



**WARBY RANGE
BUSHWALKERS Inc.**

FUN . FITNESS . FRIENDSHIP

NEWSLETTER : March, 2021

warbybushwalkers.org.au

Welcome to the Autumn 2021 Newsletter!

Those glorious autumn days are nearly upon us once more, and there is no excuse for not joining us on a walk. As usual, there is a wide variety to choose from, including some tried and true venues, as well as some new adventures.

Now is the time to read the current Walks Program (April-June) and to plan ahead for some great walks in the North-East.

Christmas Party : December 2020

Our 2020 Christmas get-together was held at the Bowmans Murrumbidgee Memorial Hall for the second year, and once again proved to be an excellent venue. Cecily, and her hard working friends, had set everything up for us, and the night went very smoothly.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, there was to be a review of the club's 40 year history at this event, and this was expertly delivered by Adrian Twitt, one of the club's founders.

Our first walk was in September 1980, and Adrian guided us through the formative years of the club, firstly as a conservation organisation, and how it morphed into the Warby Bushwalkers.

Another highlight of the evening was the awarding of "Life Member" to the tireless Kerry Davenport. Here's the address given by club president Cecily Fletcher,

"Kerri Davenport had only been a member of the Warby Range Bushwalkers for a couple of years when she attended the AGM of 2005. At that time the membership consisted of a small group of keen walkers, some from the earliest foundation of the club.



Kerri might have been surprised at the poor attendance at the AGM, but that was quite normal at the time. She might have been even more surprised when retiring president, Val Kemp, nominated Kerri for the presidential position. Kerri is reported to have said, "this is all new to me". But undaunted, Kerri took up the challenge, and the Club has never looked back.

Kerri's sunny personality, her welcoming nature, and her attention to detail, won her over to Club members.

Soon the membership began to thrive. By the end of that year, membership had passed fifty; few older members could remember a healthier number.



It was testament to the manner in which Kerri ran the Club. It was now a club where enthusiastic members flocked to be on the committee, and the participation by members, on all walks, grew.

In the first year of Kerri's presidency, she and Paul hosted the annual Christmas Party at their house, then located at Killawarra.

Kerri led walks, and initiated new aspects to the walks program. Kerri negotiated, through her contacts, the use by the Club of the Myrtleford Ski Lodge for a summer weekend at Falls Creek.

The weekend attracted 29 participants, something of a record at that time, and the 'weekend away' has now become one of the features of our walks program.

Kerri has also been proactive in organising venues for the annual week away, a long tradition of the Club. She has been thorough in her investigations, and unceasingly consultative with other members in her preparation.

It is thanks to Kerri that we have had such wonderful venues for weeks away, such as Kangaroo Valley (NSW), the Snowy Mountains, and the Blue Mountains. Her research skills are amazing.

Kerri continued to serve on the committee after retiring from the position of President in 2010. In 2015, Kerri was elected Secretary at the AGM, held with 40 in attendance at the Vine Hotel. As with the presidency, Kerri enmeshed herself into the role; attention to detail has been a trademark of her secretarial role.

The Club has continued to thrive over the years, in no small measure due to Kerri's active membership, and executive roles. She is an

active participant in the walks program, and has a thorough knowledge of the members, and their interests.

Kerri has indicated that she wishes to step down from her role as Secretary, after five years in the position.

Kerri has well, and truly, earned this nomination as a Life Member of the Warby Range Bushwalking Club."

The evening was very successful, with nearly 50 members attending the event. It was a balmy evening, and the chatter continued until way after dark.

Annual General Meeting : 2021

Our ANNUAL DINNER and AGM will be held at the Wangaratta Club on Monday, March 29th; the Club is located at 4 Victoria Parade, in the heart of Wangaratta.

Please book your table with Anne – Mobile: 0427 576 664 by Friday, 26th March; everyone is encouraged to attend.

Dinner will commence from 6.30pm (full a-la-carte menu) and this will be followed by the formal part of the meeting (that is, the election of office bearers), and then our guest speaker (Simon Mullumby, from BWV) will take the microphone.

As usual, membership fees become due at the AGM, and the fees for the forthcoming year are the same as last year's, that is, Single \$35; Family \$65; Associates \$10; Life members receiving newsletter \$10.

Some committee positions will become vacant at the AGM, and if you are thinking of joining the Committee, the nomination form can be found under "General Information" on our website, and at the back of this Newsletter.

MOUNT BUFFALO PLATEAU : December 6

On Sunday December 6, it was a glorious sunny 25 degrees, accompanied by a gentle breeze, and the makings of a great day for bushwalking.

