Australian
Two Day Walker
NEWSLETTER OF CANBERRA TWO DAY WALK INC.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Recently we had the St Nicholas Embassy Walk and we again enjoyed traditional Dutch treats at our stop across the road from the Netherlands Embassy. Before we know it, Christmas and the New Year will have passed and we will be counting the days down to the 21st Canberra International Walking Weekend. Our coming of age will be a cause for celebration when present a our new 21 year pins!

This year was a time for celebration in recognising our 20 years and the walkers and volunteers who have supported us over the years. Twenty-first birthday parties also tend to be a time for reflection, however, most 21 year olds are more interested in looking forward, than back. Our 21st is a fitting occasion for us to look to the future of the Canberra International Walking Weekend and our IVV walks. Our strengths are that we are a well established event with very satisfied walkers supported by a loyal band of volunteers. The international flavour and Canberra scenery are an added benefit. However, we also have some weaknesses: as a volunteer organisation, we are overly reliant on a few key people; we do not have a government or large organisation backing us; and we struggle with raising awareness of our event in Canberra as well as interstate. As a result, our walker numbers have remained relatively constant over the last five years. This is not a bad result - a number of IML walks are struggling with declining numbers - but our numbers are well below our potential. As a recent participant in the 7 Bridges Walk in Sydney, I was interested to note that over 10,000 walkers took part and 80% of those attempted the whole distance of 28km. If we could only tempt a thousand of those walkers to come to Canberra for our walk!

So the question is: where do we want to go with our event and how do we get there? Email your ideas, bring them to the AGM or post them on our new Facebook site. Also, think about joing our committee.

In the meantime, if you haven't already started training for the 2012 Canberra International Walking Weekend, now is the time. This is the perfect way to offset any over-indulgence during the festive season. There are training programs on our website if you are new to walking or want to tackle a longer distance. What better way to celebrate our 21st than to walk a kilometre for every year - or two for every year and walk a full marathon (42km). Something to think about when you come to making your new year resolutions!

Have a great Christmas and New Year and I hope to see you in 2012.

Lachlan Wilkinson

NEXT WALK - 31 MARCH & 1 APRIL 2012

Sydney Seven Bridges Walk

by Don Mountain

On Sunday 30th October 2011 Canberra Two-Day Walkers joined about 10,000 others in Sydney to take part in the sixth annual Seven Bridges Walk.

The walk, organised by the Cancer Council NSW, follows a route which includes seven of the iconic bridges around Sydney harbour. The bridges are Fig Tree, Pyrmont, ANZAC, Iron Cove, Gladesville, Tarban Creek and Sydney Harbour. Total distance for those who complete the course is 28 km (or 27 km if you skip the bushland sections).

Photos from top:
1. At the start (The Rocks Village) - AussieWalkers meet up from Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne AND Canada!
2. Sharon, Lachie, Judy & Diana in front of the Opera House
3. Elva & Sylvia on the Iron Cove Bridge

Walkers in this well-organised event can start at any one of seven walk "villages" set up around the course. Each village has food stalls, water-refilling points, toilets, first-aid and information booths together with live entertainment. At each village, and also after crossing each of the seven bridges, participants receive a stamp in their passport to indicate that they have completed that section. Those who do not wish to complete the full course can catch a free shuttle bus from regularly-spaced stops back to their starting point.

The day, despite the weather forecast, remained warm and sunny (although a little humid for many of us from Canberra). Our starting point was at The Rocks, and we set out just before 8 am clad in our distinctive yellow AussieWalk t-shirts. Although we had entered as a team, we walked at our own pace and not as one big group. Our shirts drew a number of favourable comments along the way. One walker told me that he thought the shirts were "awesome" (no extra points for guessing his age group!)

The course has a number of challenging hills, but large sections are easy. Great views are obtained, especially at the high-point of bridges like Gladesville and ANZAC. Not forgetting the Harbour Bridge of course... although this was at the end of the walk for us and we were probably a little less appreciative of the views at that stage, especially the steps up to and down from the walkway.

We certainly had a great day, tiring but very rewarding.

Editorial note: Given the universal enthusiasm of all participants, this walk is likely to remain on our calendar as an IVV event. Why not join us next time?

