



Affiliated with Bushwalking  
Victoria

The Victorian Mountain Tramping Club Inc. Newsletter - ACN A628G

# Trampalong

October 2019 - No. 759

## REMINDERS & NOTICES

- Christmas BBQ, Club Rooms, 12 December 2019.
- Membership renewals now due.
- Send trip reports and VMTC Community items, with photos for the newsletter.

**CLOSING DATE:** Trampalong contributions

For November: 8 October  
For December: 5 November  
email contributions to  
[info@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:info@vmtc.asn.au)



Swifts Creek to Barmah, L-R: Helen, Serg, Andreas, Noel, Jurgen, Peter, Julia, Ian in background Cath and Anna  
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## President's Report

October 2019

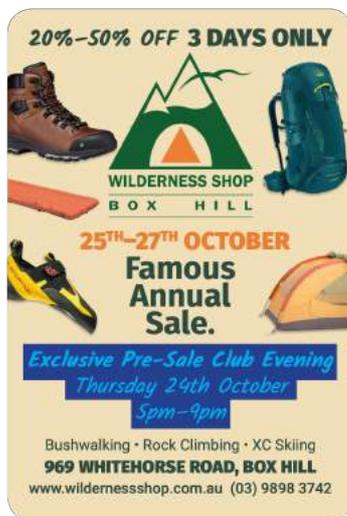
Chilly weather has not put off members this month, with lots of trips both to the snow and below the snow line taking place. Exploring around the Rover Chalet was a great experience for me. Seeing the ruins of Wilkinson's (Wilkie) Hut and hearing the stories of winters spent there was a fantastic insight into the history of the club. For a novice skier like me the generosity and care of the others in the group during this trip was priceless and highlighted once again why I love being part of the VMTC.

We have begun the process of designing our new website and again encourage members to join in on the process, either by submitting ideas in writing to [info@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:info@vmtc.asn.au) or by joining the sub-committee (register interest via the info email address).

We have some great social nights coming up (check below or on the Walks Program for details), we hope to see you there!

Susie H

### The Wilderness Shop Annual Sale



**Exclusive PRE-SALE evening is on:  
Thursday 24th October from 5pm to 9pm.**

Almost everything will be a minimum 20% OFF (normally 10% off for club members). In addition there will be hundreds of other specials at 30% to 50% OFF. (There are some exclusions, eg electronics)

#### Lending Locker

Thank you to all those people who have generously donated items for our lending locker.

We now have tents, sleeping mats, sleeping bags, packs that will help new walkers, and are available for existing members too.

### VMTC Social Events - Club Rooms and Beyond

**Social Night Clubrooms 7:30 pm - except for movie/meal night  
East Melbourne Community Centre, Powlett Reserve, Grey St, East Melbourne**

#### Thursday 17 October 2019

Damien Walters will talk about his recent walks in two areas: Watarrka NP, Northern Territory and Karlamilyi NP in Western Australia.

#### Thursday 21 November 2019

Peter Briggs walked the first half of the GR10, along the French-Spanish border in June-July 2019. He will talk about his eastward travel across The Pyrenees.

Two great social nights. Hope to see you all there.

Nola S - Social Secretary

**And remember: Christmas BBQ -- 12th December — add it to your diary,**

## BEEN BUSH - Trip Reports

24-25 August 2019

Murray River Kayak trip

Leader:

Peter C

Participants:

Helen F, Anna T, Cathy R, Jurgen W, Julia D, Noel H. & Visitors: Ian R, Andreas P, Serge K.

The Friday evening rendezvous was at the Barmah Hotel. A meal, then a night drive into the Barmah Forest to reach the Swifts Creek campground on the NSW side of the Murray River. We erected tents by headtorch. By morning, 3 more participants had arrived at camp, making 10 paddlers plus Nola S who was willing to be the driver for car shuffles, and the action photographer. Peter C had an arrangement with his friend Ian, who previously ran a professional Kayak Adventure company. With 5 more kayaks on Ian's trailer, we had 10 single person Sea Kayaks.



Base camp at Swifts Creek NSW side of Murray River, L-R: Helen, Peter, Andreas, Jurgen, Noel, Julia, Cath, Anna, Ian, Serg and Nola in front

The river current was running quite strongly, so much of the paddle effort was to maintain the kayak pointing downstream. Every experienced paddler knows they have experienced the same learning ordeal. Because soon enough, some kayakers were at right-angles to the current and pointing directly at the Right-hand bank. Following a variety of paddle strokes that problem was overcome but soon they were pointing at the Left-hand bank. The day progressed and we became familiar with the flow of the water, the sweeping bends of the river, and the run of the kayak. Each bank was mostly a vertical erosion cut that exposed the dangling roots of the River Red Gums towering over us. The water level was quite high with 70cm to the top of bank thus affording us a view over the bank and out into the surrounding forest. When lunch break was called, a nice sandy beach couldn't be found, so we beached the kayaks onto slippery mud.