Unfortunately, this was happening somewhere else on the planet, and not at Mount Buffalo, where 16 foolhardy walkers braved the elements to walk to Mt Dunn and The Monolith.



From the park entrance, our approach up the mountain was welcomed by brief sunshine; sadly, this was a last-minute tease in an effort to put our minds at ease.

However, we eventually ventured out of the warmth, and dry car interiors, into the cold and wet that was mother nature. Scrambling for wet weather clothing was hurriedly undertaken, before

the mandatory walk briefing and introductions. On this occasion we welcomed new walkers Allison and Maureen (Mauz).

Reservoir Road is a dirt road that follows alongside Crystal Brook, and passes the Mount McLeod turnoff, before reaching the Reservoir parking area, a little over 3km away. As the rain had stopped at this point, it was the optimum opportunity to have morning tea.



The showers had once again resumed, and it was around about this time that we began noticing the sensation of soggy socks. Mental note: it's time to waterproof the boots again. Wildflowers were still blooming, and though I am no expert, I did notice at least four yellow varieties, three purple kinds, and a pink one.

Birdlife was out in relative abundance today with Rosellas, a Black Cockatoo, something resembling a Raven, and Kookaburras (who were laughing at us) amongst those spotted.

The Mount Dunn turnoff was a 500m return walk. Decisions needed to be made. At this point in time, rain now turned to something known as "sago snow" according to Adrian.

I know many people use Google or Siri as a resource, but personally I prefer Adrian. Sago snow is something in between rain and hail, and we were in awe of being lightly covered in these slightly frozen white pellets.

Being group leader, I half-heartedly offered to take any interested walkers up to Mount Dunn for a higher view of grey clouds, more penetrating precipitation, wild wind-blown trees and the threat of tumbling on slippery rocks. Secretly I was hoping for no takers.

There was, however, a moment of almost sheer madness when a number of walkers seemed to think that this was an idea of merit.

Thankfully something prevailed, possibly common sense, or making the national news in a tragic headline, and we wisely opted to continue towards Lake Catani. This took us to a lovely area, with bright green ferns, and large granite rocks. This section of the walk then becomes part of the Long Plain Walk.

In less than a couple of kilometres Lake Catani came into view, and then the lakeside picnic area. The surface of the Lake had mist blowing across it, but brief patches of sunshine warmed us, and dried our jackets and gloves. A local resident, an obviously well-fed duck, accompanied us for lunch.

The rain was about to resume once again, and so the obligatory group photo was hastily taken, and before you could say, Duck a L'Orange, with a side of herb roasted chat potatoes and greens, we were on our way again.

The next kilometre was alongside the lake towards the weir, and then we made a turn towards the Chalet along one of the most popular short paths in the park.

One hundred metres off this track, a viewpoint provides a view of the eastern side of Mt Buffalo. Today this was a view of grey clouds, more penetrating precipitation, wild wind-blown trees, and the threat of tumbling on slippery rocks.

We re-joined the track, and soon met the Monolith turn-off, where backpacks and poles were left behind, and the short ascent made towards the top of this large granite boulder. This provided some of the best photo opportunities for the day.

The fierce wind didn't allow for a more leisurely sojourn, and once photos were taken it was time for the descent. We then covered the final few hundred metres towards the cars.

Today's walk was a total of 13.1km, and was completed in just under five hours. Thanks to all those who participated, and fingers crossed we attempt this walk again in more favourable weather.

[Michael]

McMillans Track Guide Book

Angus McMillan (1810-1865) was born in Scotland, and migrated to Australia in 1838. He pioneered much of what we now call Gippsland, and his memoirs show that, like many migrants, he had a great love for his adopted country.

In 1988 a 210km long distance walking track was created in honour of McMillan's adventures. This great walk leads from the junction of the Great Alpine Road, and the Victoria River Track, eastwards to the small community of Woods Point.

Up-to-date details can be found in the excellent guide book McMillans Walking Track, produced in November 2020, by expert guide book authors John and Monica Chapman, and the Ben Cruachan Walking Club. See www.bencruachanwalkingclub.com for more details.

Skeleton Hill : December 10

The walk on Skeleton Hill, in Chiltern – Mount Pilot National Park, is a new venue for the club, and proved to be a very interesting, and enjoyable, adventure.



As usual, we met at Rotary Park, and then travelled in convoy to the junction of Skeleton Hill Track and Lancashire Gap Road.

The distance planned for the walk was about seven kilometres, and we had a temperature of about 27c, with a blue sky, and some high cloud. From the start, we set off up-hill for about a kilometre, and then had morning tea, sat on some rocks, with great views to the west.

