



The NEWS

of the

MELBOURNE WALKERS INC.

February 1998

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

EDITION 564

Print Post Approved. P.P. No. 338888/00016

PRICE 60 cents

**RIVER CANOEING
MAKES MORE COMEBACKS THAN
DAME NELLIE MELBA!!!**

The Goulbourn River

27 February to 1 March

Suitable for beginners

Book early to avoid missing out.

Details inside

Opera in the Park

Held in the elegant surrounds of

Victoria Gardens

High Street, Prahran

Melways 2M B12

6 - 9 pm Saturday 28 February

Pack a picnic hamper and rug and come and enjoy your favourite opera arias and Broadway hits sung in an outdoor setting that is hard to surpass.

A free event for friends and family
For more information phone Marisa

BBQ On the Yarra

Date: Friday 20th February

Time: 6pm onwards

Place: Yarra River BBQ
Alexander Ave
(Near the Swan St Bridge)

B.Y.O. Rug, Picnic Basket, Meat, Salad & Drinks

Join us for a relaxing evening at the river.
Interested people phone Marisa

Notice
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of
Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc
will be held on

**Wednesday 25 February 1998
at 8.00 pm,**

**in the Horticultural Hall,
Victoria Street,
(enter from the Clubrooms, Mackenzie Street)**

**for tabling of
Annual Reports
and Election of Office Bearers.**

All Welcome.
Only Members can vote.

Agenda

1. Minutes from the Half Yearly General Meeting 1997
2. Treasurer's Report
3. Two motions to change the Constitution (Details in January edition of **News**)
4. Motion to appoint Jean Giese as Life Member (Details in this edition of **News**)
5. Election of Committee and Office Bearers
6. General Business

Wilky Winter Bookings

open 4th March, 1998
Details inside

From the Editor

As the editor I really urge all leaders to submit walk previews. New members read these and use these to decide if they will go on the walk. Although most people are very conscientious about these there are always a couple who forget.

I would like to thank all those who do send in articles. I have had to hold a couple over for next time as there is just no more room this month.

Judy Gipps

From the President

It can't really be twelve months since I began writing these pieces, but the calendar says otherwise. This month we have the AGM when all the committee positions become vacant and we have to elect all officers. I urge you to attend the AGM or to use your proxy vote.

You will find reports on our activities in this issue. We have maintained a satisfactory situation on all fronts. The only item that is unresolved is that of our clubrooms. This has been on the agenda for over a year, so it deserves a mention now.

The Victorian Government owns the building that we use. They decided to contract out the management by leasing the entire building to private enterprise. However I understand that parliamentary approval has now been given, and a lease has been produced. The new owners will check out and sign this, then begin to take over. They have given preliminary agreement for our continued use of the building, albeit a different

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, 14 Fairfield Grove, Caulfield South 3162, 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 MARCH 98 News is 25th February 98

area. We will know more over the next month or so.

Please read the note from GT, our conservation representative. This is a serious issue that deserves your attention. Your views would be most welcome.

Derrick Brown

NOTICE OF MOTION TO BE DEBATED AT THE A.G.M

"That Jean Giese be made a life member of the Melbourne Bushwalkers"

Moved: Doug Pocock
Seconded: Dave Andrews

Jean joined the Club in November 1976 after reading a copy of "Walk" magazine given to her by a member Jim Wilcox. Jean was in bed at the time recovering from a broken pelvis and thought that bushwalking would be good therapy for her. As an enthusiastic walker for a few years Jean, in typical fashion, decided to give something back to the Club and joined the committee. In 1990 as Vice President she became Acting President when the then President had to take leave due to ill-health.

Elected President in 1991 she held that position for four years. During her time in office Jean presided over the debate of whether to keep or sell the Club van. There were very strong opinions on both sides of the debate and Jean chaired the various meetings of the Club until the final decision was made to sell the van.

During her time on committee Jean was very active in introducing Wednesday Walks and also introducing the system of a member on Clubrooms duty to welcome visitors. The separate phone line for the Club answering service was another of her initiatives. Jean has been a consistent leader in the Club with many day, weekend and extended walks to her credit.

