



NEWSLETTER 2 (April), 2016

A NEW SEASON OF WALKS and our AGM

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.

Our ANNUAL DINNER and AGM will be held at the historic Vine Hotel on Monday, March 21st, at 7pm, and everyone (including family and friends) is welcome to attend.

Dinner will commence at 6pm, and bookings for dinner should be made with Bob Shaw (5766 2773) by Saturday, March 19.

If you are thinking of joining the Committee, then the nomination form can be found under "General Information" on our website, and at the back of this Newsletter.

Also, please remember that subscriptions fall due at the AGM (new categories of membership will be discussed at the meeting).

WEEK AWAY, 2016 – WILSONS PROM

Sunday, April 10 – Saturday, April 16

Planning for our 2016 big adventure is well under way for what promises to be a great five days of walking options at Wilsons Promontory National Park.

If you haven't booked, and are interested in this coastal adventure, or have any questions, please contact one of the Week Away Committee (Karen, 5722 2540; Deb, 5766 2340 or Leanne, 5727 0397).

Mount McLeod Day Walk, December 5

This interesting walk started off from the Mount Buffalo Reservoir Car Park, with 11 club members taking part in this 16km medium graded adventure.

Most of the walk was on undulating terrain, with some quite steep downhill stretches on the walk into the camping area.

We had morning tea, about 20 minutes into the walk, and lunch after seven of the group climbed to Mount McLeod – with magnificent views across the Ovens Valley, and surrounding peaks.

On the return journey we took the shortcut track, which saved us quite a steep climb, instead traversing the side of the hill with the bonus of walking through lush ferny gullies and a lovely creek crossing.

Wildflowers were still in abundance, and a copperhead snake was startled from its resting place on the track – fortunately it went straight back into the bush!

The group split after lunch, due to some walkers' pace being a little slower, and in the lead up to Christmas, some needed to return

home for evening engagements. The remainder of the group enjoyed Pat's cuppa, most appreciated as always.

The weather was quite warm on this early summer sunny day, with the temperature estimated to have reached 25C with no breeze. [Glenda Hall]

Mount McLeod Overnight Walk, December 5-6

There were six participants for this 16km high country adventure, and we were blessed with near perfect weather conditions – fine, high 20's (35+ in the Valleys), dry with light breeze in places.

Some miscommunication about meeting time/points led to a delayed departure, and we didn't get underway until nearly mid-day, but there were no worries as we had all afternoon for an 8km walk into the campground at Mount McLeod.



The early summer wildflowers were a real treat, with trigger flowers, everlastings, vanilla lilies, showy parrot pea, pink bells, native violets, cut-leaf goodenia and many more.

Opportunities to put the packs down were welcomed, firstly clambering over a large log across the Link Track (alternative foot track section from the 4WD vehicle access track), lunch, and then taking a break for someone to return to the lunch stop for their glasses.

Packs were getting heavy however, by the time we met up with the day-trippers heading back after their visit to Mount McLeod. Luckily, it was not much further to the open grass plain that provided the campsite, under the peak.

We set up our respective tents, and renewed our energies with a cup of tea and refreshments, entertained by the emergence of camp furniture to make sure Michael and Jeanette didn't lack too many home comforts.

We'd love to see what they didn't bring – perhaps the table might come along next time?

A kilometre climb to the top of Mount McLeod provided rewarding views across the southern Alps, with Mount Bogong standing proud on the skyline. I was pleased to be able to pick out the Murrumbidgee escarpment in the East, and a fresh perspective on the major features of Mount Buffalo from this angle.



A lovely evening at the campsite was marred by the millions of mosquitos, which encouraged us to an early night, the sooner to bring the dawn. Cecily and Jan rose with the birds to watch the sunrise over the valley before breakfast and re-loading the packs.

Some of us had discovered a small waterfall, and a hidden clearing and pond, by exploring off the path by the little waterhole, and we felt we had made a new connection to the mountain by the time we headed back up the path in the freshness of the early morning.