IVV Awards

Congratulations to the following walkers who have recently earned IVV awards:

10 Events:
Jean Babb
Hilary Harris
30 Events:
Gerry Weber
Lachlan Wilkinson
50 Events:
Don Mountain
Sylvia Mountain
75 Events:
David Horton
Diana Marshall
500 Kilometres:
Gerry Weber
1500 Kilometres:
David Horton
2000 Kilometres:
Diana Marshall
6000 Kilometres:
Harry Berg

Walker News

On the sick list: Two of our regular walkers from Albury-Wodonga - Mary Smithenbecker and Pam Thorman - have had bouts in hospital. We wish them both a speedy recovery and hope to see them at our 21st walk next year.

International Walking: Max Riley, despite his impaired vision, loves walking internationally, and catching up with walking friends around the world. Max is very grateful for the assistance he gets from the various walking organisations. This year, Max took part in quite a number of IML events, and particularly enjoyed the walk in Taiwan - see photo below:

Meet your committee...

Back row (L-R): Diana Vice-President (IVV, web, newsletter), Kelly Assistant Secretary, Anne (merchandise), David Treasurer, Kathleen Hon. Secretary (IML & much more!), Harry (records database & much more too!)
Front row (L-R): Franz (publicity, permissions), Lachie President
Absent: Albert (routes, marking)

Walking in the Rhine Valley, September 2011: Erzweg (13km) and Mythos Lorelei (12km)

by Kathleen Berg

As we would be attending the general meeting of the IML being in Spain, in October, Harry and I decided to combine the visit to Spain with participation in the German IML walk, a fortnight before the Spanish Walk.

We found ourselves with a couple of days to spare between our arrival in Germany and the Fulda walk, so looked for some IVV walks to do.

A couple of years ago, when visiting the town of St Goar on the banks of the Rhine, (close to the Lorelei) we had noticed some IVV direction signs in the town. A check on the German IVV site showed us that walks were still operating there, and we decided on the two we would do. Harry was able to download the walk descriptions from the web before we left home: they were in German, but there were no tricky words like "kraamerladen" which had caused us grief when doing the Drielander walk some years ago (a long story). However, for non-German speakers, there are translation programs such as babelfish that should turn the directions into English.

The Spritzenhaus!

We decided to do two walks in one day as training for Fulda, and we had also heard that the Spanish walk was quite challenging.

The train services in Germany are excellent, and about three hours after our plane landed in Frankfurt, we arrived at our hotel in St Goar (organised over the net before we left Australia.)

The next morning, after a good breakfast, we set off to the Tourist office to purchase the start cards for the two walks. It was a 3km walk down river on the riverbank footpath to the start of the "Erzweg" walk on a very misty morning, mists apparently quite common at this time of the year.

The walk starts in the hamlet of Fellen at the "Spritzenhaus" which I thought it would be a pub. However, it turned out to be a little self-help fire station. There was a sign with a map of the route, which we photographed and used when the description was not quite clear. The signs along the route depict miners' axes, so there must be something to do with mining in this area. We stamped our cards in the adjacent "Bundy clock" and then set off.

We were very quickly out of the village and into a lovely forest. We knew it was autumn from the click, click of falling leaves and acorns, though there was not yet a lot of colour in the leaves. After quite a climb, we reached the plateau about halfway up the valley wall. Here we reached a viewpoint, but the mist had not cleared yet - good in one way because it was not too hot, but a shame for the views. We walked for a distance through farmland before the walk took us back into the forest and then down hill, through the village, and back to the start where we stamped our cards.

We had passed no shops on the walk, but fortunately had brought some snacks for morning tea. The route was well marked, and with the description, we had no problems finding our way and also managed to find the two self-control points.

The mist had cleared and it was quite warm as we walked back to St Goar and some lunch.

After lunch we went to the stamping place for the start of the second walk, at the St Goar Rathaus and headed off on the Lorelei walk.

This time, as the start was in St Goar itself, we started climbing immediately. The climb was well graded, so it was not too difficult, but I did wonder just how much climbing we had done on the two walks.

We passed through Bieberheim village, where again there did not seem to be any shops - did I say last year that villages in Spain were isolated and poorly serviced?? We saw a cigarette vending machine but that was all. (Even St Goar had only one small minimart and a butcher for buying provisions though there were plenty of restaurants and a couple of tourist shops.)

Checking the optical illision...

In Bieberheim, there was an interesting optical illusion with a building looking as if it was half-timbered. However, when we got close, we could see it was a modern building with flat walls, though I had to touch it to be convinced.

After we left the village, we climbed further to a Telecom repeater station. By this time I had enough of climbing and we decided not to climb the 20m to the top of the tower, even if there was a fabulous view. There was a bit of scrambling across some rocks before we got onto a good path again.

