

Bibbulmun

NEWS

MAY '17 - AUG '17
ISSUE # 74
RRP \$6.00



Newsletter for the friends of the Bibbulmun Track

SMOKING CEREMONY HELD AT NORTHERN TERMINUS



Olman Walley conducted the Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony.

On 19th February a smoking ceremony at the Northern Terminus was held to launch the upgrade of the terminus and interpretive trail linking to the Kalamunda Zig Zag Centre which houses the visitor information centre and Bibbulmun Track bell for end-to-enders to ring at the end of their journey.

BTF Chair Mike Wood acknowledged the support of the Shire, Department of Parks and Wildlife and Tourism WA.

This exciting project is due for completion by July and all volunteers and members will be invited to attend the opening celebration.



RITE OF PASSAGE

Over the past 18 years the Bibbulmun Challenge has been a rite of passage experience for students at the Chrysalis Montessori School. The school is proud that it has now completed the Track from end-to-end.

The idea for the *Bibbulmun Challenge* at Chrysalis originated many years ago from discussions in our Educational Philosophy Sub-Committee. At the time, we were looking for a modern equivalent of a rite of passage experience for students approaching adolescence. This type of experience symbolizes the growth of children moving to a new stage of their life and into high school and seemed largely unrecognized in our modern society. It was also important to find a process that was repeatable, as this is what makes most community rituals successful. Walking the Bibbulmun Track provides a similar, though different, experience every year and one that is sufficiently challenging for participants to be stretched in ways that make them know that it is a real achievement.

Over the past 18 years the Bibbulmun Challenge has been the Chrysalis community ritual that provides this type of initiation ceremony. It is also a time in nature, away from electronics and everyday life, where students can reflect on their experience at Chrysalis and on their fears and excitement to come. At our school students progress to a variety of different high schools, so for this cohort, who generally know each other well, providing space and time to share their hopes and concerns together, without outside distractions, is a great opportunity for all. The Bibbulmun Challenge is also a team exercise, providing opportunities for leadership, social, interpersonal and problem solving skills.

Continued on page 2



Of course, it is not an easy thing for 12 years-olds to walk for five days carrying all their gear. We have had our fair share of problems and frustrations, as experienced by most trekkers at some stage. We have experienced injuries, blisters, emotional meltdowns, heat, water logged tracks and torrential rain. However, these types of challenges are an essential part of any successful rite of passage. Indeed, to feel that sense of accomplishment one needs to have achieved something that is not easy, and maybe something one did not even feel capable of. The difficulties are not what are remembered, rather the euphoria of overcoming them and the sense of shared success. A well-known saying in our school is "what happens on the Bibbulmun, stays on the Bibbulmun".

I believe that the real power of this event comes from nature itself. No electronic gadgets are allowed, except for some safety equipment. Children do complain about this

during our preparation sessions at school, but I have never heard a complaint once we are on the Track. Life becomes simpler on the Track, with thoughts slowing and time linked only to the sun. All we think about is where we are heading, what we will eat, when can I put my pack down or take my boots off, or what am I seeing and experiencing right now. The minds of adults and 12 year olds become equally de-cluttered.

In November 2016 Chrysalis, as a school collective, finally became end-to-enders. No one person has completed all sections, but our school has. Some participants have gone on to become End-to-Enders in their own right, but it is the school community, as a whole, that is proud to now make this claim.

The Bibbulmun Track itself is a great metaphor for having and following a vision.



The perfect Mother's Day gifts

SOME GREAT IDEAS FOR THAT SPECIAL MUM!

Silver Waugal Pendant

Beautifully crafted, unique silver stylised Waugal pendant. Unisex design – string onto a leather thong for a casual look, or create a stunning piece of jewellery with the addition of a silver chain. **RRP \$40 - Only \$36 for members .**



Bibbulmun Track KeepCup

Our funky Bibbulmun Track KeepCup is the perfect gift that keeps on giving. Next time Mum buys a take-away coffee she can show off her new KeepCup and be reducing disposable waste! **RRP \$17.60 - Only \$16 for members.**



Tote bags, T-shirts, Phone covers and other great gifts from Redbubble!

You can now order a variety of products from the Redbubble website. Just search for Bibbulmun Track and two designs will pop up. The Waugal design and the simple Bibbulmun Track logo.

Choose the styles and designs you like and order direct from Redbubble.com



FROM MY Desk

Welcome to the winter edition of Bibbulmun News,

This issue highlights the fact that the Bibbulmun Track is a great resource for the younger generation. While they might not always enjoy their time on the Track, which often tests character and resilience, it is usually an experience that becomes a lasting memory.

For year six at Chrysalis Montessori School, a five-day trek is a rite of passage as they prepare themselves to move on to high school and a new phase in their lives. As one of last year's participants said, "It's not really about walking but more about showing us that we can do more than we think we can." Our congratulations to the school students, past and present, for having walked the entire Track over the past 18 years. We hope you will continue the tradition and commence your second end-to-end!

On page 15 you'll find the record for the latest group of Scotch College students to complete the Track. These 13 young men walked end-to-end over a period of five years and no doubt formed bonds with their fellow walkers that will last them a lifetime. In issue 70 we published an article about this award winning programme.

The walker story on page 22 is from Tamsin Read who completed a nine week end-to-end with her husband Rolf and their two children aged nine and six. They didn't think they would complete the Track, but after a while got into a rhythm of life that was simple, unhurried and happy. They were certainly glad to arrive in Albany when they did—but what an experience to have together as a family. I wonder what impact that journey may have on those children and if it will shape any of their choices in life.

We received a lovely letter from a member recently who, when reading the Reflections from the Registers page in the last issue, couldn't believe she was reading a comment written by her daughter Daisy in 2006! Allison says, "I can say that the early days of little overnights with friends, using their school bags as backpacks, has led to a love of walking in adulthood." Daisy has gone on to hike other trails in Australia and overseas and is studying geology. You can read Allison's letter on page 3.

Of course, the easiest way to introduce your children or grandchildren to the Track is to take them on a day walk. There are lots of suggestions in the Section by Section Guide (under Trip Planner) on our website. We also have a page dedicated to tips and tricks for walking with children (just search for Walking with Kids). Alternatively, let us do the planning and join us on one of our kids' events!

There's nothing better than a day in the bush to tire out a child—who knows, you could be planting the seed for a future custodian of our natural environment!

Linda Daniels

Executive Director

Join us on



Thank you THANK YOU thank you

A SINCERE THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING WALKERS WHO HAVE GENEROUSLY MADE DONATIONS TO THE FOUNDATION.

Bob Ansell

Fran Barry

Daphne Bastow

Robert Butler

David Calton

Gabriele Caratti

Mark Davidson

David Forster

Greg Ireland

Angela Loucaides

Estate of Chris Piggford (Bequest)

M Paterson

Greg Peterson

Inner Trekker

Kevin Tangey

Serge Tseu

Niall Weatherstone

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 can be made out to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation with your name and address. Online, 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.

Waugal cloth badge

RRP \$12.50
\$11.25
FOR MEMBERS



Be reminded of your journey on the Bibbulmun Track with our latest cloth badge embroidered with the Bibbulmun Track Waugal trail marker.

PERFECT FOR YOUR BACKPACK, T-SHIRT OR BIBBULMUN TRACK HAT!

YOUR LETTERS

Hello there.

I have just read the Dec16 - April 17 issue of Bibbulmun News and I was delighted to read a reflection from the register written by my daughter back in 2006.

It didn't take me long to realise it was her, so I texted her straight away to let her know. She was quite amazed! She was eight when she wrote it and is now 19, studying geology at James Cook University in Townsville.

I thought you might be interested to know that since 2006 she has revisited the Track many times for overnights of up to four nights. We have also spent quite a bit of time camping in the Stirling Range. She has also trekked in Nepal in year 10, walked the Kep Track and hiked the Overland Track in Tasmania twice, once with me and then again in January this year with some friends.

I can say that the early days of little overnights with friends, using their school bags as backpacks, has led to a love of walking in adulthood. The cousins she talks about in the article and her sister have all gone on to do more walks independently. It's great to get together with friends and family and take off out into the bush with a packet of marshmallows for plain simple fun.

I have included a photo of her taken on the Overland Track in January this year, she is the first on the left. I also managed to find a picture of her in 2006 crushing a bit of grass tree resin to throw in the fire for a bit of Harry Potter magic! I think this was when she wrote in the register.

Thanking you,

Allison Carter

Ed: Thanks Allison for this delightful letter. We are so pleased to hear that Daisy's adventures continue!



Daisy on the Track at eight years old.



Daisy (on left) on the Overland Track.

I have just written to thank Pemberton Discovery Tours for a great day in November. They are so friendly and well organised, my daughter Rebecca and I had a great day.

One lady said she had not had so much fun for years. It was great to spend that time in the natural world. Also to meet up with a variety of people on the tour. Thanks to the Foundation for my prize.

Julie South

Ed: Julie won our 2016 Annual Life Members Prize Draw. Many thanks to Pemberton Discovery Tours for donating the prize.

Hi!

I completed the Track a couple of days ago. It has been one of the most challenging experiences of my life. So much emotion, so much time on my own!! I had to stop for a week in Denmark because I had tendonitis. I was so afraid of not being able to finish...but I walked shorter distances, very slowly, and I made it.

It was amazing! I never felt connected to nature like that before. I feel so good right now, full of love and positive energy. Even if some days were hard, I enjoyed every second of it. I'm looking forward to walking other long distance tracks like this around the world.

I want to thank you for everything. The experience wouldn't have been the same without your help. I was well prepared, compare to some hikers I met on the Track.

You gave me wings and taught me how to fly. I'll go to the Foundation on Monday. Hope to see you there.

Have a good day,

Laurie

Ed: This was received from a young Canadian girl who completed an end-to-end after receiving trip planning advice from one of our volunteers. A very satisfactory result!

G'day,

I finally finished my sectional End to End last Friday and have added it to my profile on the Bibbulmun Track website.

I would like to thank all volunteers for their continuous efforts to keep the Track and all the shelters in such great condition for everyone to enjoy. I appreciated the fact that I always knew that, no matter what the weather or terrain threw at me, there was always going to be a dry, comfortable shelter at the end of the day to recover.

Cheers

Claudia Payne

Hi BTF Team,

Many thanks to BTF team for all the wonderful work you all do. Very proud to be a life member - and the winner of the annual life members draw - a 25 litre backpack and entertainment book - which will be very useful and enjoyable respectively.

All the best for the New Year and here's to many great days on the Bibbulmun Track in 2017.

Kind regards,

Damian Stevens



Bus service

SULLIVAN ROCK AND BROOKTON HIGHWAY

To assist walkers with transport on the WA Day June long-weekend, the Foundation is running a bus service in conjunction with the Wandoo Flats and Rocky Faces trek. Bus users do not need to book on this walk to use the service.

Walkers can make a booking for either of the services on Saturday 3 and/or Monday 5 June (departure and arrival times are on the website).

The services allow people to walk from Brookton Hwy to Sullivan Rock (or vice versa) staying at Canning Campsite and Monadnocks Campsite which suits the long-weekend time frame.

Walkers may also book individual one-way services allowing them to end their walk on Saturday, start on the Monday (making their own arrangements at the start or end of their walk respectively), or drive to Sullivan Rock (leave the car there), get the bus to Brookton Hwy and walk back to their car.

Date: Sat 3 and Mon 5 June 2017 (long weekend)

Where: Murdoch Park'n'Ride

Cost: Members \$20; Non-Members \$25

Bookings: Online. Search for Other Services on the Calendar of Events page of our website.



Enjoy a ride to the Track and back on our coaster bus.

Track Tucker

The Galloping Gourmet's Meat Pie with Mashed Potato (serves 4)

This recipe is a bit fiddlier than some—however, it's well worth the effort and you will be the envy of anyone sharing the campsite with you!

Meat Base

- 700gr beef mince1 finely chopped (or minced) onion
- 1 finely chopped (or minced) carrot
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- 1 cup chopped mushrooms
- ¼ cup of beef stock (add more if needed but keep reasonably dry to decrease dehydration time)
- 2 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire Sauce
- Salt & pepper

Method

- Cook all together; thicken with corn flour, season to taste with salt & pepper
- Dehydrate until food is dry to the touch.

Mashed Potato

- 2-3 large potatoes peeled and chopped
- Large knob of butter
- ¼ cup full-cream milk (or cream if creamier texture preferred)
- Salt & pepper

Method

- Cook potatoes until just tender
- Season with salt & pepper
- Blend potatoes, butter and milk to a smooth consistency
- Spread on dehydrator trays and dehydrate until dry to the touch
- Blend to a fine crumbly mix

Pie Crust

- 1 portion of (Lion) pastry mix – would serve about 4 people
- Alfoil
- Olive oil
- Tomato Sauce – can make your own and dehydrate, or take commercial brand

On the Track

In separate pans cover Meat Base and Mashed Potatoes with boiling water and leave to rehydrate for a couple of hours – reheat when ready to serve.

Pie Crust Method

- Mix pastry mix with a small amount of water to a firm consistency
- Oil the Alfoil and spread the pastry mix as thinly as possible
- Cover with another layer of oiled Alfoil
- Place in a shallow pan over a low heat (or on fire coals, but be careful not to burn the pastry) Cook until golden
- Place pastry crust on top of reheated meat base and serve with tomato sauce, mashed potato and your favourite green veg.

ENJOY!

ED – The Galloping Gourmet was the Track name of Chris Piggford, a BTF guide and maintenance volunteer who sadly passed away last year. This recipe was one of his specialities and was submitted by his partner Ce.



