



The NEWS

Member of
VicWalk

of the

MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS INC.

NOVEMBER 1998

Internet: <http://www.vicnet.net.au/~bushwalk>

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The President's Weekend

20-22 November 1998

Hughes Creek (near Seymour)

The President invites all members to join him for all or part of the weekend. The Sunday walkers will join the weekenders for tea on Sunday. Details inside

Slide Night

Wednesday 25th November 8.00pm
Duncan Catannach

Bushwalking in Tasmania including the South West, Federation Peak etc etc. Excellent slides and nibbles..

Really Great Prom Walk Sunday 29th November, 1998

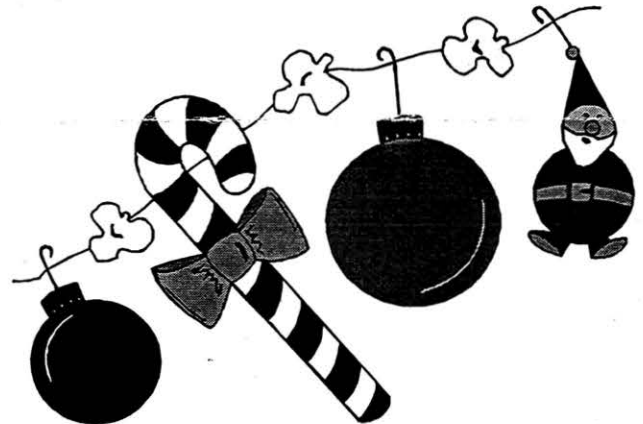
On Sunday 29th November the walk starts at 12 o'clock at the Floral Clock. Please look out for Jenny Gregory and others under our banner at a quarter to 12, then join the rally to steps of Parliament House for presentation to the Government for the alternate management plan for Wilsons Prom. After that the club will be going to the Treasury Gardens for a BBQ.

This will be a FUN day, a celebration day.

If people want to walk during the week, or on the Saturday 28th November from Huntingdale to Kooyand Road along the bike path to finish at the floral clock please contact Jenny Gregory or the following organisers direct.

Maurice Poulton or Mick Buckingham

Dr Graham Wills-Johnson will be walking during the week and if anyone would like to walk with him please contact Jenny Gregory



Christmas Party

Come dressed in Christmas Spirit and reminisce, renew old acquaintances, plan new trips and have a really good time.

Everyone is welcome.

Come and help celebrate the conclusion of another, successful year for the Melbourne Bushwalkers.

Wednesday 16th December
7pm Clubrooms

Please bring: Plate of food to share

All drinks will be supplied but BYO glass/Mug

Lucky Door Prize

Movie Night

Friday 27th November
Steven Spielberg's WWII Masterpiece

Saving Private Ryan

Starring Tom Hanks, Matt Damon & Ed Burns

Jam Factory Chapel St, South Yarra about 7pm

Final Number and payment by Wed 18th November
\$11 per ticket or a book of 10 = \$8.50 per ticket
Please see Marisa or phone

From the President

We have experienced a couple of car accidents recently while members were driving to weekend walks. Fortunately the damage was limited to the vehicles but perhaps we should be reminded of the risks that exist in driving long distances. Apart from the obvious checks that drivers should make on the car roadworthiness drivers should check that their insurance policy covers other drivers. They should also ensure that they have back-up drivers, and that they swap drivers frequently - like every hour. At night and in hot weather with bright sunlight drivers tire quickly. Talkative passengers also help the driver to stay awake! Leaders should try to ensure that cars have three or more passengers whenever possible.

Athol Schafer, one of our Life Members, has been leading historical walks around Melbourne suburbs for many years. Athol is currently suffering from a problem which is preventing him from walking very far, and so he has been unable to lead these very popular walks of late. We consequently have some disappointed members. Is there anyone who would like to take up the challenge and lead some walks on Saturdays or holiday weekends? Athol has written up all of the walks and is available for advice; who would like to give it a try?

The Club has decided to focus its attention on the last two days of the Really Great Prom Walk. That means that we want all of you to support this protest on 28-29 November. Please give this your attention - now is the

time to do your part!

Make your protest and help us to put across a message to the Victorian government that we value our Parks and we do not want them 'developed' with hotels and the trappings that Ministers seem to think are necessary. See you there.

In the meantime, I hope to see many of you at the President's weekend.

Derrick Brown

The Lerderberg Gorge Walk

Once upon a time in Lerderberg land, two leaders set forth with their followers, and what an adventure one leader had planned, through a river and prickles and spurs.

