



all nations
BUSHWALKERS INC

Autumn Newsletter

March 2019

PO Box Q23 Queen Victoria Building,
Sydney NSW 1230
<http://anbwalkers.org.au/>



NEWSLETTER OF ALL NATIONS BUSHWALKERS INC • FORMERLY ANC BUSHWALKERS INC & ALL NATIONS CLUB WALKABOUT GROUP • FOUNDED 1964 • INCORPORATED 1992

WALK

City Walk **217 January 2019 Grade: 2** **Leader: Denise Kruse**

What a perfect way to spend a hot summer Sunday walking around the Sydney city area eating ice creams and taking in the scenic views. Fortunately the weather was 32 degrees Celsius as opposed to 45 degrees.

We met at Wynyard Station at 9am and walked up Martin Place and Macquarie Street around to Mrs Macquarie Chair overlooking Sydney Harbour. Along the way we walked past the Lindt Café siege site, the Mint, the Land Titles Office and the Art Gallery. I gave a running commentary on the history of some buildings and their importance to Sydney. After morning tea and some photos, we walked around the Royal Botanic Gardens, stopping to view and admire the cactus, succulents, ferns and the exhibition of insect eating plants at the Calyx. We had a lot of laughs along the way and solved the problems of the world.

We found a nice shady area for an early lunch and then walked to Circular Quay, around to the Rocks, under the Harbour Bridge and onto Barangaroo via an ice cream parlour and the Harbour. It was great to see so many people enjoy the views and the sunshine.

Although the team tried to assure me there were caves at Barangaroo, I remained unconvinced but look forward to exploring that next time.

We finished the walk at Wynyard at the respectable time of just after 2pm. The distance of the walk was 13.2km.



Thanks to those who attended: Linda, Danny, Stephen, Charbele, Françoise, Len, Bryan and Olga and sorry to those who couldn't make it. See you on the next walk.

President's Soapbox

Happy New Year 2019! It was great to see and talk to so many of you at the Christmas Party in December. A well organised and catered for event by our members for our members. Thank you again to those that booked the site, set the tables, made and sourced the salads, cleared up afterwards and even arranged for the toilets to stay open. Well done.

Even though I quite enjoyed the Bush-walking NSW meeting I attended in November, free wine and nibbles, door prizes and an interesting speaker, please let me know if you would like to represent the club at future quarterly meetings. It is a good opportunity to ask questions such as why do the bigger clubs pay less affiliation fees per capita than the smaller clubs (us)?!

If you have enjoyed reading this newsletter over the years, please consider whether you would like it to continue in its present format with photos, walk reports and other articles or would be equally happy to just receive club notifications by email only - no photos or walk reports. If someone doesn't volunteer in the next couple of months to start taking over the role of Newsletter Editor it won't be able to continue as a quarterly colour publication as at present. If you are interested, but not sure what would be involved, please do contact either myself or any of the other committee members for more details. You would be given plenty of support and resources and could even be learning a new skill.

Looking forward to seeing you on a walk soon

Helen Hindin
President

Welcome to New Members

John Vrtaric
Ati Sadr
Wendy King
Heather Robinson-Mills
Sheree Joseph
Barbara Colquhoun
Angela McArthur
Sam Sultan
Puri Barea
Neriman Seyit
Olga Yartseva
Gavin Collins
Sean Collins
Su Yee Collins

TRAVEL

LA PALMA

WHERE? WHAT? WHY?

DECEMBER 2018

HELEN HINDIN

So where is La Palma and why would I want to go walking there? In fact, I thought I was booking a beach holiday to escape from three weeks of cold in the UK last December. I wasn't really sure where I was going except that I knew it was one of the smaller and lesser visited Canary Islands, which belong to Spain but are situated in the North Atlantic Ocean, 100km off the coast of West Africa, close to the tropics.

Our main criteria for the booking was that the flight had to leave Manchester on the afternoon of Sunday December 16th (the day after Paul's son's wedding) and had to return before Christmas Day. It had to be to somewhere warm(er) and had to be cheap. This was the only package holiday that fitted those criteria. For £360 (A\$650) each, I thought flights, transfers, 4 four star hotel with sea view and enormous buffet breakfast and dinner was amazing value. The sparkling wine with breakfast was just the icing on the cake!

