

WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS

fun, fitness & friendship



NEWSLETTER 3 (June), 2014

www.warbybushwalkers.org.au

Our ANNUAL DINNER and AGM was held at the historic Vine Hotel on Tuesday, April 1st, and it was a well attended event, with about 40 members present.

Please remember that subscriptions became due at the AGM, and that they should be renewed as soon as possible.

The subscription renewal form can be found under "General Information" on our website, and at the back of this Newsletter.

In the meantime, the winter walking season is upon us, with many perfect mild and sunny days to enjoy some of our favourite walks in the north-east.

Come and join us, check the walks calendar today, and pencil in a few dates for a perfect day in the bush.

Winter Walks Report

GREAT NEWS - BY POPULAR REQUEST the iconic WARBIES END TO END WALK has been programmed in three easy stages over July / August / September.

Additionally, three pioneers of our Club (all Life Members and Warby Experts) will be our guides. Don't miss this opportunity - perhaps bring along a friend.

A special END TO END CERTIFICATE will be presented to anyone completing the 3 Stages. This will take place at the Social Pub Meal the evening of Stage 3 (13th Sep) or sent later.

Generally we will walk a little closer to home over the shorter winter days (Warbies, Eldorado, Benalla, Everton) with a couple of more challenging walks (Tawonga Gap, Mount Samaria State Park) to get our heart and legs pumping.

We now are fortunate to have the enthusiastic Jeanette Farquhar (our former Secretary) as Assistant Walks Co-ordinator. Jeanette will hold the Walks Bag and generally oversee walks - and any problems or questions leaders have when I take my numerous 'holidays'. Of course this means you will now have both of us sidling up to Club Members in the quest for new walks and leaders.

Jeanette (and my) contact details appear at the top of the Walks Program. You will also notice there an undertaking (Committee resolution) to provide an alternative walk if the scheduled one cannot take place for some reason (for example, bad weather in the mountains or extreme heat conditions).

We welcome three recent additions to our band of Walk Leaders - Anne Turnbull, Anne Ford and Jacki Piquerez - thank you ladies.

See You On The Track.

Karen Davis (Walks Co-ordinator)

Grampians Week Away—October 2014

As previously advised, the Club's [ANNUAL WEEK AWAY](#) will be at Halls Gap from Monday, October 6 to Sunday, October 12 – and aims to explore the non fire affected areas of the Grampians.



Accommodation will be in shared en-suite rooms, and full details will be available on our website, and in forthcoming newsletters.

Please book this week now to enjoy the fun, friendship and fitness aspects of a super week away!

Australian Alpine Walking Track, Feb 28-Mar 2

The Australian Alpine Walking Track (AAWT) group consisting of eight walkers was picked up from Colac Colac Caravan Park (Corryong) on a drizzly Saturday morning, and dropped off at the Round Mountain car park, where the walk began.

From here, Farm Ridge Trail was followed to the AAWT, and O'Keefes Hut was reached before the rain set in. The next morning was a definite improvement on weather, and Mount Jagungal was tackled and achieved, and then onto Grey Mares Hut.



The third day saw the group heading for the Schlink Hilton, via the bright red Valentines Hut. Schlinks was shared with a hut maintenance group from Canberra.

From Shlinks a decision was made to go straight onto the Rolling Grounds, instead of descending to Whites Hut. I don't know that time was saved, but altitude was, and a high pass was the resting stop for the night.

The next morning foggy conditions were encountered, however, the group saw this as a plus as they couldn't see what they had to climb. The weather slowly improved to give views of high mountain tarns, and allow the group to climb Kosciuszko.

Another camp on another pass, but this time the group was entertained with lightning, thunder and hail.

The last day saw fog, but that dissipated into a fine day. A cuppa was had at the chairlift before heading onto Dead Horse Gap for sandwiches, and our ride back to Corryong.

Murrungee Hills, Moonlight Walk, March 15

A band of 11 optimistic walkers (with a cautious eye to the gathering gloom in the western sky) gathered late Saturday at the base of the Murrungee Hills for a ramble along the range, and return in moonlight on the Everton to Beechworth Rail Trail.

We set off in the company of Rosie, who took us through her family property to the ridge top. This area was testament to her family's conservation values, with well preserved native grasses, shrubs, box and eucalypt trees, and areas of majestic grass trees.

Wonderful views over the Murrungee Basin, and to the ranges beyond, were enjoyed as the group proceeded along the ridge.



