



WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS Inc.

FUN . FITNESS . FRIENDSHIP

NEWSLETTER : December, 2023 warbybushwalkers.org.au

Welcome to the December 2023 Newsletter, and what a great year we have to look back on, and forward to in 2024. As well as a nicely varied Walks Program there are two 'not to be missed events' in 2024 - the rescheduled Volcano Week (south-west Victoria) and our annual week away, which will be on the New South Wales south coast.

However, before those events, this year's Christmas BBQ will be held on December 16, starting at 6.30pm, at the Murrumgee-Bowmans Hall, accessible by turning off the Great Alpine Road (or Buckland Gap Road) onto the Murrumgee-Bowmans Road.

Specifically, from Wangaratta, take the Great Alpine Road, and drive 31km to the Bowman-Whorouly intersection, then turn left onto Bowman's Road (signposted Bowman-Murrumgee Hall).

BYO drinks and meat for a BBQ. Crockery, cutlery and chairs are provided. Contact Marita on 0427 521 122 to book, and to bring either a sweet or a salad to share.

Dates for 2024

Falls Creek Weekend

After a long hiatus due to a landslide blocking access to the mountain we have been able to secure a weekend at Falls Creek. Accommodation at the Myrtleford Ski Lodge has been tentatively booked for Friday March 1st through to, and leaving on, the morning of Sunday March 3rd (walks will be held both Saturday and Sunday)

Traditionally this has been a popular weekend of walks in the Alpine

National Park, based at the Myrtleford Ski Club Lodge, with easy, medium and hard options. Currently there is a waiting list for accommodation; email Sandi (warby.walkers@gmail.com) if you would like to join the wait list.

Week Away

The date of our next week away is from 6-13 April 2024, and will be held at Manna Park Lodge, which is located on the south coast of NSW, between Merimbula and Tathra. The cost of the accommodation will be \$230.00. Camping on site is an option this time, however power will not be available for campers. More details to follow.

Federation Walks

This year's Federation Walk venue was the Wombat State Forest (near Daylesford), and next year's event will be held at Wilsons Promontory, with a provisional date of October 12-14.

Volcano Week

This was to have been held in October 2022, but was cancelled because of widespread flooding in SW Victoria. However, the committee has pencilled in new dates for this event in 2024, the provisional dates being November 16-24. At this stage we are planning on a base camp at the Lakes and Craters Holiday Park in Camperdown, followed by a base camp at Mortlake Caravan Park.

Membership Fees

Club Membership fees need to be paid before the end of February; see our website for details.



Loggers Lane – Wenhams Loop : September 12

Today's 14km walk was the first in our "Wildflower Week" and involved walking from Ryans Lookout to Wenhams Camp (for lunch) and then return via a different route.

Setting off at about 9.00 from Ryans Lookout, we had morning tea at the junction of Loggers Lane and Stypantra Track, and then continued onwards, enjoying nice views of the Ovens River Flood Plain, and many colonies of grass-trees.

Moving on, we turned north at an un-named single-file track that provides a very scenic loop around to Taylors Track. In this section we enjoyed some nice rocky scenery, beautiful blooms of the spur-winged wattle, and some more views (including Wangaratta, and the distant high country).

We then made a gradual descent to Wenhams Camp, where lunch was enjoyed sat at the picnic tables.

The Camp was quite busy (with campers) and after a leisurely lunch, we commenced the journey back to the start, taking a myriad number of single-file tracks to the north. These tracks took us through some amazing stands of spur-winged wattles, and grass-trees, and eventually back to our vehicles.

This completed a five hour journey for the 12 of us, and our great day was completed by the traditional hot drink and biscuits, organised in absentia by Pat. [Chris]



Deborah Goodson 28/2/1949 to 7/9/2023

On Thursday September 7th Deb Goodson passed away peacefully, at home, surrounded by family and close friends after a long battle with cancer.

Deb was a member of Warby Walkers for over ten years, she was born in Kenya. Grew up on a farm there created by her parents after World War II. Her love of nature and adventure began when Deb and her two sisters set off exploring their isolated farm; and the wildlife photographic trips she shared with her photographer father developed her appreciation for the natural environment.

