

NORTHERN TERMINUS UPGRADE AND LINK TRAIL



The Bibbulmun Spirit Poles artwork at the entry to the Track are a conceptual interpretation of the six language groups of the south west and the Waugal represents the carved landforms and waterways of the region.

On Friday 1 September, Kalamunda City Mayor Andrew Waddell officially opened the upgraded Bibbulmun Track Northern Terminus and link trail.

Mayor Waddell said, "The City of Kalamunda has always been very proud to have the iconic Bibbulmun Track start – or end depending on how you wish to walk – here in Kalamunda."

"The upgrade to the Terminus and a designated walkway will increase its visual prominence, connecting the Bibbulmun Track Northern Terminus to the Perth Hills Visitor Centre. The interpretive trail leads visitors on a journey from Kalamunda's Aboriginal heritage and European influences blending art, culture and the natural environment."

"I would like to make special mention of our Artists, Aurora Abraham and Sharyn Egan, who worked with Emerge Consultants to bring a strong indigenous influence to the interpretive walk and to Gordon Mitchell for his sculptural work on the project."

Project direction and integrity assurance was sought from relevant Government

Aboriginal agencies, heritage groups and stakeholders.

Starting at the Track itself, the large steel etched Waugal, the symbol of the Bibbulmun Track, represents the carved landforms and waterways of the region. The six Aboriginal language groups of the South West region are represented in the six meeting point circles along Railway Road; the largest circle at the Terminus is indicative of a communal fire pit. The language groups are also reflected in the six upright abstract leaves and Coolamon shaped poles at the Track entrance. This artwork was generously funded by Newmont Boddington Gold.

At the Mundaring Weir Road end of the Terminus are the three interpretive signs of the Kalamunda Railway Heritage Trail and the three adjacent stations. Railway sleepers set in the footpath refer directly to the train link and the European settlement of the Kalamunda township.

The project was supported by Tourism Western Australia through the Tourism Demand Driver Infrastructure Program.



The largest circle at the Terminus is indicative of a communal fire pit.

Neville Collard performed a Welcome to Country, with special guests Hon Ken Wyatt, Federal Member for Hasluck and Matthew Hughes, Member for Kalamunda.



The original Northern Terminus sign was repurposed as a back rest for a new seat made by the Kalamunda Men's shed.

Christmas Gift Ideas



Promises to Keep by Jesse Brampton

Limited edition book about an Australian on the Appalachian Trail. Jesse was influential in the development of the new Bibbulmun Track. Only \$30



Unique Bibbulmun Track branded gifts

Head sox - \$30.00
KeepCup - \$17.60
Beautifully crafted, unique silver stylised Waugal pendant - \$40.00

Christmas stocking fillers:

- New guide books \$11.95
- Track maps \$11.50
- Bush books \$6.95
- Caps \$14.95
- Bushwalker hats \$19.50
- Nalgene water bottles \$14.40
- Posters \$10.00
- Fridge magnets \$2.20
- Replica Waugals \$4.25

Bibbulmun Track Gifts from Redbubble

www.redbubble.com/people/bibbulmuntrack

- Coffee mugs from \$19.43
- Device cases from \$33.76
- Bags from \$23.08
- Notebooks from \$17.32
- Throw cushions \$28.85
- Sweatshirts and hoodies \$45.70



BTF members receive 10% off



IMPOSSIBLE TO BUY FOR?

A Bibbulmun Track Membership - give the gift that lasts the whole year (or three!)

Individual - 1 year \$40 or 3 years \$105

Senior - 1 year \$30 or 3 years \$75

Or buy a **Bibbulmun Track Gift Voucher** (any amount) that can be used for merchandise, a BTF event or a Bibbulmun Walking Break.

Buy online today, call (08) 9481 0551 or pop into the BTF office.

Welcome to our new Gold Sponsor



The Foundation is very pleased to welcome SUEZ as a sponsor.

SUEZ makes the best use of water and waste by providing smart and reliable resource management solutions. The local team provides solutions that supply seven million Australians with safe drinking water and diverts 1.2 million tonnes of waste from landfill every year.

Our association with the company harks back to 2011 when a landfill facility was proposed near the Track. The Foundation's concerns around visual and noise impacts for walkers were taken into consideration and SUEZ established screening and other initiatives to ensure that the operation has had minimal impact on walkers.

WA State Infrastructure Manager, Craig Barker, said "SUEZ takes its role as a responsible neighbour very seriously and it's great to hear none of your walkers have raised any concerns about our operations. We intend keeping it that way."

We have a great team of operators and a substantial investment in equipment on site which can contribute to track maintenance and we look forward to working with the Foundation to ensure there continues to be minimal impact to the Track and its users."

The Foundation looks forward to establishing a positive partnership with SUEZ over the next three years.



FROM MY Desk

Welcome to the Summer Edition of Bibbulmun News

As you will see from a couple of the articles, 2017 is a milestone in the history of the Foundation, being 20 years since its inception.

As it happens, it could be a pivotal year as the Board has been focused on its long term vision for the Bibbulmun Track and the role of the Foundation. A survey provided members and volunteers with an opportunity to contribute to the discussion and we thank the 487 individuals who took the time to respond.

In some ways the Foundation hasn't changed much. We pride ourselves on being a friendly, grass roots organisation where volunteers are integral to the smooth running of the organisation and to the maintenance of the Track. On the other hand, with over 400 volunteers, 2500 members and a wide range of events and services, we have had to move with the times to modernise our administration and keep abreast of industry standards and public expectations.

Similarly, the Track hasn't changed much since the current alignment was opened in 1998. There have been realignments; steps and boardwalks installed and campsites and bridges rebuilt due to bushfires. However, the Track and infrastructure is essentially the same - is this sustainable for the next 20, 30, 50 years? - some campsites close to access points already exceed their capacity on weekends. This is just one of the questions the Board is grappling with at the moment.

One thing I can tell you from our recent survey is that the most important attribute of the Bibbulmun Track for walkers is to have a natural/wilderness experience. The next three attributes are physical/mental challenge, solitude and simplicity. Facilities was fifth out of the 12 options with walkers greatly appreciating the campsites and water supply.

80% of respondents strongly agreed (47%) or agreed with the statement: "Trail design should reflect a concern for safety without detracting from the opportunity for hikers to access natural areas by their own unaided efforts, and without sacrificing aspects of the trail which may challenge their skill and stamina. Attempts to provide protection for the unprepared lead to a progressive diminution of the experience available to others."

This feedback will guide the Board in any decisions made regarding the Bibbulmun Track to ensure that the experience walkers have enjoyed over the past 20 years is continued into the future to provide a respite from our busy lives.

For an update on the past year's activities the 2016-17 AGM report can be found on our website under get-involved/about-the-foundation/governance.

Thank you to all our members, volunteers and sponsors for your contribution which has helped the Foundation achieve its objective to make the Bibbulmun Track a walk trail of international significance and quality.

Wishing you all the very best for the festive season.

Linda Daniels

Executive Director

Join us on



Thank you
THANK YOU
thank you

A SINCERE THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING WALKERS WHO HAVE GENEROUSLY MADE DONATIONS TO THE FOUNDATION.

- | | |
|------------------|------------------|
| Angela's Friends | Kay Woodcock |
| Arnold Zeh | Ken Beatty |
| Bob Frost | Marcus Harris |
| Christine Kennea | Mark Pybus |
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| Gabriele Caratti | Peter Edwards |
| Gareth Price | Richard Roy |
| Graeme Johnstone | Rob Kilpin |
| Heath Adams | Serge Tseu |
| Jo Shetliffe | Sharon Ewen |

Donations are tax deductible!

Through the National Trust, donations to the Foundation are deposited in a special account and assigned specifically to projects that enhance the Bibbulmun Track's environmental sustainability. The National Trust provides this service for free so you can be sure that 100% of your donation will go to Track projects.

Tax deductible donations can be made online, in person by cash or credit card, or by cheque which can be made out to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation with your name and address. We will then provide you with a receipt from the National Trust receipt book which indicates the donation is specifically for the Bibbulmun Track.

All donations, regardless of the amount, are gratefully received and all help to preserve our beautiful Bibbulmun Track.

Season's Greetings



The office will be closed from 4.00pm Friday 15 December until 9.00am Monday 22 January 2018.

YOUR LETTERS

Maureen and Darryl Baker set off on an end-to-end that didn't quite go to plan, but the letter below shows that even if plans go awry the Track can provide a lot of pleasure.

Hi Jim,

Well, our walk didn't go to plan but we had a very rich adventure. One of us required medical attention so we came off the Track at the Brookton Highway and hitched into Armadale—yes, oldies like us on the side of the highway! At first we were hitching the wrong way until someone stopped and told us, so we crossed over. We stood for only ten minutes before a lovely lady and her mother picked us up. We took the train from Armadale to Mandurah, and after a week of visits to the Peel Health centre at Mandurah we were allowed to return to walk the Track, but advised not to be too far from medical assistance if required. We collected the car, drove to each Track town in turn and walked from the town to the shelters and back. We met some wonderful people who were very helpful. Yes, it rained and yes, it was cold, but despite that, and also encountering five snakes, it was a wonderful experience. We are now on our way home having walked over half of the Track. Our lasting memories are of a well maintained trail and facilities, beautiful wild flowers and very untouched coastal scenery. People were just wonderful to us. The snakes were seen between Denmark and Albany section when the sun appeared. A very big thank you to you Jim, for your great help and your time. We had a wonderful time in WA.

Cheers

Darryl & Maureen, QLD



Thank you Track Volunteers

Walking from Murray River Campsite to Dookanelly Campsite I was surprised to find Dookanelly closed, a diversion in place and a temporary campsite that had been established that morning. Not having a tent, I walked the eight kilometre diversion to the Bilya Djena Bidi suspension bridge, where I was fronted by volunteers working on the steps to the new bridge, winding up for the day. Asked to join the group for the evening I shared a drink, cheese and biscuits, spaghetti bolognese, fruitcake and a hot tea, generous hospitality, entertaining camaraderie—and a four man tent! Next morning the volunteers shared their breakfast and filled my water bottles before I departed for Possum Springs Campsite. Hikers, we are very fortunate to have many generous women and men who give their time, effort and spirit to maintain our Bibbulmun Track. As you walk the Track or recall your walks please appreciate the volunteers, sponsors and others who maintain or have maintained this wonderful asset. To those who afforded me very generous hospitality I thank each and every one of you for enhancing the hiking experience for me and future hikers.

Bill (Track name "B9")

Ed Note: And that, Bill, is one of the reasons walkers should always carry a tent! If they hadn't been there.

To all at the Bibbulmun Track Foundation

For three years now you have supported us with a few gifts for the Annual Karrynup Primary School Camp Out - our most recent one was last weekend. We thank you for the maps, water bottles and wildflower books. This initiative started from a few new dads taking their daughters for a hike on the Track and now our hikes on the track have become an annual tradition in order to spend quality time with our daughters. At this weekend's campout we had 119 families attend this great community initiative. Everyone had a blast. It is so great to get families outdoors and enjoy some (non-ipad) games, some drizzle, and a fire. So - a personal thanks for your gifts - all the support is very much appreciated.

Kindest regards

Rob McSparran

Sea to Summit



Toasting marshmallows is a favourite past time.

Hello Bibbulmun Track Team

Thank you so very much for the surprise membership renewal prize in the post today. Wow! And thank you Sea to Summit for the donation of the prize, the travel clothesline will come in very useful in a few weeks time on my trip to Vietnam. Thank you one and all for the wonderful work you do. What a fantastic organisation to be involved with.

Kind regards

Mal

Hello

Please find attached a Bibbulmun Track end-to-end form. I completed the Track last Friday. The journey to complete the Track has been amazing and I really enjoyed the challenge. Thank you to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation and the amazing volunteers who keep the Track and shelters well maintained. It is very much appreciated.

Kind regards

Leonie Nagle

I feel privileged to have experienced at first hand this landscape (Northcliffe to Walpole). It is also reassuring, as a city-slicker, to know it exists now and into the future. Many thanks to all the Bibbulmun staff and volunteers for making it accessible.

Sharon Ewen

Hi all, I wanted to let you know how delighted I was receiving a gift in the mail - second prize in the draw for September. It will come in very handy for my trip to Nepal (with you guys and World Expeditions) next year.

Evelyn Patman

(Evelyn received a Kitchen Bits Set courtesy of Sea to Summit)

Alcoans adventure out on the Track



On November 5th, a group of Alcoans (Alcoa employees) and Bibbulmun Track Foundation guides hit the Bibbulmun Track near Dwellingup.

We collected the crew in Pinjarra and headed up the scarp to the start of our walk, with a great mix of people, some of whom had walked parts of the Track and many who hadn't.

The day was a great introduction to the bush for them. The weather was lovely, a clear sky, a gentle breeze and low temperatures. Many wildflowers were still in bloom in the late spring, including the queen and cowslip orchids. A highlight was seeing two bungarras (goannas). We had a leisurely lunch at Chadoora Campsite and on the way met a few walkers who had spent the previous night there.

