



# WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS Inc.

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warbybushwalkers.org.au

NEWSLETTER : March, 2023

After a long, hot and humid, summer those pleasing autumn days have arrived, and (as usual) there is a wide variety of walks to choose from in our Walks Program, including some tried and true venues, as well as some new adventures. As well, it's that time of year again, time for our AGM, so please save the date: Monday, 20th March, when our 'AGM and Social Catch up Gathering' is to be held at Remel 185, 399 Whorouly Road, Whorouly.

Dinner is from 6pm, (three course - set menu, \$50 per person; dietary needs catered for, BYO drinks), followed by a short AGM starting at 7.30pm - see the attachment for more details.

Our Guest Speaker, Richard Loyn (a local ecologist) will present a talk entitled "Birds of the Warby Ranges".

Please book in with Marita: 0427 521 122 (warby.ranges@gmail.com)

As well as electing the committee for 2023-2024, there is a proposal to raise the membership fees for singles to \$45 (from \$35) and the family membership to \$90 (from \$65; club memberships become due at the AGM). This was discussed at the August committee meeting, and it was noted that no fee increase had occurred for at least five years. As well, it was proposed that the fee for new members joining mid-year onwards will be \$30; the casual walker charge will remain at \$5 per walk, deducted from the membership fee should that person later join the club.

The committee nomination form is available under "General Information" on our website, and at the back of this Newsletter.

## Annual Week Away

As previously mentioned, the sub-committee for the 2023 week away has suggested that The Grampians is the place to go, staying at the Uniting Church's Norval Lodge at Halls Gap. This is planned as a springtime (wild-flowers) trip for seven nights, from 22/9/23 to 28/9/23. Norval Lodge provided our base-camp nine years ago, and there are campsites at nearby locations, and Halls Gap is just minutes away.

Details, and the Registration Form, can be found on our website; the Registration Form is also attached to this Newsletter.

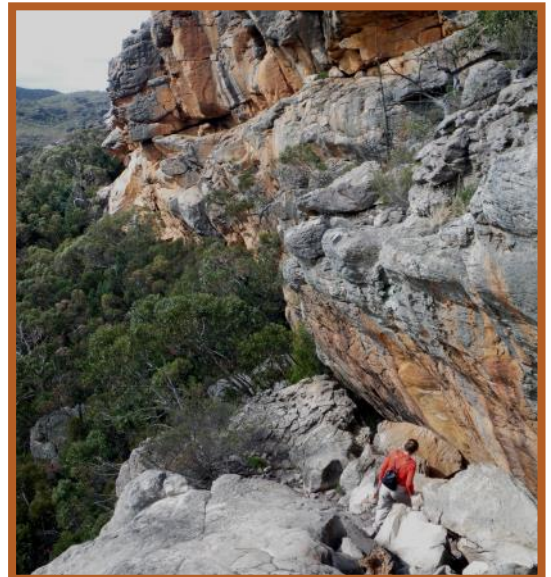
## Winton Wetlands : December 3

After several club members withdrew due to the "unseasonable" predicted hot day, a small but enthusiastic group ambled along three of the Winton Wetlands designated short walks.

In rapidly warming conditions, we covered the almost three kilometres of the Green's Hill Track, enjoying fantastic views over the now full lakes, and the accompanying massive bird life, before walking the less than a kilometre along Humphries Hill Track in a slow fashion as "beware of snake" signs were evident!!

The drive into the eastern part of the wetlands was less direct than normal as Boggy Creek Road was closed due to flood damage.

We then visited the Mokoan Hub, for a delightful coffee and cake break, before exploring the one kilometre long indigenous sculpture park (Lotipati Natjan Danak) and the beginning of the Woodland Walk. [Andy]



## Christmas Gathering : December 11

Our annual Christmas get-together was held at Bowmans-Murmungee Memorial Hall for the fourth year, and once again proved to be an excellent venue, and very well organised.

Cecily, and her hard working team, had set everything up for us, and the night went very smoothly.

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.

