

WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS

fun, fitness & friendship



NEWSLETTER 2 (April), 2015

www.warbybushwalkers.org.au

Those glorious autumn days are upon us once more, and there is no excuse for not joining us on a walk. As usual, there is a wide variety to choose from, including some tried and true venues, as well as some new adventures.

A reminder that our ANNUAL DINNER and AGM will be held at the historic Vine Hotel on Monday, March 16th, and everyone (including family and friends) is welcome to attend. Dinner will commence at 6.30pm, and bookings for dinner should be made with Jeanette Farquhar (5721 6514, AH) by Friday, March 13th.

Also, please remember that subscriptions fall due at the AGM, and that they should be renewed as soon as possible.

The committee nomination form, and the subscription renewal form, are available under "General Information" on our website, and at the back of this Newsletter.

See the President's Report (below) for more details on the AGM.

President's Column

On Monday March 16th our club is holding its **38th Annual General Meeting** at the Vine Hotel, North Wangaratta. The meal is 6.00pm for 6.30pm, and the actual AGM will start around about 7.30pm.

We suggest that members order their meal and drinks as soon as they arrive so that there is not a backlog of meals and members are having to wait unnecessarily for their dinners.

There is a Nomination Form that can be downloaded from our website so that any member can nominate any other member to our Committee.

As we discussed at our last meeting, a turnover of Committee members, and the volunteering of new members to our Committee is always a welcomed and healthy sign.

Based upon past such meetings, I estimate that the formal part of the evening should be easily finished by a bit after 8.00pm.

The guest speaker is Ruth Rampling from No Roads Expedition Foundation, a not for profit charity. Ruth lives in Beechworth and is into adventure tourism, so it will be most interesting to hear her speak.

At our last Committee meeting on 16.2.2015, it was mentioned that we had **not spent all of our \$3,000 Community Grant** because the cost of many of our items, like the publicity pamphlets and the First Aid course, were far less than estimations - due to the know-how of our Committee members, who were able to get things done at reduced prices.

Hence, we approached the Wangaratta City Council and asked if we could keep the \$1300 that we had not spent.

After constructing a convincing argument that the extra money would go into health and safety matters the Council agreed that we could retain these extra funds.



Snowgum Woodland, Bogong High Plains

The Committee agreed that part of this money would go into buying extra First Aid Kits, since our number of participants on walks continues to increase. Furthermore, we could also use the money to buy a few GPS devices. These instruments will be handy for navigation, and location purposes, and will add to the collection of things we have to improve the safety of all our walkers.

At our Committee meeting we also talked about **our website**. In July there were 68,000 'hits' on this website and 67,000 in December. We thank Committee member Chris for all the work that he has done to make this site so interesting, relevant and up to date.

Chris is also going to update our website Photo Gallery, add the massive list of all the walks that the club has run in its four decades of existence, and compile a section on how interested new walkers can enquire and book in for a walk.

It is very encouraging also to see the large numbers that were booked into the Myrtleford Ski Club at Falls Creek for our High Country weekend away.

Happy Walking.

Bob Shaw, President 2014/2015

AAWT -Dead Horse Gap-Tin Mine Track and return Saturday/Monday Dec 6-8

The Australian Alps Walking Track is a long distance walking trail of about 655km, starting at Walhalla, east of Melbourne, and finishing at Tharwa, on the Murrumbidgee River near Canberra.

The walk on this section of the AAWT started and finished at the Cascade Trail Head at Dead Horse Gap, just south-west of Thredbo Village.

On a Saturday morning, that didn't look so promising, seven of us set off for the Dead Horse Gap area, and by the time we got to the Gap the rain had really set in, but little did we know, it was far worse at home.

Off we went, until three hours later we reached Cascade Hut to be greeted by three hut caretaker volunteers. They had a welcome fire going with a billy on the boil.

It was interesting fitting seven wet people, plus three dry people into the Hut. Turns were taken at putting up tents in the pouring rain, with two walkers threatening to stay in the Hut, but it was just too squeezey.



The next day we set off in better conditions with the intention of finding the ruins of Stockyard Hut. We were warned to be careful of fire affected trees coming down due to the rain loosening their roots, and indeed we did come across such a tree.

Sylvia and I found the cairn marking the spot where we had walked in from the other direction, but the Hut was a bit more elusive, with an unpassable ford stopping us 100m from the envisioned site.