The walk now passed some abandoned apple trees; the windfalls were delicious.

Yum!

Now we were on the return, downhill back towards the Rhine. We passed through the village of Urbar, and stopped briefly in a park with the Lorelei view. Several castles were in sight, all very picturesque. We were glad to be able to refill the water bottles though, before commencing the steep part of the descent back to the Rhine.

About two-thirds down, we lost the signs. We came to a T-intersection where we thought the path should go straight on. There was no sign and there were several fallen trees on the straight ahead path, so as we were running out of daylight, we decided to keep going down and join the riverside path. We did not manage to find the second self-control point, and found out later that it was on the overgrown section of the path.

Lorelei

We gratefully arrived back at St Goar, having walked at least 31 km and having done quite a lot of climbing. We had had a lovely day in pleasant, German green rural country side - some farms, vineyards and forest, clean air and no noise.

In the morning we returned to the tourist office to present our start cards and get our IVV cards stamped. We were able to get a photocopy of a contour map of part of the area where we walked, so it looks as if the climbs were of the order of 300m each. After that it was back to the hotel to collect our luggage and catch the train to Fulda for the Fulda Two Day March.

Fulda: Year Round Walk (11km), Friendship Walk (10km), Two Day Walk (2x21km), Total = 63 km

by Kathleen Berg

Fulda is an attractive town, about one hour by train north east of Frankfurt airport. It dates from Roman times, and has some lovely Baroque buildings and quite a number of churches. In the cold war days, it was close to the East German border. The control centre for the walk is about 3 km from the railway station, on the outskirts of the town, and in the old American barracks complex.

The skyline of Fulda - this image is used in their walk logo

Friday morning saw us set off for the year round walk. We purchased our start cards and collected the map, which was not very good quality and had no accompanying directions, and set off. I was glad that we had done the walk before, as I am not sure that we could have followed the map otherwise.

It was again quite a warm day for the time of the year, but pleasant for walking. There were a few small changes to the route since we had last walked it, and twice we lost the path and had to backtrack, but eventually we arrived at the finish.

From there, we walked on to the Control Centre Start to register for the Friendship walk in the afternoon and the Two Day Walk on Saturday and Sunday.

As we had done the Friendship walk twice before, I had thought that it would be the same city walk again and had not bothered with walking poles. Bad mistake! There was a new route which included a pleasant country stretch, but that meant gravel roads, and with my arthritic knee that was bad. Also, there must have been some mistakes in the marking, as we met several people doing the course backwards. Back at the start, we met up with a number of walking friends - always good fun.

Saturday saw us arrive at the start around 8, where we spoke to a few people, including Max Riley before we started. Max, as usual, had a few stories to tell - about his experiences at the Austrian and Czech walks, done in the preceding weekends.

As we had walked the marathon distance in previous years, the first part of the route was new to us. Lovely countryside, and we were interested to walk for a short distance on the German St Jacob's way, which joins up (several hundred kilometres away) with the Camino Frances that we walked last year on our way to Santiago.

Sunday was another beautiful, fine but warm day - it is more usual to have cold, wet weather at this time of the year. More new views as again the route was different from the last time we were here.

After we finished, we happily collected our awards, said goodbye to our friends and made our way back to the hotel to get ready to travel to Spain in the morning.

Picturesque views on the Fulda walk...

IML Walking Association News

Kathleen attended the IML General Meeting held in Barcelona in October. The main items to come out of the meeting:

* The Linnaeus Walk in Sweden, in the town of Boras has been admitted and will hold its first IML event on the last weekend of April 2012. For full details, see www.linnemarschen.com

* The Discovery Walk in Vancouver Washington has resigned from the IML Walking Association, but continues as an IVV event. As a result, until further only 6 Pan Pacific walks are required for the Global Walker award, in addition to 10 European awards.

* The Indonesian Walk in Jogjakarta was inspected in November, the weekend after Taiwan (no report at this stage).

* The Beijing walk has been accepted as a candidate event, and will be inspected in 2012.

* New IML awards will be introduced in 2012. Currently the system only caters for walkers who have completed 150 IML walks. There are now several European walkers who have passed this milestone. Details of the new awards can be found on the IML website at www.imlwalking.org.

Caminada de Barcelona (2x20km)

by Kathleen Berg

I had been looking forward to the Barcelona walk because some walkers rave about it, and there had been some controversy when it had been inspected. (Later I found out that it was Barcelona itself, and the shopping, rather than the walk that brought the walkers to Barcelona.)

