Mount Whitney, took us eighteen days, through snow-covered passes, down crumbling descents and along an army of snow covered, ragged ridges in a unique and exclusive part of the world.

When we checked off at the end, the US National Parks Service advised us that, as far as they were aware, we were the first to walk it in one go unaided – a nice first for Australians.

The John Muir Trail ranks alongside other walks I have done, such as the Pyrenees (Atlantic to Mediterranean), La Grande Traverse des Alpes (Lausanne to Nice), the Italian Grande Traversata delle Alpi and the Chamonix to Zermatt Haute Route, all of which have their own, individual charms.

On the European trails there is usually the opportunity of yarning with other walkers from many countries in the huts each night, whereas the John Muir Trail passes through fragile areas where walkers are rightly limited by quota, which means meeting very few. On one section of six days, in fact, we met none! I consider it one of the world's great walks, with the added bonus of walking in John Muir's footsteps.

**Ed:** Certainly not a trek for the faint hearted! Congratulations to Bill and John on finishing such an arduous journey unaided.

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