

Brindabella Bushwalking Club



November 2023



From the President

*The best laid schemes
o' Mice an' Men
Gang aft agley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!*
(From 'To a Mouse' by Robbie Burns)

Why am I 'rambling' and quoting from this well-known (at least to Scots) poem?

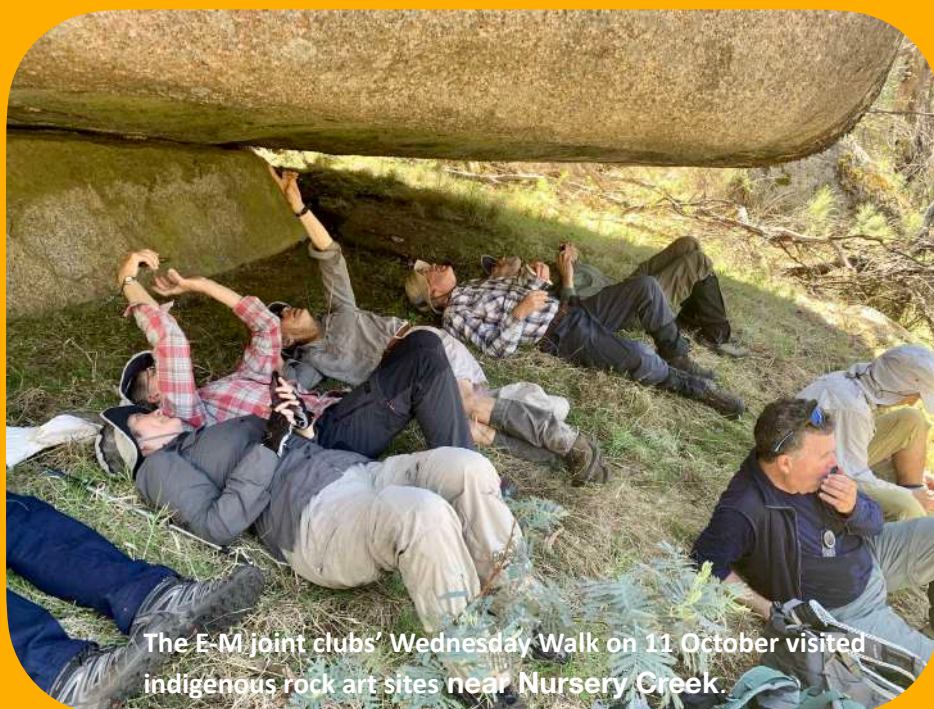
Firstly, it has been a quiet month hence rambling, although it is important to note that the revised Club Constitution has been formally approved by the ACT Administration and it is good to get closure on this major piece of necessary administrative definition.

Secondly, and more relevantly, a group of us headed off to do reccie's of some potential walking opportunities North West of the Blue mountains. The explorations were very informative and assisted us to understand the walk options in the area being surveyed. I cannot overstate the importance of exploring unfamiliar territory ahead of involving a group of fellow walkers to ensure everyone's safety and enjoyment. In this case, for example, on paper there appeared to be quite a few well defined and accessible tracks to choose from. However, the reality was a little less positive; some of the tracks were closed due to land/road slips (and had been for some time), others crossed private property or were not at all distinct i.e., very much off-track/exploratory. Although this meant that there are fewer choices than hoped for, it was nonetheless a valuable

exercise. So, we started in high spirits and ended a little less so, hence the quote!

Finally, earlier in the month I assisted our training officer in the running of the club's annual Navigation and Walk Leader practical day-out, where basic but essential navigation and leader training is provided. The course was again well received by all the participants, thank you Bob.

As always, I hope to see you on a walk soon, until then take care.... Bill



The E-M joint clubs' Wednesday Walk on 11 October visited indigenous rock art sites near Nursery Creek.

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Editor - Peter Ford

CONTRIBUTIONS WELCOME

[Email here](#)

John Clune's Austrian walking trip in September/October was fantastic and thoroughly enjoyed by his participants, Liz Conway, Neil & Glenda Lynch, Nancie Lim, Ashleigh Bauer & Virginia De Luca.