Before you go ...

CHECK THE LATEST TRACK CONDITIONS

Before heading out on to the Bibbulmun Track it is important that you check the current Track conditions and are aware of any changes that may impact on your journey. Refer to the 'Latest Track News' accessible from www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au or contact the appropriate DPaW District (see contact details below).

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. 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

Parks and Wildlife 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 dependent on appropriate weather conditions and for this reason dates of burns are not available in advance. For information regarding prescribed burns, please contact the 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 noi@bibbulmuntrack.org.au. NOI forms can be obtained from our website or contact the Foundation.

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.

Parks and Wildlife Contacts:

Recreation and Trails Unit

recreationandtrails@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Ph: (08) 9334 0265

District Offices

Perth Hills District (Mundaring and Dwellingup)

Perth Hills District (Mundaring and Dwellingup)

Kalamunda to the Harvey-Quindanning Road

Map 1 & 2 and Guidebooks 1 & 2

Contact Rebecca Hamilton on (08) 9290 6100 or

mundaring@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Wellington District (Collie)

The Harvey-Quindanning Road to Mumballup

(Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Rd)

Map 3 and Guidebook 3

Contact Nick Evans on (08) 9735 1988 or

wellington@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Blackwood District (Balingup)

Blackwood District (Balingup)

Mumballup (Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Rd) to Willow Springs

(Gold Gully Rd)

Map 4 and Guidebook 4

Contact Andrew Sandri on (08) 9731 6232 or

blackwood@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Donnelly District (Pemberton and Northcliffe)

Willow Springs (Gold Gully Rd) to Pingerup Rd

Map 5 and Guidebook 5

Contact John McKenzie on (08) 9776 1207 or

dannelly.district@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Frankland District (Walpole)

Pingerup Rd to Denmark River mouth

Map 6, 7 and 8 and Guidebooks 6, 7 and 8

Contact Chris Goodsell on (08) 9840 0400 or

frankland.district@dpaw.wa.gov.au

Albany District (Denmark and Albany)

Denmark River mouth to Albany

Map 8 and Guidebook 8

Contact Luke Coney on (08) 9842 4500 or albany@dpaw.wa.gov.au

RESPECT WILDLIFE

- Don't feed animals or birds and clean up even the tiniest food scraps.
- Secure food bags tightly and hang from rafter if necessary.
- Protect vegetation and other habitat around campsites.
- Leave your pets at home. Dogs are not allowed in national parks, water catchments or nature reserves.





Kerstin Stender,
Trails Coordinator

Locked Bag 104, Bentley Delivery Centre 6983

Tel: 9334 0265

Email: recreationandtrails@dpaw.wa.gov.au



Department of
Parks and Wildlife



Recreation & Trails UNIT

Where did the summer go? Autumn cooler weather seems to have settled in early this year and I'm pleased to say that there have been no infrastructure losses due to bushfires this season. This has allowed us to catch up on rebuilding lost or damaged shelters and bridges from the previous two bushfire seasons. Dog Pool, Gardener and Murray camp sites have all been completed and are open, leaving the replacement of the Long Gully Bridge as the only major outstanding recovery work. I understand that the weathering steel for the above ground bridge works will arrive soon, with the bridge components to be prefabricated prior to delivery and construction onsite. We are still on target for completion in May, despite the flood in February, which submerged and tested the recently completed footings.

The Department of Parks and Wildlife prescribed burning operations have commenced for the autumn season and the first diversions have been implemented. Please check the Track Conditions (www.parks.dpaw.wa.gov.au) prior to heading out and whenever you can along the way, as the notices can change daily.

Diversions for prescribed burns are implemented in advance, so that the burns can be lit when conditions are right—a decision made on the day. Due to the late decision making it isn't possible to mark the diversion just prior to the burn, which unfortunately may result in the Track being diverted even when the prescribed burn hasn't commenced. Please do not enter closed sections as, even though you might not be able to see smoke, the burn may be lit any moment at any time of the day.

Post burn the Track remains closed until it can be assured that there will be no re-ignition and burning trees along the Track have been checked, because for an extended period after a burn, branches or whole trees can fall to the ground with little warning and pose a real safety risk. These closures and diversions are in place for your safety!

I have been working with the Foundation to put together a works program for the Support Volunteer Team with Mark, the team's coordinator, who has been doing a great job of sorting out the maintenance reporting. The Support Volunteer Team will complete the more advanced tasks that have been left for too long, greatly assisting the Department and the individual maintenance section volunteers. We look forward to a reduced list of outstanding items and continued upskilling of volunteers.

The cooler weather has allowed hikers to enjoy the bush much earlier than usual this year, and hopefully you will be able get out onto the Track. "The passionate love of life and of all that is alive", was described by German-born American psychoanalyst Erich Fromm in *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973) as biophilia. The term was later used by American biologist Edward O. Wilson in his work *Biophilia* (1984), which proposed that the tendency of humans to focus on and to affiliate with nature and other life-forms has, in part, a genetic basis.

I hope you will enjoy your innate tendency to seek connection with nature while on the Track.

Stay safe!

Kerstin Stender
Trails Coordinator



The new Murray River bridge footings submerged in flood.

Eyes on the GROUND



Kerstin Stender from the Recreation and Trails Unit and Support Volunteer, Alex Williams.

Despite the warm weather our maintenance volunteers have been able to manage some visits to their sections on the cooler days and this has allowed us to keep the Districts informed of any problems and helped us with planning maintenance activities for the next few months. Mark has spent many hours updating our procedures and reporting system to simplify the reports for the Districts.

Additionally, Mark has compiled a list of projects to be undertaken this year by our Support Volunteer Team with help from the regular volunteers. This includes a number of small realignments to divert the Track away from some very degraded sections, making walking a more pleasant experience and preventing damage to the environment.

One of these proposed realignments is in the Conspicuous Beach/ Rame Head Campsite area which Mark visited with Parks and Wildlife staff members to investigate the best option for the new route.

Other realignments will be done near Canning and Waalegh Campsites. It is anticipated these will all be completed soon.

After many years of use, some of the campsites are in need of some extra work and this will be carried out as time permits. Of course any urgent work will need to be slotted into our rapidly filling program.

One problem that has faced us has been the lack of suitable storage facilities for large pieces of equipment such as chain saws and brushcutters, as well as the myriad of small tools required. We are hopeful that a storage area will soon be available for us at the Department's offices in Kensington, which will make it easier for tools to be collected prior to commencement of a project.

By the time Bibbulmun News goes to print, Mark will be enjoying a long holiday in Europe and filling in for him will be Charlie Soord, another of our maintenance and support volunteers. We look forward to Charlie's help.

We welcome your reports of any issues you find when out walking. Please be as specific as possible in describing the problem and the location. Your reports are really helpful for us and for the Districts and can often make life easier for other walkers.

Gwen, Charmaine and Mark

Maintenance Programme Coordinators

**NEWMONT.**
Boddington Gold

The Eyes on the Ground maintenance programme is generously sponsored by Newmont Boddington Gold.



Chris Goodsell from Parks and Wildlife Frankland District with Support Volunteers Mark and Alex, setting off to research the realignment near Conspicuous Beach.



Our thanks to Alcoa for sponsoring our Volunteer Support team.



Join Michelle (far right) on the last day of her end-to-end to raise funds for the Bibbulmun Track.

FILMING AND FUNDRAISING FOR THE TRACK

In April of 2017 Michelle from Walking Two by Two will start an end-to-end, during which she'll film a documentary to showcase the Bibbulmun Track, its beauty, its diversity and the people who not only walk it but care for and maintain it.

Michelle is inviting all members, volunteers, walkers, friends and supporters to be a part of the documentary by joining her walk on the final day into Kalamunda on Sunday 28 May.

Michelle is using the last day of her end-to-end as a way to raise funds for the Bibbulmun Track and to acknowledge the 300 plus volunteers who dedicate their time to maintain the Track that is free for all to enjoy.

You can be a part of this fun day by simply greeting her at the Northern Terminus to walk the last hundred metres to the visitor centre at the Zig Zag Cultural Centre, which will be the official end point of her journey. Alternatively, be a part of the fundraising effort and register to join Michelle for the last 20km or 9km of her walk. Refreshments and transfers back to the starting points are being arranged.

To find our more and to support this wonderful fundraising initiative, go to the Walking Two by Two blog page - walkingtwobytwo.com

VALE JOHN WYNNE

We were very sorry to learn that maintenance volunteer John Wynn passed away suddenly in January.

John, who was a Life Member and an End-to-End, had looked after two sections of the Track near Pemberton since 2007. He was also a valued member of our Support Volunteer Team.

Fellow Support Volunteers joined Mark and Charmaine at John's funeral where they heard from a number of John's family and friends how enthusiastic John was about the Bibbulmun Track.

We send our sympathy to Helen and all of John's family.



John Wynn at the Perth Hills Field Day in 2016.

FAVOURITE SHORT WALK

SULLIVAN ROCK TO MT COOKE CAMPSITE

Map 1: Darling Range—12km return

Park: Take Albany Highway from Armadale to Sullivan Rock picnic area (9km south of the Jarrahdale Rd turnoff). The parking area is on your right heading south.

The section of Track that I like to walk, in all seasons except summer, is a 12km stroll from Sullivan Rock to Mt Cooke campsite and back. If you want to turn this stroll into a hike, you can summit Mt Cooke as the

views from the top make the effort very worthwhile. This will be a 240m ascent and will add just over an extra 6km in distance.

From the parking area, cross carefully over the highway and take the marked spur trail across the granite slab to where it meets the Bibbulmun Track. Turn right and walk easily to Mt Cooke campsite on an almost level path. If you're feeling fitter and more adventurous you can take the hike to Mt Cooke summit, making sure to allow two hours for the extra distance.

Depending upon the time of year I take hot soup and sandwiches sit back and enjoy the peace and serenity of the jarrah forest, and the summit views if I go to the top.

Mark Davidson



View from Mt Cooke summit towards Mounts Cuthbert and Vincent. Photo by Mark Pybus

Getting into Gear

PACKS FOR THE BIBBULMUN TRACK



Two of the most important and expensive pieces of bushwalking equipment you'll ever buy are your boots and your backpack, so you need to make the right choices or pay a terrible price. We'll cover boots another time—this article will concentrate on the larger size 50-75 litre packs.

An ill-fitting pack will make your trekking life hell. Anyone who has had the misfortune to carry the wrong pack for an extended period of time will tell you that it's up there with boots that give you blisters. A pack that continuously rubs you in the same spot will detract from your wilderness experience and might become the only thing you think of on your journey, so it is important to make the right choice.

Weight is always a topic when it comes to packs—actually, there's a lot of talk about weight with any piece of outdoor gear. It is an important factor in your choice of a pack, but not the only one; comfort has to be the main consideration. Certainly if the pack is too heavy it will be uncomfortable, but it will also be uncomfortable if the harness system is not up to carrying the weight you put in.

I would advocate trying on a number of packs from different manufacturers to try and find the one that fits you best. One brand of pack may not suit your back shape; much like a brand of boot may not suit your foot. The things that I look for in a pack include the main type of fabric in the construction, the amount of air movement between the harness, the rear of the pack and my back, the waterproofness of the pack and the comfort of the harness when carrying some weight.

Packs constructed from Nylons (synthetic polymers) tend to be light in weight. Canvas is a traditional Australian and New Zealand fabric that some bushwalkers will swear by. It's not used by other overseas manufacturers, but it has a place in our environment. It is tough, hardwearing, can be made highly water resistant but it is heavy in comparison to Nylons or other synthetic fibres.

Consider waterproofness of the fabric and design—waterproof fabric will be your first line of defence in wet weather. A good rain-cover will prevent most water getting in, and drysacks will keep gear inside the pack dry, however the quality of the waterproofing on the pack fabric is very important. Cheap waterproofing will delaminate and peel away leaving a porous fabric in place.

Look carefully at the harness—can it “breathe” when the pack is loaded up and on your back? Some good airflow will really reduce the uncomfortable wetness on your back. Check the padding in the harness, do you need that much foam padding? Some pack manufacturers are now reducing weight by reducing foam padding and cutting out sections to make the harness fold better, to make it sit better and conform to the human shape. Make sure the pack you select has the capacity to carry a water bladder if you plan to use one, and/or convenient pockets to carry water bottles.

Finally, consider the brand. Some brands have a reputation of standing by their product, of researching and developing their product and not just copying competitors. Brands such as Mountain Designs, Wilderness Equipment, Deuter, Osprey, Macpac and One Planet do their own development and research.

Let's have a quick look at some of the brands in detail:

Mountain Designs: Check out their Daintree model in 60 and 70 litres, two compartments, traditional bushwalking design with top

entry. They also have a model called the Surmount which has a front zip entry as well as being a top loader.

Deuter, Berghaus and Mammut. All great European brands. My own personal packs have been Deuter, I particularly like the Air Contact models, 60, 65 and 75 litres. Some people think these packs weigh a bit too much in themselves, but I like the support and padding for those long days with 20+ kilos on my back.

Another brand that has become very popular is Osprey, one of the lightest packs on the market. I have been impressed with the harnesses and the way the weight is distributed. Really clever designs and good features.

Wilderness Equipment packs have a strong following in Western Australia, designed in WA. As an Australian pack company W.E manufacture not only in nylon but also in canvas, one of the few companies left doing this. Well made thoughtful designs, backed up with local knowledge and support—this is definitely a brand to explore further.

In the end, get as much advice as you can, speak to knowledgeable sales people in specialist stores, read the surveys, try and support local brands and buy a pack that suits your shape and your back.

Happy walking!

