

WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS

fun, fitness & friendship



NEWSLETTER 1 (Jan-March), 2015

www.warbybushwalkers.org.au

It has been wonderful to have so many walkers join us over recent months. Thanks to the Walks Leaders, who have provided such an adventurous and varied program exploring our beautiful area over winter and spring.

Next quarter (January – March) nine different Leaders have provided a program specially designed to “beat the heat”. We’ve gone early / we’ve gone late / we’ve gone up the mountains and down on the rivers!

There are some challenging walks and some gentle strolls on offer as well as many opportunities to socialise – something we do well.

Thanks to Adrian and Kerri for once again arranging high country Lodge weekends – a real summer walking and social treat.

Reminder: Please book in with walks leaders (a day or two ahead of the walk if possible) especially if car shuffling needs to be organised.

Looking ahead: Adrian and Adele have already started planning for a weekend of walks (possibly in May) in the Barmah Forest and Wetlands, with camping or cabin accommodation. An interesting area close to home we haven’t yet explored. Members suggestions for new walks or locations are always welcome.

Happy Walking – See you on the Track – Karen

Warby Range—North to South

Section Three: Taminick Gap (Ryans Lookout), to Mount Glenrowan, September 13

In the third section of our North-South Trek, 22 walkers headed south from Taminick Gap along the main Ridge Track to complete the last stage of our traverse of the Warby Ranges. In fine weather, we once again enjoyed superb views, and the prolific wild flowers. We even disturbed a sluggish black snake!

Lunch was taken at the top of Mount Glenrowan, looking down on



Glenrowan township, and the snow-capped Alps beyond.

On the return walk we descended Chick Hill (where we watched a big brown snake slide down a steep rocky section) and ambled back to the Gap via Taaffe Road, where Pat’s table of drinks, and fresh biscuits awaited us.

Mount Samaria, September 24

Mount Samaria State Park covers 7600 hectares, mostly at sub-alpine altitudes (700-900m) with Mount Samaria (949m) being the highest peak.

For this outing, 17 walkers had a considerable drive to the Spring Creek campsite, and from there we walked a loop covering the terrain from Spring Creek Ruins to Rocky Knoll, Braking Station Ruins, Mount Samaria, Wild Dog Creek Campsite and back to Spring Creek Ruins.



A steep climb on bush tracks was needed to conquer Rocky Knoll, which was the high point of the trip.

The crew then walked across to Mount Samaria, which at 953m has a 360 degree view, with the most obvious feature being Lake Nillahcootie close by. The descent was made via the Wild Dog Creek camping area.

Overall, about 13kms were covered in glorious spring weather, and everywhere there were masses of wildflowers. At one stage three curious wallabies stared at the group, exploring a rarely visited area.

Grampians Week Away, October 6-12

Our annual week away was held at Halls Gap from Monday, October 6 to Sunday, October 12 – and aimed to explore the non fire-affected areas of the Grampians.

Twenty six members attended the Annual Week Away for 2014, staying at Norval Uniting Church Lodge in Halls Gap. The accom-

modation comprised a number of beds and bunks in each room, with an en-suite toilet and shower. There was an industrial kitchen, a cool room, storage room for food, and a very large eating area and meeting room.

Members arrived on the Monday, and walks were organised for every day from Tuesday October 7th, until Saturday October 12th inclusive.

Walks completed, included

- Balconies (24 walkers)
- The Pinnacle (two walkers)
- Mount William Summit (22)
- Mount William Car park to Halls Gap Road (10)
- Mount William to Jimmy's Creek (9)
- Glenisla Shelter and Manja Shelter (7)
- Bainggug (2)
- Mout Sturgeon (22)
- Mount Abrupt (5)
- Sundial Lakeview (20)
- Sundial to the Pinnacle (15)
- Sundial to Sundial Peak (10)
- Mount Rosea (12)

Other walks completed during the six days were the Central Pinnacle area, around Halls Gap and Sundial area, rated as Easy, with about 20 walkers taking part.

Each day the Committee had planned the walks so that all walkers would complete the easier walks together as a group. Then as each day progressed the Easy walks would be done early, and the Medium and Hard graded walks would then be undertaken by the stronger walkers.



Overall, there were about 10 Easy walks, 4 Easy/Medium walks, 4 Medium walks and 2 Hard graded walks completed. Participants seemed to enjoy this way of walking more as a group wherever possible.

Members seemed very happy with the facilities at the venue. They were also extremely pleased with the location, and some were very surprised at the diversity and extensiveness of this whole Grampians area.



There were many species of wildflowers to satisfy those with a biology interest, as well as those who were interested in the human and geological history of this part of western Victoria.