After lunch, Anna provided the only mishap for the weekend with an unintentional rollover in midstream. Fortunately, she coped with the water temperature as both she and kayak were towed back to the riverbank. However, she must have been uncomfortable in cold wet clothing for the rest of the day despite the sunny conditions. A chat around the campfire included Ian's final words of wisdom and guidance, "tomorrow you will be much more relaxed in the kayak and it will all be easier".

Sunday was fine weather again but with a light head wind as we put in to paddle from Swifts Creek to Barmah, 14km. Sure enough, mostly every kayak was travelling in a straight line with the current. Only Cathy would randomly lose direction with the current and become all crossed-up, but, with her seemingly unwavering spirit, she would simply give a chuckle at the situation, sort herself out and paddle off in a straight line – (for a while). By now everyone was familiar with

A calm and pleasantly sunny Saturday was before us as we made the morning vehicle shuffle upstream to a river location called Fisherman's Bend giving a 22 km journey back to base camp at Swifts Creek. With kayaks unloaded, Peter C sorted through a big bag of gear ensuring everyone was appropriately fitted out for a day on the river. We were 5 experienced paddlers and 5 ranging from less experienced to novice, so Ian's professionalism came to the fore as he delivered a chat about what will happen and what to do to control the kayak when on the water.

edging their kayak alongside a slippery muddy bank to get in and out for a snack time.



Helen F helping to launch kayaks at Fishermans Bend NSW

How many bends did we negotiate? How many fallen tall trees and half submerged snags did we dodge? Fortunately, the only other river traffic we passed were fishermen moored to fallen trees hoping to catch a prize. But mostly they shake their heads when we enquire. As we turned up a side creek for a final lunch break an obvious midden with the shell remains of hundreds of muscles scattered within the layers of the embankment. Scars on old trees had been noted but we didn't confirm an obvious 'canoe scar'.

With the head wind growing stronger we covered the last couple of kilometres to where the vehicles, and Nola, were waiting. By 3pm, all kayaks were loaded up. Peter, Helen & Ian returned to the Swifts Creek camp for one more night, others closing out on the weekend and heading for home.



Swifts Creek to Barmah, L-R: Helen, Serg, Andreas, Noel, Jurgen, Peter, Julia, Ian in background Cath and Anna

Thanks to Peter C for the pleasant trip. Well done to Ian for providing the extra kayaks.

**24 July – 15 August 2019**  
**Larapinta Trek**

Leader: Tony H  
Participants: Jacque P, Anne F, Anna T, Sal and Wendy M.

I was fortunate to be able to complete the 20-day hike of Larapinta led by Tony H. Although I was well prepared for the walk, having done lots of googling, I was still pleasantly surprised by our adventure. The track, although busy in sections, is very varied with challenging climbs and descents that I would not have expected in Central Australia. Underfoot varied from deep sand to sharp rock, from pebbles to boulders, often uneven, and unforgiving on your shoes, ankles and tired feet! You needed to keep your wits.

I expected spectacular, but the views and landscape exceeded all my expectations – magical shapes and patterns in the rocks, majestic twisted river gums, ghost gums and contrasting dark gnarly cork trees, and the colours... OMG. Huge fires that decimated vast areas of the trail and beyond, have laid large sections bare and black. Undressed of the mulga, the landscape reveals rock forms that may have been hidden in years past. Like the lines and wrinkles on an old man's face reveal his story and character, so did the lines, ridges and strata of the rocks reveal the story of the Ranges. An ancient and fanciful story of seas and mind-boggling land movement (orogeny! Really...it's a word. Look it up!). If you have no interest in geology you will by the end of your Larapinta journey.



Tony had us well organised with 3 food drops for the trip. A day in Alice prior to starting was a blessing, allowing us to do some final organising and some pre-trip fattening up. We had 20 days for the hike, walking 15-20 km per day. Starting each day around 7am we were in camp most days by early afternoon, before the heat, which was a good incentive to keep to the daily rhythm.

