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Membership Fees

\$40 per Person
Subs due July each year

Sunraysia Bushwalkers

March 2014

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Affiliated with:
**Bushwalking
Victoria**

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<http://www.sunbushwalk.net.au/component/attachments/download/94.html>

- ❖ **The revamped Calendar**

<http://www.sunbushwalk.net.au/calendarofactivities.html>

See a selection of photos on the club's
Facebook page at
<https://www.facebook.com/sunbushwalk>

A walk through The Never Never
put this smile on Karl's face.
Can we do the same for you this
year?



There are plenty of activities to choose from so have a close look at the calendar and pick out a smile inducing one for yourself.

WALLS OF JERUSALEM THROUGH THE NEVER NEVER TO THE OVERLAND TRACK

January 30th to February 4th 2014. By Dick Johnstone

Accomplished by six Club Members under the leadership of Russell Shallard

Last night I lay a sleeping,/ There came a dream so fair /We'd been at Walls Jerusalem,/ Beside the Never N'ere!.....



Beginning at a somewhat nondescript car park our adventure starts with a steady ascent through dry eucalypt forest. It's a warm afternoon and there is an element of reassurance knowing there is not another significant climb for three more days. The small shingle roofed Trappers Hut half way up the rise is a relic of past times when the skins of native animals were highly prized. Again, our path rises until the forest clears into flatter open lands with a succession of tranquil ponds on our left hand side. Known as Solomon's Jewels they are an early indicator of many more lakes and tarns ahead. A little further on, we reach Wild Dog Camp area with wooden tent platforms and reticulated water. Wild Dog Creek flows down a green valley. Yet it is obscure as the water flows most of the time below the grassy surface, revealing itself occasionally through holes in the sod. After setting up camp, we find a convenient water hole from which we draw water for a refreshing rinse.

We share the area with some other campers and Parks staff. In the morning, we find that a young nearby French couple had an entry hole ripped in their tent by a possum some time during the night. Perhaps the furry animal was volunteering to keep them warm as the night's temperature had been some-what cool.

From Wild Dog Camp we ascend gently amongst flowering Ti trees and come to a point where we look forward right into "The Walls." We are all far too old for Herod to consider us threatening as we walk through his gate into a place of incredible beauty.

We are immediately surrounded with areas of verdant green moss growing amongst the masses of cushion plants and flowing Scoparia. With high rocky faces towering beside, the setting becomes a living postcard. The amazing cushion plants are endemic to the alpine regions. They grow ever so slowly from a tap root and can endure for hundreds of years. Being ever so delicate on their surface, they develop a very hard interior. The aptly named Lake Salome on our left glistened in the morning light. As we moved through this wondrous plant community we get a better view of David's Peak high up on our right hand side.

