



NEWSLETTER 4 (October-December) 2017

The wattles are in bloom, and the rivers are rising—spring is in the air, and our October – December walks program is jam packed to take advantage of the prime spring walking conditions.

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

On the social scene, Judy Shaw organised a dinner at the Wangaratta Club on August, 10. This was a very entertaining night that attracted 40 club members.

As well as enjoying a nice meal, we socialised, watched scenes of recent walks, and then viewed a short video of 2018's "week away" location – the magnificent South West coast of Victoria.

[The organising committee for next year's week away has been busy, and there are several attachments to this newsletter relating to that great event.]

The evening concluded with a short, but difficult, trivia competition set by a devious life member.

Spring Gully to Ryan's Lookout : June, 3

A perfect winter day after a hard frost made this morning walk a delight.



The group of eighteen walkers set off from the Spring Creek picnic area in the Warby Range, and the initial part of the walk was the only challenge, in what would otherwise be an easy walk.

The steep banks of the Spring Creek were slippery in parts, and required caution. One walker was grazed in a tumble, and required first aid, but otherwise the walk went without incident.

Much of the walk is untracked, adding to the interest of the route. It is open woodland, with some outstanding grass tree specimens. Some kangaroos, and a wallaby, were sighted.

We followed Spring Creek upstream, but only some pools of water were present on the day. However, the rocky path of the stream is quite picturesque.

Eventually, by following a southerly direction, the group sighted the Devenish Road, and followed it in parallel until Ryan's Lookout was reached.

The picnic area near the lookout proved ideal for an end-of-walk barbecue, which was enjoyed by all.

[Adrian Twitt]

Mount Murrumbong : June, 18

Undulating. Now there's a word for you. One steep section. There's another three, but more about that later.

Sunday June 18 was an adventure to Mt Murrumbong or Mt Murrumbong, (spell it however you like), a small range in the Kiewa Valley. On this beautiful day, fourteen wonderful and willing walkers made the effort to get out into mother nature. It was nice to meet Rod from the Benalla walking group, who joined us on this occasion.

The day started off with a prompt departure from Apex Park for over an hour's drive to Simpson's Lane, near Kergunyah, in the Kiewa Valley. Cars were parked at the Gap Flat Road junction, where a moderate uphill climb of three kilometres, towards Lumby's Track, began.

Views through the trees over a fog laden Kiewa Valley were observed and the distant snow capped peaks of the Alpine Mountains were visible on this day. A pleasant stop for morning tea was welcomed by all, as a noticeable climb was imminent.

On a reconnaissance drive to this area some months back, Jeanette and I parked at this spot. We then proceeded to walk up this one steep hill. Upon reaching the top, the rest of the walk in the distance appeared undulating. There was no apparent need for us to investigate further. Oops, my mistake.

So after morning tea we set off up this one steep hill. Walkers were encouraged to reach the top for a lolly snake, and each in their own time managed this ascent. Incentive is a powerful thing. To say that it was a heart starter would be an understatement.

A climb of about 100 metres in elevation over a shortish distance

got everyone huffing and puffing, and I am sure I heard whispers of, "I think I can, I think I can". My heart was pumping so hard, I believe I may have bruised my ribs from the inside. A brief respite at the top, and a snake as promised, allowed everyone an opportunity to catch their breaths before some easier walking.

This however, after a section of longish downhill walking, soon turned into another steep section. "Where did this come from?" "Why wasn't I told about this?"

Apparently this was a little more than some walkers had expected, and been told about in my brief, which was fast deteriorating into an alternative fact. Oops, my mistake.

Nevertheless an apprehensive Ann, and reluctant Robyn, marched on like troopers. Fortunately for me I had bought the larger than family pack of snakes – the wilful, wayward Warby Walkers bulk pack, so I was well prepared.

The Mt Murra track was partly shaded during the walk, and the frequent sections in sunshine were well received. The forest area contained some notable looking trees, but I was unable to answer what they were when questioned.

I wanted to say big white ones without bark, but instead admitted that flora and fauna were not my forte. They were the type of trees that would take on a ghostly appearance should walkers be left straggling in forests around dusk or later.