Mike Wood

BTF Chair

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The Wild Hiker

BTF member Louise Pontin completed her sectional end-to-end in October 2016 and has sent us this study of what she terms the Wild Hiker—read on:

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Here we are parked at a popular viewing point, the Southern Terminus of the Bibbulmun Track, in Albany, WA. This is a great vantage point for viewing Wild Hikers, and I'm sure we'll get some action today. As you may know, Wild Hikers have a tendency to walk long distances through the bush, often for weeks or even months at a time. Here at the Southern Terminus, Wild Hikers have often been walking for two months or even more...

...and here comes one now! It's hard to tell from a distance, but...yes, I'm pretty sure this is a fully-grown female. You will see by the way she is limping that she has sore feet. Often when you come across a Wild Hiker they will be limping because of some form of lower limb pain—feet, knees or hips.

Observe the hump on her back. Although this may appear to be part of her anatomy, it's actually a separate object, known as a pack. Wild Hikers living in domesticity are well known for suddenly starting to collect items and hoarding them—often in a dark cupboard or under the bed. These items will include things such as tiny one-person tents and portable stoves. The Wild Hiker then fills its pack with these collectables before disappearing into the wild. It is easy to assume that the pack is actually growing on the Hiker—you rarely see a Wild Hiker without one.

Okay folks, she's getting closer. Please make sure your windows are closed—trust me, you won't want a whiff of this one! It's probably been days or weeks since she's washed properly.

You might notice she's looking around cautiously with wide-open eyes as she approaches. Always take care when driving past Hiker road crossings—when they've been in the wild for so long the mere sound of a car engine can cause them to take fright. They are easily startled and overwhelmed as they first approach the city after their long journey, so please don't use your flash when taking a photo.

If you look to the right-hand side of the bus, you can see she's approaching the food we put out earlier. You can see her nostrils flaring—she's picked up the scent of food from quite far away. Her awareness of has been enhanced by being in the wild! Judging by her size I would hazard a guess that when she's in domesticity, she may have subsisted on a diet of gluten dairy sugar preservative everything-free...

...however, let's watch...yes! Just as I thought! She is going past the raw vegetables and heading straight for the calorie dense items...she's hesitating between the cheese and the steak. Oh, look, she's eating both at the same time! Oh, now what is she doing – yes, ladies and gents, I hear your exclamations of disgust, and trust me, I agree with you!

However, it's quite a common thing in the wild to combine unusual foods, and although you may find the thought of scoffing cheese, steak, peanut butter, strawberry jam and olive oil all at the same time somewhat offensive, understand that when Hikers are in the wild their sense of taste can change quite dramatically. The longer they hike, the less taste is considered over the more important aspect of caloric density. Rest assured, once this Hiker is re-domesticated, her sense of taste will return to normal.

Now that she's eaten, she will be full for approximately 45 minutes—when she will need to eat again. For now though, she will likely turn to the next important process—shedding. Yes, here she goes. First she will shed her pack—see how much smaller she is without it, folks! Next her shoes and socks and look! She's throwing the socks straight over to the bin. You can see they look more like rags with holes in them than socks. She will likely discard many of her layers—while tattered, holey socks and shirts will be seen as useful essentials in the wild, when the Hiker returns to a city, she seems to suddenly see the items for what they are.

Now we see her approaching the shower block—drawn there by the smell of fresh water, and a vague memory of the habit of showering in hot water with soap. When she emerges from the shower block, ladies and gents, you will not recognize her as a Wild Hiker! They are able to go through an impressively rapid transition on their return.

Don't be alarmed if you come across a Wild Hiker in the bush, they are generally calm and friendly when in their natural habitat. You may even want to offer them something to eat—they will often take it straight from your hand! When you see a Wild Hiker in domesticity, you will be unable to tell them apart from their domestic counterparts, who are commonly found walking around parks or reserves near the city. If you realize that a Hiker you've come across is from the wild and not the domestic species, don't be scared. Do be cautious though, as they are always inclined to suddenly drag out their pack and disappear into the bush. Even though they are living in the city and have the appearance of being domestic, they are, after all, wild creatures at heart.

Ed: Louise did not provide any pictures of Wild Hikers, so here is an offering of a nameless male version before and after candidate having undergone a six week end-to-end.



Before



After

Yes, THEY DID IT!

The number of end-to-end registrations has continued to grow as walkers are now able to walk a through-hike with fewer restrictions caused by the bushfires of the last two years. All entries are in chronological order of finishing their end-to-end.

Our congratulations go to all of them!

Shirley Stanfield, of South Australia, registered her walk (N-S, 31.08.09 to 31.10.09) but, apart from commenting about the lateness, gave no other details.

Peter Coyle (67), of Midland, called himself Camel as he walked with family and friends to finally complete an end-to-end (Sectional, 2000 to 05.07.15). He enjoyed the northern jarrah forests where he could pretend to be an early Australian explorer. Identification of wildflowers and trees provided satisfaction. Dolphins were a highlight but a cheeky possum carried off his Jetboil lid. Peter says his practice walks helped him immensely.

Susan Axton (73), of North Fremantle, and **Elaine Geddes** (73), of Bicton, have walked together for many years (Sectional, 03.11.02 to 22.10.15) after their first Track walk as a 60th birthday celebration. All walks were during spring and both loved the incredible wildflowers, including orchids they hadn't seen before. Overnighting at Waalegh was a special memory for Susan with a brilliant sunset, heavy downpours overnight and a valley full of thick, rising mists in the morning. Seeing the amazing regrowth in previously burnt areas north of Collie was magical. Elaine loved the whole experience and encourages anyone feeling daunted by a through-hike to do it in stages, as they did.

Tricia van de Beek has registered her end-to-end (Sectional, 23.05.09 to 27.07.16). She walked with Anne Hill (64), of Dawesville, and they called themselves the Bibb Babes. There was lots of fun, laughter, flowing poetry, singing and amazing morning teas. Anne's favourite sections included Giants to Rame Head and from DRV to Pemberton, with highlights including a swim at Lake Maringup, the wildflowers in spring and meeting other walkers who've become friends. A variety of dried food was mixed with noodles or Deb potato in the evenings, followed by nightly port and chocolate.

Anne also reports some challenges—clambering around the rocky headland at Perkins Beach and climbing using the railing on Mt Hallowell.

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"It was an experience I'll never forget. Losing track of time and simply enjoying the challenge of each day's walk was the best feeling. At the end I felt nostalgic that the big trek was over. I felt fit and unstoppable, like I could have kept on walking and walking..."

Ally P

.....
James Davies (41), of Collie, fitted his end-to-end (Sectional, 01.01.13 to 29.07.16) around his FIFO timetable. He suffered blisters early on but got better equipped later. His favourite section was from Pemberton to Northcliffe and he particularly enjoyed the sections with longer days. He advises hiking with poles.

Greg (33) and **Laurie** (33) **Simmons**, from the USA, were Mufasa and Dory and they thought the facilities were awesome. They say it is the best maintained trail they have walked (N-S, 13.06.16 to 30.07.16). While being a lot shorter than the AT with easier terrain, it was still challenging, rewarding and beautiful. The whole southern coast was their favourite section and they found resupplying in towns easy. Highlights for Greg were daily rainbows along the coast and reconnecting with friends from the AT. Laurie enjoyed reading walker entries in the journals, fording the Murray River, and surviving a few 40km+ days. Her advice is to wear Crocs through the inundated plains, and to take phone pics of elevation profiles for quick reference while walking. Greg advises walking in June and July to avoid crowds, bugs and snakes.

Lucy Thorpe (Bird), from Victoria, had an amazing time on her journey (N-S, 21.08.16 to 29.09.16) and thanks everyone for their wonderful work and support.

Buddy Moyle (28), of Leeming, also had an amazing journey (N-S, 22.08.16 to 25.09.16) on his first-time long walk. He found it was both physically and emotionally very tough, and put life into perspective about how easy daily tasks and challenges really are. Rame Head and Peaceful Bay were favourite places and he loved seeing the ocean after 700 km+. Lots of snakes were seen along the coast when the sun was out. Buddy advises taking your time as there is so much to see.

Natalie Roe (33) and **Lee Berry** (38), of Greenwood, had an amazing hike (N-S, 12.08.16 to 30.09.16) and loved living a back to basics life for seven weeks as they learned to appreciate the simple things. They had no trouble resupplying in towns and became very creative with two-minute noodles. Sections south of DRV were their favourites and they loved the remoteness and beauty of the Pingerup Plains. An echidna was among a wide variety of wildlife they saw. Both Natalie and Lee advise taking your time, going at your own pace and savouring every minute of it.

Corrine Van Burgel (54), of Kulin, was Enniroc on her end-to-end (N-S, 13.08.16 to 30.09.16) and says she could have turned around at Albany and walked back, as she was amazed how quickly the time went. The weather was very wet but she took each day as it came and had no dramas. Corrine dehydrated her own meals, and even managed to catch a salmon using dehydrated pear as bait. It tasted so good! Other highlights were meeting people along her journey and having friends join her too. A cantankerous tiger snake and a hysterical daddy emu were not impressed with her. She advises preparing well for your hike.

Allison Plenk (30), of High Wycombe, called herself Ally P on her hike (N-S, 19.08.16 to 11.10.16) when every day offered something different. She says "It was an experience I'll never forget. Losing track of time and simply enjoying the challenge of each day's walk was the best feeling. At the end I felt nostalgic that the big trek was over. I felt fit and unstoppable, like I could have kept on walking and walking...". The star-filled night sky, learning about

Our CONGRATULATIONS to the following 72 walkers on completing an end-to-end! 12 from overseas, 12 from interstate and 48 from WA.



wildflowers and wildlife, and experiencing nature's power while walking through hail, wind, rain and heat were all highlights. Allison is appreciative of the volunteers who maintain the Track.

Mark (35) and **Rebecca** (31) **Frendo**, of Bassendean were simply Mark and Bec or the Frendos on a walk (N-S, 04.09.16 to 15.10.16) that they found super tough and challenging, but a walk they would recommend to everyone. They started off in healthy mode—no chocolate, coffee or treats. By the second section they were carrying triple cream brie, blocks of chocolate and canned gin and tonics! They found towns were well stocked for food, but discovered you can't buy a pair of socks in Dwellingup! They say the relentless cold and rain started to get to them and sometimes it was really hard leaving their trail family with whom they'd shared campsites. The south coast sections were favourites and the blue wrens were a delight. The Bibbulmun Track is right up there in comparison with other walks, and they say that, like all great challenges, you only appreciate how amazing it was once it's done.

Allison (26) and **Tony** (55) **Higgs**, of Kronkup, were Bubba Hubba and Papa Hubba on a journey (N-S, 28.08.16 to 17.10.16) that was both unique and incredible. Tony was happy that Allison was willing to join him on an end-to-end and she was pleased that it was far less intimidating than she expected. A family feast at Pemberton is a special memory. After she finished, Allison felt less stressed and more inspired toward the future, and Tony found the Track brought out the best in people—walkers were consistently friendly, generous and good company at campsites.

Lawrence Cook (66), of Kallaroo, called himself Freddie on a walk (N-S, 12.08.16 to 21.10.16) during which he experienced lots of rain and tree blow-downs. He found towns had good supplies to supplement his dehydrated meals. Balingup to Northcliffe was his favourite section, with the first sight of the ocean being a highlight. Lawrence found the Track provided a good way to clear his head of the everyday pressures of modern living. It provided varied

landscapes and was not as crowded as many other walks.

Lynne White (63), from NZ, was one of the three March Girls (N-S, 01.09.16 to 23.10.16). They delivered food drops to post offices and VICs along the way and found this worked really well for them. The southern coast was Lynne's favourite section, and she enjoyed the generosity of people she met on Track and in towns along the way. Granite slabs, wild flowers and coastal scenery were also favourites. She advises planning well and being prepared for rain and cold as well as sunshine and warmth.

Louise Pontin (28), from Victoria, was One Boot on her first long-distance hike (N-S, 04.09.16 to 23.10.16). While she found many parts were stunning, enjoyable, fun, adventurous and calming, there were also parts that were challenging, boring, tiring, painful and unpleasant. But overall, the experience was rewarding, and helped her appreciate how good and comfortable our lives are most of the time. She was appreciative of the Track's great facilities which compared very favourably with other walks. Louise loved the south coastal sections where she also saw a seal up close and personal on Light's Beach, and watched a pod of dolphins surfing the waves at Sand Patch.

Ross Currie (55) and **Barbara Gloggner**, of Rossmoyne, say their end-to-end (Sectional, 05.10.14 to 24.10.16) was fantastic—time and energy well spent. Their favourite section was from Walpole to Denmark with its impressive and varying scenery. Meeting fellow hikers and sharing shelters with them was also enjoyable. They were excited to do the walk and relieved when it was finished. Advice for others is to keep weight down to an absolute minimum.

Julian Dear (18), of Kallaroo, was Mr Deer on a journey (N-S, 03.09.16 to 25.10.16) that could be pure joy, yet hard at the same time. He says the entire trip was a life highlight for him, and he discovered an inner strength he didn't know he had. Using both food drops and town purchases helped to keep his pack-weight down, but still offered variety in his diet. Sections of karri forest were among favourites and he also liked the entire south coastline.

Jeremy Bliss (71), from NSW, was Jman on his end-to-end (N-S, 30.08.16 to 26.10.16). This trip was his first after a helicopter rescue on the Australian Alps Walking Track, and gave him back his mojo. He said there were some hard moments but they only made the good times better. Overall, it was an excellent walk with its variety of environment and weather, its first-class amenities and its great maintenance. Jerry dehydrated most of his meals and supplemented these with town supplies. The area around Mt Cooke and the section from Walpole to Peaceful Bay were favourites with the amazing karris, the first sight of the ocean, the after-fire regrowth and pancakes and maple syrup being real highlights. He advises flexibility in planning, and utilising the VICs in the Track towns.