After completing the Fulda walk we flew to Spain and travelled through Moorish Spain, for about 10 days, before going to Barcelona for the IML general meeting, followed by the Barcelona walk. We did quite a lot of walking while sightseeing, but there were no IVV walks in this area.

Saturday of the walk arrived, and unfortunately we could only get breakfast at the hotel from 7am. With the walk start time between 7 and 8, most people had started by the time we got to the Control Centre, near the Sants Railway Station, to enrol and collect our start cards. We climbed up to the Parliament building, on through the Botanic Gardens and then to an old fort for the first checkpoint, a climb of around 200m. After that, the route took us down again, past the Olympic Stadium and across town, via a steep valley, up to the Parc Guell. Interestingly, a local stopped to ask us what all the walkers were doing - we in Canberra aren't the only ones with a recognition problem. As we came up out of the valley, there was a bank of 5 flights of escalators, which are officially included in the route. This took a bit of the sting out of this 150m climb. I took the easy way out, but Harry did the whole climb unassisted. The Parc Guell, a show piece of a lot of Gaudi's work was the highlight of day 1, but sadly it was so jampacked with visitors so we did not enjoy it - hard to see anything.

Great views from the Parliament Building

Parc Guell

After that, it was just citybashing back to the Control Centre. The city was very busy, full of traffic and very noisy - not enjoyable at all. There was a lot of stopping and starting at intersections, which were very wide. Almost back, and the map did not agree with the signage- we decided should follow the signs - that added about 1km to a course that was eventually 23km long - and we only got 20 km IVV credit. However, we are happy that we got any credits - this was the first year that the event has been IVV sanctioned.

Escalators ease the climb!

Day 2 saw more citybashing, though it was a lot quieter, being Sunday. We went up to the hills behind the city. 400m of climbing this time, though except for the last bit to the TV tower, the grades were comfortable. Great views - right down to the airport in one direction. Down was a bit steeper, but generally still ok. One thing that did strike us was the beautiful bougainvillea flowering hedges in one area. There were also some very fine streetscapes, and parks, but not something that is easily photographed. We had a couple of stops and chatted to walking friends, and it took us just under 6 hours, about ¾ hour quicker than day 1.

We arrived at the finish and collected our awards. The certificates and medals were rather uninteresting, but we do have the satisfaction of adding the Spanish bar to our IML medals now.

We concluded the event with a very pleasant dinner with 10 other delegates from five of the "small walk" countries.

In summary, the route was generally well marked, and there were lots of officials, as human arrows and at the checkpoints. The walk is well supported by both the city and the province. However, I would not rank it as one of the most enjoyable IML walks that we have done, though it did show us some of the sights of Barcelona, which are many - it was just the city roads between that were a problem.

Barcelona does have two routes, with the starting point for the other route, in a different part of the city and the other route is supposedly not as tough as this one. Something for another year?

Are you on Facebook or Twitter?

AussieWalk now has a presence on both these sites and we want you to join in the conversation & help promote our event to your social network.

Please "Like" us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/AussieWalk) - we will share all of our up to date news on Facebook and this will give you an increased opportunity to interact with us.

On Twitter we have commenced a marathon walk training program - timed to have you ready for our marathon walk on 31st March. Why not "follow" us on Twitter (@AussieWalk) and follow along with the training program.

St Nicholas Embassy Walk

Saturday December 12 and time for the annual St Nicholas Embassy Walk. The Dutch connections of the club are a good enough excuse to have a walk celebrating the feast of St Nicholas. St Nicholas was born in Turkey, had associations with Spain and is very important in the Netherlands; hence the route taking us through the Embassy area of Canberra. We also pass the Embassies of the United States and Finland whose countries also have claims to Santa Claus (the anglicised version of Sintaklaas).

We always stop and enjoy St Nicholas treats (pepernoten, taaitaai, brokken) when we pass the Dutch embassy, but in deference to our age, Harry hands out the pepernoten instead of throwing them for everyone to scramble and pick up off the grass!

AussieWalkers always enjoy the treats on the St Nicholas Embassy Walk

IVV News

AussieWalk is now partnering with the Heart Foundation for our monthly IVV group walking program. This partnership has mutual benefits:

* Heart Foundation Walking will cover our public liability.
* Walks will continue to be listed on the CANwalk portal www.canwalk.org.au - which also lists numerous other Heart Foundation Walking groups in Canberra and Queanbeyan.
* Heart Foundation Walking has over 1,200 walking groups around Australia and 17,000 active members, so walkers outside the ACT can find a group to walk with - or start a group themselves. See www.heartfoundation.org.au/active-living/walking for more information.
* As a Heart Foundation Walking member, walkers earn recognition awards after walking 25, 50, 100, 200, 500 or 1,000 walks - and credit is earned for any Heart Foundation Walking event that you attend (not just walks done with the AussieWalk group). These awards are in addition to any IVV awards that our walkers earn.