## Salisbury – Mount Warby : December 14

This was my second ever time at leading a mid-week walk for the club, and while numbers may have been small, the calibre of the walkers were amongst the highest ever encountered.

The original planned walk was the Warby Ovens NP at Killawarra; however, a last-minute check of this area the day before proved a saviour, as the sign-post said "Park Closed for Public Safety".

The new proposed walk for the day, sent out to the walkers booked in, would now be the Salisbury Falls to Mount Warby, returning via Alpine Views Track. No mention was made that the walk was still on, despite public safety concerns knowing that Andy was attending.

I have walked the Salisbury Falls Track numerous times, but today was the first time I can remember a significant amount of water flowing over the Falls. Sonia and Sandy who had been here earlier, mentioned the Falls had been more spectacular then with the abundance of spring rainfall. We made our way carefully along the narrow track looking over the creek below.



After crossing the bridge located at the top of the Falls, we continued following the creek, before crossing it again and heading towards the Boilerwood Track junction. From here it was just a short walk before we turned onto a bush track which leads towards Mount Warby. Not far along this track, a large fallen tree made the ideal group seat for morning tea.

The mountains were visible in the far distance, as was much of the Warby Range State Park in the immediate area towards Mount Glenrowan. Mount Warby (490m) was not far away, and it was there we had another short break.

We resumed our walk following Friends Track, which would lead us to the Alpine Views Track. While much of the signage in the park is hit and miss, somehow the Alpine Views Track has ended up with two good signposts in the same spot. It was along this section that a small brown snake was encountered. Fortunately, Carmel and I obliviously passed the snake before Liz stopped and pointed it out to the group.

Bull ants were out in force today. Must have had something to do with that saying, "make hay while the sun shines". Long story short, one of them got into Andy's trousers. He had to act fast. So down they came, with the Split Enz song and cry coming from Sandy, "I see red, I see red, I see red!" Mission completed; we were able to resume walking.

Along the Alpine Views Track the possible forecast showers came, necessitating some of us to put on raincoats. This first lot of showers passed soon enough, and lunch was taken alongside the track.

As we got lower towards the Boilerwood Track again, the rockier outcrop along this track turned into fields of yellow. Numerous wildflowers were out in abundance too. There were the usual ones – yellow, white, pink, red, violet, and lilac. Not purple. We heard kookaburras, mainly when we were walking in the rain, and magpies seemed to be everywhere.





Along the Boilerwood Track we met the Salisbury Falls junction and returned via the way we came. Out to make a real day of it, Andy took a little tumble, but was soon back on his feet.

Once at the cars, Andy presented his version of Pat's afternoon tea to the group. You had to be there. Today was a great day of walking, featuring all the W's. Warby's, wildflowers, waterfalls, and wildlife. The leisurely 10.5km was completed in under five hours, and thanks to all those who attended. A special thank-you to Andy for a day of entertainment. [Michael]

### a new walk in South Australia

The first four days of the Heysen Trail (in South Australia) have now been given an additional name - The Wild South Coast Way.

This multi-day (74km) coastal walk extends from Cape Jervis to Victor Harbor, on South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula.

The peninsula was named after an early explorer of the area, a Frenchman who was a contemporary of Matthew Flinders.

The Fleurieu is renowned for its moderate temperatures (never above 30C) and its high rainfall (about 800mm a year), and this makes it a nice green place to go bushwalking. The walking track meanders through some excellent bushland, with regular ocean views.



Victor Harbor makes a good base camp for walking in this area, and has some nice easy urban walks, such as the Inman and Hindmarsh River Trails.

Details of The Wild South Coast Way can be found at "[parks.sa.gov.au/wscw](http://parks.sa.gov.au/wscw)" and "[southernoceanwalk.com.au](http://southernoceanwalk.com.au)"

The December/January edition of "Great Walks - Australia's Bushwalking Magazine" also has a feature article on the walk.

### Mount Buffalo : December 18

A happy tribe of 14 walkers took a day out of their busy pre-Christmas schedules to find some serenity on Mount Buffalo on Sunday 18 December; ten of the group emanated out from Wangaratta and were joined by four more from Myrtleford.

