



WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS Inc.

FUN . FITNESS . FRIENDSHIP

warbybushwalkers.org.au
NEWSLETTER : December, 2024

Welcome to the December 2024 Newsletter, and what a great year we have to look back on, and forward to in 2025. As well as a nicely varied Walks Program (see separate email) there is our annual week away, which will be based at Anglesea.

However, before those events, this year's Christmas BBQ will be held on Friday, December 20, starting at 6.00, for 6.30pm, at the Murrumgee-Bowmans Hall, accessible by turning off the Great Alpine Road (or Buckland Gap Road) onto the Murrumgee-Bowmans Road.

BYO drinks and meat (or something else, if you prefer) for a BBQ. Crockery, cutlery and chairs are provided. Contact Marita on 0427 521 122 to book in (before December 18) , and to advise if you will bring either a sweet or a salad to share.

BURROWA PINE MOUNTAIN WALKS WEEKEND : Sept 6th – 8th

On the weekend of September 6 – 8, 26 walkers descended upon 'Clack Clack' Caravan Park near Corryong, for walks within the area of Burrowa Pine Mountain National Park. The park is 18,400 hectares in size, features more than 200 native plants, and is reputedly one and a half times the size of Uluru.

The group met Friday evening 8pm in the camp kitchen for a briefing for Saturday's walks. Several tracks were since closed within the park, from when Jeanette and I reconnoitred walks here in early April. Back then one track was closed, and now seven were off the agenda. During the briefing, my mispronunciation of some local towns, an amusement to some, and a cause of concern to others, were quickly corrected by Cecily.

Since then, this has given me the idea to pitch to television producers a new Australian show called, 'Pronounce these Australian Towns and Places'. Shaun Micallef would be a perfect host, and it could fill that important 8.30pm Wednesday evening timeslot on ABC television. I can imagine the rights being sold worldwide, and would look forward to the Welsh version where vowels are almost non-existent.

Pine Mountain was the selected trail for all walkers on Saturday. Overnight showers had created a bright and fresh sunny day for hiking. We assembled at 7.45am, and were on the road via Corryong, Towong and Walwa. We reached the starting point about an hour later and after a group photo we began walking at 9.30am.

The short walkers would hike to Rocky Knob and then return, making a two-kilometre walk. Despite being very short, we had decided that the views over the park were essential for all to experience. This walk begins on an almost manicured track, with wattle blossoms in abundance and climbs about 50m. Rocky Knob is a picturesque spot, and was chosen for morning tea.

The medium and hard walkers continued towards another rocky outcrop which is about three kilometres from the start. This is a difficult climb to this point, and the total elevation gain of 300m was enough for some walkers to decide to wait by the track. One short rock section necessitated poles being put away, as hands and knees were needed for the scramble. I can attest to the degree of difficulty as I ended up with one scraped knee, and a small hole in my trousers. For those who ventured to this 900m elevation peak, the views were impressive. Wedge Tail eagles were observed in the sky. No doubt waiting to pick off lonely and isolated walkers along the track.



The group at this point divided into three. Medium walkers stayed to enjoy the view a little longer before returning. The longer walking group divided into two groups, and set off at their respective paces.

From here much of the hike is over large flat rock areas. Occasional orange markers and cairns assisted with navigation. Covered with moss and lichen in places made their traversing perilous at times. The tried and proven method of sliding on one's backside proved popular, as did just slip and slide a little, while hoping for the best. After this rocky section a denser foliage path was encountered. The walking was easier as the track levelled out significantly.

The final climb towards Pine Mountain was again over large flat rock areas in an open area. A suitable space was chosen for lunch. Jeanette then led most of our group towards the top of the ridge.



Eden played her part by adding to a cairn, another carefully placed rock. They didn't venture to the end unlike the first group, instead taking in the immediate views of the Murray, and valley views towards New South Wales.

Satisfied with our personal achievements, it was now a matter of retracing our steps back to the start. On our way, we encountered one young couple hiking towards the top with full packs, intent on camping overnight on the summit. Ah, to be young, energetic and foolhardy again.

Difficult uphill sections now became wonky knee testing downhill paths. Sandi Lee used a technique I have never encountered before. She would walk into small trees to slow her pace down. It proved effective, but I can't vouch for the number of bruises she may have attained along the way. I can guarantee that no trees were harmed in her undertaking this walk. Finally, back at the lone remaining car at 5pm, the 10.5km hike was completed in 7.5 hours by the last group. A most rewarding, but challenging day hike.

Numerous additional activities were undertaken by walkers, once they had completed their Pine Mountain adventure. Helen and her group had the following experience.

[Our activities on Saturday afternoon included a coffee stop in Walwa with a very enthusiastic, pleasant young lady running the cafe/general store/ tourist information providing one of the best iced chocolates I have had anywhere!

The sculpture trail along River Road had us learning more about the local area and animals, as well as enjoying the sculptures of a lizard, Murray Cod and Bogong Moth. The Murray Cod is found high above the Murray River itself in Tintaldra where we learned much about the First World War Avenue of Honour, originally established by children from the Primary School. Information boards gave us an insight into the perceived importance of honouring the local men and women who served their country both far away, and at home, in times of war.