It was only after booking the holiday and doing some research that I realised that La Palma is the steepest island in the world with a 2.4km gain in height over an 11km ascent and is famed for its well marked walking routes. La Palma is a 7km high volcanic ocean island with 4km of the volcano under the ocean. The volcano is dormant, but not extinct, with the last eruption of one of the vents taking place in 1971. As there have only been seven eruptions since the Spanish occupation I wasn't too worried. Luckily, I hadn't at that point read the Wikipedia entry hypothesising that a future eruption could cause a tsunami across the Atlantic, inundating most of the American Eastern seaboard seven hours later!!

Paul was tasked with planning four day walks for us to do. He did a great job and we were further blessed by clear skies, no wind (possible at any time of year with dust storms and prevents walking on the high ridges) and coastal temperatures of 20 to 24 degrees Celsius and around 15 to 17 degrees higher up. So where did we go and what did we see?

Pico Bejenado 1845m – 15.3km

The aim was to get to a good vantage point overlooking the Caldera de Taburiente (crater or cauldron where the centre of the volcano has collapsed) and across to the highest point on the island, Roque

Muchachos 2426m. We also wanted to burn off maximum calories to make up for the massive breakfast and dinner we were eating in the hotel.

The walk numbered LP13.3 started by parking the car at the end of the paved road at about 1000m of altitude. Although there is a public bus system on the island, if you are planning on independent walking without an organised group you would probably end up having to take taxis at some point as the buses don't go everywhere and aren't that frequent. So, hiring a car was great value and Paul a.k.a. Stirling Moss, had a wonderful time negotiating all the hairpin bends.

The main features of the walk up the steep zigzag path to the lookout were lots of pine trees, so very quiet, no bird sounds or footsteps due to the pine needles deadening all sound. Along the way there were a couple of sites with petroglyphs, thought to be as old as from 500 BC. Not that spectacular but a fantastic excuse to take a break from the upwards slog.

The other feature of the walk, which we noticed on all the walks we did that week, was lack of people. Considering the number of walkers staying at our hotel and the fact that La Palma is famed for its walking routes we met no groups walking and none of the routes were that busy. So where were they all walking? Did we miss something?!? At the top of Pico Bejenado, we saw half a dozen other walkers who, like us, sat in perfect silence taking in the enormity of the crater in front of us - serenity.

El Pilar to Pico Nambroque 1923m – 10.7km

One of the most popular routes in La Palma is the GR131 (Gran Recorrido) Route of the Crest and Volcanoes, a three-day hike along the island's mountain spine totalling 66km. To get a taste of this route we did

two small sections of it on two separate days. The first was from the campground at El Pilar, a stunningly peaceful spot amongst the pine trees, on a sealed road but only one tent, a coffee truck and half a dozen cars in the car park.

A less steep walk than the previous day, it started at about 1500m, also very different in that we were following the spine of the island along the Cumbre



Vieja, with magnificent views in all directions. Across the sea to the south we could see Mount Teide, the volcano on the nearby island of Tenerife. To the north we could see Pico Bejenado, our destination the previous day. To the south-west we could see the banana plantations along the coast.

After lots of false summits, we decided to turn back at the viewing point overlooking the Crater del Hoyo Negro, a steep sided mini caldera. On the way back to El Pilar we decided to take a smaller marked track that was not numbered. Although it ran parallel to the way we had come, it was on a more defined ridge of the Cumbre Vieja and was much more steeply undulating with loose volcanic gravel. It turned out to be the original track, from before the more solid one was built and gave much better views, when we weren't watching where our feet were going. It eventually finished with a sign prohibiting entry and returned us to the main, more substantial, track.

Los Canarios 790m to Faro de Fuencaliente – 9.4km

The final part of the GR131, which apparently most multi-day walkers don't bother with, is the downhill stretch from the town of Los Canarios to the lighthouse at the southern tip of La Palma. Parking the car at the lighthouse we took the public bus up to Los Canarios, a scenic journey through the banana plantations of the south west coast up through the pretty village of Las Indias to Los Canarios, the regional centre. Famed for its dessert wines it seemed only reasonable to stop at Bodegas Teneguia (a winery) to try and buy the wine before starting the walk. Still not actually having started the walk, we passed a restaurant showcasing the local wines so managed 'one more for the road'.

