

# PANDANI POST



**NEWSLETTER OF THE PANDANI BUSHWALKING CLUB**

P.O. Box 146 North Hobart 7002

[www.pandani.org.au](http://www.pandani.org.au)

## April 2012

### *President's Report*

Welcome to the autumn 2012 edition of Pandani Post.

The Club's annual general meeting was held at Chauncy Vale on Sunday 5 February with 20 club members attending.

Chris again organised a pre-meeting walk, which was very enjoyable and interesting in particular for those who had not previously been to the caves. Fortunately the forecast rain held off and we held the meeting with everyone sitting around in a circle on the grass enjoying a picnic lunch.

The new committee for 2012, elected at the meeting is:

President: Graham Wootton  
Vice President: Simon Kendrick  
Secretary: Vacant  
Treasurer: Susan Vanderheiden  
Committee Members: Chris Wilson, Rosemary Bruce, Susan Gardner, Andrew Bowen, Terry Vince and Greg Robertson

Appointed rather than elected officers are:

Public Officer: Susan Vanderheiden  
Newsletter Editor: Robert Gardner  
Walks Coordinator: Chris Wilson

Many members were thanked for their contributions to the club, most of whom are listed in my report in the January Pandani Post but special mention was made of retiring program typist Maureen Lum for her considerable contribution to the production of the club program over the years. A special mention also of the club walks leaders for the great range of walks they organised in 2011.

On the committee front, the club is planning to significantly update our website with a more

professional look and more resources that members can access.

Pam Scott has stepped down from the committee after 12 years serving in many different roles. I think I can speak for the committee and club members in general in saying that we appreciate the tremendous amount of work she has done for the club over the last decade and are confident she will continue to contribute to club life in other ways.

Pandani celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. The celebrations kick off with a weekend camp and walks on 21-22 April, based at Koonya on the Tasman Peninsula and led by Phil and Cheryle Colbeck. For full details see the current program. Later in the year we will be organising a special dinner or other social event to also mark the occasion.

Looking forward to meeting you out on the track sometime this autumn.

*Graham Wootton*

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## **Pam Scott**

The Club Secretary, Pam Scott, has stepped down from the position. Her input will be greatly missed.

The Committee would like to thank Pam for her many contributions to the running of the Club for the past twelve years. Pam has been President of Pandani for seven of those twelve years. She has been a general committee member for four years and Club Secretary for the past year. She is indeed a club stalwart. While President, Pam organised the modernising and rewriting of the club constitution, helped organise club insurance, worked on the Adventure Activity Standards, the Leaders' Manual and helped to organise the mentor system.

Pam has also been Walks Program Co-ordinator for six years. As Co-ordinator, Pam was responsible for at least 25 Walks Programs. Not only was she responsible for organising the walks leaders and their contributions, but she also formatted the program for all this time. Whilst Pam was on the Committee, the club has gradually become more enmeshed with technology. Both Pandani Post and Program now are sent out via email as well as by post. Pam was an integral part of these changes.

In addition, Pam was the Club Rep for Bushwalking Tasmania for three years, a somewhat onerous job for a vegetarian as it necessitated driving up to Ross four times a year, at night, and then being confronted with a resolutely unvegetarian menu at the Man O' Ross Hotel.

As well as all this, Pam has regularly run navigation courses, round the 'navigation table' in her dining room, and has run both day walks and overnight trips often off track and to remote areas. She is one of few leaders with this sort of expertise.

*Her contribution to the Club has been enormous. However, she will continue to be involved in the Training Committee. We also hope that she keeps contributing to the Walks Program and navigation training...*

Thanks, Pam.

*Christine Wilson*

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## **Editor's Rucksack**

Welcome to the April Pandani Post! In this edition we note the celebrations for the Club's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as well as the ongoing production of the Commemorative magazine. Also included with this edition are insert documents about the Club's Risk management Strategy and Minimal Impact Bushwalking. All members should read these and keep them for future reference.

By the time you read this the Club's new website will be online at [www.pandani.org.au](http://www.pandani.org.au) Although still 'under construction', it's looking great, with a more modern, cleaner appearance. Thanks to web manager, Terry Vince and his team.

Thanks to all contributors to this edition. If you have any information about any aspects of bushwalking, kayaking, cycling etc that would interest other members please write about it! You may submit photos without an article too.

Please send your articles and photos for the next issue by email to [pandanipost@pandani.org.au](mailto:pandanipost@pandani.org.au) or post (typed or handwritten) to XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX.