Where the actual summit of Mt Murrumbidgee is located seems questionable. My GPS gave an elevation of about 870m at one point earlier in the walk, after that one steep section (the first one). We proceeded along to the edge of the ridge of the Mt Murra Track, stopping before it descended to the valley floor below.

Through the trees we could see Lake Hume glistening with the sun's reflection, farm dams looking plentiful, the surrounding land covered with glorious green grass and additional snow peaked alps in the distance.

Lunch was taken nearby, and people relaxed in the brilliant sunshine, and conspicuous lack of wind. Trevor was given some minor first aid treatment, after struggling to open the world's smallest can of tuna.

To this point we had walked a little over seven kilometres, in just under three hours, with breaks. On a clear day like this, Victoria's northeast is a wonderful place to be.

After lunch everyone was keen for the return walk, except where previous long downhill walks were now more steep inclines to undertake. The walk back was surprisingly faster with a spring in everyone's step and snakes still available to all. Obviously the thought of Pat's afternoon cuppa and cookies were on the minds of all walkers.

Upon approaching Lumby's Track for the second time, Jeanette led half of the group for a more adventurous trek along a lesser marked walking track, while the rest of us continued along the dirt track as before. It wasn't long before both groups rejoined and walked back to the cars for well earned refreshments.

The total walk of 14.35kms, that's almost 18,000 steps, unless you're Erin, then it's about 40,000, was completed in five and a half hours. Thank you, and congratulations, to all who participated in the walk.

Next time you are passing the Mt Murra forest, don't forget to look up and remind yourself that you've now walked that undulating range with one steep section. [Michael Braendler]

Mount Barambie, July 2

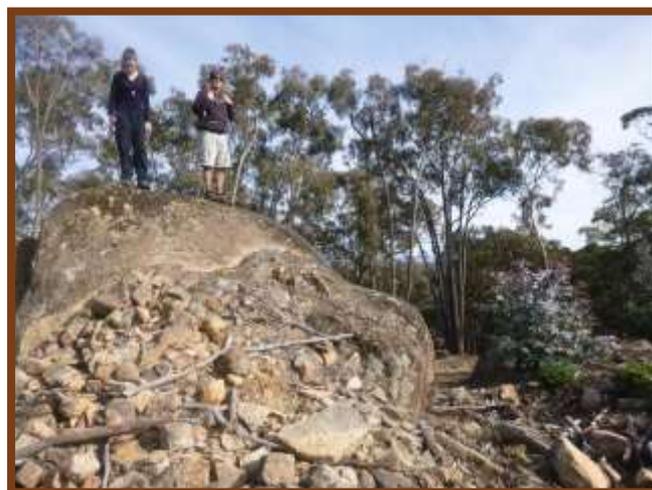
We had a very frosty start to Sunday before our walk to Mount Barambie, but 22 participants braved the cold, and came out for a walk with gloves, scarves, beanies and thermals (one has to stay warm).

Barambie is to the east of Chiltern, and we completed a loop walk of about 11km, starting out from the Water Trust Road/Bear Track intersection.

From here, we walked to a bush track south of Mount Barambie Road, where we enjoyed morning tea.

We then followed the bush track around to Mount Barambie Road, which was close to the newly remade, and extended, road to the new fire tower at the top of Barambie.

After a short steep climb up the Mount, we had lunch at the top, and climbed the rocks for a better view.



The tower (unfortunately) is off limits to climb for views, and I'm sure they would be fantastic.

After lunch, it was into the bush to find PX Track, and then onto Bear Track to continue back to the cars.

Afternoon tea included a home made cake from our new member Greta (competition for Pat's cookies).

Greta was also our eagle-eyed wildlife spotter for the day, having pointed out a koala, and a wedge tailed eagle, along our walk.

Enroute to the walk we had also come across a mob of kangaroos, and a fox. [Jeanette Farquhar]

Flagstaff Track/Murmungee Basin : July 15

This medium/hard adventure (of about 19km, taking six hours) started off from near the intersection of the Myrtleford/Beechworth Road, and the Ovens Highway, at Taylor's Gap, with a prior car shuffle of about 10km to the finish at Buckland Gap.

Setting off, the nine walkers started to climb up a well made, and well used, 4WD track, and at the end of a 500m climb, over two hours, we arrived at Flagstaff Hill (880m).