Leandra Finger (27) and **Michael Kressibucher** (30), from Switzerland, experienced very changeable weather from hot sun to strong winds and hailstorms on their two-month walk (N-S, 28.08.16 to 30.10.16). All supplies were purchased in Track towns with more and more fancy things added along the way. Mounts Cuthbert and Cooke, as well as the southern coastline, were liked for their spectacular views. A highlight was leaving the rainy wet plains and seeing the ocean for the first time. Leandra says it was sometimes a challenge to walk on, especially on days with sore feet, rain or when they walked over 30km. But it was interesting how strong the will to make it to the end became. Both were happy to see kangaroos, wallabies and emus, and managed to photograph a slow moving snake.

Peter Ketelaar (56), of Denmark WA, enjoyed his walk (N-S, 28.09.16 to 31.10.16) on a world class track. He thought most of the towns had adequate food supplies even if variety was lacking in a few. Favourite sections included Balingup to Pemberton and Northcliffe to Albany. He especially liked the spectacular locations of some of the campsites. Peter advises taking a small tent or mosquito net as protection against coastal mosquitoes.

Baptiste Cecille (21), from France, enjoyed his end-to-end (N-S, 07.09.16 to 01.11.16)

Yes, THEY DID IT! (CONT.)

which showcased the south-west's diverse landscapes, but acknowledged the difficulties caused by the weather. Food drops sent to VICs worked well. Walpole to Denmark was the favourite section, with highlights including the karri forests, beaches, whales and wildflowers. As a quiet solo walker, Baptiste was able to see a variety of wildlife.

Kevin Tangney (61), from Victoria, was Kevin on an amazing adventure (N-S, 07.09.16 to 01.11.16) which he described as challenging but always fun, and with campsites as luxuries when compared with other walks. Favourite sections included Kalamunda to North Bannister, DRV to Northcliffe and Walpole to Albany. Karris and tingles were special and he also enjoyed the wildflowers, the coastal scenery and meeting so many interesting people. He advises doing your homework before setting out.

Ryan Bongiovanni (24), and **Melissa Loven** (23), from the USA, were part of a group called The Yanks (N-S, 06.09.16 to 02.11.16). Ryan loved the Track and the shelters which he says are far better than those on the AT. Melissa loved the greater variety of scenery. The group used food drops, and said some of the smaller towns couldn't supply a big variety of foods. Ryan liked the views from Helena and Waalegh, but Tom Road and Schafer were his favourite campsites because of the water. Melissa liked Monadnocks to Nerang because of the amazing views, and learned a lot about orchids from other walkers. They found some great company on the Track and remain friends with some of the walkers they met. Among the wildlife, they saw a lot of snakes, so both advise others to wear gaiters.

Iain Noble (59), from the ACT, was Iain on a walk (N-S, 04.10.16 to 10.11.16) that didn't take him anywhere near as long as expected. He found it was easy to maintain good distances each day and enjoyed the logistics of planning each section. He appreciated the good gradients, the well-marked Track, the excellent shelters and the reliable water supplies. Iain loved the variety of trees and also enjoyed the diversity of wildflowers in a bumper year for them. His walk gave him time to think and he loved the solitude, always using his tent rather than sharing the shelters.

Mar Knox, of Leederville, was MARvellous on her end-to-end (N-S, 14.09.16 to

11.11.16). In comparison with other walks completed, she says the Track must be the flattest, easiest long distance walk in the world, and very doable for most people. She felt very fit and strong when she finished, admitting to carrying a 22kg+ pack all the way as she'd never sacrifice her luxuries for a few grams! Mar loved the tall trees from DRV to Pemberton, but the undoubted highlight was the profusion of wildflowers that accompanied her down the Track. Each section produced new floral interest. Mar's boots began to fall apart, but with the help of duct tape, Araldite and prayers to the gear-Gods, they made it safely to the Southern Terminus rubbish bin!

Jacquelyn Balkin (52), from NSW, says her walk (N-S, 19.08.16 to 11.11.16) was one of the most challenging and emotional things she has ever done and she acknowledges the encouragement received from family, friends and new hiking companions. She also appreciated the campsites with good shelters, water tanks and toilets. The tingle forests were a favourite with Jacquelyn, as were the flatter sections of Track! Trail magic from a local Northcliffe farmer was also remembered. Hiking poles were a big help.

Claudia Payne (58), of Scarborough, loved meeting such a wide variety of people and sharing stories and experiences with them on her walks (Sectional, 09.10.09 to 11.11.16). She kept food supplies simple and made her own special granola mix for breakfast each day. Favourite sections included the Perth Hills region and Walpole to Albany. Claudia's only problem was bad blisters, but this improved after she opted for hiking shoes instead of boots.

Michael Doubleday (53), of Ascot, thanks everybody from the bottom of his heart for such a great walk (N-S, 17.09.16 to 16.11.16). He bought all supplies in Track towns with no problems, loved the whole Track and enjoyed every moment of his 63 days out there.

Phill O'Neill (45), from Victoria, called himself Evil Dr Phill on an awesome experience (N-S, 08.10.16 to 17.11.16) that raised over \$5000 for the Australian Paralympic team. He claims Walpole has the best bakery on the Track, Dwellingup the best pub meal and Boat Harbour had the best on-Track meal of fresh-caught sushi. Northcliffe to Walpole, through the water, was his favourite section. Phill

met so many great people and saw lots of wildlife including five emu chicks that ran right at him.

Bill Price (63), of Margaret River, calls his end-to-end (N-S, 01.10.16 to 20.11.16) one of the significant accomplishments of his life. He found his body could adapt and heal even while walking day in and day out for seven weeks, and it was cheaper than therapy! His home dehydrated food was excellent. Bill particularly enjoyed the section from Northcliffe to Walpole and loved meeting other people on Track. Early morning mists and bird song were also lovely. Wildlife seen included 19 snakes. He urges others to pack light, but eat well—don't starve yourselves!

Donghyeon Yun (25), from South Korea, was sometimes just Don on a walk (N-S, 26.09.16 to 24.11.16) he will never forget. It was hard, painful, exciting and beautiful all at the same time. He couldn't believe how clear the sea water was and loved the unpolluted natural environment. Favourite things included Walpole to Albany, karris, tingles, orchids and meeting other walkers. Catching crabs with chopsticks was a highlight and Don also climbed the Gloucester Tree at Pemberton. He did Jeju-Olle in Korea and while he loved both walks, the shelters on the Bibbulmun Track are a huge plus.

Frank Trybulec (54), of Rockingham, and known as Frank T, has now completed his ninth end-to-end (N-S, 14.10.16 to 24.11.16) and never tires of the Track. Favourite sections included DRV to Northcliffe and from Denmark to Albany. The wildflowers amazed him with all their glory, and he liked the running creeks near Gregory Brook and Dog Pool campsites. Frank says his walking poles helped enormously with stability while wading the Pingerup Plains.

Clare Holland (57), from NSW, walked some long distances on some of the days of her end-to-end (N-S, 21.10.16 to 25.11.16), but no other details were provided.

Richard Mayer (66), of Maida Vale, signed in as Richard and says spring is the best time to do an end-to-end (N-S, 03.10.16 to 25.11.16) as there are wildflowers all the way, everything is lush and green and it's not too hot. Dehydrated meals cooked by his wife sustained him on his journey.

Tamsin Read, Rolf, Catherine (9) and **Zephir** (6) **Heidecker** of Fremantle were glad to reach Albany as the hot days were

starting and they reduced the fun (N-S, 26.09.19 to 25.11.16). But they were all sad to finish the walk, leave their Track lives and go back to normal life. You can read all about their journey on page 22.

Hee Kang (67), from Victoria, also agrees springtime is the best time to walk because of the wildflowers (N-S, 20.10.16 to 28.11.16). Her main diet consisted of easy-to-cook dried fish and dried seaweed. Lake Maringup campsite was a favourite spot and Hee was the first walker there after the floods. The black cockatoos were also a favourite. She says her self-trust and confidence have grown as a result of her walk.

Naomi Brooks (52), of Drummond Cove, enjoyed every minute of her walk (N-S, 01.10.16 to 29.11.16) and loved the variety of landscapes, flowers, forests and views. She dehydrated her own meals, used food drops along the way and carried a Minipresso coffee machine! Pemberton to Walpole was her favourite section and a big highlight was meeting other people on Track and forging friendships with them. A very different memory was sharing Rame Head campsite with the resident tiger snake!

Laurie Leclerc, from Canada, has registered an end-to-end (N-S, 17.10.16 to 07.12.16) but no other details were provided.

Alexandre Bouillot (28), from France, says his first long distance hike (N-S, 07.10.16 to 08.12.16) was a great experience that will be in his heart forever. He enjoyed the whole 1000km, but especially from DRV to Pemberton. Highlights included seeing his first kangaroo on Track, solitude for three days, Gloucester Tree, the rat at Beedelup and eating bardi grubs. He maintains all kinds of food are great when you're walking each day and chocolate is amazing after a month without desserts!

Lincoln Flynn (46) and **Jan Tepper** (48), from Victoria, were Grizzly and Brave Dave on their longest walk so far (N-S, 11.10.16 to 12.12.16). Lincoln says every day was challenging, amazing, interesting, peaceful, rewarding and just plain fun. He loved every minute—except the one when he fell down! Jan loved the time to slowly get fitter, stronger and more relaxed. They dehydrated their own meals and sent food drops to pre-booked accommodation. Double-hutting from Woolbales to Mt Clare proved to be their best day on Track with

its variety of giant forests, low vegetation, mountains, sand dunes and beaches. Highlights for them included being able to get back to basics, being in tune with nature and enjoying all the simple pleasures of life. They had over half the campsites to themselves, but also enjoyed the company of other people they met. Facilities on the Track were appreciated as they made the walk so much more achievable and comfortable, and thanks are given to our volunteers. Lincoln urges others to either join the Foundation or make a donation as a contribution to ensure this amazing track remains available to all for years to come.

"We started off in healthy mode—no chocolate, coffee or treats. By the second section we were carrying triple cream brie, blocks of chocolate and canned gin and tonics!"

Mark and Bec aka The Frendos

Ben Miles (37) of Eaton, and **Marcus Ohm** (42) of Darlington, enjoyed all their walks together (Sectional, 08.10.11 to 31.12.16) and both appreciate the efforts of volunteers. Ben also likes hiking a trail without having to worry about permits or reservations, as with so many overseas trails. The longer each of their walks was, the more relaxed he felt. Their end-to-end was a fantastic achievement and accomplishment for both, and Marcus says he grew a lot as a hiker over that period. Camping in a huge thunderstorm near Peaceful Bay and reaching the ocean at Mandalay are special memories. Marcus has embraced ultralight hiking and says his base-weight is now around 5kgs. Ben urges other walkers to do shorter hikes if time isn't available for a through-hike.

Peter Bouquet, from Spain, has registered his end-to-end (N-S, 15.11.16 to 04.01.17) but provided no other details.

Michael Piccininni (70), of Waikiki, was Mick on his end-to-end (Sectional, 25.02.02 to 06.01.17) where Northcliffe to Walpole and Denmark to Albany were favourite sections. Highlights included walking out of the forests to the views of the southern coastline. He liked the well maintained campsites but many fallen trees and logs sometimes made walking difficult. A variety of wildlife was seen and he had a memorable encounter with a large tiger snake at Sullivan Rock. His advice is to take

each day as it comes.

Jim Freeman (80), of Mandurah, and well-known as The Mad Axeman, has added to his end-to-end tally (Sectional, 30.10.14 to 29.01.17). He has seen many changes to the Track over the years, and says the hills have been getting higher and harder, and he's been getting more weary! His favourite section is "somewhere between Perth and Albany". Highlights include seeing whales in the Southern Ocean, in addition to seeing all the birds and animals that inhabit the bush. Jim has no plans for another end-to-end but will continue as a maintenance volunteer on his sections.

Scotch College continues its tradition of having students finish an end-to-end each year. This year's group was **Jakheen Coaby** (17) of Cable Beach, **Phillip Collard** (16) of Kondinin, **Joe Dowling** (17) of Popanyinning, **George Gibson** (17) of Mingenew, **Luke Gollan** (16) of Beverley, **Oliver Harding** (16) of Williams, **James Hills** (17) of Northam, **Nicholas Klug** (17) of Williams, **Thomas Menzies** (16) of Metricup, **Lachie Morrell** (17) of Beaufort River, **Roko Radman** (17) of Leinster, **Oliver Repton** (17) of Swanbourne, and **Callum Willmott** (17) of Cunderdin. For some, it was a great way of spending time with friends in an environment away from everyday life. Callum says the walk bonded them as a group and brought out each personality; Phillip was glad he continued with the walk; Jakheen said it was a great experience despite the aches and pains. Reaching the ocean was a highlight for many, as were the swims and the amazing views along the Track. Other memories included Mr Bradley carrying rocks in his pack (Nicholas), having to run when a train came along the rail-track they thought was disused (James), the day their packs got a lift to camp (Oliver H) and getting to camp each night and finally being able to go to sleep (Luke). Nicholas says it placed him out of his comfort zone and taught him to deal with uncomfortable situations, and both Oliver R and Oliver H reported a sense of achievement when they finished.

