

## Walking the Lake

### Shingle Splitters Shuffle

Correct as at 4<sup>th</sup> April, 2018

#### Overview and Track Information

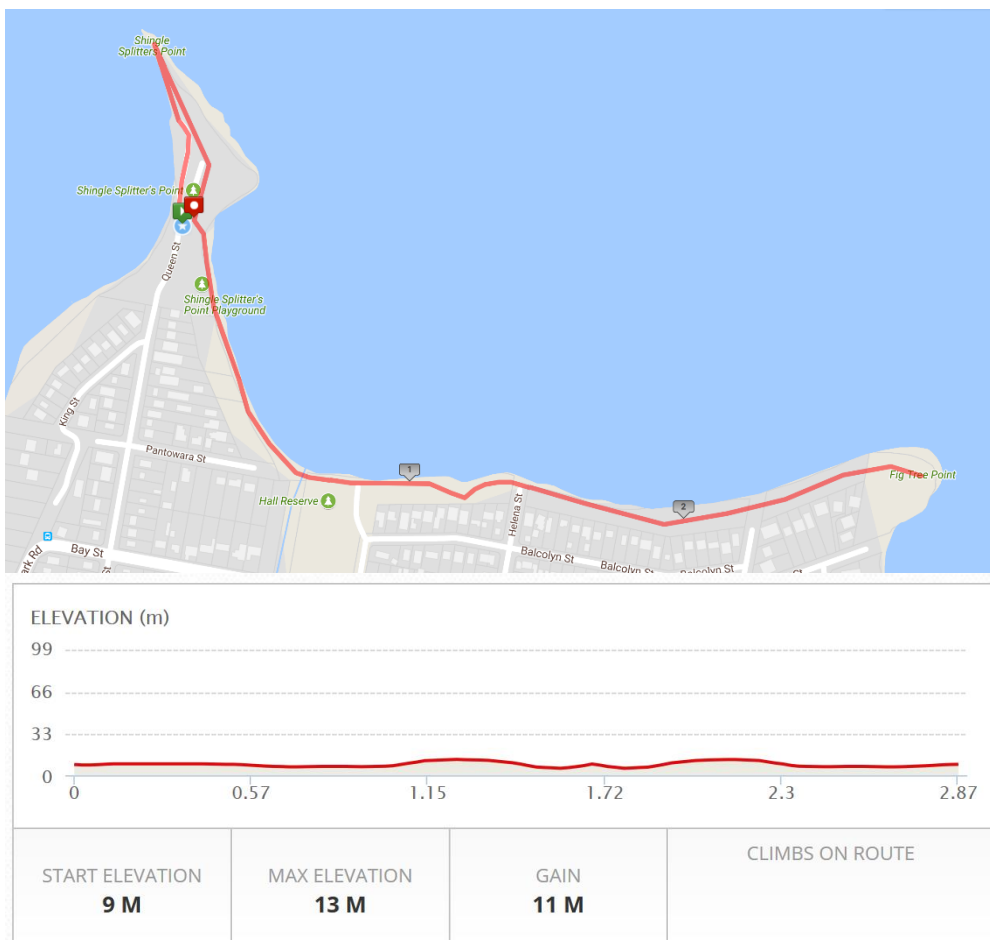
This is an easy out-and-back walk of about 3 kilometres along the Balcolyn foreshore. It starts with a walk around Shingle Splitters Point reserve, with views to the digital delta of Dora Creek and across Bonnells Bay. It then follows a flat foot track to Fig Tree Point, with great view across to Point Wolstoncroft, Pulbah Island and Wangi Point.

#### Meeting Point & Getting There

The meeting point is the car park near the playground at the end of Queen Street, Balcolyn. From Fishery Point Road follow Yarrowonga Park Road past the Crusaders' campsite. Queen Street is on the left just after the road swings right and becomes Bay Street. There is a public toilet near the playground.

#### Map and Elevation Profile

The walk begins and ends at the car park, marked by the green square on the map.



#### About Shingle Splitters Point

Before the advent of corrugated iron there was tremendous demand for she-oak shingles for roofs. There were big stands of she-oak along the waterfront and Shingle Splitters Point provided a good anchorage and loading place. The shingle splitters lived in huts nearby.

Alfred Sara lived alone at Shingle Splitters Point in a house built of slabs. He is believed to have planted the Norfolk Island pines which are now a landmark, probably about 1920.

# Song of the Shingle-Splitters

Henry Kendall

Published in Australian Town and Country Journal, Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 1874

In dark wild woods, where the lone owl broods  
And the dingoes nightly yell  
Where the curlew's cry goes floating by,  
We splitters of shingles dwell.  
And all day through, from the time of the dew  
To the hour when the mopoke calls,  
Our mallets ring where the woodbirds sing  
Sweet hymns by the waterfalls.  
And all night long we are lulled by the song  
Of gales in the grand old trees;  
And in the brakes we can hear the lakes  
And the moan of the distant seas.  
For afar from heat and dust of street,  
And hall and turret and dome,  
In forest deep, where the torrents leap,  
Is the shingle-splitter's home.

The dweller in town may lie upon down,  
And own his palace and park:  
We envy him not his prosperous lot,  
Though we slumber on sheets of bark.  
Our food is rough, but we have enough;  
Our drink is better than wine:  
For cool creeks flow wherever we go,  
Shut in from the hot sunshine.  
Though rude our roof, it is weather-proof,  
And at the end of the days  
We sit and smoke over yarn and joke,  
By the bush-fire's sturdy blaze.  
For away from din and sorrow and sin,  
Where troubles but rarely come,  
We jog along, like a merry song,  
In the shingle-splitter's home.

What though our work be heavy, we shirk  
From nothing beneath the sun;  
And toil is sweet to those who can eat  
And rest when the day is done.  
In the Sabbath-time we hear no chime,  
No sound of the Sunday bells;  
But yet Heaven smiles on the forest aisles,  
And God in the woodland dwells.  
We listen to notes from the million throats  
Of chorister birds on high,  
Our psalm is the breeze in the lordly trees,  
And our dome is the broad blue sky.  
Oh! a brave, frank life, unsmitten by strife,  
We live wherever we roam,  
And our hearts are free as the great strong sea,  
In the shingle-splitter's home.