



# WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS Inc.

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NEWSLETTER : June, 2025

Welcome to the June 2025 newsletter of the Warby Range Bushwalkers . . .

Our well-attended 48th Annual General Meeting was held at the Wangaratta Club on the 17th of March, and these are the main items from that meeting.

#### Election of Office Bearers

All positions were declared vacant, and Life Member, Adrian Twitt, conducted elections for the following roles,

President: Sandra Smith

Vice President: Michael Braendler

Secretary: Roger Barker

Treasurer: Andrew Greene

Committee: Jeanette Farquhar, Cheryl Hoysted, Andy Kimber, Chris McLaughlin and Marita Samuelsson.

#### Life Membership Presentation

The proposal of Chris McLaughlin for Life Membership was presented, and the President presented Chris with his badge and certificate, to acclamation.

Our guest speaker for the AGM was Darren Sutton, a Beechworth miner and prospector. Darren presented a fascinating and entertaining social history talk about the people, and life, in the Beechworth and surrounding goldfields area, and his experiences of prospecting in the bush.

Please remember that subscriptions became due at the AGM, and that they should be renewed as soon as possible.

The subscription renewal form can be found under "General Information" on our website; subscriptions are asked to be paid electronically.

#### Walks Report - April 2024 to March 2025

To say the weather has messed with our walks program during the past year is an understatement. I don't recall so many cancellations or rescheduling of walks as we have experienced this past year.

August saw the McMillans Track walk cancelled due to the thunderstorm forecast, November and December saw four walks cancelled due to weather that was either too hot or had thunderstorms forecast. The next walk being our first walk this year was rescheduled to avoid cancellation due to the hot weather forecast.

Our most recent weekend away was hosted by Helen and Adrian Twitt at the Wangaratta Ski Club Lodge at Mount St Bernard. Earlier in the week we held concerns about the bushfire danger ratings, and possible total fire bans. Over the weekend wet weather took care of the walks scheduled for Friday and Sunday. Thankfully Saturday's walks were able to go ahead, and everyone got out and about. Everyone walked to Derrick Hut, the medium walkers got to Mount Loch as well, and the hard walkers reached Spargo Hut and Silver Brumby Hut. Sunday saw most attendees enjoying coffees and hot chocolates in Harrietteville, where there wasn't a thunderstorm.

A weekend staying at Colac Colac near Corryong was held in September with 26 participants ready to check out the Burrowa - Pine Mountain National Park. The walks in the Pine Mountain section were held on the Saturday, and the walks that we anticipated having in the Burrowa section of the park didn't eventuate due to rebuilding in the area we would need to access. Other walks nearby were put together for Sunday. Participants found other interesting things to do, like birdwatching - Rod spotted 51 different species; visiting the local museum; seeing the handknitted map of Australia; following a sculpture trail and spotting a culturally modified tree.



November was a busy month for our club with 'Try Bushwalking', Cup Day and the Hume & Hovell 200 Year Anniversary Walks.

Bushwalking Victoria held a 'Try Bushwalking Month' in November, whereby they asked clubs to participate by offering walks for potential new members to try bushwalking. We offered three walks, being the White Box Walk at Chiltern, a walk to Mount Glenrowan via Chick Hill, and a walk at Eldorado to Kangaroo Hill. We had people book into all three walks to 'try bushwalking'.

The Chiltern walk went ahead with five people coming along to try bushwalking with us. Some of these booked into our next two walks, along with some other interested parties. Then the unfavourable weather kicked in and unfortunately these next two walks were cancelled due to weather conditions for the days they were scheduled.

Our annual Cup Day Walk was held in the Stanley Forest, with two walks offered that finished at Clarkes Corner for a shared afternoon tea, hat parade (won by Sonia) and Cupcakes, and we were in time to hear the race.

In July last year, Mike, a local resident from Myrree, contacted our club with an idea for a bushwalk to celebrate the 200 year anniversary of explorers Hume & Hovell passing through the area. I followed it up with him, and after meeting with Michael and myself we worked out a route where we could lead the walk. Mike followed up with the landowners seeking permission to cross their properties, we reconnoitred the walks and recorded the route on Michaels' GPS which then provided us with a map. We ended up with two walks that were held over the weekend of 23rd and 24th November.