Viewing points along the sculpture trail provided names for the distant peaks of the Snowy Mountains which had some snow cover still visible, despite the below average snowfall and warming weather. Of special interest was the information about *Grevillea Jephcottii* – the green grevillea which I had seen just beginning to flower in Pine Mountain NP. These are unique to the area, and further investigation revealed that they were first discovered by local lad, 14 year old Sydney Jephcott, in 1878.

As we approached Corryong, I was thrilled to spot a eucalyptus camaldulensis (red gum) growing by the road which had been manipulated maybe 200 years ago by the indigenous population. Closer inspection revealed that at least two branches had been encouraged to grow into other branches to form non natural continuous shapes ("circles"), about three metres above ground level. Rather amazing.

The museum is clearly a much loved and well presented local institution. The stand out exhibition in the main building (there are 10 smaller buildings which we did not attempt to see in the time available!) was the hand knitted map of Australia, completed in six weeks by local Jim Simpson, after being taken prisoner when shot down over Germany on his first mission of the Second World War in 1940. His own hand knitted woollen jumper, quickly unravelled and

wound into balls soon after arrival in camp, to prevent the Germans acquiring the garment and sending it to the Russian front, provided the starting point for the map which he began later in the war.

Jim used the skills his mother had taught him, to help his fellow prisoners learn how to knit socks to keep them warm! And to honour his mother, and all mothers of servicemen, he was inspired to use some of the many balls of wool the prisoners acquired, to knit the rug which measures approximately 2 metres by 2.1 metres. Complete with state boundaries, coats of arms and representations of mountains it is surprisingly accurate and skilfully knitted. Recognised as a symbol of the resilience of Australian soldiers it is an inspiration and well worth visiting the museum to see. Helen Twitt]

[Rod elected to take a more leisurely stroll as part of his Saturday morning, rather than walk Pine Mountain.

Birdwatchers walk differently. I walked to Corryong on the track, listening for bird calls, stopping to look for the caller; every dam, creek or wetland was scoured for birds.

So we move slowly, marking our progress not so much in distance as in the number of birds. Overhead we watch for movements, flocks, eagles on thermals, where birds are flying to.

On this bird walk I noted 51 different species. Many of these were at the Corryong Poo Farm.

Nutrient rich water attracts hundreds of them. Grebes, 5 different species of ducks, swans, cormorants, stilts, welcome swallows, mudlarks and a kestrel sitting on tree. I spent an hour here constantly watching.

Birdwatchers look for seasonal changes. I saw a small clutch of tree martins, obviously part of a migration. Rufous Whistlers were everywhere as they arrived in the district. On the flat area I watched Flame Robins ready for their altitudinal migration to the summer food and breeding in the high country.

Overall, I walked about seven kilometres for the day. But slowly, absorbing the bird world, listening all the time, being absorbed in a different way to many walkers and the unique pleasures that they find in the bush. All part of the enjoyment of the outdoors. Rod Davis]

Dinner was held Saturday evening at the Cudgewa Hotel. Following the meals, descriptions for Sunday walks were provided. These were to be in Shelley, Koetong and Mount Lawson State Park. For most people this allowed walks to be completed on their way home. It was proposed to the group that we meet at 9am in the morning rather than the original planned time of 7.45am. A more resounding yes has never in the history of mankind been received.

[Adrian shares the adventures of his walking group on Sunday . . .

Thirteen walkers participated in the easier walks on Sunday. Participants converged on the Mountain Creek Nature Trail at Shelley in the morning, a two kilometre walk through largely dense forest. Helen scooped up the only leaflet (later returned) from the information box, a brochure covering the highlights at 20 information spots along the way, read to participants at each stop.

One walker asked if there was to be a test at the end! Highlights included the bubbling Mountain Creek itself, and the powder magazine once used to store explosives used for creating forest tracks required by pine plantation workers decades ago.

The afternoon walk was somewhat of a contrast. Our aim was to walk seven kilometres from a point along the Shelley rail trail towards the huge trestle bridge beyond the former Koetong railway station. We were delighted to come across several trestle bridges in this rugged country. Tall timber, and another gushing mountain stream, added to this delightful walk. Lunch was held overlooking one of the rare farms. A curious horse, enviously gazing across the fence at the contents of our lunchboxes, was rewarded with surplus lettuce and apples.

Those of us who didn't trip on the sticks and debris along this rail trail, or fall down a wombat hole, enjoyed the hike along this engineering feat, once the highest railway in Victoria. Adrian Twitt]



Finally, the medium walkers chose several walks to create a day of hiking. Beginning with a visit to the Koetong Trestle bridge, it was then followed by a drive to the Conic Rocks.

The short 750m walk to these large boulders gave great views to the east, and northeast, of the park and beyond. Sandie observed a small cluster of orchids upon our return. Morning tea was taken at the picnic table before departing for the next location.

