



**WARBY RANGE
BUSHWALKERS Inc.**

FUN . FITNESS . FRIENDSHIP

warbybushwalkers.org.au

NEWSLETTER : September, 2022

Welcome to the Spring Newsletter; highlights in this edition include information on the Federation Walk 2022, Volcano Week, our Christmas get-together, and the 2023 Week Away.

A wet winter is almost behind us and the wild-flowers are blooming, the waterfalls are running, and everything looks good for a great walking season; see the Walks Program for the details.

Annual Christmas get-together

Our Christmas Party will be held on Friday, 16th December 6pm.

The location is the Bowmans-Murumungee Memorial Hall, 6 Nearys Lane, Murumungee

BYO BBQ, contact Kath (0401 752 550) or Marita (0427 521 122) to book in; bring either a salad or sweet to share.

Typo Station

The club is holding a walks weekend during October (7-9) at the historic Typo Station, in the Rose River Valley, with easy and medium walks, and a hard walk of about 15k. Other offerings include an approx 10k walk to Mount Cobbler for some of the best alpine views in Victoria.

Typo Station provides self catering bunk-house accommodation in expansive park like grounds. Accommodation cost is determined by the number attending. For example, 20 participants approx \$85 pp for the weekend, including a shared dinner on Saturday night.

Contact Geoff at 0418 530 242, or bushydining@gmail.com for further details of what's on, and what to bring.



Warby Heritage Trail : June 2

The Warby Falls Heritage Trail was created several years ago, and aims to display the farming life of Ben Warby's family, early settlers of the Wangaratta area. The Heritage Trail loops in and out of the range country behind Booths Winery, and provides an enjoyable 7.5km walk.

Nine enthusiastic walkers (including three "newies") headed off in fine conditions on the walk, starting on Booth's Road. The route went along Spot Mill Track, then descended along Cellar Track before reaching the rear of Booth's Winery, where we could see the actual ancient spot mill!

We followed the foot track to the old sheep dip site, then along the gully next to the Warby Heritage Falls, passing old dry stone weirs, cascades and rock pools.



The group stopped above one amazing pool, which was named the Granite Nostril, before we walked back to the cars, and another delightful cuppa and fresh biscuits organised by Pat!! [Sandi]

Dingle Block, Stanley State Forest : June 12

There were thirteen of us on this misty June day, for a 12km walk in the Stanley Forest; this was to be a medium loop walk in the Dingle Block of the Forest, starting and finishing at Old Stanley Road, walking on fire trails which lead up to, and around the back of Stanley township, a hilly walk, with quite a lot of up and down.

After two weeks of rain the bush looked fresh and healthy, and luckily not too slimy underfoot as we laboured up the hilly terrain.

Expectedly, many and varied fungi were seen along the tracks, and the Peter Finedon Path saved us all from a steep and dangerous descent at the end of Ritchies Track, and was much commended by all! A most enjoyable day with friends, and we also welcomed a new member, David from Cheshunt. [Lesley]



Federation Walks 2022

The Federation Walks event, also known as FedWalks, is a member-only event held annually in a different part of Victoria each year. The name dates from 1934 when Bushwalking Victoria was known as the Federation of Victorian Bushwalking Clubs. One or more affiliated member clubs in a specific region, volunteer to host the event, with support from Bushwalking Victoria as needed.

The host clubs organise the event, develop the walks program, social program, arrange the logistics and manage registrations. All the members of Bushwalking Victoria are invited to participate in the event, an opportunity for members of different clubs to walk together, and for our individual members to join the community for a walk.



This year's event will be based in Wangaratta, and the program includes walks in the following locations; Warby Ranges, Chiltern-Mount Pilot National Park, Wahgunyah, Beechworth, Strathbogie Ranges and Mount Buffalo National Park. Details are on the FedWalks website (fedwalks.org.au).

Mount Porepukah : June 25

Mount Porepukah is just to the north of Bright, and it was overcast and chilly to start with on our way to the start, but the weather held, and there was no rain to spoil the day.

There were 10 participants on the walk, with five walkers travelling from Wangaratta and Beechworth, and meeting up in Myrtleford with the rest of the group. Registration and briefing was completed at this point. A new walker (Jenny) was collected along One Mile Creek Road, from her driveway.

The unsealed access road to Mount Porepukah has a good surface, and is suitable for 2-wheel drive; the road ascends steadily, but not too steeply, to the summit. Six participants elected to start at the 3.8km point (One Mile Creek Track) and walk to the summit, with the remaining four walkers continuing up the road to the 5km point, starting at the saddle. The distance for the two walks was 9km and 12km.

It was lovely to have the company of two walkers new to the group, the small number making it easy to get to know one another.