Compiled by Charmaine Harris

BTF Volunteer and End-to-End

Accommodation, Tours and Services



Please support the Walker Friendly Businesses that support the Track.

- Accommodation - Visitor Centre - Track Transfers - Catering - Tour Guides

BUSINESS NAME	TOWN	TYPE OF BUSINESS	PHONE NO.	WEBSITE	DISCOUNT OFFERED TO MEMBERS
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ALBANY HARBOURSIDE APARTMENTS	ALBANY		(08) 9842 1769	albanyharbourside.com.au	10% Discount on accommodation
CAMP KENNEDY BAPTIST YOUTH CAMP	ALBANY		(08) 9845 1040	albanybaptist.com.au/camp-kennedy.html	
DUNMOYLEN HOUSE B&B	ALBANY		(08) 9842 5235	dunmoylen.com.au	
THE POST HOUSE (BALINGUP BUDGET ACCOMMODATION)	BALINGUP		(08) 9764 1049	theposthouse.net.au	10% discount (individuals and couples). Different discount options available to groups.
YOHO PIZZA	BALINGUP/ DONNELLY RIVER		0403 734 814	yohopizza.com.au	
COLLIE RIVER VALLEY TOURIST PARK	COLLIE		(08) 9734 5088	colliecaravanpark.com.au	
COMFORT INN AND SUITES COLLIE	COLLIE		(08) 9734 6444	collieheightsmotel.com.au	10% discount accommodation and meals
GLEN MERVYN LODGE	COLLIE		0428 395 328	glenmervynlodge.com.au	
HARRIS RIVER ESTATE	COLLIE		(08) 9734 4042	harrisriverestate.com.au	10% off accommodation for stays of 2 nights or more
MUMBLES	COLLIE		0429 322 038	mumblesboutiquestays.com.au	20% discount after 2nd night
THE COLLIEFIELDS	COLLIE		(08) 9734 2052	colliefields.com	
WHISPERING PINES B&B	COLLIE		(08) 9734 3883	whisperingpinesbandb.com.au	
BLUE WREN TRAVELLERS' REST	DENMARK		(08) 9848 3300	denmarkbluewren.com.au	5% discount on accommodation
CAPE HOWE COTTAGES	DENMARK		(08) 9845 1295	capehowe.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
CASA LIBELULA	DENMARK		0403 154 764	facebook.com/Casalibelula6333/	10% discount on accommodation
DENMARK RIVERMOUTH CARAVAN PARK	DENMARK		(08) 9848 1262	denmarkrivermouthcaravanpark.com.au	
INLET WATERS B & B	DENMARK		0404 577 014	inletwaters.com	10% discount on accommodation
PELICANS AT DENMARK	DENMARK		0413 122 176	pelicansatdenmark.com.au	
PEPPERMINT HOUSE	DENMARK		0408 935 405	pepperminthouse.webs.com	
THE COVE	DENMARK		(08) 9848 1770	thecovechalets.com	10% discount on accommodation
WINDROSE B & B	DENMARK		(08) 9848 3502	windrose.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
DONNELLY RIVER HOLIDAY VILLAGE	DONNELLY RIVER		(08) 9772 1244	donnollyriver.com.au	From \$25 pp
DWELLINGUP ADVENTURES	DWELLINGUP		(08) 9538 1127	dwellingupadventures.com.au	
KALAMUNDA CARRIAGES & 3 GUMS COTTAGE	KALAMUNDA		(08) 6293 1902	perthhillsaccommodation.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
MUNDARING WEIR HOTEL	MUNDARING		(08) 9295 1106	mundaringweirhotel.com.au	
KARRI COUNTRY GOOD FOOD	NORTHCLIFFE		(08) 9271 2869	karricountrygoodfood.com.au	
WATERMARK KILNS	NORTHCLIFFE		(08) 9776 7349	watermarkkilns.com.au	Discount on application
INNER TREKKER	PACIFIC PALMS			innertrekker.com.au	10% off retreat experiences
NUTKIN LODGE	PEACEFUL BAY		(08) 9840 8650	nutkinlodge.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
PEACEFUL BAY CHALET & BACKPACKERS	PEACEFUL BAY		(08) 9840 8169	peacefulbaychalets.com.au	Discount on application
KARRI VALLEY RESORT	PEMBERTON		(08) 9776 2020	karrivalleyresort.com.au	10% Discount on accommodation (excluding peak periods)
PEMBERTON CAMP SCHOOL	PEMBERTON		(08) 9776 1277	pembertoncampschool.com.au	
PEMBERTON CARAVAN PARK	PEMBERTON		(08) 9776 1800	pembertonpark.com.au	
PEMBERTON DISCOVERY TOURS	PEMBERTON		(08) 9776 0484	pembertondiscoverytours.com.au	
PEMBERTON OLD PICTURE THEATRE APARTMENTS	PEMBERTON		(08) 9776 1513	oldpicturetheatre.com.au	
SILKWOOD WINES	PEMBERTON		(08) 9776 1584	silkwoodwines.com.au	
PUMP HILL FARM	PEMBERTON		(08) 9776 1379	pumphill.com.au	10% discount on accommodation in non-peak periods
ADVENTUROUS WOMEN	PERTH		1300 388 419	adventurouswomen.com.au	
INSPIRATION OUTDOORS	PERTH		(08) 6219 5164	inspirationoutdoors.com.au	
MUNDA BIDDI SHUTTLE SERVICE	PERTH		0474 774 600	mundabiddishuttle.com	
CHE SARA SARA CHALET	WALPOLE		(08) 9840 8004	chesarasarachalets.com.au	
COALMINE BEACH HOLIDAY PARK	WALPOLE		(08) 9840 1026	coalminebeach.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
WALPOLE LODGE	WALPOLE		(08) 9840 1244	walpolelodge.com.au	
ALBANY VISITOR CENTRE	VISITOR CENTRE		(08) 9841 9290	amazingalbany.com.au	
COLLIE VISITOR CENTRE	VISITOR CENTRE		(08) 9734 2051	collierivervalley.org.au	10% on souvenirs
PEMBERTON VISITOR AND TOURIST CENTRE	VISITOR CENTRE		(08) 9776 1133	pembertonvisitor.com.au	
PERTH HILLS VISITOR CENTRE	VISITOR CENTRE		(08) 9257 9998	experienceperthhills.com.au	
SOUTHERN FORESTS WA	VISITOR INFO		(08) 9771 7777	southernforests.com.au	

Karri Forest Walking Break

This tailored self-guided Bibbulmun Walking Break enables you to walk a complete section of the Bibbulmun Track between Pemberton and Northcliffe in day walks, carrying only a day pack.

This three-day section of Track is a particularly picturesque walk through the Warren River Valley. You'll experience a mix of towering karri forest and undulating farmland. Highlights include the famous Gloucester Tree and the Cascades - a series of waterfalls that flow from Lefroy Brook.

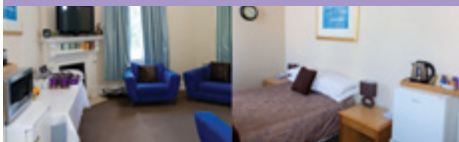
Break includes 4 nights' accommodation, all meals and transfers to the Track, maps and walk notes and extras. Optional additional tours can be arranged.

Cost: \$1250 (for two people twin share)
Call Lindsay (08) 9481 0551 to book.

Our Bibbulmun Break packages are available in all the towns along the Track. Check out our website for more details and complete the online enquiry form for a quote.



Gary & Michele invite you to come and stay with us in our friendly, Hotel & Backpacker rooms to suit all budgets, from our twin and 4 Bed Backpacker rooms, to our lovely Hotel Ensuite rooms and all with luxurious rain-fall showers. Comfy Guest Lounge for all to relax.

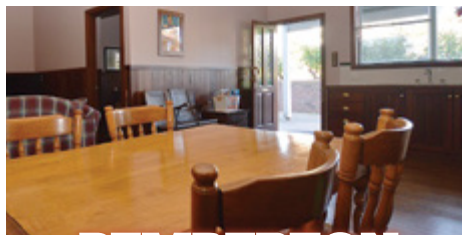


Discounts for Track Members &/or free upgrades (when available) for walkers. Beds from \$39 sharing Single Rooms from \$58.

Packages held & shopping, pick-up or drop-off available on request.

Free WiFi & use of washing machine. Hearty continental breakfast included in all tariffs.

Show a pic of this ad and enjoy a free cup of coffee in our friendly Coffee Shoppe / Tea House with our awesome homemade cakes and hearty meals.



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 overnight in our four star fully self contained accommodation from \$160.00 for 2 people per night.

info@oldpicturetheatre.com.au
www.oldpicturetheatre.com

(08) 9776 1513



SMALL GROUP TOURS EXCLUSIVELY FOR WOMEN

Join Adventurous Women to discover new places, meet new people and have fun in a safe and supportive environment.

4 Day Bibbulmun Track WA

4 Day Outback Station Experience WA

8 Day Camino Salvado Pilgrim Trail WA

5 Day Flinders Ranges Walking Tour SA

7 Day Cape to Cape Track WA

5 Day Kangaroo Island Walking Tour SA

8 Day Three Capes & Beyond TAS



For more information call Sue on 1300 388 419
or visit www.AdventurousWomen.com.au



Office GOSSIP



From L to R: Elsie, Charmaine and Gwen in New Zealand.

LIFE MEMBER PROFILE NOLA CHAMBERLAIN



After our summer break the office reopened to a flurry of activity as an update of all office procedures continued with daily feedback sessions with all the volunteers.

We have procedures to cover almost every aspect of running the office, so it's a huge task, especially as so many things have changed over the years with the advent of our website and the use of email and online bookings etc. rather than people using the post.

Late last year we welcomed Ce Kealley to our team. Ce has been a guide and maintenance volunteer for many years and we've kept her busy since she joined us. We recently said farewell to Patricia as she wants to spend more time with her grandchildren.

The recent rain and cooler weather has made walking more appealing and we are now busy with members coming into the office for trip planning, as well as those from interstate and overseas arranging trip planning by email.

Edith has had a continuous flow of end-to-end registrations coming in and we all enjoy reading about the walks, chuckling at some of the funny things that happen, commiserating with those who suffered an injury along the way and admiring some marvellous photos.

Vicki has done a great job with the green log book rotation and our brilliant data entry volunteers are keeping up with the constant flow of books arriving. With more books coming in we would love to have more help, so if you have any spare time at home please let me know.

Looking through our diary I see that just about every one of the team is heading off for holidays again this year to all sorts of locations and we always look forward to hearing about their adventures on their return.

Charmaine, Elsie and I began the holiday exodus when we were all in New Zealand together in February enjoying the Remote South tour arranged by World Expeditions. Charmaine and I are now both back at our desks but Elsie is still away and about to enjoy a cruise.

I hope you can all find time to enjoy some walking now that it's cooler and the rain has freshened up the plants. If you need any help with planning, you'll find our website very helpful, you can email or phone us or pop into the office and we'll be happy to assist.

Gwen Plunkett

*Office Manager and Volunteer
Coordinator*

Log Book data entry

Thanks to a sterling effort from our volunteers nearly 125,000 log book entries have been entered into the database. This is giving us some very useful data for grant applications and Track management decisions. In the next edition of Bibbulmun News we will provide some snapshots for you. In the meantime, of the 5574 entries entered so far from Rame Head campsite (thank you Elsie, Linda and Diane!); approximately 51% were from the Perth metro area, 19% from country WA, 18% from interstate and 12% from overseas.

Can you help?

If you have access to a computer and the internet this is a great job to do from home. We have a number of more recent log books, many with only a few pages to enter, to work our way through. Please contact Gwen if you are able to assist.

I grew up in the Bedforddale area, closely surrounded by state forest, so I have always felt a deep affinity with the Northern Jarrah Forest. I first heard about the Bibbulmun Track in the mid-eighties and immediately felt drawn to the idea of walking it. I acquired a guide book but soon realised that some orienteering skills would be essential in following the maps. That aspect plus commitment required by a growing family put the idea on hold for some years.

In 2002, I read Bryson's A Walk in the Woods and knew that now was the time. The guide books were far more user friendly and both children had left home. I suggested the idea to my early morning walking partner and over-the-road neighbour Sue Hansen and she agreed to give it a try. The plan was to aim for 200km per year over five years. We started out in April 2003 with a day walk from Kalamunda to Perth Hills National Park Centre as a test. Apart from being totally exhausted at the end of it, I was definitely hooked. In fact I wrote in the log book at Hewett's Hill shelter something to the effect of, "Albany here we come!"

As it turns out, the five years was ambitious given our full time work and life in general bringing up other distractions, but whenever we had trouble planning our next section, the consolation was always "Never mind, it'll still be there when we get to it." For the northern section, the routine was generally for one husband to drop us wherever we left off previously and three-four days later, the other husband would be waiting with food, comfortable shoes and the ride back to Northam. At different stages, various friends and relatives joined us for a section, but if we were walking by ourselves, that was fine. As we progressed south my husband suggested that if it was going to take us six hours or so to drive to the Track, we needed to be walking significantly further each time—which was probably fair.

By the time we arrived at the Albany Terminus, it had taken us seven years but we had a diary and several photo albums full of wonderful memories. In order to keep our connection with the Track, we rang Gwen and offered our services as Maintenance Volunteers. Fortunately my husband and brother have agreed to join the team which is really providential because they do the majority of the work between them—but Sue and I are very good organisers and supervisors.

The Life Membership came about because I know I will always want to have some affiliation with the Bibbulmun Track. When I can no longer contribute actively, I will still be looking forward to receiving my Bibbulmun News!