We had two destinations, Innsbruck and Pertisau each for a week. Innsbruck has a very colourful infrastructure with all buildings painted in all different shades which makes the city very attractive. Architecture in this city is both Imperial and modern and there are little alley ways everywhere with great restaurants, coffee shops and shopping.

The walking we did in this area was spectacular. We had a backdrop of the Nordkette mountain range which we visited via cable cars. We did a summit walk and John was first to the top. We also walked in the foothills and into the forested area which was very attractive with autumn colours just beginning to peep through on the birch trees, pin oaks, and some pine trees. We went to the Bergisel ski jump area on the opposite side and were lucky enough to see 4 ski jumpers practising their ski runs for the winter Olympics. We descended through a lovely forest and down to the river. We visited Ambrose castle and walked within their lovely gardens. John was very good in organising public transport where required, and mostly gratis! We had many morning teas and evening dinners together. Schnitzel & potatoes was a classic as was beef clear soup with dumplings, similar to our rissoles. This appears to be the specialty in the area. There were very few greens seen on any plates for the whole 2 weeks.

We all enjoyed Innsbruck very much with its fantastic views.



Austrian Walks Sep./ Oct. 2023

Virginia de Luca and Nancie Lim

In our second week we caught a train to Pertisau which is a beautiful area by the Archen Lake and is surrounded by Rofan and Karwendel mountain ranges. We were in the small village of Archensee which is nestled between the mountains. All the residents have many a flower box of geranium or petunias which is just stunning. This is a very pretty town. The area is popular for skiing and hiking, as is Innsbruck. The walking we did here took us into the gorgeous valley where the farmers cared for their cattle. All the cows wear bells around their necks so you can hear bells ringing most of the time. They each have a different pitch so the farmer is able to tell whose cow it is if they go wandering. On our second day out, we caught the boat on the Archen Lake for 12kms and walked back along the lakeside. It was not as flat as one would have thought but we had fantastic views across the lake along the way. We visited two areas by cable cars and did some walks up top, again the views just blew you away. We visited a village close to Archensee called Maurach and went up the Rofan cable car then walked to Dalfazalm for our morning break. We then attempted to hike to the Dalfazer waterfall but halfway through, John made the executive decision not to proceed as the trail was proving to be more difficult than some of us could have coped. Turning back we did not feel disappointed as we felt we were on top of the world.



We had very good weather (mild) excellent for walking the whole trip. There were a couple of wet days which gave us all an opportunity to wander randomly, catch buses to outer areas, and to explore. (when some of us got into a little trouble).

We enjoyed the local foods, beer (a large for John please) and their wines. Many a coffee, cake and the mention of apple strudel was enjoyed on every day out.

Like the lack of greens on any plates, we did not encounter much bird life at all.

Both areas of course have many churches and cathedrals all with bells ringing which was lovely to hear.

We were lucky enough to witness the 'blessing of the cows' in Pertisau where the cows are walked through the villages with clanging bells and decorative headdress. (a bit on the nose) The locals celebrate with food and of course much beer.

A fabulous holiday was had by all and the company was great. Thank you John & Liz for all your efforts, it was much appreciated.

New Constitution and Rule changes accepted

Julie Pettit, our Secretary and Public Officer, has confirmed that our new Constitution and amendments to our Rules have now been accepted by Access Canberra and are available on the public record.

Passwords

Windows

Please enter your new password

User

Cabbage

Windows

Sorry the password must be more than 8 characters

User

Boiled Cabbage

Windows

Sorry the password must contain one numerical character

User

1 Boiled Cabbage

Windows

Sorry the password cannot contain blank spaces

User

50damnboiledcabbages

Windows

Sorry, the password must contain at least one upper case character

User

50DAMNboiledcabbages

Windows

Sorry the password cannot use more than one upper case character consecutively

User

50damnBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYouIfYouDon'tGiveMeAccessNow!

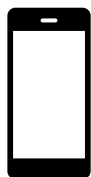
Windows

Sorry that password is already in use.

