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THE NEWS OF THE Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.

ABN 14 396 912 508

March 2014

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Melbourne Bushwalkers (Incorporated) will be held on Wednesday, 26 March, 2014, 8:00 pm at The Clubrooms, Royal Historical Society of Victoria, Corner of A'Beckett Street and William Street, Melbourne

Members are invited to attend.
Non-members are welcome but are not eligible to vote.

Business:

Apologies

Confirmation of minutes from the 2013 Annual General Meeting

President's report

Treasurer's report

Walks Secretaries' reports

Other reports

Determination of the annual subscription fee for 2014

Determination of number of Committee Members – non office holders

Election of Office Bearers and Committee Members

Appointment of Reviewers of Financial Statements

Conferral of Honorary Memberships

General Business

Proxy forms are available in the Clubrooms.



**Due date for contributions
(including May previews) to April News:
21 March**

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Because of space constraints, I've had to hold over some trip reports – two New Zealand and one Mt Bogong. Look for them in next month's News.

Editor

Jean Giese cuts the cake at the TOFs 10-year anniversary morning tea by the Yarra, Thursday 6 February.

Members of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc meet on Wednesday evenings between 7:00 and 9:00 pm in the club rooms at:

**Royal Historical Society of Victoria
362 William Street
(Cnr William and A'Beckett Streets)
Melbourne
Vic 3001**

Visitors are always welcome!

General correspondence should be directed to:

The Secretary
Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc



PO Box 1751
MELBOURNE VIC 3001
www.melbournebushwalkers.org.au

The News of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc (The News) is published monthly, and is the official newsletter of Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.

Editor: Marilyn Whimpey

Walk previews, walk reviews, articles, poems, news items, photographs of club events, reports of new gear, book/movie reviews, letters to the editor, advertisements, et cetera are always welcome. However, the Editor reserves the right to edit contributions where space, clarity or propriety dictate, and to maintain editorial consistency. Note: photographs should be sent as separate files which are capable of being edited.

Please send your contributions as unformatted text files by email to news@mbw.org.au

Closing date for receipt of material for *The News* is the 21st of the month.

Advertisements should relate to bushwalking (e.g. gear, maps, trips, tours, health and fitness etc.). These may be published subject to space availability and Editor's discretion. For current advertising rates contact the Editor at news@mbw.org.au.

Please note:
Next committee meeting will take place on
Monday 3 March 2014

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members to the Club:

KELLY MCARTHUR, CAROL ELFVERSON,
KATHERINE SHACKELL, SUE SHAW,
JAMES KEEP

BOOK REVIEW

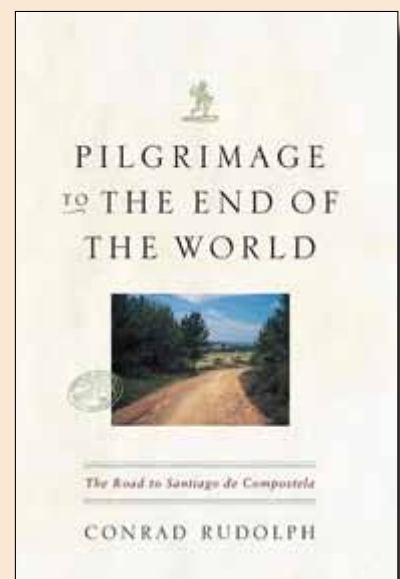
PILGRIMAGE TO THE END OF THE WORLD: THE ROAD TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELLA by Conrad Rudolph

Despite being a mere 140 pages, this book is truly a delight and captures the essence of walking the pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostella. I say this with assurance as I have recently completed the walk from St Jean Pied de Port to Santiago and found the author's descriptions and reminiscences evocative of my own experience. Conrad Rudolph walked the even longer route from Le Puy to Santiago and rather than give you a day by day description of the journey, he provides delightful snippets of the places, the people and the experiences of the journey that whet the appetite to experience this for yourself.

Rudolph quite rightly states in his book that this journey is made special by the people (the locals in France and Spain) and the special camaraderie of the pilgrims.

This little book also has a section of black and white photographs with explanatory text, illustrating the highlights of the pilgrimage route; and another section on practicalities, such as guide books, what to pack, further reading and useful websites.

This book is not just for those planning to walk the Camino de Santiago but also for those armchair travellers.



Cathy Merrick

2014 Social Calendar

Slide presentation by Ian Mair in the Clubrooms – Wednesday 23 April 2014, at 8:00 pm **BIBBULMUN END-TO-END – DID I REALLY DO IT?**

A rush of blood to the head? A cunning plot to get out of Victoria to avoid a 70th birthday party? The lure of walking on one of Australia's best long-distance tracks? A belief that you can't call yourself a 'real bushwalker' until you have walked further than the distance to the nearest pub? It could be one or all of the above. Either way, Ian Mair, with help and encouragement, made this epic journey of almost 1000 km (plus a few extra for getting lost!) in the south-west of Western Australia during the peak of the wildflower season. Join with Ian as he teases us with eye-catching slides and see why he, and other club members, rate the trip as one of their walking highlights.

Slide presentation by Ian Mair in the Clubrooms – Wednesday 25 June 2014, at 8:00 pm **WALKING IN NEW ZEALAND'S SOUTH ISLAND WONDERLAND**

New Zealand is famous amongst bushwalkers for its diversity of inspiring and challenging walks. Ian Mair will provide an overview of some of the classics of the South Island such as the Routeburn, Milford, Rees-Dart, Travers-Sabine, Heaphy and others as he highlights why he keeps going back. These are all within the capability of the average club member with an interest in overnight walks. Come along and see how accessible they are and be inspired by the breathtaking beauty of the country.

Kakadu Short Circle 13-26 April 2014

A very special trip at a very special time of year – **Banggerreng.** It's not the Wet and it's not the Dry. This is when the rain clouds have dispersed and clear skies prevail. Creeks that will eventually dry to a trickle are still flowing well. Wet season wildflowers can still be found. The land is still green with just a touch of the browning off that is to come.

This is our only trip that visits the upper reaches of Koolpin Creek, an area noted for its abundance of Aboriginal art sites. This trip provides most groups with more time for visiting Aboriginal art sites, birdwatching, botanising and/or simply relaxing than is possible on most of our other circle trips.

Special offer. I enjoy the trip so much that I guaranteed the departure for only three people. Quote this ad and join us and I'll give you a **\$500 discount**.
What more can I say?