Eventually underway, the walk was a pretty easy descent on loose volcanic gravel paths, zigzagging down through the barren landscape, interspersed with old grape vines. This was the area where the 1971 eruption took place. Some of the peaks, created by the volcanic eruption could be scaled but access was by a narrow ridge with strong cross winds. So, we got half way up then sat and watched a younger, less risk adverse walker attempt it. Great views down to the old and new lighthouses at our final destination could be seen along the way. Once down at the lighthouses we visited the large salt pans, still used for the production of white and pink salt. It's easy – sea water is pumped into the tanks then the hot sun (the island has very little rain) evaporates it to make the salt.

Santa Cruz de La Palma – 11.7km

Not exactly a bushwalk. From our hotel along the coast to the capital of the island, Santa Cruz, the walk took us through the industrial zone, past the port and the military barracks. Santa Cruz is a lovely historic town of cobbled streets, winding up

the hill side. Dating from 1493 with a present day population of 13,000 it has continually been used as a port, originally to export sugar cane but now as the major ferry terminal for the island and a cruise ship stop. Balconied fishermen's cottages can still be seen intact along the sea front promenade. Complete with palace, fort, cathedral and various whitewashed and turreted buildings it made a great rest day from walking.

Roque de Los Muchachos 2426m – 10.2km

Supposedly the biggest tourist attraction on the island, we easily managed to get a parking spot in the small, mountain top car park, close to the summit. This is the main viewpoint for looking into the Caldera de Taburiente. Being the highest point on a small island in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean, this is also one of the best places in the Northern Hemisphere to star gaze. Strict controls are enforced over light pollution to enable the enormous telescopes to operate effectively and there is an Observatory that is open nightly to the public. Not fancying the hour and a half drive in the dark up the winding, narrow road to the summit we opted for giving the stars a miss and walking along the edge of the caldera in daylight to get a feel for its size and the fantastic views in all directions.

An undulating walk along volcanic rock paths in both directions from the summit along the edge of the crater, this is also part of the GR131 track from the north to south of the island. However, the only person we met the whole week attempting it in its entirety was a mountain biker – and he was carrying his bike! This time not only could we see the peak of Mount Teide on Tenerife in the distance but could also see the smaller Canarian islands of La Gomera and El Hierro, rising up through the clouds.

Despite doing rather more walking that I'd anticipated and rather less lying by the pool reading, this was a fantastic relaxing week, burning enough calories to justify all those great Canarian potatoes and deserts consumed each evening.

Came back down to earth, flying back to Manchester airport in the early hours of Christmas Eve with the plane kept waiting in a holding pattern, unable to land due to thick fog.



Helen & Paul at Roque Muchachos

TRAVEL PICOS DE EUROPA SEPTEMBER 2018 FIONA BACHMANN

It seems to find real mountains one has to venture beyond Australia. What Australia calls 'mountains' are rather gentle hills by comparison to the Picos de Europe i.e. Peaks of Europe. I also remember this as the rock trip. Not the guitars, drums and screeching Rolling Stones type but, geological rocks and lots of them. Large rocks, small stones, loose sliding shale, steep slopes covered in stones shining in the sun and slippery rocks poking through snow.

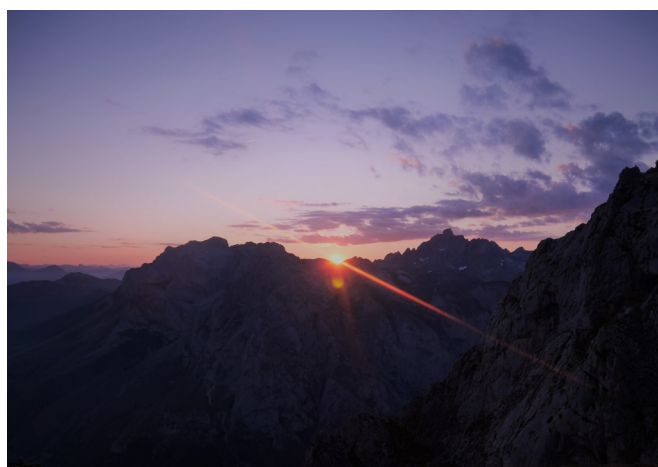
I agreed to what seemed like a good idea at the time, to join Charles, Jacqui and Liam on a trip that we as Australians were fortunate to access. With the addition of Liam's brother Kevin, a Spanish family of three, and Carlos, our guide from Rumbo a Picos, we ventured through the Picos or Peaks of Europe.