*Robert Gardner*

## **Celebrating Pandani's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

### **20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Camp and Reunion Weekend**

There is a growing awareness within the club that a major milestone for Pandani is approaching, and a Camp and reunion party weekend is programmed for the weekend of 21-22 April at Phil and Cheryle Colbeck's property in xxxxxxx. Check the autumn program for full details.

### **Commemorative Magazine Update**

A high quality magazine with colour photos is taking shape. This B5 publication includes an outline of Pandani's 20-year history, culture, characters, activities, adventures and humour. Most of the material has been drawn from Pandani Post articles along with some excellent new articles and relevant photos provided by participants.

Your opportunities to contribute further to the magazine:

## Photographs / images

The magazine committee is still looking for a few more good quality photos (or other images / sketches / cartoons / paintings etc) to be included throughout the magazine.

Of special interest to the committee is finding images suitable for the front and back covers.

Can you imagine the kudos and pride (perhaps even fame) from having your images published, especially if it makes the front cover? Go for it!

We are also seeking photos taken on any of the following trips:

The Devils Backbone May 2003  
Lake Rhona March 1996  
Collins Cap with Keith (and a lizard)  
The Upper Florentine May 2008

## Magazine Name

Your suggestions for a suitable title for the magazine are eagerly invited.

The working titles we have been using are:

“Pandani - 20 Years On” and  
“Pandani - 20 Years Down the Track”

Can you come up with something better? I am sure we can find a suitable small reward if your suggestion for a name is chosen (the original Pandani club name earned the person who suggested it a bottle of bubbly!).

## REQUIREMENTS FOR COVER PHOTOGRAPHS

- Photographs submitted must have been taken in Tasmania on a programmed Pandani Club walk or other walk comprised substantially of Pandani members.
- Photos should be in ‘portrait’ format. All photographs submitted should have a generous margin of non-critical material around the perimeter to allow for cropping to the aspect ratio of the magazine (250mm high x 175mm wide).
- Photographs must have a minimum resolution of around eight megapixels and be sharp and well exposed.
- Film based photographs will be considered if they are of high quality and on super size or larger colour prints or original negatives.
- Cover images may be photographic or graphic in origin.

## MAGAZINE NAME SUGGESTIONS

The title should include the word ‘Pandani’

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** Photos and name suggestions should be sent to the following addresses *by 30 June 2012 at the latest*.

By email to: [pandani.publications@gmail.com](mailto:pandani.publications@gmail.com)  
Images sent by email should preferably be downsized but please make sure you retain the original full size image for publication.

By mail to: Graham Wootton, XXXXXXXX  
XXXXXX

## New Members

The club welcomes:

- Patrice Beard
- Charles Chadwick & Lou-Anne Barker
- Karen Cogan
- Rob Clark
- Anne & Brian Dorman
- Catherine Forman
- Roger Harrison
- Catherine Holeywell
- Shelley Johnson
- Deborah McGlinchey
- Jennifer Marshall
- Delus Mollross
- Madeleine Naqvi
- Elizabeth Newell
- Hein Poortenaar & son Tom
- Keith Skidmore
- Aroella Williams & Byron Combes
- David Zendalewicz

## Membership Changes

Corrections for your membership lists:

- Kelvin Jones: suburb is XXXXXXXXXXXXX and phone is XXXXXXXXX
- Deni Flowers is now Deni Beer with same address and phone as Doug (Congratulations to them both!)
  - Sharn & Noel Davies Ph XXXXXXXX
  - Peter Lloyd Ph XXXXXXXX
  - Michelle Thompson Ph XXXXXXXX

## For Sale

Walking Boots - 1 Pair of women's size 6 made by ROSSI (Eagle) All leather and in very good condition. PRICE \$60. Please phone after 6pm any day XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX. - Mabel

## PANDANI FACEBOOK PAGE

Most members would know by now that the club has a group page on Facebook. You do not need to be a member of Facebook to look at the page. Just go to [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com) and type in Pandani Bushwalking Club in the search bar. By the time you read this Pandani will probably have a link to the Facebook page on our website.

However, if you want to make postings or comments on the page or upload photos you will need to open a Facebook account and then join the group. If captioning photos please use just the first name of any people in the photographs. For assistance with setting up a Facebook account or any other issues or concerns regarding the club group page just contact one of the page administrators Gill Mosmann, Andrew Bowen or Graham Wootton.