Saturday's walk went over private properties and Crown land from the Fifteen Mile Creek valley to the Middle Creek valley. Sunday's walk the group met at Brookfield Maze before boarding a bus transporting them to the first property we were passing through in the Boggy Creek Valley.



The landowners were thrilled to be a part of this anniversary walk and had chilled bottled water and trail mix snack packs for the walkers. The next property we passed through is known for its excellent views. Unfortunately, on this day they were hindered by the rainfall that started not long before we reached the lookout. But not to be outdone, the owner was serving chilled drinks and scones with jam and cream, before we crossed the top and descended down to Fifteen Mile Creek, and reached Brookfield Maze for afternoon tea.

Afternoon Tea has been a wonderful social ending to our walks for some years now, and was taken care of our much loved member, Pat Kuhle. Unfortunately for our club Pat our wonderful 'keeper of the urns' retired from our club, and hence we no longer have a caretaker for our afternoon tea. These days the walks leader may bring along the afternoon tea gear for a cuppa at the end of the walk, or a café has been sought out for refreshments. Ideally someone will offer to be a 'keeper of the urns' to keep this tradition going.

During the year we have explored our local Warby Ovens National Park with walks along the Salisbury Walk, Friends Track, Kwat Kwat Lookout, Billabongs and River Flats, Mount Warby, Alpine Views, a Springtime flower walk; a moonlight walk at Winton Wetlands; historical features at Magpie Creek, Beechworth Historic Park, May Day Hills, Stanley, Chiltern Mount Pilot NP, Mount Buffalo NP, Bright, Wandiligong, Mount Wombat and Polly McQuinns Weir, The Paps, Myrtleford. Our most recent walk at Havilah was followed by lunch at the finest dining table available.



This past year has seen 30 weekend and midweek day walks with 301 walk participants, averaging 10 people per walk, and 285 kilometres walked averaging 9.5 kilometres per walk.

Thank you also to the walk leaders and organisers for weekends away: Adrian and Helen Twitt, Andy Kimber, Anne Ford, Anne Turnbull, Bob Shaw, Erin Pascoe, Gerri Boland, Greg Absler, John Walker, Karen Davis, Lesley Finedon,



Marita Samuelsson, Michael Braendler. These members have volunteered their time and effort to lead a walk and/or organised a weekend away for our club. My apologies to anyone that I have missed.

Thank you to everyone involved with our club that make what we do happen. Our program would not work without you, and your assistance is greatly appreciated.

It is my intention to continue as Walks Co-ordinator for another 12 months, please consider if you would like to take on this role following that. Jeanette Farquhar, Walks Co-Ordinator

### **Beechworth Tree Walks : March 2**

For this re-scheduled urban adventure, a small group met at Mayday Hills in Beechworth to complete the three tree walks of this historic township.

The gardens were planted in the late 19th century, with trees and shrubs donated by the Royal Botanical Gardens in Melbourne, and it took about two hours to explore, and locate the various numbered trees on each of the walks.

We had lunch at the Hillsborough Cafe, then went on to the nearby Lake Sambell for some more walking. [Erin]

### **Stanley Village Walk : March 5**

This walk started at the Stanley Recreation Reserve, with nine walkers prepared for a walk in hot, but fine, conditions around, and through, the pretty village of Stanley.

Led by former resident (Greg) we learnt a lot about the early days of the gold diggings, and the recent days of orchards and pine forests.

Good views of Mount Feathertop, and the Stanley surrounds, were enjoyed from Ritchies Track, and the storyboards along Higgins Lane told the story of the diggings.

The walk concluded with a visit to the Stanley Athenaeum, and the Cemetery.

This was an easy/medium walk of about eight kilometres. [Marita]



### **Havilah : March 9**

On Sunday morning 10 of us did our planned walk in Havilah, north of Myrtleford, and we had two new members who joined us for their first walk with us.

Our walk started in the farmland of the valley, but soon we were in the mature forest, and the road meandered very gradually up the hill.

We were in the cool of the shade for the entire walk, which we all appreciated.

Morning coffee/tea break was on the side of the road in the bush, and when we got back after 10-11 km walking and 3½ hours, it was lunchtime.