Deb climbed Mount Kilimanjaro when she was eighteen years old. Later she cycled solo across Europe, wild camping by herself. She met her husband, a kindred spirit, on a bushwalk. Her honeymoon was an eight-day jungle photography trek in Sulawesi. In her later years, she swam with whale sharks, camped on Lady Musgrave Island, and wilderness walked in Tassie.

Deb was always dynamic, reinventing herself many times. She trained and worked as chef.

Worked as a qualified photographer. Lived in London, eventually settling in Australia. Married, she and her husband Peter (an agricultural scientist), along with son Tim, built a farm at Lurg. When Peter died of cancer, she sold the farm, took Tim to Europe for three months, and built a new life once again, in Hamilton Park.

Deb left a legacy. "Tumbling Through Life" is her memoir and is available in the Wangaratta library. Future generations of her family will treasure her gift to them. Deb Goodson's was a life well lived. [Rod Davis]



Tomaree Coastal Walk - 27km

The 27km Tomaree Coastal Walk starts at Tomaree Head (Shoal Bay) and finishes at Anna Bay, that is, the environs of Port Stephens. The track weaves along the coastline of Tomaree National Park, with lush headlands, rock ledges and angophora forests, before arriving at the huge sand dunes at the Worimi Conservation Lands.

As to be expected the route includes breathtaking scenery of panoramic ocean views, sparkling beaches and coves, rock formations and an abundance of flora and fauna including birds, dolphins and seasonal migrating whales.

The multi-day walk is best experienced as a two day walk (or three day walk for those wanting a more leisurely pace), with a range of accommodation options available at local coastal villages.

Walkers can also choose to walk shorter sections of the track, including half-day or full-day walks in either direction, with many suitable entry and exit points along the route.

See ["nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/experiences/tomaree-coastal-walk"](https://nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/things-to-do/experiences/tomaree-coastal-walk) for more details.



Sunrise Track : September 14

This walk was the second in our "Wildflower Week" and the six of us stepped it out at 9am, looking forward to a great walk on a perfect day – blue sky, and a top of 22C.

Our first stop was the quarry, less than a kilometre from the start, and here we indulged in an early morning tea with amazing views over the floodplain of the Ovens and King Rivers. Heading onwards, and upwards, we followed the single file track to the top of the ridge, enjoying the bird calls (and a few sightings) as well as admiring the grasstrees.

Some wildflowers were also visible, and we all reflected on how fortunate we are to live so close to the Warby Ranges.

On the way downslope we stopped many times to admire the valley views, and lunch was enjoyed back at the cars. Total walking time was about two and a half hours, and we covered about eight kilometres.

Bird sightings (as logged by Peter) included Turquoise Parrot, Superb Fairy Wren, the Welcome Swallow and the Eastern Rosella. We also spotted (and photographed) a very busy Red Headed Mouse Spider. [Chris]



Macs Point and Mount Dunn : September 17

Sunday September 17 was a great bush walking day on Mount Buffalo with 16 walkers prepared for the hike incorporating Macs Point and Mount Dunn. The sun was shining and at times a slight breeze was noticeable. Our starting point was Lake Catani which allowed for the formalities of handouts of maps and introductions. Speaking of introductions, next time I am going to organise the group so that we can have a consecutive name call of Sandi, Sonia, Sandie, Sara, Sandy and Shannon. It has a nice ring to it.

I pointed out to all present that this walk was new to me, as I was not one of the four people who had reconnoitered the walk last year. Aah, our club members are a trusting group. It was now about 10am, and we began leaving the car park alongside the lake and following the dirt road back towards the main road.

A track on the right led us closer to the lake, and a flowing stream. After crossing the main road, we were at the start of the Long Plain Track which leads to various points of interest including Macs Point and Mount Dunn.

Long Plain track begins as a flat walk alongside the Eurobin Creek which feeds into Lake Catani. The creek was flowing well and an occasional small waterfall was noticed along the way.

Our first junction point was one leading to Mount Dunn in one direction and Macs Point in the other. It was decided to take morning tea at this stage, and had nothing to do with, "which way shall we go now...decisions!"



While relaxing, we encountered another group of three walkers who were on their way to Mount Dunn.

After some morning tea in this pleasantly sheltered spot, we continued in the direction of Macs Point. Our elevation at this point was about 1350m. For the next section we would climb to about 1490m over a distance that would get the legs working and heart pumping – if they weren't already. Once we had reached this maximum elevation, we continued past points of interest such as Stanley Rocks while walking down a little in elevation to the next junction point, which was another means of walking to Mount Dunn.