Not being particularly interested in rocks, I didn't think much about the Picos being the largest mass of mountain limestone in Europe. For those into geology and the technical; This limestone was caused by compression of sediments set down beneath the ocean in the Carboniferous period 280 -345 million years ago. In later periods of uplift the limestone has been pushed above sea level, this stress causing fracturing and folding. In present times ice and rain continue to erode and dissolve the rock making the current characteristics. With contemporary history going back to 1918, the Pico de Europe was named in May 1995, being Spain's first national park and awarded UNESCO Biosphere Reserve designation in 2002.

Our trip covered the western, central and eastern massifs and the provinces of Asturias, Cantabria and northern Castille y Leon, the largest province in Spain. After an easy meet up day and wander around Cangas de Onis in Asturias province, known for its food and long pour cider, we headed to the walk start at Valcavao. Our end point for the day being Jermoso Refuge. On the way we climbed in beautiful sunshine, and spotted goats, rebeco and unfortunately, or maybe fortunately, no 400 pound brown bears. Spotting Rebecos or Chamois, short horned goat antelopes, became an interest along the trip.

At the end of these three walking days we stayed at refuges. At each, everyone was issued a num-

bered locker key and expected to put pack and large items into a locker. There were also boot racks in the entry areas and only bedding and personal items were to be taken into the dormitory areas. One's bed space was allocated via the same number and consisted of a pillow, and blanket on a sleeping mat in a continuous bunk bed. BYO sleeping sheet and a tolerance for sleeping next to complete strangers. Showers were an additional charge of around five euros and either time or water volume limited. Accommodation included dinner and breakfast. Dinner was bread, an entrée such as soup, main of rice or pasta and a yoghurt dessert. Fairly expensive beer and wine could also be purchased. Breakfast consisted of dry and sweet biscuits, terrible mass produced filter coffee in jugs or hot chocolate. Of course, I took my Vegemite tube and added it to anything of a bread or carbohydrate nature feeling it could only improve the humble servings. 145g being barely enough to sustain me for the month I was away from home!



Sunset at Jermoso Refuge

On the first refuge evening while waiting for dinner we observed several locals trail running from the Jermoso Refuge back to our start point. With the Picos at their back yard fit Europeans take the opportunity to run or dog walk sections such as the eight kilometres up to Jermoso Refuge and eight kilometres return. After dinner we observed arguably the best sunset of our trip as the sun spectacularly but quickly dropped over the distant mountains.

On the second day of Picos walking we travelled across steep rocks past a ridge I am sure our guide Carlos described as an elephant due to its large back and smaller trunk with the ground falling away on either side. This day was described as not being suitable for those with vertigo, and it became apparent why. We experienced a mixture of hard dry rocks and snow patches, with the most unusual part being the ex USS warship constructed turret shelter at Cabaña Veronica Refuge.

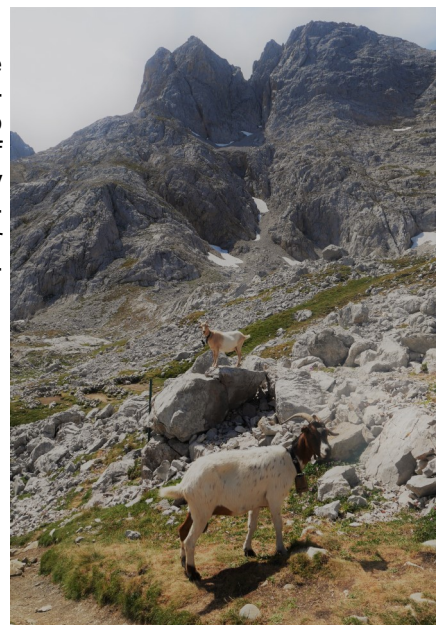


Cabaña Veronica Refuge

We lastly stayed at Carbrones Refuge. Some made extra climbs up very steep loose rock and some of us couldn't resist the opportunity for another grand sunset over enormous boulders. We finished in the Central Massif via a long descent initially with fixed ropes. After apparently unusually sunny weather for the season this day included rain to add to the difficulty. We passed old mining shafts, hiding spots for cooling cider and cheese and rebecos crouching on snow to keep cool. After a stop in Bulnes we completed the final descent into Poncebos.