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## 2012 Public Transport Walks

All but one of the five programmed walks went ahead. The first, on Friday January 6, involved a walk from Rosny to Howrah. On a nice sunny day a small group enjoyed the beaches and a diversion to historic Kangaroo Bluff fort.

Friday January 20 was rather different! The walk across Knocklofty from Mt Stuart was shrouded in mist and a fine drizzle dampened our morning tea. Visitors from the USA and Birmingham, England enhanced the walk. Toni had recruited the Americans in the Metro office after overhearing their request for walks information!

Unfortunately Rob disregarded Yvonne's local knowledge and relying on his instinct took the party through Hobart tip instead of the Glover painting reproduction! No-one visited the Tip Shop, but the Female Factory was much appreciated. The Americans commented that the gulls are replaced by bald eagles in Canadian tips! After lunch at the Cascade gardens a walk back to town along the Rivulet track took us through the newly opened right of way past the former cider warehouse. A visit to the Wall of Peace ended an interesting walk.

A NSW couple joined us on the bus to Kingston the following Friday, with two from the UK meeting us there. Fourteen walkers took morning tea on the beautiful Boronia Beach before walking the cliff path to Kingston, and on the recently opened Brickfields track to Taronga Road bus stop.

Most of us then enjoyed a pleasant afternoon tea at the Shot Tower, leaving the interstates to climb the tower while we continued our bus journey.

A final walk on the first Friday in February took in the Truganini Memorial on Mt Nelson. An early morning tea at the Semaphore station allowed views over Ralphs Bay, Bruny and Hobart. After walking down the new track to Lambert Avenue, lunch was taken, courtesy of the Casino, in the tennis court area - a former outdoor swimming pool. The re-arranged garden furniture allowed the ten walkers to enjoy their sandwiches in a communion enlivened by conversation and jokes.

Several of us finished the day with a stroll through Battery Point and a pint in the pleasant Shippies Hotel.

Thus finished a pleasant season of bus walks. We attracted several interstate and international

visitors, showcasing our wonderful town for little cost. The ability to walk in a safe environment and the flexibility of this type of walking is a bonus to our usual program of walks.

Personally I'm two thirds of the way to leading a hundred Public Transport walks. I hope my 'Green Card' is not cashed in before the century is completed!

*Rob Hill*

## **Walking the Contour December 22 - Richard Wright**

A nice day greeted 17 starters for a walk on the mountain via various tracks, a few of us keen to try and rid ourselves of a few kilos before the Christmas feasting began! We commenced at the upper car park at the Springs, making our way up the Pinnacle Track to the junction of the Zig Zag and Organ Pipes Tracks. From here we walked along the Organ Pipes Track to an open area where we enjoyed a very leisurely morning tea. Fully rehydrated and refuelled, we moved on to the Chalet which marks the end of this track.

Crossing over the road, we headed off down Hunters Track until we came to the turn off into Lakins Lair where we were going to have our lunch break, however the area was quite wet due to recent rain, so we moved on down to Junction Cabin for lunch. Our last track was the Lenah Valley Track, of course via Rock Cabin and Sphinx Rock, arriving back at the cars quite early, so naturally a coffee break was in order, enjoyed at "Wildside", Fern Tree.

Thank you Richard, a very pleasant day, a good walk with excellent company.

*Judy Hislop*

## **Hartz Mountain January 12 - Rosemary Bruce**

I'm pretty sure that "The Big Man" on high has Rosie's number when it comes to Hartz Mountain! After the rain, wind and snow at our last attempt, this time it was rain, wind and

very low cloud! Rosie said "no more attempts to be headed by her"!!!!

22 starters heading out on what looked like an okay day, however the weather deteriorated very quickly once we got underway. Low cloud, misty rain and wind greeted us as we trooped on past Lake Esperance and into Lady Tarn for 11s. Moving on after morning tea, we climbed up to Hartz Saddle where the rain became more persistent and the wind stronger. Not to be deterred, we all agreed to push on to the top as we had come this far and we weren't going to give up. So on we pushed with most of us reaching the top to have our photos taken in the mist, being tossed about by the wind and not being able to see anything view-wise because of the mist and low cloud - Oh what a hardy, crazy bunch of bushwalkers!

Turning for home, we struggled back down and at the saddle, hid as best we could behind rocks and bushes to try and eat lunch and believe me, that was not the easiest of tasks. However we all made it back to our cars, cold, wet and very wind blown, but hey we made it to the top, one day to return and do it again in good weather to see the distant views that everyone tells us are spectacular.