The remainder of the trail towards Macs Point is best described as gently undulating. This was obvious from the increased conversations and less huffing and puffing. After passing another junction we encountered the Split Rocks, and not long after reached the first of today's highlights – Macs Point. The expansive view over the southern parts of the national park made for a suitable lunch spot. The elevation at this point made it a little more exposed to the stiffening breeze, and numerous jackets were now being put on.

After a suitable break we retraced our steps a little to a link track which leads to the reservoir via Rocky Creek Track. On the reconnoitre completed by previous walkers, this section of the link track was badly in need of maintenance. Fortunately, the trail had been cleared, and it was easily navigated. Once we reached Rocky Creek Track, we continued towards the next junction leading to Mount Dunn. On the way a small stream was easily crossed and Og, Gog & Magog were visible at one point on the road.

Last time I led a loop walk involving Mount Dunn it was not possible to climb, as the weather had turned and made it most uninviting to take a detour in such conditions. Today with the sun shining most of the group proceeded to the summit. I am not a fan of heights, and despite the sturdy looking steel ladders I wasn't planning on making the final ascent of a few metres. Perhaps it was the way Trevor said, "would you like me to hold your hand?" or something else inside me that urged me on those final few steps.

Gripping the ladder guide rails tighter than a Coconut crab could pinch your bones, I slowly made my way up to join my fellow adventurous walkers. The reward for our efforts at the summit elevation of almost 1490m, were 360-degree views with clear blues skies, and the last of the season's snow in the distant alps.

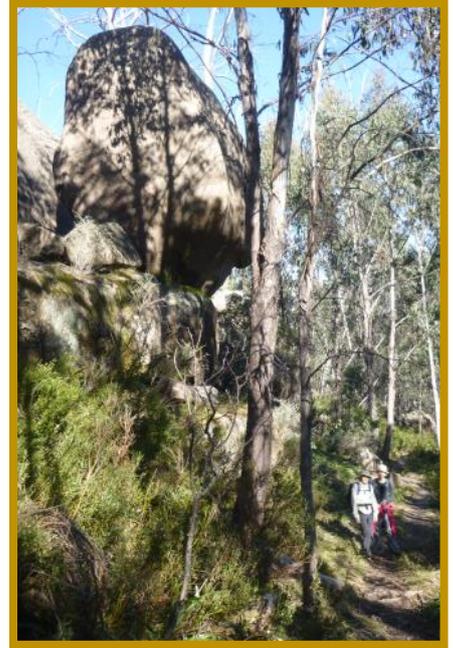
Such dizzying heights can affect you. One of our Sandi's had misplaced her glasses. "Oh, my glasses, where are my glasses, has anyone seen my glasses?", was the plea we heard. "Oh, never mind, I found them. They're on my head!" She was wearing them all the time. Yes, the exhilaration of bush walking has a different effect on all of us. Mission accomplished, it was a return descent to meet the rest of the group, hand out the edible snakes, and head back towards Lake Catani.

Before meeting up with the Long Plain Track again, we passed through a section of the park which is quite beautiful with its vegetation, and precariously balanced granite boulders. Certainly, one of my favourite parts of today's walk.

Probably the most difficult section of today's trail involves those parts where the trail is very narrow for your walking boots. To accommodate this, you need to adopt more of a supermodel walk. This is where one step or foot is directly in line with the next step, rather than walking with feet side by side. Believe me, it's unnatural and uncomfortable. It also necessitates a certain hip and posterior movement to achieve this peculiar walk successfully and I am yet to master it. But then I am not a supermodel.

Once back at the cars we made use of one of the lakes shelters for Pat's afternoon tea. A spread which is welcomed at the end of each walk and has gained legendary status.

Thanks to everyone for participating. Thanks also to my four walkers who checked this route out a year ago in Jeanette, Sara, Sandi and Sonia. The hike of about 16km was completed in six and a half hours, and was a great day of walking in this spectacular National Park. [Michael Braendler]



Friday 22nd September to Friday 29th – Week Away at the Grampians

We had 29 club members at gorgeous Hall's Gap and the weather was superb for walking!! As well, the organisation of walks, food and accommodation has been top class!!