Thank you to our VOLUNTEERS

Thank you to all of our 379 volunteers – what would we do without you!

Whether looking after a section of Track, helping in the office, guiding or entering log-book data –the Foundation and the Track could not be in better hands. A huge thank to you all for being part of the team!

Volunteer rewards and Long Service Awards for 2016 were presented at functions in Kalamunda, Peaceful Bay and Albany.

LONG SERVICE AWARDS

Long Service Award recognise the commitment and loyalty of our long serving volunteers – regardless of how many hours they are able to volunteer annually.

These awards are support by Zanthorrea Nursery and Fairbrossan Wines.

15 YEARS

Trish Bird
Graham Murdoch
Guy Spouge

10 YEARS

Julie Bessant
Mal Cooper
Wes Fokkema
Colin Gee
Ruth Gee
Elsie Grygiel
Caro Knight
Joy McGilvray
Malcolm McGilvray
Margaret Ross
Peter Whittle

5 YEARS

Janine Batger
Brian Bicknell
Richard Clay
Tony Cole
Joe Courtney
Denise Hilsz
Beth Hutchison
Andy Monks
Dianne Moody
Rosie Smith
Charlie Soord
Sue Soord
Annie Van Poppel
Henk Van Poppel

MOUNTAIN DESIGNS VOLUNTEER REWARDS



These rewards, given to volunteers who contribute 100, 300 or 500+ hours in a financial year, are generously provided by Foundation sponsor Mountain Designs. 22,468 hours were recorded last year.

500 + HOURS

Trish Bird
Isabel Busch
James Freeman
Colin Gee
Elsie Grygiel
Charmaine Harris
Ian Rae

300 - 499 HOURS

Maryanne Addenbrooke
Peter Addenbrooke
Jim Baker
Colleen Clayden
Richard Clayden
Mark Davidson
Peter Sweetman
Volker Storig
Kathi Storig
Roland Stayt
Edith Thomas
Peter Whittle

100 - 299 HOURS

Robert Allen
Hedley Amos
Greg Arnold
Jenny Arnold
Alan Barker
David Bridger
Kath Broderick
Michael Carter
Derek Callow
Sandra Ceriani
Anthony Cole
Mal Cooper
Mike Cosson
Dave Currell
Peter Dear
Dianne Easton
Teresa Eldridge
Wes Fokkema
Mary Gray
Stuart Gray
Paul Harris
Cameron Hobson
Tony Jennings
Julie Johnston

Gayle Kealley
Sandra Maley
Dolly Meates
Geoff Meates
Graham Murdoch
Michael Marsh
Lari McDonald
Yvonne Noble
Kerry Ovens
Margaret Pierce
Chris Plunkett
Annie Van Poppel
Henk van Poppel
Jane Singleton
Deb Spiden
Guy Spouge
Vicki Squires
Lorna Saunders
Steve Sertis
Charles Soord
Susan Soord
Brian Traynor
Patrick Tremlett
Jessica Wolff
John Wynn
Jing Xie

JUST SOME OF OUR FANTASTIC VOLLIES AT THE VOLUNTEER THANK YOU EVENTS IN KALAMUNDA, PEACEFUL BAY AND ALBANY.



Frankland Volunteer Thank You Day.



Albany Vol Thank You Day.



Volunteer Thank You Day Kalamunda 2016.

Prize WINNERS!

2017 Life Member draw

Congratulations to **Damian Stevens** who won a Wilderness Equipment backpack and an Entertainment Book.

New Life Member draw

Maureen Potter was the lucky person who received a Wildflower Book, a 1 Litre Lightweight dry Sack, XShot and an X Bowl.

Monthly Membership Prize draw October

Michael Carter won a Microlite Towel.

Richard and **Pippa Moore** won 2nd prize a waterproof cover for an iPad and a set of cutlery.

November

Ally Plenk won a large XPLate.

Garry and **Elaine Keymer** received the 2nd prize of a Nano Head net and a cutlery set.

December

Mark Thomas won an UltraSil Toiletry bag.

Jenny and **Ted Altham** received the 2nd prize of a Travel Clothes line and cutlery set.

January

Maggie Taylor won an UltraSil Toiletry bag and a waterproof iPad cover.

Norma Willmott received the 2nd prize of a Travel Pillow and travel cutlery set.

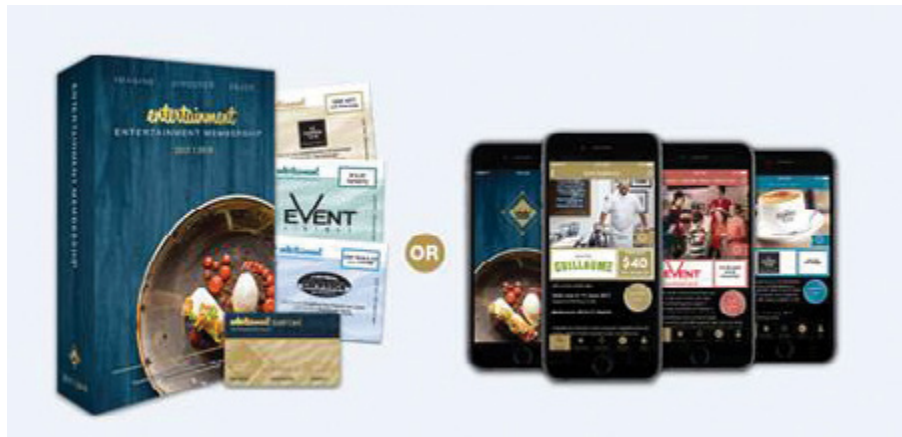
February

Richard Dewar won a 10 litre Pocket Shower.

Michael Ainley received the 2nd prize of a Waterproof iPad cover and travel cutlery set.

Unless otherwise stated all the prizes were donated by Sea to Summit and we thank them for their generous support.

SEATOSUMMIT



Introducing the 2017 – 2018 Entertainment Book and the new Entertainment Digital Membership!

Your guide to the most popular restaurants, attractions, shopping, travel and more, all with valuable up to 50% off and 2 for 1 offers!

Choose from:

- **Entertainment Book** offers are redeemed via Entertainment Gold cards and vouchers.
- **Entertainment Digital Membership** allows you to redeem offers directly from your iPhone or Android smartphone.

Whichever you choose, \$14 of your \$70 purchase helps the Bibbulmun Track Foundation, and you receive over \$20,000 worth of valuable offers valid through to 1 June 2018!

You can pre-order now: <http://www.entbook.com.au/835a11>

Thank you for supporting the Bibbulmun Track!

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.

HAVE YOU CHANGED ADDRESS?

Help us save time and postage and update your details. Hop onto our website, log in and update your details under My Account. You can also upload a pic of yourself!

Not sure how?

Visit our Website Help page under Contact Us at www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Otherwise call us and we will update your profile for you.

WEEKLY EQUIPMENT HIRE 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
Dehydrator	\$35.00	N/A
PLB	\$35.00	\$45.00
PLB e-2-e 2 mths	\$170.00	\$200.00

All prices include GST and are for one to seven days
A bond is required prior to hiring equipment:

\$150.00 for basic equipment

\$300.00 for PLBs

\$230.00 for Dehydrators

Payment may be made by cash, cheque or credit card
For all enquiries contact the Foundation: Tel: 9481 0551

Email: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au or download the booking form on our website under Trip Planner / Equipment & Hire.

TRACK TOWN - Walpole

Hidden in the southwest of Western Australia is the township of Walpole, settled in the heart of true wilderness, conserving unique natural and cultural values.

Nestled on the shores of the Walpole-Nornalup Inlets Marine Park, the town is the main access into the Walpole Wilderness Area, incorporating eight adjoining National Parks and five nature reserves throughout the Shannon, Deep and Frankland River systems.

The knowledgeable team at the Walpole Visitor Centre will help guide you on how to best experience the wilderness that contains, amongst other magnificent venues, the Valley of the Giants Tree Top Walk and Ancient Empire, Mount Frankland's new wilderness viewing platform and the awe inspiring Conspicuous Cliff that looks out across the legendary The Right, a famous surfing spot with massive waves.

The Wilderness Area also preserves the Hilltop Lookout with the remarkable Giant Tingle Tree, one of the world's largest girthed flowering eucalyptus, and Circular Pool that stirs the Frankland River into a foaming mass of tannin red water topped with a white natural froth caused by mysterious myrtle saponins. You can see how the wilderness has inspired some of WA's artists at the Swarbrick Art Loop.



Dinghy on Walpole Inlet.

Staff can also direct you on fabulous treks, mountain bike rides and to the best places to go swimming, such as Peaceful Bay and Monastery Landing. You can go beachcombing along many beaches including the beautiful Mandalay Beach or travel on 4WD tracks to remote spots such as Long Point or Banksia Camp. Canoeing routes into the wilderness are also available. They can also offer advice on where to camp and what accommodation is available, or provide tickets to experience the Marine Park on the daily Wilderness Eco Cruise.

The Visitor Centre is open every day to help you discover what the Walpole Wilderness is all about.



Giant Tingle Tree.

If you are walking the Bibbulmun Track Walpole is a lovely place to rest and restock for a day or two. Or base yourself here for a few days and enjoy some of the many short walk options available in the area. You'll find lots of day and overnight walk suggestions on the Bibbulmun Track website – or purchase the Walpole Day Walk Map Pack.



Frankland River, Nornalup



Conspicuous Cliffs by Trevor Burslem

Fact file:

Walpole-Nornalup Visitor Centre

Phone: (08) 9840 1111

Email: info@walpole.com.au

Address: Pioneer Park, South Coast Highway, Walpole

www.walpole.com.au

Open: Every day except Christmas Day.
9am to 5pm (4pm on weekends)

Please support our Walker Friendly Businesses in Walpole

Che Sara Sara Chalets
(08) 9840 8004

Coalmine Beach Holiday Park
(08) 9840 1026

Walpole Lodge
(08) 9840 1244



Walker Story

A FAMILY ADVENTURE

BTF members Tamsin Read and her husband Rolf Heidecker decided to do an end-to-end with their children Catherine (9) and Zephyr (6). This is her story—the accompanying pictures say it all!

Why does a family with a nine-year old and a six-year old start walking on the Bibbulmun Track? Simply because we could! I can still hear my daughter in the background—"What are you thinking, Mum? He's only six!"

My husband and I had walked a fair bit of the Track in sections over the years and it had always been a bit of a long-term dream to walk the whole track. We had managed a few overnight walks with the kids and were confident they could do at least 10km sections...whether we could do the whole lot was a completely different question.

Early in 2016 it looked like a bit of an employment gap was coming up and we tossed around ideas as to what to do. We chose to attempt to walk the Bibb. We didn't rate our chances of completing it as very high, but we figured we would enjoy any part that we did complete. Importantly, if we didn't start with the idea of finishing we certainly didn't have any chance of completing the whole thing.

So we packed up the house, prepared vast quantities of food, organised food drops along the way and got everyone as well equipped as we thought necessary. If I had realised more than a couple of days before we started just how heavy my pack was going to be I might have gotten very scared, or done some training!

We started at the Northern Terminus in September, the first few weeks were a slow, cold and sometimes wet experience where we worked on our technique for walking together, keeping an eye out for Waugals, played lots of eye-spy and started eating our way through the heavy packs full of food.

By the time we arrived in Dwellingup, with considerably lighter packs, some fairly impressive blisters on the nine-year-old, stronger legs and having lost a fair bit of weight, I didn't think we had any chance of

making it to Albany. To me, attempting to walk 1000km was just too much to do.

The kids seemed pretty unfazed though and after two nights rest and eating huge amounts of food we headed out again to see how we went on the next section. It was somewhere along this section that I came to the realisation that it didn't matter if we made it to Albany or not; the fact that we had started and managed what we had already achieved was satisfying in itself.

After Dwellingup it became easier—all we really had to do was to walk to a new shelter each night and if anyone wanted to pull out at the next town, we would all do so, no questions asked. We kept walking—looking at flowers, kangaroos, birds and echidnas, streams and trees, moss and spiders—all of the things that you don't normally have time to see.



At the halfway mark!



Leaving Northcliffe.



Approaching Collie.



Woolbales.

We met lots of people, mostly going south, some going north, some attempting an end-to-end for the first time, some for the fifth time, some just out for a day or two. Some we spent a couple of minutes with, others we shared campsites with for a week or so. I left Kalamunda thinking it would be great to spend time as a family and arrived in Albany loving the time we had spent walking along as a family and also remembering fondly the time we had spent together with other walkers.

The longer we were out on the track, the easier we found each day and instead of being worn out we were refreshed, happy and content.

Almost nine weeks after we left Kalamunda we arrived in Albany. Yes, we were glad to get there because the hot days were starting and they reduced the fun. But, we were all sad to finish the walk and leave our Track lives and go back to normal life.

Epilogue:

I was walking along the cliff top in Lima a few days ago with my son before I dropped him at school when suddenly, out of the blue, he said, "I miss the Track, Mum".

We all do.

Tamsin Read – Rolf, Katherine and Zephyr Heidecker

ED: A slightly longer version of this wonderful story is on our website under News/Tales from the Track.



At the southern terminus in Albany after nine weeks on the Track.



Meeting an echidna is a highlight.



Beachwalking along the south coast.

Notice board

WANTED:

WALKING PARTNER

I am looking for a female walking partner to walk the Track approx. 2 weeks at a time in April, May, June and July.

