



# WARBY RANGE BUSHWALKERS Inc.

FUN . FITNESS . FRIENDSHIP

NEWSLETTER : September, 2024 [warbybushwalkers.org.au](http://warbybushwalkers.org.au)

Welcome to the September 2024 Newsletter, with all the latest news from the Warby Bushwalkers, including blogs of the previous walks program events (except the McMillans Track walk, which was cancelled due to an electrical storm).

The October – December walks program (see our website) is again action packed to take advantage of the spring walking conditions, and it looks as though we are entering an excellent wildflower season. For the socially inclined, our popular Cup Day Event is on again, and of course our Christmas BBQ (details to be advised) will round off the year.

Happy Walking;; see you on the track.

## **Kelly's Cave : June 18**

Thirteen people took part in the walk to visit Kelly's Cave, located between Eldorado and Beechworth. Three new members came along which was great, and one has not been in Australia for long; they were all made very welcome.

We could not have asked for a better day, as it was nice and sunny, and the temperature was in the high teens.

The walk was approximately thirteen kilometres, with the majority on a track, and then we headed into the scrub to find the cave. Morning tea was in a lovely spot, with plenty of fallen trees for us to be able sit and relax.

We then continued our walk until we found the point we had to enter the scrub. Previously three of us had checked out the walk, and left markers which helped on the day.

The bushwalking rules of walking in scrub came into play as we found our way to the cave, and on some of the rocky outcrops we got spectacular views of the valley below.

When we arrived at the cave it was lunch time, so it gave everyone a chance to look around and have our lunch.

On our return, we had to be wary of the kangaroo tracks as they can easily help you get lost even though we had markers.

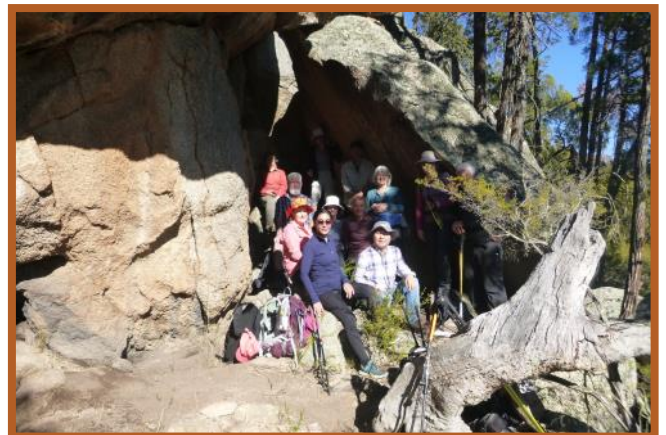
The highlight of the day was seeing three koalas in a tree (who were active) as well as seeing kangaroos and wallabies.

Plus, one of the walkers has read many books about Ned Kelly, and was able to tell us many stories about the area and its relationship with Ned Kelly.

After our walk we went back to Eldorado to enjoy our traditional afternoon tea, which was greatly appreciated after our six hours walk. [John]

## **White Box Walk, Chiltern : June 19**

Today's midweek walk, the White Box Walking Track in the Chiltern-Mount Pilot National Park, was held in the afternoon, and attended by 11 walkers who rugged up to brave the cold forecast of an expected high of 11 degrees.



Meeting at the start point, the Honeyeater Picnic Area, we started with lunch, and hot cuppa's, before heading off on the 8.5k loop track.

The highlights of our walk were the Golden Bar Open-Cut Mine and the landscape that has been altered by mining over 100 years ago and now features mullock heaps.

We sighted two wallabies, and a number of Scarlet Robins delighted us in the picnic area, and elsewhere during the walk, and we sighted a dozen or more White-winged Chough.

The forest includes Red Stringybark, Blakely's Redgums, Mugga Ironbark, Apple Box, White Box, Red Box, and we came across two grass trees. Parks Victoria was kind enough to provide some brochures at the information board that enabled us to identify the birds and trees.