After a simple, but relatively luxurious, overnight stay in Cangas de Onís and a chance to reshuffle gear, four of us were transported to a rainy Cares Gorge to undertake the popular seven mile hike. Despite being wet it was a relatively straight forward walk through rock tunnels, bridges and a canal cut into the rock feeding the hydro plant downstream.

That was the Peaks of Europe. On to the contrast of a bigger city Bilbao rounding off our tour of northern Spain.



Between Urriellu and Carbrones Refuge

TRAVEL

SELECTIVE TOUR OF JORDAN - PART II

CHARLES BOWDEN

Dead Sea

In travelling through Jordan, it is impossible to avoid or miss Biblical references. Our first hike was no exception. It was to be a 14km trek along "breathtaking shepherd's paths" from a place called Mukawir down to the Dead Sea. Mukawir it turns out was once called Machaerus which was the fortified palace of King Herod and supposedly the site of John the Baptist's beheading following the notorious dance of seven veils by Salome.

The site of the former palace is on top of a large featureless hill which unfortunately we weren't able to climb. A couple of reconstructed columns are visible at a distance while excavation of the ruined foundations is ongoing.

We did indeed meet a shepherd near the start of the walk with his flock of goats ambling alongside. However, the shepherd's path was a broad graded dirt road, a little eroded in places, which wound its way down at a gentle gradient to the sealed roading bordering the Dead Sea. The views along the way were impressive, the starkness of the terrain devoid of vegetation underscoring the aridity already alluded to.

Along the way, the hillsides were pockmarked with small caves purposely dug either as storage places or shelters, occasionally as burial sites. It was a hot day, temperatures in the 30s °C, so it was with some surprise that we found ourselves lunching amid rubble and rocks at a bend in the road.

It was therefore no wonder that we hastened on our



Goat herder and his flock

way down the track, to the consternation of our chain-smoking guide. Osama later told us that he had never completed that trek so quickly, fully over an hour faster than usual. None of the group were unduly stressed however but, after the walk was over, we all certainly appreciated the luxurious surroundings of our accommodation at the Dead Sea Spa Hotel.

The Dead Sea has a salinity of 35%, which makes it 10% saltier than the ocean. The high salt content prevents fish and other marine creatures from surviving so no need to worry about sharks or jellyfish. It is so salty, however, that to get any water on your face where the skin is thinnest results in severe stinging and do not even think of getting it into your eyes or a wound, e.g. a scratch.

It is also impossible to swim in a conventional manner, i.e. on your stomach, as the excess buoyancy flips you over. The only way to move is to lie on your back - actually it's more like reclining in a bucket seat - and paddle with your hands. A person of even (i.e. thin) proportions is said to be able to stand upright in the water to their waist without sinking.

Nothing stirs on the Dead Sea: no birds... and no boats. It is effectively a military border zone between Jordan and Israel. The Israeli shore is meticulously groomed, it is said, so that footprints can be easily detected. Israel's presence is felt in the ether as well: while staying at the hotel, our mobile phones automatically switched over to the Israeli telephone service, so strong was the signal.

We discovered that the Dead Sea is shrinking rapidly, at a rate of over a metre per year. Signposts on the beach next to the hotel indicating various shorelines since 2002 revealed that the water level had dropped by more than thirty metres.

Later as we drove along the coast, the shrinking shoreline revealed extensive salt harvesting operations as well as spectacular hues generated by the shallow waters. And to add to the list of Biblical allusions, there is a pillar (referred to as a pillar of salt although it looked rather rocky to me) referred to as Lot's Wife.