Welcome to New Members

Amand Bullock
Sharon Clancy
Michael Clisby
Mary Colreavy
Ros Crago
Elizabeth and Peter Daly
Gloria Grimes
Zdenka Grundelova
Anne Hastings
Rebecca Higgins and Andrew Ryan
Kirk Hone
Helen Kinmonth
Michelle Loveday
Joanne Murray
Cole Neering
Helen Osborn
Mark Reynolds
Catherine Stephenson
Sandra Teffer
Jacqueline Wilkinson

Enjoy your walking!



Some light relief: [Kim Jong Un does Monty Python](#)

Canberra's Centenary Trail – September and October 2023

Leigh Hermann



Group at Foundation Stone at the start on 12 Sept

For years I've wanted to walk Canberra's Centenary Trail. This is the 145-kilometre walking and cycling trail that circuits Canberra and was launched in 2013 as part of Canberra's Centenary celebrations to 'showcase urban and rural Canberra as well as iconic sites and hidden treasures'.

You've probably seen its distinctive markers. So to find some walking companions and solve the transport issues I put it on the club program. And although BBC has often offered individual sections, it seems this was the first time the full route had been offered. There was plenty of interest.

My information source was Woodslane's 'Walking and Cycling Canberra's Centenary Trail' which breaks the walk into 16 sections, heading north from Parliament House in an anti-clockwise direction (note, an updated edition was released recently). As the suggested 7-day walking schedule has a long first day with the second day finishing at the Northern Campground where there is no road access, I made it 8 days with 2 sections per day, walking 2 days a week over 4 weeks in this year's spring. Apart from Parliament House, parking was unlimited at each day's start and end points. We'd meet at the day's end point then carpool to the start. After reaching the end a driver



or two would take the morning drivers back to their cars. The logistics worked well.

So, how difficult was the walking? Days varied in length from the first day's 11km to the longest day of 23.5km (Hackett to Forde), but most days were around 20km. The 23.5km day was a bit of a slog, especially the exposed roads of Goorooyaroo and Mulligans, but after that day a 20km stretch seemed very doable. We passed through most of Canberra's nature reserves; some sections were on bicycle paths but these were in the minority. Being a cycling route, it was often quite hard underfoot but usually possible to walk on the grass beside. Climbs varied between 230m and the 530m of Day 2. My Backcountry Navigator gave a total distance of 148 km and 2800m climb.

And the navigation? It was mostly OK, with markers at most intersections. Maps are available from the ACT Parks website, as well as GPX and KML files of both walking and cycling routes, but I didn't find the gpx on my Android phone particularly helpful. For us, roadworks on William Slim Drive meant an unmarked diversion into Palmerville, and there was also confusion re the official route from the Arboretum to Stromlo. We took the official route along the Molonglo River, but there is also a 'future' signposted route along Boundary Road through the pine forests on the northern side of the river. The car park at Stromlo Forest Park was closed so the ACT Bushfire Memorial was that section's end point.

And the highlights?

So many nature experiences: 7 shinglebacks, an echidna, a very sick rat, 2 flocks of superb parrots feeding by Lake Burley Griffin, 2 brown snakes, a blue tongue lizard, a tawny frogmouth, many different wildflowers, a forest of thickly flowering wattles, various orchids including Jenny and Andrew's discovery of the uncommon Brown Beaks on Black Mountain, as well as chancing upon a very informative and helpful ACT worker putting out European Wasp traps at Isabella Ponds.

So many expansive views of Canberra and beyond: from Mts Ainslie and Majura, the Mulligans to Hall trail, One Tree Hill, Gossans Hill, Black Mountain, the Arboretum, Coleman Ridge, Mt Arawang, Mt Sheaffe and Red Hill.

So many historic discoveries: Dames Enid Lyon and Dorothy Tangney at Old Parliament house, John Gorton and his dog outside the John Gorton building in Parkes, various war memorials along Anzac Parade, a scar tree on Mr Majura, a history of Aviation in Canberra at the very pretty Hughie Edwards picnic area, border markers and lockspits on the northern border, the AIS, the ACT Bushfire Memorial, a memorial to Jansz and the Duyfken on La Perouse Street with a statue of La Perouse at Red Hill shops.