It is not only her record of service to the Club that prompts this motion but Jeans outgoing personality and friendliness that makes her such an asset to the club and a pleasure to walk with. Jean is certainly a person to "hold in high esteem".

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

Previews for February/March Day Walks

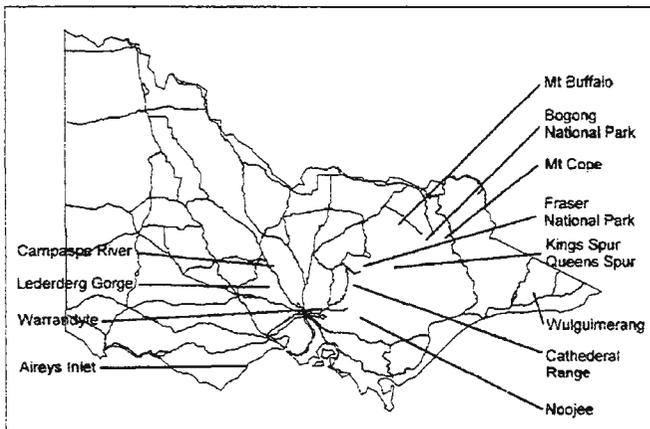
Saturday 28 February 1998 Dandenong Explorer Easy

Leader: Michael Humphrey
Transport: Private
Area: Sassafras - Sherbrooke Forest
Expected time of return: 4 pm
Approximate length of walk: 12 km
Map Reference: Melways maps 66 & 75

Come along and join me in this very beautiful part of the Dandenong's. Beginning at Grants Picnic Ground (Melway 75 K4) we make our way to Beagleys Bridge where we pick up the walking track which skirts Sassafras Creek to Olinda.

We will lunch at Ferny Creek Reserve after which we make our way into Sherbrooke Forest for the return journey. I have chosen this area for its cool and shady surrounds as this time of year can be very hot.

We will commence the walk promptly at 10.30 am at Grants Picnic Ground. If you are coming by public transport, the train arrives at Belgrave station at 10.03 am. Please phone me at home on if you need to be picked up. See you there!!



Sunday 1 March 1998 Fraser National Park Easy/Medium & Medium

Leaders: John Kittson & Rod Novak
Transport: Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 8.30 am
Area: Eildon NE of Melbourne
Expected time of return: 8 pm
Approximate length of walk: 15 & 20 km
Map Reference: Fraser National Park & Collier Bay 1:25,000

Note 8.30 start

Both walks start and finish at the Devil Cove Camping Ground at Lake Eildon. Our climb up Keg Spur will give us some great views of the surrounding mountains and also Lake Eildon far below. It makes it well worth the effort. The wildlife in this area is made up of kangaroos, wallabies cockatoos, kookaburras, magpies,

crimson rosellas, just to name a few that we will see on our way through the open forests in this area. We will finish our walk along the tree lined banks of this lovely man made lake on our way back to the bus.

Sunday 8 March 1998 Dom Dom Saddle Easy/Medium & Med - Mt Vinegar - Fernshaw

Leaders: Sue Ralston & Peter Havlicek
Transport: Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Area:
Approximate distance from Melbourne:
Expected time of return: 7:00 - 7:30 pm
Approximate length of walk: E/Medium 16 km, Med 20km
Map Reference: Juliet 8022-4-N and Juliet South 8022-4-S (1:25 000)

Walk preview

(** PLEASE NOTE: The walk on Campaspe River originally planned for this Sunday has been rescheduled due to access being denied by farmers during the high fire danger period.)

Location: Dom Dom Saddle to Mt Vinegar - Fernshaw (E/m) & to Mt Monda & Maroondah Dam (M)

E/Medium 16 km, 550 m ascent (ascent may be avoided and walk shortened for some walkers) Medium 20 km, 600+ m ascent

These peaceful, pretty walks start at Dom Dom Saddle and follow tracks in the cool forested and fern-treed areas of the Maroondah Catchment area and Marysville State Forest.

The easy-medium walkers will make their way from Dom Dom Saddle to the base of Mt Vinegar. There, those heavily allergic to a stiffish climb (of 380 m) may skirt the mountain and wait for us at the Road Eight junction. The rest of us will climb up, have lunch at Cleft Rock (a very interesting spot!), then down from the high point of Mt Vinegar (approx 970 m) along Road Eight towards Carters Gap and on to Fernshaw along Morley's Track (one of the prettiest tracks I know).