At first, We followed the Razorback Track Which we shared with some noisy trail-bikers, but we lost them soon after we started to hack through the hakia that managed to strike us.

There was exploring ahead, so we followed the lead downstream for near half an hour, then back to our lunch spot for a well-earned feed-well, for those who'd gone exploring in particular.

Thanks to Stuart's rope, most were able to straddle the stepping stones placed in the river, but a few brave souls dared to wade and paddle through deeper water, which made me shiver.

Like mountain goats we clambered upward to the top, and a view to behold - through our efforts, we'd very quickly soared out of that hakia stranglehold.

As we meandered our way along the track, the scenery became more spectacular, such a shame that it seemed we were nearly back, or so said our intrepid leader.

That "kilometre" to go was more like three, then another was definitely two, so t'was quite a relief for our adventurous party when O'Brien's Crossing came into view!

Jill Dawson
4/10/98

Meetings are held in the Clubrooms, MacKenzie St., Melbourne (rear of the Royal Horticultural Society building) on **WEDNESDAY** Evenings between 7.00pm and 9.00pm.

Visitors are always welcome.

General correspondence should be directed to:
The Secretary, Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.
PO Box 1751Q, MELBOURNE 3001

The NEWS is the official newsletter of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc. and is published monthly. Edited by **Judy Gipps**.

Articles, walk reports, poems, snippets of news, reports of new gear, book reviews, letters "to the Editor", advertisements, etc are always welcome. The Editor reserves the right to edit articles, letters or other contributions, where space, clarity or propriety dictate. and to maintain editorial consistency

Please note that articles for **The NEWS** may be :
placed in the **Red Box** in the clubrooms or
mailed to Judy Gipps,

or
faxed to me on
emailed to

Advertising Rates

¼ Page 1 Issue-\$20; 3 Issues-\$50; 12 Issues (1 year)-\$180
½ Page 1 Issue-\$30; 3 Issues-\$75; 12 issues-\$270
Full Page 1 issues-\$50; 3 issues-\$125; 12 issues-\$450

Only advertisements directly relating to bushwalking will be accepted (eg gear, maps, trips, tours)

Members Ads - FREE

Closing Date for **DECEMBER 1998 News** is **26th November 98**

Sunday 6th December, 1998 Easy/Medium & Medium	Cockpit Creek Blowhard Range
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Leaders: Alan Miller & Brian Crouch
Transport: Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Map Reference: Glenburn, Taggerty South.
 Juliet North, Toolangi
 Healesville - Kinglake
Area:
Expected Time of return: 6.30 pm
Approx Distance: 15 & 18 km

This is tall timber country through Toolangi State Forest. The walks will be through some of the best of the forest, avoiding as far as possible, those parts which have been clear felled for export as wood chips to Japan. There are some picturesque parts including Cockpit Creek, Myrtle Creek, and the Wirrawilla walk at the end.

The start of the walk passes close to Sylvia Creek Falls, so your leaders will explore the possibility of crashing through the bush (and leeches) to the falls.

Sunday 13th December 1998 Easy & Easy/Medium	Point Nepean - Quarantine Area
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Leaders: Peter McGrath & David Laing
Transport: Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Area: Mornington Peninsula
Approximate length of walk: 14 & 17 km
Expected time of return: 7.00pm

This is surely a beautiful and historic area. Closed off to the public until only very recently. Point Nepean is an interesting part of Australian History and a major geographic feature of this vast continent. Come and see the guns that fired the first shot in WW1 and the first Australian Shot in WW11. What other walk can off this ?

There is an admission fee of \$5.50 to the area (\$2.75 for people with a pension card). We will collect this when you book and pay on the day. If you qualify for the discount please bring your pension card on the day

Do not wear walking boots on this day. It is a day for runners. Please bring a torch if you want to see some of the tunnels.

This was Harold Holt's favourite area, but this is only one feature of this area. The Easy/medium walk will do a short walk around Farnsworth Track (London Bridge to Portsea and back) which will differentiate the two walks.

Wednesday 16th December 1998 Easy/Medium	Olinda Forest - Hamer Arboretum
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Leaders: Margaret Borden
Transport: Private
Area: Olinda
Approximate length of walk: 12 km
Expected time of return: Approx 5.30 pm
Map Reference: Melways Map 122
Meet at 9 Albert Crescent, Surrey Hills at 8.30am or the
Arboretum Car park (Melways 122 B 9) at 9.30am

We will start from the car park with its magnificent views of the Yarra Valley and the Donna Buang Ranges and continue in mainly northerly direction along forest roads surrounded by mainly native vegetation and birds and maybe lunch near the Olinda Falls. There will be a short off road climb back to Bartlett Road and then southerly on forest roads and walking tracks to the car park passing the Olinda golf course. Before we reach that be warned there is a long uphill grind, but worth it for the views alongside the gold course. It is a quite secluded walking area with some lovely fern areas and native forest with, around the car park, introduced exotic forest trees. We should finish early enough to indulge ourselves with tea and extras so bring a mug, at least.