Each section of the Larapinta had its highlights. Euro ridge a taste of the spectacular ridges and views to come. Simpsons Gap with its beautiful gums and the pool reflecting the orange rock walls. Flocks of zebra finches in the trees at Bond Gap. The beautiful colours of Arengue Bluff. The walk out to Hamilton Downs Youth camp from Jay Creek. Here we met Rocky and Rob who told us about the school camps they run, bringing in "city high schoolers" to learn about the outback, indigenous culture and to play football against the locals. That's why Rocky was in a knee brace, footy injury! We traversed the "high route", with its steep climb, long ridge walk and steep descent but awesome views. The rugged terrain

and beautiful green of Hanging Valley as you walk into the back of Standley Chasm. Once there, the much-appreciated lunch at the cafe and a hot shower... how good was that! Another steep climb to Brinkley Bluff, spectacular views but the raging wind discouraged us from camping there for fear of being blown away. Making our way across Razorback Ridge, a narrow ridge with sharp drops either side that you must navigate while being distracted by the sweeping views of the ranges. We camped at Hugh Gorge junction and spent a morning exploring upper Hugh gorge and its steep walls. The walk into Hugh Gorge itself is beautiful with small reed pools and cycads lining the way.

At Ellery Creek we hit a hiccup with a dingo ripping Tony's tent in half and taking most of his food. We were able to continue unaffected though, thanks to the generosity of other campers and the efforts of Zac from Larapinta Trail Trek Support, who kindly donated tape for the tent and ample food supplies. A dip at Ellery big Hole was indeed a dip, the water too cold to bear!

On day 13 at Serpentine Gorge camp, one of our party chose some rest and recuperation for a couple of days, due to sore feet, deciding to get a ride to meet us in a few days at Ormiston Gorge. A tiny bit envious, the rest of us made our way on to Serpentine Chalet camp where we explored the old dam and ruins of an old outback getaway accommodation set up by Reg Ansett. Further on Counts Point Lookout is one of the highest points and most famous on the Heavitree range and while the photos of long narrow ridges lined up like a stegosaurus parade are eye-catching, seeing the real deal was breathtaking and one of the most memorable moments of the walk.

We broke from the track next day, to cheers all round, going off track to Mt Giles for a 3-day trek. The walk out to Giles camp was through thick spinifex and mulga but made easier by the fire cleared bush. Easier but we were all left very blackened pushing through the charred bush. The last few hours of the walk along a deep sandy creek bed carrying 2 days water was hard going and we still needed to find water for a third day to allow us time to climb Giles. Luckily our John Chapman map led us to Giles Spring Nth where we found drinkable water, possibly even running if you looked hard

enough. The climb to Giles was also made easier by the fire cleared bush. We picked a spur, and a 90-minute steep rocky scramble had us at the summit enjoying amazing 360-degree views.



Tony lends a helping hand

We headed to Ormiston making a diversion into Bowman's Gap, another beautiful deep but long sandy gorge with tall rocky walls. Back on the trail, we looked forward to the hot showers available at Ormiston. There, we met up with our fellow trekker who had many interesting stories to tell of people she had met in the 3 days R & R. The hot water system wasn't working, so, cold showers for all (and appropriate screams and groans). We had to console ourselves with focaccias, coffee and muffins at the café ... and ice creams, cold drinks and chocolate, etc, etc.

Still sore and inspired by the fun she had meeting so many new friends in camp, our fellow trekker chose again to get a ride to our last camp at Redbank Gorge. The rest of us resisted the slight temptation and trudged on. Our next camp Hill Top Lookout would be tight for tent room, so keen for pole position and in spite of carrying water for dry camp, we made quick time up the long and steep rocky climb, leaving any opposition in our dust! We secured panoramic tents sites by midday and well relaxed by the evening, we enjoyed an amazing orange sunset over Mt Sonder. Digging your hole in the rocky hilltop took some planning and organising, so I was up before dawn digging in anticipation, but the reward was watching the full moon set with colours rivalling the sunset we witnessed a few hours earlier. In an amazing trifecta I was also lucky to see the shooting stars of the Perseid meteor showers in a star filled sky, before the golden sunrise rudely signalled time to down the tent and don the pack.

Arriving at Redbank we were concerned our fellow trekker was nowhere to be seen. We assumed she'd either stayed at Ormiston, once she had got the hot showers to work or run off with a new acquaintance. Meanwhile, we had a quick dip in the gorge pool, Tony had a hypothermia defying swim, stuttering something about being born in Tasmania! Just on dusk, having devoured our dinner and lamenting a dearth of supper, our trekker mate arrived at camp having not only secured a car lift with the Ormiston cafe owners, but all of their left-over muffins. Full tummies, happy stories and a star filled sky. Happy days!

We did the Sonder climb next morning, in what seemed a fitting climax to the trip. Amazing views again. Tony and Jacque pushed on to the true summit a sharp exposed and dizzying climb requiring some chimneying and sure footedness.

Perhaps another good reason to do the Larapinta east to west is the bus ride back to Alice. The road runs parallel to the range. Road signs, and the range's peaks and gorges remind you of where you have been and what you have achieved, consolidating memories of a magnificent trip with good company.