It was suggested one of us strip, swim across, take a photo and report back, but there were no volunteers.

We returned back to Cascade Hut to find our companions gone. Some hilarity then followed in lighting the fire, until the metho got low, and the boys were warned off. The girl scouts among the group used the old cross hatch method with extreme success.

The trip out was like seeing the landscape for the first time, as not much was seen on the way in due to the poor weather conditions.

Thank you to those who went for a successful trip and a great time.

Ovens River Walk, December 8

Despite the predicted showers, a small but enthusiastic group walked the easy (although quite damp after the big rain) seven kilometre loop on flat tracks, from Frost's Crossing near Peechelba. The bush tracks amble through the open forest of the Ovens River flood plain, and beside the actual river which was almost black from the massive downpour just upstream less than two days before.

Large areas of the grass between the big River Redgums had been flattened by the storm, and masses of noisy cockatoos were feasting on the grass seeds and screaming from the flowering trees.



First Aid in the Bush, December 8

On Monday December 8th an update on previous first aid courses that the club had held, was offered to our members. Twenty eight people attended the course in the Library Meeting Room.

The large number in attendance was most encouraging. The presenter was one of our own members, Angus Clark, who is a full-time local paramedic.

Before tea, Angus spent about one hour on an update of CPR procedures. Then dinner was served for all those in attendance in the form of pizzas.

Then after dinner, Angus used some entertaining examples of real life possible scenarios using our own members and what may happen to them in various situations in the bush. He presented each case study, asked opinions of what we would do in that situation, then he gave the update on the most recent procedures used in each of these scenarios.



Angus covered snake bite, soft tissue injuries common in the bush, emergency life support procedures and the items that we should ensure are part of both the club's, and our own personal first aid kits.

At the end of the evening Angus was presented with a gift voucher and the feedback gained from members was that this was a highly entertaining and informative evening.

A big Thankyou to Angus for his professional, interesting and factual presentation.

Woolshed Falls, December 14

Sunday's bushwalk at Beechworth Historic Park started at the historic Powder Magazine and headed to the scenic Woolshed Falls, stopping at the Cascades along the way.

We came across a shy echidna near Spring Creek enroute, and morning tea was at the Falls, with lunch being enjoyed at Spring Creek on the return trip.

After lunch the group split into two, with five walkers returning via the Spring Creek Bridge, and the other 11 taking on the more challenging path to The Precipice, Fiddes Quarry and Ingrams Rock before returning to the Powder Magazine.



Overall, a great walk during which we enjoyed the company of visitors from Deniliquin and Shepparton.

Christmas Party, December 19

The 2014 Christmas party was attended by about forty members at the home of Judy and Bob Shaw at Hamilton Park.

It was good to see many loyal members over many years attending,, as well as a large number of newer participants in our club.

The use of name tags was very helpful particularly for those who have just joined the club, and for those who have not walked for some time.



This was just an informal event - with pre-dinner drinks, a BBQ for those who wanted to, sweets and drinks etc.

It was a time to catch up socially, and to share yarns about the year that was with all members who had been on walks during the year.

Moonlight Walk, January 3

In partly overcast and muggy conditions on Sunday evening – the night before a full moon, the new Warby Heritage Walk was pioneered by a group of Warby Walkers, eager to walk off that Xmas Pudding.

The route of this walk basically descends from Booths Road, down to the winery, passing by much of the original water storages constructed by Ben Warby in the late 1880s.

The first part of the walk was in daylight, along the narrow path on the side of a picturesque gorge accessed via a new car park on Booths Road, a few kilometres on from Wenhams Picnic Area.

Only pools remained in the waterways, with the cascades and waterfall almost dry, but providing enough moisture for several groups of wallabies and kangaroos, as well as evidence of a healthy wombat population.

The signage on the several weir sights was excellent, also at the old wool scour and sawmill.

A picnic tea was enjoyed at Booth's Winery, before the return trip in twilight, and later moonlight, via Cellar and Spot Mill Track brought us back up to Booths Road, and the waiting vehicles. The cooler evening conditions were appreciated for the climb back out of the valley.



As the moon struggled to peep through the cloud cover, some torches were brought out towards the end of the walk, and to light our welcome cuppa at Wenhams on the way home.

All agreed this walk should be repeated in late Winter - early Spring, when the water is flowing, and the wildflowers blooming.