The day was a great opportunity to showcase the Bibbulmun Track and the work that our volunteers do on the Track. It also allowed the Alcoans to see firsthand the type of work that some of their colleagues have done on the Track through Alcoa's ACTION program. A great day for all and well summarised in the feedback from one participant:

"It was an awesome day, very well run by the Bibbulmun Track personnel. Steve was a terrific guide. Best engagement I have seen for a sponsored partner. Loved the day—well done all whom championed it. A credit."

Alcoa received this guided walk as part of their sponsorship of the Foundation. If you would like your organisation to benefit similarly, take a look at how your organisation can become a sponsor of the Foundation. See www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au/get-involved/partnerships



Before you go...

CHECK THE LATEST TRACK CONDITIONS

Before heading out on to the Bibbulmun Track it is important that you check the current Track conditions and are aware of any changes that may impact on your journey. Refer to the 'Latest Track News' accessible from www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au or contact the appropriate Parks and Wildlife Services District (see contact details below).

There may be maintenance or construction projects near or on the Track that result in temporary diversions or changes. These will not be marked on your maps. If you encounter these when walking, follow the temporary markers, not your map. The Waugal trail markers will revert to the normal black on yellow when the diversion rejoins the main Track again.

Please remember the Bibbulmun Track is a walking track only. No wheeled vehicles, including trolleys, wheelbarrows, prams or bikes should be on the Track. Please help to preserve the Track and the environment by keeping to 'boots only'.

Prescribed Burning Operations

Parks and Wildlife conducts a program of prescribed burning operations each year. Prescribed burning operations are undertaken for a variety of reasons, including property protection, fuel reduction and biodiversity management.

These burns are carefully planned but may cause some disruption to Track users. Where prescribed burning operations impact on the Track, temporary diversions will be put in place. Prescribed burning operations are dependent on appropriate weather conditions and for this reason dates of burns are not available in advance. For information regarding prescribed burns, please contact the District offices.

Groups on the Track

Non-commercial groups of walkers with eight or more members that are staying overnight on the Track are requested to fill out a Notification of Intent (NOI) form and submit it to noi@bibbulmuntrack.org.au. NOI forms can be obtained from our website or contact the Foundation.

Car access to the Track

Walkers are reminded that vehicles can only access the Track at designated points. These are marked on the maps and guidebooks as red or green car symbols. Other roads that lead towards the Track might be restricted or have locked gates as they enter disease risk areas. Attempting to access the Track at non-designated points can spread disease or damage wildlife. Please use only the access points marked on the maps and guidebooks.

Parks and Wildlife Contacts:

Recreation and Trails Unit

recreationandtrails@dbca.wa.gov.au
Ph: (08) 9219 8265

District Offices

Perth Hills District (Mundaring and Dwellingup)

Perth Hills District (Mundaring and Dwellingup)
Kalamunda to the Harvey-Quindanning Road
Map 1 & 2 and Guidebooks 1 & 2
Contact Rebecca Hamilton on (08) 9290 6100 or
mundaring@dbca.wa.gov.au

Wellington District (Collie)

The Harvey-Quindanning Road to Mumballup
(Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Rd)
Map 3 and Guidebook 3
Contact Nick Evans on (08) 9735 1988 or
wellington@dbca.wa.gov.au

Blackwood District (Balingup)

Blackwood District (Balingup)
Mumballup (Donnybrook-Boyup Brook Rd) to Willow Springs
(Gold Gully Rd)
Map 4 and Guidebook 4
Contact Andrew Sandri on (08) 9731 6232 or
blackwood@dbca.wa.gov.au

Donnelly District (Pemberton and Northcliffe)

Willow Springs (Gold Gully Rd) to Pingerup Rd
Map 5 and Guidebook 5
Contact John McKenzie on (08) 9776 1207 or
donnelly.district@dbca.wa.gov.au

Frankland District (Walpole)

Pingerup Rd to Denmark River mouth
Map 6, 7 and 8 and Guidebooks 6, 7 and 8
Contact Chris Goodsell on (08) 9840 0400 or
frankland.district@dbca.wa.gov.au

Albany District (Denmark and Albany)

Denmark River mouth to Albany
Map 8 and Guidebook 8
Contact Luke Coney on (08) 9842 4500 or albany@dbca.wa.gov.au

LEAVE NO TRACE TIP – LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND

Do not add to, or create new, rock cairns. Cairns are for navigation only where other trail marking is not possible.

Individual rocks provide shelter for all types of critters and new cairns not only disturb the natural environment but can lead walkers astray.



Kerstin Stender,
Trails Coordinator
Locked Bag 104, Bentley Delivery Centre 6983
Tel: (08) 9219 8265
Email: recreationandtrails@dbca.wa.gov.au



Department of Biodiversity,
Conservation and Attractions



Recreation & Trails UNIT

The completion of the Bilya Djena Bidi, the bridge across the Murray River, marks the end of the department's recovery works from the 2015 and 2016 bushfires. It was officially opened by Stephen Dawson, Minister for Environment, and Alana MacTiernan, Minister for Regional Development, with a social media clip which included footage of the bridge and Foundation volunteers hard at work.

Thank you to all the organisations that contributed to the new bridge: Bibbulmun Track Foundation, Royalties for Regions Regional Grants Scheme administered through the Peel Development Commission, Alcoa, BG&E, Duratec Australia and Bocol Constructions. Without pooling these contributions, the department would have struggled to build such a suitable structure.

However the maintenance program on the Track never stops and you may already have seen the improvements to the three most northern camp sites. The new tent sites at the Hewett's Hill Campsite provide flatter and well drained camping spots which cater for this popular site. There is a new area for group camping with a separate fire ring. Additional tent sites were put in

at Ball Creek Campsite, with revegetation works proposed for next winter. New outside tables will offer additional eating and cooking spaces along the creek once installed. The floor was extended at the Helena Campsite shelter in preparation of the roof extensions in the near future. Here too, new paths connect additional tent sites. The creation of a defined path between the shelter and the toilet, and revegetating along that section, dealt with the unsightly erosion issues. Floor and roof extensions at the Swamp Oak Campsite are to follow. These are more collaborative projects between the department, the Foundation's Support Volunteer team and a private earth moving contractor.

There are also major works planned at the River Road Bridge south of Pemberton and realignments of the steep and eroded track sections on the south coast. Maitland Heritage Engineering volunteered their services to assess the bridge and provide a structural report with a schedule of works. We are developing a works program from this report in partnership with the Support Volunteer Program for this financial year to preserve the bridge for many more years to come.

My initial assessment of the Track between Parry's Beach and Conspicuous Cliff on the south coast identified extensive erosion caused by steep track alignments over the dune systems. Realignments are being planned to bypass these steep sections that will require environmental and cultural approvals before construction can commence.

As part of the redevelopment of the department's Explore Parks website, you will soon see changes to the way Track conditions and diversions are presented and accessed via an interactive map. This will hopefully assist hikers to navigate the website and find information more easily.

The Recreation and Trails Unit staffing has shrunk slightly, with Kelly Scherbarth, our part time school based trainee, graduating from high school and the program. Kelly is now employed full time working with our eMedia team, assisting with the department's camp site booking system.

Stay safe during summer and remember not to plan extended hiking trips during the summer fire season.

Kerstin Stender
Trails Coordinator

Summer is here – please don't take any risks!

It is strongly recommended that you do not carry out any **extended** walks between December and the start of March anywhere on the Bibbulmun Track.

The Track gets very hot and the bushfire risk is extreme. Temperatures can range from low 30s to mid-40s. In recent years the Track has been severely impacted by bushfires with the destruction of campsites and other structures which fire fighters were not able to save due to the ferocity

of the fires. Much of the Track is difficult to access quickly in an emergency and more so during a bushfire.

Please plan to walk outside of these months and avoid putting your life at risk and the lives of those that may need to rescue you.

We advise people planning a day walk to check the weather and fire forecasts. If the fire danger is very high or above

we strongly recommend people don't go out on the Track, or leave if they are already out. If in doubt, and the weather forecast is for hot and windy conditions, our recommendation is not to go walking. The south coast, although may be cooler, offers little protection from the sun due to the lack of a forest canopy and fire spreads more quickly in open bush and grassland.

Eyes on the GROUND



Support volunteers did a great job installing steps at the Bilya Djena Bidi. From L to R: Ross Simpson, Phil Lehmann, Ron Greenhalgh and Graham Gargeeg.

The last few months have been a busy time for both regular volunteers and the support volunteers.

Regular volunteers have been dealing with a lot of regrowth after the damp weather and now—finally—the sunshine. The bonus has been the wonderful display of flowers along the Track.

The support volunteer team completed the realignment and marking of the Track up to the Bilya Djena Bidi and the access, including steps on the southern side. They also repaired burnt duckboards near Shelley Beach, constructed creek crossings and steps in various locations and extensive brush cutting on the south coast. Team members have also been involved with the improvements to Hewett's, Ball Creek and Helena Campsites as outlined in the Recreation and Trails unit report on page 7.

Support volunteer, Geoff Meates commenced the mammoth task of walking each section of the Track to check and update the trail marking as required to meet our guidelines. Geoff is working with the sectional volunteers on this project.

The final Field Day for this year was held in the Frankland District at Mt Clare Campsite. With many hands to help we soon had the shelter, dunny, sleeping boards and tables oiled/varnished, the exterior of the water tank cleaned, leaf litter build up raked clear of the shelter and overhanging plants trimmed back, as well as tidying up overhanging vegetation on the approaches to the campsite.



Our thanks to Alcoa for sponsoring our Volunteer Support team.



In the last few weeks we have said farewell and thank you to a number of long-time volunteers and welcomed those who have taken their place. Among the new volunteers are a team from Foundation sponsor Newmont Boddington Gold.

Without the assistance of our nearly 300 maintenance volunteers the Bibbulmun Track would not be so well maintained and we thank them all for their commitment.

Gwen, Charmaine and Mark

Maintenance Programme Coordinators



The Eyes on the Ground maintenance programme is generously sponsored by Newmont Boddington Gold.



Getting into Gear SLEEPING BAGS



Sleeping bags are a minefield of choice and you definitely need to put some real thought into deciding which one to settle on—there is no sleeping bag that's the size of a loaf of bread, weighs 100gm and costs only one dollar. If you have many different tasks for your sleeping bag, then you may need a couple of bags—much like one jacket won't work for do all the jobs you have, nor will just one sleeping bag.

When deciding on a sleeping bag, determine whether you want a synthetic or down filled bag. Synthetics are normally cheaper because they are easier to manufacture, as the fill comes in sheets that are cut to size. They generally are larger in volume than down filled bags, particularly some of the older fills like *Hollofibre*, although they are getting smaller as the technology improves. Some newer insulation fills like micro thermic are now challenging down in size, weight and performance.

Down filled bags tend to be more expensive because of the labour that goes into making them, and down itself has different grades of quality. The trade off is that down bags stuff to smaller volume and people are often prepared to pay a price to get that size reduction. To understand down quality you have to know about the *Loft* system of measurement. This is an international standard used by all manufacturers; the old ratio system of measuring the percentage of down to feathers in the fill is now not used in Australia as it was deemed inaccurate.

So let's try and explain the concept of *Loft*. The down supplier puts one ounce of down in a clear Perspex cylinder under controlled standard humidity and temperature conditions and measures how much that one ounce has expanded and lofted up. So, if one ounce of down lofts and fills 650 cubic inches it's called 650 Loft, which is considered a very good quality of down. If it lofts to 500 cubic inches it's called 500 Loft and is considered average. 800 Loft down is considered the best quality.

If you increase the quality of the down then you need less of it to do the same job as a cheaper down. For instance a bag that has 600 grams of 650 Loft down in it will be warm down to about minus 5C—my bag, which has 600 grams of 800 Loft in it, will handle minus 15C. The bags are the same total weight and pack to the same size in the stuff sack but the 800 loft bag performs much better.

On the Bibbulmun Track the most you would need is a 3-season bag rated to somewhere between minus 5C and minus 10C, taking into account whether you are a cold sleeper or not. Some people radiate more heat than others. Also consider adding a liner to the bag to give more temperature variation. All liners are good for the longevity of a sleeping bag, not only do they add extra warmth they also protect the bag and keep it clean. It's much easier to wash a liner than the actual bag.

Liners come in different fabrics of which cotton is the cheapest, which also means it's the heaviest and has the highest volume when packed up. Remember the old rule of thumb, the lighter and smaller something is in the outdoor field, the more expensive it is. Next comes silk, which is light, cool, good for summer climates and seems to tangle less than cotton. There is also a mix of cotton and silk available. Finally, there are some technical fibre liners that can add 4C or 5C degrees to the performance of your bag. One of our sponsors, Sea to Summit, makes a great range of liners in all those fabrics so have a look at their range.