Thanks Tony H. for your organisation and navigation skills, and to all involved for your friendship and fun.  
Sal M

**1 September 2019**  
**Cathedral Ranges Northern Circuit**

Leader: Alan W  
Participants: Roland W, Brent M, Noel H



Alan and Roland looking into the Acheron valley  
Cathedral peak



Noel H and Roland W looking south along the Acheron Valley from near Cathedral peak

### GOING BUSH - Trip Previews List

Members, find contact details on VMTC calendar.

Visitors, please email: [membership@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:membership@vmtc.asn.au)

**5-6 October 2019**  
**Baw Baw Area**

Unfortunately, due to work commitments I'll be unable to lead a trip on this weekend. If anyone is interested in taking over this trip, or running something of their own, please contact me Greg S or Jim H.

**5-6 October 2019**  
**Stirling Circuit**

Leader: Susie H  
Grading: Medium/Hard/Alpine  
Rendezvous: To be confirmed

We will be attempting a circuit done by the club a number of years ago, there will likely be a lot more scrub around for the off track sections so come prepared! We will park north west of Razorback Trail. From here we will head towards King Saddle and onto King Saddle East Rd, at the end of the road we will head off track towards The Monument and aim to camp a little south

east of Monument Saddle where there should be water available. The next morning, we will head up an unnamed spur to the top of Mt Stirling for those beautiful views before jumping on the Bluff Spur Trail to head back to the cars wandering the many trails as we see fit.

**12-13 October 2019**

**Whroo base camp and navigation practice**

Leader: Chris S  
Standard: Easy Base Camp  
Rendezvous: Nagambie Bakery 8:30 Saturday morning  
Maps: All provided

Saturday morning: we explore Whroo's goldfields and the general area before heading of to our camp beside the Fontainbleu Diggings. Saturday afternoon we explore the area, getting a look at the general lie of the land and relating this to the map.

Please Bring: water for the weekend, suitable food for basecamp by the car. Seat, maybe a folding table, wine and nibbles to share. Snacks for eating along the way, plus lunch (at the car). You will also need a suitable compass (Silva or Suunto are good examples), day pack, rain jacket. This weekend is also great for families.

### Wednesday, 16 October 2019

#### Hawkestone Park to Epping

Leader: Bill W  
Standard: Easy  
Distance: 12 km.  
Maps: Melway 182, 183  
Rendezvous: Hawkestone Station 9.15 am.  
Transport: Mernda Train - Flinders St 8.14 am, Parliament 8.23 am, Hawkestone Station 9.13 am.  
Note: Escape available at South Morang. Toilets not a problem.

Walk through Plenty Gorge Park with morning tea at Homestead, then various parks to Whittlesea Civic Centre for lunch. Henderson Creek Trail and Yan Yean Pipe Track is followed to Epping.

### 19-20 October 2019

#### Grampians Track Clearing

Leader: Jim H  
Standard: Easy  
This was originally scheduled for May but was rescheduled at the request of Parks Victoria. Joint activity with Melbourne Bushwalkers, Bushwalking Victoria BTAC and Grampians Walking Track Support Group.

### 19-20 October 2019

#### More highlights of the Eastern Strathbogies

Leader: Ray Thomas  
Standard: M/H (mostly off track)  
Distance: 20 km for the w/e  
Area: Eastern Strathbogie Ranges, SW of Lake Nillahcootie  
Map: Brankeet Creek 8024-2-3  
Mt Strathbogie 8024-2-2

This walk will explore NE Strathbogie Ranges, the highest, most rugged part of the plateau. It is a place to treasure!

It has pristine creeks, magnificent waterfalls, Tree Fern thickets, and forested slopes homes to Lyrebirds, Greater Gliders, and even Bandicoots. There are steep-sided ridges with spectacular cliffs, huge granite rock slabs, and massive boulders smothered with velvety green moss. There is tremendous forest variety, with tall Manna Gums, open Stringybark forests, even Snow Gums on the three highest tops; relics from the last Ice Age!!

More info on rendezvous times and places will be forwarded after registration.

### 2-5 November 2019

#### Mt Cope to Youngs Hut to Fainters

Leader: Jim Harker  
Standard: Medium  
Rendezvous: 9:00 am Mt Cope car park

If the Bogong High Plains road is still closed by snow, we will change the trip to go in via the Mt Hotham road.  
Saturday - Mt Cope to High Plains Creek waterfalls to Youngs Hut

Sunday - Day trip from Youngs Hut to a nearby waterfall and Youngs Tops

Monday - Youngs Hut to Mt Jim to Tawonga huts to the Fainters

Tuesday - Fainters to Tawonga Huts to Pretty Valley  
I'm hoping to have a car shuffle between Pretty Valley and Mt Cope.