Sunday 20th December 1998 Easy/Med & Med	Kinglake & Andrew Hill Island Creek
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Leaders: John Kittson & Jean Woodger
Transport: Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Area: Kinglake NP via Melba Highway
Approximate length of walk: 11 & 16 km
Expected time of return: 6.30 pm

Both walks will start and finish at the Island Creek Picnic Ground, GR 570502 along Eucalyptus Road, just off Melba Highway between Castella and Glenburn. We will have a good 300m climb up Andrew Hill over a distance of approx 4 kms. It will all be done before lunch and there will be a good afternoon ahead of us with very little climbing, trust me. On our preview we saw many orchids, an echidna, black cockatoos and several lyrebirds at close quarters. We also took in fern gullies and tall mountain ash (no trail bikes). Very enjoyable - might even sneak in a quick ice cream at Yarra Glen on the way home.

Previews for December and Christmas Weekend /Pack-Carry/Base Camps

20-22nd November 1998	President's Weekend
Easy & Easy/Medium	Hughes Creek

Leader: Derrick Brown
Transport: Private
Area: Near Seymour
Distance: Various
Map Reference: Mt Stewart 7923-1-4,
Mt Bernard 7924-2-3
Expected Time of return: Sunday evening

The President invites all members to join him for all or part of the weekend. The Sunday walkers will join the weekenders for tea on Sunday. See details in October News.

27th - 29th November, 1998	Mt Feathertop
Medium	North West Spur-Bungalow Spur

Leader: Deb Henry
Area: Mt Feathertop
Transport: Private
Map Reference: Bogong Alpine Area 1:50,000,
Expected Time of return: Late Sunday
Approximate Distance from Melb 350 km

First off I apologise for not getting this in the "News" earlier, very slack on my part. This is a classic route to the summit of Feathertop. The North West Spur is known for it's steep accent of the mount, so fitness will play a part in this trip. We will stop in or near Harrietville on Friday night and climb up North West on Saturday. Sunday will be a very pleasant stroll down Bungalow Spur.

As everyone knows the view from Feathertop is to die for, and at this time of year the Feathertop area is stunning. So come on all you keen weekend types, get your names down.

4th -6th December, 1998	Tali Karng
Medium	Pack Carry

Leader: Alan Ide
Transport: Private
Map Reference: Tali Karng 1:25,000,
Approximate Distance 30 km

This walk follows the Wellington River to the Valley of Destruction and then up to the magnificent lake Tali Karng where we will camp on Saturday night. I am hoping that we can get started early on Saturday (9am?) so we will have time to explore around the lake and Snowdon Falls. If you want to come on the walk see if you can get the afternoon of Friday the 4th off from work as it is a

long drive up to the Wellington River turn off. (About 6 hours)

The return journey will be via Riggals Spur and then back down the Wellington River. There are many river crossings on the way and hopefully the weather will be warm enough for some swimming. However, as we are a bit pushed for time we will have to walk at a fairly brisk pace.

11-13th December	Otways
Easy/Medium	

Leaders: Jerry Grandage
Transport: Private
Area: Lorne Waterfalls
Expected time of return: Sunday 9 pm
Approximate Distance: 33 km
Map Reference: Either "Otways & Shipwreck Coast" (Outdoor Leisure Series) or 1:25,000 Topographic Map "Lorne" 7620-1-1
Numbers Limit: Ten(10), Owing to limited tend sites at the camping area

We will visit some of the well known waterfalls behind Lorne, including Erskine, Cora Lynn, Phantom and Kalimba Falls. There will also be a wide range of Otways vegetation to Enjoy. A good introduction to Otways walking.

26 Dec - 2nd Jan 1999	High Plains
Easy	Pack Carry

Leaders: Jean Giese & Judy Gipps
Transport: Private
Area: Bogong High Plains
Expected time of return: Sat 2nd or Sun 3 Jan
Map Reference: Bogong Alpine Area
Outdoor Leisure Map 1:50,000

Commencing at Strawberry Saddle, a walk of 4km will find us at our first camp. (So if you can't get away from Melbourne early a late start on the day is possible) Then will follow 5 days of carrying our packs between 5 and 12 km per day, two full days without packs and some half day side trips. Highlights will include High Plains Creek falls, Niggerheads, Fainter, Cope, some spurs above the Bundara River and a day trip to McNamara's Hut on Dinner Plain.