The medium walk, from Dom Dom Saddle (508 m) to Mount Monda (900 m) and down Condon's Track to Maroondah Dam is though lush mountain ash and messmate forest, with grassy hills, blackwoods and fern trees. There are two steepish climbs totalling 500m (both before lunch!) and a descent of 700m at the end. The tracks vary from fire tracks to grassy fire breaks to some which are blackberry-strewn and barely discernible!

Monday 9 March 1998 **Historical Walk**
Easy **Dennis - Yarra Bend**

Leader: Athol Schafer
Transport: Train, meet under Flinders St Station clock at 10 am
Area: Yarra Bend Parlands
Expected time of return: 4 pm
Approximate length of walk: 8 km
Map Reference: Melways Maps 30 & 44

For the Labour Day holiday this is a circle walk, starting and finishing at Dennis Railway Station. Features along the way include Merri Creek Gorge, Dights Falls, the two boat houses and extensive parkland made up of Studley, Fairfield and Yarra Bend Parks.

Saturday 14 March 1998 **Little River Gorge**
Medium **Cathedral Range**

Leader: Alan Ide
Transport: Private
Limit: 10 persons
Approximate length of walk: 10 - 12 km
Map Reference: Cathedral Range
 Outdoor Leisure Map (1:25,000)

The Little River Falls are hidden away in the unfashionable lower east-side of the Cathedral park. We will follow the Lowerson track from Cooks Mill until it runs out by the Little River. From there it is cross country up the gorge. This is fairly rugged and is likely to result in wet feet, dialog with leeches and the odd broken limb. Once we have got over the main falls, there are several others up steam to explore. There are many options for our return depending on how the party is feeling, but it should be a circuit walk back to Cooks Mill.

Please call Alan on (H) or (W) for information and transport arrangements.

Sunday 15 March 1998 **Aireys Inlet - Lorne**
Easy & Medium

Leaders: Fay Pratt & Clare Lonergan
Transport: Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Expected time of return: 7.30 pm
Approximate length of walk: 13 & 16 km
Map Reference: Outdoor Leisure Map
 The Otways and Shipwreck Coast

The medium walk commences at Aireys Inlet lighthouse and is a pleasant beach walk with plenty of rockhopping. Many beautiful specimens of beach life and rock formations may be observed along the shore. The walk finishes at Lions Park, North Lorne with an opportunity for a swim, so bring your bathers. Beach shower available.

The easy walk begins at Fairhaven Surf Lifesaving Club.

Both walks follow the same route to North Lorne. The photo opportunities are well worth the effort, so bring your cameras.

Wednesday 18 March 1998 **Lederberg Gorge**
Easy/Medium

Leader: Trevor Thomson
Transport: Private
Area: Bacchus Marsh
Expected time of return: 5 pm
Approximate length of walk: up to 9 km
Map Reference: Lederberg Gorge CFL 1:25,000

A chance to walk along this rugged and impressive gorge. If not too hot, we will climb up to 280 m out of the gorge for panoramic views, and descend back further along. We can rockhop up the gorge as far as we like, as the river is very low now (mid Jan), but there are plenty of pools for dips or paddles.

Meet 9.15 am Westgate Bridge Park, or 10 am Darley Ford, at the north end of Lederberg River Road.

Saturday 21 March 1998 **Yarra River Lilo Trip**
Easy **Warrandyte**

Leaders: Ken & Joan MabMahon
Transport: Private

Come and have a good time in Warrandyte, liloing down the river - followed by an evening barbecue at our place which backs onto the river.

Participants can start from the bridge (2km), Jumping Creek (5 km) or even further upstream if you have the time and energy. There are lots of gentle rapids interspersed with long deep stretches. If it is too cool for frolicking in the river, we'll organise a walk instead.

BYO everything including chairs and lilos.

Sunday 22 March 1998 **Belbird Creek**
Easy/Medium & Medium **Noojee**

Leaders: Lloyd Young & Fulvia Collavo
Transport: Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Area: Noojee
Expected time of return: 7 pm
Approximate length of walk: approx 13 & 16km

These walks will be in beautiful forest areas very suitable for this time of year. Come along and have a lovely day walking though this beautifully shaded forest.

