



WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS Inc.

FUN . FITNESS . FRIENDSHIP

NEWSLETTER 3 (June), 2019

warbybushwalkers.org.au

Welcome to the Autumn-Winter Newsletter; highlights in this edition include our detailed report on the 2019 Week Away.

Our 42nd ANNUAL DINNER and AGM was held at the Wangaratta Club on Monday, March 18th, and was a well attended event, with 60 members present.

During the official part of the meeting, Glenda Hall “hand balled” the president’s “crown/bush hat” to Cecily Fletcher, after five very successful years at the helm, and the following office bearers were elected,

Secretary: Kerri Davenport

Treasurer: Bob Shaw

Walks Co-ordinator: Jeanette Farquhar

Assistant Walks Coordinator, Michael Braendler

Committee Members: Peter Brain, Andy Kimber, Chris McLaughlin, Guy Robertson, Anne Turnbull and Trevor Turnbull.

The incredibly hard working Adrian and Helen Twitt (who were both part of the original Bushwalking Club) have now come off the committee.

Our guest speaker was Mike Grant (secretary Bushwalking Victoria); Mike gave a very informative talk on BV, and brought us up to date with such sub groups as the recently very active “Bush Search and Rescue” team, and the volunteers of the “Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation” crew.

Please remember that subscriptions fell due at the AGM, and if you haven’t yet paid your subscription, please do so now.

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

Strathbogie Surprise #2 : March 2

Despite the heat, twelve spirited walkers took on my Strathbogies Surprise #2. Which leads one to ask themselves – whenever is a movie sequel as good as the original? How many music artists have had an amazing debut album, and then bombed with album number two? Would the same be said with the second of my walks in the Strathbogies State Forest?

We were fortunate that the high temperatures didn’t lead to a total fire ban day for this walk, and it was actually a few degrees cooler than Wangaratta. Most of the walkers were new to this area, and keen to experience what the forest has to offer.

On this walk we also welcomed back another Sandra, who had walked some years previously with the club. With today’s group containing two Sandra’s, a Shirley and a Sonia, I feel inclined to come up with some sort of tongue twister. Tempting.

Our first short return walk of less than 2kms was to an historic marker where a plane crashed in 1942. The two pilots were on their way from Deniliquin to Laverton, and crashed at the site due to fog. Both men were killed. There is no wreckage of the Wirraway A20-265 amongst the forest anymore as it was all salvaged and put to good use.



The second walk was the approximate 9km loop involving Rocky Ned Track and Lookout. This walk along four-wheel drive tracks amongst the forest was most pleasant as it was still late morning. The road had a few ups and downs, which necessitated occasional breaks for the group.

At one junction Jeanette led a few hardy souls along a short cut involving a steep section that ran between the natural forest and pine plantation.

The rest of the group joined me to continue following the road. During this section the heat was beginning to be felt more, and shade was less available. It was a case of “less talk – more walk” to conserve energy.

We rejoined the other group a few minutes later, and a brief walk led us to the start of the Rocky Ned Lookout. Rocky Ned may have been named with some reference to Ned Kelly. My research however, did discover another Rocky Ned – a former rodeo horse who was a famous champion bucking bronco.

Lunch (and some hydrolytes for June who felt rejuvenated enough to be able to ride the Rocky Ned) was taken before a gentle climb of less than 1km to the lookout. The view from the top was great on such a clear day, with the forest and plantations clearly visible.

Once everyone had fulfilled their photo opportunities and sufficiently rested, we returned the way we came and headed for the cars.

At this point one carload of four walkers made the decision to return to Wangaratta. So we farewelled Lesley, June, Shirley and Glenda, who I believe may have made a stop at Swanpool to run amuck before heading home.



The remainder of the group then drove 12kms to the base of a track for a steep ascent to Mt Separation. Ann, who has been on my previous walks, no longer trusts my estimations or descriptions of my walks. However I feel that a chorus of “liar, liar pants on fire” was hardly necessary. The AWTGS (Australian Walking Track Grading System) is a useful classification system. However, on this occasion I preferred my own – VBD (very bloody difficult). And it was.

Mt Separation may only be some 737 metres, but the view from the top of the huge flat granite rock is superb. Visibility was outstanding, and we were rewarded with 360 degrees views. From the forest and pine plantations to the north and east, and the Strathbogie Shire to the south and west

The Alps too could be seen in the distance. Sandra #1, who clearly was not yet exhausted, was photographed trying to hold, or was that dislodge, some enormous boulders before our departure.