The return walk to the carpark didn't appear as long as the walk in, taking three hours including stops along the way.

After deliberation, we again took the Link Track, which was just a little shorter and less steep than the road, and provided a little more excitement as Trevor (in the lead) stepped past a black (or tiger?) snake sleeping in the leaf litter beside the path.

We were just a little weary and glad to see the cars; it didn't take much to decide we had earned a coffee and cake at the Gorge before we returned back to Wangaratta – it was nearly lunchtime after all.

It was unanimous that this was an excellent overnight hike, providing an opportunity to test the pack and gear without overstretching the distance or climbing capacity of the legs. (Jan Heywood deserves an award for walking with the lightest pack, bringing a favourite old H-frame from the 70's for an outing). A very happy weekend activity for those who participated.

The walk was graded as moderate, and the list of hazards includes mosquitos, flies and ants.

Later in summer there may not be running water which would add to the difficulty –as it was, carrying 2.5-3 litres was plenty as water from the stream could be boiled for hot drinks and dinner.

[Cecily Fletcher]

McFarlanes Hill - Wodonga, December 13

McFarlanes Hill, on the western edge of the Wodonga urban area was the chosen venue for this *Christmas-time Walk*. The day started off warm, but didn't get overly warm, due to large banks of high level cloud.

So, with a gentle breeze to keep us refreshed, the ten of us left Fell Timber Creek Road in high spirits.

The group took the access track from near the car parking area, and climbed up to a t-junction, where we needed to swing left to pick up the ridgeline walking track.

We had morning tea at about the 2km mark, with some nice views to the left of the track, over-looking the valley of Fell Timber Creek.

We then followed the walking track through to a stile (one of several on this route) that led immediately onto a roadway.

Turning right here, we followed the roadway for a few hundred metres to a rotary gateway. Passing through this gate, we began a relentless climb to the summit of "One Tree Hill".

Lunch was enjoyed the rotunda at the top of the Hill, with great views of the High Country, and the Albury-Wodonga urban area.

From here we skirted around, and down, to the east, passing through a rotary gate, and then followed a line of timber back to the roadway referred to above.

Turning left at the roadway, we now made a short climb back to the stile, also referred to earlier, recrossed the stile, and made our way back along a portion of our outgoing route, turning right just over a creek, to pick up the return route, which clings to the southern (shaded) side of the ridgeline.



After our customary afternoon tea, we were back in Wangaratta about 3pm, having enjoyed an excellent walk with excellent company. [Chris McLaughlin]

Mitta Mitta – New Year 2015-2016

This interesting outing was made up of a group of walks around Mitta Mitta township, and these were completed on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. The walks were, the Mitta Mitta River Walk, Deep Gully and the Upper Pioneer Trail Walks on the 31st, and the Pioneer Mine and Mount Welcome Walks on New Year's Day.

The information for these walks can be found in the Mitta Mitta walks brochure, available at the General Store, and at mitta.com.au.

The township of Mitta Mitta was founded in the gold rush days of the late 1800s, and is situated at the confluence of the river of the same name, and the scenic Snowy Creek. Both of these streams rise on the Bogong High Plains, and until Dartmouth Dam was constructed in the early 1980's, this was the only unregulated major tributary of the Murray River.

Starting out from the Mitta Mitta Historic Park for the New Year's Eve Walk, we had flat, undulating, terrain along the riverside, then undulating terrain alongside Deep Gully, which leads uphill, away from the River.



Some of the group of ten returned to the township via Deep Gully, whilst some continued east, taking the Upper Pioneer Trail, with its great views over the Mitta Mitta Valley.

It was then down to the serious business of welcoming in the New Year down at the Mitta Mitta Hotel.