A short car shuffle was required for the next hike involving The Spa and Grandmother's Track. After a little panic regarding some momentarily misplaced car keys, the group was ready to begin. I must admit that the Grandmother's Track is well... nothing to write home to your granny about. Simply a four-wheel drive road that undulates a little before meeting up with Mount Lawson Road. Fallen trees along the side of the road, did make for a suitable lunch spot.

The Koetong Creek River track leads to what is known as The Spa. Two campsites along the way looked idyllic near the river, however we were walking some distance from the water. Just as we reached The Spa junction, Murray had stopped ahead of us. Two wombats, possibly a mother and her young, were quietly feeding on grass adjacent to the road. We were able to observe them for a couple of minutes before they hurriedly retreated into the bush.

The Spa Track descends to the river. It was a beautiful spot with a cascading waterfall, and some suitable water holes which would make refreshing places to take a dip on a hot day. We enjoyed the surroundings for a time, taking the obligatory photos before returning the way we had come.

Murray, who is obviously training for the 2028 Olympics, strode ahead to bring his car closer for the rest of us. Despite his herculean effort, time was beginning to get away from us. The drive to Mount Lawson summit was abandoned from our program, and we returned to the Trestle Bridge to end our day. Our Spa Track walk, incorporating Grandmother's Track, was a hike of almost 10km completed in three hours.

Many thanks to the extra contributors, Rod Davis, Adrian and Helen Twitt for their descriptions of their day's activities. Thanks to Kelton Goyne from Parks Victoria, and Jeanette who assisted in ideas for alternative walks. It would be great to complete a version 2.0 weekend in this region when all tracks are open again to bushwalkers.

Finally, the walkers who have completed their test questions on the Mountain Creek Nature Trail, can simply email their answers to Adrian and Helen. First prize is an evening dinner for two at the Cudgewa Hotel. Second prize is an evening dinner for 25 at the Cudgewa Hotel. [Michael Braendler]

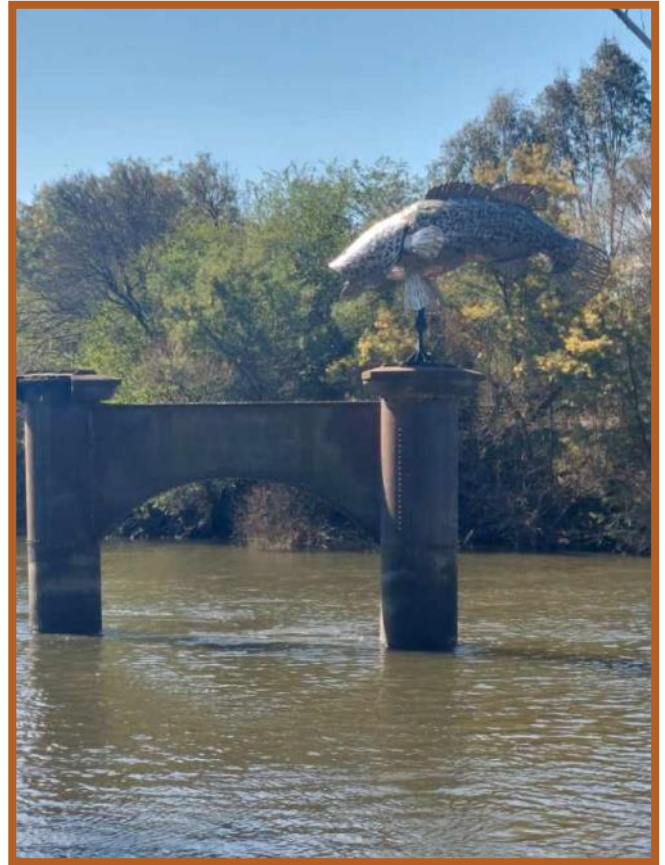
Springtime Flower Walk, Warby Ovens NP : Wednesday, 18th September

An enthusiastic group of six walked the two wild-flower walks beginning at the Killawarra Camp, and despite the very dry winter, the orchids, and other ground flowers, were still observable if in small numbers.

The weather was great, so an enjoyable slow amble of the just over five kilometres through the healthy Box Ironbark Forest was a very positive experience! [Andy]

Rutherglen Loops

This cycling/walking route was formerly called the Rutherglen Wine Walk Cycle Trail, and when complete will provide a 48km mix of trails



around the Rutherglen area, including access to all of the wineries in the Rutherglen-Wahgunyah area. When complete, it will be possible (for example) to walk from Corowa to All Saints Winery (about 4km each way) and to Cofield Winery (also about 4km each way).

See "www.indigoshire.vic.gov.au/Residents/Projects-works/Current-projects/Rutherglen-Loops" for the status of this project, which is expected to be completed before the New Year.

Grass Trees Event : December 6

Please see the attached flyer (on the last page of this newsletter) relating to a special event that celebrates the Grass Trees of the Warby Ranges.

The Grass tree (*Xanthorrhoea glauca*) is threatened by the presence of a pathogen called *Phytophthora*; Grass Tree features, and the work to save the incredible communities of our special flora, is the focus of this gathering on December 6th.

Wandiligong Wander : September 22

Sunday's Wandiligong Walk comprised 21 participants, including one visitor.