The next thing about down bags is the construction of the shell and its fabric. This is where it can get complicated. You must control the down somehow and confine it, otherwise, as it moves around inside the shell, it can clump and bunch up and cause cold spots. Manufacturers stitch baffles into the bag that separate the inner and outer shells and confine the down into these narrow compartments. It is possible to stitch through the inner and outer shells, but if you do that, you'll get heat loss through the stitching. So a baffle prevents the movement of the down and the heat loss through the stitching. The height of the baffle is important; if it's too high the down will loft too much and create thin, cold spots. If it's too tight the down won't be able to loft up to its full potential so you'll be carrying extra weight for no gain.

Another thing to be mindful of is your sleeping mat. Self inflating mats will give you a much better night's sleep than anything else on the market. They are also warmer than air beds or closed cell foam mats and certainly warmer than sleeping on the ground. You must have something between you and the ground to insulate you or the sleeping bag will not perform properly. Most importantly self inflating mats are incredibly comfortable to sleep on; they come in a variety of thicknesses, 2.5cm, 3.8cm and 5cm, the thicker they are the more comfortable but thicker means heavier and bulkier. Again, Sea to Summit has built a brilliant range of mats that are light, warm and comfortable and absolutely worth a good look. The latest range of mats now require you to blow them up, some have pumps, rather than being self-inflating.

So, to sleep comfortably on the Bibbulmun Track on a spring or winter trip (spring nights are cold due to the clear skies) I would want a bag that's rated to minus 5C minimum, or probably even go to minus 10C. In the Mountain Designs range I'd be looking at the Dedos 690, 750 Loft down, a very light 20 denier weight shell that has been treated with a Durable Waterproof Repellent (DWR) to stop condensation affecting the bag during the night. It has a well-shaped 3D hood so I won't lose heat from my head, box wall baffling and a zip baffle to stop heat loss through the zipper.

I would have a Sea to Summit lightweight sleeping mat, probably the Ultralight Regular length at 395g; at 5cm thick it is more than enough comfort. In addition, I would add in a STS inflatable pillow, I do love a good pillow! I would use a silk liner, going for the lightest weight and I would buy a STS Ultra-Sil 8 litre roll down stuff sack to replace the stuff sack that comes with the bag, to ensure my bag is waterproof whenever it is packed away.

There is a lot involved in sleeping bag manufacture and construction, much to consider when factoring in things like weight, performance, comfort and not forgetting simple things like size—is it big enough for you? In essence, you don't have to freeze in your sleeping bag ever again if you do some research and get a bag that suits your needs.

As usual, visit the good gear stores like Mountain Designs, get advice from the staff, find out what they are using and get their advice.

Happy trekking!

Mike Wood
BTF Chair



The Dedos 690 from Mountain Designs is ideal for the Bibbulmun Track.



The Bibbulmun Track Foundation (BTF) was originally formed in 1997 under the name Friends of the Bibbulmun Track. But who were these Friends, and why was this organisation created?

Jesse Brampton, from country WA, hiked the Appalachian Trail in 1987/8 and it was his experience of this trail that not only inspired the *Building a Better Bibbulmun Track* project but instigated the proposal to CALM (now Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions) to set up an independent body.

Loosely based on the *Appalachian Trail Conservancy* in the USA, the foundation would encourage volunteers to be responsible for their sections of the Track and provide resource assistance, both financial and in kind, to support the department in managing, maintaining and marketing the newly aligned Track, complete with campsites, which was due to open in 1998.

After initial reluctance from the department, the idea was given the go-ahead and Jesse found an enthusiastic ally in Mike Wood, MD of Mountain Designs, who had been associated with and financially supportive of the project from the beginning. Mike had good contacts with Bruce Manning, EO of the Southern Province Projects Group and Simon Holthouse, Chairman of the WA Planning Commission—they had trekked together in the Himalayas.

Other significant people were approached to set up the board of what would become the Friends of the Bibbulmun Track (FOBT) and it was agreed that CALM would have two representatives on the board – including Jim Sharp, head of the steering committee charged with producing the new Track.

The FOBT held its first board meeting on 6th August 1997, with Mike Wood as Chairman and Jesse Brampton as EO. At the meeting Jim Sharp outlined the perception CALM had for the future relationship between the two organisations and the board worked to develop a Memorandum of Understanding which still forms the basis for the organisation today.

In 2002 the *Friends of the Bibbulmun Track* was renamed the *Bibbulmun Track Foundation (BTF)*.

So, fast forward to the present day—the use of the Bibbulmun Track has grown exponentially over the years and the volunteer programme is of paramount importance in meeting the demands this growth has created. Although major clearance work and construction of Track infrastructure remain in the province of the department, a Support Volunteer programme has been created to assist with large scale tasks.

Funding remains critical—it costs a lot of money to provide a huge facility like the Bibbulmun Track free of charge to the public. Membership, fundraising, sponsorship, merchandise, events, tours and other services all generate essential income for the BTF and enable 100% of donations to be used on Track projects. The busy office is open five days a week with the assistance of over 20 volunteers who also answer enquiries and chat to walkers.

The Foundation has greatly raised the profile of the Bibbulmun Track over the last twenty years; walkers come from all over Australia and indeed the world to WA solely to walk on the Bibbulmun Track, which has truly achieved its objective of becoming *A Walk Trail of International Significance and Quality*.

However this is not a time for resting on our laurels—plans are well under way for the next twenty years!

Postscript: Those mentioned by name in the above account—where are they now?

Jesse Brampton resigned from the position of Executive Officer of the FOBT in 1998 and has since been active in trail planning, development and interpretation across Australia, working on more than 200 projects and delivering in excess of 1500 interpretive panels, 200 laser-cut steel sculptures and a variety of maps, brochures and guides. The Bibbulmun Track and the formation of the Friends / Foundation remain his most treasured outcomes.

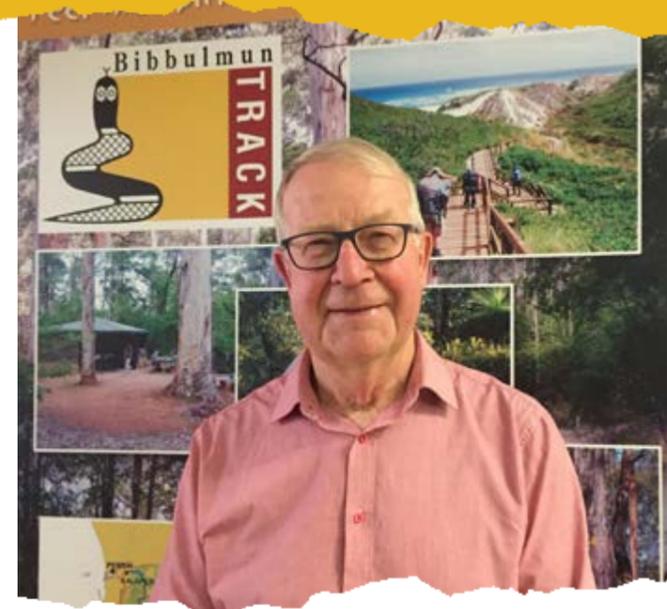
Jim Sharp remained on the Board of the BTF until his retirement this year as Director General Parks and Wildlife. He has been awarded Honorary Life membership of the BTF.

Simon Holthouse also remained on the Board until the AGM in October 2017. He was deputy chair for most of that time and is a Life Member. In retirement Simon manages his farm and produces a very good red wine.

Mike Wood still remains as the Chairman of the BTF after 20 years of continuous service. He is currently the MD of Peregrine Travel Centre WA. Mike has always been one of the Track's foremost supporters.

Bruce Manning also remains on the Board and is CEO of the Great Southern Development Commission.

A full account of the formation of the Foundation and of the Track is available on our website: www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au/get-involved/about-the-foundation/how-it-all-got-started



At the AGM in October we farewelled one of our longest serving volunteers and founding board member Simon Holthouse.

I would like to thank Simon for his contribution to the Bibbulmun Track Foundation, which has been long, steadfast and consistent. Simon came to the board at my insistence despite having a huge amount of work on his plate at the time as Chairman of the State Planning Commission. Simon's life was full of the big picture planning issues of the whole State of WA, yet he chose to share his time with our fledgling organisation.

The success of the BTF is due to many factors and many people who have all played their part in ensuring that our Track and the Foundation will exist for many years, decades and even centuries into the future. Simon was an integral part of this. He says that his 20 years with the BTF is the longest time he has ever devoted to an organisation and for that we are extremely grateful.

Simon not only brought gravitas to our board but also impressed upon us the need for transparency, integrity and attention to a consistent process. In my unfamiliar role as the new Chairman of the Board Simon was immensely helpful with advice, direction and his superb guidance on the way to do things properly.

The Board, staff and volunteers of the Foundation commend Simon on the legacy that he has left the State of Western Australia for future generations. His friendship is greatly treasured by myself and the other board members and we all wish Simon well in the future.

The Board would like to warmly welcome Simon's replacement, John Holan, voted on to the Board at the last AGM. We hope that the next 20 years will be as productive and entertaining for John as they have been for Simon!

Mike Wood
Chairman BTF



MD's staff helped to build the shelter at Rame Head Campsite.

THANK YOU MOUNTAIN DESIGNS!

Founding sponsor 1997 - 2017

Not many organisations can say they have had a sponsor since the very beginning and we are proud of the long term partnership forged with this quality company.

MDs provided funding to build the information shelter at the Northern Terminus and staff members helped to build the sleeping shelter at Rame Head campsite. Their primary contribution to the Foundation has been to provide us with office space above their Perth store and the annual volunteer rewards. For many years they also sponsored our Bibbulmun Team Challenge.

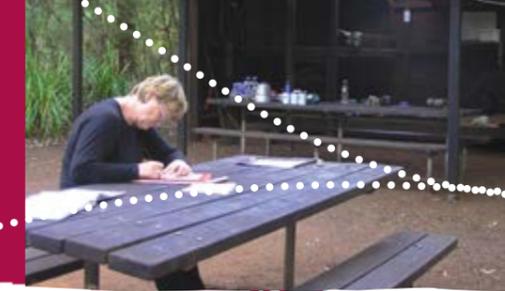
THANK YOU Mountain Designs for your ongoing support and contribution to the Foundation – you really are legends!



The BTF Board in October 2017. L to R: Mike Wood (Chair and founding member), Patrick Tremlett, Linda Daniels (ED), Bruce Manning (founding member), Louise Yeaman, Simon Holthouse (founding member, retired at AGM), Kerstin Stender (Parks & Wildlife Svcs), Kathleen Broderick, Charlie Soord, Peter Sharp (Parks & Wildlife Svcs).

Yes, THEY DID IT!

Our CONGRATULATIONS to the following 32 walkers on completing an end-to-end! 8 from overseas, 3 from interstate and 21 from WA.



Walkers, through circumstance or just personal preference, can take several years to complete their end-to-end. A sectional end-to-end can be a very different experience to a through end-to-end, but it is still a real accomplishment to cover the whole Track and it's always pleasing to see these hikes registered. Naturally, it's more common for walkers from overseas to complete a through hike and it's good to be able to acknowledge all walkers' efforts.

All entries are in chronological order of finishing their journey.

Our congratulations go to all of them!

Noelle James (73), of College Grove, is the only one of a group of ten starters to complete an end-to-end (Sectional, 01.10.98 to 05.05.14) and she survived extremes of weather while doing it—from the coldest night at Mt Cooke to the hottest days along the south coast. Noelle enjoyed the variety of the Track and particularly liked walking through the tall timbers. She found some sections were hard going but always liked meeting other walkers along the way.

Peter West (71), of North Fremantle, walked with Bruce Seligmann and Allan McKechnie on his end-to-end (Sectional, 16.04.02 to 03.05.16) but provided no other details of his walk.

Jean Cleaver (62), of Leeming and **Stephen Bousfield** (33), of Bull Creek, walked together as the *BC Team* (Sectional, 07.07.08 to 16.08.16). Some sections were completed several times and Steven always looked forward to their next hike. Jean learned heaps from other people about food supplies and dehydrated many of their meals. Donnelly River to Pemberton was a favourite section for both and Jean also liked Walpole to Peaceful Bay. They loved the peace and quiet, the scenery, arriving at each campsite and being able to experience nature at its best. They are grateful for such a facility that can provide a cheap holiday, a lot of enjoyment and improve fitness too. Jean would have liked to see more wildlife, but admits she was far too noisy!

Patrick Ryan (28), of Mosman Park, called himself *Water Boy* on his speedy hike (N-S, 22.05.17 to 24.06.17). He advises carrying more food than you expect you'll need. A highlight for Patrick was seeing the ocean for the first time after all the forest. Wildlife

seen included roos, emus, whales, snakes and an echidna.

Alison Jennings (57), of Warnbro, was simply *Alison* on her journey (Sectional, 02.08.09 to 26.06.17) and she loved the challenge of completing her end-to-end. The quiet isolation of the bush and the joy at seeing the shelter at the end of each day kept her coming back each year. Walpole to Denmark was a favourite section and highlights included the awesomeness of the Southern Ocean and the diversity and magnitude of the Pingerup Plains. Alison was also awed at the forest's ability to regenerate after such massive bushfires. Roos, emus, wild pigs, many beautiful birds and one solitary snake were seen along the way. Alison suggests talking to other end-to-enders while planning any walks.