At the end of the six days, an evaluation sheet was completed by all participants to gain feedback about the meals, the accommodation, the walks program, as well as the location.

The results will be published on the website, and will be used to assist in the planning for our Week Away to the Newcastle area in August 2015.

Hume and Hovell Walking Track—Buddong Falls to Henry Angel Trackhead, October 3-6

The Hume and Hovell Walking Track stretches over 440km between Yass and Albury and allows walkers to basically follow the route of explorers Hamilton Hume and William Hovell on their expedition to Port Phillip in 1824.

The track starts at Cooma Cottage, on the outskirts of Yass, and finishes at the Hovell Tree on the banks of the Murray River in Albury. For this section, after meeting up in Holbrook, we all headed for Batlow, where we were warmly welcomed by the caravan park owners.

Saturday saw us meeting up with Geoff at Laurel Hill, and setting out for Buddong Falls. After several attempts, and 4x4 driving lessons, we arrived at our destination and morning tea was had at Buddong Hut.

We misplaced the track shortly after this, and just as we found the track a group of distraught trail bike riders found us. One had two broken wrists, and was in shock, none of them knew where they were, and nobody had phone reception.

The only time I haven't taken the epi-rbs, as both clubs needed them for other walks; a lesson here I think.

Anyway we sorted them out as best we could, and they headed on while we headed in the other direction to find Geoff ready for the car shuffle, and moving camp to Tumbarrumba. That night we met up with our trail biker friends at the pub. They had eventually made it out to Laurel Hill, and the ambulance had taken their friend to Wagga, having given him a healthy dose of morphine.

Next morning we were woken up by a circling medivac helicopter which landed next to the camp ground. Geoff and I dropped the ute off near Junction Campsite, and off we all headed to Paddys River Dam. Lots of people were at the campsite, and we were glad of our choice to stay at Tumbarrumba.

At the Coffee Pot, a wandering whippet caught up with the group, and decided to join us for the rest of the days walk, which proved longer than anticipated, as I misplaced the ute.

Another lesson learned, take a GPS reading of where you put your vehicle in a strange place. The poor dog, answering to various names, walked 15km with us, managing to find all sorts of wildlife along the way. It is amazing how many hidden animals one walks past, and even more amazing how fast a wombat can run.

Eventually we found the ute, the dog was taken in by the Caravan Park, and Sylvia and Trevor finished off a very long car shuffle. Thank you so much you guys.



Monday morning we were again woken up by the medivac helicopter; Tumbarrumba is a busy place. Only had a small car shuffle, and Graeme, who was not walking for the day, helped with this one. The walk took us through the Burra Goldfields, and past many interesting relics and signage, a flock of yellow tailed cockies was also encountered.

Graeme met us at Henry Angel, the car shuffle completed, and we all headed home.

Thanks to Therese, Graeme, Sylvia, Loris and Trevor for accompanying me, and special thanks to Geoff for helping with the car shuffles.

Mount Barambogie, October 19

Mount Barambogie is located about 15km south-west of Chiltern, stands at about 500m, and was the destination of the 13 walkers on this very enjoyable springtime walk.

Having a parked our vehicles about a kilometre west of Gravel Pit Road, we headed west on Barambogie Road, before swinging to the south on Bear Track. This led us to PX Track, where we went slightly further to the west, before cutting across country to Mount Barambogie Road.

The ascent of Mount Barambogie itself led us to a great lunch spot, and we enjoyed some superb views, as well as very comfortable seating in the rocky surrounds.



The descent from the Mount involved some more cross country work, and we were soon down at PX Track, and on our way back to the vehicles.

An unmarked track off PX Track then took us through some excellent woodlands, and from here we cut across a low saddle to some interesting rock-gardens, and then a gradual descent back to the start.

Overall, a very interesting walk of about 15km, with a variety of on-track, and off-track sections. Scenery was consistently excellent, as was the company and the wildflower display.

Eldorado to Mount Pilot, October 25

On a warm morning, 10 intrepid walkers set out from Eldorado to walk to the summit of Mount Pilot, 22km away. Although warm and dry, the forest was still green, and flowering plants peppered the bush along the way.

The walk utilised a number a well formed forestry tracks, and was undulating, with a couple of steeper pinches towards the end. Swamp wallabies were sighted, and bird song heard.

Having crossed the swing bridge, our local leader, Ian, led us along Lonies Gap Road, then Davitts Swamp Track; there was still water in this attractive wet land. The group headed north on Reedy Creek Track, through an attractive gully, and over small rises to the Old Coach Road, where a shady spot was selected for lunch.