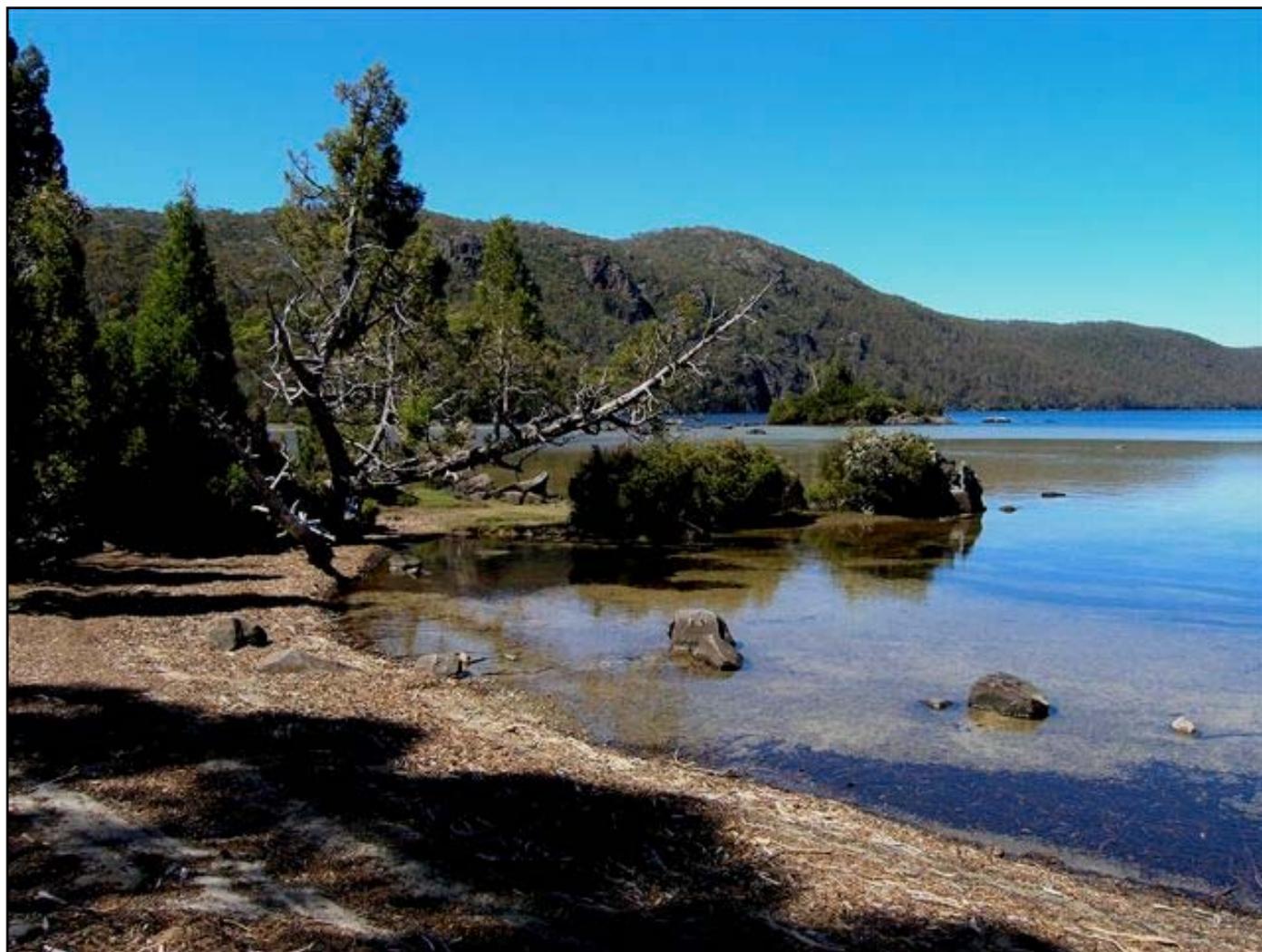


West Wall & Damascus Gate

Towards the end of this valley, we take a short side track to visit the tranquil Pool of Bethesda. Although there is good camping here, we believe it is discouraged. Towards the south eastern end we go up an easy rise past Pencil Pines to Damascus Gate. Ahead, we see the long valley that will hold our destiny for the next days, as it stretches down and into the far distance. The track to Dixon's Kingdom descends through a truly enchanting and extensive forest of ancient Pencil Pines. We really have no accurate idea of the numbers of summers they have seen come and go but they would be ever so many. Already, the rewards from today's passage have outweighed many times the investment in energy required to reach this stage. Dixon's Kingdom Hut has walls made from massive horizontal logs and is located right at the forest edge amongst some of the very largest pine trees. The surrounds would be an idyllic place to stay for much of the year, but woe – a pestilence in the form of a plague of March Flies keep us waving and smacking. Leaving our packs, we take an excursion to the top of Mt Jerusalem. For a moment we see Roger and Karl silhouetted against the blue sky at the peak of Solomon's Throne. Looking south, we see many lakes on the vast plateau that fades away into the far distance.

After lunch we travel along the grassland of Jaffa Vale. The track makes for soft walking between occasional water holes in the turf. The valley descends with increased gradient through pines somewhat smaller than the previous specimens, and before long we discover the shore of Lake Ball. The lake has a long track beside its northern edge and along the way passes yet another small wooden hut. The western end of the track is a little rocky and overlooking us are the stark remnants of pine trees standing as sentinels that failed to survive fires from perhaps as long ago as the 1960's or even earlier. From lake's end a steep descent brings us to the northern end of Lake Adelaide. We have the choice of camping in either forest or on the open site near the water's edge. We choose the latter, pitch our tents and have a soothing relaxing swim.

There is some upside to having blokes only! It is here that we see the first of five snakes seen over the duration of the trip. It is with some apprehension that we start the long path south beside Lake Adelaide as our book's description appears challenging. Therefore, a pleasant surprise awaits us as we find a very clear path with only a couple of minor ascents. An excellent camp ground is situated at the end of the lake but being still early in the day, we proceed across open land to Lake Meston. Much of the ground cover appears to be a dwarf kind of bracken. We almost believed that in parts of the track, Russell had preceded us with his Victa mower as there was neat, uniform cropped grass in a tidy band through much of the field.



Lake Meston has a relaxing sandy beach where the track connects.

Beyond here, unlike the other lakeside tracks, the path passing Lake Meston takes us way up and away from the water's edge.