Petra

Our next stop was Petra where we were to remain for a few days. Charles said he could have spent a week as there was so much to see.

Petra in its entirety could justifiably be considered a present-day wonder of the world, not just the one building (the Treasury) that has been nominated. Discovered and settled by the Nabataeans in 4th century BC, Petra remained in Nabataean hands for the next 8 centuries. The Nabataeans became skillful engineers, carving massive structures out of stone as well as creating channels, both large and



Petra—coloured triclinium interior

small to control and divert water in and around the rocks.

Largely deserted by 1000 AD, the city became 'lost' to the western world by 1500 AD but was known to the Bedouin for centuries before 'rediscovery' in the early 19th Century. It wasn't until the Bedouin who had been living in the carved out 'caves' were relocated to a purpose-built town in the 1980s that extensive archaeological work began. Many of the largest and most spectacular rock structures are now known to be tombs or mausoleums but much archaeological work is still to be carried out.

In keeping with the theme of the tour, on our first day we walked into Petra via the Siq, a narrow winding 3km canyon with a sandy floor that leads from the main entrance all the way to an amphitheatre carved out of solid rock; with seating for 8,500 it is even larger than the Amman amphitheatre. On both sides of the Siq, narrow water channels carved out of the rock wind sinuously along. At regular intervals, carved rock faces indicate the presence of a tomb while carved stone steps disappear mysteriously into the heights of the surrounding cliffs.

After about 2km the Siq opens into a large space where the spectacular Treasury mausoleum dominates the surroundings. It was so named by the Bedouin, unaware of its origins, because they believed it to contain treasure of the pharaohs.

Past the amphitheatre, a series of spectacular ornately-carved tombs mark the start of a steep trail to the top of the cliffs, known as the High Place, from which vantage point there is a marvellous view of the Treasury.

On our second day, we headed to Little Petra, another Nabataean enclave which archaeologists now believe was a suburban offshoot of the main city. Entry is gained via an even narrower canyon than Petra. More tombs carved out of rock are found in Little Petra as well as Roman-style for-

mal dining rooms, called biclinium or triclinium. One of these features, remnants of 2000 year-old ceiling frescoes was only discovered in 2010.

From Little Petra we walked via dirt tracks and hill paths along the 7km back route to Petra, taking in scenic vistas from the heights, until we reached the Monastery, another misnamed but spectacular tomb. From here a stone staircase leads down to the Basin, a wide open area marking the confluence of two wadis (valleys), in the centre of which are located the grandiose ruins of the Great Temple and the Temple of Dushares. A broad and dusty avenue, called the Colonnaded Street, then leads back to the amphitheatre in Petra.

On a small hill opposite the Great Temple are the ruins of a 5th Century AD church complex which feature some remarkably well-preserved mosaics. Next to the amphitheatre, another steep narrow track rises to the High Place of Sacrifice which overlooks the Basin and surrounding hills. The track descends the other side of the mountain to yet more impressive rock-carved tombs as well as the remains of a drinking fountain in the shape of a lion.

There is so much more to see in Petra, given time and inclination and a robust constitution. The weather was very warm (consistently in the 30⁰s C)



Petra guide map



Wadi Rum sunset

during our visit and plenty of water needed to be carried to ensure adequate rehydration.

During our visit, the Bedouin were ever-present, as unofficial tour guides, leading camels or horses or donkeys for transportation, operating souvenir stalls and drink stands, or just sitting around smoking & gossiping. The younger men, with their long hair in a bandanna and kohl-rimmed eyes, are nicknamed Jack Sparrows (cf Johnny Depp in *Pirates of the Caribbean* et al) and are supposedly responsible for romance scams involving (invariably) solo female travellers.

The only Jack Sparrow we met was the son of a New Zealand woman who had married a bedouin in the late 1970s and later wrote an autobiography of her life in Petra. Educated in New Zealand and Australia, perfectly bilingual and a qualified engineer, he didn't seem to find any incongruity in running a souvenir stall on behalf of a local charity when we chatted to him.

Wadi Rum

From Petra we were driven further south to Wadi Rum, the largest desert valley in Jordan, stretching all the way to the border with Saudi Arabia. The valley features hundreds if not thousands of sandstone or granite rock formations (reminiscent of the Olgas in the Northern Territory) in various hues of pink, orange and purple.