We stopped for a snack at the 'quiet area' and finished the walk back at the Honeyeater Picnic area with afternoon tea. It turned out we walked in the best part of the day (double figures for the duration of our time there) with some sunshine before the sky clouded over, and Chiltern had reached a high of 11.9 degrees. [Jeanette]



### Back Creek Hills : June 23

On Sunday morning 13 true believers, so to speak, set out for our walk in the Back Creek Hills.

It was a very cold morning, but we could tell from the clear blue sky that it was going to warm up a bit, and it was most defiantly going to be a nice day to be outside.

We walked in a part of the Stanley State Forest, in the area between Yackandandah and Stanley, towards what was the gold mining town of Hillsborough at Back Creek.

The walk started at the edge of the native forest, and we gradually got higher up the slopes and also deeper into the forest, where we were delighted with the company of flocks of yellow tailed black cockatoos.

The walk included a morning coffee/tea break, a lunch break and ended with a fabulous afternoon coffee/tea break, all which also involved lots of socializing.

We all went home satisfied in many ways! [Marita]



### New guide book to the Flinders Ranges

Book publishers WoodsLane have just produced a new 206 page bushwalking guide to the Flinders Ranges.

The book, "Best Walks of the Flinders Ranges" covers all of this great bushwalking venue, from Mount Remarkable in the south, through to Wilpena, and way up north to Arkaroola. The Flinders Ranges sections of the Heysen Trail are also included.

The descriptions by Julie Mundy and Debra Heyes are very informative, with excellent maps and photographs.

See [woodslanepress.com.au](http://woodslanepress.com.au) for more details.



### Mansion Loop - Stanley Forest :

#### July 6

Fifteen very keen walkers set off up Red Hill Track, after meeting at the “mansion” site about one kilometre east of Beechworth township.

From here, we ambled along many beautiful bush tracks, and fire trails, in the Stanley Forest, such as the Kerferd, Middle, Gum Tree Ridge and Running Creek Track.

The steep climbs slowed a few people somewhat, but our group of hardy souls overall really enjoyed the company, many and varied bird calls, and the gorgeous bush scenery on this easy walk!

The leader’s superbly delicious fruit cake was consumed in near Olympic record time when afternoon tea was taken back at the mansion site! [Lesley]



### Mount Wombat Walk and Seven Creeks Walk, Strathbogie : Sunday, July 21

Six committed walkers enjoyed a break in the wintry conditions to hike up Mount Wombat, and along Seven Creeks in the Strathbogie area on Sunday.

We set off from the historic Strathbogie Cemetery, in Mount Wombat Flora and Fauna Reserve, where we were delighted to immediately encounter “fauna” in the shape of a beautiful koala which scrambled up a small tree.

We set off up the Mount Wombat Lookout vehicular road, which ascends for about three kilometres, through beautiful tall eucalyptus forest, to the rocky summit at 799m altitude.

Here we enjoyed morning tea, and a magnificent 360 degree view with minimal haze.



After our descent back to the cars, we lingered at the cemetery, but not for too long as we had lunch to look forward to at the beautiful Polly McQuinns Picnic Area on the raging Seven Creeks, a 20 minute drive away.

After lunch we drove to the environs of Strathbogie township and walked two kilometres, following the Seven Creeks waterway from an old stockbridge, and exiting up to the Main Street.

We enjoyed the historic interest of the buildings and statues, before being enticed by the warmth and thought of a hot drink at the Strathbogie Store and Coffee Shop, whilst the weather threatened with about 10 spots of rain.

Overall, it was a brilliant day, encompassing two walks, and a taste of Strathbogie area. [Anne Ford]

### Friends Loop : Tuesday, July 23

A small party walked this delightful eight kilometre track, while also carrying out several pieces of “research” over the three hours we spent in our special park. The route covered Wenham’s Camp - Mount Warby - Salisbury Track - Alpine Views, and then back to the start.

We checked phone/ability to get the internet along the route, with good connection available soon after we left Wenham’s to climb Mount Warby, but it soon deteriorated.