We were up at Lake Catani by 10:00 on a beautiful early summer day, and heading down the lakeshore, we took the track out to View Point Nature Trail, a 1.8km extension through a sheltered part of the forest.

This led us to an exposed boulder face giving views to the east over Buckland Valley, and back towards Lake Catani, where we enjoyed our morning tea.

Returning to the track junction, three of our party elected to take the less precipitous route to The Gorge, on the Lake Catani Track, whilst the remaining group headed towards the Underground River.



A steep descent of about 100m, down stone steps brought us to the jumble of large boulders in the gully where the bubbling of the creek, and the cool air were the evidence that this was the Underground River, Eurobin Creek.

Another steep ascent brought us to the Haunted Gorge Lookout, and further on another lookout towards Porepunkah, where hanggliders could be seen. Not far from here, passing the abandoned Chalet tennis courts, we emerged at the bottom of the Gorge Carpark.

Lunch at the picnic tables, toilets and coffee van made this a more civilised walk than most. Rather than walk around the Gorge, we elected to check out the state of the Old Lady, The Chalet. She was looking cared for, although the

rhododendrons were past their best, and the Lupins were making a good show. A Park Ranger confirmed the reason many stately trees were sporting hessian wraps – a treatment for graffiti etched into their sides. How disappointing this should be necessary.

An easy two kilometres back to Lake Catani brought us to the end of our walk, and a welcome cup of tea and bikies, provided by Pat.

It was unanimous that this had been a lovely relaxing day, exploring (for many) a new trail on Mount Buffalo to add to the list of places to come back to.

Thanks to Jeanette and Michael for escorting the Wangaratta group off in the morning, and to all who shared their company on this happy day. [Cecily]



### Brandy Creek to Young's Hut Overnight Walk : January 7-8

What an adventure we had on this weekend! On Saturday, 12 intrepid walkers left from the Brandy Creek Mine picnic area (about five kilometres from Mount Hotham) towards Omeo, and trudged down to the Cobungra River on the Brandy Creek Firetrail, then ascending up tough Paling Spur onto the Bogong High Plains.

We then walked across open plains and through marshy swamps, until we finally arrived at our destination, Young's Hut on the upper Bundara River, where we would set up camp



We awoke the next morning to a heavy dew, and our return home took us along the ridge, with spectacular views and down a steep descent, back to the river for lunch. The steep incline, for the final section of our walk, was quite gruelling!!

We agreed that it had been a great adventure, which required lots of resilience.

Thanks to Trevor for organising this hard walk, and for showing us how to cross the Cobungra River, in spectacular style. [Anne]

### Mount Sugarloaf : Saturday 21st January

With Leader Lesley Finedon out front, 16 walkers started this walk on Warner's Track in the Woolshed Valley.

They covered about 12kms on a warm day, with a maximum of 30 degrees.

The group ambled off at 8.45am, and climbed continuously upwards; the track was quite eroded and washed out, making it very slippery in parts.

Lunch was enjoyed at the lookout of Mount Sugarloaf, enjoying stunning views over the Woolshed Valley towards Beechworth, and then on to Mount Buffalo in the distance.



Everyone enjoyed the adventure, and after making it successfully back to the cars they were welcomed once again by that amazing cup of tea, and freshly baked biscuits, provided by the incredible Pat!



## Mosaics at Reform Hill

Myrtleford's popular Reform Hill is the new venue for some more locally made mosaics, to be laid out in a similar pattern to the Mosaic Walk alongside the Ovens River.

The theme of the mosaics is endangered wildlife of the local area; this includes the Bogong Moth, the Drooping Mistletoe, the Feather Glider, the Gang Gang Cockatoo and the Spotted Tree Frog.

The mosaics now number about 18, and further details can be found by using the QR code at either of the entrances to the Reform Hill walks.