Russell Willis

Willis's Walkabouts



www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au rwillis@internode.on.net Ph: 08 8985 2134

PRESIDENT'S CORNER – MARCH

The **main items at the February Committee Meeting** were: finalising AGM arrangements; a review of three Incident Reports; looking at how we can further spread the workload of Wednesday Club Nights; the make-up of the Committee for 2014; discussion on issues around Life Membership; and a decision to buy excellent whistles we have found and offer them to members at cost (new Leaders and Whips still get them free).

The Annual General Meeting will be on Wednesday 26 March at 8 pm in the Clubrooms (see the AGM Notice and item on free parking). The Treasurer's Report has historically not been available before the AGM as it's too large for the News. This year we will make it available on the Club Website after the March Committee Meeting.

Getting people to nominate for Committee is never easy, but with a team effort we have always managed to get enough people prepared to help in running the Club. I am pleased to say we have sufficient nominations for the 2014 Committee. I want to thank those people who are standing down this year for their fantastic efforts, namely Howard Friend, Cecily Hunter, Tina Leeuwrik, Kerry McKeand, Ian Mair, Carol Sisson, and Roger Wyett.

Congratulations to Jean Giese and all those who support the 'Thursday Old Fogies' Walks. TOFS had its 10th Anniversary in February. It was great to see over 25 members attend the anniversary walk and the celebration afterwards. The TOFS walks are typically around 10 km and have proved very popular. Jean also initiated the Monday Old Fogies (MOFS) in 2008 and more recently the Social Walks to ensure the Club caters for its changing member needs. Everyone is welcome so if you have a spare Monday or Thursday go along!

Congratulations also go to David Reid who received an Order of Australia Medal this year for his services to bushwalking. David, who is not a member of our Club, has been a very strong advocate for bushwalking and has been President of both Bushwalking Victoria and Bushwalking Australia.

We would like to get more people to assist with the Wednesday Night 'Meet and Greet' for visitors in the Clubrooms. We already have a small group of non-Committee members who help with Wednesday Night duty and would like to get to a point where we have 1 Committee and 1 non-Committee person on duty each Wednesday. It's another way for members to assist in running the Club and lighten the load. Keep an eye out for information in coming months or contact me now to volunteer!

Each year we have an informal **'Committee Thank You' Dinner** for the 'old' Committee, 'new' Committee and the many people in non-Committee positions e.g. News Editor, Equipment Officer, Webmaster, Club Emergency Contacts etc. This year it will be on April 14th. Invitations will be coming out shortly.

Our early February Walks program was heavily affected by fire and extreme heat concerns with two Sunday Walks, a Base Camp, and a Pack Carry cancelled, and other activities modified. Luckily the weather cooled and we had a full bus on Sunday 16th February with lots of members and visitors getting out for the day. Lets hope the extreme summer weather is largely over and we can get away and enjoy the great outdoors!

Reminders for this month:

- 1 Before you go out on an activity tell anyone who may be concerned if you are back late to check the Club Emergency Mobile 0447 489 661 for information on significant delays.
- 2 Check for information on Total Fire Bans and Extreme heat in the areas you are walking in. The Fire Season officially continues to the end of April.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the Annual General Meeting (wine and cheese provided), our Wednesday Social Nights, and some of our outdoor activities during the year.

Mick Noonan

GETTING TO THE AGM/CLUBROOMS

Yes, you can still park for free!

Catch a Tram: 23, 24, 30, 34 on LaTrobe St, 55 on William St

Catch a Train: Flagstaff Gardens Underground on the Loop, opposite the Club

Car Parks: Both Wilson and Secure Parking in A'Beckett St near the clubrooms have a \$6 Flat Rate 4–10pm

Close but expensive Parking: Around Flagstaff Gardens it's now \$5.50/hr metered to 8:30 pm

Free Parking: Many areas have **free** parking after 6:30 pm or 7:30 pm

North of Dudley St: it's **free** after 6:30 pm, e.g Walsh, Milton, William, Rosslyn, Capel

A'Beckett, Queen and Lonsdale Streets: loading zones and some metered parking that end at 7:30 pm

Batman St (other side of Gardens): many spaces are free after 6:30 pm, others after 7 pm

Note: The Summer Victoria Night Markets go to the end of March.

You can also Walk or Cycle!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2013



This has been my second of a planned three years as President and it has again been a very busy year from both a personal and a Club perspective.

By a number of measures we again had a great, active year with:

- A minor surplus for 2013 with sound cash reserves (Poppy's Treasurer Report is to be handed out at the AGM, and will be on the Website from 10th March). We are not recommending any fee increases for 2014.
- The format for Sunday walks with a mix of bus and carpools continues to be a success but with numbers down slightly in 2013, resulting in a minor loss. However over the last few years the Sunday Walks have shown a large surplus (see Halina's and Poppy's Reports)
- A good mix of Pack Carries, Base Camps, Cycling, Conservation and other activities including 2 snow events and 2 interstate trips (see Cecily's Report). We still need to expand our Pack Carry and Base Camp Programs.
- Our Wednesday Social Nights had mixed results, with some great response and some disappointing numbers. The Christmas Party had around 90 members attend again, the Bush Dance had over 70 participants, and on occasions we had over 50 people in the Clubrooms sharing wine and cheese while enjoying great photos.
- Membership numbers remaining stable for the last 4 years with 416 at the end of Dec 2013 (see Roger's Report). While we had a very low number of members leave in 2013 (55 compared to up to 100 in some recent years) the number of new members was down.
- The Website continuing to be a great resource and Facebook is still the 2nd most popular way people find out about us after search engines such as Google.

The Club undertook a number of key initiatives and events during the year. We:

- Started a trial of a new Emergency Contact System, including introducing a Club Emergency Mobile for information on significant trip delays, as part of modernising our operations and improving safety
- Obtained a Government Grant of \$3000 for new GPS units (which are now available to Leaders) and also for training courses. This will ensure we can continue to offer heavily discounted First Aid Training in 2014.
- Completed the first part of our Future Directions work with the Club's key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats being identified
- Approved new Rules to comply with new legal requirements and improved best practice standards at an Extraordinary General Meeting attended by 43 members
- Expanded our mentoring program for new leaders from Sunday to Pack Carry and Base Camp Walks
- Continued our annual donations to promote the environment and bushwalking with \$420 to the Victorian National Parks Association, and \$450 to the Great Dividing Trail Association.
- Held a successful Training Weekend at Nioka Bush Camp in November with 25–30 members on each day
- Organised a well attended First Aid Training Course that was subsidised by both us and Bushwalking Victoria

None of this would be possible without our members volunteering their time, energy and skills. People contribute in many ways to make our Club what it is, e.g. through being on Committee, leading or being a whip on activities, taking on one of the many non-Committee roles, volunteering for Bush Search and Rescue (BSAR), creating new walks, etc.