Contact: Tricia
0409 689 544
E: triciapaul11@bigpond.com

WANTED:

WALKING EQUIPMENT

Walking poles
- one pair the lightweight type suitable for bushwalking
- one pair of the collapsible type suitable for carrying in your suitcase when travelling overseas
- headlight torch, lightweight, suitable for bushwalking

Contact: Michael
0427 850 883

FOUND:

SUNGLASSES

Sunglasses and case recently found near Northern Terminus. Please contact the Office to claim.

Contact: Lindsay
(08) 9481 0551
E: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

FOR SALE:

DAYPACKS

Choice of two, both in very good condition, can supply photos by text if required \$50 each:

Osprey Stratos 34
Deuter Futura 22

Contact: Ian
0429 417 743
E: ian.rae@westnet.com.au

FOR SALE:

BACK PACK & ACCESSORIES

1 x Mountain Design back pack 65L
1 x Montane bum bag
2 x dry bags
1 x rain cover

The lot for \$80 or make an offer for any item or items.

Contact: Alec
E: brucealechale@gmail.com

FOR SALE:

MACPAC ESCAPADE SLEEPING BAGS

1. Escapade woman's 500 length down sleeping bag. 600 loft duck in a microlight shell, comfort rating of 7°C and a tested lower limit of 2°C. Semi rectangular shape features side and foot zippers, to be opened up completely. LH zip.

2. Escapade standard 700 length down sleeping bag. 700 loft duck in a microlight shell, comfort rating of 2°C and a tested lower limit of -3°C. Also features side and foot zippers, to be opened up completely. RH zip.

RRP \$450 and \$500 respectively. Sell \$200 and \$250 respectively or \$400 for both.

KATHMANDU NAVIGATOR SLEEPING BAG

Down sleeping bag. Regular LH zip (210 x 152).

Rated to minus 6 degrees for men or zero for women.

Red/grey RRP \$500. Sell \$200.

WHISPERLITE STOVE

MSR Whisperlite International multi-fuel stove with pump and fuel bottle (Model 11780).

Very good condition. Will work with kerosene, diesel, unleaded or white spirits.

RRP \$190. Sell \$75.

WE TECTILE 1 UL 3 SEASON TENT

Ultra-light hiking tent. Single-pole, hybrid-single-skin, ultra-light solo tent. Can accommodate two if necessary. 3-plus-season performance. Detachable ceiling panel acts an effective barrier when conditions mean condensation is unavoidable.

Wt: 1.62kg, packed size: 45cm (pole section length) x 14cm diameter, floor size: 205cm long x 118cm wide, Area: 2m2

Canopy colour: blue

Really good condition. RRP \$649. Sell \$325.

OUTER LIMITS RAZORBACK TENT

1 person tent, excellent condition. Only used a few times.

Single pole design with a large side entry plus a vestibule for extra sheltered space

1.8kg, floor Size: 260cm x 90cm, height: 110cm, packaged size approx: 14cm x 40cm, colour: orange

RRP \$260. Sell \$150.

The above items were kindly donated to the Foundation to sell.

Contact: Bibbulmun Track Foundation Office

(08) 9481 0551

E: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Want to advertise on our notice board?

Free for members – just log into your profile on the Bibbulmun Track website. Click the Notice Board & Classified tab under the News tab.

Non-members, please phone or email us to arrange your adverts.
Cost is \$5 for 3 months.

All items will be deleted (from the website) after three months if not renewed.

Phone (08) 9481 0551 or email friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Do you have your End-to-End BADGE?

FREE when you register your first end-to-end!



GUIDES GET TO GRIPS WITH Wilderness First Aid



On the March long weekend, the Bibbulmun Track Foundation hosted a three day (24 hours in total) wilderness first aid course offering CPR and plenty of scenario based teaching.

This course, conducted by the Wilderness First Aid Consultants, is a well-rounded introduction to all of the essential topics of wilderness medicine. Having time for scenarios as well as adult CPR/EAR sets participants up well to deal with a variety of patients in the outdoors.

The Bibbulmun Track Foundation uses this course for training our volunteer guides and we highly recommend it. Nine BTF volunteer guides, along with 20 other outdoor enthusiasts, participated in the recent course. Each was critiqued on their performance during the scenarios to ensure understanding of basic principles. They also had a lot of fun getting bandaged and covered in fake blood!

We thank the Wilderness First Aid Consultants who sponsor training for our volunteer guides. Check out their courses (throughout Australia) at www.wfac.com.au.

Feedback

The Patient Assessment was very good. I left with much more confidence. I learnt that I don't have to rush my treatment, but can act thoughtfully and quickly.

Trainers were unreal, the pace was great and both were happy to provide answers and feedback.

I found all the information helpful, particularly the foundational knowledge and then repetitive building on this knowledge. The trainers were confident and informative. They were friendly, approachable and quite sure of their info.



The advertisement features a large background image of a coastal landscape with a blue sky and white clouds. On the right side, there are three smaller inset photos: the top one shows a woman in a blue jacket looking out at the ocean; the middle one shows a group of hikers posing on a sandy path; the bottom one shows a hiker in a grey jacket walking on a trail.

**Want to walk the
CAPE TO CAPE TRACK**
but don't want to rough it?

8-Days, \$2,300pp, ex Perth
Tick this spectacular walk off your bucket list and complete the entire 135km of the Cape to Cape Track with Inspiration Outdoors. No camping or carrying a heavy backpack. Just walk and relax, we will do the rest!

Comfortable Accommodation, Small Group Size, Delicious Meals, Fun & Knowledgeable Guides, Multiple Departures in Autumn & Spring.

For more information on the Cape to Cape Track tour & our other walking tours call us on 08 6219 5164 or visit: www.inspirationoutdoors.com.au



Upcoming events

Joining us on an event is a great way to meet new friends who share the same love of bushwalking. Events do fill up fast, but we still have places available on the upcoming walks below. Find out more and make your bookings online at www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Bibbulmun trek for beginners

The perfect introduction to overnight bushwalking, discover the tranquillity of the bush as you explore a relatively easy section of the Bibbulmun Track.

We walk approximately 8km each day and camp out under canvas at a typical Bibbulmun Track campsite. Our experienced and friendly guides will teach you all you need to know about walking and camping and give you the confidence you need to venture out on your own. Hire gear available at no extra cost on this overnight trek learning the tricks of the trade with our very experienced guides!

Date: Sat 29th - Sun 30th April 2017

Where: The Darling Range

Rating: Beginners

Cost: Members \$145; Non-Members \$165

Balingup weekend adventure

One of our most popular and longest running events. A fabulous weekend walk south of Balingup, camping out on the Bibbulmun Track.

Leave your worries behind as we transport you to the picturesque Blackwood area.

Spend two glorious days walking through karri/jarrah/marri forest finishing with views across the Blackwood Valley. Experienced guides are on hand to offer guidance and support.

Date: Fri 19th - Sun 21st May 2017

Where: Balingup

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: Members \$260; Non-Members \$280

Ramble and paddle

A fantastic walking and paddling weekend escape in Dwellingup.

Two adventures wrapped up in one weekend! This is one of our favourite events. A fantastic walking and paddling weekend escape in Dwellingup.

Includes transport, accommodation, two continental breakfasts (other meals not included), guided POW tour, experienced guides, canoe equipment and instruction.

Date: Fri 26 - Sun 28 May 2017

Where: Dwellingup

Rating: Beginners

Cost: Members \$295; Non-Members \$315

Dandy Dwellingup dames

A ladies only weekend of walking and relaxation in the forests around Dwellingup and a great way of getting away from it all.

Meet us down in Dwellingup on Friday afternoon at our accommodation set by the banks of the Murray River. After breakfast on Saturday we spend the day walking on the Track (7km) and then come back to wonderful neck and shoulder massage. Relax in the afternoon with views over the Murray River at our accommodation for the night and enjoy a delicious meal. The next day we walk a different section of the Track (9km).

Date: Fri 26 - Sun 28 May 2017

Where: Dwellingup

Rating: Beginners

Cost: Members \$395; Non-Members \$415



Wandoo flats and rocky faces

A three-day walk through fabulous wandoo forest with outstanding views from the top of Mt Cooke.

From near Gringer Creek campsite we head north through open flats typical of a wandoo forest. After crossing the Serpentine River we camp near a stream which is part of the Canning River headwaters.

Ascending the rocky southern slopes of Mt Cooke provides sensational views to the south, east and west. The walk ends after traversing Sullivan Rock where we then head home around noon, refreshed and ready to tackle the short working week. With the first day being 17km, the

second 13km and the last about 7km, this 3-day trek is an excellent way to spend the WA Day long-weekend. A great event for sectional end-to-enders trying to fill in the blanks. Includes comprehensive planning night, trip preparation manual, map, experienced guides and equipment hire and return transport from Murdoch Park'n'Ride rail terminal.

Date: Sat 3 - Mon 5 June 2017 (long weekend)

Where: Darling Range

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: Members \$230; Non-Members \$255



Get found with Steve

So you know basically how to follow a bearing on your compass? But have you really found yourself?

The perfect opportunity to put your compass and map reading skills into practice! On this fun but more intensive weekend we go through some more theory but this time the practical aspect is out on a Rogaine. You will learn to navigate longer distances and will also learn to do it at night, finding your way through the bush – there are no trails!

Camp out on both Friday and Saturday night and be prepared to walk around 20km over the entire weekend. Location unknown until the week prior but generally within 3 hours of Perth. Includes entry fee to Rogaine and a 2017 membership with the WA Rogaining Association, some theory and plenty of practical tuition, dinner Saturday night, breakfast and lunch on Sunday.

Date: Fri 9 - Sun 11 June 2017

Where: Within 3-hours' drive from Perth to the site

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: Members \$175; Non-Members \$195

Bibbulmun in bloom!!



8-Day Highlights Tour 12 – 19 September 2017

Experience the very best of the Bibbulmun Track in the magnificent wildflower season on this fully guided tour staying in comfortable motel and chalet accommodation.

- Selected full & half day walks
- Spectacular coastal, forest & wilderness areas
- All meals & transfers included
- Side trips to eco-tourism attractions

Plus a free Bibbulmun Track branded Deuter daypack, KeepCup and water bottle valued at over \$200.

Just bring your boots, your camera and a sense of adventure on our all-inclusive tour!

For the full dossier, bookings and more information contact us on **(08) 9481 0551**, email events@bibbulmuntrack.org.au or go to our website.

Social Sunday walks

Free for members. \$15 non-members. See booking conditions online.

WALK RATINGS: 🦺 BEGINNERS 🦺🦺 INTERMEDIATE 🦺🦺🦺 EXPERIENCED

WALK BOOKINGS - Only 2 can be booked at a time

7 May 9am 🦺
10km return walk Lowlands Beach to West Cape Howe Campsite (near Albany)
14 May 8.30am 🦺🦺🦺
19km return walk from Dale Road to Beraking Campsite. (Fit and experienced walkers only!)
21 May 9.00am 🦺🦺
12km return walk from Kinsella Rd to Canning Campsite
28 May 8.30am 🦺🦺🦺
24km return walk from Kalamunda to Hewett's Hill Campsite. (Fit and experienced walkers only!)
18 June 10.30am 🦺
11km return walk from Mundaring Weir to Ball Creek Campsite

25 June 9am 🦺🦺
16.5km return walk from Peaceful Bay to Irwin Inlet
25 June 9am 🦺🦺
17km return walk from Brookton Hwy to Canning Campsite
16 July 8.30am 🦺🦺🦺
24km return walk from Kalamunda to Hewett's Hill Campsite (Fit and experienced walkers only!)
6 August 9am 🦺🦺
15km return from Mt Cooke Pines to Nerang Campsite
20 August 8.30am 🦺🦺🦺
18km return walk from Dale Rd to Beraking Campsite (Fit and experienced walkers only!)

Bookings For each walk will open one month prior to each walk.

Book online, or contact the BTF office for a booking form. Bookings cannot be made over the phone.



Track Trivia

HELLO FELLOW WALKERS!

Hello fellow walkers!

First and foremost, congratulations and many thanks to those readers who pointed out my error in the previous edition referring to “the plaintiff cry of an owl”. No, it wasn’t bringing a lawsuit, it was just sounding sad and mournful. A bad mistake on my part but on the positive side it does indicate that someone is reading Track Trivia. Look for the deliberate error in this edition.

We are seeing a fairly constant stream of end-to-enders coming through, now that it is possible to walk the whole Track, albeit with a diversion between the Murray and Possum Springs Campsites. With all the damaged shelters rebuilt with rammed earth, and the construction of the new bridge over the Murry underway we should soon be back to business as usual. This has also meant the volunteers who give trip planning advice for long distance walkers have been kept busy, both in the office and in communicating by email to members out of state and overseas.

The End-to-End and Getting-into-Gear workshops have been fully booked out in March, so it’s good to see plenty of people are still keen to walk on the Track.

Unfortunately we still see too many cases of people going out on the Track with high hopes and ambitions but without sufficient knowledge or planning, which usually means they give up their walk early and sometimes become disillusioned with the idea of bushwalking. I have always held the opinion that the more you plan in advance, especially for an extended walk, the less problems you will encounter and the more enjoyable the experience will be.

I know there are those who will disagree and I sometimes see the comment from successful end-to-enders, “just get out there and do it!” They have succeeded, so good luck to them, but this kind of cavalier approach, if it fails, can mean putting not only yourself in danger but also endangering those who have to come to assist you. The rescue services

understand people suffer injury or become incapacitated in the bush, but take a very dim view if it happens because walkers are ill-prepared in some way.

When we hold our end-to-end planning workshop I am always surprised by the number of participants who have never set foot on the Track, yet have decided they want to walk it end-to-end. To me that’s a bit like entering the Tour de France before you’ve ridden a bicycle.