## Sunday, February 5 – in the forest around Stanley

This walk took place in, and around, Stanley township, and 17 club members gathered at the recreation reserve, where the temperature was only 10° when we started our adventure at 9am!

The walk took us through the township, then into the bush on narrow old roads, and we found the perfect spot to have our morning break, sitting on logs.

The route continued through farmland and back into the bush, and then a wetland section, which led to the interesting Bates Dam, which we took time to admire.

From there we walked along the edge of a small creek with lovely fern vegetation. After about three hours, we were back at our starting point, where we enjoyed our picnic lunch in the shade.

We had enjoyed a lovely walk with lots of stops looking at interesting things such as; the big cork tree, an unusual bush that we were wondering what it could be; a little kingfisher sitting on a wire, and the dam.



The weather gave us perfect conditions, and the smell of the forest was unusual for this time of the year. Last but not least, we all enjoyed each other's company very much, and are looking forward to our next walk. [Marita]

## Wednesday, 8th February. Beechworth Waters Walk

For this interesting walk 13 enthusiastic starters met at the Lake Sambell bbq area just after 9am, with a warm to hot day predicted.

We ambled along Silver Creek on the right bank for about a kilometre towards the Silver Creek Caravan Park, before heading back on the left bank, and then skirting the Lake Sambell Caravan Park back down to the lakeside.

The eastern side of the lake has suffered some damage during the recent big rains, but we managed to navigate around the taped off steep sections to emerge into the Chinese Gardens. Then we followed the track alongside Silver Creek, down to the bridge at the start of the gorge, before walking the right bank of the creek back to Camp Street, and then the west side of the lake to where we had parked our cars.



After seven kilometres of varied walking, we once again enjoyed Pat's now famous cuppa with fresh biscuits, and even an olive flavoured dip!! [Andy]

## Mount St Bernard Weekend - February 17-19

Twenty-six members gathered at the Wangaratta Ski Club Lodge at Mount St Bernard for the annual High Country weekend, and all seemed delighted with the facilities. Two other members joined us for walks, and the shared dinner on Saturday evening.

On Friday afternoon a short walk up nearby Mount Smythe proved a warm-up for the weekend. Soon after, storm clouds burst, blotting out the magnificent mountain views from the lodge windows, but providing an enthralling display of lightning and torrential rain.

A cairn near the summit of Mount Smythe was erected by surveyors Black and Allen during their survey of the Victorian High Country in 1868. Black and Allen had previously laid out the 'straight section' of the Victoria-NSW border (that is the section that leads from the headwaters of the Murray River, south-east to the coast). This piece of high ground was named after Smythe because of his work as Secretary for Mines.

On Friday evening there was a Happy Hour, and drinks and nibbles became the introduction to a degustation dinner, enjoyed by 28 noisy participants, content to socialize in an internet and TV free environment.



### Saturday : Cobungra Ditch

The Cobungra Ditch is an artificial waterway that provided a source of water for gold mining operations in this area, and in the modern era provides a 10.5km walk.

Saturday dawned cloudless with a predicted 21C top temperature for our designated walk and half the group preferred to do the 12km one-way hike with car shuttle; the other half opted for the full circuit, returning via the cross-country ski trail to complete 18km.

There are many very informative storyboards along this walkway, and our adventure started by taking the Davenport Access Track from the Great Alpine Road, and from here we made a gradual descent to the sign-posted turn off to the start of the walk.



All enjoyed the mostly shaded walk with its occasional waterfalls, and myriads of wild flowers. And almost all enjoyed a coffee at the General Store, the longer trail walkers looking decidedly weary after their trek. However, one had been evacuated early to the Lodge, having had a nasty fall. Rod Davis - turned ambo driver - became the paramedic rather than leave our hapless hiker 'in the Ditch'.

### Saturday Evening

Helen, and her assistants, had organised dinner for us back at the Lodge, and it was a very pleasant evening where we enjoyed lasagne and red wine, followed by pavlova for dessert.

### Sunday : The Twins

One of the walks on Sunday was a loop of The Twins, just south of the ski lodge.