I want to extend my thanks to all those who volunteer and to the members who often, through simple things like making a visitor feel welcome, help make the Bushies a great bushwalking club.

As a Committee we had a very busy year. We really tried to do too much. The combination of the new Rules, the new Emergency Contact System and the Future Directions work meant we did not complete the second part of our Future Directions where we describe what we want our Club to be in 2–3 years' time.

I am sure the year ahead will be both challenging and enjoyable. Our new Committee will focus on making sure the Club operates efficiently as well as ensuring that there are lots of great activities for both members and visitors to enjoy, e.g. introducing a new Membership Database, rewriting our By-Laws, finishing off our Future Directions work, and making our programs even better with more choices and challenges.

Mick Noonan

GENERAL WALKS SECRETARY'S REPORT

In 2013 Melbourne Bushwalkers maintained its longstanding tradition of offering a fine range of activities for its members in addition to Sunday walks.

Overall, day walks attracted around the same number of participants as they did in 2012. MOFs and TOFs maintained this number despite the cancellation of three TOFs walks in February because of high temperature. The number attending Saturday walks was largely unchanged but slightly more people participated in the Wednesday walks. A similar number of visitors attended these day walks in 2013 as in the previous year.

The committee made a concerted effort to increase the number of pack carries and base camps in 2013 by introducing the mentoring of interested potential leaders by experienced leaders. People have been generous in offering their services but it is too soon to assess the effects of this innovation. Eighteen pack carries were programmed in 2013, an increase of one on the previous year, and attracting a similar number of participants as in 2012. 9 base camps, an increase of three, were scheduled and the number of participants was slightly up on 2012. As in 2012, a good snow season supported two snow-based activities, cross-country skiing and a snow shoe pack carry which attracted 6 and 12 participants respectively. Cycling continues to be supported at a similar level as in previous years.

Cancellation of activities was more prominent in 2013 than in previous years. On one hand this was clearly attributable to the hot summer with the associated heightened risk of fire. On the other hand the cancellation of two pack carry, one lodge and three cycling activities due to low numbers raises the question of whether there has been a shift in members' interests.

Particular thanks are due to the leaders of all these activities for their outstanding cooperation in providing previews for publication in the News and, on completion of the activity, a report for the Club database.

Cecily Hunter

SUNDAY WALKS SECRETARY'S REPORT

Again I wish to thank our leaders. All our leaders are the basis of our club and without them the club could not exist. The Sunday program had 29 leaders covering 78 walks with 5 leaders leading their first walks with the club and one mentor walking with a new leader. The high number of participants in the Leaders Training weekend was very encouraging with indications that more members will take the plunge and lead walks.

Unfortunately Sunday bus and carpool numbers have dropped from the record highs of 2012, with fewer of both members and visitors walking with the club. A concern is that this reduction in participation has mainly occurred in the second half of the year and may continue. Part of the reason for record highs in 2012 was a targeted campaign to encourage new members with pamphlets being dropped at bushwalking shops, centres of tertiary education and libraries. This brought in an influx of visitors and it has been decided that we will replicate this campaign in 2014 with an emphasis on locations that will attract visitors who may become long term members (e.g. city apartment accommodation).

Another initiative being introduced is opening the bus to members who just want a day out. The first walk to be offered for these participants is the Cumberland Walk outside Lorne in February. If spaces are available after the booking cut off time of Thursday 4:00 pm these will be opened to members and accompanying family and friends at the cost of the bus fee to visit Lorne for the day. What a great way to spend a Sunday (apart from walking) but to visit an area and enjoy its local attractions.

Overall we have a very strong participation in our Sunday program. However, with price pressures we hope that the promotion of the club and opening the bus to non-walkers will enable the club to continue offering bus walks at an affordable price.

Halina Sarbinowski

Committee Reports for AGM

MEMBERSHIP REPORT 2013

The average annual membership has remained static around 415–418 members over the last three years (2011–13).

While this is an average decline of 9.4% from the 460 members in 2008, in 2012 and 2013 significant follow-up action was undertaken with non-renewing members to the extent that only 55 members did not renew in 2013 being only 13% of the membership compared to other years that have been as high as 28% of members not renewing.

From 2012 hard copy distribution has ceased to be an option for new members, with all Newsletters, Activities Programs, Membership Lists and ancillary information being distributed via email to the majority of members. This has assisted in reducing the third biggest cost to the club from over \$9,600 p.a. to as little as \$1,730, thus assisting in maintaining a constant low level membership fee. The current cost of printing and posting the News is \$23 which is partly offset by a \$10 fee.

Membership by category: Life 13, Honorary 9, Single 249, Single (discounted) 51,
Couple 84, Couple (discounted) 7, News Subscribers 3

Roger Wyett

EQUIPMENT REPORT 2013

The club provides equipment for use by members and visitors at nominal hire rates and for use by leaders and the club generally at no charge. Items are selected to improve club facilities, contribute to safety, encourage beginners and assist members in the acquisition of appropriate gear. All purchases are justified on a cost benefit basis with income producing items meeting the additional requirement of being self-funding.

During the year we hired out 12 tents, 8 packs, 1 sleeping bag, 4 sleeping mats, 1 stove, 3 food dryers and a few sundry items for a total income of \$271. Members also made good use of our non-income producing items including Personal Locator Beacons, GPSs, projector, first aid kits and radios.

Also during the year a government grant enabled us to acquire two new Garmin Oregon 650 GPS units with Australian and New Zealand Topographic Maps.

We will continue to monitor developments in light weight gear and as usual are always happy to discuss equipment needs with members and visitors

John Fritze, Equipment Officer

WEBMASTER REPORT TO AGM – 2014

Throughout the past year the club's online presence has performed to expectations and continues to expand as a window on the club's activities, provide an information source for members and visitors and act as a tool for the management of the club's operations.

