



NEWSLETTER

June 2021

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As we approach the middle of the year, our program is in full swing with more weekday activities plus regular weekend activities to choose from. Membership has increased and we welcome the new members who are trying out our club.

As the borders have opened up, some extended interstate walking trips to Tasmania, Flinders Island and the Victorian Alps have finally gone ahead, and more are planned and on the program.

It has also been good to see some full pack walks with a good number of participants exploring the Bundian Way, Mt Jagungal and the Budawang.

After a break of a year due to Covid, our monthly General Meetings have recommenced at Sutherland Community Centre at 7PM on the last Wednesday of the month. The recent meeting had a very interesting and dedicated guest speaker from WIRES.

With the cooler months starting, our club volunteers are clearing the Anice Falls Track, as our latest adopted track, for the benefit of other RNP users. Some club members also volunteered to help the Friends of Royal with their removal of some invasive weeds.

A review of the equipment we have for loan to members, mainly for overnight walks, has been completed and an updated list is available on the Forms and Information page of our website.

Also on that page of our website, the following guidelines have been updated and all members are encouraged to familiarise themselves with them,

namely 'What to do in the event of an accident', 'Guidelines for Activity organisers' and 'Guidelines for Participants'.

It is worth noting following some injuries and rescues of club members in the last two years, that transport to hospital by ambulance or helicopter is charged a fee in most cases in NSW and other states. The cost can be fully or partly covered by members' private health insurance or the bushwalking insurance policy that comes with membership.

With the current trend of registering for program activities months in advance, please remember that it is important to advise the organiser as soon as you are aware that you cannot participate. There have been some recent instances of "no shows" creating delays trying to contact the person who hasn't turned up or preventing others joining the activity.

Thanks again to our increasing number of activity organisers and I look forward to catching up with many of our members in the coming months.

Shaune Walsh

President



Flinders Island -10th-20th March 2021

Leader- Becky Rae

Participants- Pete, Paul, Lesley, Tracey N, Lexie, John, Leonie, Jackie, Shaune, Beatrice, Judy T.

Flinders Island has been on my to do list for many years, so it was great to be able to tick it off, and also recommend that it should be on everyone's to do list as it was a great place to visit. While planning I wondered if 10 days was too long but it turned out we ran out of time and still had more things we could have done.

The Furneaux group of islands has around 52 islands located on the eastern end of Bass Strait, between Victoria and Tasmania. Flinders is the largest in the group. The island is approx 75km from end to end and 40km wide, so it was easy to travel around in the hire cars. Population of 800. Mainly sheep and cattle farmers, and a developing tourism industry.



The history of Flinders Island begins with the Tasmanian Aboriginal people who were the first peoples 35,000 or more years ago. About 9,000 to 4,000 years ago, as sea levels rose cutting the islands off from mainland Australia and for reasons uncertain, the Tasmanian Aboriginals ceased to be full time occupants of the Furneaux Group.

The Furneaux Group of islands became the most intensively exploited sealing ground in Bass Strait after seals were discovered there in 1798. A total of 29 islands in the Furneaux Group have been found to have some tangible link with sealing in the 19th century and many locals can trace their descentance from these sealers who had taken aboriginal women as wives, often forcefully.

Shipwrecks abound, the most famous being the Sydney Cove wrecked in 1796 on Preservation Island. The small Furneaux Museum has a great shipwreck display, and is a must if visiting the island.

We stayed in the cabin park close to the main town of Whitemark and hired 3 cars to get us around.

Every day's walk or activity depended on wind and tides, and plans changed daily to take this into consideration.

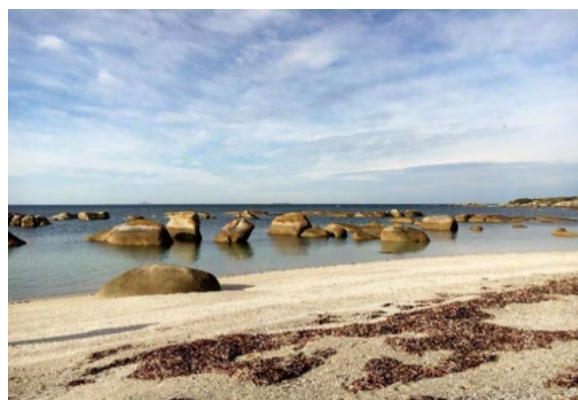
Day one dawned clear with only a little mist on the fortress-like Mt Strzelecki in the southern part of the island. Standing 700m ASL it is a challenging rough hike. As we start at sea level it was a was a real test for us all especially on day one. The mountain offers stunning views of the surrounding coastline,

outlying islands and Cape Barren Island. Mist closed in as we reached the top, making it even more dramatic as it would open and reveal the beauty below.