Here we enjoyed the company of several hundred other visitors, and the band of club member Michael Braendler – *Liam Blunt's Funky Rhythm Train* playing to a good crowd, dancing til the music finished in the wee hours of 1st January, 2016

For the club's first walk of the New Year, there were two walking groups, those who tackled the local loop, known as the Pioneer Mine Walk, and the more energetic who headed up to Mount Welcome (600m).

The Pioneer Mine Walk covers about a kilometre, and leads through a former mining site, with some interesting artefacts at hand, as well as some interesting micro-climate driven vegetation changes.

The Mount Welcome walk began with covering some of yesterday's walk, and then swinging off to the sign-posted turn-off. From here, a fairly constant climb took us to Mount Disappointment, and then onwards and upwards for lunch at the top of Mount Welcome.

From here, we followed Disappointment Track back down to the Omeo Highway; this provided great views, albeit with a steep descent.

Once at the Highway, we had an easy four kilometres to cover, back to the township, having made a 600m ascent/descent.

Although short, this was a hard walk, with many stops for a rest, and to have a drink.

The walk is better suited to a cooler day, probably in the autumn as the historic Snowy Creek Valley is a blaze of colour at this time.

[Jeanette Farquhar]

Killawarra Forest, January 12

This was our first mid-week walk of the New Year, and led for about seven kilometres, through very pleasing bushland.

Killawarra Forest forms the most northerly part of the Warby Ranges, and is renowned for its springtime wildflower display.

Setting off from The Camp, we followed Spring Track which formed a circuit, including Tarrawalla Track. The route was very flat; with pleasant scenery but no flowers of note. Lunch was enjoyed under the gazebo back at the Camp.

[Pat Kuhle]

Pfeiffers Winery, Wahgunyah, around Lake Moodemere, and return, January 17

Lake Moodemere is located a few kilometres downstream of Corowa/Wahgunyah, and is part of a cut-off meander of the Murray River. This is a popular area for bird watching, and for water sports, and was the replacement venue for our Sunday walk in January – the original venue being Mount Emu, near Carboor.

Lots of "7s" were involved on this enjoyable walk – there were 17 walkers on the 17th January, and a certain superb leader called Pat was one day short of 70 years!!

The group, which included one 10 year old, and our two members from Deniliquin, walked clockwise around the ancient lake, and enjoyed morning tea at the boathouse.

Our break included the consumption of gorgeous cup cakes, with candles for the birthday gal, who must be the fittest 70 year old in the North East, and maybe in Australia?



We then followed the track alongside the Murray for a section, with many holiday campers being observed, clearly enjoying river activities.

The walkers arrived back at the winery, via another vineyard, and were then able to enjoy their very welcome Pat styled cuppa, and an art show which included an item by our hard working committee member Karen.

[Andy Kimber]

Ovens River, Bright — Cherry and Canyon Trails, January 30

The Ovens River rises north of Mount Hotham, and from its headwaters flows past the towns of Bright, Myrtleford and Wangaratta before joining the Murray River in the backwaters of Lake Mulwala. The River has carved out a scenic gorge alongside the township of Bright, and this was the venue for our little adventure.

Fourteen members strode out in lovely warm conditions along the beautiful Ovens River (Burwang to the original inhabitants) .

The Cherry Walk heads off to the east of the central park in Bright, and excellent information is provided along the track, informing walkers of the flora and history of the area.



The 5km track runs on both sides of the River, the waters of which looked so enticing, particularly when we stopped for a drink break on a soft green bank.

The crew then trudged west from the other main car park, and completed the other easy 5km to the west, towards Porepunkah.

Lunch was enjoyed at a quite delightful spot in the Gorge, seated on rock slabs, and in the shade, looking over our special local stream.