The primary internet-based operations of the club comprise:

- (a) The **website** at <http://mbw.org.au> which presents background information on the club of interest to visitors and potential members, provides timely details of future and past activities programs, provides a repository of archival material and provides a link address for the submission of enquiries at info@mbw.org.au;
- (b) A **social media** link through Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/melbournebushwalkers> which presents an alternative window to the club, provides a link back to the primary website as the source of detailed information and acts as a forum for discussion on club activities;
- (c) A restricted access **leaders' secure site** accessible by club office bearers and leaders as a source of best practice and policy documentation, a repository of maps and documentation from past activities for use in program planning, a database of participant bookings for past and future activities and a set of tools to facilitate the generation of Quarterly Activities Programs;

(continued over page)

Committee Reports for AGM

WEBMASTER REPORT *(continued from previous page)*

- (d) A restricted access **membership database** (under development) with details of member contact information, emergency contacts and financial status of membership compiled from membership application records and subscription renewals, used to generate the annual membership listing for all members and the issuing of annual subscription notices; and
- (e) A centralised **email management system** (under development) for the distribution of electronic mail to members with provision for the automated subscription and unsubscription by members and visitors to categories of communications.

The website

- (a) Attracts around 80 visitors per day (2400 per month) of whom around 50% are classified as unique in any 24 hour period;
- (b) Anecdotally acts as the primary source of club awareness for visitors and potential members.
- (c) Around 7% of visitors view the membership information section of the website;
- (d) In excess of 60% of visitors arrive from search engine enquiries; less than 5% are through referrals from other sites;
- (e) Around 30% of visitors utilise mobile devices (including tablets);
- (f) There are in excess of 10,500 photographs in the Photogallery;
- (g) There are around 1000 photographs in the archive (pre-2000) section of the Photogallery;
- (h) 60% of the club's newsletters have been scanned and 40% processed and available for download from the newsletter archive;
- (i) 12 of 18 copies of 'Walk' magazine have been scanned and are available for download.

Facebook

- (a) Has a regular following of around 200 persons (page likes);
- (b) Outranks Bushwalking Victoria as a source of referrals to the club website;
- (c) Around 60% of regular visitors are female (cf 46% for all Facebook users);
- (d) Attracts a younger audience than the general club membership; around 55% of females are in the 25–44 year age group and 37% of males;

As noted above, there are a number of projects and developments underway to enhance the utility of the club's internet facilities. These include the archiving activities covering past publications and photographs which have received strong support for past and current members. The principal development activities currently in progress are the finalisation of a membership database suite and the introduction of a new email management system. The former is a custom build to meet the club's specific requirements whilst the latter will utilise the open source phpList tool set. Both should be operational before the commencement of the club's 2014–15 financial year on 1st April 2014. Following these developments attention will be directed towards the implementation of an extended online booking capability for club activities.

Any members who would like to discuss options to help progress the club's online activities, whether it is assisting with the archiving projects or enhancing the club's online capabilities, are warmly invited to contact the webmaster.

In closing I wish to express the club's gratitude to all who have contributed to the online activities in the past year and in particular Chris Schirlinger for maintenance of the leaders' database and sharing the responsibility as webmaster in my absence, Mark Heath for taking on an increasing role as webmaster in my absence, Tina Leeuwrik, Mark Heath and Ron Hampton for their contributions to the document archives and the growing list of members who have contributed photographs for the Photogallery.

Ian Mair – Webmaster

ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS – MARCH 2014

Bogong High Plains work party 28–30 March

We will be joining with the 'Friends of Bogong' with their volunteer work on the Bogong High Plains. Possible activities include track maintenance and/or weed removal (it all depends on the expected weather and ranger priorities). Base camp and you need to have suitable equipment for both hot and possible cold (snow!) weather conditions. Bring your own small gardening tools. Come along for a fun time and helping the Rangers in the Bogong Management Unit of the Alpine National Park. Early bookings required to help the rangers with their planning.

This weekend is being led by Rod Novak for our club, so please contact him for more information and to let him know you're coming.

Regent Honeyeater nest boxing weekends

Come and help threatened species in the beautiful country near Benalla. Discover Squirrel Gliders residing in nest boxes while enjoying the Lurg Hills scenery, the extensive forest areas, the bush navigation practice, as well as gaining deeper insights into local ecological issues and seeing first-hand the successes this project has had during 19 years of habitat restoration.

Assisting Ray Thomas with this work is a very special experience, so if you have or haven't been nest boxing before, now is the time! Anyone can be involved, and Ray is careful to give all a safety briefing before setting out.

Accommodation is provided in the Benalla Scout Hall, or you can bring your own tent or choose from other accommodation available in Benalla. BYO picnic dinner to have with other volunteers on Saturday night at the old Lurg school house.

More information available here: <http://regenthoneyeater.org.au/nest-box.php>

Nest box weekends: March 1/2 April 5/6 May 3/4

I am hoping to gather a group to attend the April 5/6 weekend, so please let me know if you can join me then.

If you would prefer to go another weekend, then please contact Ray directly at ray@regenthoneyeater.org.au to let him know you're coming.



Deb Shand

WILLOW HUNTING ON THE BOGONG HIGH PLAINS 2014

The annual Australia Day weekend willow weeding event coordinated by Bushwalking Victoria and Parks Victoria on the Bogong High Plains was divided into two locations this year. One group stayed in the Viking Lodge at Falls Creek as in past years and went to weeding locations from there. The other group, eschewing the comforts of the ski lodge, carried their packs up Eskdale Spur to base camp near Cleve Cole hut on Mt Bogong. This latter group of nine, including three Melbourne Bushies and ably led by Ranger Anthony, then marched out from camp to wage war on the sallow willows that had taken root in the surrounding boggy areas.

We were rewarded with perfect sunny Alpine weather for the weekend with a cool breeze to keep the temperature pleasant. It was a great opportunity to get to know some bushwalkers from other clubs while exploring untracked areas in the high country and contributing to its protection from invasive species. As well as executing many tenacious young willows with secateurs, loppers, saws and poison, we had time to enjoy the Alpine scenery and wildflowers, to share bushwalking tips and stories, and to learn more about the environment and vegetation from the knowledgeable Parks Victoria ranger working with us. A good time was had by all, but the willows didn't fare as well!

Thanks to Mark and Agajan from MBW as well as our fellow workers for their company, and to Charlie Ablitt, BTAC Projects Coordinator from Bushwalking Victoria for organising the weekend.

