



WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS Inc.

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warbybushwalkers.org.au

NEWSLETTER : March, 2022

After a long, hot and humid, summer those pleasing autumn days have arrived, and (as usual) there is a wide variety of walks to choose from in our Walks Program, including some tried and true venues, as well as some new adventures.

A reminder that our ANNUAL DINNER and AGM will be held at the historic Plough Inn, at Tarrawingee, on Monday, March 21 at 6pm.

Cost: \$25 for a two course meal, limited menu (orders will be taken once people are seated), vegetarian option available.

Special Guest: Rob Humphrey: "Huts in the High Country"

RSVP: to Cecily Fletcher by text (0490024471), or email: fletchers@southernphone.com.au

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

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

Mount Stanley : December 5

There were 10 of us on this planned walk up to Mount Stanley, a walk along a bush road, with mature eucalyptus forest surrounding us on both sides.

The morning was cool, with a light breeze, and the birds were singing their lovely tunes for us.

Through the trees, the views of hills, mountains and valleys were there for us to enjoy.

At the top we stopped for morning tea, or coffee break, and there we enjoyed more views in multiple directions, and tried to identify various hills and places. We were also pleased to see beautiful wildflowers.

We then turned around and walked back to the start, enjoying our surroundings once again.

As well as enjoying the bush, we also enjoyed each other's company, and we're looking forward to our next get-together. [Marita]

Beechworth Gorge Ramble : December 10

Lesley led a small group along this delightful medium walk of about 8km, in the rugged granite gorge area of the Beechworth Historic Park.

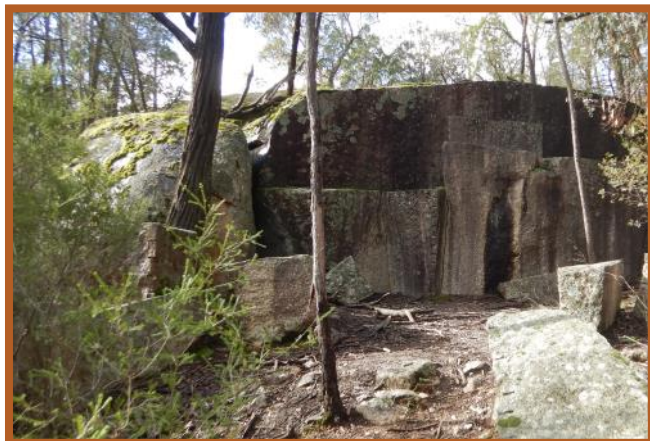
Starting at the Powder Magazine, we visited many features such as the Precipice and Fiddle's Quarry.



From near Ingram's Rock, we spent time really enjoying the fantastic views over the Woolshed Valley, and marvelled at the changes this valley has experienced from the early 1850's when gold was discovered, and many thousands of diggers were camped there.

The many small granite quarries are evidence of the amazingly hard work the pioneers carried out, cutting very hard rock, and then transporting it into nearby Beechworth town for early building construction.

At one stage, a very social echidna was encountered beside the track. She just stared at us, rather than hiding her beak, and we assumed that residing along this very popular ramble has meant that this special animal is now quite blasé about visitors invading her territory!



Christmas Party : December 10

The club's well attended Christmas Party was held at the excellent Bowman's - Murrumbidgee Memorial Hall.

Cecily, and her hardworking crew, organised the setting at the venue, and everything went very smoothly.

It was an informal gathering, and Cecily took the opportunity to look back on what was another very successful year. The club now has a membership of over 140!!

Razorback and Bungalow Spur Descent : December 18

The club has walked The Razorback many times, but this time it was a bit different. On this occasion, we organised a shuttle bus, from Harrierville to Diamantina Spur, and then walked all the way back to Harrierville via The Razorback and the Bungalow Spur. With a detour to Mount Feathertop this meant a 24km adventure, taking most of the day.

We started walking at about 9am, and had morning tea in a sheltered location (sheltered that is from the very high wind) at 10.30am.

Arriving at the saddle where the track to Mount Feathertop goes off to the right, we had a quick lunch and then geared up for the ascent of Feathertop.

There were eight takers for this optional side-hike, with the remaining five taking cover under an enormous snow-gum.

The views from Feathertop were amazing, particularly so given the dynamic sky we had been in awe (fear?) of all morning.



However, the rain held off for a little longer, and all of us were able to admire the views, and that blue haze that typifies the mid-latitudes right around planet earth.