The walkers on the shorter route took a break before taking the right turn up Tower Track taking them to the summit, arriving about 11:30am for an early lunch. Within 20 minutes they were joined by the second party, and a flock of black cockatoos that were passing by. Moments of sunshine broke through the clouds at this time, and there were glimpses of the snow on top of Mount Buffalo.

The first party began their descent soon after this, to avoid the chill of the wind, and made a steady rate back to the car.

Arrangements had been made for both parties to re-group at the Happy Valley Hotel (Eurobin) where an enjoyable afternoon tea finished a successful outing. [Cecily]



Volcano Tour : Bushwalking in Victoria's south west, and South Australia

As mentioned in the June Newsletter, it is proposed to run a "Volcano Tour" from October 16-23 this year. The week will be based initially at Port Fairy, and then at Mount Gambier, and will be a less formal version of our annual Week Away.

There will be walks (and more) at Tower Hill, Warrnambool, Budj Bim – Mount Eccles NP, Peshurst Volcanic Discovery Centre, Mount Rouse and Mount Napier volcanic peaks, Byaduk Lava Caves, Mount Gambier's four volcanic peaks, the Blue Lake, sink holes, Mount Schank, Engelbrecht Caves and Umpherston Sink Hole.

Accommodation needs to be booked ASAP to ensure participants stay at the same venue for each location. More details from Chris, 0418 503 802 or Bob 0408 475 235

The proposed calendar is listed in the October - December Walks Program.

[In addition to the resources mentioned in the Walks Program, there was a program on the ABC recently - "Great Southern Landscapes" - presented by Rachel Griffiths. Episode 4 was based on a landscape painting of "Tower Hill" by Von Guerard in 1855. It tells the story of Tower Hill from its pristine state, then to being denuded by early settlers, and now after being revegetated. It's available on ABC iview.]



Falls Hotham Alpine Crossing update

An article in the Wangaratta Chronicle (July 22) provides details of a proposal for an extended Falls Hotham Alpine Crossing. The plan is to extend the current 37km route by connecting it up with other tracks in the alpine area. The proposal also provides for two campgrounds, with "low impact huts that blend in with the alpine environment". More details at "<https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/projects/eastern-victoria/falls-to-hotham-alpine-crossing-project>".

The Bruarong Walk : July 3

Sunday Morning, and there were only seven keen walkers that set out to do the climb up Bruarong Lane, to the Escarpment Road in Stanley State Forest. The frost was heavy on the ground, but we walked at a speed that warmed us up. It was a beautiful winter's day, with mostly clear blue sky, and fairly still, with a few exceptions where the wind was strong and cold.

We found a pleasant spot to have our morning coffee break, and also our lunch, which was in the long-forgotten settlement of Hillsborough.

The views from the escarpment were spectacular, with snow capped peaks on the far away mountain ranges, as well as a glittering body of water that we guessed would be Lake Hume. As we have all done multiple walks in the area, we enjoyed pointing out in what direction this or that walk was.

All of us were keen to do the longest of the walks on offer, so we ended up doing a bit of exploration of the area.

However, we realized that we were walking down a road that was taking us away from where we wanted to go, so back up the hill we trotted, happy that we had realized our error, and also happy that we were in a beautiful forest.

We found our way back down the hill to where the cars were parked, and after our 12 km walk we had a very nice hot drink, and more social time before we parted.

When can we meet and walk again? Soon I hope. [Marita]

Kangaroo Hill : July 15

The Kangaroo Hill walk at Eldorado attracted 18 participants, with five doing the shorter version (that is, not climbing the Hill), and 13 climbing the Hill.

The walk began opposite the pub, and general store, at Eldorado's Gun House Park, and from here, we cut across to Reids Walk, and then the swing bridge, and a foot track to Lonies Gap Road.

We followed Lonies Gap Road to Mulls Track, and had morning tea looking over what would be a waterfall if there had been enough recent rains.

After morning tea we continued along Mulls Track to an intersection with a foot track and took the left option, leading us towards Kangaroo Track. Crossing a small stream along the foot track and then Kangaroo Track, we turned right, followed a left hand bend and were at the base of the track leading to the top of Kangaroo Hill.

The track leading up to Kangaroo Hill starts off very rough and rocky before becoming an easy dirt/gravel road to walk upon. As mentioned, the challenge was taken up by 13 of the group who continued up the Hill to have lunch at the top with excellent views.

The other five completing the shorter version of the walk, and continued along Kangaroo Track to Mulls Track returning to the cross intersection, from which we turned left towards Reedy Creek.

Lunch was enjoyed seated on some fallen trees, before crossing the icy cold waters of Reedy Creek, and after drying off the feet, and returning to dry socks and boots (the feet never felt so good), we continued on a foot track, following Reedy Creek downstream.