On previous walks I have heard whisperings of “I think I can, I think I can”, utterances of “just one step at a time” and mutterings of “come on, you can do this”. This is the first time, courtesy of Sonia, I have heard, “I don’t wanna break a leg, I don’t wanna break a leg”. And break a leg she did not. So her European holiday plans are still intact. After completing this return walk of about 3kms afternoon tea was welcomed by all.



The heat obviously affected the amount of wildlife seen today. Apart from one sole wallaby, spotted while driving along the edge of plantations, the usual kangaroos, shy echidnas and rare wombats were hiding along with most of the birds. Even the flies took the day off.

Thanks to everyone who attended the walk. Congratulations to those who braved the final leg without breaking one. Finally, if I don’t mind saying myself, the sequel to the Strathbogies Forest walk was as equally as rewarding as the first.

[Michael Braendler]

Hotham to Falls Creek : March 18

Under the leadership of the rugged Bob Shaw, 22 super energetic members headed off from the Mt Loch car park (just north of Mount Hotham) early on a cool mountain morning (6 degrees with some wind), having left Wangaratta at 6.30am on a bus driven by selfless club member John Gullock.



The hard walk of a very undulating 23kms, was completed in eight hours, with quite a few stops taken to admire the views, and refue!

After a major descent, lunch was enjoyed at 11.30am, deep in the West Kiewa Valley, at the isolated Dibbin’s Hut.

The steep ascent via Basalt Temple was achieved by 2pm, and then it was a matter of following the pole line along the Bogong High Plains to Pretty Valley. Phew!!

Did the adventurers appreciate Pat’s famous cuppa, and her fresh sweet biscuits? They certainly did, as well as meeting up with John, and the transport home.

[Andy Kimber; photos by Mike Gustus]

Book Review : Wildflowers of the High Country

Luke Steenhuis, 2018

This 175 page book combines a comprehensive listing of wildflowers to be found in the Australian High Country, with a very professional presentation.

Luke Steenhuis has written about the High Country for many years, most notably on the history of the goldfields, and this book reflects his extensive knowledge of the area.

The excellent layout, and full-colour format, provides easy access to all of your queries and the book makes a great addition to any bushwalkers library.

At \$34.95 the book is great value, and not too heavy to carry in one's daypack.

The book is distributed by Australian Bush and Country Maps (also known as ABC Maps) and can be found right across the High Country (I bought my copy at the Tawonga Newsagency).

[Chris McLaughlin]

Ovens River, North of Killawarra : March 21

Nine people ambled around this popular walk of about 8 kms, very close to Wangaratta.

After driving into the Warby Ovens National Park, we parked at an intersection just in from Frost's Crossing.



In fine but rapidly warming conditions, we followed the unmade road down to the Ovens and walked beside the river, occasionally visiting our special stream, and various (quite clean) campsites.

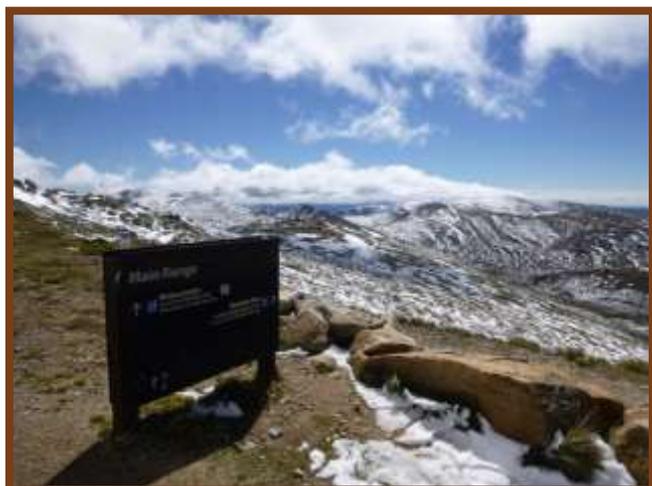
We discovered that this section of the park is comparatively weed free, except for the dreaded Noogoora Burr along the side of the river.

The walk back along Boundary Track, through dry billabong country, emphasised the lack of rain over the last year. [Andy Kimber]

Thredbo – Week Away, 2019

Our 'big-trip' for 2019 was an adventurous five-day walking experience in Kosciuszko National Park.