Our coffee break was at the Petty Sessions Cafe at Franklin where we could once again view fellow Pandani walker Lisa Falk's latest art display - truly magnificent.

Thank you Rosie - from all of us.

*Judy Hislop*

## **GLEN DHU RIVULET UNABRIDGED January 22 -Graham Wootton**

As Wayne the used car salesman would say, "Why do I do it?" - that is "why do I keep on leading trips to Glen Dhu Rivulet?" A question I ask myself every time I put it on the program again. It's hard to define the reason but there is something addictive about this trip. In the past, members responses have varied from "bloody hell, never again #\*!\*#!\*# through to "the most interesting, challenging and unique day walk I have ever done" (what a kind and thoughtful person!) Anyway back to the 2012 trip.

A record of nine volunteers signed on for the trip, Phil, Jim, John, Urszula, Sandy, Monika, a

visitor Caroline, Keith (one of an elite (or perhaps mad?) group of only four Pandani members who have turned up for the trip more than once) and myself as leader. It was a peerless day with a brilliant blue cloudless sky and mild temperatures all day. The rivulet had just the right amount of water in it, enough to display some interesting cascades but not enough to impede progress significantly. The climb from Collins Cap Farm to the Cap-Bonnet saddle and descent to the rivulet near the Yellow Cliffs were uneventful but then the real walk began in earnest.

The first two kilometres of the route up the rivulet climb quite steeply with a chaotic mix of large boulders and fallen tree trunks making progress very slow and gymnastic, a thorough full body workout. However everyone in the party was up to the task and we made good progress, reaching the ultimate logjam, christened "McGuire's Maze" on our first trip in 1997, by about 12.00. Beyond McGuire's Maze the rivulet bed flattens out significantly and beautiful sections of remnant beech forest that escaped the 1967 conflagration make for delightful walking. Indeed, some members of the party at this stage would have been thinking that the worst was over if it hadn't been for Keith reminding them every time we stopped of the "green hell ahead" once we had left the rivulet.

We stopped for lunch in a particularly green and mossy section of the beech forest. It was then we noticed to our amazement that John's footwear was still completely dry, apart from the tip of one sock, which he was dutifully drying in a patch of sunlight. Everyone else had wet feet as most of the party had at some stage suffered at least partial immersion due to the slippery rocks and in some sections it was simply easier and more pleasant to wade. Why or how John wanted or managed to keep his feet dry was beyond us but it certainly suggests a new award at the next Christmas party.

After lunch we continued up the Rivulet for another two kilometres before entering Keith's green hell around 3.30 pm. On this trip it actually didn't seem too bad if you picked your way carefully, except for the last 200 metres to the firetail which was a solid wall of cutting grass, bauera and tea tree. A bit of hard pushing and we broke through onto the road about 5.00 pm. Feelings ranged from exhilaration to exhaustion but I think we were all relieved when we finally got back to the cars after 9 ½ hours walking. I don't think I have ever seen Glen Dhu more beautiful than on that

day and the excellent and well matched party made the walk that much more enjoyable and easy to lead. Thanks to all for making it a great day.



*Graham Wootton*

## **Festivale Weekend ! Feb 11-12 - Belinda Jeffries**

**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>**

We all met at 8.00am at the Launceston Backpackers before carpooling to the start of the Mt Arthur walk, (Meredith, Sam, Bec, Andrew, Phil, Belinda, Stu (nicknamed Tigger!), Sue G, Rob G, Con, Peta, Terry, Melissa and I). Upon arriving at the car park for this walk, and having passed a large number of cars on the left, we continued on to find spots to park. On getting out of the cars, we discovered a dog that had seemingly decided to join us in our walk. He was a beautiful tan kelpie (think 'Red Dog' but thoroughly shampooed).

The entire climb up Mt Arthur was definitely a gradual one, with the thick layer of damp leaves underfoot which at times was a little slippery. Half an hour into the walk, we were most surprised to meet the owners of the large group of cars we had earlier passed. A football team was descending, all holding a thick heavy rope as obviously part of their training. It was funny to hear a few of them say "Don't do it! don't do it!" after they had ascended in the dark and were now, obviously fairly tired.

About an hour into the walk, Sam needed to turn back, and accompanied by Tigger, Red Dog was also encouraged to return to the car area.