Half way along, we stop beside Meston Hut for lunch. All of the huts we have so far seen have been small shingle roofed structures with differing fire places. They would afford good shelter, but only for very few people in unfavourable weather conditions. There is little access with the south west end of Lake Meston before we begin the passage though Mayfield Flats. No

track markers are evident as we alternate between slightly raised forest and extensive spreading fields of sphagnum moss. Being summer, there are no signs of the moss growing but rather the dry conditions render it yellow and faded. It's here that the GPS gives confidence on the general direction as we can still use narrow animal pads at times.



Dick, Karl & Russell having a well earned break

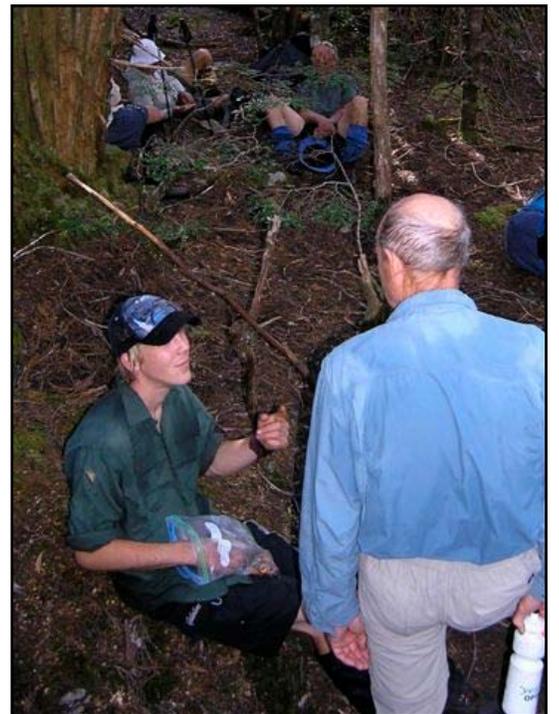
With a tree band ahead of us we descend “off track” and come upon an obvious camp site overlooking Junction Lake. We establish camp, and for a while, Junction Hut is elusive as it is concealed only a very short distance away from our GPS coordinates. Having just completed another end of day swim, Roger and I encounter Ben, a lost and worried Frenchman who that day had failed to discover the connection with the Overland track and returned to Junction Lake for the evening

We wonder what his fate would have been had he not found us as he had lost his maps during his confusion and anxiety. As evening falls, we attract increasing numbers of small black sand flies, so the best escape from them is in a secure mesh tent.

It's Sunday. The forecast temperature had been for 30°. With our group now numbering seven, Ben guides us past a lonely log book box to the top of Clark Falls. We are along- side the upper reaches of the Mersey River that is cascading some twenty metres to where it continues to flow along a rocky base through the mossy rain forest. This is the “Never Never,” a land hemmed in by two ridges. We find no obvious route; rather it is a case of using indistinct paths, pushing through lowland shrubs or crossing exposed areas of sphagnum moss. In the course of time, we find McCoy Falls, having forgotten Russell's log crossing a little upstream. For now it does not concern us because the stream flow is gentle and there will be other opportunities to cross over. This proves to be the case as we find a big tree that has fallen and formed a bridge, complete with rope handrail across the Mersey River.

Ben in conversation with Peter

Knowing the Hartnett Falls are only a short distance away, we split up with four of us crossing to the southern side. It is lunch time, so being in a sheltered, shady, mossy rain forest we make the most of the cool surroundings for a stop. Just prior to the falls, we come into drier scrub. Although the track is almost dusty for much of the way, the writer is reminded of the



hazards of mud holes; having one leg disappear some three quarters of a metre into black goo from what appeared to be an innocent damp patch. Before much longer, our path meets another with split timber foot boards wired together so it seems we are back in the busy world. This is the main track into Hartnett Falls. We take the time to have a look up from the bottom of the rumbling water.



From the top of Hartnett Falls

Being a hot day, and for the very first time carrying a full pack on the rising side path up to the main Overland Track, we find the effort to be quite testing. The main track continues the long and steady ascent through the dry forest to the high point of Du Cane Gap – some 1080 metres above sea level. Although there are long sections of boardwalk, we still need to rest a number of times as we learn later that the peak temperature at the Gap is 36°. Thankfully, we go downhill to Windy Ridge where we again camp on wooden platforms. It is small consolation to discover that even the young walkers found the warmth today to be especially tiring. There are no swimming holes here so a sponge with a wet towel offers a bit of a freshen up. The new Bert Nichols hut is an imposing structure. We think it lacks the kind of friendly verandah that is provided at New Pelion Hut. As the light fades we look up to see what we believe is a possum's nest built high at the top of a tall slender tree.