Liz Browning (43), of Ocean Reef, was known as *Lizymisso* during her time on Track (Sectional, 05.09.13 to 07.07.17). She prepared most of her food at home with a dehydrator, but sometimes mixed it with supplies purchased in towns. The section from Helena to Waalegh is a favourite for Liz and she recently saw her first feral pigs and had to do some wading for the first time. She has enjoyed meeting fellow walkers—"some lovely people and also some real characters. It's fantastic how hikers are always so willing to share their knowledge with each other. It's like we have our own sub-culture, with our own jargon to go along with it". Liz likes warm feet and doesn't leave home without her Ugg boots!

James Davies (42), from Collie, was *MULE* on his walk (Sectional, 24.12.16 to 09.07.17). He enjoys hitting the Track as a release from working in a large industrial plant. Harris Dam to Yourdamung was

his favourite section and a highlight was managing to photograph a full rainbow between Long Point and Mt Clare. James has hiked in NZ and Tanzania but says the Bibbulmun Track is unique.

Jack Logan (55), from Bunbury, signed in as *Jack* and/or *Jack the Map* on his first end-to-end (Sectional, 1999 to 09.07.17), which was made more difficult due to long-time work commitments in the State's north. He's now back in the south and looking forward to more walking on the Track. Walpole to Boat Harbour was his favourite section and he enjoyed meeting other walkers. Jack says every day had a highlight. The wildlife he saw included dolphins surfing between Peaceful Bay and Boat Harbour, plus many birds seen through his binoculars. Jack advises getting into the same breathing rhythm as snorers in a shelter so you can relax and just drift off...

Steve Parish (67), of Darlington, was amazed by the lack of other hikers on his winter walk (S-N, 02.06.17 to 21.07.17), having 75% of campsites to himself. Sending his dehydrated food to Visitor Centres worked well and, despite eating double food portions, he lost 10kg in weight during his trek. He had no favourite section, but says they were all good for different reasons. He managed to get lost after following large rock cairns for a couple of hours on Abyssinia Rock before realising he should have followed the smaller cairns. Some very noisy emus were amongst the wildlife he saw.

Harry van Rooyen (53), of Woodvale, was *Hiker Harry* over six years of walking the Track (Sectional, 31.08.11 to 01.08.17). He says he now hates freeze-dried food! Walpole to Denmark was his favourite section and reaching Mandalay Beach was a highlight. Harry advises never underestimating the topography on the maps and says hiking days are much harder in extreme weather!

Tina Wassermann (31), from Germany, called herself *Cowgirl* (N-S, 30.05.17 to 08.08.17) on a trek she started only six days after hearing of the Track and says it was one of the best decisions of her life. She loved it! She met wonderful people

and was amazed at how willing walkers were to share their stories and advice. Many became like Track angels for her. Tina occasionally spoiled herself with chocolate and enjoyed filling her hollow legs at every town! She loved the whole Track, including the Wellington spur trail. A shooting star in the amazing skyscape at Blackwood, along with a mist filled valley in the morning were highlights. She also loved a sunrise rainbow at Sandpatch.

Lari McDonald (62), of Success and **Hedley Amos** (68), of Jarrahdale, shared much of their latest end-to-end (Sectional, 02.11.15 to 10.08.17). Hedley spent months cooking and dehydrating his food and found curries and aromatic based foods hold their flavours best. His favourite sections are anywhere in the karri and tingle forests, and Lari has too many favourite spots to choose just one, but she detests the beach sections! Meeting fellow hikers was a highlight for both with stories told, information shared and gear compared. Hedley says you can never stop learning from others. They have walked many tracks and trails around the world but Lari says nothing compares with the 5-star quality of our Track and shelters each day. She warns that long-distance walking becomes addictive!

.....
"Met some lovely people and also some real characters. It's fantastic how hikers are always so willing to share their knowledge with each other. It's like we have our own sub-culture, with our own jargon to go along with it."

Liz Browning (aka *Lizymisso*)
.....

Simon Hremeviuc (28), of Dalkeith, was *White Dog* on his generally solitary end-to-end (N-S, 26.06.17 to 11.08.17) when he met only seven other walkers between Possum Springs and Albany. He dehydrated and vacuum sealed his dinners and supplemented these with meals and beers while in towns. He loved the karri forests and south coast and had an exhilarating experience crossing Torbay Inlet in chest

deep water. Freezing swims were also enjoyed at Schafer, Dog Pool and Mandalay. The dreadful weather experienced along the south coast made his final feeling of accomplishment even greater. Wildlife included marron in large puddles on the Pingerup Plains, foxes, dolphins and a baby sea turtle. Simon credits a home-made pot cosy (from a windscreen sun-visor) for a 230g gas bottle lasting for 10 days. The worst thing he carried was a 1.6kg text book for "light reading"... which only made it to Sullivan Rock!

Richard Walton (54), from Queensland, was *The Earl of Grey* on his walk (N-S, 16.07.17 to 08.09.17) which he found to be relaxing and peaceful and he enjoyed it much more than he expected. An ample choice of food was available for resupplies in each town and he phoned, pre-walk, to check on gas supplies. Richard enjoyed the early morning walks as well as arriving in camp at the end of each day, culminating in a good cup of Earl Grey. The peace of the walk was a highlight and he found he could live in the moment. In comparison with other walks, the towns every week or so, the amazing campsite infrastructure, and the track maintenance all make the Bibbulmun Track stand out.

Elaine Ellard (75), of Noranda, was *Elaine E* during her walks (Sectional, 30.09.12 to 13.09.17) over five years. Earlier walks were for the peace and solitude found in the bush, but an ambition to complete an end-to-end soon took over, despite her friends thinking she was mad! Elaine wanted to prove to herself that she could do it. The tall forests were her favourite sections and she liked the wildflowers and fungi. Meeting other walkers and sharing their stories was always enjoyed. Elaine carried the lightest food possible, but always included an extra day's ration.

Katrin Hix (38), from Germany, (N-S, 21.08.17 to 20.09.17) found the Bibbulmun Track was the best maintained trail she has ever walked and says the campsite structure with water tanks was amazing as it guaranteed a beautiful and safe journey. Favourite sections were from Monadnocks to Nerang, from Nullaki to West Cape Howe and all along the south coast. Katrin

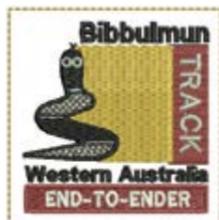
enjoyed seeing the curious kangaroos and lazy seals around Peaceful Bay. In comparison with the Te Araroa and the Larapinta, the Track was an easy walk... and fun!

Julia Forsyth (60) and **Andrew Craig** (62), from NZ, found walking the Bibb (N-S, 02.08.17 to 22.09.17) to be one of the best experiences of their lives. It was so much more than they expected. "We hadn't realised how much joy there would be in the simple act of getting up each morning, putting on our packs and walking, oblivious to what was going on in the outside world". They shopped in Track towns for supplies and, while it was more expensive, they were able to find adequate supplies and felt happy to support local businesses. The imposing karri and tingle forests, the dramatic coastal sections, the abundant and colourful wildflowers and the watery Pingerup Plains were all favourites. Both enjoyed seeing the quenda at Torbay campsite and Julia was happy that Andrew encountered most of the snakes! In comparison to NZ walks, they found the Track relatively easy and a great introduction to long-distance walking.

Regina Bauer (50) and **Kevin Bauer-Laufer** (11), of Goomalling, are proof that children's abilities should never be under-estimated (Sectional, 12.01.12 to 03.10.17). Regina advises starting with shorter walks and building on them. They loved all sections walking in spring when the wildflowers put on a show. The orchids from Denmark to Albany were amazing. Kevin loved the kangaroos at DRV and still enjoys going to visit them. They say the Bibbulmun Track is special, with few towns but somewhere safe to stay each night. Regina enjoyed the feeling of accomplishment on arriving in Albany, knowing that they had done it.

Do you have your End-to-Ender BADGE?

FREE when you register your first end-to-end!



Michael Brown (57), of Mosman Park, had various track names, from *Mike B to Tank* and then *Barclay* during his walks (Sectional, 25.03.17 to 06.10.17). He was very grateful for advice, information and support received and thanks everyone involved in the maintenance of the Track. Mike loved walking along the cliffs and sand dunes on the southern section, and seeing the views at Blackwood and Beraking. Highlights were the rolling waves along the coast, the rainbow over Blackwood and nearly being knocked over by a startled emu! He found his journey to be quite spiritual, and now feels rejuvenated, energised and ready to take on life.

Geoff Ellis (68), from Queensland, has been back to finish another end-end (Sectional, 16.03.12 to 06.10.17) on his favourite track in the world—because it has no big mountain ranges! Like many non-locals, he found it difficult for supplies on the first major section due to the temporary closure of the North Bannister roadhouse. Geoff liked meeting other hikers and his favourite section was from Albany to Walpole. He also enjoyed having to "switch on" in snake country from Walpole to Northcliffe. Shelters and facilities were far superior to those he found on the Appalachian Trail.

Magdaleen van Blerk (58), of Thornlie, was *Meerkat* on her journey (N-S, 03.08.17 to 08.10.17). The tall tree country around Pemberton was her favourite and she particularly enjoyed Maringup campsite with its stunning sunrise (seen from her bed) and the sound of the ocean in the background. Magdaleen has previously hiked in Alaska, and likes the fact that on the Bibbulmun Track there is nothing that wants to eat you! Best equipment was her SPOT messenger, which provided safety for her and peace of mind for her family.

Megan Webb (50), who was simply *M Webb*, found it was wonderful to have such a long track to walk (N-S, 20.08.17 to 09.10.17). She purchased all her food in the Track towns and was always able to find something. For Megan, being able to walk 1000kms with no traffic was an absolute highlight!

Ken Beatty (62), of Cowaramup, says his walk (N-S, 28.08.17 to 13.10.17) was a great experience and he was pleased with his body's response to the physical and mental challenges. He dehydrated and vacuum sealed his meals but was always happy to supplement these with comfort food in

the Track towns. The section between the Albany Highway and Dwellingup was his favourite and he loved the prolific displays of wildflowers along the Track.

Masafumi Saito (44), from Japan, was known as *Masa* during his walk (N-S, 02.09.17 to 16.10.17) which was very wet and cold. He has walked extensively overseas and appreciated the high standard of track-marking on the Track, but he didn't like the inlet crossings! Masafumi resupplied in towns and found his pack was heavy when he had to carry eight days of food. He liked the sections south of Collie and particularly the sections between Walpole and Denmark.

Kathrin Heckmann (29), from Germany, thoroughly enjoyed her adventures on the Track (N-S, 21.08.17 to 14.10.17). She resupplied without problem in towns and started with carrying only the necessities, but ended with avocados and red wine in her pack! Her favourite section was from Kalamunda to Dwellingup because everything was so new and exciting. Kathrin loved all her Track firsts—first kangaroo in the wild, first beer in first Track town, first camp-fire under the stars, first swim in a lake, first view of the ocean, first snake—and on the last day a huge goanna showed up on the Track to say goodbye. She says there are very few walks in the world with such great shelters and dedicated maintenance workers.

Jolinde Vlieger (29) and **Jorrit Dykstra** (36), from Holland, were simply *Jolinde* and *Jorrit* as they enjoyed the Track (N-S, 29.08.17 to 14.10.17), and thought it was well marked and had great campsites. They bought supplies in the towns, preferring to support local businesses rather than sending food drops to towns. Walpole to Denmark was the favourite section for both and Jolinde loved seeing the coast for the first time. Jorrit liked the beaches, the tall trees and the sunsets. Both enjoyed meeting other walkers as they helped to make the Track so special. Lots of wildlife was seen and Jolinde reports stepping on a snake!

Pierre Charbonneau (62), from NSW, was *Pierre* on his hike (N-S, 13.08.17 to 17.10.17), which he called magical. In comparison with other walks he's done he found it was well-marked and well maintained, and the shelters were life-savers. He resupplied in towns, with no problems, and was happy with selection and price. Pierre loved the entire Track with special highlights being the karri forests, tingle trees, coastal views, wildlife and the abundant wildflowers. He was in awe of all the beauty found on the Track.

Compiled by Charmaine Harris
BTF Volunteer and End-to-End

On Sunday 19th November, the Foundation held a Vision Workshop for members and volunteers. The aim of the workshop was to build on the concepts gained from the online Vision Survey to develop a vision for the future of the Bibbulmun Track. The results of the workshop will articulate how we, the members, want the Track to look and feel.

Over 70 members attended to help flesh out the concepts that were grounded in the five most important attributes raised in the survey: those being the *natural wilderness experience; the physical and mental challenge; solitude; simplicity; and the track facilities.*



Concepts discussed at the workshop included:

- Fundraising methods such as membership fees, ways to increase BTF membership, and consideration of fee systems for use of the Track.
- The types of roads considered most acceptable to be used for alignments

(e.g., old forestry tracks or rail formations, management tracks and/or public roads).