Having regrouped from the ascent of Feathertop, we meandered down to Federation Hut, where we loitered for a while before facing the music of the relentless descent back to Harrierville.

There were several groups of walkers setting up camp near the Hut, and we were envious of them, but given what occurred overnight (weather-wise, all hell let loose) maybe not!

We passed the old hut site, endured a very light shower, and then ambled down to Wombat Saddle, admiring the change in vegetation as we went.

The transition from snow-gum woodlands, to the tall timber of the lower slopes, and then the fern glades was exceptional, as was the wildflower display.

Unfortunately, at the western side of Wombat Saddle I severely jarred a tendon in my left knee, and had to hobble all the way from there to the finish.

This slowed things down a lot, however my walking friends helped out, with heaps of tolerance, support and first-aid.

The group split into two at this point, with the front group keeping up a good pace down to the caravan park, so as to organise some cars to be at the Harrierville terminus of the Bungalow Spur.

It was about 6.30pm when I staggered to those welcome sights (the cars), totally exhausted.

Back at Harrietville, Saturday night was very noisy, with thunderclaps and heavy rain; Sunday morning was very grey, and very threatening

This led us to meet at Bella's Café in Harrietville for an hour long morning tea, and then head for home. This was a good decision, as the morning rain was very heavy, and the wind very powerful.

Overall, a great weekend; it was a very interesting route with an excellent group.

Many Thanks to Jeanette for her first aid skills; to Hugh for coming to meet us, and carry my pack for the last kilometre; to Michael, and Steven, for organising the cars at the finish, and to everyone for their support of their hobbling team leader. [Chris]



Walking at Stanley

The Stanley Landcare Group unveiled its "Walking Stanley" brochure on Australia Day 2022. This is a great piece of work that details walks in, and around, the charming village of Stanley.

See the link on our website for a download of this very informative PDF.

Grampians Peak Trail

The 164km Grampians Peak Trail now has an official set of maps, produced by Parks Victoria. The three maps (North, Central and South) are available at local outlets in the Grampians area, and via several on-line map stores (such as Cartographics).

The three maps are very detailed, and can be used by bushwalkers completing short sections of the Trail, as well as being an essential resource for the tough guys, and girls, tackling the complete route (about two weeks).



Overnight Camp, Bogong High Plains : January 8 and 9

After initially meeting in Falls Creek, we gathered at the Pretty Valley Pondage. From here, the first stage of the walk took us up a steep track towards Tawonga Huts – a challenging start with the hope of flatter walking later.

We turned south on the track around Mount Jim, and stopped for morning tea under an old dead snow gum, where several groups of brumbies watched us from a distance.

After skirting Mount Jim, we bush bashed off the Alpine Walking Track to the Cope West Aqueduct, with some challenges fording it to the track beyond. There were plenty of small trout watching on!

A few kilometres further west we found the track to the falls, and dumped our packs. The 1.5Km walk took us to the upper falls, and a frigid swim for a few.

After a steep climb back to the aqueduct, and a couple of kilometres further west, we found the Ryder's Huts for our overnight stay; an outstanding campsite with great views and soft grass.

The next morning saw us rise early, and follow the service road back to the Pretty Valley car park – a total walk of around 22 km.

The mandatory meeting at the Mount Beauty Bakery completed an excellent walk. We look forward to the next overnight walk opportunity! [Anne]



Bright—Harrietville Pathway

The Bright to Harrietville shared pathway (pedestrian and cycle) opened a few weeks before Christmas. This scenic route basically follows the GAR from Bright to Germantown, and the next section (that includes several new bridges) leads off to Freeburgh, Smoko and Harrietville.

The complete route covers about 24km (each way) and offers a mix of surroundings, with the best scenery to be found between German-town and Freeburgh, and then from McMahon's Road through to about a kilometre beyond the Harrietville Trout Farm.

During a recent stay in Harrietville we got a lift to Germantown (the Mount Beauty turn-off) and walked back to Harrietville. This covered about 22km, and took about six hours, passing through some really enjoyable riverside areas.

Some sections are quite close to the Great Alpine Road, but that did not detract from the enjoyment.

The best part of our trek was staggering into one of Harrietville's cafes for a cup of tea, and a chocolate brownie, at the finish. [Chris]



Mollisons Galleries, Mount Buffalo : January 23

After driving up to the Mount Buffalo Plateau, we started walking on the track towards Mount McLeod, then turned left for Og, Gog and Magog. There was some rock scrambling involved here, but well worth it to enjoy some great views.