Next day we move down the glacial valley to Narcissus Hut. From Narcissus, we continue almost to Echo Point where we locate a lakeside campground that we learned about from one of the Parks Rangers we had earlier met. This last section has been easy walking between the giant trees of the rain forest. We set up camp beside flowering Leatherwood trees.



Lake St Clair - Echo Point

Next morning, as we near journey's end at Cynthia Bay we come across a massive tree that had only recently fallen across the track. The Parks' staff had sawn an opening to permit the passage of walkers and were still working on the gigantic trunk. They speculated that the tree may be in the order of four hundred years old. It certainly makes the nearby bitumen surface look positively young.

"And did those ancient feet in recent times, walk upon Tassies' mountains green?".....

They certainly did! It was a wonderfully rewarding mission.

Dick Johnstone



THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM TO LAKE ST CLAIR

VIA

"THE NEVER NEVER"

Noel Hayward

During the seven years I lived in Tasmania the Walls of Jerusalem were known to me as being a lovely area, but as they were almost on the opposite side of Tasmania (there was no Cradle Link Road in those days) did not warrant the travel required to go walking there. After all, there were more than enough beautiful walks to do and majestic rivers to kayak on the West Coast without spending a day driving to get to the Walls.

This is the commencement of Noel's excellent 10 page report that is published on the club's website in our Classic Reports section. The link is www.sunbushwalk.net.au/calendarofactivities/classic-walk-reports.html

SUNRAYSIA BUSHWALKERS

2014 Calendar

DATE	DESCRIPTION	WHERE	#	^	COMMENTS
Mar 5th	Meeting	Club rooms			photos of Never Never Trip and calendar approval/adjustment
Mar 8th(Sat)	Day walk	Hattah (Nth end of park)	9	ME	Contact Roger 50257325/0488121648
Apr 2nd	Meeting	Club Rooms			Finalise trips to KI, Mutawintji & Mt Feathertop
Apr 5th (Sat)	Canoe trip	Chalka Creek	7	SE	This is to inspect prior to next scheduled flooding event.
April 6-12th	Away trip	Kangaroo Island SA	5	SM	Car camping with Day walks
Apr 18-21 (Easter)	3-4 day trip	Mutawintji NSW	9	SE	Contact Noel 50257455/0438456335
Apr 25-27th	3 day pack carry	Mt Feathertop	9	MM	Contact Roger 50257325/0488121648
May 7th	Meeting	Club Rooms			
May 10th (Sat)	Day Walk	Cowanna Bend	7	SE	Contact Noel 50257455/0438456335
Jun 4th	Meeting	Club Rooms			
Jun 7-9th	Supported day walks	Mt Crozier to Pink Lakes	9	MM	Contact Roger 5027325/0488121648
Jun ??	Bike ride	Wales - UK	6	LM	Contact Michael 0400549988
Jul 2nd	Meeting	Club Rooms			
Jul 5-6th	Mid-winter Dinner	Hattah Lakes	13	SE	Walking optional / eating compulsory
Jul 7-13th	Day walks etc	Norfolk Island	6	SE	Contact Roger
Aug 6th	Meeting	Club Rooms			
Aug 9-10th	Day walks with possible canoeing	Lindsay Island	9	MM	Contact Noel - Proposed saty at Ned's Corner as a base for weekend
Sep 3rd	Meeting	Club Rooms			
Sep 6th (Sat)	Day walk	Hattah Kulkayne	9	MM	Contact Roger
Sep 7th (Sun)	Canoe	Chalka Creek &/or Lakes	8	MM	Contact Dick 50220030/0417245350
Oct 1st	Meeting	Club Rooms			
Oct 4-5th	Overnight walk	Grampians	8	MM	Contact Noel 50257455/0438456355
Nov 1-4 th Melb Cup	Walking/Canoeing	Gunbower Island	9	SE	Contact Noel 50257455/0438456355
Nov 5th	Meeting	Club Rooms			
Nov 9th (Sun)	Bike Ride	TBA	9		Contact Michael
Dec 3	Meeting	Club Rooms			
Dec 6th (Sat)	Xmas breakup	TBA	10		Contact Noel 50257455/0438456355

is the number of members responses to an activity

^ is the grade give to the activity

This is a copy of the club's Calendar webpage as at 2nd March 2014.

To view this page follow the link <http://www.sunbushwalk.net.au/calendarofactivities.html>

The grades relate to walks but are also used for other activities as an indication of what you may expect if you join in on them.

Any update will be made on the webpage only and is the most reliable source of what we are proposing to do.

The webpage will only be visible to members for the present while it is being bedded down after our member survey. If you are a member you will need to **login** using your **username and password**. If you have forgotten either or both contact Roger and he will reset them for you.

Dated 2nd March 2014