Deb Shand

CATTLEMEN PUSH FOR GRAZING IN THE WONNANGATTA VALLEY

Published February 2014

The Victorian Government has asked Australia's environment minister Greg Hunt to approve a new cattle grazing trial in the Alpine National Park.

We understand that the minister has asked for further information and it is unclear how long this will take, although cattlemen are hoping to get cattle in before winter.

The cattlemen plan to bring 60 cattle into the remote Wonnangatta Valley, a beautiful river flat below the Howitt High Plains. The Wonnangatta valley has been ungrazed by cattle since 1988.

The cattlemen are claiming this three year trial will prove cattle should be brought into other areas of the national park to reduce fire risk.

Like previous attempts in 2010 and 2011, the proposal is seriously flawed:

- There is no scientific design for the trial, and apparently no scientists are involved.
- There has been no consideration of a location outside the national park, even though there are many areas where such a trial could be conducted.
- Information in the application is misleading, sometimes wrong or missing, and there is not enough information in the submission to enable a decision.
- There has been no call for this trial from the Bushfires Royal Commission, fire managers or the scientific community.
- Claims by the cattlemen that a trial is necessary have not been tested.
- The proposal could significantly impact nationally threatened species and communities.

For example the trial site covers one of the two known locations of the Pale Golden Moths Orchid, which is listed as vulnerable under national environmental laws.

The proposal to reintroduce cattle to the Alpine National Park is flawed and an attack on the integrity of national parks.

The Victorian Government's latest grazing trial is more of the same: a favour for cattlemen mates dressed up as fire and land management.

Take action

- 1 Write to federal environment minister Greg Hunt and let him know the trial should be rejected: Greg.Hunt.MP@aph.gov.au
- 2 Write, email or phone your local federal MP.
- 3 Send this e-letter: <http://vnpa.org.au/eletter/don't-let-cattle-destroy-the-alps-on-your-watch>
(from vnpa.org.au – Victorian National Parks Association)



FINDING SPECIAL INTEREST BOOKS

Sometimes finding special interest books on walking or walk guide books can be difficult. However, one useful resource, not just for special interest books, is the website booko.com.au.

Booko is an Australian website that searches for a book title or author and will provide you with options of where a particular book is available and the cost including delivery. For instance a book may cost US Dollars (USD) \$0.80 and have a shipping cost of USD \$10, another stockist will have free delivery but charge USD \$12 for the book. Booko will list each cost in Australian dollars and provide you with a total cost in Australian dollars, listing in order of the cheapest to most expensive, so that you can compare the offerings and make an informed decision. It searches Australian, US and UK online stockists.

Happy reading!

Cathy Merrick

A reminder that to view all available previews and any notifications of changes to walks, just log on to the walks program and previews pages on the MBW website:
http://www.mbw.org.au/mbw_activities/MBW_activities_program.php

**CUT OFF TIME FOR SUNDAY BUS ONLINE BOOKINGS
 4:00 PM THURSDAY PRIOR TO THE WALK.**

Bookings notified to busbookings@mbw.org.au after the cut off time will not be processed and a credit will be issued.

Payment to the leader of the full bus fee and late fee of \$5.00 will have to be made on the day if your booking has not been confirmed prior to the walk.



SUNDAY TRAIN

BELGRAVE TO SASSAFRAS CIRCUIT

DATE Sunday 9 March 2014

Train leaves Flinders Street station at 9:06 am, arrives at Belgrave railway station at 10:30 am. Meeting time for the walk: 10:30 am.



WEDNESDAY WALK

DANDENONG RANGES

DATE Wednesday 12 March 2014
STANDARD Easy/Medium
DISTANCE 16 km
ELEVATION 300 m
LEADER Ed Neff (instead of Jerry Grandage)
AREA Dandenong Ranges
MAP REF. Melway 52, 66, 122, 120
FIRE BAN DISTRICT Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE Mt Dandenong

Starting and finishing in the Kalorama area, we will head up the hill towards Mt Dandenong, then down through the Mt. Dandenong Arboretum and down Mechanics Track, Rifle Range Track, Bridge Track etc. to the Sylvan Dam area, then up to Mt Dandenong Tourist Road near Inverness Road. You will see a typical sample of Dandenong Ranges scenery on both sides of the mountain. I am leading this walk instead of Jerry Grandage who will be walking somewhere else.



BASE CAMP

BOAR GULLY CAMPGROUND, BRISBANE RANGES

(This walk replaces the Grampians BC cancelled due to the fires.)

DATE 28-30 March 2014
STANDARD Easy/Medium
DISTANCE Sat. approx. 15 km,
 Sun. approx. 18 km
LEADER Judith Shaw

TRANSPORT Private
MAP REF. Meridian Map Brisbane Ranges NP 1:30,000
LIMIT 12

Two day walks exploring some hidden gems in the beautiful Brisbane Ranges. On Saturday we explore the rugged Little River Gorge. This day is mostly off-track but not difficult. On Sunday we start at the beginning of Anakie Gorge and follow the Yankee Gully Creek through old gold-mining country, finishing at Stieglitz for afternoon tea. This day is mostly on tracks.



TOFS WALK

VALLEY RESERVE TO GLEN IRIS WETLANDS

DATE Thursday, 3 April 2014
STANDARD Easy
DISTANCE 11 km
ELEVATION Negligible
LEADER Keith White
TRANSPORT Train (or private car + train connection)
AREA East of City
MAP REF Melway 59, 60, 69 and 70
FIRE BAN DISTRICT Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE Melbourne

Meet at 10:30 am just inside the entrance to Valley Reserve (opposite Amber Grove) in Waimarie Drive, Mount Waverley – reference Melway 70F1

Valley Reserve is a bushland oasis in the heart of Mount Waverley. The walk will basically follow Gardners Creek passing Melbourne Water Retard Basin (good level of water at end December with a variety of birds) and through the Glen Iris Wetlands area.

Public transport option: Take train to Mount Waverley station and walk across to start of walk. The walk will finish at Glen Iris station (or East Malvern station if you require a shorter walk). NB: all stations are on the Glen Waverley line.

Private car option: Park your car near the start of the walk. Return by train to Mount Waverley station from either Glen Iris or East Malvern station.