We then went past the Top Cut Dam, and along the embankment created by dredge works during the gold mining days, through to McEvoy Drive, and returned to Gun House Park for a welcome afternoon tea. Those completing the longer walk returned down the rough track of Kangaroo Hill to Kangaroo Track and followed the same path as the short walk group, but arriving about an hour later.

The longer walk came in at 15.2k on the GPS and the shorter walk at about 12k. [Jeanette]

Kancoona Gap : July 31

There are meaningful moments in history when something momentous occurs, and you know exactly where you were on that day. It becomes significant. Often life changing. Events like the Berlin wall going up, landing on the moon, Fleetwood Mac releasing the Rumours album, the Berlin wall coming down, Port Adelaide winning the 2004 AFL premiership, the list goes on. For a few of us from the WRBC, it will be Sunday July 31st, 2022, and the Kancoona Gap Track walk.

What we didn't realise was the history being made today by our club walkers. For what I believe is the first time ever, we had men outnumbering the ladies on a walk. That's correct 57% of the walkers today were men. I have contacted the people at Guinness World Records, and am eagerly awaiting their reply to hear how they rate our record-breaking achievement.

It was a bit of a bleak, cloudy day with a temperature of 13 degrees forecast (it felt like five) and predicted rain approaching possibly late afternoon or evening. Our incentive for the walk was to beat the rain, and allow sufficient time for the promised wine tasting at Eagle Range Estate on the way home.

It's a fair drive from Wangaratta to begin the walk, and our first mission was to leave a car at what would be the end of our walk, Kancoona Gap Track, where a roadside stop exists. Google maps list this as the point where the Happy Valley Road changes its name to Running Creek Road. It was then on towards the plantation in Kancoona South. We took the opportunity to drive a little further first, and view Running Creek Castle. Best described by observers as one man's folly. But a delightful one at that.

Our starting point was just off the sealed road, on the edge of the plantation at Rolland Road, beginning at an elevation of 425m. For most of us beanies were the order of the day as we began our gradual ascent. This road bordered the edge of plantation, and state forest, for all this section. A little further along, at about the 4.5km point, morning tea was taken.

We resumed our walk, and 300 metres later we were at the main junction where six tracks go in all different directions. Our track, the Kancoona Gap track, was of course, the steepest. So far, we had climbed steadily, about 185m over almost 5km to be at about 610m in elevation. It hadn't been strenuous at all. Things were about to change. Although by no means daunting, we were now going to be climbing steadily to reach a height of 753m over about 1.5km; however, it wasn't a constant uphill trudge, with the undulating ridge providing respite at points.

A covered shelter and table provided us with a suitable lunch venue. Pat's welcoming cuppa was also consumed at this point and warming all up from the inside. The 10.2km walk was completed in about 3 ¼ hours.



The journey home was rewarded with a visit to Eagle Range Estate wines. The tastings of their cool climate wines were melting the frosty insides of today's walkers. Winemaker Frank was very informative, and we had our own special lecture on winemaking. The views from the cellar door were amongst the best of the day, and so a group photo was demanded. [Michael]

White-Box Walking Track : August 13

Perfect weather (and company) was shared by 14 walkers who had travelled from afar, including two new casual participants, to undertake the 8.5km circuit known as the Whitebox Walking Track.

Though some of the participants had done this walk previously, the sight of the old Golden Bar Open-Cut Mine was a new one for many, with its sheer rocky orange walls.

Gold was discovered here in 1858, and the equivalent of 36 million dollars, in today's currency, was mined over a 40 year period.



The bush track took us through the ever changing scenery of Box-Ironbark forest, open woodland, grass trees, early blooming wildflowers and wattle trees. We were surrounded by a cacophony of sound by the resident birdlife, in anticipation of spring. A circuit of the Cyanide Dam concluded the walk, followed by lunch, and a well earned cuppa at the Honeyeater Picnic Area. [Sandi]

Winton Wetlands : August 18

The Winton Wetlands were created by draining former irrigation storage (Lake Mokoan); Aboriginal people once occupied the areas around the original wetland area, and would have found this to be an ideal environment for their hunter-gatherer life-style. This walk around the wetlands included the Spit Walk Loop, and the Lotjpatj Natjan Danak Sculpture Walk.

Fifteen adventurers (including four newbies) braved interesting weather conditions to amble along the ancient duned shores of the Winton Swamp, trekking from the Winton North Road to the Long Neck Turtle art feature where we had a short break.

The rain was threatening, but amazingly we made it back to the car park along the Lunette Walk, and then into the comfort of the Mokoan Hub and Cafe, before the predicted moisture almost arrived.

After soup, snacks and great coffee, most of us explored the gorgeous 14 sculptures along the new "Yarning and Gathering Pathway" which is set out in the shape of special turtle of the Yorta Yorta people. [Andy]



Warby Tower Lookout to Pangarang Lookout : August 28

Today's walk had 17 participants, with one new casual walker, and two casual walkers on their second walk with our club.