Continuing on, we checked out the spur track at the south-western tip of the ridge, and then returned to the main track.

Swinging around to the south-east, we had great views of rolling hill country, and were soon back at the start, where we had lunch.

Walking time was about two hours, and we enjoyed the ironbark forest, and its collection of wildflowers and wildlife (wallabies, a goanna, and an eagle).

This was an easy walk that could easily be repeated, maybe including Koala Track, so as to make the walk about three kilometres longer.

Many Thanks to Rae for organising a litter collection bag; we filled a shopping bag with cans, bottles and soft drink containers, all left by careless users of our glorious bushland. [Chris]

Mount Killawarra : December 19

This was a 12km loop through the beautiful bushland at the northern tip of the Warby Ranges, and was a new venue for the club.

The top temperature predicted was 27c, and we had an interesting blue sky, with a nice cooling breeze.

The route was immaculately researched, by Jeanette and Michael, during the springtime, and what a great walk it was.

We met at Rotary Park at 9am, and from here we travelled in convoy out to the Warby Ranges.



There were 17 club members on this adventure, and setting off from the intersection of Warby Tower Road, and Boweya Road, we followed Jeanette's mud map meticulously, making a wide loop around Mount Killawarra.

Morning tea was taken on a massive granite slope, and from here we curved around to the Mount itself for lunch. There was enough shade here for us to take cover, particularly under those gorgeous Spur Wing Wattles. The views from the Mount were very impressive, and we could clearly see Mount Cobbler, the Wabonga Plateau and Mount Buffalo.

We were back at our cars just after 1.30pm, nicely timed to avoid the warmest part of the day.

Federation Walk 2021

This year's Federation Walk will be held in the Victoria High Country to the north of Licola, a small village on the banks of the Macalister River.

The base for the walk will be the Licola Wilderness Village, in cabins containing 3 or 4 bedrooms, with bunk-style accommodation. An all-inclusive package (including meals) will be available as part of the registration process. More details can be found at fedwalks.org.au, and in our next Newsletter.

Popular walks in the area include Bryce Gorge, Pieman Falls, Moroka Gorge, Vallejo Ganther Memorial Hut, Mount Howitt, The Crinoline (see photo) and Lake Tali Karng.



This was to have been the Federation Walk in 2020, but was held over because of the covid-19 pandemic; next year's venue is North-east Victoria!!

Mount Buffalo : Sunday, January 10

This was our first walk of the New Year, and was to have been at Beechworth (Lake Sambell to Lake Kerferd) but that was cancelled due to a continued track closure (since the winter of 2020) by Parks Victoria. This was caused by safety concerns for the grill structures that protect the various mine shaft relics on the track to Lake Kerferd.

So, the new agenda was to head for Mount Buffalo, and given how hot it was in the valley, this was a good move, regardless of the track closure mentioned above.



We met at Rotary Park (at 7.45am), organised the car pooling, and headed off to the high country via Myrtleford. Here, we met up with club members, and guests, from Myrtleford, Whorouly, Murrumgee and Beechworth.

Our starting point was at the entry to The Monolith Track (opposite the Parks Victoria depot), and from here all 22 of us headed up to The Monolith for morning tea.

The fairly steep track, with a number of rock steps, and then a metal stair to the top, was easily achieved, and the views were amazing. The backdrop to the view was that gorgeous blue haze, typical of the mid-latitudes right around planet earth, and this was a memorable spot for refreshments.

A plaque on the rock commemorates the first ascent of this monster by Edward Carlisle, way back in 1893.

We then continued towards The Chalet, and joined a large number of tourists who were enjoying the spectacular views. As well (I have to mention), a few people took advantage of the mobile coffee van situated in the carpark!

After about 20 minutes here, we continued to Lake Catani, just in time for a midday lunch on the shores of the Lake. A few begging ducks joined us, and were rewarded with nibbles.

The Lake was also a busy place, with plenty of kayakers out on the water, and a few swimmers. We didn't have kayaks with us, but that did not stop a couple of avid swimmers/walkers taking a dip.

After an enjoyable lunch at the picnic area, and consultation with some topo maps, we split into two groups, one of 14 walkers, and one of eight.

The group of 14 adventurers set off to tackle Chalwell Galleries, and the eight meandered around to the Grossmans Mill picnic area, and then returned to the cars via the Lakeside Walk, and the south side of The Monolith.

We regrouped at the cars, and enjoyed afternoon tea in the shade, followed by the drive home.