We took the opportunity to stop for our lunch at a hall we had seen on the way, and very nice it was. [Marita]



### **Mount Buffalo Plateau, 3 Peaks**

Mount Dunn, The Monolith and Lake View : Sunday, March 23, 2025

A fine and sunny day greeted the 16 walkers who chose this hike up on the plateau of Mount Buffalo.

The original loop walk was altered slightly to take in Mt Dunn, the Monolith and the Lake View summit, and this enabled three peaks within close vicinity of each other to be explored, with a planned hike distance of about 14.5km.

On today's walk we had three gentlemen accompanying the thirteen ladies. The first stop was at the park entrance for a 'comfort stop'. From my observation this was for a select thirteen walkers of our group. We were soon underway to the starting point of Grossman's Mill Picnic Area, which is adjacent to Lake Catani next to the main road.

After an acknowledgement of country, the distribution of maps and introductions, which included our regular trio of Sandi, Sandie and Sandii (personally I feel I could spell them anyway I wish).

Today we welcomed first time walker with the club Angi, who was also making her first visit to our beloved Mount Buffalo. Today's group was efficient and well organised, so before you could say we were moving like a bloot of hippopotamuses (yes, bloot), we were off walking a little after 9.30am.

Reservoir Road is being worked on since some storm damage, and so today involved a return walk to Mount Dunn instead of a loop.

From the beginning of the Long Plain track, the summit is under 3.5km away. Recent rain in the middle of the week had freshened things up nicely.

Our track showed little evidence of the latest rain, and was relatively dry and firm underfoot. One fallen tree across our path required a little navigation over some large branches.

This walk is obviously popular, and one lady was determined to compete it no matter what. She was wearing a moon boot! Now that's commitment. To reach the approximate 1535m peak of Mount Dunn, an ascent of about 170m is made over the last kilometre. Sturdy ladders assist in reaching the summit, although their steps are best suited to hikers with feet the size of a toddler. The 360-degree clear views made an excellent location for morning tea at 11am.

Once we were satisfied our nourishment had been completed, we began the return walk. At the bottom of the track where it meets a junction that leads to the Reservoir, I handed out nutritious snakes to each walker.

Ingrid rather enthusiastically called out 'SNAKES', to which our newcomer Angi jumped backwards, noticeably startled, with her expectation of about to encounter her first ever snake in the bush. I was to learn later that her greatest fear regarding bush walking is snakes. However, there are no snakes on Mount Buffalo. The drop bears, yowies and bunyips have killed them all.

A charming section of the walk covered with bright green ferns, and large granite rocks, is made a little past the fore-mentioned junction. This section of the walk then becomes part of the Long Plain Walk that follows Eurobin Creek.

Soon Lake Catani came into view, and Mount Buffalo Road was reached. Lake Catani, the picnic tables and shade of nearby trees presented the best option as a lunch spot after competing about 7.5km thus far.

Last time here, in less than desirable weather, a well-fed wood duck, accompanied us for lunch. Once again, they made an appearance, hoping for any crumbs that might fall to the ground. Whilst eating my lunch, I reminisced of how much I enjoy Autumn Duck Confit Salad appearing on a dining menu. After lunch, a group photo was taken with the lake in the background, and we resumed our walk.

The next kilometre was walking alongside the lake towards the weir. Several brave and hardy souls were swimming in the lake, whose water I know would be exceptionally chilly. For me to undertake such an activity I would need the temperature much warmer. The sort of heat where cows would give powdered milk.

Once past the weir, it was a turn towards the Chalet along a popular short path in the park. Another viewpoint, just off this track, provided an opportunity to take in the sights of the eastern side of Mount Buffalo.

Back on the main route, our junction leading to the Monolith was soon reached. Walking this section is much like the entire plateau with fantastically shaped granite boulders amongst grand old trees and other plant life. Parks Victoria information states that Mount Buffalo was originally three times its present height, and today encompasses more than 90 kilometres of walking trails.

At the base of the monolith a short ascent was made towards the top of the large granite boulder. In days before health and safety was a consideration, this larger boulder was the place where stupidity seemed to reign supreme.