We then returned to the main track, and continued on to Eagle Point. Here we climbed the steel ladders for some more excellent views.

Back on the track, we continued on to Mollisons Galleries, and enjoyed a late lunch in the shade. Returning to Eagle Point, we kept right at the Og, Gog and Magog intersection, and headed back to the start, at the Reservoir Car Park.

There were nineteen of us on the walk, and we enjoyed great scenery, and a perfect sunny day. [Sara]



Reform Hill, Myrtleford : February 5

A warm, sunny and still morning was ideal for the 17 walkers who assembled at the base of Reform Hill for an easy walk. The low humidity was in stark contrast to conditions of the previous few days.

A steady climb, with great views of the Ovens Valley and Mount Buffalo, brought us to the summit lookout, ready for a breather!

We had passed many mining relics from the 19th century, plus we had discovered several of the fantastic mosaics recently installed by the Myrtleford based "Crack Pot" crew (we eventually found 9 of the possible 13!)

Ambling around the hill - where so much careful vegetation restoration work has been carried out; we stopped for lunch, before plunging back down to street level via the Hume and Hovell Monument. These intrepid explorers passed by here in 1824 – so in two and a half years it will be 200 years!



After a great walk of about 8kms, and an ascent of 390 metres, the walkers, led by the enthusiastic Jon, enjoyed Pat's so welcome cuppa and ANZAC biscuits. We left really satisfied, and almost totally reformed!! [Jon]

Falls Creek : February 11, 12 and 13

The club's annual visit to Falls Creek was very successful, and we enjoyed three days of walking in, and around, the high country.

Friday's walk (led by Chris) was to Mount Jaithmathang, and having gathered at the Pretty Valley camping area we set off for Tawonga Huts in quite foggy conditions.

By the time we reached the huts the fog had lifted, and we enjoyed morning tea in brilliant sunny conditions.

Bracing ourselves for the next exertion, we followed the single file footpad that leads to the summit of Jaithmathang.

Given the La Nina wet season that we've had, this was expectedly quite a boggy adventure. However we made it to the cairn, and enjoyed our lunch with some amazing views all around.

In the slippery conditions, the descent was nearly as slow as the ascent, and the eight of us made it back to our cars, having covered a little over 13km.



Friday night saw a gathering of walkers at The Last Hoot (pizza trattoria in Falls Creek), and we psyched ourselves up for more action on the next day.

Saturday's walk attracted 30 walkers, and we formed three groups of ten; the first of these (led by Adrian) took the shortened version of the full loop out to Kelly and Fitzgerald Huts, whilst the other two groups (one led by Kerri, and one led by Chris) headed off for the full show.

Following Langford East Aqueduct, we enjoyed great views of the Cobungra Valley, before arriving at the t-junction (Kelly Track) just to the east of the two huts.

Hanging a left at this intersection, we continued to Kelly Hut, and enjoyed lunch in this beautiful setting.

Continuing on, we checked out Fitzgerald Hut, and then took the snow pole line to the environs of Marum Point.



Just beyond here, we veered left onto the Australian Alpine Walking Track, and followed this very scenic section of the AAWT back to the aqueduct, and thence to the start.

That evening there were social events at the Myrtleford Ski club and the Frying Pan Inn (Falls Creek).

Sunday's walk (led by Jeanette and Michael) also started at Langford Gap, but this time following the Langford West Aqueduct, and headed towards Cope Hut.

We came across a small brown snake (about the size of a pencil) along the way, and continued on, past the Bogong Rover Chalet, and onto the Wallaces Heritage Trail.

Here, we stopped at the viewpoint, with storyboard and seating, for our morning tea.

Next, we checked out Cope Hut, and its camping facilities (with fantastic views from each campsite) before continuing along the Heritage Trail to Wallaces Hut for lunch.



This was at an outdoor dining setting that suited our group size perfectly.

After exploring the Hut, we continued along the Wallace Hut Track to the aqueduct, and then returned to Langford Gap. All up, we had trekked approx 11k. Another group of walkers started at Wallace Hut Track, and completed the Wallaces Hut and Cope Hut loop of approx 7k.

For those staying off the mountain, Cecily led half a dozen explorers up Survey Track from Mt Beauty township, climbing steadily below the Falls Creek Road to Crankie Charlie Corner.

Morning tea was had at a convenient bench seat, overlooking the East Kiewa River, and Mt Bogong, with its head in the clouds.