After parking at the carpark close to Doughty's Bridge, we followed parts of the Wandil Walk, Bennett's Trail and the Diggings Walk to reach the Wandil Pub for lunch.

The trails follow Morses Creek, passing through areas with evidence of the former goldmining days, rocky gorges and swimming holes; along a shared pedestrian/bike path and through 'the diggings' with the Royal and Chinese Bridges. Recent storm damage was evident with fallen trees and the Royal Bridge was off limits also.

Morning tea was forsaken as time was precious to reach the pub in time for our midday booking.

One of our participants became separated from the group when trying to catch up to the rest of the group, only to realise they were in fact way ahead of the group.

Part of the proposed walk was now unavailable, and an alternative route was followed in lieu.

However, we arrived at the Wandil Pub in good time and delicious lunches were enjoyed under the verandah; there was even mulled wine available to enjoy with our meal.

Three participants completed the one way walk to the pub (5.5km) and the remainder of the group completed the return walk, via Alpine Park, enroute to Doughty's Bridge (11km).

Afternoon tea was enjoyed in the carpark, and we had a cool and partly sunny day, which was lovely as the forecast leading up to the walk day was for wet weather, which didn't eventuate. [Jeanette]

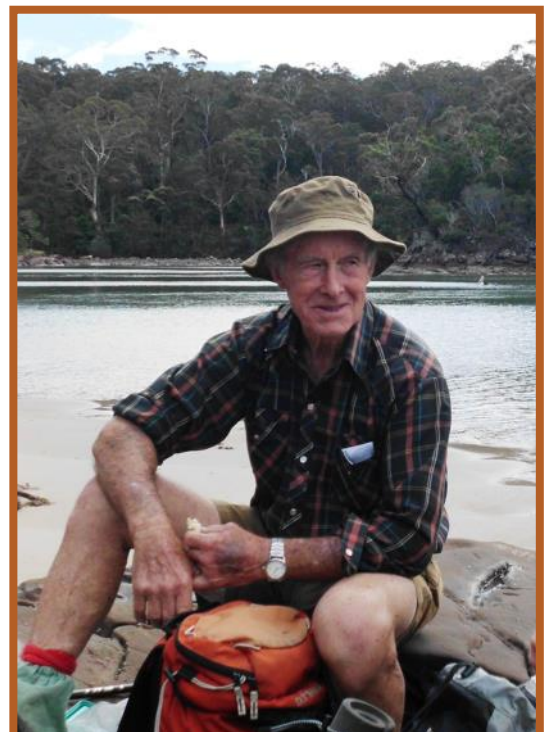
VALE LIFE MEMBER, ALLAN RAISON

We of the Warby Range Bushwalkers were saddened recently to learn of the death recently of our much loved Life Member, Allan Raison.

Allan was a veteran walker of our Club. He joined the Club when many of his age might have been looking for their lounge chairs, and became an enthusiastic walks leader. In his seventies and eighties, he was hard to keep up with, so much so we sometimes wondered where he had got to! Nevertheless Allan often helped those struggling with their walking, and made new members very welcome.

Those of us who tried to keep up with Allan on walks should not have been surprised to learn that he was no mean sprinter in his younger days.

He competed in professional events across north-east



Victoria, even the Stawell gift. Allan was also a keen footballer, playing with Milawa in the Ovens and King League for 17 years. He won their best and fairest, and went on to boundary umpire for them for 13 years. He was awarded a life membership of Milawa F.C.

He enjoyed playing tennis, in earlier years winning the hardcourt B-grade doubles championship. In retirement, he liked to hit a golf ball, cycle, and go to the gym. On his eightieth birthday he did 80 push-ups at the gym. I watched him do it! No wonder Allan was so fit.

Allan was born on a small farm in South Wangaratta, where he also went to school. He did farm work after leaving school, and then worked for Irving's Hardware which was sited where the Pinsent Hotel carpark now is. He spent most of his working life in hardware businesses, going on to the Co-store, and then managing French's (later Mitre 10) hardware.

Allan met his wife, Tim, at Milawa after football one day, and they married in Milawa in 1956. They were a devoted couple for almost seventy years. Sadly, Tim died in very recent times, and though Allan tried to keep going in his immaculate house, and attractive garden full of fresh produce, Tim's death hit him hard. Eventually he needed to retire to a nursing home as his memory began to fail him.

Allan as a member of our Club, served on the committee and as Walks Co-ordinator. He was awarded Life Membership for his great service to the Club. At Allan's funeral, we were well represented by Club members past and present. Allan died at the age of ninety-five. [Adrian Twitt]

Beechworth Historic Park : October 2

Four walkers set off for this six kilometre adventure from Ingram's Rock, walking down past Fiddes Quarry to the Precipice, where we had our first morning tea, overlooking the Woolshed Valley.

Then we took the walking track from the Precipice down to Spring Creek. This track was closed for quite a few years, due to damage to the bridge over the creek. It was a steep downward trek until we emerged at the Ponds Track near an old dam wall. After a short walk to Spring Creek, we then retraced our steps a short distance.

Instead of taking the track back up to the Precipice, we chose to walk along the Ponds Track, viewing the nearby water treatment lakes, with plentiful birdlife.