Here we spent three days, sleeping in tents in a bedouin eco-camp and walking among the incredible rock formations. Some have been given names, such as the Seven Pillars alluding to Lawrence of Arabia who spent time in Wadi Rum, although this mountain has no connection to his book, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*. Its Arabic name means Mountain of the Plague!

Among these sandstone hills and mountains we visited narrow fissures with petroglyphs and later inscriptions etched into the rock. Erosion by wind and water has created several stunning rock bridges and arches, some which we climbed over and through; many hills resembled giant mounds of melted wax as sandstone succumbed to erosion. And the sunsets were spectacular, featuring a range of pastel hues.

Our desert walks were conducted in temperatures often exceeding 40°C; on one occasion it reached 48°C! Fiona's boots, so long cherished and having recently conquered the Picos de Europa mountains in Spain, succumbed to the desert heat and, notwithstanding an attempt to keep them going with gaffer tape, had to be replaced.

Madaba

Our final destination was Madaba, an ancient town also mentioned in the bible, but better known today for its fabulous byzantine mosaics dating from the 6th Century AD. We spent a day wandering from site to site, mostly ancient churches, admiring the various mosaics, notably the famous map of the Holy Land.

We also visited modern mosaic workshops where skills and methods of mosaic production are now taught to preserve the traditional craft. Plenty of souvenir pieces were on offer but, for tourists with luggage weight considerations, most had to be ignored.

Epilogue

Our Intrepid adventure in Jordan officially concluded in Madaba although some of us spent another day in Amman before leaving Jordan. In reviewing the trip, there was actually a lot less walking than



Madaba portion of mosaic map

had been envisaged. Owing to the consistently high temperatures we experienced, this was probably a good thing for the group as a whole, although some of us felt short-changed.

Transport consisted of an air conditioned bus with comfortable seats and windows that could be curtailed off. However, the luggage compartment was disproportionately small, providing us with endless entertainment each time the driver and guide had to reload luggage and provisions for twelve people.

Our guide Osama spoke very good English and was humorously tolerant of Jacqui's 'typically Lebanese' Arabic. Indeed, their exchanges provided a learning experience for the rest of the group. Osama also had a thorough knowledge of the history of his country and the region together with numerous anecdotes and references to Christian and Islamic perspectives to entertain and educate his audience.

Our hotel accommodation varied from adequate to very good but tended towards the budget end of the spectrum. The bedouin encampment in Wadi Rum had tents of a reasonable size, each with two camp beds, and separate (and basic) toilet/shower blocks for men and women.

Food was very much in the Middle Eastern style: plenty of unleavened bread accompanying meat and vegetable dishes usually featuring blended spices. Large mezze selections featuring dips such as hummus, tabbouleh and baba ghanoush were typical fare. One highlight was a visit to a Jordanian family's home where we were presented with dishes of maqluba, a sort of pilaf-style casserole consisting of rice, vegetables and meat. After cooking, the pot is flipped upside-down onto a plate for serving. Maqluba means "upside-down" in Arabic.

Beverages invariably consisted of water and soft drinks. Some hotels served alcohol but we discovered that small liquor stores did exist in some places, notably Madaba, where beer could be bought. These shops were all owned by Christians as Muslims are forbidden from selling alcohol.

STORIES & PHOTOS

NICK COLLINS

My first snake of the season – and it's an endangered Broad-headed one!



I really like snakes. Don't see nearly enough of them, despite being out in the bush so often. So far this snake season (the warmer half of the year) they've just about eluded me.

But the other week, on a rocky outcrop above Victoria Brook just outside Mount Victoria in the Blue Mountains, there it was: the first of the season. And it wasn't a common old brown snake, a red-bellied blacksnake, or a diamond python. It was the rare and endangered broad-headed snake (*Hoplocephalus bungaroides*). My second ever such sighting, and both out in the western Blue Mountains area.

They used to be common throughout the Sydney Basin, though they were always endemic to the region. Now they are only found in some of these remoter areas. Click here for: [Wikipedia article](#)

It seemed oblivious to us for a while, but eventually it woke up when I and my fellow Thursday Surveyors started pointing our cameras at it. It reared up, looked threatening for a moment, and then slithered into a hole under a rock.