Unfortunately about a third of our way through the walk the heavens opened, and with the threat of thunder and lightning, it was decided to don raingear and drop off to a lower path, and return to our cars. The rain eased enough for the group to enjoy the walk back, and a picnic tea and cuppa, alas with no moon visible.

Further adventure awaited as we drove back down Diffey's Road, now strewn with tree branches. The athleticism of our President, and a band of willing *branch hurlers*, was clapped down the track, and everyone (somewhat damp, but in good spirits) agreed that we must return to complete this beautiful walk.

Mount Granya, March 29

Mount Granya State Park is located about 60km east of Albury-Wodonga (20km north-east of Tallangatta). The Park is noted for its steep slopes, cliffs and prominent rocky bluffs and a diverse range of plant communities.

In between two major rain episodes; 10 club members met at Tallangatta in fine, warm conditions, and then drove to the Mount Granya picnic area. The 870 metre bush covered peak was climbed via mostly dry walking tracks, and some four-wheel drive roads.



Excellent views of the Murray Valley were enjoyed on the way up and the from the top we could look straight down into the fertile valley of Georges Creek, close to Old Tallangatta.

Hume and Hovell Walking Track, April 4-7

On a rainy Friday the crew set off for Batlow, with the hope of clearing weather, but as it was still raining on reaching Batlow, the campers decided to join the rest of the party, and stay at the Batlow Hotel.

This was easier than anticipated, as the new manager didn't have a booking sheet, and with a one key fits all policy, it was a matter of if you can find a bed, you can have it.

Unfortunately this policy continued well into the night, with the old manager trying to find a bed well into the wee hours, with a not very welcome reception from the guests. Goldilocks and the Three Bears did cross a few people's minds.

We decided what Batlow Hotel lacked in comfort, it made up in entertainment, and one shouldn't stay there without a sense of humour.



Saturday was a long day in the drizzle, not helped by a shift in camp to Talbingo, and a long car shuffle. Bargo State Forests' one way system resulted in a longer walk than planned, with the group walking from the ridge road down to the Flats, (half way along Lake Talbingo), then onto the dam wall.

Sunday dawned sunny, and the group nearly had the one way system worked with a few detours taken. The day before had taken one casualty who helped with the car shuffle, (thanks Graeme). The walk took the party from the Flats almost to Talbingo, and walking around the lake on a sunny day was very enjoyable

Monday was another nice day, with the one way system fully worked out, and used to our advantage at the end of the day.

Buddong Falls was playing nicely after the rain, with the lower falls being very spectacular. Talbingo was reached in good time, but the lengthy car shuffle meant that the group got home later than expected.

Mungabareena Reserve, April 12

Ten walkers set off on this perfect autumn day, following the best seasonal break in nearly two decades.

Interest centred on the history of the area, and stage one of the walk was to climb to the Eastern Hill Lookout to view the 360° vistas that include Albury-Wodonga, Lake Hume and the Murray Valley. We then picked up Hamilton Hume's arrival track to Mungabareena Reserve, which we circled, before picking up Hume and Hovell's departing track along the Murray River. After the very heavy rains, the track down the Hill, and around the Lagoon was surprisingly firm.



In the 1820s the Murray could be walked across by late summer-autumn, particularly north of Doctor's Point, and of the current Reserve. On the second week of November 1824, Hume climbed Eastern Hill - Hume being the first to sight the broad valley and river that Hovell named the Hume.

Natives called the section to the east of here, the Indi, and to the western plains, the Millewa.

The river was still quite high, and the party backtracked west, where they built a boat to cross sections of the Murray and Mitta Mitta Rivers that are now both under the waters of Lake Hume.

13 years later Paul Huon, of the titled French family took over the *Woodonga Run* founded by Charles Ebdon, the first pioneer to settle to the south of the Murray River.

Paul was most impressed with the grazing flats over the river, and soon acquired the so called *Mungabareena Run*, named after the big annual camp of the five local aboriginal tribes of the local Woradgery nation (Mungabareena means big meeting place, like a parliament).

Paul bought this run for his widowed sister, Elizabeth Mitchell, whose five sons and six daughters did much to establish the Mitchell dynasty in the upper Murray. Her husband was said to be a wayward ex-military captain, and so she relied heavily on her eldest son, and sent 18 year old Thomas to build a home, and run the station with his uncle Paul.

Elizabeth and her children arrived at *Mungabareena* with the Joseph Docker family, who were on their way to take over *Botherambo*, nearly two years later.

