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Sunraysia Bushwalkers December 2013

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In this issue:

- ❖ **Report of Croajingalong Walk**
- ❖ **Mutawintji Follow-up**
- ❖ **Great Recipes for the Culinary Challenged**
- ❖ **2013 Christmas Break-up**
- ❖ **Calendar**



Flying by the Seat of Your Pants- 24th Oct – 5th Nov 2013 (A walk not sanctioned)



Karl, in deep contemplation

Travelling from one extremity of the state to another to undertake a walk is obviously not a popular undertaking as it only attracted two walkers, Karl & Roger. So it was, that we undertook a drive of over 900kms just to get to our starting point at Cann River. 'Seat of the pants' refers to the very loose planning as we had intended to walk from Cape Conran but were less than thrilled with the prospect of carrying two days water at the start of the walk, eventually opting for a start at Tamboon Inlet.

Arriving at Cann River at lunchtime and then enquiring as to the availability of a taxi service had us directed to the local garage. The proprietor, Lob, inveigled his daughter-in-law, Rose, to act as our driver with the plan that she would drop us off at the landing at Tamboon and then leave the car back at Lob's garage awaiting our return. Tamboon Inlet, it became obvious, was closed to the sea; the lake was so high that the jetty had water even over the handrail.

Change of plans – drive back to the gated track marked 'Clinton Rock', which was our intended first overnight stop, and start from there. We found a great campsite sheltered from the prevailing wind but no water. We had sufficient water for the night but in the morning we decided to visit the rocks and find the water source and replenish our supply. Our 3kkm round trip found us harassing a wild dog that we met travelling towards us along the waterline. It was then that we commented on the abundance of food for the dog, as the beach was littered with the carcasses of Shearwater that had failed to complete their journey south. The death of so many birds was due to a reported change to their stopover being subject to commercial development and a severe storm that had obviously stressed them in their weakened state. At one stage of the walk I counted Shearwater bodies, along the high water mark, at a rate equal to one body per step.

One of the joys of this walk is the feeling of being the first there as you walk along pristine beaches without any footprints of other humans. It is quite a privilege to be able to make such a walk. As a safety factor we carried a SPOT device that we activated each morning and checked in each evening allowing others to track our progress.



The walk took us via Point Hicks and its famous lighthouse. We reached this landmark at lunchtime and were so engrossed in feeding ourselves that we had failed to see the whales breaching just off the point. Once it was pointed out we spent considerable time watching a mother & calf and another whale far out to sea. We opted to walk around the coast to Thurra River camp. It was reasonably challenging over the rock but very attractive. Up until reaching the lighthouse we had not seen any others and as it was Friday prior to the Melbourne Cup we came across a number of vehicles arriving for an extended long weekend.



Orange water

The next day took us to a campsite set back from the beach at the base of a large sand dune and a water source that had bright orange algae in the stream coming from the base of the sand dune. The smell was sulphurous. We arrived at this site at lunchtime and after our feed decided to have a swim in the surf, which was fairly flat. As the sun was shining and I only had a washer as a towel I decided to drip-dry. Whilst waiting for the air to dry us off we walked 300 metres up the beach to a rocky outcrop of granite. We discovered water seeping out of the sand above the high water line and with a little digging around found sweet water which was better than back at our camp and decided to harvest it. On returning to collect our water containers we dressed to avoid sunburn and headed back to get the water. As we turned to cart the water back to camp we were surprised by 8 walkers heading in our direction. We later discovered they were part of the Strezlecki Bushwalking Club. A delightful group, who we continued to meet at most of our remaining camps on our journey to Mallacoota.

The next day saw us rock scrambling around Petrel Point and onto Rame Head where we had our first inland walking away from the actual coast prior to visiting Wingan Inlet. We were well ahead of the others and walked into Wingan Campground, which was fairly full due to the weekend, so on replenishing our water, we headed back to the beach to make the river crossing while the tide was low. We met the others heading in to the campground and they were not sure whether they would continue or cross in the morning.



Strezlecki Bushwalking Club



River crossing at Wingan Inlet

At the river's edge we found that the wind had got up considerably, and as we prepared to get our packs and clothes into their waterproof bags we looked up and saw a group coming along the beach towards us. Not sure if it was the other walkers or just some weekend, it became a bit of a farce as bags (both) took off and were only recovered as they hit the water, a case of severe 'mooning' of approaching walkers and the carrying of heavy and slippery plastic bags full of our precious dry belongings. The water was cold, flowing quickly and deeper than expected; so swimming was required as we drifted at speed towards the ocean. Once on the

other side and suitably shielded by some rocks, we gathered our composure, regrouped, dressed and headed bush. This latter action was the wrong thing to do as we were not near the track and had to return to our landing area before heading around a rocky headland.