You name it, someone probably did it. This location provided some of the best photo opportunities of the day with Lake Catani below us.

After taking in the wonderful views, it was time to retrace our steps a little. When we reached the Mount Buffalo Road again, the final peak option was the Lake View summit.

A short distance of one kilometre to the peak involved an ascent of about 130m. At the end of a day's hiking this was enough to get the blood really pumping, if it hadn't been till now. This summit was the second highest for the day at about 1460m. We could look back at where we had been at the Monolith and had another clear view of Lake Catani below. A well-earned rest, customary group photo and discussion of humorous children's books about animal poo (thanks Ingrid and Jeanette) was enough to call it a day.



The return downhill was a blessing, and we soon met up with others who had declined the final short hike. In the meantime, our wonderful drivers for the day assisted the group by walking one kilometre back to their cars to return and pick up their passengers.

Today's walk was a total of 15.1km and completed in 6.5 hours with about 930m of ascent made during the day. Enough exercise and effort to make one sleep like a baby. Especially after a well-deserved glass of wine. Not mentioning any names. Shirley.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the walk. Only about 75km of other trails to complete in the Mount Buffalo National Park. [Michael Braendler]

### Great Coastal Walks : Australia

This is a full colour guide book to the coastal walks of our wonderful country, and was published early this year by Gelding Street Press.

The author (Brent McKean) describes 40 walks in 250 pages, covering all states, with excellent descriptions, maps and photos. The book sells for \$39.95, and I purchased my copy from Edgars Newsagency here in Wangaratta.

All of the well known coastal walks of Australia are described, including my favourite - the Cape to Cape Walk of Western Australia (see photo). [Chris M]



### Week Away at Anglesea

April once again proved to be a month of stable weather, for 39 of our members, to enjoy the walking opportunities along the Surf Coast, with our base at Anglesea.

This year we had a different style of accommodation, compared to the exclusive self-sufficiency of the lodge style with which we have in recent times become accustomed. This latter has become difficult to find for our number of participants, so this year a large holiday park was our home base.

The Anglesea Family Caravan Park is nestled between surf coast beach, and the silted up river mouth, enabling choices of walking on the coastal tracks, swimming, or a five minute walk into town for coffee.



It was a well-organized, well laid out and landscaped area, with clean and plentiful amenities, and we experienced a period of relatively low occupancy, which was very pleasant. The many resident eastern grey kangaroos were very watchful of us walking about, but really not moving aside.-. we were the interlopers.

We accommodated 24 members in four cabins, each with three bedrooms and one bathroom, and a further 15 members booked their own caravan sites.

Marita had done a great job of keeping our travellers informed, and on the first evening we met at a new, large, well-equipped camp kitchen, where we had happy hour and dined.

To the rear of the camp kitchen there was a large, unoccupied children's playroom, which we commandeered for discussions about the three levels of mostly circuit walks, in the same area, which Sandie had planned for the next day. This we were able to repeat each evening.

The first day, the Anglesea perimeter walk was offered, second day was Aireys Inlet (Distillery Creek), third day destination was Point Addis/ Bells Beach, then two walks instead of three at Lorne/Erskine falls/Kalimna Falls. The fifth day was Aireys Inlet/Urquart Bluff, and finally the last walk was changed from Moggs Creek/ Aireys Inlet/ Lighthouse, to Anglesea to Point Addis, due to burn offs.

Our "Intentions Book" was put to good use as a few folk took a "rest" day to pursue other activities available while in the vicinity. The three, self-described "Little Friends", came back very satisfied from their choice of walking another part of the surf coast. Others chose fishing as a special diversion, or opp-shopping, or finding old haunts and family homes, which pulled a few heart strings.

Each evening Melanie had rostered a catering group, with complete instructions for catering a designated three course menu for the group, including a shopping list if necessary. The elaborateness of the menus had been scaled down due to the limited availability of fridges, and having to share preparation areas.

Two nights we had BBQ and salads, another night we had lasagna, and another was very good take-away fish and chips. Then there was a personal choice night, and our last meal together was at the golf club. This club ran special guided kangaroo tours, and as we arrived there were more than 50 'roos to be seen, grazing on a long, very green, fairway below the clubhouse. You could even have your photo taken through a cut out kangaroo.