- The style of bridge acceptable for different types of water crossings.
- Campsites and shelters—including layout, preferred shelter, and improvements considered a priority.
- Workshop participants were asked to sum up the unique character and traits of the Bibbulmun Track that they felt we need to ensure are retained (the look, feel, and character).

We would like to sincerely thank all members and volunteers who participated for their amazing input. The response rate and feedback was outstanding and constructive. Feedback about the workshop from participants was overwhelmingly positive.



"What a well-run session it was today. Well done to Ce, Steve, Linda and the team who organised it. Really enjoyed participating, and I hope the BTF gets lots of worthwhile data from this workshop."

"I just want to congratulate the team for putting on such a professional session yesterday pm. It also made me happy to see that the survey we filled out has been looked at closely. It actually revitalised my enthusiasm for the Track!"

Stay tuned for more detailed results of the Vision Workshop which will be circulated to members.

Steve Sertis
Events Manager and Lead Guide

Waugal cloth badge

RRP \$12.50
\$11.25
FOR MEMBERS



Be reminded of your journey on the Bibbulmun Track with our latest cloth badge embroidered with the Bibbulmun Track Waugal trail marker.

PERFECT FOR YOUR BACKPACK, T-SHIRT OR BIBBULMUN TRACK HAT!

FAVOURITE SHORT WALK

Balingup Bibbulmun Track Trail Head through Golden Valley Tree Park Map 4 Blackwood—6km return (add 2 or 3kms to explore the Park!)

I park my car off the main street in Balingup, grab a map of the Golden Valley Tree Park from the visitor centre and follow the Waugal markers south out of town, alongside Southampton Road.

After about a kilometre the Track veers left on to Old Padbury Road and shortly after passes through a kissing gate into the Tree Park. From here it is a very pleasant stroll through trees from all parts of the world—the Park is the State's largest arboretum.

A series of pathways lead to the gazebo in the centre of the park and also offer the

opportunity to visit the Pear Tree Lookout and other features of the Park.

Taking the direct route along the Bibbulmun Track leads to the exit stile on to Old Padbury Road, the point at which I turn back towards Balingup. Once in town I always make a point of having coffee or lunch at one of the cafés on the main street.

Angela Loucaides

Do you have a favourite short walk?

Send the details (around 200 words) and a photo if you have one to admin@bibbulmuntrack.org.au



Golden Valley Tree Park by Kristal Berry

Accommodation, Tours and Services



Please support the Walker Friendly Businesses that support the Track.

🏠 Accommodation 📍 Visitor Centre 🚗 Track Transfers 🍴 Catering 👥 Tour Guides

BUSINESS NAME	TOWN	TYPE OF BUSINESS	PHONE NO.	WEBSITE	DISCOUNT OFFERED TO MEMBERS
ALBANY BAYVIEW BACKPACKERS YHA	ALBANY	🏠	(08) 9842 3388	bayviewbackpackers.com.au	Discount on accommodation
ALBANY HARBOURSIDE APARTMENTS	ALBANY	🏠	(08) 9842 1769	albanyharbourside.com.au	10% Discount on accommodation
CAMP KENNEDY BAPTIST YOUTH CAMP	ALBANY	🏠	(08) 9845 1040	albanybaptist.com.au/camp-kennedy.html	
DUNMOYLEN HOUSE B&B	ALBANY	🏠	(08) 9842 5235	dunmoylen.com.au	
WALK INTO LUXURY	ALBANY	👥	1300 662 452	walkintoluxury.com.au	
YOHO PIZZA	BALINGUP/ DONNELLY RIVER	🍴	0403 734 814	yhopizza.com.au	
COLLIE RIVER VALLEY TOURIST PARK	COLLIE	🏠	(08) 9734 5088	collicaravanpark.com.au	
HARRIS RIVER ESTATE	COLLIE	🏠	(08) 9734 4042	harrisriverestate.com.au	10% off accommodation for stays of 2 nights or more
MANDIA B&B	COLLIE	🏠	0417 179 260	mandia.com.au	
MUMBLES	COLLIE	🏠	0429 322 038	mumblesboutiquestays.com.au	20% discount after 2nd night
THE COLLIEFIELDS	COLLIE	🏠	(08) 9734 2052	colliefields.com	
WHISPERING PINES B&B	COLLIE	🏠	(08) 9734 3883	whisperingpinesbandb.com.au	
BLUE WREN TRAVELLERS' REST	DENMARK	🏠	(08) 9848 3300	denmarkbluewren.com.au	5% discount on accommodation
CAPE HOWE COTTAGES	DENMARK	🏠	(08) 9845 1295	capehowe.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
CASA LIBELULA	DENMARK	🏠	0403 154 764	facebook.com/CasaLibelula6333/	10% discount on accommodation
DENMARK RIVERMOUTH CARAVAN PARK	DENMARK	🏠	(08) 9848 1262	denmarkrivermouthcaravanpark.com.au	
PELICANS AT DENMARK	DENMARK	🏠	0413 122 176	pelicansatdenmark.com.au	
PEPPERMINT HOUSE	DENMARK	🏠	0408 935 405	pepperminthouse.webs.com	
THE COVE	DENMARK	🏠	(08) 9848 1770	thecovechalets.com	10% discount on accommodation
WINDROSE B & B	DENMARK	🏠	(08) 9848 3502	windrose.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
DONNELLY RIVER VILLAGE	DONNELLY RIVER	🏠	(08) 9772 1244	dannellyriver.com.au	From \$25 pp
DWELLINGUP ADVENTURES	DWELLINGUP	🚗	(08) 9538 1127	dwellingupadventures.com.au	
KALAMUNDA CARRIAGES & 3 GUMS COTTAGE	KALAMUNDA	🏠	(08) 6293 1902	perthhillsaccommodation.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
VILLA DU LAC	KALAMUNDA	🏠	08) 9293 2906	villadulac.com.au	10% to Bibbulmun Track members
MUNDARING WEIR HOTEL	MUNDARING	🏠🍴	(08) 9295 1106	mundaringweirhotel.com.au	
KARRI COUNTRY GOOD FOOD	NORTHCLIFFE	🍴	(08) 9271 2869	karricountrygoodfood.com.au	
WATERMARK KILNS	NORTHCLIFFE	🏠	(08) 9776 7349	watermarkkilns.com.au	Discount on application
NUTKIN LODGE	PEACEFUL BAY	🏠	(08) 9840 8650	nutkinlodge.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
KARRI VALLEY RESORT	PEMBERTON	🏠	(08) 9776 2020	karrivalleyresort.com.au	10% Discount on accommodation (excluding peak periods)
PEMBERTON CAMP SCHOOL	PEMBERTON	🏠	(08) 9776 1277	pembertoncampschool.com.au	
PEMBERTON CARAVAN PARK	PEMBERTON	🏠	(08) 9776 1800	pembertonpark.com.au	10% discount to members
PEMBERTON DISCOVERY TOURS	PEMBERTON	🚗	(08) 9776 0484	pembertondiscoverytours.com.au	
PEMBERTON OLD PICTURE THEATRE APARTMENTS	PEMBERTON	🏠	(08) 9776 1513	oldpicturetheatre.com.au	
SILKWOOD WINES	PEMBERTON	🍴	(08) 9776 1584	silkwoodwines.com.au	
PUMP HILL FARM	PEMBERTON	🏠	(08) 9776 1379	pumphill.com.au	10% discount on accommodation in non-peak periods
ADVENTUROUS WOMEN	PERTH	👥	1300 388 419	adventurouswomen.com.au	
DISCOVERY PARKS - PERTH AIRPORT	PERTH	🏠	1800 626 677	discoveryholidayparks.com.au	10% discount plus free Discovery Park membership
INSPIRATION OUTDOORS	PERTH	👥	(08) 6219 5164	inspirationoutdoors.com.au	
CHE SARA SARA CHALETs	WALPOLE	🏠	(08) 9840 8004	chesarasara chalets.com.au	
COALMINE BEACH HOLIDAY PARK	WALPOLE	🏠	(08) 9840 1026	coalminebeach.com.au	10% discount on accommodation
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WALPOLE LODGE	WALPOLE	🏠	(08) 9840 1244	walpolelodge.com.au	
ALBANY VISITOR CENTRE	VISITOR CENTRE	📍	(08) 9841 9290	amazingalbany.com.au	
COLLIE VISITOR CENTRE	VISITOR CENTRE	📍	(08) 9734 2051	collierivervalley.org.au	10% on souvenirs
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PERTH HILLS VISITOR CENTRE	VISITOR CENTRE	📍	(08) 9257 9998	experienceperthhills.com.au	
SOUTHERN FORESTS WA	VISITOR INFO	📍	(08) 9771 7777	southernforests.com.au	



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Office GOSSIP

It has certainly been a busy few months with many walkers taking advantage of the cool weather to set out on an extended walk or an end-to-end. We always enjoy meeting walkers when they come in, especially those who have come from interstate or overseas. Recently we held our AGM, a member's night and Linda and Ce have been busy analysing the results of the member survey and preparing for the vision workshop.

Nadine has joined us for six months on an internship as part of her degree in Tourism Management at Jade University in Germany. In her third year of study, she is working with Ashley and Linda on all activities relating to tourism and her time with us will equip her with the practical skills necessary to complete her degree. Nadine is in Australia with her husband and is enjoying being a tourist while studying.

International Volunteer Manager Day in November recognized the work done by those in management positions. I attended a function hosted by Volunteering WA where we shared experiences and ideas on volunteer management as well as enjoying morning tea.

As is always the case in November we prepare for our annual Volunteer Thank You days when we recognize the marvellous contribution by our volunteers. Look out for the photos in the next edition of Bibbulmun News.

The office will become quieter now as the weather warms up and walkers tend to swap boots for bathers.

We will close the office as usual so that the team can enjoy a well-earned rest. The



last day will be Friday 15 December and we will reopen on Monday 22 January.

We wish you all a very happy festive season

Gwen Plunkett

Office Manager & Volunteer Coordinator



BF Bibbulmun

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The Pemberton Bunkhouse is centrally located and accommodates a private group of up to 12; with outdoor minigolf & BBQ.

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0427 133335

www.WAWilderness.com.au

*Pemberton Discovery Tours - Bibbulmun Track Transport Providers

NOMINEES FOR 2017 OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS



Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions



Two Foundation volunteers were nominated for Outstanding Service Awards. Awards will be presented by the Departments of Parks and Wildlife at a function in December



CE KEALLEY

Ce has been a volunteer with the Bibbulmun Track Foundation for over 17 years, initially as a Maintenance Volunteer and subsequently as a Volunteer Guide. In addition to her guiding role Ce recently joined the BTF staff as Office Administrator. To further assist the Foundation with events, Ce upgraded her licence to drive the BTF bus, thus increasing the number of drivers available and expanding the types of events she is able to assist with.

To date, Ce has contributed over 1,350 hours in volunteer time, 900 of these in the past year.



GEOFF MEATES

Geoff has been a Maintenance Volunteer for over two years, during which he has contributed more than 1,280 hours to the Foundation. He is currently visiting each of the 151 sections of the 1,000 kilometre Track, with the primary purpose of logging, in precise detail, the markers and signage along the Track, to determine how well they comply with the draft Long Trail Signage Guidelines. Geoff has also worked on projects associated with repair work, including bridge building, steps and trail construction and trail marking, and is responsible for the maintenance of two sections of Track in the Frankland district.

MEMBERS' NIGHT WALKING THE RABBIT PROOF FENCE

On 2 November, over 100 members, sponsors and friends were held in awe by Sarah Hyde who recounted her 1400 kilometre journey from Mogumber Mission (formerly known as Moore River Native Settlement), just north of Perth, to Jigalong in the Pilbara, in the footsteps of Molly (14), Gracie (11) and Daisy (8) whose stories were told in Doris Pilkington's book, *Follow The Rabbit Proof Fence*.

The three young indigenous girls escaped from Moore River Native Settlement in 1931, following the fence across the state to return to their families in Jigalong, from whom they'd been forcibly removed as part of the Aborigines Act of 1905, Western Australia.

Sarah walked the route the girls took to get home including crossing the Little Sandy Desert from South to North. The girls walked 1600km as they backtracked and walked in circles to cleverly evade trackers and police.

The walk was undertaken with the blessing and support of Molly and Daisy's descendants, the Pilkington family.

Our thanks to Sarah for sharing her experience and wonderful photographs with us.

Our next Tales from Other Trails event will be in April and we look forward to seeing you there.



VOLUNTEER PROFILE - JIM FREEMAN

20 years of showing the way.

2017 marks a special time for Jim Freeman. In his 20th year of being with the Foundation, Jim has decided to retire from being a Volunteer Guide. I first met Jim, he often reminds me, at a wilderness first aid course in Dwellingup. He remembers me very well because in one of the scenario role plays, I was his patient with a sprained ankle. He administered first aid happily, but with a devilish look in his eye. He competently strapped my ankle with an abundant use of adhesive tape a fair way up my leg, all the while grinning. I could almost hear him musing to himself how much it was going to hurt getting that tape off considering my very hairy legs. He still laughs about it.

