

THE 2011 GREAT DIVIDE MARATHON
Saturday November 5

This year's marathon walk is the eighteenth conducted by the Essendon Bushwalking Club since the first back in January 1995.

The 2011 start is at Graytown on the Heathcote-Nagambie Road about 30km from Heathcote, and the finish is at the Dargile Camping & Picnic Ground which is 10km north of Heathcote. The event is almost entirely in the Heathcote-Graytown National Park, and topographically it will be one of the easier marathons with just a few short hills. If you haven't done an Essendon marathon before, this is a good one to start with.

Walkers are required to be at the Heathcote Information Centre in High Street, Heathcote by 6-45am. You will need to be there in your own car or to have arranged transport with others. From there we will travel in convoy to Dargile, the finish point of the Marathon (see above). This arrangement ensures that everyone has their car waiting at the finish of the walk, avoiding the necessity of anyone having to return to Graytown after the event. After the morning assembly at Dargile, a bus takes us from there to the Graytown starting point.

The marathon comprises 7 stages and is suitable for reasonably fit walkers. Most of the walk is on bush tracks in box-ironbark forest. The stages range from 4.5 km to 9 km.

Support cars meet the walkers at the end of each of the 7 stages of the walk. Those cars have two main purposes:

1. To carry walkers' food, drink, additional clothing and footwear. (It is suggested that you place these in a back-pack or bag. If you want to put cool drinks in a support car, please read the note below).
2. To provide transport for any walker who wants to skip a stage or retire from the walk.

IMPORTANT: The support team has asked that NO solid car fridges be put in the support cars. They take up a lot of the limited space in the vehicles. If you wish to bring a cooler, make sure it is one of the "soft" types which can be more easily squeezed into the available space.

During the walk, walkers need to carry only sufficient water for the stage, and any protective items deemed desirable taking the weather into account. If walkers wish, a small amount of food might be carried, although this is usually found to be unnecessary when the support cars meet us so frequently.

An umbrella can be a good shelter from both rain and hot sun, both of which we have encountered over the years.

A one-course hot dinner at the Commercial Hotel at 139 High Street, Heathcote, after the walk is optional. Friends and family are most welcome. Cost is \$16 per head.

Other costs:

\$14 for bus fare and contribution towards support car and other expenses

\$5 temporary member fee for non-members of the Essendon Bushwalking Club

If you wish to take part, go back to the previous web page, download and print the Application Form, complete the required details, and post it with remittance to the address on the form, or hand it to Ray Scilley at an Essendon Bushwalking Club meeting. It is recommended that you do this as soon as convenient as we have limited places available.

As was the case last year, Ray will be handling the finances, Gina will co-ordinate the support team, and Des will lead the convoy. It is anticipated that most or all of the regular support team will be in attendance, but there is always room for more. If you are interested in helping, please contact me.

Bill Casey (Walk Leader)
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