On the evening of day 7 we will be camping within three quarters km of our cars where we can collect our food for that night and the next day, returning to Melbourne on Saturday or Sunday, as it suits the members of the party.

Book early so we can make arrangements.

26 Dec - 3rd Jan 1999	High Plains
Easy	Base Camp

Leader: Lance Mobbs
Transport: Private
Area: Bogong High Plains
Distance: Various
Map Reference: Bogong 1:50,000
OutdoorLeisure Map

This walk should mostly be easy in grade and I'm hoping to cover most of the peaks, huts and waterfalls.

We will be camping just down from Wallace's Hut so not much pack carrying. Even though the walk is listed for 1 week, I will be staying for 2 weeks so come along and enjoy the High Plains. As I have no phone please contact me in the clubrooms.

26 Dec - 3rd January 1999	Kosciuszko Main Range
Medium	Geehi Dam - Kosci - Dicky Cooper

Leader: Stephen Lake
Transport: Private
Map Reference: Mount Kosciuszko 1:50,000
Area: Kosciuszko National Park
Approx Distance About 70 km plus side trips
Expected Time of return: 3 January pm

Most of this walk is familiar to me from many years of walking, skiing and climbing. The pace will be fairly gentle, especially uphill. It may snow, and could get very nasty, but I expect mainly fine weather. The walk suits fit people who can manage one day of steep off-track walking. Please book by 2 December, as I will be discussing gear before the trip, and may need to book transport.

Drive to Geehi Dam on 26 December, about 500 km from Melbourne. Two easy days to the Opera House, visiting Lower and Upper Canyon Falls, 80 metre and 30 metre high. Then the tough day: 1100 metre up steep slopes to near Townsend. Another route that I am trying to get information about is via Lady Northcotes Canyon, which is generally far less steep and has less climbing, but may be rocky.

Kosciuszko, then the Main Range to Dicky Cooper Bogong, with side trips to The Sentinel, Blue Lake, Watsons Crags, Dicky Cooper Falls, etc. Hopefully, 30 and 31 December will be on Twynam, for side trips. We may return via Leaning Rock Falls (120 metre high), cross country, or via the road. Back at Geehi Dam by mid-morning on 3 January, drive to Melbourne. Carefully.

A spectacular walk across the roof of Australia, wildflowers and high quality experience. A good way to end the year.

27-31 December 1998	Ettrema Creek
Medium	Pack Carry

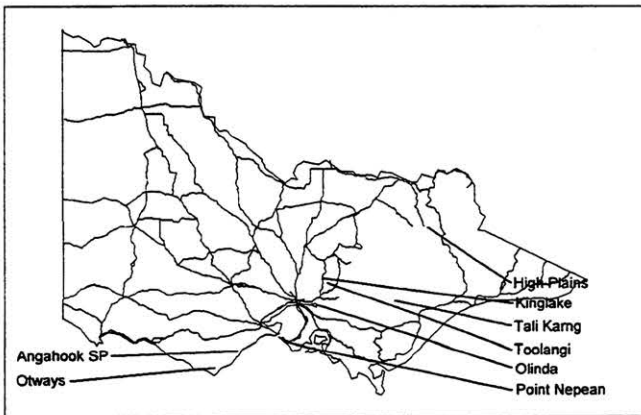
Leader: Pearson Cresswell
Transport: Private
Map Reference: NSW 1:25,000 Touga & Yalwal
Area: NSW Coastal Ranges
Approx Distance 40 Km

Ettrema Creek is at the centre of some spectacular gorge country, south of the Shoalhaven River and north of the Budawang Ranges. Access is via Braidwood and Nerriga. This walk will explore the heart of this little known area, including (probably): Ettrema Creek - Sentry Box Canyon - Bundundah Creek - Twelve Apostles - Pauls Pass. It will be off-track walking, plenty of climbs and rock (scrambling and hopping), with 5 days the pace won't be too hot (the weather may be) and there will be lots of opportunities for swimming.