Mount Buffalo is an amazing venue for bushwalking, not only for its high country scenery and vegetation, but also the profuse collections of contorted boulders that we came across everywhere that we walked. Another advantage is that the temperature is usually about 12 degrees lower than Wangaratta, so a great venue on a hot day. [Chris]

Book Review : From Snow to Ash

Antony Sharwood is an award winning journalist, and in this great read he shares his emotional, philosophical and physical insights during his traverse of the Australian Alpine Walking Track.

Setting off from Walhalla, Anthony leaves a wintry environment, and heads off (unknowingly) to the trauma of the January 2020 bushfires.



On the way, he quotes widely from the guide to the AAWT (by John Chapman, Monica Chapman and John Siseman) so for veterans of this iconic long distance walk, it's easy to picture the terrain, and events, of each day. There is also extensive commentary on the historical background to the walk, places visited along the way, and people encountered.

Overall, a great read; very enjoyable. The publisher is Hachette Australia (www.hachette.com.au) and the RRP is \$32.99.

[In January we were fortunate to have John and Marion Siseman stay with us for a few days; they were providing logistic support for the Chapmans, who were walking some sections of the AAWT ready for an update. Sales of their guidebook were way above average in 2020, driven by demand from bushwalkers who would normally tackle an overseas venue. Yve M]

[Australia-wide outdoor retailer, BCF, has reported a 50% lift in over-the-counter sales during 2020; and a 100% increase of on-line sales.]

Stypandra Track, Warby Ranges : January 31

This route was pioneered by Karen Davis, and is a very interesting, and enjoyable, walk.

The 19 participants met at Rotary Park at 7.30am, organised car pooling, then headed off to Loggers Lane. Having dropped off all of our gear, we took a shuttle car to the picnic area at Jubilee (Briens) Falls, and we were finally walking on the track at 8.30am.



We headed south, along Loggers Lane, and had an early morning tea at the junction of Loggers Lane, and the un-signposted Stypandra Track (the track is named for its profusion of Nodding Lilies *Stypandra glauca*.)

We then followed this disused vehicular track along a spur, and descended down to the valley floor, with great view of the Ovens/King floodplains.

Turning west at a fence line, we followed this through to a clearing where there is an un-named waterfall. This is a very scenic locality, and has evidence of European settlement at some time.

Returning along the fence line, we walked alongside Jubilee Golf Course, emerging from the bush about 300m from the picnic area at Jubilee Falls. After lunch here, we returned to Loggers Lane, via the shuttle car, to collect our cars.

This was rated as a moderate walk, and we had a nice sunny day (max 27c) for our eight kilometre adventure. The overall time taken was about 3.5 hours (8.30am to midday).

Flora and fauna included many intriguing colonies of grass-trees, eight kangaroos, and a metre long goanna.

Most of the route taken is shown on Rooftop Maps Beechworth-Albury-Wangaratta Adventure Map, but not on any topographic maps of the area.

This walk was originally scheduled for January 23, but was delayed because of hot conditions on that date. [Chris]

Yackandandah Escarpment : February 7

The Yackandandah Escarpment extends southwards from Yackandandah township, and is renowned for its beautiful open forest, and great views.

We had a group of 20 walkers for this adventure, as well as a lovely sunny day, with some high-level cloud. The walkers based in Wangaratta met at Rotary Park at 8.30am, organised the car pooling, and then drove to Beechworth.

Here, we met up with walkers from Myrtleford, Bright, Buckland Valley and Beechworth, and then continued on to Yackandandah.



Heading south from Yack, we took the Dederang Road, then Back Creek Road, to a right turn onto Schmidts Lane.

This took us through to a sharp right, that leads to a convenient piece of flat ground; perfect to park our vehicles on.

From here, we commenced an anti-clockwise loop to the west of the escarpment, taking time out to admire the scenery, and to have morning tea on the inevitable fallen logs.

Making a sweeping u-turn, we then came to the escarpment itself, and enjoyed the valley views to the left and right.

Lunch was taken along this ridge line, and we then began the big descent back down to our vehicles. The climb so far had been quite gentle, and we didn't realise how much we had climbed until the descent was in front of us.

Making full use of those trekking poles, we took it slowly downhill, and our knees were very grateful to see the finish line.

Afternoon tea (thank-you Pat) was served in the shade of some enormous eucalypts, and we then headed home.

There are many more tracks in the forest than those we utilised, and if you want to return to this area with your friends, a copy of the topographic map Yackandandah will be essential equipment.

[Jeanette]

Map Review : Great South West Walk and Mornington Peninsula

Respected map maker, Simon Spivak, has produced new editions to his popular maps of the Great South West Walk, and the Mornington Peninsula. Many of us have used Simon's maps (which are produced under the Meridian Maps brand) and found them to always be accurate, and a great asset.