The week kicked off on a chilly windy Monday morning. when 39 members took the Kosciuszko chairlift to Eagles Nest to commence the 12km return walk to the Mount Kosciuszko summit. However, within 500 metres along the walkway, we encountered snow and icy conditions making us proceed with caution.



Standing on top of Australia, we lapped up the sunny day, and took many photographs, and selfies, of the magnificent snow-covered views of the surrounding peaks and ridges. Upon descending Mount Kosciuszko, some of the group decided to walk to the historic Seamans Hut, via Rawson's Pass, before returning to Thredbo via the chairlift.

Tuesday saw the teams divide into two groups, one group undertaking the 8km return walk following the beautiful Thredbo River upstream to Dead Horse Gap, while the remaining group caught the chairlift, and walked down Rams Head Plateau, soaking up the spectacular views looking westerly towards Victoria, before arriving at the Thredbo River.

Both groups commented on the diversity of vegetation, the huge granite boulders, beautiful snow gums and tall eucalyptus trees while walking the trail. Sitting at the water's edge, enjoying lunch at Dead Horse Gap, looking at the reflections in the river was a peaceful experience.



Wednesday morning saw us undertake the 19km return Cascade Track, from Dead Horse Gap to the historic alpine Cascade Hut. On crossing the fast-flowing Thredbo River, we experienced some steep climbs before ascending to Bob's Ridge, at an elevation of 1750 metres, where morning tea was taken amongst an area of granite boulders.

On the walk to Bob's Ridge there was a sighting of five brumbies grazing in a distant valley. From Bob's Ridge, walkers encountered another steep climb before crossing the beautiful Cascade Creek, to arrive at the historic magnificent Cascade Hut.

Lunch was taken at the hut, in a lovely grassland setting surrounded by tall eucalyptus trees, with 180-degree views looking down the valley towards Cascade Creek. The highlight of the return walk were three brumbies grazing on the river grasslands within 100 metres of the walking track.

Thursday, most walkers tackled the Thredbo Valley track which follows the Thredbo Valley, meandering along the banks of the picturesque Thredbo River, which flows through open grasslands and eucalyptus forests. The beautifully constructed suspension bridges, that enable the crossing of the Thredbo River was a highlight of the walk.

Some walkers choose the 12km return walk to the Rangers Station, whilst others took the 16km one way walk to Thredbo Diggings Campground, while the keen ones headed for Lake Crackenback Resort, a 20km one-way walk.

On Friday, 10 walkers decided to walk the 13km return Rennex Track, which crosses extensive grasslands, with several steep climbs amongst forested sections, testing the stamina of all involved.



The track finished at Giants Castle, a large granite outcrop where a radio communication tower is located. From Giants Castle extensive views of the Snowy River Valley, Island Bend Dam, Blue Cow, Mount Kosciuszko, and other mountain peaks, could be observed, a truly great sight.

Throughout the walk wild pig activity was evident, a deer family were seen, and a mob of grey kangaroos were observed grazing unperturbed by our presence on the grasslands.

On the return walk, a keen-eyed walker sighted a pig trap, and upon inspecting it explained in detail how the trap operated.

[Robert Chard]

Paradise Falls and Wabonga Track (McMillan Track) : April 14

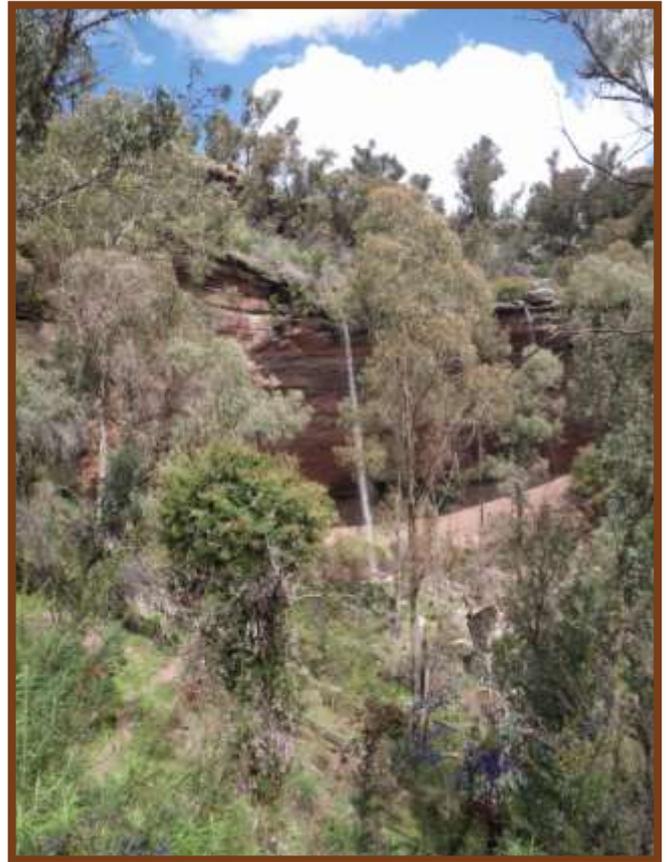
There were 15 participants for this 14.5km medium grade walk, with a starting point at the scenic Paradise Falls, in the King Valley. The weather was fine, mild and slightly cloudy, and no wind