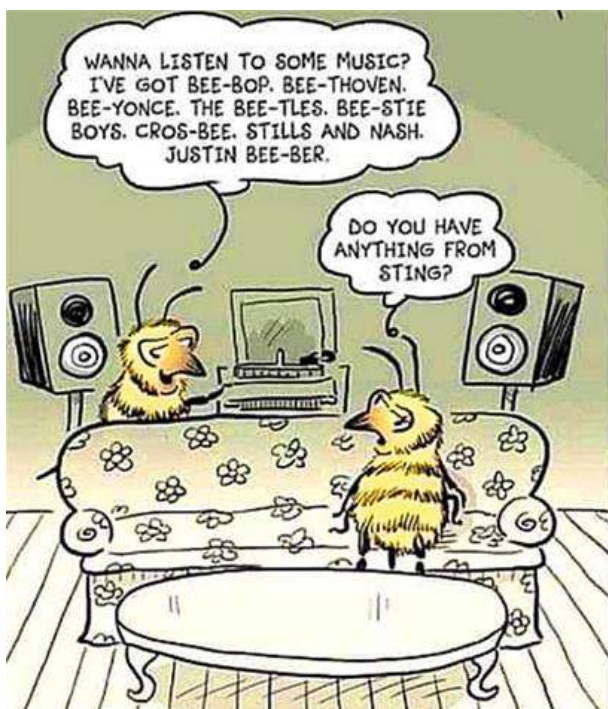
And of course, morning teas and lunches with grand vistas, burbling brooks and virgin bushland, as well as several coffee shops visits. But best of all was a sense of achievement and the company and goodwill of my companions who made the leading role so easy. Overall there were 15 'core' walkers: Cathryn O, Andrew and Jenny C, Graham S, David W, David A, Jo M, Michelle L, Sue W, Sue B, Luisa, Prue, Phillip S and Ros C with 3 others joining occasionally. The first 8 of these, with me, did the full walk – many thanks and congratulations to everyone!



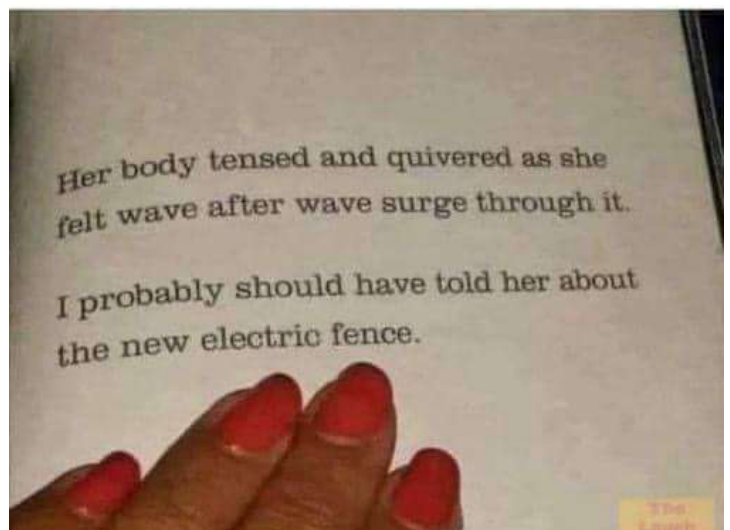
Group at PH at the end (13 Oct)

For more photos see our Facebook page [here](#)

So, what next? Suggestions abounded about running this walk again, maybe even next year. And to make it different, in reverse! So if you're keen to walk the full Centenary Trail, watch this space (well, perhaps not *this* space, maybe your 6-monthly program). Till next time



Farmers writing romance novels



Mallacoota BBC trip October 2023

David Wardle

Mallacoota is in far eastern Victoria and to give you an idea of distance it is closer to Canberra than Melbourne. The locals are used to the isolation as when we were there and the power went off the locals just turned their generators on. After all, the beer has to be kept cold and the bread baked. 16 of us booked out the whole of Karbeethong Lodge, a 1920s era guest house overlooking the estuary and for the early risers, stunning sun rises.