Nine Mile Track, January 18

This favourite of the Club makes use of the route of Nine Mile Track, and leads from near Rollason's Falls on the Buffalo Plateau, down to Ovens Township, an overall distance of about 17km, with a nice neat car shuttle to link the start and finish points.

There were 28 participants on this occasion, and the weather was fine and mild.

Setting off from the high country (the Buffalo Plateau) the first four kilometres led up and down on the ridge line, with the starting point being a 4WD track on the east side of the car park, with a locked gate at the very start.

We had views west to Mount McLeod and the Buffalo Plateau, and from here kilometres 5-8 led us on a descent to 600m. Continuing downslope to 500m, we had great view of the Buffalo Valley, and the Ovens Valley.

We now encountered a steady descent from 500m to 200m, so as to arrive at Selzer's hydroponic sheds down on the valley floor.

From here, only the non car shuttle drivers continued walking on the river flats, crossing over the Ovens River, and turning left on the Ovens Highway, to walk the last one kilometre to the historic Ovens Hotel.

With stops every hour, morning tea for 10 mins, and 20 mins for lunch at the 10km mark, the whole walk took five hours, commencing at about 9am, and finishing around 2pm.



Degree of difficulty – Medium grading, as it is mostly downhill on a well made 4WD track.

Sunrise @ Sunrise, January 20

Sunrise @Sunrise proved a popular walks inclusion with 18 walkers rising early to beat the heat, and complete the Sunrise Loop, and to be back in time for breakfast.

The walk commenced at 7am, due to the forecast of a predicted 33C day. The group left the Sunrise car park and proceeded to the plateau via the Quarry Loop.

The Sunrise Loop was then completed at a leisurely pace, and members commented how good the bushland was looking for mid summer thanks to the recent rainfalls.



The walk was completed in just on 2.5hrs, and members then drove to Bob and Judy Shaw's home at nearby Hamilton Park to enjoy a sumptuous cooked breakfast, cooked by Bob.

As this walk proved quite popular, as did a similar one last year, I highly recommend including in the January program an early morning 'breakfast social walk'.

Mount St Bernard, January 30—February 1

Twenty three participants took part in our weekend in the Victorian Alps at the end of January. Based at the Wangaratta Ski Lodge's excellent location, walks were conducted on both Saturday and Sunday.

The unpromising weather of Friday, with a maximum temperature of a mere 5 degrees at Hotham, and a stern wind, seemed not to auger well, but a dramatic improvement in the weather by Saturday morning meant the walkers had almost perfect conditions.

Saturday's walk covered the length of the Blue Rag Range, which, varies in altitude from 1500 to 1700 metres, and overlooks the headwaters of the Wongungarra River.

Some steep climbs and descents make this quite an arduous walk, but it was handled well, though it tested out those who had allowed their level of fitness to drop over the traditional summer holiday period.

Sunday's walk to The Twins was less challenging, but required one very steep climb and descent, and some skilful navigation, given that the markers of the Alpine Walking Track are almost non-existent due to the bushfires of recent years.



Bushfires have burnt off the snowgums of the country surrounding both walk locations, leaving the dramatic views across the mountain landscapes unobscured, and encouraging an abundance of sun loving alpine flowers.

Wangaratta Ski Lodge provided the perfect base for the weekend, and it was a great opportunity to engage with newer members of the Club who took the opportunity to be part of this superb event.

Wagirra Trail, February 14

As mentioned in our last newsletter, Albury City Council has been extending Wagirra Trail, which basically runs downstream from Norieul Park to Horseshoe Lagoon, by building a connection path that will link Wagirra with the Wonga Wetlands. This was the chosen venue for our Valentine's Day excursion, and it turned out to be Wagirra in the rain!

After an early morning start (to beat the heat that never eventuated) we started off from Albury's Norieul Park, heading downstream, with many members of the local populace to accompany us.

The walking was easy, with only a couple of small rises to tackle, and we made good time on our route to the Wonga Wetlands.

Morning tea was held alongside part of Horseshoe Lagoon, with many waterbirds at close hand.

Continuing downstream, we tackled the new bridges that lead to the Wetlands, as well as taking time out to admire the trackside sculptures that are a part of the Yindyamurra Sculpture Trail.

After a few false starts, the rain came down in earnest, and we were relieved to see the large (and sheltered) picnic area at the Wetlands.



Following on from a brief lunch, we completed a short loop around some of the wetlands, and then set out for Norieul Park, via a slightly different route.