Following the car shuffle, we began our walk from the Spring Creek Picnic Area under a cloudy sky, and headed off to the Warby Tower Lookout. Here we had morning tea, with great views north and east from this elevated location.

Following this we headed off towards Pangarang Lookout, via Tower Road and Link Track. The clouds had disappeared by this time, and lunch was enjoyed under clear blue skies at the Lookout, with excellent views to the south and west, and over the top of the Warby Ranges.

After a leisurely lunch we returned to the Pan-gerang Lookout car park for Pat's welcome afternoon tea. [Jeanette]

Membership Fees

At the August committee meeting a fee increase for 2023 was discussed due to a significant rise in insurance costs. It was noted that no fee increase had occurred for at least five years. The motion was "that for next year the fees will be set at \$45 per member, \$90 for a family, and \$30 for new members joining mid-year onwards". The casual walker charge will remain at \$5 per walk deducted should that person later join the club.



Track Maintenance

The Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation section of Bushwalking Victoria have been working hard in the Warby-Ovens National Park.

The team recently gave the following favourites some tender loving care - Friends Track; Sunrise Track; Warby Heritage Falls Trail and the Salisbury Falls Walking Track. For the statistically minded the enthusiastic crew of 18 contributed 379 volunteer hours over two days.

Week Away 2023

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

Water Crossings

Some bushwalks require water crossings, and the traditional system here is to have a small towel in your kit, and to take off shoes/boots and socks before the crossing, and get dressed on the other side.

During the autumn I walked the Delatite River Trail (a descent off Mount Buller) which has a large number of river crossings; 21 of them via a bush bridge, and the last one via a wet, and gravelly, crossing of the Delatite.

At the very last crossing I dithered for a few minutes, trying to psych myself into taking off my shoes and socks for what looked like being an uncomfortable (and cold) crossing). At the same time, a group was approaching from the other direction (heading off for a multi-day walk at Mount Stirling) and crossed the river without taking off their footwear. What a good idea I thought; not only easier, but safer, but what would it feel like afterwards – walking in wet shoes/socks — not very comfortable I'm sure.

However, on a recent walk to Mitchell Falls (in Western Australia, see photo) there were 17 of us in the group, and we set off in warm conditions for the five kilometre walk (which took us about two hours each way).

Arriving at the 30m wide, knee deep, crossing of the Mitchell (above the Falls) I decided to use the new modus operandi, and stepped it out very carefully over this very slippery, and rocky river crossing.

The rest of the group stripped off, and battled their way across this scenic waterway; several slipped and fell into the water, and all of them had problems on the other side getting their gear back on. I felt pleased with myself; but what would it feel like with the wet gear on my feet?

Well, I can report that at the ambient temperature of the day (high 20s) that after 200m of walking I could not tell that I had wet gear on my feet, and felt good that I had achieved a very safe crossing without messing about with shoes, socks and a towel, and the inconvenience of taking gear off, and putting it back on again. Chris M



"SAFEGUARD" FOR WARBY'S

The Warby Range Protection Society will seek assistance from the National Parks Advisory Committee in its bid to preserve the ranges in their natural state.

The Society is fighting a running battle to prevent ICI Australia Ltd. from carrying out mining exploration work in the Ranges.

President of the Society, Mr. C. F. English, said today that he had hoped the National Parks Advisory Committee would act to prevent any mining work in the crown land areas of the ranges.

"I base this hope on a letter received from the Secretary for Lands, Mr. C. E. Middleton, by the Wangaratta City Council.

"The council had written to Mr. Middleton registering its protest about the ICI plan, and urging the Department to refuse permission to allow the mining work.

"In reply, Mr. Middleton said that this type of licence is a matter for the Mines Department.

"However," Mr. Middleton said, "I understand from enquiries of that department that although in this case the licence ex-

tends over 100 square miles, no exploration can take place within the area of the Crown lands in the parishes of Glenrowan and Taminick in the Warby Ranges that were reserved under the Land Act in August last year as sites for public purposes (National Park) and placed under the control of the National Parks Advisory Committee, without the consent of that body.

"Further, these areas in addition to being so reserved, excepted from occupation for mining purposes under any Miners Right.

"In the circumstances, it is considered that the reserved Crown Land in the Warby Ranges are sufficiently protected from unauthorised mining operations," Mr. Middleton said. Mr. English said that the

letter was very heartening, as it appears to provide a safeguard for the areas of Crown Land in the ranges.

"We now propose to make further contact with the National Parks Advisory Committee to outline the situation.

"We hope that with their co-operation we will be able to protect the Crown Land areas," Mr. English said.

He said that this would not apply to land owned privately in the Ranges.

"In these cases, we can only hope that the land owners will support our stand by refusing to allow ICI to carry out any mining exploration at all," he said.

Protection has ma