Approaching our first stop at the peak of Mt Arthur, Belinda phoned Tigger who was on his way back up having confirmed that Sam was safely in their ute. Most of us then made our way from the small “Gazebo-like” fire lookout and memorial over to the beehive cairn that marks the top of Mt Arthur. Here we sat for a while before returning to the fire lookout. On this return trip, the conversation somehow turned to Rosie and our experiences when we had each previously walked with her. What an amazing woman she is. We were stunned when we rounded the trail to come across who else but Rosie! accompanied by Christine.



After chatting to Rosie & Christine at length, we continued to the fire lookout where Tigger had now arrived. We settled down on the rocks for a well deserved leisurely lunch. The descent following lunch was pleasant and for the most part, relaxing. Back where the cars were, there was no sight of ‘Red Dog’.

Back at the backpackers, we gathered to discuss the evening’s plans. Con, Peta, Sue and Rob G were going to Festivale and the rest of us were contemplating somewhere else to eat as a group. We finally booked into The Metz; an easy walking distance from the backpackers and with a menu that suited all of us. Given that it was

about 3pm when the final arrangements were made and with a 6.30pm meal booking, everyone headed off to shower and relax.

After an enjoyable dinner we all left the Metz at about 9.30.

### Sunday 12th

At 8.00 am, we once again all gathered at the Launceston backpackers and said goodbye to those staying rather than joining us on the Stacks Bluff climb; including Sam and Melissa who were setting off back to Hobart.

Not long after leaving Launceston, we passed through the last town before reaching Stacks Bluff, the old mining town of Rossarden - typified with houses in various states of disrepair and an uneasy air to it. The road soon became a dirt and gravel track as we made our way to the start of the Stacks Bluff walk.

Similarly to the previous day, we got out of the cars and headed directly up hill with no levelling off; although today, the incline was significantly steeper and involved a bit more path negotiation. Following this, we came to the first of the uphill boulder fields and during the next hour or so, hopped, negotiated, slid and four limb drove across fields of boulders, before hauling ourselves up the final steep incline, in the ever-changing cloud mist, past the beautiful Tranquil Tarn and then finally, up onto the Stacks Plateau.



Gathering together on Stacks Plateau, we ate our lunches while watching the clouds allowing glimpses’ of the extensive Stacks Plateau; much larger than I had imagined and extremely flat, relative to what we had just climbed.

A decision was made, primarily by Belinda, due to her experience and supported by the rest of us, to go no further across the plateau. We didn’t have a GPS and those of us carrying compasses found that each one displayed a

## **Weld Valley February 9 - Ronda Longuet and Lee Stanlelos**

Well, what a wonderful surprise this "merry jaunt" turned out to be for 19 walkers thanks to our two guides. The meeting point was Huonville from where we commenced a long, dusty drive into the Weld Valley for our "outing". Our first stop was Rueben Falls, a very pretty walk through a wonderful rain forest with pretty streams and ancient ferns. Unfortunately the track was closed just prior to the falls due to a track collapse, but the walk in and out was well worth it. Our second stop was Glover's Bluff, a lookout where we were able to take in spectacular views of the Weld Valley and beyond.

Our third stop was at the start of Eric Pettett's Road where we left the cars and started off on a short walk to our lunch spot at Fletcher's Eddy. On the way we had to negotiate a small creek crossing and quite a few mud holes, but on reaching Fletcher's Eddy, we were all entranced. What a beautiful, peaceful, serene (I could go on here) place this was. There was even a flat rocky outcrop right at the eddy which gave us all good seating where we could enjoy our lunch and where a few anglers could try their luck for a fish or two (I did say "try"). However all too soon it was time to move on from this peaceful spot on the Weld River and return to our cars for the long trip back to Huonville and of course the obligatory coffee break.

Thank you Ronda and Lee, a lovely day out into an area one doesn't get the opportunity to travel into as a bushwalker.

*Judy Hislop*

## **Blue Peaks December 27-31 - Pam Scott**

Pam led a group of 8 to a remote part of the Central Plateau, Blue Peaks, shortly after Christmas. The weather was superb - day after day of clear bright sunshine and cool breezes. Ideal walking weather.

We began our walk at Lake Mackenzie, a hydro impoundment that drowned two natural lakes in the 50s. The Blue Peaks track started near the dam wall and made its way south through gently undulating open countryside. The track used to



different reading, leading to the decision to head back, without navigating the plateau nor the final little scramble on to the top of Stacks Bluff.