After driving from the northeast, Saturday was spent exploring the immediate Hall's Gap area, and visiting some spectacular lookouts.

On Sunday the three groups (easy, medium and hard) ambled around the Mount William area, with the hard crew not arriving "home" until just before dark!!

Monday was spent trudging around the Zumsteins and the MacKenzie Falls section of this glorious National Park, with amazing wildflowers in full bloom!

Graeme from Myrtleford who has not adventured with us before, describes the three groups via musical examples. He claims that the people walking under 10 kms per day should be called "Easybeats" (with "Friday On Their Minds" when we will not wish to go home); the medium crew are "Stuck in the Middle With You" by Stealer's Wheel Band, and the tough hardened mob of course always march along singing the Proclaimers hit "I'm Gonna Be" – and I will walk 500 miles"

The incredibly fine and clear weather continued, and we walked for the last three days in the magnificent Grampians ambling through banks of wildflowers which were simply amazing, even in areas absolutely devastated by fire only nine years ago!

Tuesday was spent close to the township of Dunkeld, featuring Piccaninny Hill, which everyone enjoyed, plus the formidable Mount Sturgeon, with the million-dollar new track at the end of the Grampians Peaks Trail.

Wednesday was spent close to Halls Gap, and one walk featured three lookouts – The Pinnacle, Lake Lookout and Sundial Peak – which was a highlight for many.

Also on the other side of the valley, the hard group tackled the steep Boronia Peak.

Thursday, we visited, and then climbed the simply impressive northern most end of the range. Mount Zero and Mount Stapylton were tackled by most of our 29 attendees, as well as viewing rock paintings, and delightful locations such as the Beehive Falls were also visited.

So, another magnificent week away was complete!! As we headed back to Wangaratta and Myrtleford, everybody would have agreed that the six days spent in the Grampians had been very special !!

Saturday, 7th October. Greta History Walk

There were 15 enthusiastic participants who took off from the front of the former Greta Primary School on this mostly level walk, but with occasional views of the Warbys and the Alps on higher ground.

We followed mainly sealed roads plus some gravel tracks, exploring the area and guided by Adrian Younger who was a gold mine of interesting information.

We visited the site of the former Greta police station, but most time was spent at the Greta cemetery where Adrian pointed out significant graves, and told us stories about some of the



deceased. Lunch was enjoyed in the rear yard of the old Greta School, and afternoon tea took place at the rotunda at the cemetery. [Jeanette]

Sunday, 8th October. Grass Tree Celebration

Sunday, 8th October was the date for the Grass Tree Celebration Walk in the Warby Ranges, and 16 people attended this event, celebrating these magnificent plants which are threatened by a nasty pathogen called phytophthora.

Several Grass Tree (*Xanthorrhoea glauca*) experts were available to explain the possible future problems associated with these exceptional plants, and what action could be taken to defend our flora.

We walked about five kilometres from Wenhams in a clockwise direction, firstly along a new bike path, and then down Taylor's Track and the Friends Track back to our cars at the camp.

Visitors from Melbourne, Warragul and the Otway Ranges were with us to assess the environment, and the probable risks with our iconic and often very old Grass Trees. Then everyone enjoyed Pat's now almost internationally famous cuppa, with the accompanying exquisite biscuits!! [Andy]



Walks in the Pyrenees area of France

Pyreneestours (based in Bowral, NSW) offer a range of walking holidays in France, including The Hautes Pyrenees (made famous by the Tour de France) with spectacular views, a national park abundant with rare fauna and flora, and mountain villages overflowing with character, charm and history. More details at pyreneestours.com.au



Sunday, 22nd October. Bowser to Boorhaman

Five people took part in this first time walk by the Warby Range Bushwalkers. The weather was kind, as it was overcast which made the thirteen kilometre walk enjoyable.

This adventure started near the start of Back Estcourt Road on Three Chain Road/Federation Way. The walk was predominantly on Back Estcourt Road, but in several places, we could walk on the former rail line bench.

The Peechelba East railway line was a track branching off of the North-East railway line at Bowser railway station. It was opened on 31 October 1927, and closed on 8 December 1986. The line was built to primarily serve soldier settlers in the area.



We stopped near the Bowser CFA shed for morning tea, and after approximately four hours the crew arrived at the Boorhaman Golf Course, and enjoyed lunch, along with the flies.