After an unsuccessful search for Allan's glasses, the group continued on to Gidleys Track. A steep pinch, up and over, then brought the walkers to the Chiltern-Beechworth Road, and the track to the top of Mount Pilot. The walk had been completed within six hours – very good going in the warm conditions.

After enjoying the view of the surrounding plains and hills from the summit, a welcome cold drink and cuppa left in the cars near the summit was appreciated.

The drive back to Eldorado, through the forest, flushed out a large monitor lizard, and another wallaby; alas Allan's glasses were not to be found.

A warm and dusty, but well satisfied group, decided this walk should be repeated – perhaps in cooler weather.

Australian Alpine Walking Track, Cowombat Flat—Tine Mine Hut, November 1-5

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 began with a long drive in the rain, via Corryong and Benambra, to the car park near Cowombat Flat.

Fortunately, the rain cleared after lunch, and a very undulating trail got us to Cowombat Flat at about 5pm.

The next day dawned cold, but clear, and the group set off for the Tine Mine Hut.



On Monday, we walked to Tin Mine Falls, and by Tuesday, we had conquered Mount Pilot, found the source of the Murray River, and the elusive Border Cairn (marking the border between NSW and Victoria), and returned to Cowombat Flat.

Overall, a very successful trip—a difficult section of the AAWT had been covered, without the need for a huge car shuffle.

Lake Moodemere, November 4

Twenty-eight members and guests of the Warby Range Bushwalkers took the opportunity on Tuesday to complete the annual Cup Day walk, this time around Lake Moodemere near Wahgunyah.

The group met at Pfeiffers Winery, to walk the ten kilometre circuit around the lake. The Club was delighted to welcome a number

of guests, including some from the Wahgunyah, Rutherglen and Yarrowonga areas. The youngest participant was Danny Rodwell, who at ten months, was pushed around the course in a sturdy stroller which handled the ruts, the tall grass and other impediments, without mishap.

The circuit, which has been on the Club's program on other occasions, is a popular one, with much variety, including shaded red gum woodlands, vineyards, the River Murray, and of course the glittering waters of the lake itself.

Morning tea was held by the lakeside, watching a lone water skier towed by a speed boat. The final leg of the walk passes through private property, leading to a delightful bridge over a lagoon at Pfeiffers Winery, in which, could be seen large fish, and many turtles.



With great rapidity, a gourmet spread of shared food appeared for lunch, but not before an assortment of wine was selected from the winery to wash it down. The extensive lawns and shady trees made it the perfect place for such a delicious repast.

Then, at the appropriate time, cup cakes appeared with a horse's name hidden on each. Eager walkers made their selection, and discovered the name of their horse for the Cup. So, with great eagerness, we all listened to the Melbourne Cup. The winner, Therese Rodwell, accepted the perpetual trophy, presented by last year's winner, Jillian Anderson.

Everyone voted it a great walk, and an enjoyable social occasion – one to be repeated next year.

Granite Spur/Eskdale Spur Track to Mount Bogong, November 8

For this great walk, 24 of us met at Mountain Creek camping ground at the base of the Staircase at 8.00am. We then proceeded in 4WD vehicles 6.6 km uphill from Mountain Creek to Trappers Gap, where there are roads to the east leading to Mitta Mitta, and to the north to Mount Emu. A further two kilometres took us to another car park where there is a sign "Mount Bogong 2.5km."

To get to Mount Bogong, and the West Peak (a four hour walk) we proceeded uphill for half an hour to the Michel Hut turnoff to the north. From here we continued uphill for another 20 minutes to another turnoff to the Hut.

We were now on Eskdale Spur, where an uphill walk, above the tree line for one hour, brought us to Mount Bogong Summit.

Heading off in a westerly direction for three kilometres from the Summit took us to the West Peak. For two thirds of this distance

we followed a track, then where the track swings to the south and loses altitude, we needed to walk overland across the alpine meadows towards the West Peak.

The last climb up West Peak is fairly strenuous, but well worth the effort as the views from the west peak are panoramic. You can see Mount Buffalo, the Kiewa Valley to Dederang, Mount Feather-top and adjacent peaks, Mount McKay and adjacent peaks as well as Spion Kopje and the rest of the Bogong High Plains, Mount Feather-top and Mount Buller.

To the east you can see Mount Kosciuszko and the Thredbo peaks.



The return journey from the peak of Mount Bogong to the Granite Spur Car Park took 70 – 80 minutes, and the rest of the walk, to the Granite Spur 4WD Car park, and the second car park took about 40 minutes.

Some walkers completed the trip just to Bogong Summit (2 walkers), some completed Bogong and the West Peak (15 walkers), some completed Bogong and Cleve Cole Hut (7 walkers), whilst seven walkers completed the lot – Mount Bogong, West Peak and Cleve Cole, all in one day.