Previews for March Weekend & Pack-Carry Walks

27 February - 1 March 1998 **Wilsons Prom**
Easy/Medium

Leader: Teck Chin
Transport: Private
Area: 220 km
Expected time of return: 8 pm
Approximate length of walk: 20 km
Map Reference: Wilsons Prom National Park 1:50,000

The aim of this walk is to maximise the opportunity to see the many wonderful sights of the Prom. We should leave Melbourne about 7 pm. The earlier the better. We will camp at Tidal River Village for the night. The walk starts at Oberon carpark and proceed to Sealers Cove, our campsite for the night. There will be a side trip to Refuge Cove. The next day we head back to the carpark.

27 February - 1 March 1998 **Goulbourn River-**
Easy **Canoeing**

Leader: George Zamorah
Transport: Private
Area: Goulbourn River, Nathalia District
Approximate distance from Melbourne: 250 km

Come and explore with me the wanders of the Goulbourn River.

On Friday night we will camp close to McCoys Bridge, which is located on the Murray Valley Highway. On Saturday we start our paddle downstream to where the Goulbourn River meets the Murray River. On Saturday night we will camp on one of the sandbars along the river. (Plenty of sand bars on this trip.) We should arrive at Stewards Bridge on Sunday afternoon after smooth water paddling all the way.

For those people who have been on previous canoeing trips, this river is completely different to the Murray River. First, there are no high speed boats on this river, just canoes, so you don't have to insert your fingers in your ears each time passes. Second, the river is not as deep, nor does it have such strong currents as the Murray River, which means that it is easier to negotiate obstacles such as snags.

You will see magnificent River Red Gumms and many types of native birds; but you will not see people (except at an exclusive country resort that may leave you open mouthed. Beautiful campsites will provide a trip to remember. It will be an easy trip with lots of swim stops, lunch and afternoon breaks.

Warning: It will be hot - old pyjamas, plenty of 15+ and a hat.

We will hire canoes at Barmah. The two person Canadian canoes are supplied with - life jackets,

waterproof barrels, detailed maps, bird ID book, fact sheets and compasses. A deposit of \$10 will be required.

A great adventure. This trip is a must. It is already half full so book early.

You can book at the club room or ring AH or BH

6-9 March 1998 **Mt Cope - Youngs Hut-**
Easy/Medium **McNamaras Hut**

Leaders: Stan Macowiak
Transport: Private
Area: High Plains/Falls Creek
Expected time of return: Late Sunday evening

This walk will be held in the area near Wilky in the Alpine National Park area. See the leader about this walk in the clubrooms.

6-9 March 1998 **Little River Gorge**
Medium/Hard **Wulgulmerang**

Leader: Stephen Rowlands
Transport: Private
Area: Snowy River
Expected time of return: Monday evening
Map Reference: Murrindal

This gorge is the biggest and deepest in the area. Starting at the road bridge we will spend the next three days abseiling, rockhopping and swimming our way downstream towards the snowy river. Blackberries will more than likely to be encountered so bring some appropriate clothing. Due to the abseiling (waterfalls maybe included) everyone is required to provide their own harness and have abseiling experience.

More information can be obtained from Walk 1987.

13-15 March 1998 **Cape Liptrap**
Easy **Base Camp**

Leader: Merilyn Whimpey
Transport: Private
Expected time of return: 6 pm Sunday
Map Reference: Maitland Beach 1:25 000
& Walkerville 1:25,000

This is a very short walk along the coast with lots of rock scrambling, plenty of opportunities for swims and wonderful views of Wilson's Prom. Last time we did it the tide was coming in which made it quite interesting, but we still got to camp very early on Saturday afternoon. On Sunday besides further beach walking there are ruins of an old lime kiln to look at.

There is a camping area accessible to vehicles at Bear Gully, so we'll car shuffle from there and camp there

on Saturday night – Friday night too if you want to. It's only about 2-1/2 hours drive from Melbourne, so it's possible to drive down on Saturday morning. I can't remember whether we had to bring our own water last time. I'll let you know when you book in.