Details of this, and other walks in, and around, Bright, Harrietteville, Myrtleford and Wandiligong can be found in the walks brochures produced by the Alpine Shire, and available at the TICs in Bright and Myrtleford. [Andy Kimber]

GPS Training Session, February 3

Sixteen walks were present at our first GPS training session, held at Hamilton Park. A BBQ tea was enjoyed by many, then from 6.30pm onwards, Chris McLaughlin used the club GPS devices, and copies of the Magellan manual, to instruct club members on the basics of how to use a GPS.

By the end of the 90 or so minutes most participants had some idea of the basic operations of the GPS devices, and had walked around within the vicinity of the BBQ area using the GPS's.

Participants mostly came to the conclusion that these devices do have a safety component, which does make them useful in bushland. They seem to be useful to backtrack, and also to pinpoint your exact location within a few metres.

All present agreed that this was a helpful introductory session, and much more practice is needed during walks to learn more details



of their usage. Some took the GPS home, with the manual, and will study the manual to improve their familiarity.

Thank you to Chris McLaughlin for his presentation, and untold patience with participants. Where else would we have an author of a book on GPS's giving a talk to club members – we were very privileged. [Bob Shaw]

[Message from Chris – “Many thanks to all of those club members who attended the first GPS Training Session at Hamilton Park last night (3/2) - it was a pleasure to pass on some of my knowledge. Many Thanks also to Bob Shaw for organising a great venue. There will be follow-up exercises, on actual walks, during the year.]

Wagirra Trail, February 10

Albury City Council has been extending Wagirra Trail, which basically runs downstream from Norieul Park to Horseshoe Lagoon, by building a connection path that links Wagirra with the Wonga Wetlands.

So, after an early morning start (to beat the heat) the walkers 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 close by.



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 Yindiamurra Sculpture Trail.

Prior to lunch, we completed a 2.5km loop around some of the wetlands, and then, after lunch, set out for Norieul Park, via a slightly different route. [Chris McLaughlin]

Harrietteville and Mount Feathertop, February 13-14

This great weekend kicked off with twenty two club members gathering at the Harrietteville Caravan Park on the Friday night.

Joy was short-lived, however, as we soon learnt that Saturday was to be a day of Total Fire Ban. Traditionally, the club has not walked on such days, so Saturday was spent on informal exploration of the town, and its environs.

Some walked out along the West Ovens Track, finding many relics, and evidence, of the gold mining era on the way. Others checked out the local ice cream parlour, and others went for a swim at the former Tronoh Gold Dredge site.

Sunday dawned bright and sunny, with a predicted top of about 18c, so there was plenty of hype as we left for the mountain at 6.45am.



As usual, The Razorback provided us with an excellent walk, and everyone was impressed with the scenery, particularly the blue haze 'range-upon-range' views to the west.

It took about four hours for us all to get to The Cross, and from here some headed up to Mount Feathertop, others down to Federation Hut, others to have a look at the Molly Hill Memorial.

The group then split in half, with 11 heading down Bungalow Spur, directly to Harrietville, and the rest of us returning to the vehicles at the Great Alpine Road.

Overall, an excellent weekend, with one of Australia's great iconic walks as the centrepiece.

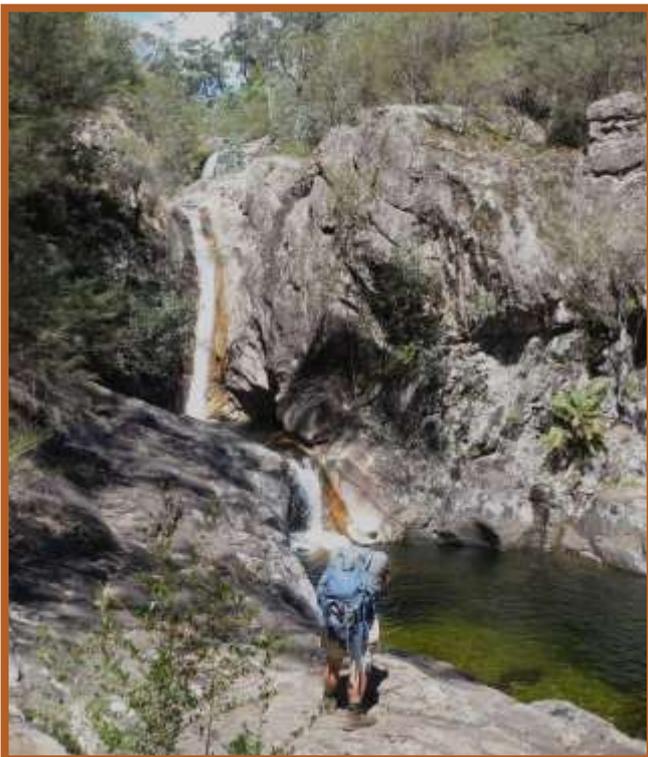
Unfortunately, the change of plan (because of the fire ban) meant that some members could not join us on The Razorback, so for many reasons this is a walk to be revisited before too long.