PACK CARRY

WILSONS PROM BEGINNERS

DATE 4-6 April 2014
STANDARD Easy
DISTANCE 25 km
LEADERS Ian Mair and Halina Sarbinowski
TRANSPORT Private
AREA Wilsons Promontory
MAP REF Parks Victoria – Wilsons Promontory NP
FIRE BAN DISTRICT West Gippsland
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE Wonthaggi

How often do you feel that you would like to try overnight hiking and camping, feel that you are fit enough but have been too cautious to try or are concerned that you don't have the right equipment? Have you visited Tidal River at Wilsons Promontory and wondered what it is like on the other side? Now is a chance to take the plunge and take that next step in your bushwalking adventures. Or, if you are a bit more experienced, it is a chance to hone your skills and prepare for something bigger.

Wilsons Promontory is one of the favourite areas to visit for many bushwalkers. With well-defined walking tracks, stunning coastal views and inviting beaches it is an ideal location. The emphasis on this trip will be on enjoying the surroundings while sharing tips and advice on equipment selection, what to eat and how to prepare for longer trips and at the same time experiencing a night in your own portable castle. The club's selection of equipment for hire is an ideal way to test out some of the alternatives before making an expensive purchase.

After spending Friday night at Tidal River, or for those that prefer an early morning arrival, we will set off from Telegraph Saddle Car Park and head to our Saturday Night camp site at Sealers Cove, a distance of just over 10 km, mainly downhill. Arriving around lunch time we will take time to set up camp before exploring further. There will be an option to head along the coast to Kersops Peak with some of the best coastal views on the Prom, or for those who may be looking for an easier time, taking a dip in Sealers Cove.

Sunday morning we will have a relaxed start before retracing our steps back to Telegraph Saddle. A bit more uphill this time but we will not be in a rush. From Telegraph Saddle we will have a further option to drop our packs and follow the track to the top of Mt Oberon, overlooking Tidal River and the wider Prom, before setting off for home with a stop along the way for refreshments.

Numbers are limited and early booking is recommended to secure a place and/or reserve any hire equipment you may need. Telephone or email the leaders if you are looking to attend.



WORK PARTY

NEST BOX SURVEY

DATE 5-6 April 2014
STANDARD Easy
LEADER Ray Thomas
TRANSPORT Private
AREA Benalla
FIRE BAN DISTRICT Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE Wangaratta

Full details of this weekend were in last month's News. Also see Deb Shand's article on page 9 of this News.



SUNDAY BUS

MT JERUSALEM – MT EVERLAND

DATE Sunday 6 April 2014
STANDARDS Easy/Medium and Medium
LEADERS John Fritze and Theo Mertzianidis
TRANSPORT Bus – Leaving Southbank Blvd at 8:45 am
FIRE BAN DISTRICT Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE Melbourne

For details of this walk please contact the leaders.



WEDNESDAY WALK

MT CHARLIE & CONGLOMERATE CREEK FLORA RESERVES

DATE Wednesday 9 April 2014
RETURN TIME 6 pm
STANDARD Easy/Medium
DISTANCE 11 or 14 km
LEADER Jopie Bodegraven
AREA Riddells Creek area north of Sunbury
MAP Kilmore 1:50,000
FIRE BAN DISTRICT Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE Melbourne

This walk is in two parts. The first and major part, the 11 km bit, is a circuit and ascent of Mt Charlie with a side trip up Mt Teneriffe. It is mostly on track except for about 2 km of relatively easy off track along the Mt Charlie ridge and down off it. There are two major climbs. The first of about 230 m is the up and back ascent of Teneriffe, for which we will be rewarded with morning tea and great views northwards from a clifftop. Anyone up-averse could relax further down and wait. The second also of about 230 m total can't easily be avoided but we can take our time.

After all this we will adjourn for afternoon tea at one of the coffee shops in Riddells Creek and then for those with energy and time left we will do the delightful 3 km nature trail in the nearby Conglomerate Creek Flora Reserve with its creek cascades and open stringybark forest.

We will meet at 10 am at the junction of Mt Charlie Rd and Kent Rd at the base of Mt Charlie. This is about 3.5 km along the Mt Charlie Rd from the Riddells Creek to Kilmore Rd. From Riddells Creek travel about 3.3 km towards Kilmore or alternatively from Bolinda travel west 1.3 km along Mullalys Rd then turn left towards Riddells Creek for 3 km to Mt Charlie Rd.



CYCLING

BASE CAMP: BALLAN–BLACKWOOD AREA

DATE 12–13 April 2014
RETURN TIME 7 pm
STANDARD Medium
LEADER Jopie Bodegraven
FIRE BAN DISTRICT Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE Melbourne

This weekend consists of two day rides not far west of Melbourne, camping Saturday night at the Blackwood Caravan Park and having Saturday dinner at the Blackwood Pub. For the time-poor there is the option of joining us for just one day, given that we are quite close to Melbourne.

Saturday we will meet in Ballan near the toilets in Fiskens St just south of the Old Melbourne Rd at 9 am. Our ride takes us through lovely rolling farm country passing through Mt Egerton, Gordon and Wallace. Morning tea is at the Gordon Music Café and lunch at the Moorabool Reservoir. Distance is approx. 64 km with about 540 metres of ascents. It is all sealed except for about 3 km of gravel

On Sunday we are lucky as we start high and finish low with a car shuffle. We start about 100 m north of the junction of the Mt Blackwood Rd with the Pentland Hills Rd (Vicroads 77G3) and finish about 330 metres lower in Bacchus Marsh. The ride is about 65 km with only about 360m of climbing. Once again there is about 3km of gravel, the rest sealed.

A highlight will be the wonderful downhill cruise through the Parwan valley. Morning tea will once again be at a café, this time in Ballan. I doubt I will be able to maintain this high standard of coffee stops on future rides but it would be nice! For those not sufficiently caffeinated by the end of the ride, there is a nice bakery café in BM that we can stop at.

If you are happy to camp, I will organise that but if you would like a cabin, please organise that yourself by ringing the caravan park on 5368 6539. Let me know if you would like to share so that I can put you in touch with any other cabinners

So come along for another fun cycling weekend.