Throughout the descent, we saw little teasing patches of visibility around the top of Stacks Bluff! We were still glad that we hadn't climbed it, putting our safety first, which was a good feeling in itself. I think it is easy if you are close enough to it, to get carried away with emotional rather than logical decisions aimed at getting to the very top. I'm sure we will all give it another try at some point in the future! Albeit a tough walk, it was wonderful!

At the cars, while changing footwear, we all said goodbye to one another and to a wonderful, wonderful weekend.

A massive thank you to Belinda I know goes out from all of us for making this trip happen, including the organisation of accommodation, our walk selection, prior reconnaissance work, and skilful group management, which made this weekend such a relaxing and fun weekend for everyone.

*Kerri Walsh*



be a 4WD drive track, but is now scarcely recognisable. Vehicles have been banned since the 70s and the track has certainly recovered. Pencil pines marked watercourses and the scoparia was in bloom. Mounds of pale pink, white and cream decorated the landscape. We arrived at our first campsite, a sheltered marsupial lawn, at about 4 in the afternoon, at the unimaginatively named Middle Lake. The usual occupants, wallabies, watched us nervously from the hillside as we pitched our tents. The Blue Peaks were a couple of conical hills nearby.

Next day we investigated a weird stone wall, presumably built by fishermen in the days when lighting cooking fires was far more acceptable. We found several of these relics- dry stone walls built to keep out the wind. They were the only trace of humanity, apart from fishermen (and their tents) escaping over the Christmas and New Year period that we encountered. We walked on to the third lake in the Blue Peaks area, Little Throne Lake, and attempted to climb an oddly shaped small crag, Little Throne. Defeated by scrub, on we went, following wombat pads and watercourses while Pam navigated our way to Pencil Pine Tarn. This was one of the few areas we found with any real tree cover, which seemed quite luxurious. Shade! The countryside was so open, scoured by glaciers in the last ice age and there was really very little soil and virtually no forest. It was easy to cross, but hard to navigate through - there weren't many outstanding landmarks and there were a great many tarns, all unnamed. Many of the pines had been burned in the huge fires that swept the plateau in the 30s, but there was a reasonably large remnant stand of ancient pines at Pencil Pine Tarn and we found a campsite under the trees and pitched our tents. We could see the Walls of Jerusalem in the distance, about a day's walk away. Our presence lured swarms of mosquitoes from the surrounding areas, and they and the cold wind forced us into bed early.

The following day we wandered about the Pencil Pine Tarn area, spending some time watching a swan family with six grey fluffy cygnets. There were numerous galaxids in ponds away from the tarn, while in Pencil Pine Tarn itself we saw a number of large trout cruising the banks. The fishermen we talked to all opted for a catch, photograph and release policy. After lunch we set off, making our way back towards Lake Nameless.

Pam hoped to pick up the cairns on Ritter's Track, which would lead us in the right

direction. This part of the plateau was used for many years for summer grazing by several families based in Chudleigh and Meander. Many of the huts in this area, such as Dixons' Kingdom hut in the Walls, were built for shepherds and snarers. George Ritter used Ritter's Track, which winds from Lake Nameless to the Walls and is marked by tall cairns, about a metre high, designed to be spotted by riders. Unfortunately many of them have fallen, victims of decades of frost, snow and dire winter weather. In their place a plethora of cairn gremlins had been busy creating random routes marked with stones that went all over the place. "I've found a line of cairns over here," I'd shriek optimistically to Pam. "They're the wrong cairns," she'd shout back. Crushed, I'd return to the main party. Eventually, we did indeed pick up Ritter's Track, which followed higher ground, keeping the cattle out of the sphagnum moss and scoparia bogs.

We camped that night at a nameless tarn, which had the virtue of being close to a line of ancient, tall mossy cairns, which soon vanished, once we attempted to follow them the next day. We blundered around, somewhat hampered by the fact that virtually none of the lakes, tarns, ridges or knolls were named on the old Pillans map. At one point we came across another old 4WD track leading to Lake Pillans. Finally, however, we found two small lakes, which Pam said were the key to the route down to Lake Nameless, which took us along the grassy banks of a creek and through a wombat labyrinth to a moraine on the edge of the lake. It was not far to the misleadingly named Ironstone Hut where we had lunch. This is a beautiful stone hut with a colourbond roof and a wood heater rebuilt by the Mountain Huts Preservation Society, which sleeps six and has the luxury of a toilet with a splendid view of Ironstone Mountain.