Where we took a morning rest is the famous meeting place of the natives. Elizabeth and her family did not discourage its use, and The Hon Tom Mitchell, calling on family accounts, told Des Martin (author of *A Tale of Two Cities*),

When the tribes came down, fat and shiny from their rich diet (of Boogong Moths in the Alps) they continued to the meeting place of the tribes, Mungabareena, and there held parliament. This annual conference showed remarkable co-operation in settling inter-tribal policy, disputes and importance, arranging marriages, dispensing justice and issuing passport credentials in the form of carved sticks that gave safe passage to travellers. Without one of these an aboriginal going out of his bimple (tribal area) was likely to be speared without warning.

These sticks permitted couriers to travel tracks that virtually circled Australia ... (providing) a steady trade in medicants, narcotics ... paints and flint.

Nothing remains of the *Mungabareena* Homestead; it was physically moved upstream to the *Hawsview Run*.

Many years later Captain Heywood was renovating old buildings there, and came across a beam with the date 1839 carved on it. He told his workmen to set it aside, for it was an item of great historical importance. When he returned the next day, he found the apprentice had split it up to boil the billy!

Lunch was taken at the confluence of the Murray, and a long curling backwater, before picking up the Hume and Hovell Walking Track, and zig-zagging back up Eastern Hill to the Lookout.

Lake William Hovell, April 26

Seventeen walkers left Wangaratta at 8.30am as we knew that the walk would use up most of our daylight. We parked at the picnic area next to Lake William Hovell, and approached the walk in an anti-clockwise direction.

There was a reason for this; if we had walked the 15km in a clockwise direction, then found the King River in flood, it would be a long way back to our cars – whereas if the King was too deep going in an anticlockwise direction, we only had 8km to get back to our cars!

Walkers were given advice to bring poles to assist with the steep ascent once we crossed the King River, as well as the steep descent on the last part of the Long Spur Track, plus old runners to help them walk across the knee deep King River, as well as a small towel for drying feet.



The first 8.3km of the walk led us alongside the western and southern sides of the Lake, then where the vehicular track crosses the King River at Sandy Flats, we traversed the River - after two hours of walking in undulating bush lands.

We had morning tea on the banks of the river before the traverse, and two walkers, who were doing the Medium, rather than the Hard Walk, retraced their steps back to the cars.

The next 3.4km was straight up, climbing 400 metres vertically for one hour. This track (Sandy Flat Track) is quite tough, and walkers were very glad of the advice to use poles, as the track was also slippery at times. Once we reached the intersection of Sandy Flat Track and Long Spur Track we enjoyed lunch.

We then walked north and north-west along the Long Spur 4WD Track. This was undulating, and quite easy for the first 2.5km, then descended quite sharply for another 2.5km, until we came to some pink tape on a tree, on the left side of the track. Walking time on Long Spur Track was about 1.5 hours.



We then followed a disused vehicle track for another 6.3km back to the dam wall. This part of the trip back to our cars took about two hours, and at times the track was hard to follow due to fallen trees. After a creek bed there is a very steep, but short ascent, before we dropped down to the grassy areas beside the dam wall.

We walked on the north (downstream) side of the dam wall, and then through the tunnel (below the dam wall) and looked at the water gushing out of the portal on the dam wall.

From here we walked back to the cars at the picnic area, and had a cuppa before driving back to Wangaratta, arriving back in Wang at about 5.30pm, which was nearly darkness.

In terms of fauna and flora, we saw kangaroos and two deer along the route, and heard a few lyrebirds on the plateau, as well as noting an amazing array of fungi.

This is a walk for those who are reasonably fit, and is classified as a "Hard" 23.0km walk, taking about 7.5 hours with stops for morning tea and lunch.

Improvements for next time –

- drive a car to the car park near the dam wall, so that we do not have to finish the walk with a 3.0km trudge back to our cars along the side of a bitumen road.
- Start at 8.00am in Wangaratta, to ensure we arrive back in daylight.

Friends Track, Warby Ranges, May 10

This was to have been a walk along the Nine Mile Spur of Mount Buffalo, but this was cancelled due to the threat of consistent rain over the day. This proved to be a good call, as the weather on the Plateau was appalling all day, producing about 50mm of rain.

However half of the 16 originally booked in for Nine Mile Spur decided to head up to Wenham's Picnic Area (in the Warby Ranges) mid-morning, and walk around the Friends Track and Salisbury Track - a shorter and less elevated walk close to home.