The group set out from west of the car park that is the start of the Paradise Falls access track, heading consistently uphill for 3km, to a t-intersection with Wabonga Track.

We had morning tea at this intersection, and then headed off in a northerly direction along the 4WD Wabonga Track for another 2km, until we reached a car park with splendid views towards the west across the King River Valley. We could see Lake William Hovell, and adjacent peaks, as well as the upper King Valley towards Mt Buller. We sat on the cliff tops, and enjoyed lunch at this viewpoint.

The group then continued on the Wabonga Track, and walked north again. This track continued as a 4WD Management Vehicle Only track along the ridge line for another 3-4km, before starting to descend to the floor of the King Valley; after a continuous descent we finished up just south of Chrismont Winery, near the powerlines which were in an east-west direction.

We then ascended along a management track, which had once been used by the former State Electricity Commission to observe the powerlines, and finally descended to Burrows Lane where the shuttle vehicle was waiting at about 3.30pm.



Whilst the majority of the group enjoyed afternoon tea, the five drivers were taken back to Paradise Falls to collect their vehicles.

We left Wangaratta at 8.30am, and drove through Whitfield and Cheshunt. At Cheshunt two cars went along the Upper King Valley Road, and one of these cars was left in Burrows Lane for the end of the walk car shuffle. The other three cars went straight to Paradise Falls, 13km beyond Cheshunt, and all walkers in these cars went down from the Paradise Falls carpark to view the Falls.

We commenced the walk at 10.30am (after the car shuffle), and had finished the walk by 4pm, arriving back in Wangaratta at 5pm.

[Bob Shaw]

Warby Heritage Trail : April 22

We had 13 members participate in today's walk in overcast weather, following a lot of rain the previous night. Not so much that the creeks and water courses were running, but all was damp and clean and fresh, a welcome change from dry and dusty.

Ben Warby, and his family, were amongst the first settlers in this area, and the walk is well sign-posted, with storyboards, and images of that era.

Starting and finishing an eight kilometre loop walk from Booths Taminick Cellars, and Black Dog Brewery, we began with the Warby Heritage Falls Trail which featured an old spot mill, a sheep wash in the paddock over the fence from the track, and stone walls for the weirs, with spillway and pipes still in place (we could see the water race features on the ground).

The major waterfall of the walk didn't quite have a trickle falling over it, but there were some pools of water among the rocks from the previous nights rainfall. I'm sure it looked great last night when the rain was falling.

Morning Tea, complete with easter eggs in lieu of snakes, was at

the waterfall, and other snake, snack and drink breaks were taken further along the walk, which continued on to Spot Mill Track and Cellar Track.



Lunch was held after the walk at Taminick Cellars, where wine was available for tasting, or purchase by the glass, or bottle, along with pizza for lunch, but I think we all brought our own lunch (I became aware of the pizzas being available after we arrived!).

[Jeanette Farquhar]

Lake Sambell to Lake Kerferd : April 28

This interesting walk covered a variety of tracks from Beechworth's Lake Sambell, through to Lake Kerferd, and return.

Lake Sambell (see photo) is a flooded remnant from the gold mining era, whereas Lake Kerferd forms a major part of Beechworth's water supply. It was named after prominent local George Kerferd who first advocated this site.

The dam was declared operational in 1874, and Kerferd went on to become mayor of Beechworth three times, a member of the Victorian Parliament for many years, and subsequently Premier of Victoria in 1874.



There were eight walkers on this 15.5km outing, and having made it to Lake Kerferd via Pipeline Track, we crossed over the spillway to the opposite side of the Lake. We then looped around this scenic waterway, and returned to Lake Sambell by the better known Kerferd Track, as well as some lesser known side tracks.

Many relics from the gold mining era were checked out on both routes, and we had plenty of interest on this fine, but cool, day.