Mount Howitt, November 22-23

This was an overnight backpacking trip to Mount Howitt, an interesting part of the Great Dividing Range, to the south-east of Mount Buller.

We started walking near the Howqua River and climbed up a steep track to just below the spectacular Crosscut Saw. Camp was made at the saddle below the ridge in fairly sheltered conditions, and close to a very vocal dingo.

On Sunday we scrambled along the rocky ridge and appreciated the great views of this wilderness country before leaving our packs near the summit of Mount Howitt.



We then ventured across the large snow grass plains to the superbly sited MacAllister Springs Hut.

The return trip, down the very steep Howitt Spur, and back to the car was completed by 5pm. A small fit group had covered 28km on this hard trip, in quite varied weather conditions.

Grasstree Walk, November 29

This walk began with an early start on the popular Sunrise Loop, but then after climbing to the high point and surveying several four metre Grass Tree specimens, we headed south down Colson's Track in the Taminick Gap Road direction.

When the track headed into private farmland, we pushed through heavy vegetation along the National Park fence line, and then into a gorgeous hidden valley, which contains probably the most prolific stand of Grass Trees in the Warby Ovens NP.

Kangaroos were everywhere as we completed the seven kilometres back to the Sunrise car park.

Despite the very warm conditions, this short, but varied walk in a rarely visited area, proved to be most enjoyable.



New Walking Tracks

Several new walking tracks are in the process of development in the North-east—here's what's on offer . . .

1. The Alpine Shire is nearing completion of a shared (bike/walk) trail from Bright to Harrietville. This 22km trail will be sealed from Bright to Germantown (the Tawonga Gap turn-off) and from Harrietville to Stony Creek, and follows the scenic Ovens River quite closely.
2. North of the border, Albury City Council is extending Wagirra Trail, which basically runs downstream from Norieul Park to Horseshoe Lagoon, and is about 8km each way. There are some excellent wetlands in this area, and the City Council is currently building a connection path that will link Wagirra with the Wonga Wetlands (at present you have to walk alongside the Riverina Highway to get from Horseshoe Lagoon to Wonga).



3. Closer to home, Wangaratta Rural City Council is to build a link pathway from Hamilton Park to the northern side of Glenrowan, near the caravan park.

President's Column

This is the 6th Presidents Column for 2014, and the text shown here is also located on our website..

It is most encouraging to see a number of aspects of our club functioning so well at the moment. There have been a number of new members join us on walks this spring so our Membership numbers are very healthy at the moment. Similarly the numbers attending many of our spring time walks has been phenomenal.

The numbers on some of our Easy Graded, and more social type walks have been very encouraging, and even the Hard Graded walks have attracted large numbers.

There seem to be a combination of reasons for this increase in club activity – the better spring weather? The variety and breadth of our current Walks Programs?

The efforts of many members in encouraging others to join our club? Andy Kimber's meritorious job at local publicity, the publicity on our website and/or the distribution of our new pamphlet to many suitable locations?

The conviviality and welcoming nature of our members in talking to and mentoring new members? Whatever the reason(s) it is most encouraging to be part of such a club at the moment.

Our \$3,000.00 Council Community grant is being spent wisely. We



have finished our Website in-service, our assistance with the Trinity welfare organisation has almost been finalised, and our publicity efforts through our very professional new pamphlet have all been a success.

To complete the spending of our grant we are conducting a "First Aid in the Bush" in service free for any members on December 8th starting at 6.00pm at the local Wang Library Meeting Room. Contact Karen Davis or Bob Shaw for more details. Every member has been contacted via an e-mail or by snail mail about this event.

With large numbers attending all our walks at the moment the Committee is asking members to book in for walks as soon as they know they will be attending. Walks Leaders need to often solve a few logistics problems, like cars required, 4WD vehicles perhaps needed to ferry walkers and so on. Hence could members please ensure that they do not leave the contact with the prospective Walks Leader to the very last moment to minimise any hassles.

We have a number of social events on the program that are coming up soon – there is the traditional Christmas party at Judy and Bob Shaw's, 16 Kingfisher Lane Hamilton Park on Friday December 19th. We have our Annual General Meeting at the Vine on Monday March 16th and we have an interesting guest speaker lined up for this night.

There could be a number of personnel changes on the club Committee for 2015, so I am urging club members to consider themselves and other members for positions on this Committee. It is always encouraging if members join the Committee, add value to our club, then see fit to resign from this Committee to give others the chance to make their mark on our club.