The Heart Foundation will be our official charity for the 2012 Canberra International Walking Weekend. We hope that you support the organisation that is not only supporting us, but is also making a positive contribution to improving the cardiovascular health of all Australians.

There is no cost for attending a Heart Foundation Walking walk; however AussieWalk members will continue to make a $2 donation. During 2011 these donations resulted in $284 being raised for the Lions Club (this is in addition to the generous donations made as part of the Canberra International Walking Weekend). We hope that we can exceed this for the Heart Foundation in 2012.

Special Offer for New IVV Walkers - for only $10 you can become a new IVV walker and receive an IVV Event Book, IVV Distance Book and your first three Australian IVV stamps (a total value of $29-$35). We hope that this will encourage more people to get involved with IVV in Australia.

New Year Round IVV Walk in Albury-Wodonga in 2012 - IVV walkers will now have the opportunity to complete a new route in Albury-Wodonga (on the NSW-Vic border). The map and route instructions for this new walk will be posted on our website in the New Year - details will also be posted on Facebook & Twitter.

2012 IVV Calendar

Please join us - everyone is welcome and we accommodate all walkers - you walk at the pace that is comfortable for you. As always the meeting time is 8am on the 2nd Saturday of each month, but there are a number of additional walks for 2012 and the meeting times for these walks has yet to be confirmed. Email reminders are sent out on request and will include further details for each walk.

The program of AussieWalks for 2012 is as follows: (note the Yellow Pages map references are from the 2011/12 directory which has changed from the previous years)

Jan 14: Lake Ginninderra walk - meet at Townsend Place (Yellow Pages Map 11 B13) - 8km or 10km options

Feb 11: Lake Tuggeranong walk - meet at Cowlishaw Street car park opposite Tuggeranong College (Yellow Pages Map 31 N13) - 7km or 10km options

Mar 10: Lake Burley Griffin walk - meet at Questacon car park (Yellow Pages Map 19 G9) - 14km

Mar 25 (Sunday): Equinox walk - details to be confirmed - in conjunction with a number of other CANwalk affiliated walking organisations in Canberra

Mar 31 - Apr 1: 21st Canberra International Walking Weekend! Bring your family & friends! (Yellow Pages Map 19 J13) - 5km, 10km, 20km, 30km and 42.2km options

Apr14: Capital walk - meet at Parliament House Forecourt (Yellow Pages Map 19 E14) - we'll walk the original route through Telopea Park - 11km

May 12: World Walking Day - location and meeting point to be confirmed - 10km approx

Jun 10 (Sunday): 46th Annual Lake Burley Griffin Walking Carnival at Weston Park (on Sunday) - organised by the ACT Race & Fitness Walking Club. Details of all event options will be available on their website closer to the date - refer actwalkers.org.au

Jul 14: Capital walk - meet at Parliament House Forecourt (Yellow Pages Map 19 E14) - we'll walk the new route to the Australian War Memorial - 11km

Aug 11: Bushwalk - location and meeting point to be confirmed - 10km approx

Sep 8: Lake Ginninderra walk - meet at Townsend Place (Yellow Pages Map 11 B13) - 8km or 10km options

Sep 23 (Sunday): Equinox walk - details to be confirmed - in conjunction with a number of other CANwalk affiliated walking organisations in Canberra

Oct 13: Lake Burley Griffin walk - meet at Questacon car park (Yellow Pages Map 19 G9) - 14km

Oct 28 (Sunday): Seven Bridges Walk in Sydney - fundraiser for the Cancer Council - total loop is 27-28km but you do not need to walk the entire distance

Nov 10: Lake Tuggeranong walk - meet at Cowlishaw Street car park opposite Tuggeranong College (Yellow Pages Map 31 N13) - 7km or 10km options

Dec 8: St Nicholas Embassy Walk - meet at Questacon car park (Yellow Pages Map 19 G9) - 10km

Entries for the Canberra International Walking Weekend will open on 1st January - you can enter online with a credit card at Register Now or mail in a cheque or money order with your entry form. Don't miss out!