Karbeethong Lodge

Fingers had been crossed for weeks that we would be able to make the sea crossing out to Gabo Island. The ocean, as home to more than 32 shipwrecks and with Australia's second tallest lighthouse on Gabo, was not to be taken lightly and had defeated us on previous visits so when the day came and we were able to make the crossing it was with more than the average level of excitement. It took two crossings to get us all on the island which we had to ourselves for the day and this also gave us access to the lighthouse with unbeatable 360 degree views.



Gabo Island Lighthouse



Looking back to the mainland

The weather on other days was not quite so idyllic however we were still able to achieve most of our walks and the time spent in front of the log fire in the lounge was not a bad alternative. Following recent bushfires much rehabilitation work had been undertaken on the various walking tracks and we were able to walk along the coast to Shipwreck Creek, the Casuarina Track to Betka Beach and up the estuary to Captains Creek.

A surprise addition to the week away was a visit to



View from Mallacoota Coastal Track



Cliff face on Quarry Beach

the WWII Bunker Museum managed by the Mallacoota Historical Society that showcased so much of the region's history from the many shipwrecks to the prominent role played by the area at the junction of major shipping lanes during both world wars.

As well as tourism, the area is a major supplier of abalone to a hungry Chinese market. The area has always been a bit of an artist's colony recording visits from writers such as E J Brady and Henry Lawson and a legion of painters. The community art gallery was evidence that this characteristic is still well alive.

Oh, and did I mention food. The bakery with its broccoli, cauliflower and cheese pies, Lucy's with abalone in a variety of dishes and for the last evening a slap up dinner at the golf club with views across the greens to the ocean.



Facebook: Our Facebook Manager regularly posts photos, walk reports and information about upcoming activities. Please visit [here](#) and see what our members are planning or have recently been up to. *No, you don't need to be on Facebook yourself.* Please send your photos etc. to Heather at facebook@brindabellabushwalking.org.au

Tour du Mont Blanc – Bill and Deborah Gibson (August 2023)

Whilst we had trained and knew we could do multi-day hikes of reasonable distance, we still undertook this hike with some angst as to how we would handle the significant elevation involved. This feeling had been intensified after receiving an email from the group leader telling us that several participants on the previous group tour had been unable to do the walk due to lack of preparation/fitness! In spite of this we joined the tour in Chamonix eagerly looking forward to the adventure that was ahead of us. So, off we go.....



Day 1 - Chamonix to Les Houches 13km +700m -1500m Due to predicted afternoon storms, we took the cable car to Le Brevent (2525m), which reduced the elevation by 300m. Then we walked along the stunning ridge to Refuge Bel Lachat after which we had a long and tough descent (1500m) over rough and rocky paths to Les Houches. The views were still great even if the cloud cover denied us glimpse(s) of Mont Blanc. Hard going for many of the group as the first day of our hike, sore knees aplenty. We stayed in Hotel Campanules and had a very welcome hot shower. We went for a short walk from/to Les Houches across a dam with significant glacial water outflow – very silty but very very high flow rate.

Day 2 – Les Houches to Les Contamines 13km +800m -1300m

Took the cable car to the Bellevue (1802m) and then walked to Chalets des Miage (+650m) via the Col du Tricot and then a long down-hill (1250m) to Les Contamines. Stunning views walking through high altitude pastureland and green forest. The view back from Miage up to the Col du Tricot was absolutely awesome. Although tiring, the incentive to get over the Col du Tricot was delicious wild alpine Blueberry Pie 🍓 to be had at the Chalets des Miage. Bill literally ran down from the Col to ensure he didn't miss out!

Day 3 – Les Contamines to Refuge Nova 20km +1450m -1000m

A big day but we started early and took plenty of time. We walked up to Col du Bonhomme and then across to Col de la Croix du Bonhomme. From here it is a steep descent down to the Refuge Nova. The valley views were again very good and although steep we started to see

livestock on the pastures, cows with cow-bells ringing in our ears and a flock of over 100 sheep wandering up in the direction of Col de la Croix du Bonhomme. Refuge Nova was “original” ie basic, but dinner was great – Soup with veg and meat + great crusty bread, roasted baby potatoes + slow cooked pork in a red wine jus and finally Panna Cotta and a cheese platter. Without exception there were no leftovers as everyone was very hungry after the days walk.