There were no views on the initial stages, due to the fog/low lying cloud; however there was evidence of mullock heaps from the goldmining eras, and panoramic views across the Murmungee Basin, almost to Wangaratta, at the peak.

We then continued walking along the ridge for another hour, with some more extensive views across the Murmungee Basin. This section was very up and down, with muddy sections in the gullies.

Turning north onto Burgoigee Track, the landscape changed abruptly from eucalypt forest to pine plantations/blackberries/new trees.

We stopped at Clarke's Corner, which is an historic site, related to the goldmining and post war immigration times, as well as forestry, in this area.

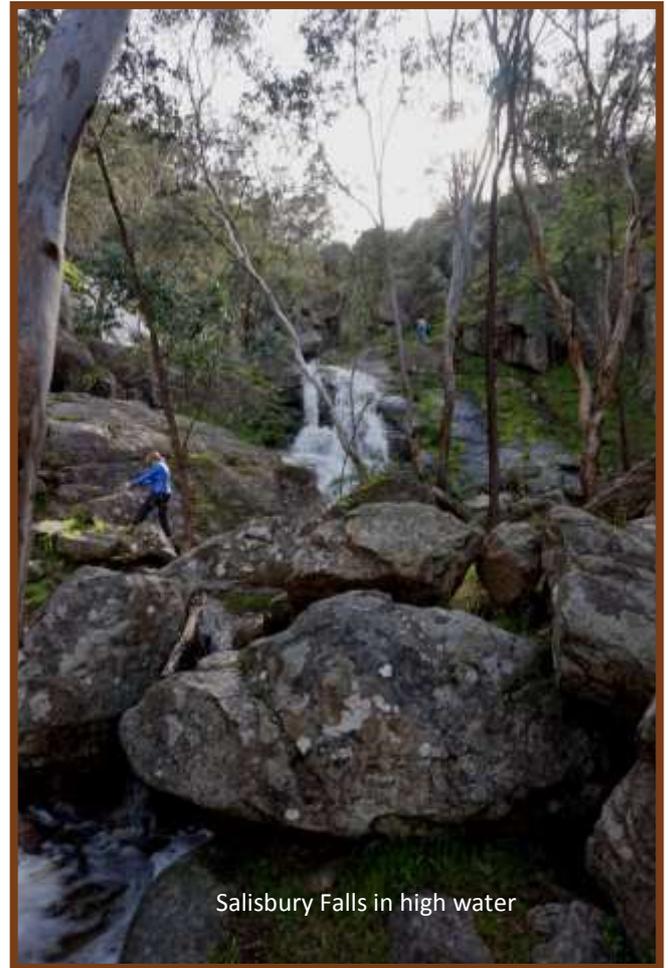
We then proceeded along Lady Newton Drive for almost three kilometres, back to the 'official' Murmungee Lookout, with magnificent views across the Ovens and King Valleys.

You could see the distant snow on Mt Buller and Mt Stirling, as well as Glenrowan Gap and Lake Mokoan.

From here we continued to walk downhill to where the cars were parked at Buckland Gap. [Bob Shaw]

Salisbury Falls, Warby Ranges NP : July 20

In fine conditions with some cloud over the Alps, six club members enjoyed the classic 11km walk from the Salisbury Falls area at the end of Shanley Street into our special Warby Range.



Salisbury Falls in high water

The first section climbs quite rapidly towards the top of Mt Warby with the vegetation obviously rejuvenated by recent rains, and with buds just appearing ahead of the usual wildflower "explosion" which will occur in a few weeks' time.

Some of the creeks were just running, and the waterfalls were close to making an appearance.

Kangaroos and many bird species were evident as the group enjoyed the always superb Alpine Views Track, which winds back on the edge of the Range. [Andy Kimber]

Woolshed Falls : July 10

Eighteen walkers decided to make the most of their day with a walk to the Woolshed Falls in Beechworth. The later meeting time of 9.30am in Wangaratta gave some a chance to sleep in, while others had an opportunity to lock up their stray dogs who made an early morning escape. Jeanette has now learnt to securely lock her backyard gate.

The Wangaratta contingent, including first time walker with the club, Kerryn, met other walkers in Beechworth at the Powder Magazine car park. The Powder Magazine building was built in 1859, and housed the gunpowder which was used during the prosperous mining days in the area.