We had a well earned swim at the end of the day at Trousers Beach, (the story goes a young shipwrecked sailor came ashore here minus his trousers). Swimming in the clear cold water became almost a daily treat. Just too nice to resist, we all agreed on that. Even the non-swimmers among us couldn't say no.



We covered each corner of the island, north, south, east and west. The western side was calmer and where we always swam, while the eastern, flatter side has long open windswept dangerous beaches where we wandered picking up shells and all sorts of interesting pieces.





Beach combing was irresistible.



Another amazing rock hopping and beach walk with orange rocks, a ruined fishing shack, small bays back to the cars at the Dock.



Mt Killiecrankie in the north was on a low wind day as there were boulders to negotiate, and rock scrambling and tight squeezes to reveal views of the Dock (a small bay) also a must for visitors.

Killiecrankie beach also has other hidden treasures that lured the treasure hunters among us, the Killiecrankie diamond can be fossicked and found at a small stream and gully a few kilometres along the beach. Four of the party carried their sieves and spades along the beach and stayed in search of a find. The “diamonds” are really topaz, clear and pretty, all who stayed to search found a small treasure to take home. The rest of us walked on past Old Mans Head and Stackeys Bight with it’s orange lichen covered boulders with underlying limestone outcrops.





remains a testament of this tragic era in Australian European history.

One day we had Rock Jaw (a local tour operator) take us across to Vansittart Island, his family place, now mostly owned by Russians!

He ferried us around in turn in his ancient rusted Land Rover to different viewpoints and to the small family cemetery on the island. An interesting character, with a lot of local yarns to tell. From the top of Gun Carriage Hill we could see the wreck of the Farsund 1912.



We walked every day, dined out at the local pub, picnicked in wild beautiful places, swam in Bass Strait. No more needs to be described if you've seen THE LOBSTER that Shaune & Beatrice's cabin shared

Come and enjoy this place it's amazing. I started by using a book from Sutherland library- Walks of Flinders Island by Ken Martin.

Take a look you may be inspired.

Rebecca Rae



2 x Walks at Mt Victoria - Blue Mountains

Walkers: Nine in total, Fiona & Ken Wilkinson, Susan and Steven Mudge, Sue Celkys, Nicky Ross, and Sheree Brinsley, with Irene & Barry Mann.

Saturday 1 May - The Little Zig Zag track and Rienits Pass. Starting at Pulpit Rock on the southern side of the highway (take care - there are 2 pulpit rocks, the other one is at Govetts Leap), we descended this old bridle track into the Kanimbla Valley. There are 6 zigs and 6 zags going DOWN - it is a wonder that horses could ever use this track! On the way down we passed four 20-something ladies on a climbing expedition (a popular place for climbing), checked out the way to Bushrangers Cave (decided this was too difficult), then traversed across the valley through numerous king ferns, while looking up to those fantastic sandstone cliffs which dominate the scenery all around.

Then there were more zig zags, this time leading UP to the base of the cliff line. We paused here to regain our breath, and explore a lovely waterfall (actually it was only a dribble) 150m along a dead end. Then back along the cliff base and up a gully - Rienits Pass -back to Pulpit Rock where we started.

Every day was different and varied. There is a sad history of forced aboriginal settlement where all but a few of the people from all over Tasmania were forced to come here, far away from their homelands and who perished as a result. Wyabalena Chapel

Marilyn & Henry had done this walk a week earlier (as they could not come on the day), and cautioned us that it as a HARD walk, not MEDIUM as outlined in the book that we were using. We agreed, even though it was ONLY a 3km walk, with 250m descent and ascent.

Sunday 2 May - Asgard Swamp and Thor Head. A contrast to the Saturday walk. A relatively easy fire trail descends then crosses Asgard Brook, leading down to Pagoda Rock for a short break. Next the track leads down a steeply inclined, narrow and exposed zig zag to an "old" coal mine. We all wondered who discovered coal here, and how they retrieved it given the location. The coal mine is open, with a safety warning at the entrance, plus there is something which looks like a kiln nearby.