After our second morning tea break, we started the steep climb back to Ingram's Rock.

Although only a shortish walk, by the time we reached the cars at Ingram's Rock, we all felt suitably exhausted due to the steep gradient on our return journey.

Lunch was enjoyed after the walk, with coffees from the Café at the Old Beechworth Gaol. [Gerri Boland]

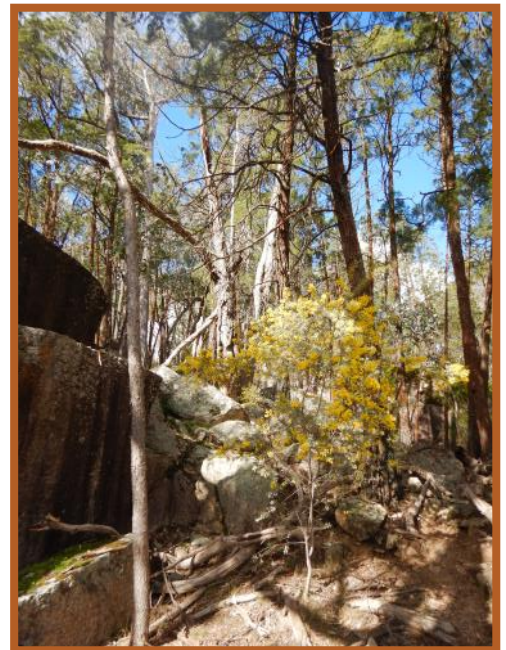
Magpie Creek Historic Area : October 5

Eight walkers (including one visitor) met at Wooragee for this walk, with time being saved by Lesley, Rod and Gerri having organised the car shuffle in advance.

From Wooragee we drove to Pieter's property, where we were shown a very old Aboriginal Ring Tree with three rings. We also came across a wombat whilst enroute to the Magpie Creek Historic Area and the Magpie Creek Gold Mining Diversion Sluice.

The stone retaining wall here was built by Chinese miners from local granite blocks in the 1860s; the wall and alluvial workings being listed as significant on the Victorian Heritage Database.

Pieter was able to explain the function of the wall, which was to divert the creek away from the bedrock so the miners had better access to the alluvial gold. Whilst hearing about the back breaking work that the Chinese miners did, a koala scaled a nearby tree to see what was going on.



We returned with Pieter along Magpie Creek, and then Jeanette took over as our fearless leader. We had our morning tea overlooking the serene Chinamen's Dam, and then headed south along the reserve, until we came to a small waterfall where we had our lunch. From here, it was only a short walk to the southern end of the Historic Area, where the cars awaited our return.

We then returned to Wooragee, and enjoyed afternoon tea at the park area near the CFA building.

Once again, a shortish walk (about six kilometres), which provided us with an informative observation of alluvial gold mining undertaken by Chinese miners in Wooragee from the mid 1860s.

Thanks to Pieter for his generosity of time and knowledge. [Gerri Boland]

Mount Buffalo Walk : Sunday, October 20th

A fine and sunny day was on display for the 15 walkers who were intent on walking to Eagle Point and Og, Gog and Magog at Mount Buffalo on Sunday October 20th. But gentlemen, gentlemen, where were you all? Colin and I were the only two blokes with the task of accompanying the ladies today. A most demanding assignment.

My car was providing the club's exclusive taxi service as we picked up Shirley in Tarrawingee and Cath in Myrtleford. Car conversations on route to a walk are often interesting. Sometimes not. Our conversational topics included the imperial and metric systems. Inches, centimetres, metres and even the decimetre rated a mention. Now there's a useless measurement if there ever was one. Then with the recent rainfall there was the topic of measurements in millimetres, inches and points. I usually cite buckets, downpours, deluges and cats and dogs.

Our drive up the mountain was glorious. Waterfalls were observed in the usual places, as well as smaller roadside locations.

After about a half hour drive from the base, we reached our starting point, the track leading to Mac's Point. Reservoir Road is currently closed, and this necessitated a change for the day. Mollison's Galleries would not be part of the hike.

After the usual map handouts and introductions, including new first timer with the club, Ayesha, we set off walking at 9.45am.

The first section was damp underfoot. Much of the time we walked in shallow flowing water along our walking paths. Those paths, without some form of walking material to protect the environment, were noticeably muddier and sodden underfoot. Some grassy plains and small ponds required careful navigation, or you would discover the water proofing capabilities of your boots. Isn't that correct Glenda?

I have a solution. My idea to use Weetbix to soak up excess water from any problem area is yet to come to fruition. Have you ever noticed that if you leave your Weetbix in a bowl full of warm milk for more than two minutes, that the milk is completely absorbed? All gone. Amazing. Imagine that on a commercial scale. No more waterlogged cricket pitches, soaking up rainfall from a tennis centre court, replacing sandbags in times of flood and so forth. Plus, there is the side benefit of enough food to feed thousands afterwards. Ah, I can hear the phone ringing now.