Walkers hit the trail at about 10.30am, and rather than follow the

sealed road to the turnoff for the Falls walk, we opted for a short detour through the bush on a walking trail.

Despite not having an abundance of rain recently, Spring Creek was flowing well, and an opportunity to look at the Cascades provided some photographic moments. We continued along Spring Creek through to Reid's Creek Goldfield site. It was along this section that some mines were observed, which required more close attention.

It is difficult to believe that thousands of miners worked in this area, hoping to strike it rich. Today we try our luck with Lotto and poker machines, and get to keep our hands clean in the process. The walk was at a leisurely pace, except for Ted (the dog) who was his usual bundle of energy, and he couldn't help himself by plunging into the shallows of the creek.

Upon arriving at the Falls, lunch was taken at a number of the tables. There has been noticeable improvements in the picnic area at the Woolshed Falls, and it is now quite the lunch spot.



After lunch, a short walk to the cliffs over the Falls was undertaken. Walkers then proceeded down to the Falls for some more photo opportunities, and a group photo shot.

The return walk was back the way we had come. It was here that walkers were reminded of what leads you down, must then be tackled as an ascent. Strenuous for some, it was capably managed by all. Fortunately we passed two SES men in full gear as part of their training, who could have provided any necessary resuscitation, and rescue lifts to anyone who needed it.

Once back at the car park, the usual welcomed refreshments provided by Pat were eagerly consumed. The unhurried walk of 11km was completed in four and a half hours, and it was pleasing to have good numbers on this local walk.

[Michael Braendler]

Mount Buffalo - Nine Mile Track (from near Rolleston's Falls to Ovens Township) : August, 12

Despite the grey sky (and some drizzle), this 17km undulating walk attracted 21 participants, including three enthusiastic people from Kyabram.

Having organised the car shuttle (by leaving two cars at Selzers Lane, and driving to the start), we set off down the ridgeline system that was once the main access route to the Mount Buffalo Plateau.

Following the Bob Shaw copyright mud map, the varied route of the descent can be summarised as follows,

- Kilometres 1 to 4 – up and down on the ridge line, with the starting point being a 4WD track on the east side of the car park, with a locked gate at the very start.



- Kilometres 5 to 8 – descent to 600m with Constitution Hill on the right; a very walkable 4WD track. Some up and down sections

- Kilometres 9 – 10 – still up and down, but descended to 500m, with slight views of the Buffalo Creek Valley to the left, and the Ovens Valley to the right. In this section it was necessary to make sure that walkers did not take the track down to the right (always stick to the ridgeline, even if you think you are going too far away from the final descent).

- Kilometres 10 – 14 – Steady descent from 500m to 200m, arriving at Selzer's hydroponic sheds. There were a number of gates to pass through, and we ensured that all gates were closed correctly. It seemed like private property as we passed within 10m of a house, but this is a public access road. The shuttle cars were reached, near farm sheds on the valley floor, and the drivers then set off to retrieve vehicles from the start.

- Kilometres 15 – 17 – The non-drivers continued walking on the river flats, and crossed the Ovens River to reach the Ovens Highway. Turning left here, they walked the last kilometre (on the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail) to the Ovens Hotel, and some welcome refreshments.



With stops every hour, a 10 minute morning tea, and 20 mins for lunch at the 10km mark, the whole walk took five hours.

The degree of difficulty was rated as Medium, as it is mostly downhill, but on a well made 4WD track.

The only negative side of the day was the realisation that we would miss out on the now traditional Pat -ented tea, and fresh biscuits served on the ancient Pat - chworked table cloth.

[Bob Shaw]

Loggers Lane / Friends Loop : August 22

It wasn't springtime, but the wattles were in bloom, and the creeks were running nicely for this 12km walk in the Warby Ranges.

On this glorious sunny day, ten walkers set out from the Loggers Lane 'Car Park' at Wangandery Gap, and made their way to Taylors Lane, and then Wenhams Camp for lunch.

On the way we enjoyed great views of the snow covered alpine area, several sightings of kangaroos, and a pod of gang-gang cockatoos.

After lunch, we took some of the unmarked trails that lead back towards Loggers Lane, enjoying yet more great views of the alpine ranges, and more sightings of red and grey kangaroos.