The evaluation forms had an extra couple of questions this year. People had plenty to say in response to the importance of our goals of finding a place to self-cater, facility to socialize and acceptable sleeping arrangements. Requests for comments in the past, have been less forthcoming. Thanks Marita for the initiative.

The consensus from these showed that our capacity to socialize is extremely important (99%), and several missed having a communal lounge.

Our folk prefer vans and cabins in a park such as this, to be closer together next time.

A few of our newer members asked for people to wear name tags for easier communication.

Several requests were made to have notification before leaving home, of names of all attendees, plus the walks schedules and maps. This is partly to plan rest or excursion days.

Two responses were for the club to ensure all walkers have their own first aid kits, and emergency health information, in their backpacks.

A few comments noticed catering is difficult with so many dietary restrictions.

36 out of 39 forms were returned completed, and of those 88% thought the walks were very good. The accommodation received very good acknowledgement from 89%. The meals provided received an 88% very good vote.





This year, for the first time, our expenses will not be fully covered by our income. This is partly due to unexpected costs such as a parking fee for five cars, and an invoice for printing costs, plus the difficulty of anticipating food costs in our current global economy. The budget is incomplete due to one outstanding invoice at this time.

The week away budget is not intended for profit making, but for each of the last four years 300 – 400 dollars surplus has been deposited in the WRBW account, as a result of rounding up fees and selling surplus supplies, with the intent to cover unexpected contingencies. (\$1000 last year.) This has been more complex for 2025.

A consequence of these feedback responses is that the dates for the 2026 week in the Yarra Valley, have been moved forward to 28/4/26 – 5/5/26, thus avoiding school holidays, Easter and Anzac Day. This is another large holiday park, namely BIG4 Park Lane at Healesville. We have booked 6, two bedroom, two bathroom cabins, holding four people each. Marita has sent out to the membership the numbers of the cabins, and the numbers of the powered sites for vans, nearest to the camp kitchen, to enable early bookings of the van sites.

We conducted a straw poll of our gathered company before leaving Anglesea, to find out preferences for future planning into 2027. The Blue Mountains scraped in as most popular, possibly in Autumn. The new subcommittee members will make inroads to researching suitable accommodation, firstly, as we know there are plenty of walks. Peter will initially contact local bushwalking clubs and Parks NSW.

Finally, thank you for the encouragement and collegiality of the members of the sub-committee, who have been a great team for the last three years, to make it all happen.

The new sub-committee consists of Cheryl Hoysted as chair; Marita Samuelsson doing communications, while mentoring Cath Brennan; Shirley Mills catering with Anne Browne, and Peter Davis, who will tackle walks with many willing mentors in the club. [Cheryl Hoysted]

### Lower Ovens River : Thursday, 10th April.

This was a walk alongside the Ovens River above Peechelba, and after a short car shuffle, eight club members set off walking.

We ambled for about 6 kms in delightful conditions along the track, from the southernmost place on the river inside the Warby Ovens National Park, to where Frost's Crossing Track meets Ovens Track.

We visited all the campsites along the way checking for litter plus obvious weeds and were pleasantly surprised by the lack of rubbish, and by interacting with campers clearly looking after that environment while really enjoying the serenity!

Two healthy looking koalas were seen close to one camping area. [Andy]



### Myrtleford to Gapsted, Stanley State Forest : Sunday, 13th April

Seven of us from Warby Range Bushwalkers set out for this hillside adventure on Sunday, 13 April.

We started near Gapsted Wines, and it was a bit fresh with quite a breeze blowing, so we walked fast to warm up.

Up and into the bush, then along a bush road we meandered at the edge of the Stanley State Forest.

There would have been spectacular views of the surrounding hills, but due to the smoke from burn offs we weren't able to fully enjoy them. What we did delight in of course was each other's company, as well as simply ambling through the bush.

At lunch time we had completed the 12km walk, and we ended our trek with a picnic lunch in the shade, as by then the day had warmed up! [Marita]



### Yackandandah Creek Walk : April 26

Autumnal colours, a bubbling brook and sunshine regaled the 12 walkers on this nice adventure.