Morning tea was taken at 10.30am, and just over two kilometres into our walk, in a location that offered some seating care of mother nature, and just before the turn to Mac's Point. Signage in this area consisted of old rusty signs with distances in miles and brand-new ones, a vibrant green colour.

This route travels through rocky terrain, grass plains, and forests of snow-gum and alpine ash. I wonder if before the bushfires they were just called alpine.

The club is known for being a great avenue for a walk, talk and gawk. One conversation I had with Glenda was about her travel plans for 2025. It appears to be a jam-packed itinerary which made me turn a luminous green with envy, matching the surrounding plant life. It would have been easier to ask where she wasn't planning to travel.



Once we reached the Rocky Creek Track, a dirt road that leads to the reservoir, we headed in the opposite direction towards Eagle Point. It is at this point we have descended some 150m since we began the walk. After some six kilometres of total walking we reached the rock formation. The advantage of the final ascent is the sturdy ladders to assist you in reaching the summit of the imposing granite boulders. Mind you, the ladder steps are of a width and spaced best to suit someone with a child's shoe size two.

Eagle Point was our lunch spot at midday, with a cloudless sky above us. With an elevation of about 1470m a keen eye could see Winton Wetlands to the west, and Mount Cobbler to the south. Fellow walkers were a little concerned for Judy who appeared to be sitting precariously close to the edge, but she assured us she wasn't. Although named Eagle Point, I am sure that Judy can't fly.

After lunch and a group photo, it was time to head to the next rock formation, Og, Gog & Magog. I believe the name of this impressive granite feature may have been derived from an old biblical law firm. We have often walked this trail between the two viewpoints, but not in this direction. After this pleasant and shaded trail, we reached our necessary junction. A little more effort with some minor rock scrambling to reach the view at the top is required. Our elevation of almost 1500m rewarded us with picturesque alpine scenery, and expansive views of the Buffalo Plateau.

After some relaxing moments and welcomed edible snakes, it was time to leave. From here, it was a matter of retracing our route back to the cars. On our return a snake was spotted by some of the group. The sounds of birds and joyous frogs with the recent rainfall could be frequently heard. There was also the infinite number of ants you would become acquainted with should you stand still for too long.

Back at the track that leads to the reservoir, Ayesha and Sandi took the opportunity to refill their water bottles from a fast-flowing stream. Before you could say, "oops, oh no, I have just lost my wide brimmed hat in the fast-flowing stream", that's exactly what happened. So, next time you are at the reservoir, and happen to spot a wide brimmed hat floating by, it belongs to Ayesha.

It was a fantastic day of walking in ideal conditions. Our 13.88km (or 138,800 decimetres) hike was completed in 6 hours and 20 minutes, once the final group arrived back at the cars just after 4pm. [Michael Braendler]

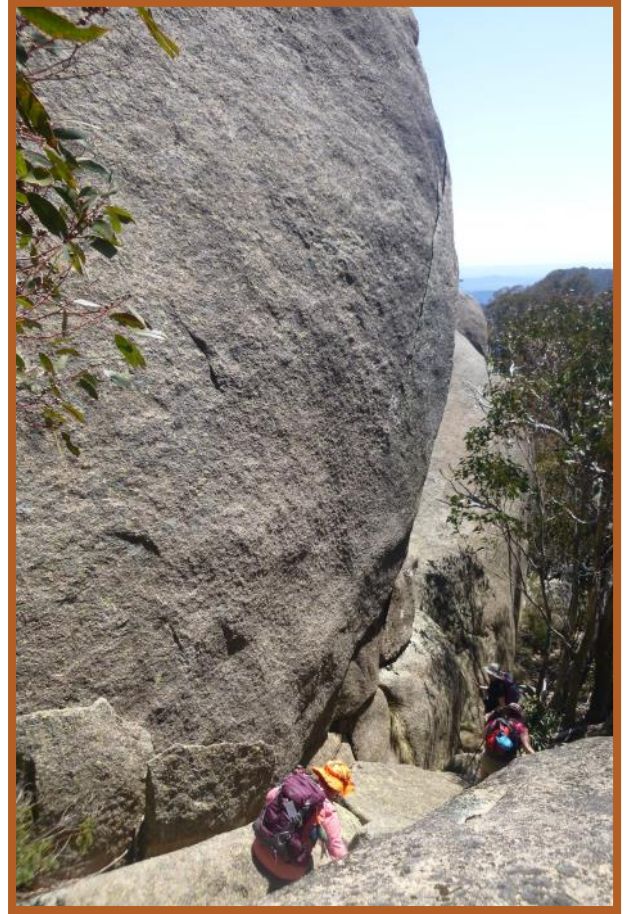
New Long Distance Walk in England

To celebrate the coronation of King Charles III, the England Coast Path has been renamed the 'King Charles III England Coast Path', and will be the longest managed coastal path in the world. Leading all the way around the coast of England; it will be around 2,700 miles long when it is complete.

This new National Trail will take walkers through some of the best landscapes in England, connecting the many coastal towns, cities and ports which have shaped this island nation. In the north, the pathway will follow sections of Hadrian's Wall (see photo), thereby linking the north-east and north-west coast sections.