26 Dec - 3rd Jan 1999	Snowy River in NSW
Medium/Hard	Lilo Trip

Leader: Jopie Bodegraven
Transport: Private
Map Reference: Numbla 1:100,000

The Snowy River in NSW is a depleted stream until it receives the combined waters of the Delegate and Bombala Rivers. It then goes into a 40 kilometre section described in the Victorian Canoe Guide as "very beautiful", being in a broad gorge for most of the way. The granite rock which lines the river has a multitude of colours from red and orange through to grey. Large sandbanks are to be found everywhere with camping no problem. "I want to go there" The grading is medium hard only because the area is fairly remote. I've never been there before and there are rapids. The intention is however for it to be a leisurely trip to let us fully enjoy the scenery and idyllic campsites. The trip can easily be shortened if progress is slow. The walk in is up to 8km depending on road conditions and the walk out will be about 8km of unknown cross country. I'm told that we can portage any dodgy rapids. Actual time away from the cars will be 6 to 7 days. If the water levels are too high we will change plans and do 2 easier 3 day sections of the Snowy further downstream. Everyone will of course need helmet, buoyancy vest, paddle and spare lilo between 2. I'll be overseas till 29 November but please contact me before 11 Dec.



At 100,000 Walker Celebrations



Gear Review - 4 season tent

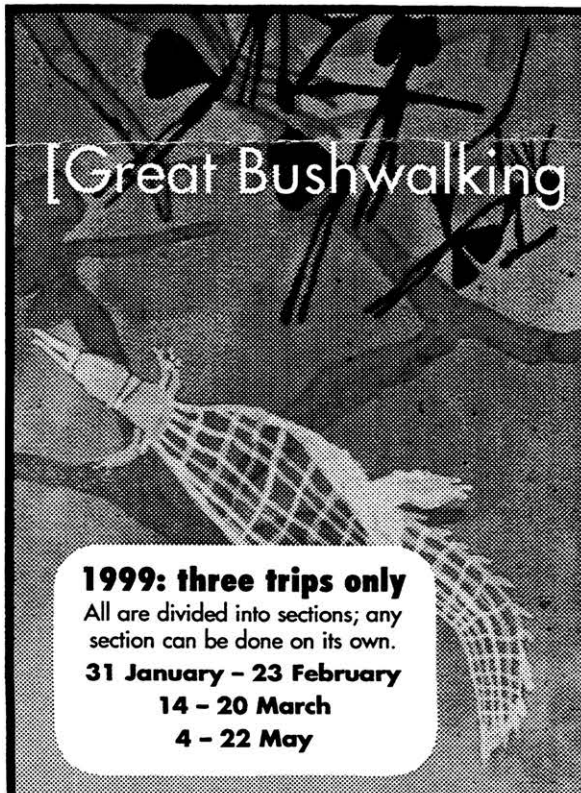
It was time for a new tent. My tiny Microlight was pushed to the limit on Bill's Easter trip to Kossie. Severe wind (it sounded like a freight train at five paces) and horizontal sleet continually flattened the tent all night. We were tent-bound near Carruther's Peak, well above the tree line, for over 20 hours.

I was in the market for a four season tent, that was light enough for one person, yet could hold two if needed. A Tassie bushwalking friend recommended the Wilderness Equipment's Second Arrow. Also, Les Sorbey (from Albury) has the much larger First Arrow model (2-3 persons & 3.5 kg). On Jean's Kamerooka trip, Les gave me a guided tour of the features and how it works - thanks Les, and I was very impressed with the engineering and design.

The Wilderness Equipment catalogue blurb says:- *"The Second Arrow is a compact 2 person, double skinned tent for ultra-lightweight travel in snow, across exposed country and in severe weather. Good ventilation also makes this tent suitable for use in warm weather conditions"*.

I have now used the new abode for three week-end trips. It has a low profile, two hoops and three pegs. It is compact, but I am very impressed with the architecture, material and zips (which allows great ventilation even in bleak weather). The Second Arrows weighs 2.6 kgs (with the heavy duty floor - strongly recommended), is Australian designed and made in Perth. I am very happy with the Second Arrow, so if you are in market for a new four season tent - then check it out.

Rod Novak



Nitmiluk
- Highly Underrated]

Katherine Gorge is one of the great tourist icons of the Northern Territory, so well known that few realise it is just a tiny part of the park which contains it - Nitmiluk.

Willis's Walkabouts

- Visits all 13 Katherine River gorges.
- Takes you to hidden gorges and waterfalls that tourists never see.
- Gives you a chance to learn about the local Aboriginal culture by using Aboriginal guides on parts of some trips.
- Offers a special low price trip where we assist park management by mapping introduced species.

Advance purchase discounts apply.

Ask for the trip notes and our brochure.

Willis's Walkabouts

12 Carrington St

Millner NT 0810

Email: walkabout@ais.net.au



1999: three trips only

All are divided into sections; any section can be done on its own.