Following Yackandandah Creek, we walked from Osborne's Flat, heading to the delightful village of Yack (as the locals call it).

Currawongs called, magpies carolled, and the track was good as we chatted our way.

Three new walkers, Les, Wendy and Christine enjoyed our cheerful company, and Morning Tea saw us sitting Creekside on a log, in the dappled light, enjoying treats and coffee from our flasks.

A few families cycled passed by, waved and went on their way.

At Yack we lunched under huge trees, their leaves changing colour to yellows and tans and russet.

We returned to our cars along the same path. Why not?

Running water and lovely bends in the creek opened up delightful scenes.

Before we headed for home, we enjoyed coffee, sticky buns and/or pies at the Gum Tree café. A great way to finish a lovely autumn walk.

Karen (our walk leader) had suggested this walk, and we all agreed it was beautiful.



### Kangaroo Hill Walk, Eldorado : May 10

We had 12 attendees on Saturday's loop walk to Kangaroo Hill at Eldorado, which included five casuals, four walking with us for the first time, and another who has since joined our club.

Starting at Gunhouse Park in Eldorado we wandered down to follow Reid's Walk, which passes through a reserve near Reedy Creek, and crossed over the Swing Bridge.

Reedy Creek is a creek bed with pools of water, but no running stream at this time. Last year this walk was cancelled due to it being way too full for a creek crossing, and the day for the walk had a forecast of thunderstorms, which discounted opting for another walk in lieu.

We continued on a bush track to Lonie's Gap Road, and ascending to Ramsay Track, and then continued to Mull Track, where Ingrid spotted three kangaroos, before reaching the now dry waterfall for morning tea.

Following morning tea, we continued on Mull Track, to a bush track which led us towards Kangaroo Hill.

Enroute along this track, Michael pointed out a koala high up in a gum tree looking down at us.

At the base of the very rough, and badly eroded, track that climbs up Kangaroo Hill, we found the best route to follow, and had lunch at the top with excellent views to the Warby Ranges.



Luis, was the artist in our group, and took to sketching the view, before we headed back down to Kangaroo Track, continued to Mull Track, and then followed the bush track to Reedy Creek, and had a dry creek crossing, no wet feet today.

We then followed the foot track through the various campsites along Reedy Creek, past Top Cut Dam and into Eldorado. Cappuccinos and flat whites were enjoyed from the General Store, as part of afternoon tea in the gardens of Gunhouse Park.

Overall, our walk was a little longer than anticipated (at 16k) and took six hours. Like many other parts of the north-east it is very dry, particularly for this time of the year.

Well done to Aakash, our youngest walker on the day. [Jeanette]



### Native Dog Peak : May 20

This is an 11km 'there-and-back' walk; Native Dog Peak (500m) is located to the east of Eldorado, north-west of Beechworth, and is located within the Chiltern - Mount Pilot National Park.

Having driven to Eldorado, six walkers set off on CFA track, which is often washed out, and a little slippery.

We had lovely views over to Beechworth, with bushland to the left, and peaceful farmland on the right.

On the way, a large koala wandered across the road and sat posing in a tree for photos! We also spied a red capped robin, some choughs and a wedge tailed eagle.

Lunch was enjoyed at the rocks, whilst enjoying the view - lots of conversation too!

Overall, a moderate walk that was very enjoyable. [Lesley]



### Top Crossing Hut : May 25

Sunday May 25th, a group of eight eminent walkers met in Wangaratta to undertake what I believe is a new walk for the club to Top

Crossing Hut. Today we welcomed two returning casual walkers, Angi and Roger, for their second walk with the club. First timer Shreeyal came all the way from India to walk with us; he possibly was already here as part of his new job.

The make-up of walkers for today was rather special with an equal number of men and women involved. Club folklore was established on Sunday July 31st, 2022, when men outnumbered women on a club walk. Today we were incredibly close, so it's a little disappointing one more man couldn't attend today.

The drive to Lake William Hovell started out as a cloudy day, with a temperature of 15 degrees and little chance of rain. The incentive for the group was to walk at a pace that was sufficient to allow a cuppa at the end of the walk at the Cheshunt Café before it closed at 4pm.