The group was treated to a beautiful misty vista, with streams running, and raindrops glistening on vegetation. It didn't worry the intrepid group that the the vistas from Kwat Kwat Lookout were reduced to a few metres, or that the drizzle returned during their lunch break on boulders overlooking what seemed a beautiful gully.

The kangaroos and wallabies were also out in numbers enjoying the refreshed bushland. And joy oh joy, the valley views did appear in places by the time the group arrived warm and satisfied on Mount Warby.

With the rain gone a cuppa was enjoyed before returning home mid-afternoon to dry off boots. Mount Buffalo will have to wait for another day!

Reform Hill, Myrtleford, May 16

A gang of 13 happy walkers gathered at Jones Reserve in Myrtleford for this interesting walk, and kicked off the adventure with an ascent of Reform Hill. A steep-ish climb led us to the picnic area, with many great views to enjoy on the way. Some recently installed information boards, and evidence of gold mining history, also kept us interested.

After morning tea at the summit, we tackled the descent by a

different route, walking past the old water supply reservoir and enjoying an excellent display of autumn colours.

Back at Jones Reserve after our four kilometre loop, we moved our cars a few hundred metres to just near the bowling club, and headed off to tackle a six kilometre loop along the riverside walking track, and back to town

This was much flatter than our ascent/descent, and once again we enjoyed the autumn colours, as well as being alongside the scenic Ovens River.



Lunch was held at the riverside park, alongside the historic tobacco kiln, and from here, half of the group retraced their steps on the riverside track, whilst the others returned to town via the Phoenix Tree monument.

Back in town, afternoon tea was held alongside Happy Valley Creek, and after some delicious chocolate biscuits, we headed for home.

Trivia Night, Vine Hotel, May 20

A big THANK YOU to the 70+ members and friends who attended our Social Trivia, and Relay for Life Fund Raiser on May 20th, at the Vine Hotel.

What a wonderful community we live in, to see three community groups coming together for a good cause, and a great night out.

As generous Club Members donated all our prizes, the total proceeds of \$907 have been donated to Relay for Life (through the team - Keith Lipshut's Mob).

Wang Uke's treated us to a great concert. Warby Walkers are well known for their 'conversational prowess' but how about that singing!! Wang Uke's voted us their best audience ever.



(If you want to practice your singing further the Wang Ukes have a jam session at the Vine Hotel the first Thursday of the month from 7pm, and everyone is welcome).

After a spirited and close competition, the Wang Uke's table crept across the line, just in front of several Warby Walkers teams.

Mount Sugarloaf / Turquoise Mine, May 25

The Sugarloaf is a prominent piece of high ground in the Fifteen Mile Creek Valley, and is one of many hills in Victoria that makes use of the word 'sugarloaf'. To access this venue we depended on the kindness of a local landowner, and eighteen of us lined up at Jones Road to tackle the ascent as part of a 9.5km circuit.

We looped around from the property entrance, and began a gradual climb up onto a scenic ridge system (great views on either side) and followed the ridge all the way to the summit at about 515m. The terrain was quite rocky, and with open woodland all around us, it was obviously not a favourable place for vegetation.

Morning tea was held in a sheltered saddle, while some of the group went off in search of a turquoise mine or two.



Lunch was on the north side of The Sugarloaf itself, and from here we began a meandering descent back to the valley floor, with more great views to be enjoyed.

Back at the cars, we had the traditional afternoon tea (nice bright red tablecloth!) and then headed for home.

Wildlife seen on our loop included the ubiquitous currawong, some robins, and the occasional kangaroo – but don't ask about the turquoise mine!

Bushwalking Victoria—Federation Walk

The Federation Walks Weekend is a Bushwalking Victoria (BWV) annual event. BWV has over 70 affiliated clubs, and the event is open to all club members, and individual members of BWV.

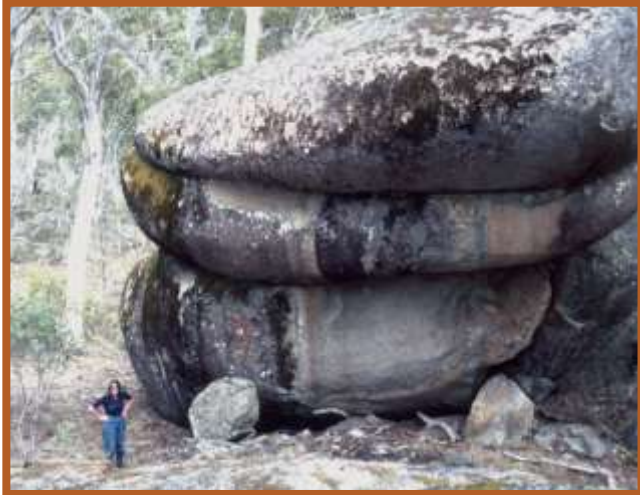
Each year a different walking club or groups of walking clubs affiliated with BWV host the event.