Day 4 – Refuge Nova to Courmayeur 14km +700m -700m An easier day but quite rocky in parts. Walked to the Refuge Mottets below the Col du Seigne (2516m) and although we climbed steeply we soon found ourselves at the Col and across the French/Italian border. At this point we discovered a very well reconstructed building called the “Casermetta”, old military barracks at the gateway between France and Italy. In prior times this was a place of military activities including drills and even attacks on the French army by Italian troops. After WWII the barracks were not used by the military, but by ski-instructor trainees in the setting up of the Mont Blanc Ski school. However, poor economic times meant that the building became rundown and neglected. The early 2000's saw a project to reconstruct the “Casermetta” and develop it as an information reception centre as well as a working station for the local Corps of Forest Rangers. Looking into the distance, the Alpine views of Italy and Switzerland are breathtaking from the Col. We came across more livestock in the form of pigs, cows and sheep during the walk especially





Left: The start of the ladders





through the Val Veny with its picturesque hanging valleys. We stopped briefly at the Rifugio Elisabetta Soldini Montanaro, to allow some of the group to have the obligatory coffee and then onto Lac Combal and from here descend to La Visaille for the short bus ride to Courmayeur.

Day 5 – Rest day in Courmayeur

Courmayeur is a lovely Italian alpine town with historic streets and buildings as well as great, inexpensive but very tasty food and drink. We found some local delicatessens where we bought cheese, cold meats, salads and more for our evening meal. Deliciously fresh and wholesome.

Day 6 – Courmayeur to La Vachey 14km +1000m -590m

Today we made our ascent to Rifugio Bertoni and continued on to La Vachey. The views of some of the peaks of the European Alps including Mont Blanc and the Grand Jorasses are fantastic from the Rifugio Bertoni. We then walked down to our accommodation in the Val Ferret.

Day 7 – La Vachey to La Fouly – 20km + 900m -1400m

Continuing through the Val Ferret to Arnava and then the long ascent to the Grand Col Ferret (2537m). The walk started in cool and windy conditions but as we walked higher it became extremely windy with snow and sleet. At the Col it was so cold and windy that the icicles on the marker of the Col were pronounced and stood out at 90 degrees to the surface of the marker! We didn't wait too long at this exposed point and crossed over into Switzerland. Within less than 1km of descent the situation had dramatically improved with very little wind and sunny conditions. So, we had winter on the Italian side of the range and summer on the Swiss side! Again, awesome mountain landscapes.

Day 8 – La Fouly to Champex-Lac 15km +420m – 570m

Easy day of walking and taking in the atmosphere of the Swiss villages of Praz de Fort and Issert. We then walked

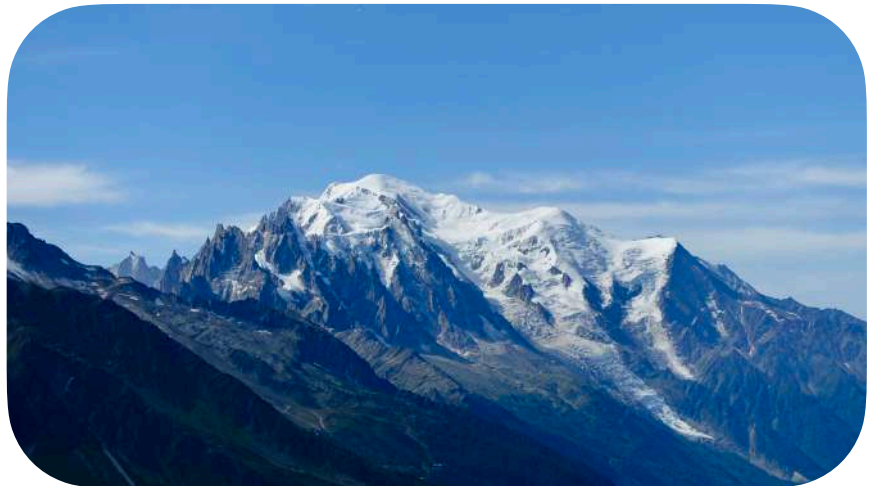
up to our accommodation in the village of Champex-Lac which is a popular spot due to its easy road access and the range of outdoor activities to be had, in and around the lake.