SUNDAY CAR POOL

MT ST LEONARD VIA CONDONS TRACK
 (ALTERNATIVE DEPARTURE POINT)

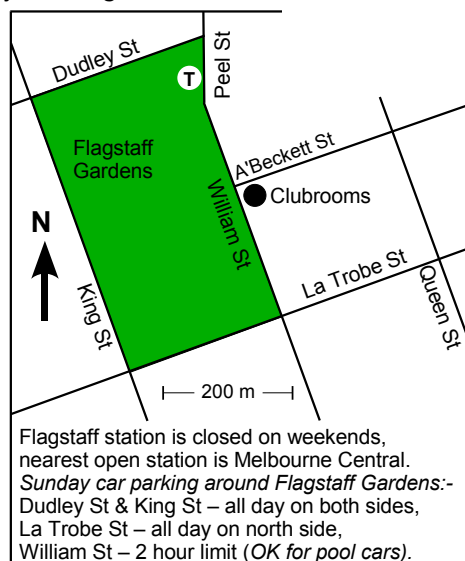
DATE Sunday 13 April, 2014
STANDARD Medium/Hard
DISTANCE 23.5 km
ELEVATION 1200 m rise and fall
LEADER Ian Mair
TRANSPORT Car pool from William Street at 8:45 am
TRANSPORT COST \$13.00 (per person)
AREA Yarra Ranges National Park
MAP REFERENCE Juliet North and Juliet South 1:25000
FIRE BAN DISTRICT Central
TEMP. REFERENCE SITE Yarra Glen

Last done in November 2011, this challenging walk, including an optional side trip to Mt Monda, was enjoyed by all who made the effort. A great test of your current fitness level!

It is not a walk for the unfit or inexperienced! The circuit walk, starting from Donnellys Weir not far from Healesville, taking in Condons Track on the way to Mt St Leonard and returning by the Mt St Leonard Track, is a day walk for those

ALTERNATIVE DEPARTURE POINT FOR SUNDAY WALKS OPPOSITE CLUBROOM

When advised, the alternative departure point for Sunday walks noted on the walks program and in previews will be at the bus stop on the northern corner of A'Beckett Street and William Street, opposite the clubrooms at the Royal Historical Society building.



that like a good workout. The distance itself of around 23.5 km is enough to put it in the harder range of Sunday walks. Coupled with a total elevation rise and fall of over 1200 m, including the sharp 550 m climb in 2.6 km of the Condons Track, makes it one of the hardest walks on the Sunday program. The estimated walking time with minimal breaks will be around 7–8 hrs. For those that accept the challenge, however, the rewards are that much greater.

The walk starts with a picturesque walk to 'Echo Tunnel' alongside a feeder channel forming part of the Melbourne water supply system from where it follows 4WD Management Roads to the start of Condons Track up the slopes of Mt Monda. The track passes through ancient fern gullies and tall wet Mountain Ash forest. Condons Track is maintained by Bushwalking Victoria and the benefits of the coordinated efforts will be appreciated, especially if we encounter rain on the slippery slopes. From the top of Condons Track we will follow earthen roads around to Mt St Leonard (although there is the option to first visit Mt Monda, adding another 3 km to the walk!). From Mt St Leonard we will take in magnificent views across the Yarra Valley to Melbourne before descending through mixed eucalypt forest along the Mt St Leonard track back to Donnellys Weir.

Should you choose to accept the challenge please contact me by telephone or see me in the club room. As this walk is rated Medium/Hard all walkers need to speak to the leader before bookings can be confirmed.

Please note that the carpool will depart from the clubrooms in William Street.



MOFS WALK

SEAFORD-FRANKSTON RETURN

DATE	Monday 14 April 2014
RETURN TIME	Before 4 pm, Seaford Station.
STANDARD	Easy
DISTANCE	Approximately 12 km
ELEVATION	Flat
LEADERS	Alan and Jan Case
TRANSPORT	Train
AREA	Frankston
MAP REF	Melway 99, 102 and 100A
FIRE BAN DISTRICT	Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE	Frankston

The walk starts and finishes at the Seaford station on the Frankston railway line. The walk to Frankston will be along the foreshore, through the Seaford Foreshore Reserve and along the beach as the tides at that time will allow for easy walking on packed sand.

Lunch will be at Frankston's George Pentland Botanic Gardens. These gardens are a pleasant surprise in the midst of suburbia. The gardens feature a large array of Australian native plants and plants from the Mornington Peninsula, a lake and fern gullies.

The return walk to Seaford will be along the Kananook Creek Walking Trail.

Meet at Seaford railway station (Melway 99 E3) before 10:30 am.



PACK CARRY

KANANGRA WALLS TO KATOOMBA (NSW)

DATE	Thursday 17 April to Monday 21 April 2014
STANDARD	Medium/Hard
DISTANCE	49 km
LEADER	Agajan Akbari
TRANSPORT	Private
AREA	Kanangra walls to Katoomba (NSW)
MAP REF	Central Map Authority (CMA) Kanangra, Jenolan, Jamison and Katoomba

The walk from Kanangra Walls to Katoomba is one of the classic longer walks of the Southern Blue Mountains. Crossing two national parks and mountain passes, a river crossing with spectacular mountain views, great camp sites and a variety of vegetation types. There are magnificent views along the way including excellent views from the high plateaux of Narrow Neck and Kanangra Walls and Coxs River.

This walk could provide some challenge as much of the walk is through wilderness, for which there are no signs, and tracks in places are vague. It is planned to do this walk in three days and to be at start of the walk at Kanangra Walls late afternoon on Thursday 17 April 2014. That means we should fly to Sydney early morning on Thursday 17 April 2014 (choose any airliner you like). Catch Sydney's trains in time to be at Katoomba railway station not later than 1:30 pm.

From Katoomba we will be transported to the start of the walk at Kanangra Walls camp on Thursday night and start the walk on Good Friday. The walk will be completed on Sunday 20 April, and we will be staying Sunday night at YHA Katoomba.

Participants are required to be experienced and have some fitness, well equipped with all types of weather gear and carrying their own personal first aid kit. Numbers are limited

and preference will be given to club members. This walk is one of the classic walks in Australia and therefore is recommended.

If interested in the walk or wanting more information contact me via email.



SUNDAY BUS

CRESWICK'S MINERS WALK

DATE	Sunday 20 April 2014
RETURN TIME	6:30 pm to City
STANDARDS	Easy and Easy/Medium
DISTANCES	15 km and 19 km
ELEVATIONS	200 m
LEADERS	Halina Sarbinowski and Richard Long
TRANSPORT	Bus – Leaving Southbank Blvd at 8:45 am
AREA	Ballarat Creswick
MAP REF	The Great Dividing Trail – Wallaby Track Map
FIRE BAN DISTRICT	Ballarat
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE	Central

The Great Dividing Trail (GDT) is fast becoming an iconic long distance walk in Victoria. Using the Great Dividing Range as its backbone it traverses many locations that are steeped in history ... the history that has formed Victoria. Our walk will follow one of the most renowned events that formed our identity.