It's a fair drive from Wangaratta to the walk, and our first mission was to park vehicles at Evans Creek, past Lake William Hovell, and before Buckland Spur Track. Correction, that was the second mission. The first was to use the facilities at Lake William Hovell for a select group of walkers.

We encountered a shooter as we parked the vehicles who alerted us to the sound of the barking dogs in the distance, which he said were in the process of bringing a deer back to his group of hunters. He also alerted his hunting group that walkers were in the area, and not to shoot. Deer bad. Walkers good.

Our beginning elevation at Evans Creek was about 430m, and we would encounter three water crossings on our hike. This first one was easily navigated via a series of stepping

stones without necessitating a change of footwear. I should mention easily navigated by most of our group. For some unknown reason, Angi and Anne decided to take a little more of a detour through the creek. Instead of travelling from point A to B, they utilised much more of the alphabet.



The turn off to Buckland Spur Track soon appeared on our right. It's challenging uphill climb was not on our agenda today. It was only about 30 minutes before we took the opportunity to have morning tea at a car park area adjacent to the King River.

The shallow flowing water made a pleasant backdrop as the tea, and coffee drinkers savoured their favourite bever-

age. Except for a disappointed Daryl; his hot drink had sprung a leak in his pack in the car boot on the drive out. However, a borrowed mug here, and an extra coffee from another walker, and he was well satisfied.

Once everyone was replenished, we set off again. Less than one kilometre, later we passed the river crossing that leads towards Sandy Flat Track. We were fortunate that this was not one of our King River crossings, because it is deeper and wider than most of the river along this track. It may have required the breaststroke to cross, and my dodgy shoulder isn't up to that.



It's at about the 4.5km mark that the first of our major water crossings required a rethink of footwear. Shreeyal simply walked through the water. Daryl had his unique efficient amphibian looking footwear. Angi wore gum boots. But not just any gum boots. These made a fashion statement. A leopard skin pattern which had to be seen to be believed. I assumed they are part of a Kim Kardashian clothing line, and wouldn't be out of place in a glam rock band either. What is more, we do have club photos. The rest of us mortals changed into old shoes or clogs.

The two necessary river crossings were within a short distance of each other, and so the footwear remained on until the second was completed. In 2006 there was an animated dancing penguin in a movie called 'Happy Feet'. That's not happy feet. No, happy feet are the feet that get dried after walking through icy cold water, and then reunited with cosy warm dry socks and a pair of hiking boots. That's what I call happy feet!

During the walk a couple of wallabies were spotted retreating into dense bush, and brightly coloured Rosellas were in abundance. Signposted a short distance off the Top Crossing Track is an old mining track constructed in 1897, and it runs from Tolmie to Buckland Junction, some 72km in length. Jeanette and Anne were keen to explore the track, but I said no, as afternoon tea at the end of the day was a priority.

Along the final stretch of track to the hut was the most uphill part for the day. A steady climb of almost 100m in elevation over 800 metres in distance, and then back down to meet the river at the Hut. Top Crossing Hut is the most meagre and humblest of all huts in the northeast. It's the Charlie Brown of huts. The campground area is pleasant, with the King River a stone's throw away. That is where we consumed lunch, on the banks of the river.

After a relaxing lunch, it was time for the customary group shot before leaving. I should say photo really, as there were genuine shooters in the area. Our return was by the way we had walked out, but in more pleasant sunshine than we had experienced earlier. This track hugs the King River all the way, and when you can't see the river, you can still hear it cascading.



The 15km walk was completed in about five hours, which allowed time for a welcome afternoon tea at Cheshunt Café. Stories were abundant, and many of them probably true. Although no one was doing any fact checking. Thanks to everyone who participated, and the walk might be a good one to repeat in warmer weather, when a swim or paddle could be undertaken in the water holes near the hut. [Michael Braendler]

### Walks Leaders

Our current walks leaders continue to offer great walks for our walks programs; however, it would be wonderful if there could be some new walks leaders come on board to assist. Is there somewhere you would like to explore for a proposed walk, or a walk you have in mind, and would like to see it on the program. If you are interested in exploring a location with a view to leading a walk, or you have a walk you would like to see on the program, please contact Jeanette on 0417 546 974.

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