Following this adventure we backtracked then went up to Thors Head - for those who made it, unbelievable views up and down the Grose Valley, and of Asgard Swamp - a sparkle of bright green in the blackish bush starting to recover from previous fires. Then it was back up the fire trail to the cars - where did those uphill sections come from? The ladies led the way back and chatted away not noticing the uphill slog. We had great cool weather, good company, walking 7km there and back, taking 3½ hours in total. The forecast storm arrived after 3pm, well after the walk was finished.

Barry Mann



Bundian Way 2021 March 26 - April 3

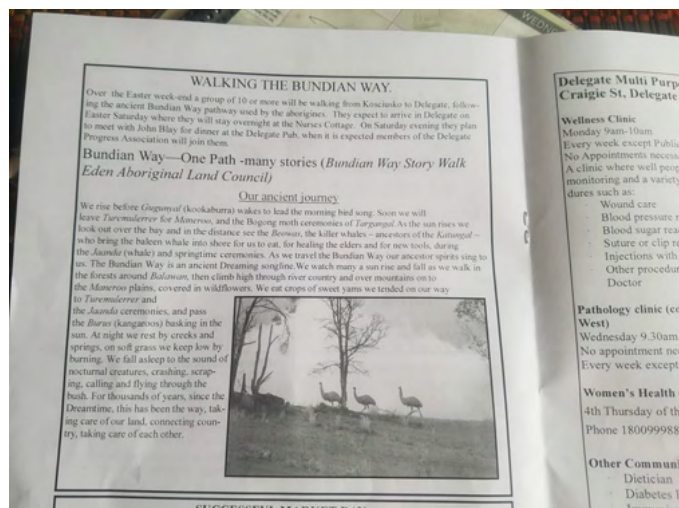
The Bundian Way 2021 event continues a project of walking and studying the route and ancient traditions of indigenous travel from Bilgalera (on Twofold Bay) to Targangal (Mt Kosciuszko), a distance of about 200km. This tradition had been researched by author John Blay in collaboration with the Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council, with the aim of creating an inspirational tourist challenge and educational facility.



Regular meetings of indigenous people from various widely distant groups were conducted over centuries for social meetings, negotiations over territorial borders, ceremonies and match-making for marriage etc. Such gatherings were made possible by the seasonal availability of food sources, in this case the influx of Bogong Moths.

I learned of all this through John Blay's book "On Track, Searching out the Bundian Way", a ripping yarn of indigenous and settler history, as told by explorers' diaries, old books, accounts of indigenous elders and multi-generational descendants of original settlers, against a background of geographical, geological, botanical and zoological observations. By 2015 the

reconstructed route was more or less defined by this book and inspired some of our Club to go and have a look.



We have since learned, through Blay's later book "Wild Nature", that there is a network of such ancient tracks, practically all since appropriated as roads by settlers, drovers or loggers. Any or all of these may have been part of the "Bundian Way" but Blay's educated guess of the main route is as good as any. "Bundian" is a variation of "Bondi" and "Boondi", with apparent trading connections to the Sydney beach.

In 2019 after the Pygmy Possum get-together, the first leg of our walk led up to Targangal then weaved its way past Dead Horse Gap, down the Cascade Trail past Cascade and Tin Mine huts, across the Ingegoodbee River, up an untracked ridge mapped by Blay and marked by a string of native currant bushes, deliciously edible product of centuries of chewing and spitting Wayfarers, then down the awful Nine Mile Pinch to the Barry Way on the Snowy River. As well as the native currents we saw roadside yam plantations, reassuring us of Blay's "on track" navigation.

We lost 2020 to COVID19.

For 2021, with ultimately just 7 walkers, Leonie, John, Kerrie, Becky, Helena, Leanne and Murray, the plan was to hire a bus down Barry Way to the 2019 endpoint then continue the walk along, then across, the Snowy River at Sandy Creek. Just before the planned start however, heavy rain flooded the Snowy River and prevented safe crossing at Sandy Ck, forcing abandonment of that plan and its finale at Craigie.

Instead we took cars through Delegate to Corrowong Rd then left them at Prestons turnoff from Merambago Rd. We thus entered Byadbo

wilderness from the East at Byadbo Gap for a there-and-back walk over 5 days. After an initial wrong turn up Byadbo Trail, which John Blay had advised was dry and steep, we retreated to the real track and camped on the trackside. After subsequent camps at Stockyard Flat, (where it rained), and Byadbo Ck about 2km south of Byadbo Flat, we retraced our tracks out of Byadbo much faster than on the way in. The 20 litre NPWS water drop on the peak is still untouched.