It was a perfect sunny morning on top of the mountains as ten walkers chose to undertake this walk. Don't bring your lunch we were told, as we would be back in plenty of time to have lunch on our return at the ski lodge. Mental note to oneself, bring lunch if you don't wish to eat it mid-afternoon.



The walk began at the ski lodge with a descent down towards the Great Alpine Road, and the Dargo Road turnoff. From here we then took a 4WD road that led down a couple of kilometres to the base of the peaks. Along the road we encountered two blue tongue lizards, of which fifty percent were breathing.

During this part of our journey our maps showed a possible route, and hopefully a shortcut. Exactly where this was located proved problematic. Rather than attempt a reconnaissance through obvious bush and scrub with ten walkers, it was decided the original planned route, and easy road walking remained the best option.

After about two hours morning tea was taken at the 6km half-way mark of our journey. Whilst relaxing in the shade we had excellent views of Mount Murray directly in front of

us, and the surrounding mountains including Mount Buffalo. After our break, the group divided into two; the sensible group of six returned the way we had come along the 4WD road. The second group of four, lacking sanity at the same time for a split second, chose the ascent to the summit.

From the base, we could see a possible faint trail. It was in fact, part of the Australian Alpine Walking Track (AAWT). The beginning of the ascent followed this trail in most places, and only on a few occasions were we left to guess our path, but remaining on the ridgeline kept us in good check.

Some sections were rocky and loose which required concentration, but when we stopped for a breath, it was great to look out at the view around us.

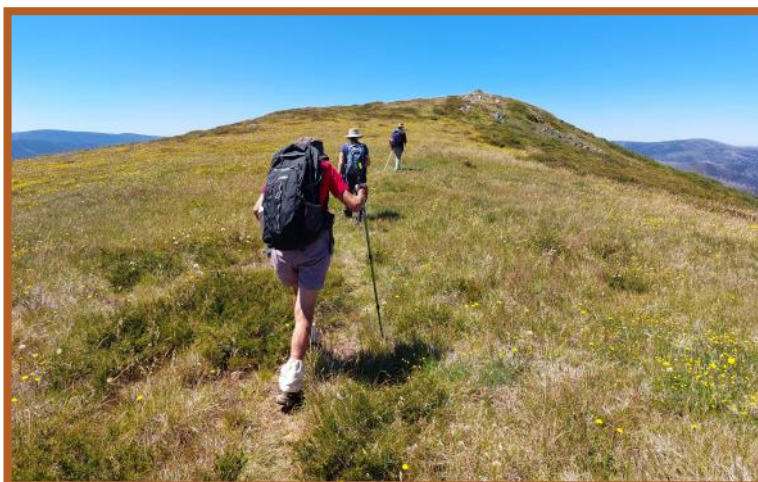
As we neared the top, we could see the trig point, and we had now come above the tree line, and the vegetation was compact and shrubby, including wildflowers of billy buttons, snow daisies and everlastings. Our trail at this point could no longer be distinguished, but the sighting of the trig point became our marker to head towards. Ann, who I believe may have been a mountain goat in a former life, was the first to the top.

At the summit, we were rewarded with impressive 360-degree views as far as the eye could see. They say on a clear day you can see the Mokoan Wetlands from just about anywhere. Yes, it was that good. We felt as if we were on top of the world, even though Mount Everest had another 7,000 plus metres on us at this point. Photo opportunities were taken, and if we only had our lunch with us . . .

The reward of reaching the summit was now replaced by the realisation that we needed to descend. Leaving the trig point we continued along the summit to the edge of the mountain top. We could see the road below, and the other group of walkers heard our "Cooees" as they were heading back to the ski lodge; obviously for lunch. To negotiate a path down from our current position it appeared it would largely be guess work, as no obvious sign of the AAWT existed.

Carefully, we began our descent. Pat chose the "bottom meeting

mother earth" method on a couple of occasions for her approach down this steep, loose rocky terrain. All the while we just kept our eyes on the road as our focal point. I was surprised not to encounter snakes today, as it appeared to be a desirable location for them. As we got closer, the bush became thicker. Fallen trees had to be climbed over, and the road could no longer be sighted, with the surrounding bush now obscuring everything.