Overall, it will link iconic places, and heritage areas of the coast, with the less well-known, and will unlock some parts of the coast for the first time.

See "www.nationaltrail.co.uk" for more details.



Australia's 50 Best Multi-Day Walks

This is a new guide book publication from Woodslane Press in Sydney; the Editor is Wendy Bruere, with a foreword by John and Monica Chapman.

The 290 pages of this full-colour book covers all of the well known long-distance walks in our beautiful country, with excellent photos, and maps.

The retail price is \$39.95, and is available via the Woodslane website.

White Box, Chiltern-Mount Pilot NP : November 2

Saturdays White Box Walk at the Chiltern-Mount Pilot National Park was attended by nine members, and five casual walkers who followed up the 'Try Bushwalking' campaign by Bushwalking Victoria, and attended their first walk with us.

The 8.5k loop walk starts at the Honeyeater Picnic Area, then heads off to the remains of the Golden Bar Open-Cut Mine.

The forest is a remnant of the Box-Ironbark, and is made up of mostly Grey Box, White Box, Red Box and Mugga Ironbark. The forest is young, having regrown after mining operations, and logging, ceased. There are old mineshafts and mullock heaps remaining from the mining.

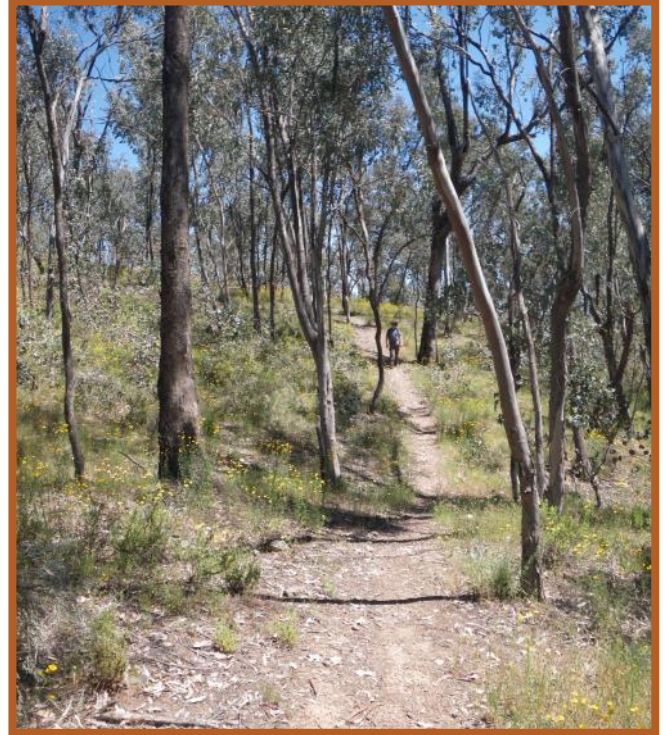
There were a number of birds about, and our twitcher attending was Pete, who identified the following: Olive-backed Oriole (we heard them throughout the walk), Brown Treecreeper, Striated Pardalote, Grey Shrike Thrush, Kookaburra, White-winged Choughs.

Other birds calling most likely species of Honeyeater, and others saw a lorikeet or rosella. There was very little flowering eucalypts etc, thus the lack of birds.

We also came across five kangaroos, an echidna and two wallabies, one with a joey's feet extending out of the doe's pouch.

Wildflowers that we came across were the everlasting, nodding blue lily, bluebells, plus other purple and mauve wildflowers. We also came across grass trees close to the end of the walk.

Morning tea was taken at some fallen trees for seating enroute, and lunch was back at the Honeyeater Picnic area, along with a cuppa. On returning to Wangaratta we stopped in Yarrunga, to check out a new Tawny Frogmouth family. [Jeanette]



Melbourne Cup Day : Orchard Track, Stanley Forest : November 5

For this adventure, 17 walkers set off with Lesley and Jeanette from Lady Newton Drive (near Beechworth), visiting Bates Dam, a relic of the gold mining era.

Continuing on the picturesque Orchard Track, we climbed the steep Tully Track before finding a shady lunch spot.

We then split into two groups for the remainder of the walk. The strong walkers did the steady uphill climb along Storm Track, finishing at Clarkes Corner for the Melbourne Cup celebrations.

The less strong group elected to return via West Dingle and Lady Newton Tracks to the cars, after which they drove to Clarkes Corner for a delicious afternoon tea.

Best Hat was won conclusively by Sonia, with a bottle brush design!

A lovely get together indeed. [Lesley]



Mount Glenrowan and Chick Hill : November 17

This walk was cancelled, due to the presence of electrical storms in the area, and will be rescheduled.

Hume and Hovell : 200 year anniversary walks

Over the weekend of Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th November, the Warby Range Bushwalking Club held two walks commemorating the 200 year anniversary of the Hume and Hovell Expedition passing through the Myrrhee area.

Myrrhee local Mike had contacted our club earlier this year, with a view to holding a walk to celebrate the milestone. He contacted the various local property owners to arrange access, and then met with Michael and Jeanette to reconnoitre the proposed walks.