The rain kept coming and going on the way back, so we were more than pleased to see Pat lay out the tablecloth, and dish out the coffee and biscuits in a picnic shelter at the finish.

Ovens and King Rivers—

Early morning walk, February 20

For this very early walk, nine walkers (including two 'newies') set off from Northern Beaches at 7.15am, and in cool, but rapidly warming conditions, they followed the Ovens River through to the cafe area, observing the great work done by the Urban Landcare Group.

They then walked the left bank of the King River, crossed the Wilson Road Bridge, and then entered the rarely visited, but gorgeous, Big Kaluna Park via the levee bank.

The group had covered about six kilometres by the time they trudged into Apex Park for the traditional cuppa and biscuits, and one member was even able to get to work on time.

Falls Creek Weekend, February 27-March 1

This trip was booked out, despite our great organiser Kerri believing that nobody was coming two weeks ago!! When the crew turned up on Friday night, we realised that the visitors almost outnumbered local Oven/King dwellers. Six people arrived from Deniliquin, two from Waygunyah, two from Shepparton and one from Albury!!

On Saturday, 30 of us walked the 20 genuine High Plains kilometres from Pretty Valley Pondage to the beautifully situated Young's Hut, in fine conditions. The obvious high point of this amble was the observance of amazing Horse Whispering skills from Brumby Al, who almost touched the wild horses, temporarily entranced by his red socks.



After a spirited evening, highlighted by Adrian's magnificent Dining made birthday cake, and fascinating revelations regarding how our retiring President met his wife of 45 years, the rain began to fall. However 18 walkers headed out on Sunday morning and despite trudging through thick cloud, the group really enjoyed a 10km walk which visited Kelly's and Fitzgerald's Hut.



Here comes Brumby Al

This horse whisperer don't need a corral

See him work with his red sox on

A regular smoothie is our Alan

2015 Week Away, NSW Central Coast, August 22—29

The planning for our famous 'week away' is well advanced, with the organising committee, led by Glenda Hall, doing some great preparatory work.

The Club has booked out Camp Breakaway, near Wyong on the Central NSW Coast, with full facilities and three person en-suite cabins, and no top bunks.

A range of daily walks across a variety of terrains including coastal, lakes and mountains will be offered and a short presentation and full details will be available at the AGM, and then on the website.

So watch this space and get ready to book for what again promises to be a fantastic week away.

Member Snippets

Our Club at last count had 89 members. As a result, we are getting plenty of people on our walks. This is in spite of the many comings and goings of members. We are, it seems, a very mobile group. New Zealand is a great beneficiary of our Club. The attractions of their many great walking destinations have been quite a lure.

President Bob Shaw and Judy head off soon to walk the Kepler Track, as well as Cecily Fletcher. Bob and Judy will also do walks elsewhere including the Mt Aspiring Walk, whilst Ken will join Cecily for some campervan adventures.

Glenda Hall and Irene Knox, only recently returned from walking and touring in Patagonia, have just returned from NZ walks, which included the Abel Tasman and Queen Charlotte Sound Walks, and others both in the Tasman Peninsula and the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. 150 kilometres in 10 days!

Our trips to the High Country this past summer have been a great attraction, with approximately 25 participants, based firstly at Wangaratta Ski Lodge in the Hotham area, and then at Myrtleford Ski Lodge in Falls Creek. Some excellent walks were held in both areas.

These walks, as well as other recent walks, have attracted new members and visitors from many quarters, with a number of outdoor enthusiasts coming from as far away as Deniliquin. It has been great to see.

Bob and Judy Shaw celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary at the Falls Creek gathering, with birthdays being celebrated by Bob, and Adrian Twitt (really a non-birthday this year, he being a Leap Year person) who says he is really three-quarters of a century.

Choristers of the Walkers group did a sterling job singing "My Favourite Things" written by Julie Anthony. The highlight of the celebration was the speech by best man at the wedding, Rob Chard, who had us all laughing wholeheartedly about the blind date he arranged for Bob to meet Judy.