20-22 March 1998 Kings Spur - Queens Spur
Medium

Leaders: Ralph Blake
Transport: Private
Area: Howitt
Map Reference: Howitt

This walk will be in the Mt Speculation area. Please see the leader about the route in the clubrooms.

20-22 March 1998 Bogong National Park
Medium/Hard Work Party

Leaders: Doug Pocock
Transport: Private
Area: Bogong

This will be the clubs annual contribution to helping maintain the Bogong National Park. Please come along and help and at the same time have a great weekend socialising with other like minded people. This is a very good cause and in beautiful surroundings.

27-29 March 1998 Federation W/E Base Camp
Various Mt Buffalo

Leaders: Sylvia Ford
Transport: Private
Expected time of return: 9 pm
Approximate length of walk: varied
Map Reference: Buffalo 1:25,000

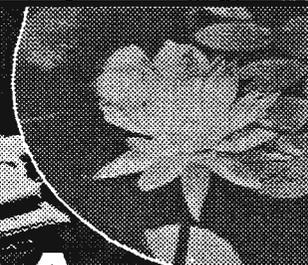
One club in the Federation of Bushwalking Clubs hosts the annual get together. (we did this in 1990 for our 50th anniversary.) This year its the turn of the VICTORIAN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION who are celebrating the centenary of the Mt Buffalo National Park. There are always stacks of walks of different lengths and degree of difficulty, leaving at different times, so there's something for everyone or its interesting hob nobbing with people from other clubs. As there's pressure on camping places at Lake Catani we have been allocated 12 places only, so let me know asap if you want to come. Other camping is off the mountains and needs to be self organised. Buffalo affords terrific views, has lots of granite bolder and has a charm of its own. If you haven't been before come and join us for a sociable and interesting weekend.

wilderness
 winter
 walking
 JUNE-
 JULY
 1998



PILBARA

EXPEDITION



As far from Sydney and Melbourne as you can get and still be in Australia, the Pilbara offers magnificent bushwalking without people. Our 1998 expedition is divided into two sections, either of which may be done on its own.

Karijini National Park: June 21 – July 5

Walk through deep, red-walled gorges in a rugged landscape that seems to go on forever. We do two long walks, one of which includes an all-day lilo trip through some of the deepest gorges. For more information, see the Karijini feature in the January 1995 Australian Geographic.

Chichester Range: July 5 – 18

We plan to do a single long walk in one of the least known parts of the Millstream-Chichester National Park. You will see gorges, waterfalls and wildflowers. You won't see people – so few people know about this area that it's unlikely your group will see anyone else during the entire walk.

We can't put the details in a short ad like this. **Ask for our trip notes.** Get in early and take advantage of our advance purchase discounts.



12 Carrington St.
Millner NT 0810

Phone: (08) 8985 2134

Fax: (08) 8985 2355

Conservation Forum

The Age (28/1/98) published a letter from Deirdre Slattery (La Trobe Uni Dept of Outdoor Education) regarding the introduction of new cattle grazing into the Alpine National Park. The grazing follows the recent fires in the Park. I will quote the last 3 paragraphs of Deirdre's letter as she puts the issues well.

A big fire causes a loss for all Victorians — loss of water resources, of soil, of timber, of plants and animals, of landscapes and of recreation but far from announcing measures to protect and rehabilitate the area while it recovers, Marie Tehan has now compounded the loss.

In order to replace loss of grazing to a favored few (because of the devastation caused to Holmes Plain, Wellington and Bennison Plains) she has handed over grazing rights for the rest of the season to one of the few remaining plains area. Two hundred head of cattle (and their calves) will now trample and munch their way through Bryce Plain, around the Piemans Creek and Bryce Gorge area, at a total return to the taxpayer of four dollars per head. And this is a Special Protection Zone in a national park!

The damage caused by alpine grazing has been very well demonstrated and documented. A season's grazing will be enough to leave its mark on this area, which was already degraded from prepark days. The loss to Victorians through fire in their biggest national park is already considerable. For a return of \$800, we will now lose further conservation value and pleasure in our so called "national. park", not just now but for years to come.

