



NEWSLETTER 1 (January), 2019

warbybushwalkers.org.au

Welcome to the first newsletter of the 2019 Walking Year, and what a great year we have to look forward to. As well as a nicely varied Walks Program there are two 'not to be missed events' - a weekend at Falls Creek, and our annual week away, taking in the great alpine scenery at Thredbo.

This years Christmas BBQ will be held on December 7, starting at 6.30pm, at the Murrumgee-Bowmans Hall, accessible by turning off the Great Alpine Road (or Buckland Gap Road) onto the Murrumgee-Bowmans Road.

Specifically, from Wangaratta, take the Great Alpine Road, and drive 31 km to the Bowman-Whorouly intersection, then turn left onto Bowman's Rd (signposted Bowman-Murrumgee Hall).

BYO drinks and meat for a BBQ. Crockery, cutlery and chairs are provided. Contact Judy on 5766 2773 to book, and to bring either a sweet or a salad to share.

McFarlanes Hill, Wodonga : September 27

We had perfect weather (25c, and a nice easterly breeze) for this 12km adventure, and having left Wangaratta at about 8.35am, we were on the trail by 9.45am.

The small 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 leads 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" (also shown as Klinge Hill on some maps) where we had lunch amidst great views.

From here we skirted around, and down, to the north, passing through a rotary gate, and then followed a line of timber back the roadway referred to above. Turning left at the roadway, we then crossed over a small creek, and then turned right for a few hundred metres, before cutting across country to pick up the return route.

We were back in Wangaratta at about 3pm, having enjoyed an excellent day in the bush. [Chris]

Strathbogrie Surprise : October 7

On Sunday Oct 7, nine walkers participated in my Strathbogries Surprise. The first surprise was that everyone who was due to meet at Rotary Park by 8am was on time, despite daylight saving beginning. Would the loss of an hour's sleep play havoc with this group? Only time would tell, with the estimated 14km hike on good dirt roads and four wheel drive tracks.



Two cars left Wangaratta, and Cecily who was driving all of the ladies, went via Warby Range Road to collect Anne. This is all part of the new pickup from your door courtesy service being offered by the club. I continued to drive the blokes to Benalla, where we were meeting Rob, and new casual member Deb, a friend of Anne's.

This was Rob's first walk with the club since the Mount Buller weekend early in the year. On that occasion Rob tried to get his ankle to perform feats that require double joints, youthful agility and the flexibility that only a circus performer possesses.

We reached the start of the walk, which commenced at the junction of Golden Mountain Track and Ferrari Link Track. Any keen eye would observe that the Strathbogries is not the place for your Ferrari. We were underway a little after 10am and heading towards Mount Strathbogrie.

This was part of the surprise as Jeanette and I had not yet checked this component of the walk. Like me, do you ever wonder how the names of roads and tracks originate? I thought more about this after leading the group along Harpers Number 4 Track, when we should have been on Harpers Number 3 Track. Surprise! This slight detour added a kilometre to our hike.



Fortunately Harpers Number Two and One tracks were not on our list of things to do. Now I am not sure who Harper was, but someone here is a little too greedy for my liking, or lacking in imagination.

The correct track to Mount Strathbogie was welcomed in more ways than one, as this was the chosen place for morning tea. Although we were at an elevation of about 1045m the views were obscured by the surrounding trees. After consuming something scrumptious, and failing to keep Andy in a strong hold box, we all headed towards Golden Mountain for lunch.

The Strathbogies have some interesting history. Some of which follows. Gold was found in the early 1850's at Hells Hole Creek, and there was a gold rush in 1860 which lasted about two years. The largest hand cut crystal in the world was mined here – the "Crystal King" at 1.7kg. There are still two mines in operation.

The amount of birds was most noticeable in the forest, and they could be heard all along our hike. The absence of huge numbers of rev heads; I mean four wheel drivers and dirt bikers, was also most noticeable. Thank you Bathurst.

This next section of walking was some of the most demanding to face the group. From Clear Creek Track we could see the ridge to where we needed to be, and it looked rather daunting as we continued to descend rather than climb.

From the top of Mount Strathbogie we descended down to about 850m, and then climbed up to about 1020m at Golden Mountain.



The last few metres along Golden Mountain Track were especially steep, and I do believe I witnessed Pat on all fours as she approached the summit.

Here the views on such a clear day were marvellous. It was apparent that all of the daylight saved during winter was used to fine effect at this moment, with clear views well into the horizon. Lake Eildon, and a number of inlets, could be clearly seen.

After absorbing the views, devouring lunch, and partaking in a customary group photo opportunity, it was time to continue. Andy chose the short cut, straight down the other side of the mountain, to the cars less than a kilometre away.

The rest of the group persisted down the other side of Golden Mountain Track towards Hells Hole. Small creeks were still flowing, despite little rainfall over winter. The roads we were walking on had all become considerably dry, and hard, over the past weeks.

During our walk we were fortunate to have the ever informative Trevor, who was able to decipher animal marks on trees and unusual markings on the dirt roads (deer, kangaroo, snake, goanna or yowie – at times it was difficult to tell even for him).

This section of the walk took us to our lowest point at about 750 metres. At Hells Hole we caught our collective breaths, and read the information boards about this area, and Dry Creek.

The cars were just twenty minutes away, with a slight incline ahead of us. Faster than you could say Strathbodie (not a spelling error for those who were issued a map) and we were soon welcoming Pat's afternoon tea as accustomed, but presented proficiently by Andy.

The total walk, according to my GPS, ended up being 16.4km, completed in 5 hours and 20 minutes. SURPRISE!

