

The Compassionate Friends Victoria, Australia

267 Canterbury Rd., P.O. Box 171, Canterbury, Vic. 3216

Telephone: 03 9888 4944 Freecall: 1800 641 091 Fax: 03 9888 4900

www.compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au Email: support@compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au



Magazine Excerpts - Oct ~ Nov 2007

The Genoa Peak

Walk

While visiting Mallacoota and the surrounding region of East Gippsland again, my family and I went on another bushwalk and picnic to Genoa Peak.

Genoa Peak is situated in part of the Croajingolong National Park. This area of the national park is a delight for any nature lover with a third of Australia's native bird species and with more than 200 species of flora (exclusive to this region) living here.

In the early morning we drove from Mallacoota to the town of Genoa. A few kilometres west of Genoa is the Genoa Peak Road. Driving through the bush on the way we saw a black wallaby beside the road. After driving some 8 km along the easy, smooth road through the forest we arrived at the carpark and picnic area.

The walk is a distance of 4 km (return) and takes about 2 hours, though with us ambling along with young children and stopping to look at things and rest, our pace is leisurely and takes us longer. We are not in a rush of course and a big part of the pleasure of the excursion is to explore and examine along the way and chat about the things we observe and experience.

The track is narrow and mostly steep, but moderate in parts. The walking track climbs through thick bush of tall trees, mostly she oaks, eucalyptus and banksias, with some other trees and shrubs. The forest trees prevent much sun from penetrating to the ground so there is not much understorey vegetation, though there are some grasses, ferns and correas in more open patches. Though it was a sunny and mild day it was shady and cool on our climb up the mountain. There are many rock outcrops; large granite boulders covered in moss the length of the track. There are also lots of fallen trees and branches around, an indication of the stormy periods sometimes experienced here. This day was still and very quiet in the forest.

Although we saw plenty of fresh lyre bird scratchings in the ground alongside the walking track on this trip we didn't see any of them. We did however catch an excellent sight of a glossy black cockatoo flying over us. We stopped at the Genoa Lookout, 400 metres from the top of the mountain to eat our lunch. The lookout has magnificent views around East Gippsland and north and east into NSW. From here we could see mountain ranges and unspoilt natural wilderness all over, except for a cleared area around the town of Genoa.

From the summit of Genoa Peak, there are spectacular views of the surrounding region, the forests, mountains, rivers and the rugged coastline, Gabo Island and far out to sea. It is a beautiful place that provides a unique feeling of solitude and remoteness, without being too difficult to reach.

But it's really the many small, precious moments that these times spent together in the bush, at the beach and other places, that give me the most memorable, touching and enjoyable reminiscences of our little journeys.

Steven
TCF, Vic. AU.



The Healing Walk

There are times when I cannot breathe. My thoughts are tumbling and tangled. I am hungry, yet I want nothing to eat. I am lonely yet I want no-one near me. My eyes are looking, searching, yet they see nothing. There is, at that moment no joy in my life. My heart is heavy and I hurt so much.

When I feel so low I go walking.

There are many days when I am content. I have become mindful of the tasks before me and the people in my life. I go about my day creating a lightness of being.

When I feel so content, I go walking.

The season is spring; new life is everywhere and there is much to be grateful for, so walk and find it. Bring it home. Walk with all the senses alive, conscious and knowing, as a gentle and deep way of finding some meaning to life. Walk in the city, walk along the beach, walk along a mountain trail or through a park.

Take deep breaths and smell what the air is offering and know that you are alive. Be grateful for that. Then listen to the sounds of nature, and of humanity and be grateful for them, too.

Feel the warm air on your skin or the soft cotton jacket hugging your shoulders and arms. Feel the earth under your feet.

Look deep into the green of the grass, the leaves on the trees, the petals on the flowers or the ripples in a stream or the chimneys on the houses.

And in each moment, be grateful that you are alive.

Mariette
mother of Dylan (died 12.01.97 aged 22)