Morning tea was held beside the Pipeline Track, lunch was at Lake Kerferd, and afternoon tea was back at Lake Sambell.

[Lesley Finedon]

Murray River Walk

The widely acclaimed Murray River Walk is based on the riverine landscape of the Murray upstream of Renmark, including its many billabongs and ana-branch systems.

The key aspect of the walk is that it involves walking 12-14km on each of the three main days, followed by a two kilometre stroll on the last day.



The best bit is being met each night by a luxury houseboat, complete with a supply of local bubbly, reds, whites and excellent cuisine.

Having spent many of our younger years paddling down the Murray (Tom Groggin to The Coorong) we found this to be a really interesting walk, with very professional commentary from our guides detailing the flora, fauna, land usage, hydrology and human history of the area.

Activities included a 5.15am start on Day 2, so as to see the sunrise along the Murray from a local lookout point; a walking visit to the Woolenook WW2 riverside internment camp, tree-hugging and short readings (by guests, after dinner) of passages from various books, including Charles Sturt's Journals, and Rebecca Solnit's *Wanderlust*.

The group size is limited to 10 people, and we had an interesting mixed-age group to share our adventure with, as well as glorious sunny weather. More details at murrayriverwalk.com.au.

[Chris and Yvonne McLaughlin]

Bright to Wandiligong : May 11

This autumn walk had 13 participants enjoying a fine day, following the popular Wandil Walk from Bright to Wandiligong.

We started near the bridge over Morses Creek, on Coronation Avenue, and followed the track alongside the creek to Alpine Park where we caught up with Kerri and Paul, their daughter Elise, her hubby Daniel, and their son Mitchell, at the playground, and had morning tea at this spot.

We continued onto the diggings, Chinese Bridge and the Junction Mine before having lunch at the Lardis picnic area. From here we walked past The Adit, before returning via the Bennetts Trail to the start of the walk. All the tracks follow, and cross, Morses Creek and Growlers Creek in the diggings area.



The day was fine, and didn't feel as cold as expected; I think we were sheltered from the cold wind which was noticeable on our return to Wangaratta.

A great day was had by all. [Jeannette Farquhar and June Brown]

Week Away : 2020

Our week-away alternates between mountain venues, and coastal venues, and 2020 is a 'coastal year'.

There were three options suggested for this event; these were, The Great Ocean Walk, the Mornington Peninsula and Royal National Park (NSW).

For various reasons, and by popular vote, the Peninsula was chosen over the other venues, but we expect to get to those other venues in the coming years.

The accommodation venue will be the Iluka Retreat and Camp, near the beach at Shoreham, and we have booked two lodges, Warrawong and Aulua, for 6 nights from 19/4/20 - 25/4/20.

More information will follow in August.

[Cheryl Hoysted, Chair of the convening committee]

Eldorado and Woolshed : May 17

The historic little enclave of Eldorado, once famous for its gold and tin mining (from the 1850s to the 1950s), was the chosen venue for this 12km loop walk.

In its heyday, the town had a series of suburbs, with Napoleon Flat, Sebastopol Flat and Woolshed Valley giving an overall population of about 7000.

The village grew up around the pastoral property 'Eldorado' founded by retired Captain William Baker of the Royal Navy.

There were eight participants on this adventure, taking in historic sites near Eldorado, and between Eldorado and Woolshed Falls.



Starting at the Wombat Mine, we walked to the Chinese Gardens (once a market gardening area), then Napoleon Flat (previously a major mining township), Kangaroo Crossing (a timber bridge which burnt down in the early 1900s), a Miners slab hut, the Chinese Diggings, Buttrees Rock (named after a bushranger) then the Reidford Hotel (burnt down in 1899) and the public swimming baths.

The walk returned via a very good dirt road.

The signage was excellent for the historic sites, and the map used was from the Woolshed Valley Interpretive Trail.

See the Eldorado community website entry 'eldorado.org.au/wp-content/uploads/woolshed-valley-tour.pdf' for more details of this area. [Pat Kuhle]

Wangaratta Walks Booklet

The Rural City of Wangaratta (RCOW) is to produce a walks booklet similar to the highly successful walks booklets produced by Indi Shire, and the Alpine Shire.

The Indi Shire booklet covers walks in Beechworth, Chiltern, Rutherglen and Yackandandah, whereas the Alpine Shire's booklet covers Bright, Harrietville, Mount Beauty, Myrtleford and Wandiligong.