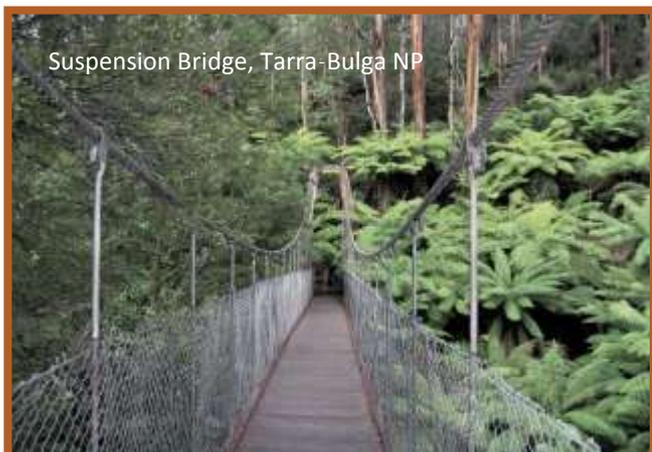
Janet and Alex Watson were disappointed not to have been able to take part in the Falls Creek program; Alex has a bout of shingles, and we all hope he makes a swift recovery.

[compiled by Adrian Twitt]

Grand Strzelecki Track

The Grand Strzelecki Track is one of Australia's newest long distance trails, and covers a fascinating section of South Gippsland's beautiful rolling-green-hill country.

While many parts of the Track are graded easy to medium, other parts are challenging and require a degree of fitness and experience. Overall, the Track is Class 4 under the Australian Standard which means that some parts are narrow foot track with minimal infrastructure provided, requiring self-sufficiency and navigation skills (although it is generally well marked).



There are four possible entry points to start the walk; Morwell National Park (Junction Road car park), Balook (Tarra-Bulga Visitors Centre car park), Tarra Valley picnic area car park or Macks Creek Hall. The Park to Park walk is 26.5km, with a further 9.5km to reach accommodation facilities. This will take two days, with an overnight stop at Jumbuk Rest Area half way.

The eastern section of the Track can be walked in three loops of 1-2 days each, starting and finishing in Balook; the Mount Tassie Loop (18.3km), the Macks Creek Loop (25.2km, or 23.7km depending on choice of route) and the Tarra Valley Loop (22.9km with an optional link to Tarra Valley township, 2.1km each way).

Alternatively these loops can be tackled as a continuous circuit of 3-5 days, exploring a variety of short rainforest walks and waterfalls en route.

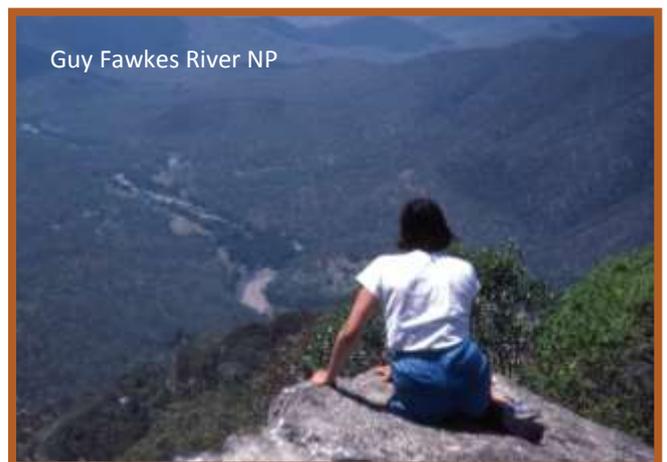
The Tarra Bulga Guest House at Balook, have very kindly offered their grounds to use as a camp site, and camping is available at Fernholme Caravan Park in Tarra Valley. Tent sites, both powered and unpowered are available and also cabins by prior booking. There are toilets and water available at the Tarra-Bulga Visitor Centre in Balook (please sterilize water for drinking). There are no facilities elsewhere.

The Park to Park section starts at Junction Road, Jeeralang Junction, about 5km south of Churchill. At the eastern end of the Track, the three loop walks radiate from the township of Balook where the Tarra-Bulga Visitor Centre is located. This network can also be accessed from Tarra Valley township, Tarra Valley Picnic area, within the National Park, or the Macks Creek Hall.

See the website (www.grandstrzeleckitrack.org.au) for more details.

No smoking in NSW national parks

The NSW government has recently introduced a 'no-smoking' policy for some of its more popular parks.



The smoking ban initially applies to Royal and Ku-ring-gai Chase National Parks, and Cape Byron State Conservation Area, and is hoped will reduce the risk of accidental fire started by unextinguished cigarette butts and reduce litter.

The smoking ban will apply to picnic areas, campgrounds, accommodations, beaches, lookouts, walking tracks, and on national parks roads.

The ban will be phased into other parks from next year, starting with other higher visitation parks.