Then it was onwards, onwards to Snake Lake, Lake Explorer and finally a well-defined track down Explorer Creek back to Lake Mackenzie with its rocky muddy shore. It had taken us 8 hours of walking from our little tarn to the cars and we all felt a bit weary, but grateful nevertheless to have escaped the demands of the Christmas New Year period for four days.

Thank you Pam, for taking us to such an interesting and beautiful area.

*Chris Wilson*

## ***The Raptor and Wildlife Refuge March 3 -Susan Vanderheiden***

Susan vdH set a sensible limit of 25 for an easy bushwalk followed by a specially-arranged visit to Craig Webb's Raptor Refuge at Kettering. We early birds got the proverbial worm and late-phoners missed a real treat.

Craig was called away interstate on Friday evening. Unflappable Susan juggled some last-minute rearrangements, lining up the Refuge's technical advisor Nick Mooney to talk to us in Craig's stead, and re-scheduling the bushwalk for afterwards. It turned out that, dazed and overwhelmed by our two hour immersion in bird world, we were happy to ditch the walk and settle for lunch at nearby Trial Bay (coffee afterwards at the Margate Train optional).

Volunteer worker Kerry gave up her Saturday morning to welcome us when we arrived at 10.15am. She has dedicated much of her last three years working at Refuge - anything from landscaping to sewing together ex-fish farm nets which form the vast eagle enclosure and the two test-flight enclosures behind it.



She talked about Craig's 12 year labour of love in planning, fund-raising and building this sanctuary almost single-handedly. At home with wild animals (he did vet nursing in the Kimberley) and with any manual work (having spent time on fish farms), he's a jack of all trades. This comes in handy when you have 20 acres of bush land, numerous aviaries and bird enclosures to build, and hundreds of injured birds coming into the Refuge each year for care and rehabilitation. His current project is a half-built octagonal wooden educational centre. When completed, with one-way viewing windows

onto attached aviaries, it will be used with visiting school and study groups.

We were allowed to see permanent residents such as the masked owl with only one functioning eye (thus unable to hunt and fend for itself) and the 'amazingly calm' crippled brown goshawk (unfazed by curious, gawking humans); also the eagles, a boobook owl, some marsh harriers and some falcons well on their way to recovery. A special moment: as we looked at the netted eagle enclosure, a wild eagle swooped across the sky, sussing out the captives below.

Behind a dividing fence is a no-go area where sicker birds are given the absolute privacy they require. Kerry and Nick stressed this is not a public wildlife park, it is a rehabilitation centre for sick and injured birds of prey, the victims of cars, fences, power lines, shootings, poisonings. Nick said the number of birds the Refuge can rehabilitate is negligible - just a few hundred a year. Its main, important role now is education, raising awareness of habitat and environmental issues.



Nick's interest in wild birds dates from his boyhood passion for peregrine falcons and spanned a 40-year career as a Parks and Wildlife biologist. In the 1970s he developed a triage system for dealing with injured animals, and in 1977 he worked with Kingston vet Barry Wells, exploring the possibilities of bird surgery. He left PWS two years ago to focus on 'special interests', one being the work of this Refuge.

Bird facts flew at us thick and fast: the changing social attitudes to wild birds, the need for rational decision-making with injured birds (euthanase or treat?), the rigorous assessment of each bird before release, the factors involved in the when/where of release, bird feather details (sizes and shapes for different purposes, leading edges fluffy or smooth, the feather-inspired

invention of 'velcro'...), foot care issues, the mating habits of captive male birds with their handlers' hats and boots (bird semen collection made easy!), the human-like bone structure of birds (wings have elbows, wrists and fingers), the amazing ability of raptors to switch from black and white vision (for distance assessment) to colour (for detail) with a shift of their head to activate a different part of the eye's retina. And so on.

We were bowled over by two Nick-plus-bird performances. An eagle is a BIG bird, a powerful hunter, its eyes fierce, its beak fiercer. Its talons, said Nick, can kill a wallaby. So saying, he walked unconcernedly into the eagle enclosure and patiently stalked them till he captured one. He brought it out and held it (firmly, securely) while it glared at us and he pointed out its features and demonstrated its dangerous 'lock-on' talons. Not too many people get the privilege of such a close encounter.



His next party trick was with a brown falcon. He showed us the remarkable ability of birds of prey to maintain their head absolutely steady, their eyes focused unwaveringly on their target, while their body twists and turns in high speed flight. To our amazement (and our bird girl Kerri W's excitement), no matter how he rotated the falcon's body, its head remained perfectly horizontal. Then, as he vigorously bobbed the bird up and down, it lengthened and shortened its neck in time with the vertical movements of its body, all the while keeping its head stock still. Wow. How does it do that?!