Day 9 – Champex-Lac to Trient 18km +750 – 950m

From Champex-Lac we followed the Bovine route up to the Alpage Bovine (1987m), an alpine farm which serves food and delicious cakes – who would have thought! Again being up high we had terrific views down to Martigny and the Swiss Canton du Valais. The walking was also through forested areas and alpine farmland pastures – a cacophony of cow-bells!

Day 10 – Trient to Argentiere – 15km +1000m – 1000m

Today was an uphill for what seemed a very long time to the Chalet du Col de Balme (2204m). The long walk up was rewarded by the best views of Mont Blanc we had on the trip. We then descended across pastureland to



our accommodation in the village of Argentiere.

Day 11 -Argentiere to Chamonix – 14km +1200m – 500m

Our last day with stunning views of the mountains, albeit accompanied by some almost vertical ladder climbing, I think there were 11 sets of ladders to take us up to the balcony path high above Chamonix. We took the cable car from Planpraz (our starting point) back to Chamonix in the valley below.

Overall

We covered 170km and close to +/- 10000m of elevation in the 10 days of walking. The views of the mountains and landscapes in the three countries were phenomenal, nothing the like we had previously experienced. Whilst we probably don't need to do it again, we can highly recommend that anyone thinking about iconic hikes should do this one, it truly was a once in a lifetime experience.



Westlake and Casey House

This little note may be of particular interest to some of the 30 walkers who participated in the Easy Wednesday Walk on 25 October.

Ed.

Westlake in Canberra is a ghost town on the outskirts of [Yarralumla](#), [Australian Capital Territory](#). Westlake used to be a suburb of [Canberra](#) from 1922 until 1965.^{[1][2]} Remnants of constructions and buildings are still visible today.

At its peak it had a population of around 700. In 2014, Pip Buining and Louise Morris^[3] created a theatrical event called *Anthology* celebrating the township.^[4] She says "the site is [Ngunnawal](#) land, *guru bung dhaura* (stony ground) a traditional pathway, and from the 1920s was the site of one of the camps created to house the workers building the new city of Canberra. Tents and a hall were erected at Westlake followed by 61 temporary cottages, designed by architect H. M. Rolland and built in 1923, for married tradesmen, and their families, who came to Canberra to build the infrastructure for the new Federal Capital of Australia."

She continues "Westlake was planned and built. Families were moved in, went to work, built friendships, got married, had children, created gardens, held funerals. The temporary suburb became a community. But when it had served its purpose and the workers were no longer required, the houses were sold off one by one and taken away on the backs of trucks. Westlake was erased."

Westlake remains a tourist attraction today. It sits in a picturesque corner of the nation's capital, surrounded by embassies and bush.

CASEY HOUSE Rhodes Place off State Circle

Casey House is tucked quietly away at the end of Rhodes Place next to the South African High Commission.

It was built in 1939 amid much controversy. At that time no Government ministers lived in Canberra. Its original purpose was to house the Treasurer of the time, Richard Gardiner Casey, so that at least one member of cabinet resided

in Canberra. Casey only resided in the residence for a few months, as a change of Prime Minister saw Casey appointed to be Australia's first diplomatic representative in Washington.

The building was then occupied by the Canadian High Commission until 1973. Since then the building has had a number of occupants including the Australian Heritage Commission and is now privately owned.



Wednesday 18 Oct Medium/Hard Walk - Mt Palerang
Peter Dalton with 18 Walkers headed off from the Mulloon Creek campsite in glorious spring weather to reach Mt Palerang. It was a slow uphill climb through the bush for most of the morning, but reaching the objective made it all worthwhile. The descent to the road was steep at times to test our balance. A good time was had by all (Peter thinks).



Diuris - Donkey Orchids 18 October