From that point on we became very good friends and Jim became a very reliable guide. He has assisted me in the planning of many walks, but especially with the Team Challenge and the 8-day Highlights Tour. Those of you who have been on an extended walk with him or the 8-day Highlights Tour will remember his bush poetry and his very dry sense of humour.

For me as the BTF Events Manager, having someone who knew the Track to the same extent as me was invaluable when it came to planning walks. I would say something like, "you know where you come around the bend and there's that great big stump on the right with the rotten fence post?" and he would know exactly where I meant without hesitation.

During the years that the Team Challenge was in operation, one team per year was awarded the *Jim Freeman - Spirit of the Bibbulmun Award*. This was not an award that we initiated or even thought of, but rather was instigated by one of the teams that participated in the inaugural challenge. They even made the trophy - a mounted kangaroo pelvic bone! Jim has had the honour of awarding this trophy each year. Jim was also instrumental in fabricating the props for many of the initiative games used in the Team Challenge. I would tell him what I wanted, give him approximate dimensions and within a week he would have it made up. The suspended maze puzzle used under the Mt Wells tower is an example.

We marked his final 8-day Highlights Tour in September with a farewell celebration in Dwellingup with a cake shared with tour participants.

There are many good memories I have of Jim out on the Track, and although he will still be out there and will still volunteer, we will miss him leading our walks.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank his wife Mavis for her understanding and patience for all the times I called on Jim to leave home and go bush. Her biscuits are fab too!

Jim remains an Office Volunteer and a Maintenance Volunteer. He is also a Life Member.

Thanks Jim for your time, effort, passion and the great times!

Steve Sertis

Events Manager & Lead Guide



Prize WINNERS!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS OF OUR MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP PRIZE DRAW

July

Regina Bauer won a Sea to Summit iPod! Pocket Trowel

Judith Wilkinson won a Travel Cutlery Set and a Waterproof iPod cover

August

Serene Sharma won a copy of the book *The Fat Chick Goes AWOL* – donated by the author

Mal Cooper won a Travel Cutlery Set and clothes line

September

Ian Butcher & Beryl Francis won a Black Diamond LED Headlamp

Evelyn Patman won a Kitchen Bits Set

October

Sandy Dunn won a Pocket Shower

Rory Dreyer won a large X Plateaw

Unless otherwise stated all the prizes were donated by Sea to Summit and we thank them for their generous support.



If you haven't already purchased your NEW 2017 | 2018 Entertainment Membership this year, this is your chance to support us and be rewarded with over \$20,000 of valuable offers!

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Thank you for your support.

FREE Trip PLANNING ADVICE
GOING ON AN EXTENDED WALK OR END-TO-END?

Our free trip planning advice service is just one of the many benefits of being a member. Experienced walkers will help you to plan your journey. If you can't make it into the office, then this service is also available via email. This is particularly popular with our interstate and international visitors.

HAVE YOU CHANGED ADDRESS?

Help us save time and postage and update your details. Hop onto our website, log in and update your details under My Account. You can also upload a pic of yourself!

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Visit our Website Help page under Contact Us at www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Otherwise call us and we will update your profile for you.

WEEKLY EQUIPMENT HIRE PRICES

ITEMS	MEMBERS	NON-MEMBERS
Backpack	\$27.00	\$33.00
Sleeping Bag/Liner	\$20.00	\$25.00
Sleeping Mat	\$ 3.00	\$ 5.00
Stove	\$22.00	\$27.00
Tent	\$37.00	\$42.00
Dehydrator	\$35.00	N/A
PLB	\$35.00	\$45.00
PLB e-2-e 2 mths	\$170.00	\$200.00

All prices include GST and are for one to seven days
A bond is required prior to hiring equipment:
\$150.00 for basic equipment
\$300.00 for PLBs
\$230.00 for Dehydrators

Payment may be made by cash, cheque or credit card
For all enquiries contact the Foundation: Tel: 9481 0551
Email: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au or download the booking form on our website under Trip Planner / Equipment & Hire.

TRACK TOWN - NORTHCLIFFE

"ON THE EDGE OF THE WILDERNESS"

Most walkers who encounter Northcliffe from the north and continue south should take a deep breath before taking off on the stretch beside the Gardner River, through karri forest, coastal heathland and swamps—big swamps. The Bibbulmun Track maps note the latter as "subject to inundation", and you'd better believe it, especially in winter and spring.

Taking that deep breath gives walkers the opportunity to stock up with food at the Northcliffe General Store or at the Karri Country Good Food Co-operative. Both have the usual range of walkers' favourites—oatmeal, nuts, raisins, noodles etc. Fuel for stoves is available as well as sunscreen and insect repellent.

Take time out to drop in to the Visitor Centre, where the manager, Wendy, is a terrific naturalist and photographer. She and her staff can advise you where the orchids are flowering and identify the flowers you saw, the bird or frog you heard on your way in, and provide the latest information on the Track and weather conditions. Emails can be checked there and they will hold food parcels for walkers. A range of Back Country foods and fuel-stove canisters are available.

TransWA coaches run through Northcliffe on most days of the week and bookings can be made at the Visitor Centre. Cars may be left at the Visitor Centre enabling walkers to explore the area on foot. Bringing your vehicle to Northcliffe gives you a perfect opportunity to also explore Pt D'Entrecasteaux and Shannon National Park.

The Visitor Centre is also the access point to *Understory Art in Nature Sculpture Walk*,



an outstanding trail that winds for a 1.2 km through pristine native forest. Along the way are specially commissioned sculptures, hiding in the bush, or looming above in the trees.

To get a hands-on feel for its history, visit Northcliffe's Pioneer Museum. It's lovingly maintained and staffed daily by volunteers, who can tell some great yarns about the early settlers and show you how they lived. Open daily 10am - 3pm.

Accommodation is available in town at the hotel/motel and along the Track at the caravan park, a short distance from the town centre. Further away, but still close to the Track, are historic *Watermark Kilns* to the north and *Riverway Chalets* to the south. Both will provide free transport to and from town. This is also true of *Gilvonnies B & B* and *Canterbury Cottage*.

The Post Office sells everything from stamps to cement and perhaps most importantly, from a walker's point of view, it has EFTPOS. Meals are available at both the *Hollow Butt Café* and the *Northcliffe Hotel*.

Give Northcliffe some time. You'll be pleased you did.

Fact file:

Northcliffe Visitor Centre
Phone: (08) 9776 7203
Email: ncfvisitorcentre@westnet.com.au
Address: Muirillup Rd, Northcliffe
www.northcliffe.org.au

Open daily 9am to 4pm
Last entry to the sculpture walk is 3pm



Please support our Walker Friendly Businesses in Northcliffe

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www.karricountrygoodfood.com.au



Walker Story

THE CONVERSION OF A NON-WALKER!



I have met many characters in my time of working with the BTF, but Michael O'Connor comes to the top of my list for the sheer guts of those that I have tried to assist in walking our Track from end-to-end. Read his story and see why:

Why would a 68 year-old man with post polio syndrome who didn't like walking in the first place set out to walk the entire Bibbulmun Track? Friends said "well, he is Irish". However, as I have spent two-thirds of my life in Australia, I claim I was driven by my Australianess (if that is a word), only to be thwarted by a twisted ankle and, in non-medical terms, a badly busted right shoulder.

For years I ran marathons and half marathons to raise funds for a charity, Friends of the Rang'i, dedicated to raising the standard of living and education for children in Rang'i, Kenya, and I have always jogged, until the effects of my childhood brush with polio stopped me running.

What to do? How to continue raising money for those kids?

I was never a bush walker and I still don't think I am one, but I knew about the Bibbulmun Track as my late sister lived at William Bay. I was with her for her final weeks in October 2015, and I decided to walk the Track, with the goal of casting some of her ashes on the Track and raising funds for starting a library in Rang'i.

I visited the Bibbulmun Track office in Perth and became a BTF member for three years, as I thought it would take me some time to organise myself to do the walk. I went home and told my long suffering family and our Rotary Club in Narooma that I aimed to raise \$10,000.

I started out by walking around town, generally around 10km a day, with a backpack to see how my back stood up to the exercise—and it seemed to cope. My first problem was how to raise \$10,000—it seemed to present a bigger problem than the walk itself. I enjoy cooking and so I decided to put on a Christmas in July dinner for our Rotary Club, which raised over

\$1600. Once I realised funds were starting to come in I contacted the Bibbulmun Track office and sought advice, as I really had no idea what I had signed myself up for.

I got emails from volunteer Jim Baker, who gave me a lot of practical advice, and my wife and son Chris did a detailed risk assessment on the walk. A major problem was food, as I had recently been diagnosed as having a severe reaction to red meat and gelatin, which meant that my whole diet had to change.

On April 27th 2017 I began the walk from Albany. My backpack was very heavy largely due to the fact that I have to carry an assortment of first-aid equipment, and I was determined not to go short of food or water. Over the whole walk I was astounded to meet walkers who seemed to have only two-minute noodles to eat, no wet weather gear, no tent and no PLB!

First stop was only a short walk to Sandpatch where I had the shelter to myself. Next day it was on to Torbay, when I walked about an extra five kilometres through becoming geographically embarrassed (*Ed: the BTF euphemism for "lost"*).

I enjoyed the stunning scenery on the way to West Cape Howe, but apart from meeting an occasional day walker it appeared I was the only one walking the Track—remarkable how few people I met along the way. Rain then came in buckets, so I was glad to get to Denmark and enjoy a bed at the Blue Wren, plus a few beers at the pub. The camp-shop where I got some lighter gear knew of my late sister and generously donated to my walk, which gave me a lovely feeling.

By the time I reached William Bay I was getting used to walking on sand—no blisters, which I attributed to training by walking about three thousand kilometres over the last 12 months, at times with a heavy backpack.

I got to Northcliffe with a few hiccups, occasionally meeting an end-to-ender, which made me realise that I was not a real bushwalker either in physique (*Ed: they come in all shapes and sizes!*) or through

wanting to wax lyrically about the Track. I was, however, beginning to enjoy the experience and what was amazing to me was that the Track is, in part, maintained by volunteers. It was also interesting in places like Walpole or Northcliffe that the locals seem to have great pride in the Bibbulmun Track, but have little knowledge or experience of it.

I had a wonderful experience of meeting up with the Gourmet Club at Lake Maringup Campsite, a group of six young males from Perth who walk a few days each year on the Track, taking with them wonderful food and booze. My enforced diet meant I couldn't accept their roast lamb, but they were extremely generous in that the winner of their poker game gave me \$80 toward my fund raising—a typical Aussie response.

And then...talk about the luck of the Irish. The zipper on my sleeping bag broke. A few days later I lost one of the lenses of my spectacles, which popped out of the case as I was walking. Even my watch stopped never to go again.

Then, after leaving Northcliffe, I slipped on a mossy rock, twisted my ankle and cut my finger. Fortunately I had the right first aid gear so after bandaging my foot and finger (never knew so much blood could pour from a finger) I reached Schafer Campsite. Next morning the ankle did not seem too swollen and I rebandaged it. Then I felt every step to the Warren Campsite!

From Warren the rain came in buckets again, I missed a turning and ended up doing a U-turn. I realised my error but I was left to decide either to turn back to Warren or press on. I decided to be sensible and get back to Warren. That meant I had walked 25km to get back to my start point, and my ankle was now giving me hell.

After a night in some discomfort I set out and reached Pemberton where I took two full days of rest, icing the ankle and having a few beers. (*Ed: I think this is where I might have caught the bus!*)

I then set out from Pemberton to Beedelup. The ankle started to get sore after about

10km and even with some pain killers I was in a fair bit of discomfort. Day 28 I was on my way to Beavis Campsite. It was wet and slippery on the Track, my ankle gave way again and I fell heavily on my right shoulder. When I think about it, it must have looked comical. I was on my back screaming and cursing, my right arm and shoulder were numb and I struggled to get out of my back pack as I could not get up.

At this point I thought I should get off the Track but as I had no mobile signal and I did not want to use the emergency beacon unless I had no other option, I kept going.

On day 30 I finally got a limited phone signal and rang my wife to say I needed to get off the track at Donnelly River Village,

and Donna arranged for friends from Perth to come to the rescue. I had passed halfway and walked about 125km with a twisted ankle and 50km of that with a busted shoulder...

...and now:—

As I write this in September, my shoulder is very sore, I still have to sleep sitting up and I am going to rehab. **The great news is that I raised \$12,000**, (shared between Rotary's End Polio project and Friends of Rang'i). I am frequently asked whether I will go back and finish the walk. I doubt it as I am truly not a walker, but I do plan to walk some more of the Track sometime in the future with my wife, as we both love visiting WA and our friends over there.

Finally, let me say the BTF and its volunteers are a superb resource for anyone trying to walk this great Track. If I had not had their advice and support I doubt if I would have had such an enjoyable walk before my mishaps. The lesson was clearly learnt that you need to have a good and substantial first aid kit, plan what to do if something goes wrong, have an emergency beacon and take enough food and water. No matter how much training you do, without proper food and gear you are taking a risk. That is not fair to yourself, loved ones or those who may be called upon to get you to safety if all goes astray.