It is indeed rather venomous, I gather. I always forget to be frightened though.

FUNNY PHOTOS

Can you guess where these photos are?

These are real photos taken without editing or alteration.

One is in Australia

The second is on another continent.



Send your answers to editor@anbwalkers.org.au by the next newsletter deadline.

Last edition's photos were;.....

- Animals on Bicycles—art trail between Molong and Dubbo NSW
- Lord Nelson Hotel Gibraltar



Editor's Note

If you have any Funny Photos to submit for the next edition send them to;
editor@anbwalkers.org.au

They should be unedited real sightings, preferably on a walk or travelling, but anywhere, and in good taste that everyone can enjoy!

Such as this busker spotted in Hyde Park Sydney...



NOTICES

Bushwalking NSW Photo Competition

Show us your best shots!

Do you take beautiful photos of scenery and people on your bushwalks?

We want to share them with the world!

Enter our competition below to feature your photos in our newsletters and website, and win a prize!

This competition closes 31st March 2019

To enter, follow these 4 easy steps!

1. Go to this link [here](#)
2. Choose your file – the maximum size is 500mb
3. Select the 'Set the Private upload' option and click the orange 'Upload' button
4. Copy and paste the bold link created into an email to newsletter@bushwalkingnsw.org.au with your full name, location, and image name

We look forward to seeing your photos!

Please note that by submitting photographs to this competition, you acknowledge that:

you possess copyright to the images, that you give Bushwalking NSW permission to use the images you supply in any Bushwalking NSW website, newsletter, social media, email, online and printed publications without attribution, and you warrant that Bushwalking NSW will not infringe any copyright by using the images you have supplied in any way.

Newsletter Editor needed

- Collect, review and collate ANB stories and photos.
- Compile the quarterly Keeping Track newsletter
- Club printing
- Participate in the ANB committee

Get involved as a sub-editor now or as Editor at the 2019 AGM. Information on the role is available at

[Newsletter Editor Duty Statement](#)

Or
email the current editor;
editor@anbwalkers.org.au
to find out more about the role.

No Editor means no newsletter

:-)

Calling all socialites and potential event planners.

The **2019 ANB Christmas Party** will be on 30 November.

Here is your chance to be involved. The date is set, the venue booked and start made.

It would be really great to have members involved. This year we thought it would be good to have a theme to the party. Any ideas?

To get involved please contact ANB President Helen or any committee member.
president@anbwalkers.org.au
Or club@anbwalkers.com.au

NOTICES

Advanced notice

FOR THE DIARY

Annual General Meeting

Come and join us

Saturday 29th June 2018

9:30am - 11:30am

Woodstock Community Centre

Burwood

Bring: A plate of morning tea to share

Tea and Coffee will be provided

Come and have a say in your club

You could even join the committee

&

**There will be a photo competition
with prizes**

We need you!

Calling all members who have wondered how they could help the club but don't want to lead a walk or organize a social event. The committee of the All Nations Bushwalkers must be elected every year. It would be great to have some new people join the committee who may be able to inject fresh ideas and are enthusiastic in wanting to help the club continue and grow for another fifty years.

There are seven positions on the committee that are all up for grabs each year at the AGM.

There will be a committee meeting in April (see notice below) before the AGM which is an opportunity for interested members to come along and see how the committee operates.

To see what each committee member is responsible for please visit this link <http://www.anbwalkers.org.au/node/256> or alternatively just contact the current position or acting position holder via this link. <http://www.anbwalkers.org.au/node/52> and ask them about their role.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE OF

KEEPING TRACK

10 May 2019

SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO
editor@anbwalkers.org.au

**Please provide clearly labelled photos
separately to the story text in high resolution
to achieve good reproduction .**

**Next ANB committee meeting
9 April 2019 at 6:30pm**

Surry Hills

*All members are welcome ...
Come along and have your say*

*To book in or ask questions please contact webmaster
Paul Monaghan
Or email club@anbwalkers.org.au*

It's not the years in your life, it's the life in your years—unknown