[Chris McLaughlin]

Rollasons and Eurobin Falls, Mount Buffalo National Park, February 28

This 9.5km walk began at the Eurobin Creek Picnic Area, and from here the nine of us followed "The Big Walk" up towards Eurobin Point. We then followed the designated walking track to the Upper and Lower Rollasons Falls, where we had lunch.

From Rollasons, we returned to the cars, and then drove up the



main access road, so as to access Lady Bath Falls, and the Upper and Lower Eurobin Falls.

Overall, this was a medium/hard walk, particularly the first 3-4km of The Big Walk, so cooling off in the creeks was very refreshing. The venue would be a great place to return to in springtime, when the various Falls would be at their best.

[Cecily Fletcher]

MISC NEWS —————

Bullawah Cultural Trail

An Elders Rock has been placed at Apex Park to honour local community leaders every year on the anniversary of National Reconciliation Week.

It's an idea thought of by the late Uncle Wally Cooper, who passed away last December, and it will form part of the Bullawah Cultural Trail, a path that stretches 2.4km along the Ovens River in Wangaratta. The \$180,000 trail will tell a story of the area's Aboriginal heritage, and how a local tribe has lived historically, and to the present day.

Uncle Wally was a highly respected Elder whose pride in his Aboriginal heritage and message for hope for the future inspired many.

Large granite rocks, which will form the foundations for the sculptures, have also be placed along the trail. Artists Anderson Hunt and Paul Blizzard of Wangaratta have selected rocks from Mawsons Quarry. The rocks will be home to their much anticipated sculptural art-works they are developing with local Elders.

The Bullawah Cultural Trail is due for completion this August.

[condensed from the Wangaratta Chronicle, February 5]

Helen Curtis, OAM

Helen Curtis, a founder of the Warby Range Bushwalkers, has been recognized posthumously with an Order of Australia medal in the latest Australia Day Honours list. Unfortunately Helen did not survive to receive her honour. Helen passed away after a long illness last April.

Helen was an avid environmentalist and loved the outdoors. Anywhere in nature, she enjoyed. Naturally bushwalking was part of that. In her early bushwalking days, she used to backpack all over the mountains. She loved the Wangaratta District and was a driving force in the establishment of the Warby Range State Park, later to become a National Park. She also was instrumental in establishing many of the walking tracks in the Warbies, which we as a Club now enjoy.

Helen Curtis led the very first walk of the Club, appropriately in the Warbies, in 1980. She was awarded a Life Membership of the Warby Range Bushwalkers many years ago.

What a shame Helen isn't with us to celebrate her much deserved OAM. We send our congratulations to Helen's husband, Peter, and their family. [Adrian Twitt]

Drivers and Walkers needed

Adele's AAWT Walks, Mount Speculation to Mount Skene (Saturday, 12th -Thursday, 17th March) has scope for an easy day walk to Mount Skene. We require people to pick us from the Jamieson—Licola Road on the 17th, and if you would like to help with this, then there are a couple of options.