The grass-trees were looking very prosperous in their rock studded gardens, and various types of orchids were just starting to come into bloom. Overall, a very enjoyable walk, with a good group.

[Chris McLaughlin]

White Box Track, Chiltern-Mount Pilot National Park : August 27

Starting out from the Honeysuckle Picnic ground, this was an 8.5km loop walk, and was an easy three hour ramble through the box-ironbark forests along a foot track.

Excellent signage helped us find our way where vehicular tracks were encountered, and there were some small hills and dips to negotiate, but nothing too strenuous.

We saw lots of birds in the forest canopy, and we noted strong regrowth in the western section of the forest, the section most heavily impacted by the Indigo Valley Fire of 2016.

Altogether, a very pleasant morning walk, followed by a picnic back at the cars, and then a short drive to Mount Pilot, and a short walk to the summit, for 360° views.



It was a bit too early for the wildflowers, and maybe a future walk in this area could include the Yeddonbah Rock Art site.

[Cecily Fletcher]

News Items from Bushwalking Victoria

1) Thanks to many people who have contacted their local Member for Parliament to raise concerns with the likely impacts of Australian Adventure Activity Standards on volunteer community-based bushwalkers.

Many MPs, and Minister Eren, have responded stating that they don't believe that the AAAS will impact our bushwalking. However, our most recent advice is that this is not the case.

Our ongoing concerns are:

The "standards" specify over 20 "national competencies" that are designed for professional operators. It is unrealistic and inappropriate to expect volunteer bushwalkers to attempt to prove they meet these competencies.

The standards are NOT voluntary if land managers, courts and insurance companies all consider that they apply to volunteer bushwalkers. The AAAS currently explicitly apply to volunteer bushwalking leaders and clubs.

Increased compliance burdens and liabilities resulting from these standards are likely to result in community-based clubs reducing their trips program or even folding.

Our simple solution is to include the following words in the standard(s):

"Compliance with this standard may be deemed mandatory for commercial adventure activity operators. This standard does not apply to volunteers."

We have launched this online petition so clubs, members and the general public can raise concerns about the AAAS directly with Premier Andrews and Minister Eren.

Peter Campbell, President, 0409 417 504

[See the link on our website]

2) We are getting more and more involved in our promoting bushwalking as a fun and healthy activity project. We need you to participate with photos - please keep them coming. We are after views, funny photos, challenging experiences etc. We are in the process of connecting with clubs on Social Media, if you are on Social Media and we have not connected, please send us an invite. When posting on Social Media please use the hashtags #bushwalk #bushwalkingvictoria #bushwalkvictoria

3) The Federation Weekend in Warburton is booking up very well with over 320 participants from multiple clubs now happily signed up. Following requests we have decided to extend sign-up time by ONE WEEK ONLY - so final registrations will now be accepted online until 5pm Thursday September 7th, but no later, at www.fedwalks.org.au by clicking the BOOK button at the end of the Bookings section.

Remember that you can take advantage of convenient accommodation at Arrabri Lodge, and also include the optional delicious Friday and Saturday night dinners, a great way to enjoy FedWalks with other bushwalking fans. Saturday night guest speakers will be historian and author Mike McCarthy, and government forests (DEWLP) manager Monica Mains. Don't miss out, register now and be part of a memorable walking weekend in beautiful Warbuton.

Red-gum Forests

Parks Victoria has released the River Red Gum Parks Draft Management Plan for public comment. The intent of the Plan is to protect and enhance the 100+ parks and reserves covering over 215,000 ha in Northern Victoria- including our Warby-Ovens National Park.



For more information, download a copy of the Plan, or an on-line form that allows you to comment on aspects of the plan. See www.parks.vic.gov.au/redgumplan for more information.

Emergency Information Card

Bushwalking Victoria suggests that bushwalkers make use of a "Private & Confidential – Personal Health Details Emergency Information Card," with the information card being completed and carried by bushwalkers.

This is to be used by first responders in the unlikely event of a medical emergency during a walk.

The form is available on the Club's webpage (under Guide to Safe Bushwalking). Please read it carefully; its use is encouraged.

Week Away—April 2018

The Club has booked accommodation at Portland Bay Lodge, east of Portland. It is about a 588km, six hour drive from Wangaratta, via Melbourne and Geelong. Accommodation style is similar to the Talbingo Week Away in 2017, with single beds and bunks.