### 2-5 November 2019

#### Bowen Mts. The Sisters to Mt. Leinster

Leader: Damien W  
Standard: Medium  
Maps: Vic Map Bindi 8423-n, Leinster 8424-s  
A mostly off-track walk through a seldom visited area, starting at The Sisters, a bunch of small peaks of about 1200m in height south of Benambra – on the opposite side to The Brothers. The route will continue along the divide following the Bowen Mountains over Mt. Tambo. The walk will conclude at the Limestone Road just north of Mt. Leinster. This area was burnt in the 2003 fires, so I would expect some regrowth in places.



Check out <http://www.bsar.org/>

### 9-10 November 2019

#### Friends of Bogong (conservation)

Leader: Jim H  
Standard: Easy  
Rendezvous: 8:15 am Parks Victoria Office Mt Beauty

Friends of Bogong do conservation work on the Bogong High Plains and adjoining areas. The exact work to be done will be organised with Parks Victoria closer to the date. We will be camping by the cars. During the day bring a day pack with the sort of gear you would have for a day walk.

**Saturday 9 November 2019, 9am – 3pm**

**BWV Smartphone Navigation**

Location: Outdoor Activity Hub Conference Room.

Address: Westerfolds Park, Fitzsimmons Lane, Templestowe. (Melways 33 G1)

What to bring: BYO lunch, smartphone (or GPS device), ruler, pencil, pens, wet weather gear. (Morning tea will be provided.)

Register by **October 4<sup>th</sup>**.

**Sunday 10 November 2019**

**Vertical Rescue Skills Practice – Werribee Gorge (Falcons Lookout)**

Leader: Damien W

Standard: Must have abseiling experience

Rendezvous: Ironbark Gorge Carpark 8.00am

Brush up on abseiling skills and practice a few rescue/self-rescue procedures. An opportunity for those wanting to get some practice for Blue Mountains canyoning.

**16-17 November 2019**

**Mt Cobbler and its waterfalls**

Leader: Susie H

Grading: Medium

Rendezvous: To be confirmed

This route was run by the club a few years ago, I loved it so much I had to come back! Heading up Little Cobbler Track we will arrive at the saddle between Cobbler and Little Cobbler where we will drop packs and check out Little Cobbler before heading up the western spur of Cobbler to the summit and then head to camp near the turnoff to Cobbler Lake. The next day we will head to the top of two sets off falls including Dandongadale Falls, we will also visit the base of these before walking down the creek to the road.

**7 - 8 December**

**Mt. Magdala – Stanley Name Spur**

Leader: Damien W

Standard: Medium

Maps: SV Maps: Buller-Howitt Alpine Area

Rendezvous: 8.00am Saturday Upper Howqua Camping Area (2WD access)

We'll take a good-looking direct spur that comes up onto the main divide just south of Mt. Magdala. There will be a short steep rock scramble near the top. Camp will be the usual nice one below Hells Window. On day 2 we'll complete the circuit taking a side spur off Stanley Name Spur that brings us down to near where we started.

**Wednesday 20 November 2019.**

**Fed Square, Lower Yarra to Station Pier**

Leader: Laurie Bingham

Maps: Melway 2E, 2F, 42 & 56

Standard: Easy 13 km.

Rendezvous: Federation Square, 9.00am

From Fed Square we follow the river downstream to perhaps Pier 35 for coffee, then on under the Westgate Bridge to Westgate Park for lunch.

After lunch walk on to Sandridge Beach, perhaps the mouth of the Yarra and finish at Station Pier. The 109 Tram gets us back to the city.

I intend to use Bus 237 along Lorimer St so you will need your Miki card.

**23-24 November 2019**

**Dock Inlet**

Leader: Chris S

Standard: Easy (suitable for children)

This is a classic beach walk in East Gippsland. The whales have almost finished their migration, but there is still a good chance seeing them just beyond the shore break.

We walk along a lonely 4wd track and then around the eastern edge of Dock Inlet. This is an impressive (and little known) freshwater lake only 50m from the ocean beach. Sunday, we return to the cars via the beach. If the weather is great, bring a Lilo or pack raft to explore further up the small streams entering the system



Send your photos to Nola ...

**30 November – 1 December 2019**

**Mt Bogong area - spectacular views and wildflowers**

Leader: Ray T

Standard: M/H but note that all the steep climbs are up south faces, away from the sun!!

Distance: 24-26 km, depending on descent route. 12 km will be on walking tracks.