To cap off this impressive display, Nick announced the bird was ready for release, and cast the falcon into the air. With not a moment's hesitation, it swooped away to freedom, unerringly ducking and weaving through tree branches until it settled high up in a nearby tree, there to savour the first moments



of its second chance at the life it was born to lead. A special moment indeed.

The Raptor Refuge exists thanks to Craig Webb's vision, much hard work, a few dedicated volunteers, bird experts, vets, wild animal rescue organisations such as Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary, and the financial support of sponsors and donations including that of our own club. Check out the website: [www.raptorrefuge.com.au](http://www.raptorrefuge.com.au).

Many thanks to Susan and Noelle for organising the day, and to Craig, Nick, Kerry for making it possible.

*Dot Sprent*

## ***Lope, Listen and Learn: Antarctica March 5 - Rob Hill***

In the morning a dozen of us met and did an interesting 4 to 5 km walk along the Whitewater Creek. This walkway is being extended and will prove a valued addition to Kingston's urban routes.

We then lunched at a pre-booked table in the Antarctic Centre's canteen before having an extremely interesting talk by bushwalker and Polar voyager Andrew Jackson. Andrew is organising this June's International Antarctic Treaty Conference - a first for Hobart. He was torn between talking about the icy continent and his recent 14 day trip to Disappearing Falls (behind Precipitous Bluff)! It was a trip he had attempted for 20 years. Interestingly Attila's (of Fern Tree) name came up with regard to Heard Island station and Andrew noted Attila was the first to walk to the Falls - then we found

out that our present Club president was with the second party to get there.

A really interesting day, capped off by a visit to the Centre's library whose Librarian, Meredith did much of the organising for the day.

Thank you Andrew and Meredith.

*Rob Hill*

## **Camelot Park To Rosny March 15 - Rob Hill**

Five of us left the bus terminal on a humid overcast day. Pleasant walking to Little Howrah Point where three took the high road and two did the scrambling.

Then along the beaches to Second Bluff where we again split. Rather difficult rock scrambling saw the leader assisted ably over a minor cliff by the agile Ann.

On to the Fish and Chip shop where the three high roaders showed their metal by walking back to Camelot. The scramblers were picked up at Rosny by a kind partner.

A newish bike was discovered dumped over the cliff at Second Bluff. Details were taken to make a police report.

Another pleasant walk.

*Rob Hill*

## **Jordan River Gorge, Lower Marshes March 22 - Anne Geard**

A large group of 27 gathered at 8.30 at Granton Car Park, on a beautiful sunny day, keen and eager to start this walk. A fairly long drive then ensued to the start of the walk which necessitated climbing a gate onto the property as the owner forgot to unlock same!! However, off we went over farm land, past some old farm houses and down to the Jordan River. Here we crossed over the river, which was not really a problem as there was hardly any water in it, then into the gorge. Wow, what a beautiful walk this turned out to be as it takes you along the floor of the gorge where the sides of the

gorge rise up majestically, past wonderful rocky outcrops, many, many caves of all shapes and sizes and eagle nests high in the trees, all this with the Jordan River meandering along in dribs and drabs due to lack of water which was okay by us as we had to "cross" it many times during the walk.

Lunch was enjoyed in the sun, sitting on a huge and strategically placed fallen tree which housed most of the party. A pair of eagles flying high in the air on the wind drafts was the lunchtime entertainment, very spectacular. After satisfying our hunger and thirst, we moved further on down the gorge before negotiating a fence and starting our gradual climb out of the gorge over sheep filled paddocks, past a couple of derelict homesteads and back to our cars by 3.30, completing a large loop.

The usual coffee stop was made at the Brighton Bakery and was very much appreciated by one and all. Thank you Anne, a most pleasurable walk which was enjoyed by all.

*Judy Hislop*

## **Raptor Refuge Assistance**

Following the very interesting visit to the Raptor Refuge, Craig Webb who established the refuge is willing for Pandani to help out around the grounds on a semi-regular basis. The intent would be basically a "working bee", not to go to look at the birds. Craig is very insistent that it is to be small groups only, a maximum of 4 people at any one time, so the birds are not disturbed by our presence. If you would like to help out in this way please let Pam Scott know on XXXXXXXX or xxxxxxxxxxxxxx.