With initial disappointment at the cloudiness of the creek water, we used Steripens or puritabs as a precaution but found the water tasted OK with no ill effects. At the final campsite, Helena was moseying round and found some likely stone knives and choppers which we photographed, noted the location coordinates and carefully replaced with much satisfaction. Earlier we had also found a couple of trees with cut-out bark. At our final dinner at the Delegate Pub we had arranged to meet our mentor John Blay, who agreed from our photos that these did look like genuine indigenous artifacts. How ancient they are is hard to tell.



Tracks in the Byadbo section, marked on the map as a dotted black line, are numerous, narrow and often vague. On the way in we took two or three wrong turns and had to consult the phone-gps to recover our track. Initially reluctant to run the phone down with continual use, we later used a solar charger and energy store to keep it running, ready to resolve ambiguous track junctions. Using this on the way back we made much faster time with no mistakes.

I had previously made a few water dumps on Merambago and Corrowong roads, one of these at Merambago proved elusive despite waypoint references. Some of the others too were not where

I expected, due to mistaken labelling of phone-GPS waypoints. We did eventually find them.

Re-emerging from Merambago Rd, we encountered remarkably generous assistance from farmers along Corrowong Road, beginning with Neil who accommodated us free of charge in his Wolundibby shearers' quarters, with hot showers and a kitchen with beer-stocked fridge. He refused payment but we left a bar-tab for him at the Delegate pub.

At one point it looked as if we would owe Neil much, much more as, invited to visit the 1860 woolshed on our way past, we were confronted by a large ram hidden behind the wool press, who after nearly knocking over Leanne, proceeded to ram into fences and gates before attempting to jump over a gate on which he became snagged, dangling by his back leg which appeared broken. With nobody else to call on, we quietened the ram by covering his eyes before levering the gate off its hinges to release the leg. After initially limping a few steps, the ram took off, thankfully good to go.



Following more friendly chatter with farmers David and Ian near Corrowong church we camped next to the graveyard on Good Friday, to the unease of some members. The rest of us had a comfortable night, finding no stones rolled away by morning. The final bush campsite was a mere 5k down the road at the Union TSR, which we learned from David had once supported an inn. It also had a substantial field of kangaroo grass (*Themeda Australis*) from which indigenous people used to make bread though I don't know how, the seed being so small.

The final leg into Delegate on bitumen was about 10k and a bit of a grind. We collected several piles of trash from the roadside, later collected with the car retrieval. Sore feet were compensated by our comfortable accommodation at the Nurses' Cottage

with a very well equipped kitchen and hot showers. That night we had arranged a meal at the Delegate Pub with John Blay and about 10 other supporters. Everybody around Delegate seems supportive of developing the Bundian Way concept, while recognising that it may be slow to come to fruition.



Murray Scott



To his horror, Irving suddenly realized he had failed to check his own boots before putting them on just minutes ago.



A warm welcome to our new members

- Robin Gordon
- Bill Lewis
- Marguerite Young
- Melina Amerasinghe
- Suzanne Curtis
- Vilma Hodgson
- Christopher Huon
- Rhona Lawson
- Vincent Micallef
- Stephen Hall
- Allan Van Kraanen
- Helen Dau
- Hui Fang Sui
- Caron Bowrey
- Muriel Milne
- Peter Lazurko
- Adrienne Smith
- John Smith
- Kursha Yelverton
- Justin Vial
- Regina Nazaar

We look forward to seeing you out on the track, on the water or on the road soon!

Sutherland Bushwalkers On-Line

Website

Don't forget to check our website. All the important information is available on the site.

Have you seen our Members Only Facebook Page?

So far more than 100 members have joined the Facebook group, sharing walks, rides ,kayaks and

photos and generally keeping in touch If you would like to join in on the fun then:-

- 1) Go to your own Facebook page,
- 2) Search for Sutherland Bushwalkers in the Facebook Search,
- 3) Click on the page that has Eagle Rock as the photo
- 4) Hit "Request to Join".

You should have access within 48 hours, usually much quicker though!

Leading a Walk!

Did you know that you can contribute to the club without being on the committee? Have you ever thought about leading a walk? The club is always looking for new leaders! It isn't a difficult job and is very rewarding. If you are still unsure, you can organise to co-lead a walk, many of our current leaders began this way. For more information, check out our website!