On Saturday, 23rd November, 12 participants, included a mix from Warby Range Bushwalking Club, Benalla Bushwalking Club, and community members, met at the Brookfield Maze ready to brave the hot day. Introductions were made, and a car shuffle organised, as was iced water for the end of the walk.

The group set off, being led through the first of the properties, across the open farmland to the bush at the rear. After climbing in elevation through the paddocks we reached the bush, where we followed a ridge that led us to the first high point of our walk. Along the way we came across a scorpion hiding by a rock and three goannas, who scurried up trees on our approach, and had a number of drink stops.

After the ridge climb, we descended to a lower point on bush tracks to a dam, beside which we enjoyed a well-earned break. Following the break, we continued on a gravel track through the forest to two further high points, coming across a swamp wallaby, a number of wildflowers, grass trees, and listening to the birdsong. Brian from Benalla regaled us with a poem on one of our breaks during the walk. Further along we descended to farmland at Middle Creek Valley.

The flies were especially friendly this day, and those walkers who wore insect nets over their hats were rewarded with way less bother from the flies. The weather was hot, part sunny, part cloudy, and similar to what Hume and Hovell would have experienced when they passed through this area. A large portion of our walk was in the shade of the forest, and we crossed one range, where Hume and Hovell had crossed five on the day they covered this area, enroute to reaching what is now known as Tatong. Drinks of chilled water were enjoyed, followed by a return to Brookfield Maze, all organised by Ron.

On Sunday, 24th November, 15 participants braved the wet weather. Four days earlier the forecast was for a hot day of 33C, but over the ensuing days it was reduced to 30, then 28, then 25, and showers; however, it rained for most of the walk. Ron generously offered to drive the group to the start of the walk, and then provided gifts of trail mix and bottled water for the group. We began our walk at a farm property, crossing Boggy Creek, and then ascending through the paddocks to the bushland at the rear.

On reaching the lookout at Mount Bellevue, the landowner provided a morning tea of scones, with jam and cream, and chilled drinks. The views from this location are beautiful, hence Hume and Hovell aptly named the location Mt Belle-vue.



On this day the views were not as far reaching , due to the now steady rainfall, but we could still see to Mount Buffalo, and appreciate the location.

Refreshed after the delightful morning tea, we continued across the top along bush tracks and paddocks, to other look-out points, before descending into a forest. Lunch was taken in the shelter of the forest, a pretty bush setting with fallen trees for seating, before we descended further through another farm to Fifteen Mile Creek. We crossed the creek, and arrived at Brookfield Maze for afternoon tea. Hume and Hovell, along with their expedition crew, had camped the night alongside the nearby Fifteen Mile Creek almost 200 years earlier.



A big thank you to Mike for asking us to assist with organising the walks, and the generosity of the local landowners for allowing our group the opportunity to hold these walks, also the very welcome treats. It has been a pleasure to be involved in these anniversary walks. [Jeanette]

Best Walks of South Coast WA

This is another new guide book from Woodslane Press, written by Mark Pybus, an avid bushwalker from WA. The book covers the West Australian coast from Walpole, through to Cape Arid National Park, and includes section of the Bibbulmun Track, as well as sections of the Munda Biddi Trail.

The 220 pages provides comprehensive descriptions of 40 walks, with maps, many excellent photos, and interesting commentary on the local environment, and history.

Places like the coastline at Albany (see photo) are covered in detail, as well as the Stirling Ranges, the Fitzgerald River National Park, and Cape Le Grand National Park.

The retail price is \$32.95, and the book is available via the Woodslane website.



Kangaroo Hill, Eldorado : November 30

This walk was cancelled, due to very high volumes of water in Kangaroo Creek, and will be rescheduled.

AWE CELEBRATING GRASSTREES AND THEIR COMMUNITY

HOSTED BY: Wangaratta Landcare & Sustainability & Friends of Warby-Ovens National Park

Join Jan Osmotherly on a personal heart felt photo journey of Grass-trees and other native plants and animals of the Warby Ranges over past decades.

She'll share snippets of information about some of her images - the microscopic and the majestic and their incredible interconnectedness... and share a very personal story of connection to local nature - of a mental health tale that continues to evolve. It's a story enriched with awe and amplified by the wisdom of her very close Indigenous friend Leonie – who sadly passed away from brain cancer earlier this year. AWE is dedicated to her.

Andy Kimber & Dr Paul Rymer will speak briefly about our local Grass-trees (a listed threatened species) and their state of health.

And Jan's dear friend and celebrated musician, Sal Kimber, will be singing a couple of songs about connection to country.

Wine, nibbles, music, fascinating info and great images.

Put it in your diary.

PS: This event coincides with the first day of Jan Osmotherly's AWE Exhibition in the Wangaratta Performing Arts Centre Foyer.

Have a browse before you come on over to the Hall.

WHEN: Friday December 6, 7pm – 9pm

WHERE: Wangaratta Uniting Church Hall, Rowan St Wangaratta

FREE

BOOKINGS: <https://events.humanitix.com/celebrating-grass-trees>
(for catering purposes)



Grasstrees in the mist: Warby Ranges © Jan Osmotherly