31 January - 23 February

14 - 20 March

4 - 22 May

Phone: (08) 8985 2134

Fax: (08) 8985 2355

Hands Off Our National Parks!



A Camp to Defend Mt McKay

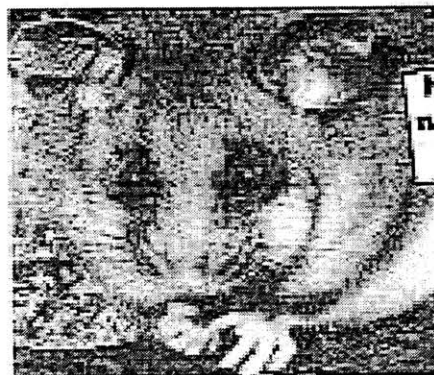
in the Victorian Alps

Late last year the State Coalition government made a decision to excise 285 hectares of the Alpine National Park and give it over to the Falls Creek Alpine Resort, free of charge. The state government says it was to provide the resort with the land for the long term development needs of the resort. To make such an excision is completely at odds with 'conservation' which is the foremost purpose of a National Park.

You are invited to demonstrate your opposition to the Excision, and demand a thorough public inquiry into the environmental effects of any commercial development on Mt McKay. See and hear about the natural values of this place.

There are numerous significant values that could be lost if development occurs in this area including:

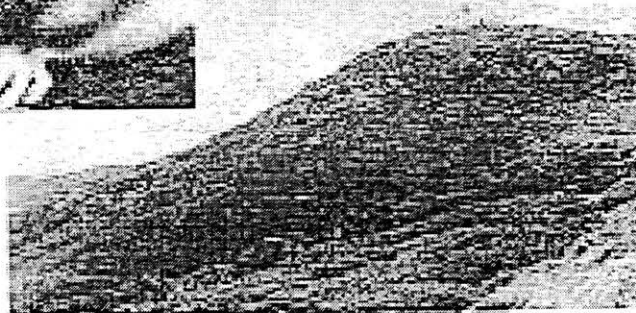
- Numerous endangered and threatened flora and fauna species, including the Mountain Pygmy Possum
- Unique geomorphological features,
- Large pristine area of alpine bogland which is a threatened plant community listed under the Vic Flora and Fauna Act.



The Mountain Pygmy Possum, a naturally endangered species with only 2000 individuals left. The proposed excision destroys its habitat.

National Parks are forever, not short term, short sighted commercial exploitation!

Mt McKay site of the development where 1000 of 100000000 of the Mountain Pygmy Possums live.



The Camp is going to be held over the weekend of the 12 & 13 of December, and will include:

- An action at Mt McKay.
- Work shops from indigenous people and expert biologists.
- Surveys of the local ecology.

With surveys expected to occur the following week.

**Where?
Falls Creek
When?
12 & 13
December.**

If you would like to come you will need to contact Peter Barker at the Victorian National Parks Association on (03) 9650 8296, or Email me on: barkerpeter@hotmail.com

McKay, dams and helicopters

There is to be an enquiry into Mt Mackay, to advise Mr Maclellan if there needs to be an EES. If you want to make a submission, you should write to The Hon Robert Maclellan, MLA, Minister for Planning and Local Government, GPO Box 2797Y, Melbourne Vic 3001.

Southern Rural Water (SRW) of Maffra advised that based on their consultant's report, a dam would not proceed on the Mitchell, Thompson and Macalister Rivers. Then the Deputy Premier and Minister for Agriculture and Resources Pat McNamara said a dam was still possible. After some bantering, it developed that the SRW looked at 15 000 to 25 000 ML, but Mr McNamara was talking about a larger dam. To put the dam into perspective, the capacity in thousand ML: Pykes Creek 25, Rocky Valley 28, Fyans 28 and Maroondah 22. So the possible dam is a fair size.

The helicopter shuttle made its presence felt between Falls and Hotham last winter. I have been corresponding with a number of government people, and the position may be summarised as follows. The helicopter does not provide any direct employment or put money into the local economy. The impact on the Alpine National Park is significant over about 300 square kilometre, which detracts greatly from the previously natural values of the ANP. There is no increased patronage due to the helicopter, but rather displacement of visitors between the resorts. Mr Maclellan acknowledges these points, which are a little different from his original position.

An airport is being built south of Hotham, and it is quite possible that there will be a perceived demand for helicopters to go to Hotham or Falls in winter, and perhaps in summer. Fortunately, there will be an opportunity for public comment into a further helicopter licence. The Minister does not apparently have a view on year round use, and it is best to dissuade him from approving such a policy. Once entrenched, policies can be hard to reverse: Stirling took a little time and effort. If you want to make a submission into any new helicopter planning permits, write to Mr Tim Blythe, Manager, Alpine Planning, Department of Infrastructure, 80 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000. You should ask that you be informed of any public comment process. Get it in writing.