The idea is to explore several untracked ridges and peaks in the Mt Bogong area, to enjoy the spectacular views and wildflowers, which have escaped cattle grazing. Start at Howman's Gap, across Kiewa River, then up towards Spion Kopje. We'll cut across to open snow grass plains to waterfalls on White Rock Creek and on to Timm's Lookout. We drop down a spur to Cairn Creek Hut on Big River and camp on Saturday night.

Sunday, we go up Granny Spur to the start of Horse Ridge for fantastic sunset views.

Monday, we'll climb up Granny Spur and Horse Ridge and go around the ridge to Mt Bogong summit. There are several possible descent routes back to the cars at Mountain Creek

## Advanced Notice of Trip

15-30 May 2020

Karlamilyi National Park WA

Leader: Damien W.

I am seeking expressions of interest in a walk in Karlamilyi (formerly Rudall River) National Park. The park is the second largest in Australia, is located 250 km N.E. of Newman and has no facilities. I have approval from WDLAC (Western Desert Lands Aboriginal Corporation) to do the walk. The viability of this walk will depend on next summer's rainfall.



The route will be from Desert Queen Baths, a permanent waterhole in the Broadhurst Range, to Punmu Aboriginal community on the NE side of Lake Dora, in the Great Sandy Desert. After the walk, I plan to stay 2 or 3 days at Punmu, to have some interaction with the traditional owners.

We'll follow Rooney Creek and the Karlamilyi River (the Martu name for the Rudall River) towards Lake Dora. These are two of the main water courses in the area. They rarely flow, but each have some excellent water holes which are a haven for a variety of bird life.

The walking will be generally easy over flat (but not monotonous) terrain. However, it can still be hot in May and we will have to cross some sand ridges (average height 15m) on a number of days. For example, the last day is 22 km and will cross about 19 ridges. There will also be a couple of dry camps.

As it is the remotest place in Australia, access will not be cheap. I am currently looking at transport options. Air charter costs ex Newman will be \$2,400 per person for a party of 4 or 8. We may helicopter in to Desert Queen Baths or be driven from Parnngurr (another Martu community) to DQB. We would fly back from Punmu to Newman.

If you are interested, please contact me. Damien

## News from the VMTC Community

*Info and adventures beyond Official VMTC Trips – Please send short items and photos*

**3 June - 11 July 2019,  
Eastward Traverse of half the Pyrenees - GR10**

The whole walk has 55 stages. I completed the first 26 with 4 rest days. The walk is well described in Brian Johnson's *Trekking The GR 10 Trail* (Cicerone), which I carried as an E book.

I began with 3 days of warm up walks to acclimatise and tune up my lungs and legs in the Pyrenean town of Caunterets at the end of Stage 17 of the GR 10. This was worthwhile, although one day was particularly bad weather, walking in snow, hail and rain – my walking umbrella proved useful, but wasn't unfurled again until the last day, when I walked for several hours in a mountain storm. These days were the worst weather on the walk, which was generally sunny and sometimes hot, necessitating early morning starts on some stages.

My accommodation each day ranged from camping ground dormitory, B&Bs, Refuges or 2-star hotels in some valleys. Dinner was generally provided, but some foraging was required where this was not available. I learnt the hard way that supplementary muesli and fresh fruit were required. I carried a 10-12 kg Aarn pack with

**From Hendave to Bagneres du Luchon  
453 Km, +24,400m, - 23,700m**

front balance pockets, which drew curious glances. When this fell to pieces, I bought a new pack in Caunterets in mid-walk.



The path emerges from beneath the snow, climbing to the left above the Hourquette d'Arre

These two days extracted from my notes illustrate the walk.



Corniche des Alhas, Stage 14,  
Section cut into face of a cliff.

**Tuesday 25 June Stage 14 - Gabbas - Gourette,  
High Point Horquette d'Arre (2465m) 23Km, +1500m, -1200m, 8h 55m**

A big day. Breakfast at 6.30. I used my muesli, then left it behind! Hotel had a fruit bowl, so enjoyed oranges, plus a couple of tomatoes. Keeping up my roughage. Long climb up through the trees on interesting path with a stretch cut in a cliff face and later beneath an overhang, before entering a long valley traversing above farms with ski slopes opposite.

Water from side spring. Balancing act to cross the main stream. Extensive snowbank approaching the Horquette d'Arre, soft enough to kick steps, so a slow climb.

Large bank of snow in the pass itself covering the path and signage, but the guide clarified the route up to the left and I followed way markers carefully for the complex and demanding, long descent.

Very happy to see Gourette below. This is an ugly ski town, but Hotel Boul de Neige was very welcoming and comfortable. One other walker and I were the only guests.