The RCOW booklet will cover the King Valley, Milawa, Oxley, the Warby Ranges, and (of course) the city itself. Some members of Warby Bushwalkers will liaise with the council on the content of the booklet—more details on this project in later newsletters.

White Box Walking Track : May 26

The venue for this walk was an old favourite – the White Box Walking Track at Chiltern-Mount Pilot National Park.

This National Park incorporates several historic sites from the mining era, and its box-ironbark forest is a major remnant of this once widespread woodland type. The Park covers a wide area of interesting terrain, from north of Chiltern township it reaches almost to Beechworth, and as well as being a safe haven for flora and fauna, is also home to many aspects of the North-east's human history.

Eight walkers gathered at Rotary Park at 9am for the short drive



to the National Park, and here we met five other walkers (from Beechworth and Myrtleford).

The thirteen of us were putting boots onto gravel at 10.15am, and it was a cold start to the morning, with the threat of 10mm of rain (which thankfully didn't eventuate) but we soon warmed up.

Early on in the walk, we took the time to make a short detour to check out a former gold mining area, and morning tea was held on a collection of fallen trees (just enough room for thirteen of us).

Lunch was enjoyed back at the Honeyeater Picnic Ground, followed by a nice hot cup of tea, and some ANZAC biscuits.

Overall, a very enjoyable 8.5km loop walk; a moderate grade, four hour, ramble through box-ironbark forest with an excellent crew.

[Chris McLaughlin]

Australian Walking Track Grading System

As mentioned in our April-June 2017 Newsletter, we have now adopted the Australian Walking Track Grading System (AWTGS) as a means of grading our walks, and the walks listed in our Walks Program have used this system for the past 12 months.

See the link on our website for more details, or key in the following address — <https://www.walkhighcountry.com.au/australian-walking-track-grading-system/>

The basic (simplified) framework of the Grades are as follows,

Grade 1

Up to 5km, gentle gradients, well formed track without steps, clearly sign-posted, no experience required.

Grade 2

Up to 10km, gentle hills, formed track with occasional steps, clearly sign-posted, no experience required.

Grade 3

Up to 20km, short steep hills, formed track with many steps, sign-posted, some bushwalking experience required.

Grade 4

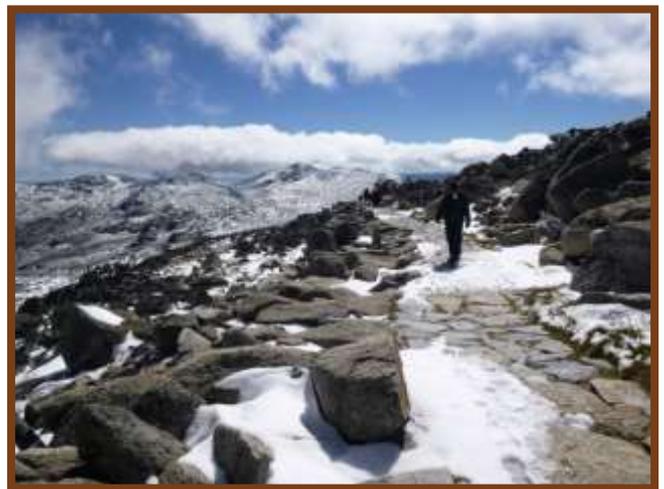
May be more than 20km, some long steep sections, rough track, limited sign-posting, intermediate bushwalking experience required.

Grade 5

May be more than 20km, many long steep sections, rough track, no sign-posting, extensive bushwalking experience required.

See the previously mentioned Newsletter for photos that typify each grade.

More photos from Thredbo . . .





SUBSCRIPTION FOR MEMBERSHIP – 2019/20

Name(s)

Address

.....Postcode

Telephone Mobile

Email

Type of Membership (Please circle)

Single (\$35) Family (\$65) Associate (\$10)

Life members receiving Newsletter (\$10)

Casual (\$5) 1st Walk

Subsequent Walk No. (maximum of 3 before joining)

Notes:

Fee is \$20 for Single or \$40 for Family if joining after 1st October in any year.

If joining after 1st February in any year full subscription is payable giving 14 months' membership.

Associate membership provides Club Newsletter & social event entry, but does not cover walks.

Please return this form to PO Box 974, Wangaratta 3676 with payment - either:

cheque to Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc

cash - or

our preferred method - Bank Transfer:

BSB 633 000 Account No. 110647799 Reference (Your name).