Michael O'Connor
New South Wales

INTRODUCING THE SOUTHWEST NATURE GUIDE APP

Before your next trip to the Southern Forests, download this new App and you'll have a handy reference guide in your phone.

The *Southwest Nature Guide* allows visitors to scan tags located near trees, plants and other features. The app then displays rich information about the species, including the name, a photo and a range of interesting facts.

There are currently ten short trails tagged in the Southern Forest region on or close to the Bibbulmun Track. These trails include:

- The Tree Top and Ancient Empire Walks – 17km east of Walpole in the Valley of the Giants
- The Diamond Tree - just south of Manjimup
- The Gloucester Tree – near Pemberton
- The Giant Tingle Tree - 5km east of Walpole
- William Bay National Park – 10km west of Denmark
- Horse Yard Hill - behind the Walpole Visitor Centre

- The Dave Evans Bicentennial tree – In Beedelup National Park near Pemberton
- King Jarrah – just outside the town of Manjimup
- Coalmine Beach Caravan Park - Walpole
- Shelly Beach trail - Nornalup Inlet near Walpole

The app currently has more than 150 individual entries on plants and animals of the South West. You can also browse these entries like a book. Over time, the number of entries will grow along with the number of tagged trails.

The app is currently available for both Apple iOS and Android. Search on *natureguide* and look for the blue banksia logo. Once downloaded it works independently of mobile coverage. There is a small fee to offset development costs.

You can learn more about the app and stay updated with developments at facebook.com/southwestnatureguide



Notice board

FOR SALE: WATERPROOF JACKET

MD men's large size long Melaleuca rain/snow Jacket. Used in the UK and Himalayas, still in good condition - \$65.00

Contact: Jim Baker
0427 402 767
E: jim_baker@bigpond.com

FOR SALE: BIBBULMUN BACKPACK 75L

Bibbulmun pack, 75L. As new, used only once. Given as a gift and not needed. Features well padded "Bar harness", top and bottom entry, approx 6 yrs old. It has been sitting in the wardrobe waiting to be used - \$100.

Contact: Steve
(08) 9481 0551
E: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

FOR SALE: VERY WARM SLEEPING BAG

Weight: 1.8kg; Temp: -10 deg C; Fill: Duck Down 90/10; Size (cm): 190 (+25 hood) x 80 x 55; Colours: Red/Black - \$250

Contact: Tor
0419 696 486
E: toroclarke@yahoo.com.au

FOR SALE: CAMELBAK MULE 3L

3L of hydration and 9L of storage; great for day walks or bike riding; very good condition - \$70

Contact: Tor
0419 696 486
E: toroclarke@yahoo.com.au

FOR SALE: SELF INFLATING MAT

Exped SIM LITE 3.8 M; 580g; R-value 3.2; 183cm x 50cm x 3.8cm - \$100

Contact: Tor
0419 696 486
E: toroclarke@yahoo.com.au

FOR SALE: WALKING TROUSERS... LADIES

1 Black and 1 Beige. Zipper detachable leg. \$50.00 each

Contact: Gwen
0438 802 588
E: g.mcn@bigpond.com

FOR SALE: MACPAC ESCAPADE SLEEPING BAG

Escapade woman's 500 ldown sleeping bag. 600 loft duck in a microlight shell, comfort rating of 7°C; tested lower limit of 2°C. Semi rectangular shape; side and foot zippers, LH zip. RRP \$450. Sell \$200. The above items were kindly donated to the Foundation to sell.

Contact: Bibbulmun Track Foundation Office
(08) 9481 0551
E: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

FOR SALE: SEA TO SUMMIT SPECIALIST SOLO TENT & SLEEPING MAT

Both only 2 months old. Tent weight: 625g. Can be pitched with a pair of trekking poles \$350 with the ground sheet. Sea to Summit Ultralight Sleeping Mat. Regular, non-Insulated. Weight: 395g. As new \$80 with stuff sack and repair kit. Tent and Mat combined \$400!

Contact: Josh
0439 867 656
E: joshua.iles@gmail.com

LOST: GOLD NECKLACE

Lost on Track about 8km north of Donnelly River - gold necklace with Arabic writing.

Contact: Rae
0407 194 306
E: raeyorg@westnet.com.au

LOST: SPOT

SPOT unit somewhere between Collie and Mumballup Tavern on Friday 29 Sept. Reward if found and returned.

Contact: Michael
(08) 8337 6621
E: mhround@yahoo.com.au

FOUND: SOLAR CHARGER & WINDOW SCREEN

Found on the Track approximately 4 kilometres north of River Road on long weekend.

Contact: Michael
0412 461 433

FOUND: SOFTSHELL JACKET

Mistakenly taken from Monadnocks shelter on Thursday 10/8/2017. Please describe and I'll be happy to get it to you asap.

Contact: Magdaleen van Blerk
0424 228 467
E: magdaleen.vanblerk@gmail.com

FOUND: POCKET KNIFE / TOOL

Found between Swamp Oak and Murray campsites. Has some surface rust due to exposure to the elements.

Contact: Mike
E: mikeyhmail@hotmail.com

FOUND: GLASS CASE WITH KEYS INSIDE

Found at Dookanelly campsite - glasses case with keys inside.

Contact: Ce
(08) 9481 0551
E: admin@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

WANTED: WALKING POLES

I would like to purchase two good quality, lightweight trekking poles in good condition.

Contact: Michael
0427 850 883

Want to advertise on our notice board?

Free for members - just log into your profile on the Bibbulmun Track website. Click the Notice Board & Classified tab under the News tab.

Non-members, please phone or email us to arrange your adverts. Cost is \$5 for 3 months.

All items will be deleted (from the website) after three months if not renewed.

Phone (08) 9481 0551 or email friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au

WILDERNESS FIRST AID TIPS



This is the first of a mini series of articles designed to tackle first aid questions and problems that might crop up on the Bibbulmun Track. Of course, mostly things don't go wrong, and we don't want them to, but it's best to be prepared. Which is exactly where we will start: with the 6 Ps.

Tip 1: Remember the 6 Ps

In over 30 years of outdoor activities in many parts of the world I've had relatively few experiences where I've had to put on my medical hat—and almost all of them have been in another group I've come across, rather than my own. Perhaps some of it was luck, but mostly it was adhering to the 6 Ps: prior preparation and planning prevents poor performance.

In our modern age of instant knowledge, we have perhaps forgotten some skills take time to learn—reading a map in the rain, interpreting weather patterns and packing the correct gear aren't things that can be perfected by watching one YouTube tutorial.

For sure, the Bibbulmun Track isn't Everest but you will avoid problems by planning properly. Think of your outdoor activities as an apprenticeship; start out simply and build up, where possible find experienced people who you can learn from. Even if you do have all the skills, get local knowledge. The Bibbulmun Track Foundation website is the obvious place to start, and attending the workshops held by the BTF is another.

Here is the framework I use - it can be used for everything from a road trip to Karijini to skiing across Greenland. Admittedly some of the headings can be left blank as you plan your Bibbulmun Track walk, but you'll want to have something pencilled in under most of them.

Logistics: routes, regulations, transport, food and fuel, equipment, training needs, and budget.

Health and Medical: risk assessment, pre-travel screening, medical kits, team selection, vaccinations / anti-malarials and hygiene.

If the mention of risk assessment made you flinch - have a quick flick through Dom Hall's *Risk Management for Adventure* and discover why dynamic risk assessment should become part of your outdoor activities. www.theadventuremedic.com/features/risk-management-adventure/

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SEATO-SUMMIT

3-Day Wilderness First Aid Course

A well-rounded introduction to Wilderness First Aid for bushwalkers, climbers, paddlers and those who find themselves out and about.

The Bibbulmun Track Foundation is hosting a 3-day Wilderness First Aid course through Wilderness First Aid Consultants. This 3-day course is a well-rounded introduction to Wilderness First Aid for bushwalkers, climbers, paddlers and those who find themselves out and about. Booking online.

Date: Saturday 3rd March 2018 at 8:00am

Where: Near Mundaring

Rating: Intermediate - Experienced

Cost: Members \$205; Non-Members \$230



TOWN TO TOWN GUIDED TOURS

Treat yourself in 2018 and complete a whole section of the Bibbulmun Track, without carrying a heavy pack or camping out!

All tours include accommodation, meals and transport and are run and guided by our local partner Inspiration Outdoors. Whether it's your first Bibbulmun Track section or one of many that you've done, you're sure to enjoy the fresh air, exercise, great accommodation, delicious meals and the rejuvenating time away from home.



Albany to Denmark
March 20-26, 2018
October 3-9, 2018
October 19-25, 2018
Days: 7 day tour, 5 days walking.
Accommodation: The Cove in Denmark.
Cost: \$1,900pp twin share.

This stretch of the Bibbulmun Track follows the magnificent southern coastline from Albany to Denmark. The rugged coastal scenery on this section of the Bibbulmun Track is some of the best in Western Australia!

You'll have time to explore the fascinating town of Denmark as well as enjoying the serenity of the forest chalets. This relaxing escape offers the perfect blend of activity and rest.

Pemberton to Northcliffe
April 7-10, 2018
Days: 4 day tour, 4 days walking.
Accommodation: Warren River Cottages, Pemberton.
Cost: \$1,150pp twin share.

Escape to the forest! We will take you on a magical four day walk from Pemberton to Northcliffe. Each day you will walk between 11 and 19 km, taking in the rivers, forests and farms that typify the area. Let the cool and quiet forest work its magic on you. Turn your face up to the mighty karri trees, close your eyes and you may hear the chanting of long ago as you breathe the deep earthy smells of the forest.

Walpole to Denmark
March 8-14, 2018
October 10-16, 2018
October 26 - November 3, 2018
Days: 9 day tour, 7.5 days walking.
Accommodation: The Cove, Denmark.
Cost: \$2,550pp twin share.

This section holds its own as the most scenic and varied section of the Bibbulmun Track. It takes in majestic forests, deserted beaches, magnificent bays and spectacular cliffs. You'll visit the Valley of the Giants near Walpole and see the beautiful rock formations and tranquil waters of Greens Pool and Elephant Rocks near Denmark with much in between.

It is a challenging walk, with hills and beaches to conquer, but the beauty and variety of the walk will make it all worthwhile.



Northcliffe to Walpole
April 13-21, 2018
November 12-20, 2018
Days: 9 day tour, 8.5 days walking.
Accommodation: Northcliffe Hotel, Northcliffe, and Bayside Villas, Walpole.
Cost: \$2,375pp twin share.

This section of the Bibbulmun Track offers some of the most diverse walking experiences in Australia with towering karri forest, pristine rivers, grasslands, wetlands, beaches and dramatic coastal cliffs. Visit one of the most inaccessible parts of the South West of Western Australia without compromising on comfort.



Collie to Balingup
September 9-13, 2018
Days: 5 day tour, 4.5 days walking.
Accommodation: Balingup Hill View Retreat.
Cost: \$1,340pp twin share.

Only a few hours drive from Perth, the Bibbulmun Track between Collie and Balingup offers some excellent walking and passes through one of the best stands of virgin jarrah forest in the south west. Lose yourself amongst the wildflowers and the sounds of the bush on this five day break, during which you will complete 84 km of the world-class Bibbulmun Track.

These tours are offered in partnership with Inspiration Outdoors



Dandy Dwellingup Dames

A fabulous ladies only weekend of walking and relaxation in the forests around Dwellingup!

This ladies-only weekend is a great way to get away from it all.

We meet in Dwellingup Friday afternoon at our accommodation set by the banks of the Murray River. After breakfast on Saturday we spend the day walking on

the Track (7km) and then come back to a wonderful neck and shoulder massage. In the afternoon we relax at our accommodation and in the evening enjoy a delicious meal. The next day we walk a different section of the Track (9km).

Date: Fri 25 - Sunday 27 May 2018
Where: Dwellingup
Rating: Beginners
Cost: Members \$395; Non-Members \$415



Bibbulmun and Beyond 9 day Tour

Book your seat today! 30 April to 8 May 2018

Join our lead guide, Steve Sertis to experience the best of the Bibbulmun Track and the majesty of the Stirling Ranges. Carefully selected full and half-day walks will take you past giant boulders and through jarrah forests in the northern section; through the magnificent karri and tingle forest and on to the spectacular ocean views and coastal heathlands of the Great Southern region.

Cost: \$2,830 twin share. Includes accommodation, meals, transfers, experienced guides and more!

Visit the **website** or contact the **Bibbulmun Track Foundation** for a dossier.

"The whole experience was seamless with professional, enthusiastic, friendly and well organised guides."

P: 9481 0551 E: friends@bibbulmuntrack.org.au W: www.bibbulmuntrack.org.au

Social Sunday walks

Free for members. See booking conditions online.