We enjoyed this lovely single foot track winding through the bush, and our return was via Pole Track, a four-wheel drive track winding below the power transformer towers, providing great views over Mount Beauty, and the Kiewa Valley.

Our group arrived happily back in town for refreshments at the cafe, where we met some

of the Falls Creek party, also enjoying refreshments before their drive home. A very enjoyable 8.5km return loop, made a bit harder by the warmth of the day; we will have to start earlier next time.

Overall, an excellent weekend; the high country always provides good walking.



Platypus Live Here

Did you know that platypus live in the rivers and creeks of the Alpine Valleys?

This is the intro blurb from a brochure produced by the Alpine Shire, and the Australian Platypus Conservancy (platypus.asn.au).

This interesting brochure continues with details about the importance of protecting, and conserving, platypus habitat in the North-east, with many examples of the threats to these gorgeous mammals. See the website shown above for more info.



Photo, courtesy of the Australian Platypus Conservancy and John Bundock.

Alpine Views Walk : February 20

The predicted weather for today was mostly sunny, with a top of about 32C, so the nine of us met at the start of the walk (at 8am), so as to make it an early finish, and avoid the heat of the day.

The distance planned for the walk was about 12km. Heading up slope, things were looking much drier than our last walk (in the spring of 2021), and we made it in reasonably cool conditions to Mount Warby.

Here we had morning tea, grateful for a nice breeze that had sprung up since we set off.

From Mount Warby, we descended to the start of Alpine Views Track, and then began a gradual descent back to the cars.



Lunch was had in the environs of the Falls (which were not running), and we then headed back to the cars for a cuppa and a biscuit or two. Total time taken was about five hours, and we enjoyed the forest, its collection of wildflowers, seeing some kangaroos, and having a good natter on the track. [Chris]

Frost's Crossing, Killawarra : February 25

Nine walkers, including one *newie*, completed the now classic 8km amble along the Ovens River flood plain, and beside the now world status Lower Ovens River (following the 2021 listing of the National Park by the IUCN).

We followed the normal vehicle tracks on flat, but slightly slippery (after overnight rain), ground, starting at the end of Boundary Track, and then we hiked along Frosts Crossing, the Ovens Tracks and Boundary Track, in a circle back to our cars.

With this trip, we could view the different types of healthy "wetlands", ranging from a flourishing Red Gum forest, many water-filled billabongs, through to the swampy areas, and of course to our very clean river.

The vacant campsites we came across were very clean, and we stopped briefly at one in the Hill's Bend area for a "breather".

After a great short hike, in warm, and fine conditions, which took almost three hours, we enjoyed the now time honoured *Pat's cuppa*, accompanied by the usual scrumptious biscuits. [Andy]



Mountains : over Australia's blue horizon

Mountains : over Australia's blue horizon is a new book by Alasdair McGregor, and details many comprehensive aspects about Australia's high country.

Published by the National Library, this excellent publication covers the high country in every state, and territory, and is a great read, with lots of great photos—both current and historical. Over the 270 pages of the book, McGregor details all of the geological, cultural and historical, details of our mountains.

The book is well written, and is a very interesting read, with renowned mountaineer, Greg Mortimer OAM, providing the intro. The RRP is \$50, and the book appears to be widely available in the North-east.





SUBSCRIPTION FOR MEMBERSHIP – 2022/2023

Name(s)

Address

.....Postcode

Telephone Mobile

Email

Type of Membership (Please circle)

Single (\$35) Family (\$65) Associate (\$10)

Life members receiving Newsletter (\$10)

Casual (\$5) 1st Walk

Subsequent Walk No. (maximum of 3 before joining)

Notes:

Fee is \$20 for Single or \$40 for Family if joining after 1st October in any year.

If joining after 1st February in any year full subscription is payable giving 14 months' membership.

Associate membership provides Club Newsletter and social event entry, but does not cover walks.

Our preferred method of payment is via Bank Transfer:

BSB 633 000 : Account No. 110647799 : Reference (your name)

Alternatively, please return this form to PO Box 974, Wangaratta 3676, with a cheque made out to Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc.



Committee Nomination Form

I hereby nominate _____
for the position of _____
on the 2022-23 Committee.

(Name) _____

(Signature) _____

I second the nomination

(Name) _____

(Signature) _____

I accept the nomination

(Name) _____

(Signature) _____

Please forward the completed form to:
The Secretary
Warby Range Bushwalkers Inc
PO Box 974
Wangaratta, 3676