Easby Creek was where we had decided to camp and it took a while to find a suitable area in amongst the coastal vegetation where two tents could be erected.



Roger

Up until now I have refrained from mentioning a favourite subject – food - as I was severely outshone by Karl's culinary skills and supplies. We had undertaken to do the evening meal in rotation and Karl, ever conscience of my aging frame, had allowed me the consideration of preparing the first of our nightly meals. It was the following night that I had realised that I was not really 'cutting the mustard' in the culinary department. Fortunately I did have one saving ingredient, in that I had purchased a sausage from the local Fisher's IGA at Merbein that had caught my fancy; simply because it was hanging outside refrigeration and I considered that it would carry well on the walk. It was for my lunches and when I had tried it and offered a piece to Karl he was much taken with the flavour. Unfortunately I was not able to answer the barrage of questions regarding what it was, who made it, etc other than 'sausage' and where I had purchased it. So instead of dishing up rehydrated Tuna for one of my meals, we had pasta and the 'sausage' for tea. It went down a treat.



The next stop was at Benedore River where there are two camp sites, one on the eastern side of the river, by far the larger, and the other on the western side which offers good protection from the prevailing westerly winds – this was the one we chose after a look at both. The Strezlecki walkers joined us and it was a most communal evening of stories and laughter.

The next day we were off and up into sand dunes along old 4wd tracks and into an area that gave us a different perspective to the area. Previously on this section I had come across 2 red bellied black snakes and was hoping to be able to show Karl their beauty, but it was not to be. Instead we came across a large charcoal coloured Goanna lying across the path. It was not at all phased by our presence and allowed us to both photograph it repeatedly and pass quite close by as we proceeded along our way. This distraction may have been the reason

that we took the right-hand track instead of the left-hand one. Hence we arrived at a car park without cars and wandered around until we came across a woman who kindly offered us a lift into Mallacoota. Thus we arrived on Melbourne Cup day in Mallacoota and it was virtually deserted, as the race was about to commence.

We spent 36 hours in Mallacoota waiting for the scheduled bus to take us back to our car at Cann River so spent the time walking up through the Narrows to the Top Lake.

We had exceptional weather and only put our waterproofs on twice, one of those times was due to high running seas causing spray over the rocks we were negotiating.

Besides the wild dog and whales, we saw a seal swimming in the surf, a dead albatross on the beach, what I believe was a southern bandicoot with 5 young on its back, oyster catchers, sea eagles, parrots of unknown names, and John Morrish LBBs aplenty. A great walk –thanks for the company Karl.

Roger 30/11/2013

Photos by Karl & Roger



Little Creek near Clinton rocks



A follow up from last month's newsletter was a phone call from the ranger at Mutawintji who requested that we publish some information regarding the goat population – at the time of publication this had yet to be received.



Since the arrival of the latest Wild magazine in our house Roger has drooled over the Peas & Potato Dumpling Curry picture for a whole week until it finally got the better of him and he just had to cook it for our Club Christmas Break-up get-together. I know potato is his favourite food but did it have to be a curry on a 30° day? The following recipes are thanks to the wonderful contributors to the Wild magazine.

Spiced Carrots and Peas

Serves two



Ingredients:

1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 teaspoon ground cumin
1 teaspoon coriander
½ teaspoon garam masala
1 small onion
1 garlic clove
2.5 centimeters of ginger
1 large carrot
3 dessert spoons oil
¼ cup dried peas
salt & pepper
¼ teaspoon sugar

At Home:

Pack cumin seeds, cumin, coriander & garam masala together.

In the Field:

Chop onion, garlic & ginger finely, dice the carrot. Heat oil, add onion, garlic ginger, cumin seeds, cumin, coriander and the garam masala, stir for 2 minutes. Now add carrots and fry for a few minutes. Add ½ cup water & the peas. Cover and leave to simmer until the peas are rehydrated. Season with salt, pepper & sugar. Serve with rice.

Nutty Rice

Serves two



Ingredients:

1 cup of rice (preferably Basmati)
4 dessertspoons dried onion or ½ bunch spring onions
1 teaspoon dried garlic
1 cup sliced dried shitake mushrooms
¾ cup mixed nuts
2 peaspoons dried parsley or ½ cup finely chopped fresh parsley
¾ teaspoon salt (less if nuts are salted)
Pepper to taste

At Home:

Roughly chop nuts & put in a plastic bag with the mushrooms. Pack all other ingredients in another plastic bag.