[Michael Braendler]

Beechworth Bush Circuit : October 10

This six kilometre walk made a loop around the Beechworth Historic Park area, just to the north and north-west of the township.

The eleven walkers in the group set off from Gorge Road, then took Robinsons Track to pick up Makakoff Road.

From here we tackled the hillside that leads to the old Tannery, a landmark building, but no longer in use (operations ceased in 1961).

We then strolled along a fire track, down to Ponds Track, and then to the cascades on Spring Creek, and back to the starting point.



Details of the route taken on this walk (as well as many other great options) can be found on the Parks Victoria PDF of the area; see the link on our website. [Lesley]

Magenta Block, Chiltern : October 14

A warm and overcast day saw 13 walkers set off on a 10km figure-of-eight walk in a rarely visited area of the Chiltern National Park.

Luckily, a refreshing breeze tempered what was to become our hottest day since last summer.

The walk commenced at Bartley's Block, site of the old homestead and brewery, and after little rain this winter/spring, the 'block' area was green, but spring fed stream and dams were almost dry.

We were not treated to all the bird calls, or spring wildflowers, anticipated; however a few hardy wildflowers and birds appeared, as we walked along the ridge track with views of the valley beyond.



After completing the Tuan Circuit, suggested by the Friends of Chiltern NP, the Howlong Road was crossed, and a loop along Stringybark Track saw the group enjoying lunch, and some exploring at Magenta Mine.

The second loop was then completed, and an early afternoon tea was enjoyed back at the 'block' in the shade of the Ironbarks.

Buckland-Gap Road to Stanley Pub : October 27

Whilst the option of a shorter 6km walk to Stanley via Lady Newton Drive and Murrungee Lookout was offered, in the end the 17 participants all chose the longer walk of 9.5km navigating various access roads through the Stanley Forest.

It was pretty nice to be sharing the day with three new walkers joining us, Julie from Tatong, and Donna and Stuart from Wangaratta. The anticipated length of this adventure was 9.5km of Easy-Medium walking, and we had a 23c day with a fresh breeze in the afternoon.

Starting from top of Buckland Gap, at the corner of Lady Newton Drive and Buckland Gap Road, our route passed Bates Dam, and the first climb delivered clear views westwards across the Beechworth Hills, and beyond to the Warby Ranges.



Walking at a steady pace, gathering breath at the top of the frequent climbs, we reached the intersection of Ridge Track and Rooney's Track, and dropped down to Six Mile Road for a welcome morning tea at Clarke's Corner, after about 90 minutes walking.

Taking Dingle Track northward and climbing a few more "hill-ish" rises, we came to the track heading East down to Stanley.

Enjoying the bird song and forest, the 'Pub' track then led us into the back of Stanley, coming out near the Recreation Reserve where we had left two cars.

It was good to sit down after walking for three hours, to enjoy our picnic lunch with the gentle activity of a cricket match playing out in the background. Even Ted was glad of a quiet sit and a treat.

The party then divided with eight people heading back home, and nine people stepping out for the return walk along Lady Newton Drive.

We enjoyed the views from the Murrungee Lookout, and prepared ourselves for the steep descent back to the cars. With tired legs and tender feet, the waiting cup of tea and biscuits drew us on to the end of a satisfying 18km walk.

Suggestions: An alternative route would be to take Jensen Track; Orchard Track; Tully's Track; Dingle and Pub Track to Stanley. There will always be some climbs, but this circuit would take you deeper into the forest on minor tracks—although you would miss Clarke's Corner which is a nice picnic area for morning tea.

The option of either one way, or return walk worked well, whilst the additional option of a shorter 6km walk was not necessary. [Cecily Fletcher]

Foot Golf at Boorhaman : Cup Day

A rare event this Spring was waking to rain! Just when we didn't want it. Our Cup Day plans for a Footgolf tournament at Boorhaman were in trouble. All was in readiness, with a bundle of soccer balls borrowed from Galen College, and plenty of bookings. Nevertheless, it had to be cancelled.

However, the lunch at the Boorhaman Pub went ahead as planned, with a large crowd of members, some suitably attired for the Cup Day occasion. A fashion parade displaying hat gear brought amusement. But all eyes shifted to the bar for the great race, each of us clutching our horse names and number, gathered from the cup cakes prepared by Jeanette and Karen.



Winner was Ann Brain, a deserving awardee. At least the perennial cup went to a new recipient this year! A day of frivolity and enjoyment. [Adrian]

South Buffalo Track : November 11

On this special Remembrance Day 20 participants including a brand new member, and a new casual walker, rolled up for Sunday's 8km walk to the South Buffalo View Point along the track from Cresta Valley.

We observed Armistice Day along the track with Kerri reading "In Flanders Fields" by John McCrae, followed by a minute's silence. Then the "Ode of Remembrance" from "For the Fallen" by Laurence Binyon was read by Glenda.



Our walk was through snow gums, meadows, and past many streams, rocky outcrops and boulders to the lookouts along the way, and then to the final view point where we had lunch.

Views to the Alps, Lake Buffalo, the Warby Ranges, Winton Wetlands were fantastic on this clear fine day. The return walk was along the same track back to Cresta Valley. [Jeanette]

[See "poetryfoundation.org" for the complete text of Binyon's poem; Verse 4 of "For the Fallen" is referred to as "The Ode of Remembrance".]

Mount Buffalo Walks : November 24/25

Both of the Mount Buffalo events programmed for November 24/25 were deferred to December 1/2 so as to avoid a clash with the Victorian State Election. See the website for reports on these walks, as well as the next newsletter.

In the meantime, here are some photos from that very enjoyable event.



[Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday, March 18; details to follow.]