These new regulations will be advertised by placing no smoking signs at entrances to parks, and at popular visitor areas.

Hotham Shelter

A new shelter for bushwalkers at the Alpine Crossing Trailhead, near Mount Hotham, has improved facilities for visitors to the area, and acknowledged the gold-mining heritage and ecology of Victoria's high country.

The Alpine Crossing Trail head shelter was officially opened yesterday by Tim McCurdy (MLA, Murray Valley). The shelter is located adjacent to Loch Reservoir, at the most elevated point on the Great Alpine Road, Australia's highest sealed, all-season road.



"The purpose-built trail head shelter is a valuable resource for bushwalkers and visitors to the Australian Alps National Park and the Mt Hotham Alpine Resort and includes a sculpture that highlights the gold-mining history of the surrounding area," Mr McCurdy said.

"The shelter has been built in a strategic location for bushwalkers in the area, providing much needed information for people embarking on the Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing, one of Victoria's four iconic walking trails.

The new shelter features a bushwalkers intention book, and a box for track notes and maps of the locality, as well as signs featuring the walks, indigenous and European history, and advisory information on the Falls Creek to Hotham Alpine Crossing.



Mr McCurdy said both elements encapsulate Hotham's history. "The sculpture represents, a gold-mining stamp battery reflecting the powerful influence of gold mining in the region. Over the decades, seven stamp batteries - used to sort gold from quartz- were built in the area."

Smart Phone—Emergency Call App

A new Smartphone application is now available that helps log your details in case of an emergency call, that is, you need to call 000. The new App (Emergency+) is available via a free download from the major app portals (search for emergency+).



Follow the next few prompts for a quick installation, and don't forget to enable your phone to forward your location without reference to you.

The App's logo is a nice bright red, and if you ever need to use it to call 000, the App will forward your GPS location to the emergency service operator.

For an example of Emergency+ in action see the Doubleclick (David Frith) column in The Australian, February 24.

Wangaratta - Benalla Bike Path

A shared path connecting Benalla and Wangaratta via Winton Wetlands is a major priority of Tourism North East.

The path would connect up with the Munay to Mountains Rail Trail and give the North East an "international attraction" according to Tourism North East cycle tourism officer Steve Plummer.

Mr Plummer was at the official opening of the Glenrowan to Hamilton shared path on Monday 23rd February, and said the 1.6km path was just the beginning of something much, much bigger.

"Ultimately we want to link Wangaratta and Benalla via Glenrowan and the Winton Wetlands. It's foreseeable in the next year to get this project going. Benalla is already virtually linked to Winton Wetlands, and trails within the Wetlands are already under construction. We're already talking with the Rural City of Wangaratta about linking this trail with the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail in the future."

[The Wangaratta Chronicle, February 25, 2015]

High Level Planning

Did you know that Paul Davenport piloted his aircraft, while he and President Bob Shaw did a surveillance of a proposed walk behind Mount Buffalo?

The aim was to check the connection between Goldie Spur from the Buckland Valley to the Buffalo Valley.

Is this the first time a Bushwalking Club in Victoria has used air surveillance to reconnoitre a walk?

Adrian

WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS

fun, fitness & friendship



Committee Nomination Form

I hereby nominate _____
for the position of _____
on the 2015--16 Committee.

(Name) _____

(Signature) _____

I second the nomination

(Name) _____

(Signature) _____

I accept the nomination

(Name) _____

(Signature) _____

Please forward the completed form to:

The Secretary

Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc

PO Box 974

Wangaratta, 3676

Subscription for membership of Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc.

2015-2016

Please note that all current memberships expire on the 31st March 2015 (see notes below).

Single \$35; Family \$65; Associates \$20 (see notes below).

Life members receiving newsletter \$20; Casual walkers \$5

Notes.

If you join after the 1st of October in any year, then the membership fee is \$20 for a single, \$40 for a family.

If you join after the 1st of February in any year, then the full subscription is payable, however this will be regarded as a subscription lasting until the following year (that is, approximately 14 months, as compared to a normal 12 month subscription).

Associate membership will not give you access to walks unless you are a member of a Club affiliated with Bushwalking Victoria, but it will give you our newsletters and entitlement to attend social evenings.

Pay cash, cheque or bank transfer.

BSB: 633 000; Account no: 110647799; Reference: (your name)

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Please return this form with subscription payment to:

Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc

PO Box 974, Wangaratta

Victoria ,3676