Stephen Lake

The Echidna and the flaming Marshmallow

In October 1995 a trip to Briggs Bluff in the Grampians turned into a bit of an adventure (tornado like winds, driving rain etc), so almost 3 years to the weekend 6 hardy souls (Alan, Lyn, Joanne, Alison, Rod and me-Anne) set off with Captain Alan at the helm to try and actually see some of these spectacular views.

Saturday dawned with magnificent blue skies and by early afternoon we were at our campsite near Briggs Bluff. Off with the sweaty packs then some exploring where did all those guys with no shirts come from anyway...more importantly where did they do !

We walked out to the Bluff to watch the sunset and perched on the edge had a real wedge tailed eagle view out towards My Zero, the Arapiles, surrounding plains and back towards My Difficult. There was a clear sky, a magnificent orange orb sinking below a forested ridge turning the rocks pink and casting a very sharp tall shadow of the bluff on the land below. It was windy but very quiet and we all sat staring and thinking, pleased to be there and alive.

Back at the campsite after feasting (as bushies do!) even though it was a wonderfully warm evening we lit a small fire for the ritual marshmallow toasting etc. They are rather combustible and in a effort to extinguish one flaming morsel someone (who shall remain nameless) turned it into a missile that hit a very surprised Lyn, Face ? hands and leg were splattered with the molten offering in quite an impressive effort - no longterm damage sustained though.

Sunday was again perfect and warm, specy from Mt Difficult over towards the Serra Ranges and we saw a very cute Echidna and some rock wallabies. After a great walk down alongside some excellent rocks we lunched and lazed like the resident lizard at the cool tasty and well flowing Tulinda falls. Captain Alan was most satisfied to locate the (previously invisible) track for our final leg, and like the whole weekend it had a good mixture of spring flowers, forest, rocks and views. We met up at Halls Gap for ice-cream - they have liquorice for those passionate about it ... to find that the Bakery had won the 1998 Jeff Kennett Vanilla Slice Competition !!! Then dinner in Ballarat at the Golden Crown Hotel - good call Rod.

Thanks for leading a great walk Alan, and organising the brilliant weather.

Anne Wilkins

Mt MacDonald - 10-11 October 1998.**(Also Known as Mt Buller)**

"The bridge is out at Sheeppark Flat. We are at Merrijig and we will meet you at Mansfield"

So went (more or less) the message on the answering machine on arriving home on Friday evening, and thus began this particular weekend walk. The preview had prophetically said that it was suitable only for fit and experienced walkers - how right it was! The advance party of Rod and Max had found the first obstacle. Not only was the bridge gone (totally as we were to later find) but any other access to Mt MacDonald was also closed off.

Thus a quick change of plans and a sunny Saturday morning saw us leave our campsite at Timbertop Saddle for the first fit bit up the 400 metre ascent to Mount Timbertop. A rest for the views and then a ridge ramble and a navigation test to the road, passed with flying colours. A road ramble to the water spot at Forest Creek and a stop for lunch.

Then the next of the fit bits - carrying several litres of extra water up to the camp site. A wide saddle half way up West Ridge, dotted with trees, covered in grass, and with views of the surrounding hills. The clouds had increased during the day, although there was no real threat of rain. Around the campfire that night we were treated to fifteen minutes of an amazing light show behind the bulk of Mt Buller. Someone, somewhere, was being severely lighteninged upon. Boobook Owls Boobooked to the night, and later on several of us heard the chuckling of the nocturnal pee-birds as they caroused around the camp.

Sunday morning dawned sunny again, and, having suitably rehabilitated Cameron's fire pit, fit bit three saw us attacking the peak. The west face of the mountain drops off in an almost sheer rock wall for a couple of hundred metres, and climbing up this side of it you are immersed in the mountain's size. Black rock towered above us as we climbed higher, while black Ravens called murder and floated below us. This is a place for birds such as the Nankeen Kestrel, which hovers stationary on the wind with a flicker of wing or tail, and then dives vertically for a hundred metres, perhaps for the sheer exhilaration of being able to do so.

Remnant snow highlighted the mountain's features and make the going more difficult. On reaching the peak the cloud had lifted and we were greeted with all-round views of mountains and valleys as far as the eye could see. Ski lifts, hidden from view until

then, lay dormant and lifeless, like the skeletons of some partially completed sprawling construction. Boggy Creek, Federation, Skyline, Wombat, read the buildings, as they lay in wait for another brief winter. We pondered what the mountain would be like without them.