In recent years the Federation Walks event has been a single day event, however, it is the aim of BWV to encourage host clubs to run the event over a weekend, making it more accessible to clubs from across Victoria.

The weekend event offers the opportunity for walkers to participate in walks led by local walk leaders with an intimate knowledge of their local area.

The event name Federation Walks Weekend has its origins in the

predecessor to BWV, when Victoria's peak bushwalking organisation was known as the Federation of Victorian Bushwalking Clubs.



The event is usually held in October or November of each year, and the 2014 event is being jointly hosted by a number of Gippsland based clubs; these include,

- Ben Cruachan Walking Club
- South Gippsland Walking and Adventure Club
- Strzelecki Bushwalking Club
- West Gippsland Bushwalking Club

The 2014 Walk will be a weekend event, based in the small Gippsland village of Rawson, with a range of walks being offered in Baw Baw National Park, around Walhalla and in the surrounding area (such as Mushroom Rocks—see above).

An attractive and affordable meals and accommodation package has been negotiated with Rawson Village.

See www.fedwalks.org.au for more details.

Important Announcement

Irene Knox writes; after 20 weeks (who has been counting) I have officially been declared healthy, not fit, but now happy. I truly appreciate the caring people we have in our Club.



Thank you to all for the visits, cards, flowers and offers of shopping and assistance. Special thanks to Glenda for keeping me sane, and weeding my garden. How good was that, because this was in January.

Many thanks also to Maureen and Bob for being there. Once again, thank you all. Irene

Local Hero

Warby Range Bushwalkers member, and local hero, Alan Raison, was the subject of an interesting cameo in a recent edition of the Wangaratta Chronicle . . .

Bushwalking and red woollen socks are synonymous with Wangaratta's Alan Raison.

At 85 years of age, Alan continues to conquer mountains and peaks with the Warby Range Bushwalkers Club – which he is a life member of – and is currently in his 26th year with the group.

"I usually wear red socks when I go hiking," Alan chuckled.

"Someone gave me a pair of red socks years ago and I have just been getting them ever since."

He cited growing up in the country fishing and shooting, and participating in sport such as footy and tennis over the years as reasons he still remains active.

He spoke of walks with the Warby Walkers – as they are affectionately known – throughout Victoria's and New South Wales' High Country, exploring the Blue Mountains, spending days completing the Victoria Great Ocean Walk, seeing the Flinders Ranges and walking regularly in the North East.

One of his most recent walks was Mount Granya, near Tallangatta, with an elevation of about 868 metres.

It's not unusual either for Alan to walk seven to eight kilometres of a morning with fellow walkers from the Wangaratta Mens Probud Club.

[Wangaratta Chronicle, April 7, 2014]

Parrot Project

Turquoise parrots in the Warby Range and surrounds will have improved habitat, thanks to a \$295,620 project, that was recently announced by Bill Sykes (MLA, Benalla) .

Turquoise Parrots were almost driven to extinction in Victoria around the early 1900s due to habitat loss; but populations have re-emerged since the 1940s, especially in the Warby-Chesney Hills.

The Practical Parrot Action Project is a co-ordinated effort by the Broken-Boosey Conservation Management Network and Chris Tzaros from Birds, Bush and Beyond. The grant will allow landholders to build nesting boxes, provide fencing to protect remnant vegetation and to provide revegetation of habitat corridors for the parrots.

The funding, to be spread over two years, was made available through the Communities for Nature initiative (with support from the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority).

Walking/Cycling path at Winton Wetlands

A 5km shared cycling and pedestrian path will be constructed from Benalla to the Winton Wetlands, and is to be opened in late 2014.

The pathway will occupy the former Lake Mokoan inlet channel land, will connect to other cycling and walking paths within the Wetlands. The decision to build the pathway came within a week of the Winton Wetlands calling for tenders to build a new \$1m visitor centre, near the former Lake Mokoan Yacht Club.

Both projects are seen as important to help develop the Wetland's tourism potential.

Subscription for membership of Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc.

2014-2015

Please note that all current memberships expire on the 31st March 2014 (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

.....

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Please return this form with subscription payment to:

Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc, PO Box 974, Wangaratta, Vic. 3676