The famous Eureka rebellion took place in late 1854 in Ballarat. On December 1, 1854, some 200 Creswick miners set out on foot to join their 'brothers in arms' in Ballarat. It was a hot and thirsty march. Raffaello Carboni, one of the rebellion leaders, recorded in his journal that the Creswick miners arrived 'helpless, grog worn, and proved to be the greatest nuisance'. Later in history the artistic Lindsay family roamed these hills.

We will walk in the opposite direction to the miners, which should help us avoid becoming as grog worn as they were. Both groups will start at different points on the outskirts of Ballarat and finish at the beautiful St. Georges Lake in Creswick. The walk follows a marked trail; the terrain is undulating and easy going. The vegetation is mostly eucalypt forest. There is ample evidence of mining activity in the area.



SOCIAL WALK

POUND BEND, YARRA RIVER

DATE	Thursday 24 April, 2014
STANDARD	Easy
DISTANCE	5 km
ELEVATION	Mostly flat with some little hills
LEADER	Jean Giese
TRANSPORT	Private
AREA	Warrandyte
MAP REF	Melway 23
FIRE BAN DISTRICT	Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE	Melbourne

The Social Walkers haven't ventured to Warrandyte yet, so Pound Bend is a good place to start. We will see where the hopeful early miners built a tunnel to divert the water from the river so they could seek the alluvial gold where the river forms a big loop. We will follow the loop upstream for about 2 km before returning to the cars by a different route. Melway 23A11.



DANDENONGS EXPLORER

DATE Saturday 26 April 2014
STANDARD Easy/Medium
LEADER Maureen Hurley
TRANSPORT Private
FIRE BAN DISTRICT Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE Melbourne

For details of this walk please contact the leader.



SUNDAY CAR POOL

GRASS TREE WALK

DATE Sunday 27 April 2014
RETURN TIME 6 pm to City
STANDARD Easy/Medium
DISTANCE 14 km
ELEVATION Up and down 700 m
LEADER Mick Noonan
TRANSPORT Car Pool – Leaving Southbank Blvd at 8:45 am
COST approx. \$13
AREA Brisbane Ranges
MAP REF Walk 22 – Daywalks around Melbourne by Glen Tempest, Staughton Vale 1:25,000
FIRE BAN DISTRICT Central
TEMPERATURE REFERENCE SITE Geelong



Autumn is a great time for walking! The ‘Grass Tree Walk’ in the Brisbane Ranges not far from Melbourne is a very interesting walk named after the famous Xanthorrhoea or ‘native grass tree’. The Brisbane Ranges National Park has almost 20% of the native plants found in Victoria.

The walk follows the initial section of the 3-day Burchell Trail commencing at the Boar Gully Camping Ground. It is mainly along quiet management tracks through undulating woodland with an understorey of grass trees and one steep climb out of a little gorge. Old slate quarries, good views, eastern grey kangaroos, wallabies, stringybark trees and the little gorge add to its appeal.

There is cinnamon fungus in the area so use the boot cleaning stations on the day and clean your shoes when you get home!

You can check out the walk on EvertTrail.com and download a GPS file. If you have a GPS bring it along on the day.

If all goes to plan there should be time for a coffee at Bacchus Marsh on the way home and still be back in Melbourne by 6 pm. See you there!!

**EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
 LORNE BASE CAMP/CABIN TRIP**

Friday 6th to Monday 9th June, 2014

Expressions of interest are invited from members who would like to participate in a Base Camp/Cabin trip at Lorne over the Queen’s Birthday Holiday weekend in June.

Three cabins with en suite facilities have been booked. Couples/singles can be accommodated. Actual cost will depend on numbers in each cabin (maximum of 6) but will range between \$111.50 to \$134.25 for the 3 nights. A deposit of \$50 per person is required at time of booking. A camping option is also available at a cost of \$37 per site for 2 people plus \$12 per person extra with a maximum number of 4 people per site.

Two full day walks will be conducted plus a shorter walk on the Monday.



**ADVANCE NOTICE
 CROSS COUNTRY SKIING
 BOGONG HIGH PLAINS**



August 9–16 2014

Again we have the opportunity to enjoy the untracked expanses of the High Plains in winter. Staying in a basic but comfortable chalet 12 km away from the distractions of Falls Creek we tend to have the snow to ourselves, rarely seeing anyone else. There tends to be two or three trips organised each day catering to everyone’s inclinations or skill levels. A voluntary roster is drawn up to ensure all jobs are done so the week runs efficiently giving maximum time for skiing.

Past skiers are welcome to return and newcomers are encouraged to discuss requirements for joining us.

*Doug Pocock
 or Marilyn Whimpey*



Bus transport meets at Southbank Boulevard, south side of the Arts Centre, before 8:45 am. Leader or deputy will be there rain, hail or shine!

APRIL 2014				
Thu 3	Valley Reserve to Glen Iris	Pvt	Easy	Keith White
4-6	Pack carry: Wilsons Prom Beginners	Pvt	Easy	Ian Mair and Halina Sarbinowski
5-6	Nest Box Survey Benalla	Pvt	Easy	Ray Thomas
Sun 6	Mt Jerusalem – Mt Everland	Bus	E/M & M	John Fritze and Theo Mertzandis
Wed 9	Mt Charlie and Conglomerate Creek Flora Reserves	Pvt	E/M	Jopie Bodegraven
12-13	Cycling: Ballan-Blackwood Area	Pvt	Med	Jopie Bodegraven
Sun 13	Mt St Leonard via Condons Track (alternative departure point)	Car	M/H	Ian Mair
Mon 14	Seaford Frankston Return	Pvt	Easy	Alan Case
17-21	Pack carry: Kanangra Walls to Katoomba (NSW)	Pvt	M/H	Agajan Akbari
Sun 20	Creswick's Miners	Bus	E & E/M	Halina Sarbinowski and Richard Long
Thu 24	Pound Bend, Yarra River	Car	Easy	Jean Giese
Sat 26	Dandenongs Explorer to be confirmed	Pvt	E/M	Maureen Hurley
Sun 27	Grass Tree Walk	Car	E/M	Mick Noonan

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