The Lodge can accommodate up to 100 guests, but we must have a minimum of 20. We should be able to have two people per room. Cost is \$35 pp per night.

There is plenty of room and good access for caravans, tents etc,

but the cost is still \$35 pp/night. We have the lodge to ourselves. There are plenty of bathrooms and showers. The kitchen is quite small, but adequate.

A variety of easy/medium/hard walks will be offered from the four radically different sections, the Forest Walk, the Glenelg River Gorge, the Discovery Bay Beach and the Capes and Bays Walk.

The team system will again be utilised to prepare, cook, serve and clean up a three course dinner on one night only. More information will be provided closer to departure.

Simple and wholesome meals will be the go, and will equate to a cost per person of \$10 per day. We will also have one night dining out, venue yet to be finalised.



Members can also explore the immediate region, and information on a variety of activities including canoeing, and a Geotrail, will be provided on the dedicated mid-week rest day.

See the attached information, and booking sheets, for more.

Great South West Walk, Week Away : Sunday 15th April-Sunday 22nd April 2018

FACT SHEET

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What to you need to provide:

- Your own dinner for Sunday 15th April - please plan to be there by 6pm
- Your own breakfast, lunch and snacks for the week
- Appropriate walking clothing, including wet weather gear
- Your own alcohol, if required.

Please note:

- We can access Portland Bay Lodge from 3pm Sunday 15th April, and must leave by 10am on Sunday 22nd April
- A bottom sheet, and pillow with pillowslip, are provided.
- BYO towel and sleeping bag/duona and top sheet, if required
- A choice of supermarkets and shops are within 15-20 minutes our accommodation, in nearby Portland, which we will be passing through most days.
- Tea, coffee, milk, butter and margarine, and mayonnaise, will be provided by the Club.
- Happy hour will be held at 5.30pm each evening in the Dining Room. This will be followed by a meeting at 6pm each evening, to plan walks for the following day – commencing on Sunday 15th April.
- Car pooling to travel to Portland Bay Lodge is encouraged, and will be finalised closer to departure date. The expectation is that passengers will contribute to petrol costs.
- The highly successful “Meter Maid” system will again be used to cover daily walks’ petrol costs.

How to Book:

Please provide a completed Registration Form and deposit of \$50 per person **By 30 NOVEMBER** as per the attached form.

\$10 per person per meal for five evening meals will be collected by the Catering Coordinator on the first night.

Any queries can be directed to members of the Planning Committee:

Chair:

Leanne Wood, 57270397

Walks Coordinators:

Chris McLaughlin, 57224876

Liz White, 58814048

Meals and Accommodation Coordinator:

Beverley Wolfel, 57219878

Communication Coordinator:

Chris McLaughlin, 57224876

Committee Members:

Lesley Finedon, 57281740

Rob Chard, 0408174027





Great South West Walk : Week Away
Sunday, 15 April – Sunday, 22 April 2018
REGISTRATION

Name:
Address:
Phone: Mobile:
email:
If you are not planning to stay the full week, please advise days NOT staying
Contact person, relationship and phone number in case of emergency:
.....

Please circle any special dietary requirements, or relevant health issues:
Vegetarian Gluten Free
No red meat No chicken
No fish Other

To register, please complete and sign this Registration Form, and send to Guy Robertson, 3 Murdoch Road, Wangaratta 3677 (or to PO Box – see below) with a deposit of \$50 per person BY 30 NOVEMBER 2017:

(preferred) bank transfer BSB 633 000 Account No. 110647799 Ref: GSWW – Your name or cash / cheque(Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc) attached (PO Box 974, Wangaratta 3676.

Please note, the balance of \$195 pp is required by 15 MARCH 2018.

Acknowledgement of Risks and Obligations of Members

During the week away to minimise risks I will endeavour to ensure that:
Each activity is within my capabilities
I am carrying food, water and equipment appropriate for the walks/activities.
In addition:
I will advise the activity leader if I am taking any medication or have any physical or other limitation that might affect my participation in the walk/activity
I will make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during the walk/ activity
I will advise the leader of any concerns I am having, and
I will comply with all reasonable instructions of club officers and the walk/activity leader.

Signature(s)
Date...../...../ 2017