Navigating our way slowly through this section, we stayed closer to, and in sight of each other.

A passing vehicle on the dirt road meant we were close to the finish of the walk; admittedly we were about 100 metres off course from our intended point, but at least we were all down in one piece. Jeanette declined my requests to call for the stretch limo, or at least someone from the club to collect us, and so we trudged the uphill road back to the lodge.

This hike was challenging in numerous places, but worthwhile for the spectacular views on such a fine summer's day in the high country. [Michael and Jeanette]

### Sunday : towards Dibbins Hut

The other Sunday walk was a 'there-and-back' towards the environs of Dibbins Hut, a cattleman's hut dating from the early 1900s.

This walk basically follows the AAWT from the Mount Loch car park, past the Charles Derrick Memorials (the plaque and the hut) to where the AAWT starts a big descent down to the Hut, and the Cobungra (great camping - but not for us on this occasion).

The construction works on the Mount Loch Reservoir are still on-going, so the start had to be about 500m on the Harrietville side of the normal starting point.

The first landmark was the memorial plaque to skier Charles Derrick, who died on a ski adventure from Mount Bogong to Mount Hotham in 1965. We then swung past the Mount Loch turn-off, and headed to the memorial hut, located in a snowgum woodland about six kilometres from the start.

See the MonumentAustralia website ([monumentaustalia.org.au](http://monumentaustalia.org.au)) for details of both of the Derrick Memorials (search under "Hotham Heights").

Continuing on, we followed the ridge line through to where it starts a steep descent down to Dibbins, and at this point made our u-turn.

By this time it was quite warm, and since we were in open/snowgum terrain there wasn't much shade for us.

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A special thanks to the walks leaders including Marino, who 'volunteered' to replace Chris, who had decided that the previous day's walk was enough for his sore back.

Sufficient to say that we all look forward to these High Country weekends, especially when conditions in Wangaratta heat up! Wangaratta Ski Lodge proved almost the perfect venue, but perhaps, by next year, the landslide-closed Falls Creek Road will have opened for a return visit there. [Adrian]







## Committee Nomination Form

I hereby nominate \_\_\_\_\_  
for the position of \_\_\_\_\_  
on the 2023-24 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

# Dinner & Guest speaker

Warby Range Bushwalking  
Club 2023 AGM.  
Members and guests all  
welcome.