One common error comes from people who are clearly unfit—dare I use the phrase dramatically overweight—whose reason for walking the Track is “to walk into fitness and lose weight”. Believe me you can lose weight doing an end-to-end—I lost 11kg walking the Track in 38 days—but I was very fit before I started. A reasonable level of fitness is desirable before you start, and don’t confuse fitness with stamina—both mental and physical.

To walk the Track, especially solo, means that you have to like your own company, to be at one with solitude. Some people, especially younger walkers, give up because “there’s nothing to do”.

The peace and solitude should be part of why you’ve chosen to escape the environment of everyday life. I once spent six days and five nights on the Track in the Pingerup Plains during which I saw no-one, and the only man-made structures to be seen were either part of the infrastructure of the Bibbulmun Track or the satellites racing through the stars. Magic!



Conversely, there is great pleasure to be had in meeting with, camping with, eating with, and sleeping with (which is not to be misconstrued) fellow walkers. Many long lasting friendships have been formed between those who met on the Track.

To come back to planning. There is a common misconception about the

difference between doing a day walk, an overnight walk and a long, or extended walk. For a day walk you need a day pack, a water bottle (or two), a map or a guide book, a first-aid kit, some snacky food, rain jacket and mobile phone. Maybe 5kg in weight. So for an overnight walk, just one night, do you need much more? Well yes. You need all of that, plus a sleeping bag, a sleeping mat, a cooking stove, more food, clothes to wear in the campsite...maybe 15kg...

...to do a long, extended walk is not that much different to a simple overnight walk. More food is required, maps and guide books to cover the whole trek, more fuel... maybe 18-20kg?

So please plan and come to the BTF for advice if you feel you need it.

To finish up, let me give you an example of someone I met on the Track who was not totally au fait with bushwalking in Australia.

Scene: Warren Campsite, mid afternoon. I’m sitting at the table in the shelter with a brew. I was walking from Walpole to Pemberton, so I’ve been walking for about ten days and I’m relishing the prospect of the spa-bath at the Old Picture House in Pemby and a meal at the pub. From the Pemberton direction, in limps Harry (not his real name), clearly in a bad state. He nods to me and from his backpack he hauls out a Trangia stove, pristine and brand new. He delves into his pack again and finds a mug and a tea bag, and produces a Coke bottle full of water. Then he sits and looks at the stove. And sits. And looks at the stove. Then looks at me, pleadingly.

“Problem?”

“Yeah, mate. Do you know how to use one of these?”

“Yes. Have you got any metho?”

“Metho?”

I’ll draw a veil over the rest, except to say I got him back to Pemby in one piece.

Happy Walking!

Wrong Way Jim

Reflections

FROM THE REGISTERS

Mount Chance

We are from Sydney NSW. Did the top half last year and this time we are walking from Pemberton to Walpole. We will be back to do the rest. Mum is a 78 year-old great-grandma and I have trouble keeping up with her! I am a 45 year-old grandma, and our next aim is to bring the grand-daughter along. **Youth is all in the mind!**

Prue Cooper and Bernice Colvin 01/05/2004

Hey Mr Mike bloody Wood, I've been trying out your "so what if your knees get wet, just wear a rain jacket, shorts and gaiters" theory for a couple of weeks now and I've got to say it sucks in hailstorms!

Dougal 25/08/2016

P.S. It is a good idea when it isn't hailing.

(Ed: Mike's response when I showed him this was "Suck it up, Dougal!")

William Bay

Starting to miss the kids—climbing Mount Hallowell must have made us delirious. Weary on arrival, but relaxed with a wee dram. Happy walking!

Sarah and Steen 07/01/2005

We came all the way from Sydney to walk the Bibbulmun Track and haven't been disappointed! Excellent well maintained trail through some beautiful areas. A great way to see your State. Thank you to all the hardworking people that maintain the track for our pleasure.

Gwen & Russell Larsbury 02/07/2005

Feeling fantastic. Just took a cup of coffee up the hill to the lookout and sat under the beaming sun with the most wonderful view out to sea. Highly recommended!

Cag and Scott 26/03/2006

Giants

Just arrived from Rame Head on an absolutely perfect day—ventriloquist views, breathtakingly beautiful beach, truly tremendous trees, wonderful wildlife, fantastically fragrant forest and other delights to tantalise the senses along the way.

Pat O. 09/04/2012

Two distinguished guests joined us for our moonlit dinner last night. They were wearing russet with white plumes on their tails. They offered to use their tongues to clean the dishes but we declined.

Judy 3/01/2016

Sandpatch

Barring any last minute hiccups this will be my last night on the Track. It has taken me 11 years, four return journeys from the UK and a hip fracture to get this far. Without wishing to use the expression lightly, it has been a life changing experience.

The injury caused me to change the way I walk; I need to take more time, rest more and carry less, which have all been for the good. I have been fortunate enough to walk in many places in the world and I would have to say without hesitation that the Bibbulmun Track is the best organised and maintained trail that I have come across.

A massive thanks to all the volunteers, organisers and Department people who make this possible.

Last but not least a huge thanks to all my fellow walkers who without exception have been friendly, interesting and amusing companions. As a visitor from overseas I cannot think of a better way to experience a country and its people. The Bibbulmun Track is an invaluable asset for WA—long may it continue!

Hugh Hoffmann, Manchester, England
13/11/2015

Wow, this has been quite an adventure! We are double hutting to Albany, so this is our last day. When we started we really didn't think we'd get this far. From day one we were both so scared of snakes, constantly scanning the path ahead—every stick was a potential snake. We saw about 20 altogether and have finally become used to them.

To all the people that we've met, you were all wonderful and made our trip really great! Neither of us had done any long distance walking before but we will certainly be doing some more. Next stop will be hiking in Norway and then the Santiago de Compostela. This is a wonderful track. Thank you Bibbulmun!

Idun & Juni, Norway 16/11/2016

Leave a lasting legacy...

Include a gift for the Bibbulmun Track Foundation in your will and help ensure the Bibbulmun Track is maintained for generations to come.

SHIKOKU 88 TEMPLES WALK, JAPAN

The fourth-largest of Japan's islands, Shikoku, is home to the 88 Temple Pilgrimage Trail. Pilgrims have walked the trail for 1200 years and even today pilgrims in their distinctive attire and white cloaks are to be seen throughout the island. The full pilgrimage route encircles Shikoku and connects 88 Buddhist temples, covering more than a thousand kilometres. BTF member and very experienced walker Su Becket explored the whole trail in 50 days, in 2016. These are her recollections:

At mid-day, late in March 2016, I embarked on my pilgrimage at temple number one, following in the footsteps of Kobai Daishi (aka Kukai), the founder of Shingon Buddhism. My plan was to walk each day and stay wherever I could find somewhere to sleep. I knew some temples had tsuyado (a free room) as opposed to shukubo (paying guest accommodation) and I was carrying a tent. There were many other places where it was acceptable for pilgrims to sleep, such as bus-shelters, parks, rest-huts and daishido (small temples with bedding). I used them all, plus a few innovations of my own!



Su outside Dogo Onsen...a hot spring used for over 3000years. The building is heritage listed and still used as a bath house.

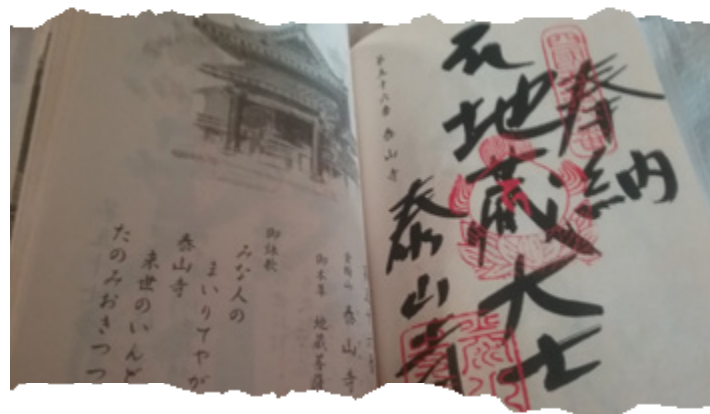
I arrived at temple number five late in the afternoon, where the attendants directed me to a zenkonyado (a sleeping place offered by a private citizen). It proved to be a tiny building with just two tatami mats. My roommate was dressed as a traditional henro (pilgrim), with a white jacket and straw hat and equipped with a long staff. As I am not Buddhist I chose to remain in civvies but was still the recipient of much osettai (alms, such as food or money given by people to help you to achieve your pilgrimage). To refuse osettai is a total insult to the donor. It is a very humbling experience and can be likened to trail angels.

I was very privileged to spend the following 50 days walking around the beautiful island of Shikoku. Although parts of the trail are very urban, it was a great way to explore Japanese culture. Rice growing, amazing bonsai, origami...in fact all the clichés of Japan but even more so! April was of course the cherry blossom season when Japanese people flock to the countryside to picnic under the cherry trees—you are likely to be invited to join them as you walk past.

I never planned anything in advance but amongst many adventures I happened upon a traditional doll festival with thousands of dolls on display and a bonsai and flower show in a town hall. I received an invitation into a café for osettai and was serenaded by local singers. I was greeted by a group of dedicated trail volunteers who fed me bowls of delicious noodles, famous in the region. They were served to me by the gentleman who made them, that same morning.

Coin laundries were plentiful with the wonderful innovation of not having to purchase or carry soap powder as it was added directly by the machine.

Then of course there was the joy of the onsens (communal bathhouses), which I took advantage of as often as I could. Before anyone gets too excited I should explain that they are, thankfully, segregated, and involve a lot of protocol which one should research to save embarrassing oneself. I thought I had it off pat...wrong! At all of the early onsens I visited the toiletries were provided in small plastic containers for general use; I assumed this to be the norm. Then I entered a rather expensive onsen, grabbed a toiletries container, sat on my little chair and scrubbed myself before entering the bath, where I was confronted by a very angry naked Japanese lady. Apparently I had stolen her personal toiletries, as this onsen was a BYO. Whoops!



Su had her nokyochō (pilgrim book) inscribed and stamped at each temple.



Temple 38 named Kongofukuji.

Despite visiting a lot more than 88 temples, I never tired of them, as each one was delightfully different. At each temple you could pray for a specific reason such as “easy childbirth, eye problems, leg ailments” etc. My favourites were “farmers suffering from natural disasters, lost pets and children who cry in the night”.

If you chose to do so there is a strict etiquette to be followed in having your nokyochō (pilgrim book) inscribed and stamped at each temple. I had my nokyochō (similar to a Camino credential) inscribed at every temple for a cost of 300 yen. I found the more isolated temples, and those requiring a return journey back along the same route, the most interesting.

The trail itself was well marked but only in a clockwise direction. Any ambiguities were



View from a remote temple.

easily resolved by the map in the guidebook which was very accurate. Japan has a very fragile environment so there is a lot of reinforcing with tar and concrete. Ignore the tsunami warnings (unless there is one!). The topography chart looks horrendous but this is relative, as the flat areas are very flat. The steepest hills were beautiful forest walks, usually deserted and with great places for camping.



A typical Daishido

Very little English is spoken in Shikoku but everyone will help you—just bow a lot and be very polite. I felt that crime was just about non-existent as people left cars with purses in full view and a fellow hiker would leave his rucksack sitting in a park for hours while he dined in a faraway restaurant. The pack never disappeared! I saw very few non-Japanese tourists or henro, but I suspect this will change very quickly.

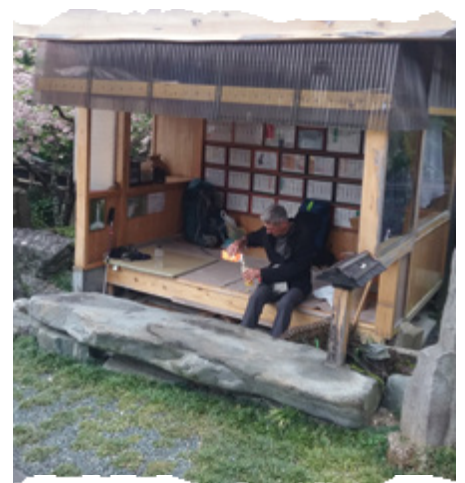
Lawson convenience stores are so frequent I started calling the trail the Lawson Trail, and I’m sure if Japanese ever found himself out of sight of a vending machine he would start hyperventilating. Public transport was frequent and never far away (although local buses usually appeared empty).



Cherry Blossom season.



Typical trail in the mountains.



A Henro (pilgrim) rest provides a great place to sleep.

I liked this trail very much. It is a delightful blend of rural, urban, coastal, mountain and forest walking. Add the temples, the culture, the kindness of the people and the food and it becomes a memorable hike. It was very different from what I had expected. I had hoped for more wild walking but the reality I found more than compensated.

Su Becket

Continued on back cover

SHIKOKU 88 TEMPLES WALK CONT.

View from temple toward the bustling metropolis.



Fact File:

- Website: www.shikokuhenrotrail.com
- Guidebook: Shikoku Japan 88 route guide by Buyodo Co. Ltd. As far as I know only available through the above website or at Temple number one.
- When to go: March/April/May or October/November.
- How to get there: Fly to Osaka. Catch bus to Tokushima (train station) from outside Airport Terminal 4. From Tokushima catch train to Bando station and then follow the green line on the road to temple number one
- Necessities of life: Convenience Stores i.e. 7/11 or Lawson Stores for inexpensive food, free water, free Wi-Fi and washrooms.
- There are no public rubbish bins in Shikoku.



A typical temple.

With grateful thanks to our sponsors:

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Printed on environmentally friendly paper

OFFICE LOCATION:

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