**Sunday 30 June, Stage 18 –  
Cauterets- Refuge Des Oulettes de Gaube,  
High Point Refuge (2151m), 15Km, +1400, -100, 6h5m**

Up at 0500, walking at 0550 using my headlamp. No breakfast due to the inflexibility of my hotel: 'Breakfast starts at 0730 Monsieur!' Steady climb up with the sun gradually penetrating the mixed forest of larch and pines.

The 2nd stage was a steeper, rocky trail alongside a tumbling mountain stream with a series of spectacular cascades, culminating in Pont D'Espagne (1496m). The bar/café at 0830 is of course 'ferme'. So, my dreams of a cup of tea and crepe for breakfast are put on hold.

The next stage was a similarly steep and rocky climb up to Lake Gaube (1796m). The Cafe was open. As its first customer of the day 0930, my tea and crepes quickly materialise. As do the crowds of day walkers, many with small children in tow on a Sunday outing. Fortified I headed off for the 4th and toughest section of the climb up to the Refuge, arriving at 1215 to a warm welcome and lunch (omelette complete, washed down with 2 beers, check-in, warm shower, wash clothes and bunk allocation for a short siesta. By 1300 the Refuge is awash with day walkers and climbers who walk up to

gaze at Vignemale (3298m) which dominates the outlook in front of the Refuge.

This walk has been one of the highlights of the route.





A complex route winds its way down to Lac d'Anglas



The climb up alongside the cascades of Gave du Marcadau, Stage 18, one highlight of the walk

### Reflections on The Walk

- Spectacular mountain scenery but a daily pattern of big climb and descent.
- My apple watch lacked battery capacity to usefully keep track of distance, not worth the trouble of recharging – back to the old Casio next year.
- The View Ranger App was excellent, loaded with IGN 1:25,000 topo maps, on both iPhone (and iPad for redundancy), with coverage for the route and deviations, backed up with a power pack.
- I did not carry a GPS and rarely consulted the paper 1:50,000 maps which I carried. I would not bother with the paper maps next year.
- My Aus Post travel SIM worked well, providing phone and internet where coverage was available. In addition to the walk guide, E books on my iPad filled in the hours recovering for the next day's walking.
- Gaiters are worthwhile to keep mud and objects out of your boots. Boots not shoes.
- The next section has several camping stretches, so my pack will be heavier next year.

Peter



The Australian Citizen Science Association (ACSA) advances citizen science by sharing knowledge, collaboration, capacity building and advocacy. We are a member-based community that supports, informs and develops citizen science.

<https://citizenscience.org.au/who-we-are/>

### Citizen Science Initiatives (CSI)

These are a great way that members of the public can contribute information about our wildlife to scientists who study them. As bushwalkers go to wild, remote places we would be able to contribute a lot. Although these are new initiatives, they give scientists large amounts of information. Three apps can be downloaded for free from either the Apple or Android app store. They also have websites, for those who don't have smart phones.

**Frog ID** - this lets you take either photos of frogs or record their calls. It then lets you look at pictures of frogs in your area, or recordings of their calls. You can then upload the picture/recordings for the experts to verify. As of 26 August, Frog ID has received 72,848 recordings, verified 105,568 as genuine frogs (some recording have more than one frog) and identified 187 species. The website is <https://australianmuseum.net.au/get-involved/citizen-science/frogid/> .

**Echidna CSI** - This allows you to take photos of echidnas and submit them. They also encourage you to collect echidna scats (poo) and send them in. The scats contain echidna DNA, the DNA of what they are eating, and hormones. So far, they have recorded over 5,000 sightings and have received over 350 scats. The website is <https://grutznerlab.weebly.com/echidna-csi.html>.

**Platypus Spot** - <http://platypusspot.org/>. This website allows you to submit photos you take of platypuses. It also has tips for how to spot a platypus.

Jim

## Membership Report

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Welcome to prospective members</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Fiona Gilder and Brent McDermott</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Congratulations to Noel Haynes</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>on qualifying for full membership.</b></p> <p style="font-size: small;">Note: Full membership follows payment of membership subscription.</p>	<p><i><b>Day walks</b></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bentleigh to the Bay – 10 members.</li> </ul> <p><i><b>Extended ski tour</b></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rovers Chalet- Ski Touring Week (8 days) – 13 members.</li> </ul> <p><i><b>Paddling</b></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tocumwal - Barmah kayak trip (2 days) – 6 members, 1 prospective member, 3 visitors.</li> </ul> <p><i><b>Track Maintenance</b></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BWV Fire Recovery Track Maintenance - 3 members.</li> </ul>	<p><i><b>No report</b></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great Otways National Park - Track clearing.</li> <li>• Metrogaine and Cyclogiane (Navigation practice).</li> </ul> <p><i><b>Cancelled trips</b></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youngs Hut - McNamaras Hut Skitour.</li> <li>• Mt Feathertop snow caving.</li> <li>• Two Bays Walks - Mornington Peninsula.</li> </ul> <p><i>(These proceeded as unofficial trips.)</i></p>
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### Reminders

- Please advise any changes to your personal details to [membership@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:membership@vmtc.asn.au)
- Leaders, as soon as possible after your trip please email a scan of the completed WR1 form to [walks@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:walks@vmtc.asn.au)
- If you cannot scan **please email the participant details** to [walks@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:walks@vmtc.asn.au), and post the completed form to the VMTC's PO Box.