The many Grass Trees within 30 metres of the track were checked for signs of dieback – none had obvious health problems!!

We also analysed the quality of signage – both directional and interpretive. Some repair is needed, with no phone coverage available to use online maps. [Andy]

### Keep it clean

More than thirty years since its first edition, the 4th edition of Kathleen Meyer's book "How to Shit in the Woods" continues to provide an open discussion of a (hopefully) secretive activity, and examines the environmental impact of too much crap in the natural environment. More than three million copies of this book have been sold; more details at the author's website [kathleeninthewoods.net](http://kathleeninthewoods.net), and at [penguinrandomhouse.com](http://penguinrandomhouse.com), the publisher's website.

### Whorouly South : Sunday, August 4

There were 16 keen walkers that met in Whorouly South for this walk towards Carboor.

We walked along a dirt road, which provided great opportunity for socialising, and enjoying the scenery, while we were walking.

The walk included a number of hills, and covered a distance of 12 km, and it certainly made our hearts work.

Of course, we had our usual breaks along the walk for morning tea and lunch, and ended it with afternoon tea.

The weather was lovely, a cool still day that was perfect to be enjoying the great outdoors.

Many of our walkers had never been in this area before, and there were lots of comments of how lovely the scenery was.

I think I can speak for all of us, saying that we're looking forward to our next walk. [Marita]

### Walking in the wheatbelt of Western Australia

The wheatbelt of WA is located on a granitic plateau, with an altitude varying between 300-400m. It's widely known as a powerhouse of agricultural production, and as the locale of the famous "Wave Rock" at Hyden. What the tourist information brochures don't emphasise is that the wheatbelt is also a great place to go bushwalking.

The wheatbelt has many granitic outcrops that are surrounded by well preserved bushland, and these are scattered all over the plateau; places such as Kokerbin Rock, The Humps (see photo), and of course Wave Rock. The bushland around this very interesting rock formation offers about eight kilometres of walks of varied lengths, and is a popular multi-day stop-over for many travellers, particularly in the wildflower season of the springtime.

Other towns in the wheatbelt that offer excellent walks include Brookton, Corrigin, Bruce Rock, Westonia and Merredin.

### The Paps : Sunday, August 18

On August 18, a foggy Sunday morning in Wangaratta, a group of nine dedicated walkers met for 'The Paps', a walk located in the Paps Natural Features and Scenic Reserve, just out of Mansfield. It was an early start for the 100km drive, and a short detour by my car was required to pick up walkers in Glenrowan. I was hoping that today's walk would once again mark a significant day in our club's history.

However it wasn't to be, as Adrian was unable to join Tracey. This meant the men only equalled the women in numbers on today's outing, rather than exceeding them. Men outnumbering women has only ever happened once – Sunday July 31st, 2022, on the Kancoona Gap Track.

The three cars regrouped in Swanpool, where glorious sunshine had replaced the early Wangaratta fog. Continuing on, we reached Lake Nillahcootie, where once again fog began to develop. Our final destination, just off the Maroon-dah Highway, was The Paps Road which is on private land. Jeanette dutifully opened the gate for the three vehicles to proceed, and was rewarded with a twenty-cent tip from Andrew.



For those who don't know, Andrew drives a rather sporty and nice-looking Subaru. I thought maybe a gold coin donation, or even a paper note of significance, would have been more appropriate. It was 9.30am when we began walking from the carpark towards the first of the Paps.

Along the road we encountered some local walkers who happily shared their knowledge of the area. Andy, as usual, began sharing so much more. It was decided that people knew how to walk and talk at the same time, and so it was now put into practice. This first section of road had pleasant views over farmland and distant white animals, which later were agreed to be cattle, and not sheep. The low-lying fog with hills in the background, made the scene particularly wondrous.

The road climbed steadily, and after about 45 minutes, we reached a junction with roads leading to the North and South Pap, and the North Pap (chosen as the morning tea venue) was rapidly approaching. The hike to the top of this summit is the more demanding one, and was a great heart starter for the morning. This peak is just over 700m above sea level and afforded our group 360-degree views encompassing nearby Mansfield, a snow-capped Mount Buller, a distant Lake Nillahcootie, and the arms of neighbouring Lake Eildon.