A break for morning tea and then across the deserted fields in search of Four Mile Spur. We still had plenty to do. In fact we had 1300 metres to do, all of it down. Fit bit four as we made our way down the rocky ridge, steadily losing height, knees straining, making slow progress because of the rocky terrain. Lunch at the river became lunch on the ridge as the day wore on.

Some excellent navigation got us onto the required side-spur and South Buller Creek. The crossing looked daunting but was soon managed. New boots were christened.

Now came the experienced bit. Because of the swollen Howqua River that had taken the bridge away, we were unable to cross over to follow the road on the other side. Instead we had to follow the bank on the north side. At times it was steep, and at times it was scrubby, but we made fair progress. Our collective hearts sank when, at a point where it should have become easier, we came upon a wall of blackberries reaching high up the steep hillside. There was nothing for it but to climb higher and continue on. Several gullies with more blackberries were negotiated. A startled deer took flight at the sight of us. At about one kilometre per hour darkness was a possibility until suddenly, right on cue - Gina led us out onto the track leading less than a kilometre to Max's car. The six of us piled in and the walk was over save for the meal at Mansfield.

Thank you Gina for another very well-led walk, and some first rate navigation, and everyone else for being fit and experienced. Party - Gina, Max, Trish, Cameron, Rod, Alan.

Alan Clarke

From the Editor

A new Editor will be required in early 1999 as I will be relinquishing the job. If you are interested or know anyone who would like to do the job please let me know or any of the committee members. I can be contacted on (H) or (W).

Judy Gipps

New members

DUNCAN JOHN CATANACH

WENDY ANN COLGROVE

STEFANIE PEARCE

SHEILA PIEKARSKI

ROBYN ELIZABETH WADE

Add to membership list:

JOHN MIKUZ

AMANDA SMITH

Altered Address/Phone:

ROSS & DEBBIE BERNER

WENDY CUSTANCE

MONIKA HOLLANDER

MAUREEN HURLEY

STUART MANN

JANE RYAN

Committee Reports**Treasurer:** Accounts for October, 1998

Opening Balance	\$52,166.45
Receipts	\$2,719.97
Payments	\$3,541.80
Closing Balance	\$51,344.62

Walks

August 98	No	Aug	In '97
Sunday	5	38	41.4
Pack Carry	2	10	7
Base Camp	1	16	15
Other Day	2	12	15.7
Cancelled	2		

September 98	No	Sept	In '97
Sunday	4	41.8	41
Pack Carry	1	91	-
Base Camp	1	21	18.5
Other Day	3	10	13
Cancelled	4		

Membership:

Life Members	11
Honorary Members	10
Single Memberships	365
Family Memberships (2x 48)	96
Total membership	482

Duty Roster

Nov 18	Marisa & Stuart	*
Nov 25	Jan & Jean	
Dec 2nd	Fiona & Judy	*
Dec 9th	Alan & Peter C	

Next committee meeting 7th November 1998

Walks in November/December 1998

Date	Location		Stand	Leader
13-15 Nov	MT BOGONG	Private	M	Cameron McMillan
13-15	INTRODUCTION TO WILKY	Private	E	Sylvia Ford
15 Sun	PORTARLINGON - EDWARDS POINT	Bus	E & E/M	Clare Lonergan & Fay Pratt
18 Wed	BUNYIP STATE FOREST- LABERTOUCHE	Private	E/M	Margaret Borden
20-22	PRESIDENTS WEEKEND (HUGHES CREEK)	Private	Various	Derrick Brown
22 Sun	HUGHES CREEK	Bus	E&E/M	Jean Woodger
27-29	FEATHERTOP(NW SPUR-BUNGALOW SPUR)	Private	M	Deb Henry
28 Sat	DANDENONGS EXPLORER	Private	E	Michael Humphrey
29 Sun	MT HICKEY - CANCELLED	<i>Really Great Prom Rally Instead- see cover</i>		
4-6 Dec	TARLI KARNG	Private	E/M	Alan Ide
5 Sat	ANGLESEA - URQUHART BLUFF	Private	E/M	Pearson Cresswell
5 Sat	CYCLING - GLEN WAVERLEY - CARRUM	Private	E	Rod Novak
6 Sun	COCKPIT CREEK- BLOWHARD RANGE	Bus	E/M & M	Alan Miller & Brian Crouch

The NEWS of the Melbourne Bushwalkers

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