The Great South West Walk map has been updated to include the emergency markers along the walk, and as well as being essential equipment for those tackling long sections of the GSWW, is also ideal for day visits to places like Cape Bridgewater and Cape Nelson.

The Mornington Peninsula maps has completely new text, and cartography, and include 25 walks at Point Nepean, within the Mornington Peninsula National Park, and the Arthurs Seat State Park.

Both maps are great value, \$14.95 for the Great South West Walk map, and \$10.95 for the Mornington Peninsula map.

Details (and on-line ordering) at www.meridianmaps.com.au

Water in Beechworth : February 12

Despite showers occurring as we drove up to Beechworth, seven keen walkers headed off for a 5-6km pleasant amble, which aimed to be always within a few metres of water.

Remarkably the rain ceased just as we parked beside Lake Sambell, and parkas were not needed!



The walk started by trudging up the Silver Creek Track for a few hundred metres to explore the newly constructed wetlands.

Then the crew circled the caravan park, before clambering around the eastern shore of the lake.

We then followed Spring Creek, and Rotary Tracks, all the way to the bridge at the start of the gorge.

The return trip back to our cars involved walking mainly on the right bank of Spring Creek, through the Chinese Gardens, and

the Rail Trail just to the west of Lake Sambell.

With two seasoned historians in the party, and with good signage, this walk proved to be a very interesting journey in perfect weather conditions. [Andy]

Book Reviews : The Great South West Walk, and The Great South West Walk Track Notes.

That amazing volunteer organisation, Friends of The Great South West Walk, has produced a 214 page guide book to the GSSW, as well as an overview Track Notes booklet.



Both are essential gear for trip planning, as well as to take on the walk itself.

The guide book in particular is very comprehensive, and covers everything you need to know as part of the planning process, and whilst on this amazing walk (it was the venue for our week away in 2018).

The mapping is excellent, as are the photographs and the text.

Both publications are available via on-line ordering from www.greatsouthwestwalk.com, the guidebook being \$34.95 (plus postage), and the Track Notes \$4 (plus postage).

Gapsted, Stanley State Forest : February 20

Today's walk was an 8km loop through Stanley State Forest, near Gapsted Winery.



There were 20 of us, with three newcomers, and two dogs (Tobey and Ted) as we set off at 9am on the initial section of the walk, along the Murray to Mountains Rail Trail.

We then headed off to the right, taking Stoney Creek Track, and then Gapsted Track, so as to loop around the back of the winery.

As the temperature was expected to reach the mid-thirties, we enjoyed the walk in the shade of the trees in the bush, and also that the walk was mainly flat, with only a few gentle hills.



We had our regular morning tea break along the track, where we found some logs, which we could sit on.

There was plenty of talking along the way, which is an important part of us meeting and walking, and something most of us have been deprived of over the last 12 months.

We finished our walk at 11.15, making it a bit over a two hour walk, by which time it was then rather warm in the sunshine.

However, we all had had a lovely Saturday morning, and are looking forward to our next walk. [Marita]

Week Away : 2021

Our annual week away for 2021 (postponed from 2020) takes in the great coastal scenery of the Mornington Peninsula.

The registration form can be found on our website.

The fourteen-kilometre Sorrento Ocean Beach to Bridgewater Bay walk, as well as the Bushrangers Bay to Fingal Beach track, are on the walk's program. Both walks offer spectacular cliff top views of the coastline, rock platforms, small bays and birdlife.

Walkers will also enjoy the hilly terrain around Red Hill and Arthur's Seat National Park with views of rural properties, majestic old pine trees, wetlands, wildflowers and wildlife.

All walkers will have the opportunity to undertake a section, or the entire challenging twenty-six kilometre Two Bays Walking Track, the longest continuous walking track on the Mornington Peninsula, running from Dromana on Port Phillip Bay, to Cape Schanck.

A twelve-kilometre circuit track around Port Nepean will also be explored. On this circuit, walkers can read about Australia's military history, a historic quarantine station, and the Harold Holt Memorial, while enjoying the stunning views of coastal vegetation, and bay views, of Port Phillip Bay, and Bass Strait.



Yackandandah Escarpment



Stypandra Track



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Committee Nomination Form

I hereby nominate _____

for the position of _____

on the 2021-22 Committee.

(Name) _____

(Signature) _____

I second the nomination

(Name) _____

(Signature) _____

I accept the nomination

(Name) _____

(Signature) _____

Please forward the completed form to:

The Secretary

Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc

PO Box 974

Wangaratta, 3676