In the Field:

Bring 2 cups water to the boil in a large pot. Add rice, garlic, onion, parsley & bring to the boil; turn down & simmer for approx. 7 mins. stirring occasionally. Add more water if necessary. Add the nuts & mushrooms to rehydrate. Once rice is cooked & mushrooms rehydrated remove from the heat and season with salt & pepper. All the liquid should be absorbed,

Flavoured Lentils & Rice

Serves two



Ingredients:

¾ cup of rice
½ cup of red lentils
4 dessert spoons dried onions
1 teaspoon dried garlic
1 teaspoon ginger (finely chopped)
2 dried red chillies
4 whole cloves
1 inch cinnamon quill
4 cardamon pods
1 teaspoon tumeric

At Home:

Pack all ingredients into a plastic bag
Note: Fresh onion & garlic can be used instead, but carry separately.

In the Field:

Put the contents of the plastic bag into 2½ cups of water. Place on heat, bring to boil, turn down to a simmer for approx. 10 mins, stirring occasionally. Turn off heat, cover, let sit for 5 mins and serve.

Pea & Potato Dumpling Curry

Serves Two



Ingredients:

½ cup instant potato
½ cup plain white flour
1 tablespoon oil
½ an onion (finely chopped)
2 cloves garlic (finely chopped)
1 teaspoon mustard seeds
½ teaspoon fenugreek
1 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon coriander
1 teaspoon cumin
Chilli powder to taste
1 large dessert spoon tomato paste
¼ cup dried peas

At Home:

Place instant potato & flour together in a plastic bag. Place mustard seeds, fenugreek, turmeric, coriander, cumin & chilli powder together in a small plastic bag.

In the Field:

Place the potatoe & flour mix into a pot & add ½ cup water. The amount of water will vary depending on the brand of potato you are using so start with a small amount of water and keep adding. When the mixture comes together and is still quite stiff, roll into 12 small balls and set aside. Add oil to the pot & fry the onion, garlic & ginger for a minute, then add spices. Fry for another minute stirring continuously, then add tomato paste.

When mixture has formed a thick paste add 1¼ cups water & peas & bring to the boil. Place dumplings in the curry, cover & let simmer for 3-4 minutes while stirring occasionally. Remove the lid & continue simmering until the peas are rehydrated, the gravy has thickened & dumplings are cooked. Serve with rice or unleavened bread.

Christmas Break-up 2013

Our Club Christmas break-up this year was held at the Syke Pumps near Red Cliffs on the Murray. Our President gave us a short potted history of the area and the pumps before setting off on a short walk along the billabong, which was very pleasant; but then we headed along a dusty road before walking across a clay flat to a salt encrusted area before we headed back to the welcome coolness under the large sheltered area near the old pumps. The late afternoon was still rather warm.



When we had almost finished our meal we were wonderfully surprised by a visit from Santa! It is amazing just how he knows where to find us each year. We each received a **small** chocolate bar from his **large** sack and promised to be better children next year.

It was noticed that Karl gobbled down his bar faster than one could say Jack Robinson!



Birds on the 'Bong'



SUNRAYSIA BUSHWALKERS



PLANNED WALKS FOR 2014

If you intend going on any of these trips please contact the Trip Leader by 8 pm the Thursdays beforehand so that arrangements may be finalized. Unless a minimum of 4 walkers (including the Trip Leader) have registered by Thursday evening walks may have to be cancelled.

2013	Activity	Grade	Contact
December 4	General Meeting		
2014			
February 5	General Meeting – First for the year		
April	Kangaroo Island – 8 days	E	Verna 50234102
April 18 – 21	Mutawintji National Park		
	Cobdobra – <i>Suggestion only at present</i>		
	Glue Pot - <i>Suggestion only at present</i>		
Late April/May	Mt Feathertop – Harriet Ville to Ridge Walk - <i>Suggestion only at present</i>		
	Katoomba to Genolan Caves (5 days) - <i>Suggestion only at present</i>		

All walks are given a **two letter grading code**

<p>The first letter refers to the distance S - short (8-12 klms a day) M - medium (12-20 klms a day) L - long (20 plus klms a day)</p>	<p>The second letter refers to the terrain E - easy (mainly following form of marked track typically on flat ground) M - medium (mainly on formed tracks but may include some off-track walking with moderate climbs on or off track) H - hard (day or overnight walks which may require long or multiple steep climbs, cross country travel, creek crossings &/or some rock scrambling) R - rough (day or overnight walks in difficult terrain which may include long &/or steep climbs and considerable off track walking. May include special requirements such as requirement to carry extra water, experience in rock scrambling &/or snow, knowledge of survival)</p>
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Next Meeting
Wednesday 4th December at 8.00 pm
at Drysdale's
2164 Fifteenth Street,
Irymple