It was a pity that the Canola and Wattle flowers had just come to an end, but it was still an enjoyable walk. [John]

Saturday, 4th November: Everton to Horseshoe Gap loop

Nine walkers began this walk on the rail trail at Pender Road, and then left the trail at Heywood Lane, where we climbed steadily up a gentle hill.

We then crossed the walking track which leads to Cemetery Lane, enjoying the wonderful views over towards the mountains. The return journey was via Cemetery Lane, and the rail trail, back to Everton.

The walk was about 11km long, and a very pleasant medium level walk.

The rail trail follows the route of the Bright railway line, which was a branch from the previously constructed Yackandandah line to Beechworth, with the Bright line branching at Everton. The line opened as far as Myrtleford in December 1883, being extended to Bright by October 1890. The line closed in on 30th November 1983 between Bright and Myrtleford, and back to Bowser and the North-east line on 13 April 1987. [Lesley]



Cup Day walk from Taminick Gap to Morrison's Winery

On Tuesday, the 7th of November, 14 walkers headed off up the ridge from Taminick Gap in warm, but pleasant conditions.

Most enjoyed a small glass of a classic white on the summit of Mount Glenrowan before plunging down the fairly steep and trackless south ridge (with some new orange markers provided to help with navigation) towards the winery.

By the time we arrived at Bob's delightful place we had ambled about eight kilometres in total, with the last three kilometres being rather rugged!!

About 12 non-walking Club members joined the walkers at Morrison's where we had lunch and socialised before preparing ourselves for the big race!!

Bob "sort of" volunteered to judge the gorgeous hat competition just before 3pm, with five mares and one stallion lining up.

Some hats were bedecked in the superb local flowers, but the prize went to Pat's simple but exquisite red mini bonnet! The names of horses

were tooth picked to charmingly decorated cup cakes, and the race was listened to intently. Amazingly, Anne Ford won the coveted Warby Cup for the second time in two years!!

Thanks goes to Bob Morrison for his great "horsepitality" (again!) and the organisers of the cakes and the sweep!! [Andy]



West Ridge, Mount Buller

On the 18th of November, in perfect weather, an eight member enthusiastic all-girl team took up the challenging hike of the west ridge of Mount Buller.

With the aid of two very generous young male drivers, we were shuttled to Mirimbah, then five kilometres up Doughtys Road, to the start of the walk at 1100m.

Starting steeply, through forest and wildflowers, then opening out to a small clearing, we caught our first glimpse of the spectacular west ridge, and took a morning tea break.

Continuing on, and climbing higher, the rocky track narrowed and involved some tricky negotiation, but our efforts were well rewarded by increasingly magnificent views of the surrounding mountains to the west.



As we rose above the tree line, and were looking for a lunch perch, we discovered that our two drivers were watching our progress from the summit above.

Seeing the end in sight, the final section involved cautiously clambering over rocks and loose scree, finally reaching the summit hut to be met by our drivers.

After a moment of exhilaration, and satisfaction, with photos to prove our efforts, we then went down to Mount Buller village square to relax over a cuppa and biscuit before the drive home. [Anne Ford]

Northern Territory National Parks volunteers

The NT National Parks Service is seeking campground hosts, people who volunteer their time in national parks around the NT. The volunteers carry out various roles associated with park and visitor management, and are people who enjoy the outdoors and have good health and fitness levels.

Campground hosts are mostly self-sufficient, with their own tent or caravan, staying on site for three weeks at a time.

Duties include: welcoming visitors, providing general information about the area, and assisting with the cleaning and maintenance of visitor facilities.

The campground host program operates in a number of campgrounds across the Top End and Central Australia including:

- Wangi Falls
- Florence Falls
- Tjaynera Falls
- Eley National Park (Jalmurark Campground)
- Judbarra / Gregory National Park (Big Horse Creek Campground)
- Keep River National Park (Jarnem Campground)
- Karlu Karlu / Devils Marbles Conservation Reserve
- Trepkina Gorge Nature Park
- Finke Gorge National Park (Palm Valley Campground)

More details at ["nt.gov.au/parks/learn-and-be-involved/volunteers-in-parks"](http://nt.gov.au/parks/learn-and-be-involved/volunteers-in-parks).