Patches of cloud, reminding me of cotton balls, floated past as we consumed a leisurely morning tea. It was here that Tracey spotted an echidna which had climbed into a fenced area near the tower. Being confined in such a small area with no place to hide, this made for some great close-up photos. Before our departure, the group gathered for a customary collective photo opportunity, and then headed back down towards the junction.

It was during the descent that Murray and I spotted a fox running through the bush, cross the road, before once again disappearing into the bush on the other side. Why did the fox cross the road? To get to the chicken on the other side.

Once the junction was reached at the bottom, it was simply a matter of following the road towards the southern Pap. While walking, several vehicles passed us on their way to the top of each Pap. One such vehicle stopped to chat, and they introduced themselves as members of the Strzelecki Bush Walking club. This ascent was a gentler one, and once the top of the southern Pap was reached, great views of Lake Eildon, and surrounding farmland were observed.

Apparently, the word Pap, is an interesting one to describe a peak. Google tells me it comes from the Latin 'papilla'. The Scots use the word to mean breast. I won't go into too much more detail, although Andy delighted in telling us, in a marvellous Scottish accent, sufficiently more information about the history of it all. You know how Mount Buffalo looked like a buffalo to explorer's Hume and Hovell and hence got its name? Well apparently, these two mountains reminded someone of something too, and it wasn't a two humped camel.

At the summit of the southern Pap, we consumed our lunch in glorious clear skies, with the sunshine warming our backs. After another group photo, we decided to try and follow a little used bush track for part of the return walk. By we, I mean Murray, Sara and I decided on behalf of the group.

It was a steep descent for the first immediate section, and then transformed into pleasant bush surroundings. On our printed maps the bush track looked most definite; the reality however was somewhat different. Fortunately, Avenza maps was providing sufficient assistance along the way.



One of the club's newer members (Eden) asked whether this trail was shorter than simply following the road, or just an adventure. It was, for the record, an adventurous shortcut. The most difficult part of this bush track was navigating back towards the dirt road and tackling the short, steep, wet grassy incline up to it. And although there was one minor tumble, no bushwalkers were seriously harmed in the undertaking of today's walk.

During the last few hundred metres of road walking, another echidna was spotted by Sara, before everyone finally reached the cars. Club members will no doubt be aware that Pat Kuhle, our wonderful afternoon tea caterer and 'keeper of the urns', has retired from this position. Unwilling to try and compete with the legend of her treasured afternoon teas, I opted for coffee, hot chocolate and cake at the Barjarg coffee shop a short drive away.

More than just a coffee shop, it is a mix of antiques and bric-a-brac, and as we relaxed outside under umbrellas and outdoor settings, we were entertained by the 'Andy and Tracey Show' - coming soon to an RSL club near you. It was a pleasant way to end the afternoon, although the local Superb Fairywrens were disappointed in the scarce cake crumbs left behind.

All the walkers agreed the bushland, great views and impeccable weather made a great day to be out and about. The planned 12.5km hike was shortened a little, with the bush track to about 11.5km and completed in 4¼ hours. A fantastic little walk that will surely be added to our program again in the future. [Michael]



### **Beechworth Gorge Ramble : Thursday, August 22**

Starting at the Powder Magazine, in Beechworth's Historic Park, this was an 8k walk in fine weather.

We first walked down Gorge Road to view The Cascades pouring down to Woolshed Falls. From there, we climbed up the steep, but well made track, to One Tree Hill where we found a good vantage point for morning tea.

Then it was out to The Precipice for great views of Woolshed Valley, followed by a stop at Fiddes Quarry, before arriving at the scenic Ingrams Rock.

We then took Old Chiltern Road and Gorge Road to return to the cars at the Powder Magazine, then it was the hard part of the day – an enjoyable lunch in Beechworth. [Lesley]