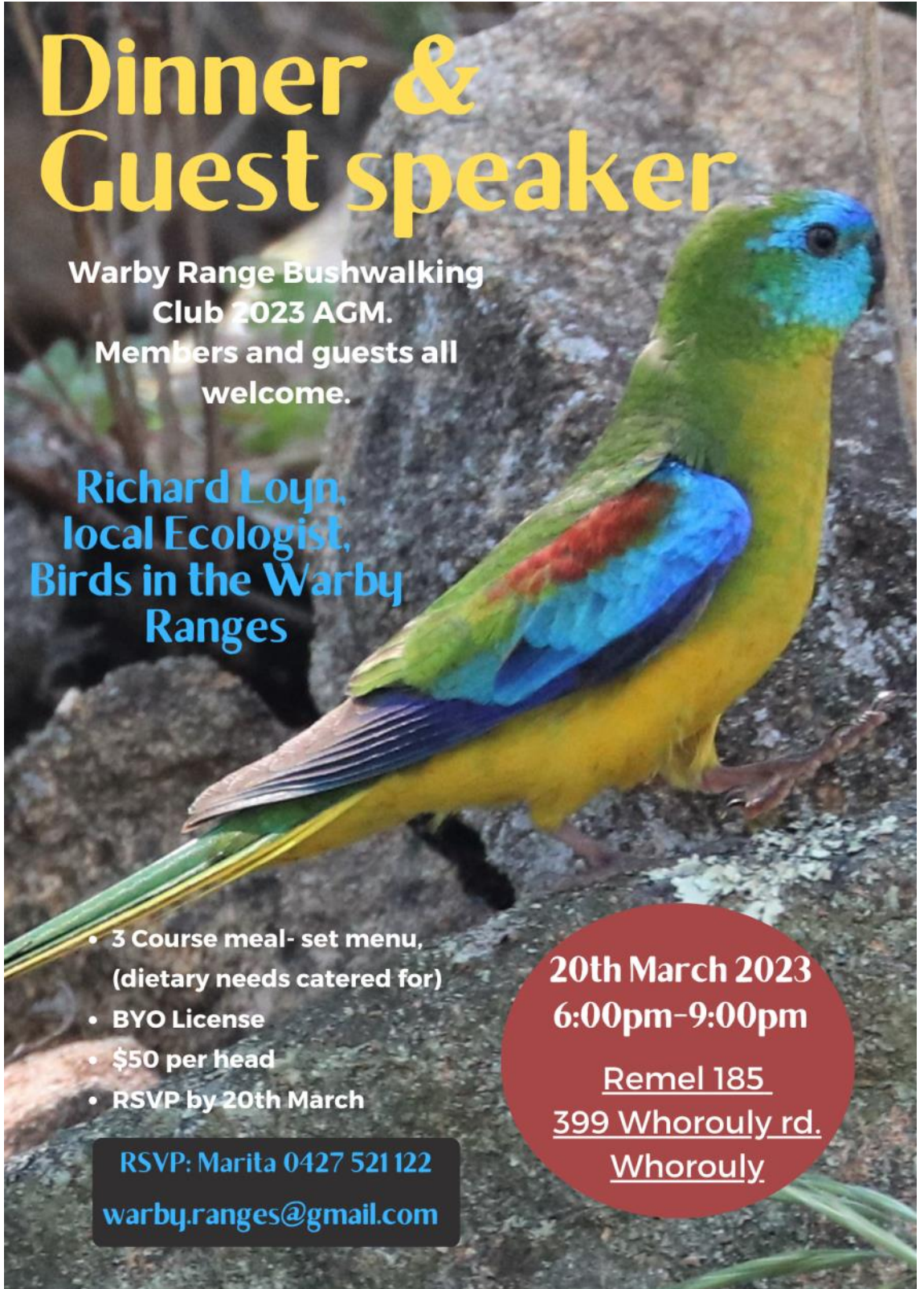
Richard Louyn,  
local Ecologist,  
Birds in the Warby  
Ranges

- 3 Course meal- set menu,  
(dietary needs catered for)
- BYO License
- \$50 per head
- RSVP by 20th March

RSVP: Marita 0427 521 122  
[warby.ranges@gmail.com](mailto:warby.ranges@gmail.com)

20th March 2023  
6:00pm-9:00pm

Remel 185  
399 Whorouly rd.  
Whorouly





## Registration Form

### Week Away – Grampians - 22 – 29 September 2023

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Emergency contact Name:

Relationship:          Phone:

#### Regarding the evening meals

Please tick for any dietary requirements: (copy and paste this) ☐

Vegetarian          No Red Meat

No Chicken          No Fish

Gluten Free          Other

Allergies

#### Regarding the accommodation:

Will you be staying at the Norval Lodge?

Are there people who you'd like to share room with?

To place you in a room that is best suited. What are your sleeping habits/needs:

Do you snore?          Are you a light sleeper?

Early or late to bed?          Early or late to rise?

Will you allow us to share your contact details with the other people coming?

**Payments:** BSB: 633 000 Account: 110 64 77 99 Reference: W-A & name  
\$100 deposit, to be paid by 28<sup>th</sup> February. Remaining \$220 to be paid by 25<sup>th</sup> August

#### Acknowledgment of Risks and Obligations of Members

During the week away – to minimize risks I will endeavor to ensure that:

- Each activity is within my capabilities
- I am carrying food, water and equipment appropriate for the walks/activities.
- 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/or the walk/activity leader.

Signature .....

Date...../...../ 20