WALK RATINGS: 🦋 BEGINNERS 🦋🦋 INTERMEDIATE 🦋🦋🦋 EXPERIENCED

25 March 3.30pm 🦋
6km return sunset walk from Camel Farm to Hewett's Hill
22 April 9.00am 🦋🦋
14km return walk from Albany Hwy to Boonering Hill
29 April 9.30am 🦋
13km return from River Rd to the Murray River via Swamp Oak Campsite return (Dwellingup sth)
6 May 9am 🦋
10km return walk Lowlands Beach to West Cape Howe Campsite (near Albany)

13 May 8.30am 🦋🦋🦋
19km return walk from Dale Road to Beraking Campsite. (Fit and experienced walkers only!)
20 May 9.00am 🦋🦋
12km return walk from Kinsella Rd to Canning Campsite
27 May 8.30am 🦋🦋🦋
20.4km return walk from Kalamunda to Hewett's Hill Campsite. (Fit and experienced walkers only!)

Bookings For each walk will open one month prior to each walk.

Book online, or contact the BTF office for a booking form. Bookings cannot be made over the phone.



Track Trivia

Hello Fellow Walkers!

That's a bit of a misleading title in fact, as owing to a foot injury I've not done any serious walking since returning from the UK and the trek along the Ridgeway. It appears I'm suffering from a pain in my left heel caused by *fat pad atrophy*, which sounds vaguely distasteful. It's improving slowly, so hopefully I can get out on the Track before it gets too hot—if it ever gets hot! I'm writing this on October 7th at three o'clock in the afternoon. The temperature outside is 15°C after an overnight low of 7°C, and it's raining. Lovely trekking weather!

This picture was taken in the Perth Hills on the recent *Teen Trek* event on the Track:



The situation was made even more difficult by the fact a total fire ban was in place.

Which brings me, for some reason, to my *Well Travelled Waugal* series. Those few misguided folk who actually read *Track Trivia* may recall that some time back Barry and Margaret Bryan (*The Silvertops, many times End-to-Enders of the Track*) claimed to have placed the most northerly Waugal at Ashby-de la-Zouche in the UK—latitude 57.75 degrees north. (*Issue 62*)

This was swiftly challenged by Michael and Veronica Schulze, End-to-Enders from Germany, who took a Waugal marker to Watson Lake in the Yukon, Canada, where it was proudly displayed in Signpost Forest, at latitude 60.06 degrees north. (*Issue 67*).

Not to be outdone, stalwart BTF member and End-to-Enders Melanie Kilpatrick, on a trip to the North Pole, sent us a picture of a Waugal marker together with a GPS read-out, at 80.36 degrees north. (*Issue 69*)

We may not get much further north, so I've turned south. Volunteer Elsie Grygiel plans to visit Antarctica soon, with a Waugal marker—anyone else going that way? I'll give you a free plastic Waugal marker to photograph.

Upwards? Mike Wood, chair of BTF, is taking a party on the high pass trek in Nepal next year—how about a highest Waugal picture on the top of Kala Patar? Maybe someone could get a Waugal to the summit of Everest?

Our trip planning advice service is still going strong with a steady stream of face to face sessions in the office and a lot of e-mails being exchanged with walkers in other States and in various parts of the world.

It's good to see that a lot of people come to WA for the sole purpose of walking the Bibbulmun Track, bringing in tourist revenue and spreading the word about the attractions of our State on their return. I still receive my fair share of odd queries ranging from the old chestnut "will the compass I have in England still point north in Australia?" to a more recent, and in my view very pertinent question, "where will I find the coldest beer in Albany?" It's good to see people have their priorities in the correct order.

Possible the silliest question I have been asked this year didn't relate to the Bibbulmun Track, but to trekking in the Himalayas. This was from a young lady who was planning a trek to Everest Base Camp:

"What is the likelihood of me ending up in bed with a huntsman in Nepal?"

My mind boggled until I discovered she suffered from severe arachnophobia...I'll leave you to work out the rest!

Happy Walking!

WWJ

Rock Cairns

What are rock cairns? From middle Gaelic, the word *cairn* means *mound of stones built as a memorial or landmark*. Generally rock cairns are a way of marking the **right way** to go on trails in some locations where other types of markers are not possible or markers are too far apart. Not only on the Bibbulmun Track but along many WA trails, we notice an increasing number of rock cairns in places they shouldn't be, and often it appears that people are adding their own rock to make a statement.

Rock cairns should only be made by park rangers, maintenance volunteers, or trail creators. Unless you are one of these people you should avoid building rock cairns for fun in places where they could be confused as trail markers. Doing so could lead an unsuspecting hiker into trouble, away from the trail and into potentially dangerous places.

Leave No Trace means leave no sign that you travelled through the area, making **zero impact**. This includes not moving rocks—when you move rocks to create decorative cairns you are altering nature for the next visitor and leaving a reminder that you were there.

It also disrupts the natural state of the ecosystem. Individual rocks provide shelter and protection for lizards, insects and other small creatures. Minimising human impact on the natural environment helps to maintain biodiversity. Fight the urge to stack rocks, or add to a cairn, just to make your mark and please help spread this message to others.



Cairns are for navigation – please don't create your own or add to them.

Reflections FROM THE REGISTERS

Mount Cooke

Started from Sullivan Rock; Ray, Sue, son Jared and his mate Jono, both 15. Thought it was about time they were dragged away from their computer games and re-introduced to the real world. Warmish walk, it was good to see the trees regenerating after the fire. Neat new shelter as well. Intend to see the sunset from the top of Mount Cooke then get back by torchlight for a well-earned nights rest.

The Kerrs 15/01/2005

Day six upon the Bibbulmun Track
The day was truly beauty packed
Cuthbert and Vincent scaled today
Breathtaking scenery all the way

The wildflowers were a sight to see
With such diverse variety

If I were a botanist

I'd give complete list

But I'm not so I'll stay mute

Except to say they were all so cute.

J S Bark 20/09/2006

New shelter fantastic, regrowth amazing, wildflowers spectacular, birdsong beautiful—what more could I ask for except maybe a glass of ice-cold champagne and a strawberry or two? Beaut walk over the two hills, nowhere near as hard as we expected; the only sad part of today was walking through the Dieback area. Happy walking to all.

Debbie, Sally and Sarah 02/10/2006

Schafer

Finally got here after leaving from Warren this morning. Today was OK, yesterday was a killer. Imagine this—took a bus from Perth to Pemberton, then for some reason (we blame quantum physics) we started walking north instead of south. Three and a half hours (15km) later we realised our error, set up our tents in the dark, slept well and walked 31km to Warren yesterday. What did we learn? **Pay attention to your compass!**

Northcliffe tomorrow.

Tim, David, Shaun, Justin and Ivor 17/11/2003

(I love entries like this! Wrong Way Jim)

Wow! What a place to stay. This is by far the most beautiful shelter on the Track. Well done to all for placing the Schafer Campsite in such a superb location.

Ric Troode 18/01/2004

Torbay

We had lots of fun hiking with Mum. We slept in our sleeping bags. Me and Phoebe took our favouret toys I took my cat and Phoebe took her Piglet. We likted to look at the ocen we also likted to spot ants nest we slept in this hut it was worm in our sleeping bags. We got all muddy beacous it has rained for ouwes. My fevret part was looking at the map.

Anon 10/04/2016

Another great day and another great walk on the Bibbulmun Track. Started at Mutton Bird at 9am; lots of sun while we were on the beach and we were lucky enough to see half-a-dozen dolphins! Onwards now to our transport at Shelley Beach.

Christopher and Kerri 06/05/2016

Here at Torbay, day two, hard going, beach cut up and soft, inlet crossing was waist deep and it poured with rain all day! Would I prefer to be in a warm office with four walls around me—no chance!

Clint 26/10/2002

Here I am gorgeous day, gorgeous scenery and with a gorgeous girl—I'm a lucky, lucky man!

Merv 16/06/2003

I've reassessed my life. I'm going to live in the cave under the cliffs south of Dingo Beach.

Hal 07/09/2003

Leave a lasting legacy...

Include a gift for the Bibbulmun Track Foundation in your will and help ensure the Bibbulmun Track is maintained for generations to come.

TRAILING AROUND THE WORLD

THE SOUTH DOWNS WAY, ENGLAND

The South Downs Way in the south-east of England stretches 100 miles (160km) along the rolling hills separating Winchester and Eastbourne, and then joins the south coast for a final few miles high up on the famous white cliffs overlooking the English Channel. The Way is mainly ridge-top walking with soft grass underfoot, interspersed with leafy country lanes, farm tracks through patchworks of fields and pastures and quiet trails through ancient beech forests.



The first signpost!

Countryside like this is best enjoyed in fair weather and fortunately I was blessed with the kind of benign conditions that only the summer in the UK can offer; cool mornings, sunny afternoons and long warm evenings, still light at 10.00 o'clock at night.



Poppy Fields

I elected to walk the painless way, having my luggage sent ahead, carrying only a day-pack and staying each night in comfortable accommodation, invariably situated in

towns and villages in the valleys way below the ridge top, so most days ended with a steep descent, and then a stiff climb the following morning.

The trail begins at the west door of the beautiful Winchester cathedral. Winchester is steeped in history, traceable back to Celtic settlements in 450BC, and if you have time it is well worth spending a day exploring the town before setting out. I had allowed six days for the walk, starting each day with the compulsory English breakfast, walking for about eight hours and staying overnight in either a B&B or a pub. Judicious planning meant that a refreshment stop at a traditional inn was always available along the way!

The first stretch from Winchester to the village of East Meon passed through forest and farmland, traversing fields filled with white poppies, followed by a climb over Beacon Hill, the first introduction on the walk to the high ground of the Downs. Beacon Hill is one of many hills across the south of England where fires were lit to warn of the invasion by the Spanish Armada in 1588. The day ended at the very comfortable *Ye Olde George Inn*.



The George at East Meon



England Our England

Day two was a solid twenty mile hike to the village of Cocking, providing a contrast of tough hill climbing with strolling through beautiful beech forest, before the second half of the day's walk followed the top of the South Downs escarpment. There are spectacular views across the valley to the north and the ancient history of the area is demonstrated by the *Devil's Jumps*, a series of Bronze Age barrows laid out along the ridge.



The Devil's Jumps



Great Sight at the End of the Day



Mouth of the Cuckmere River

From Cocking to the town of Steyning was my day of walking alone on the trip, as friends John, Debby and Mike had joined me on the first two days and life-long mate Brian was meeting me in Steyning for the rest of the walk. There were tough climbs, mitigated by superb views across the valleys. The long descent into Amberley, the half-way point, led me to the *Bridge Inn*, a welcome spot for a lunchtime pint on a gloriously sunny day. Here I met a local who clearly thought me mad, until he discovered I was Australian.

"Where've you walked from, then?"

"Cocking."

"What, today?"

"Yep."

Long incredulous stare.

"Where're you goin'?"

"Steyning."

"What, today?"

"Yep."

Longer incredulous stare.

"Where're you from, then?"

"Australia."

"Oh, right."

Steyning itself is about one mile north of the path, down one of the very steep descents mentioned earlier, and the last half-hour of the walk was hard work on bitumen road.

What comes down must go up! A good night at the *Chequer Inn* was followed by a tough climb out of the town, but then a good level track followed the escarpment to Ditchling, a further thirteen miles of walking. On this stretch the track passes the Devil's Dyke, a dry valley said to have been carved out by Satan in order to allow the sea to flood all the churches in the valley below! Ditchling village is way down in the valley, and the track we followed to get there had clearly been designed by a mountain goat—by far the steepest yet! The village itself is very pretty and well worth the detour from the ridge above.

Two more days! From the village we rejoined the track just below Ditchling Beacon, a nature reserve and popular tourist spot. The walk up to the beacon was a long steep slog to start a nineteen mile day. Our destination was the beautiful village of Alfriston, on the River Cuckmere. The remainder of the walk was an easy stroll along the ridge, with good views to both north and south. Accommodation in the *Chestnuts B&B* was excellent and the meal in the *George Inn* was one of the highlights of the trip.



White Horse at Alfriston

THE SOUTH DOWNS WAY, ENGLAND CONT



Journey's End!

The final day dawned damp, but the weather cleared early. From Alfriston we followed the river valley, observing the white horse carved on Cradle Hill in the

1920s, until the river led us to the sea, where the Cuckmere becomes a mass of twists and bends. From here the track is a switch-back as it negotiates the *Seven Sisters*, along the top of the famous white chalk cliffs, until finally reaching Beachy Head, where the cliff plummets 162m to the beach below. From there the trail leads to the resort town of Eastbourne, where a plaque marks the end of the Way, and a couple of celebratory pints of the good amber liquid were enjoyed!

The South Downs Way is an enjoyable walk through open country and woodland with prolific wildflowers, and birdsong fills the

air. Wildlife abounds—amongst the animals seen were stoats, rabbits, hares, foxes and otters. The walk time can be tailored to any level of fitness. While not having the challenges of some other walks in the UK, there are enough steep hills to ask a few questions!

My thanks to Northwest Walks UK, who did an excellent job in organising my luggage and accommodation, and to the good friends who accompanied me.

Jim Baker

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