Those who attended the Grampians Week Away in October completed an evaluation sheet at the end of that week. The feedback was very positive, as you can see from the report below by Peter Murray to our Committee .

REPORT FROM THE GRAMPAINS WEEK-AWAY COMMITTEE

Participants evaluations of the above week was highly favourable with some making useful suggestions. Evaluation was based on a rating of:1-10.

1. Accommodation (79% rated it 8 out of 10 or above)
2. How the walks met expectations (90% rated it 9 out of 10 or above)
3. Adequacy of walks' briefings (81% rated it 9 out of 10 or above)

4. Satisfaction with meals and catering (84% rated 9 out of 10 or above)
5. Enjoyment of entertainment (67% rated 9 out of 10 or above; some confusion here as the game night was cancelled. Others regarded the Travel talks useful, not necessarily for enjoyment.

SOME WORTHY SUGGESTIONS

1. When possible, the walk leader will indicate a time for lunch at the briefing.
2. Walks co-ordinator could explain more the nature of the walk especially if it is rated hard.
3. A generous supply of maps/routes be available.
4. After a day's walking most are happy to relax and talk rather have entertainment. Retain the supper and walks/travel talks.
5. Centrality of the accommodation to town facilities appreciated.
6. Restless or disturbing sleepers might have the option to opt out of a room.

NEXT WEEK AWAY

1. Glenda and Irene have indicated they will serve on the next committee to ensure continuity (and efficiency).
2. Lesley is willing to act as walks co-ordinator.

Bob Shaw, President

Social Snippets

If you have noticed President Bob Shaw being a little harder to find, he has been in Melbourne for the month of November tending to his mother who is having radiation therapy. Bob has been travelling back home each weekend, and led a great walk to Mount Bogong during the month. We wish Lillian successful treatment, and a speedy recovery.

Prior to Lillian's treatment, Bob and Judy Shaw had a very enjoyable extended walking holiday in the French Alps - the envy of many of us who have not ventured into that domain.

While we are focused on walking holidays, it's worth mentioning that Glenda Hall and Irene Knox are in Patagonia for a walking and tourist holiday which will include a visit to Cape Horn - lucky people. They prefixed their trip with a visit to the Amazonian jungle.

Margot O'Halloran had a rewarding walk along the Larapinta Trail in Central Australia early in the winter, while recently Judy Lardner traversed a substantial section of the Camino enroute to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Judy, unfortunately has had to relocate to Melbourne to support family, so we may not see her on our walks again.

Kerri and Paul Davenport had a great time in North America on their trip. Paul's excuse was to go to the Oshkosh, Nebraska, air show where those who love playing around in light aircraft can indulge themselves to their heart's content.

Both Kerri and Paul spent time walking in the great national parks of the Rockies region of the US and Canada, including Glacier National Park, Banff and Jasper Parks. Kerri also spent time with a friend, climbing the flanks of Mount Rainier and Mount St Helens.

Helen and Adrian Twitt were more focused on the wedding cele-



bration of their son, Craig, in Schorndorf, Germany, recently, than walking. They did have time to tackle a cliff-top walk along the Dorset coast of England, several walks in Scotland, a climb to mountain top in Germany (which to their amazement had a kiosk at the top - closed for the autumn). On their return journey home, they also gained a sweat-climbing up through a rainforest in Brunei, which they accessed by long-boat.

John and Helen Van Riet are in NZ - not for a walking holiday, but an extended time to see relatives, and enjoy the scenery, while Jeanette Farquar is planning to go to NZ for Christmas. Peter and Kate Murray have had a trip up to the Gulf Country, and Chris and Yvonne McLaughlin have, among other trips, been up to Cape York and Kakadu, where they completed the renowned Barrk Walk.



Rod and Karen Davis, by all accounts, thoroughly enjoyed their recent trip to Africa, spending much of the time in South Africa and Tanzania. Rod was especially impressed by a game park totally run by the local African community.

Hasi Vaez, who as a new member, has participated in a number of walks this year, is back in Iran visiting her family there.

All these comings and goings makes the author feel exhausted! It reflects on a very mobile, and quite adventurous Club.

Several of those mentioned missed the Grampians week away. By all accounts it was a great success - a very enjoyable social week as well as providing lots of varied walks. Some have described the event as 'the best ever'. That creates some pressure for the planning of our next week away in August 2015, which will be based on the central coast of NSW.

2014 REVIEW



APRIL

Lake William Hovell—27km, 17 walkers

JUNE

MacFarlanes Hill—14km, 13 walkers



AUGUST

Tawonga Gap—21km, 19 walkers

JULY—SEPTEMBER

Warby Ranges north-south in three stages

40km, 32walkers