### Activity Registration:

- It is important that all participants in an activity are registered on the online booking system. This information is required in the case of an emergency.
- It is a responsibility of the leader to ensure that all participants are registered, and to register any participants who cannot do so themselves (e.g. visitors). Refer VMTC online booking system – responsibilities for members elsewhere in this issue.

Tony H

VMTC Membership Secretary

**Early bird discounts close 31 October; renew by 30 November or lose your membership.**

### Membership Renewals - Reminder

Membership Renewal Forms will be sent out late August and can also be downloaded from the Member Section of the VMTC'S website ([vmtc.asn.au](http://vmtc.asn.au)) in the Forms Section.

*Payment on or before 31<sup>st</sup> October*

Single \$40, Family \$80, Student \$20

*Payment after 31<sup>st</sup> October*

Single \$50, Family \$90, Student \$20

Please pay directly to VMTC bank account:

BSB: 063 002 Account Number: 00910167  
 Account: Victorian Mountain Tramping Club  
 Message/Reference: Your surname(s) and initial(s) and "subs"

Email [treasurer@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:treasurer@vmtc.asn.au):

Saying who the payment covers. This avoids confusion when couples have different second names. If paying through CBA branch, please ask teller to use this format: in the reference 'Your second name-subs'

**NOTE:** VMTC encourages all members to renew so you receive all communication, keep up to date with VMTC activities and in touch with other members.

If you are moving overseas temporarily, apply to Committee for exemption.

## QUICK INFO ADVERTISING

*The VMTC's website is a wealth of information, but sometimes members want quick reminders or quick access to information. This section meets this demand. The content changes to address issue of importance.*

### Car Travel Costs

Persons sharing their cars may make prior arrangement for sharing costs. In the absence of any other prior agreement, the standard and maximum payment shall be 1.5 times the cost of petrol divided by the number of persons in the vehicle. Road tolls are additional. (See Bye-law 2.6).

### Online bookings

Booking for club trips is an online process for members. Once logged in, under [Members Only] [Events] select Calendar to view and register for upcoming events.

### Paying membership and visitor's fees

The easiest way of transferring fees to the VMTC bank account is via internet banking. Or deposit the fees by cheque or as cash at a Commonwealth Bank with a follow-up email to [treasurer@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:treasurer@vmtc.asn.au) that explains the detail of that deposit.

The bank account is:

BSB: 063 002

Account Number: 00910167

Account Name: Victorian Mountain Tramping Club Inc.

Reference: Your name



Peter's G10 – Eastward traverse of the Pyrennes  
The ski resort of Gourette was welcome if somewhat ugly sight

### Official club email addresses

Email address	Purpose
<a href="mailto:secretary@vmtc.asn.au">secretary@vmtc.asn.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External correspondence to VMTC.</li> <li>Members can communicate to the committee.</li> </ul>
<a href="mailto:treasurer@vmtc.asn.au">treasurer@vmtc.asn.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial transactions or queries to be directed to the treasurer.</li> </ul>
<a href="mailto:walkssecretary@vmtc.asn.au">walkssecretary@vmtc.asn.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enquiries about walks published on the website to be directed to the walks secretary.</li> </ul>
<a href="mailto:membership@vmtc.asn.au">membership@vmtc.asn.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enquiries about membership via the website.</li> <li>Update changes to members contact details.</li> </ul>
<a href="mailto:info@vmtc.asn.au">info@vmtc.asn.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Circulate information via VMTC News to all on the email listing.</li> <li>Update changes to member's email address/s for receiving VMTC emails.</li> </ul>
<a href="mailto:walks@vmtc.asn.au">walks@vmtc.asn.au</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Send completed WR1 or list of members/visitors who participated on trip/s.</li> </ul>

### Updating contact details:

Send an email with updated information to:

1. [membership@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:membership@vmtc.asn.au)
2. [info@vmtc.asn.au](mailto:info@vmtc.asn.au) (updates VMTC News contact list) and
3. on the website, in members section Profile" (bottom tab on members main menu page), click on this and you can update all contact details. This is important for auto populating online booking.