Either drive to Mount Skene on the Wednesday, then walk into meet us; or drive to Mount Skene Tuesday afternoon, then walk into Rumpff Saddle (about one kilometre), camp, and then walk into meet us on the Wednesday. The driving is on a sealed, or metalled, bush road, no problems in the dry, and it is all very scenic.

We also need drivers for the following stage of the AAWT, Mount Skene to Stronachs Camp (March 25, to March 29). More details from Adele, 5727 9501.

Victoria's Red Gum Parks

Parks Victoria, with the community, is developing a management plan for Victoria's River Red Gum parks and reserves.

The management plan will guide the protection of Victoria's River Red Gum floodplain forests and wetlands, cultural sites and explore opportunities for tourism and recreation.

Parks Victoria is working with all interested Traditional Owner groups in the River Red Gum planning area. The planning process will ensure Traditional Owners can provide input on their aspirations for future use and involvement in management of their traditional lands.



Community meetings will be held in 2016 in the region's major centres. Dates and locations will be advertised in local media and on the Parks Victoria website: www.parks.vic.gov.au/redgumplan

Public submissions will be accepted and carefully considered in preparing the plan.

The draft plan will be available for public consultation in late 2016 on the Parks Victoria website. The management plan will cover the Red Gum forests along the Victorian side of the Murray River between Wodonga and the South Australia border.

Some of the areas to be included in the plan are: Gunbower National Park, Hattah-Kulkyne National Park, Warby-Ovens National Park, Kings Billabong Park, Leaghur State Park, Lower Goulburn National Park, Murray-Kulkyne Park, Nyah-Vinifera Park and sections of the Murray - Sunset National Park.

For further information, contact Glenda Hall (our club delegate on the planning team); Parks Victoria Information Centre: 13 1963; visit www.parks.vic.gov.au/redgumplan, or email the planning team at redgumplan@parks.vic.gov.au

Help Bill Rosser

Bill Rosser, a former very active member of this club, and now a life member, is in need of help to get out for a short walk each

day. Bill is a resident at St Johns, and can be contacted via Marianne Wilkie on 0439 943 903.

Week Away -2017

Planning has already started for our Week Away in 2017. At the Committee Meeting on February 8th, it was agreed that the northern part of Kosciuszko National Park would be an excellent venue for us.

This incorporates some of the best features of the Park, both natural and man-made, covering places such as Kiandra, Yarrangobilly and Talbingo.

Bob Shaw and Adrian Twitt are the first nominees for the organising committee, and they can be contacted if you want to help with the running of this great annual event..

Top Crossing Hut

Members of the Wangaratta 4x4 Club spent the weekend of January 16-17 refurbishing the ageing, and partially vandalised, Top Crossing Hut. The Hut is on the King River, not far upstream of the upstream end of Lake William Hovell.

This is a popular camping area, the Hut having been built in the mid 1950s by dog trappers Frank Burrows, Nifty McDonald and Ken Bustle.



The working group replaced some old weather beaten mini corrugated iron, and a support beam, with replacement (second-hand) mini-corrugated, iron similar to what was originally on the hut, fixed up and re-mortared the fireplace inside and repainted the outside of the hut.

Walking in East Gippsland

Like many other shires in Victoria, East Gippsland Shire has a handy 'walks guide' on offer that can be picked from any of the TICs in the area, and via their website.

For more details of some really excellent walks in this great part of Victoria, see www.discovereastgippsland.com.au/images/uploads/activities/Great_Walks_46508.pdf .

New Cycling Venues

The State Government has announced a \$205,000 grant that will be used to partly support the construction of a bike path from the Winton Wetlands to Glenrowan.

Other bike paths / rail trails to share in the funding include Beechworth to Yackandandah, Yackandandah to Huon, and Wodonga's central business district.



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Committee Nomination Form

I hereby nominate _____

for the position of _____

on the 2016--17 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