The following day The Age published a letter from Marie Tehan, Minister for Conservation and Land Management. I will again quote the last 3 paragraphs in full as it is the essence of the response.

... With regard to relocation of stock from licensed areas affected by the fire, this step was only taken after careful consideration of the natural values of the park.

The arrangements made with the affected licencees require that an area of former freehold land previously used for grazing, will be fenced off to prevent cattle from straying into the rest of the park. This conforms with a provision of the National Parks Act, which allows grazing on freehold land, formerly part of the Wonnangatta Station acquired for

addition to the park. Within this fenced area sensitive communities, such as sphagnum bogs and areas containing rare and threatened species will be fenced off to prevent damage by grazing. Rigorous inspections of the fenced area will also be undertaken by rangers so that, if any damage from overgrazing is revealed, other arrangements can be quickly implemented to address this.

These conditions are based on this being a one-off emergency arrangement to offset the loss of licensed areas caused by the fire.

One thing that is not clear at this stage is whether the Minister has interpreted the National Parks Act correctly. There is so much bureaucratess in the 2nd para it's not clear what point Minister Tehan is making. There are no existing licences for the area taken over and it may be that the minister can only reshuffle between existing licences. This is to be resolved. Irrespective of the legality of the situation the minister clearly doesn't see any conflict over values by reintroducing grazing into a sensitive area that is within a national park. If, as she states, there are other arrangements that can be quickly implemented why weren't the other arrangements quickly implemented in the first place rather than risk damaging a national park? No, she sees it as her prerogative to dispense this largesse at our expense and to the detriment of a national park.

Another unhappy piece of news, which came via David Rimmer (VicWalk president), is that royal assent has been given to the excision of the 285 hectares from the Alpine National Park near Falls Ck. as discussed in The News last December. It's now law. Those of you who wrote submissions and attended the meeting organised by the VNPA will be disappointed.

Enough is enough. I think stronger measures need to be taken with the current government. They won't listen to concerns from the electorate. This is more than clear. We do our democratic thing, we write polite submissions and we politely protest and we all get for this effort is our concerns are ignored and told we are un-Victorian. We may as well be sheep bleating. Worse than that, this government would be more interested in sheep because sheep can be sold for money.

The only way that I can think of to make them take note, and perhaps even listen, is to threaten the government's huge electoral majority. It's this majority that permits them to ignore democratic process with an indifference and arrogance. Let's threaten individual politicians electoral margin. Kick a few out. Make them worry instead. There are enough Bushies to cause a worry to any government;

there are about 500 Melb. Bushies alone. I voted at the recent Mitcham by-election and there was an enormous anger at the government, basically over its high handed and arrogant behaviour, and substantially from by people who I would never have expected to express such opinions. We are therefore not alone out there with just our bushwalking issues. I would like to suggest that the Melbourne Bushwalkers do something that we've never done before - lend open support to a group who would be prepared to push an agenda of protection for national parks. The most obvious group would be the Victorian National Parks Association. The VNPA are basically apolitical, are very close to our own bushwalking creed and strive for the preservation of parks irrespective of the party in power. We must get proper protection of national parks and remove their control from the whims and agendas of politicians, all politicians, and forever, but particularly urgently from the current lot before they destroy our national parks.

I would be pleased to hear Bushies views on this, pro or con. Write to The News, or give me a call at home on

Graeme Thornton

CROCKS AND GERIATRICS AND OTHERS

Christmas–New Year 1997

Leader: Jean Giese

Ralph and Liz picked me up on Christmas afternoon and we drove up to camp on the Delatite River. Judy and Peter had driven down from Canberra and Alan, Jean, Ces, Susan and Stuart were there too. Gina was trying to shake off the 'flu so she and Derrick were coming on Boxing Day.

On the morning of the 26th we set out in cars for the start of Stanley Name Spur. We arrived in time to stop Stuart driving up to Mt. Buller, but Alan shot past the Stanley Name Spur turnoff and Peter drove after him. Eventually we were all together and ready to tackle the first steep climb on Stanley Name Spur. The day started off cool, but it got very hot in the afternoon and there were sections where there was very little shade. We were glad to arrive at our camp site where water was available at a beautiful shady creek with fierce mosquitos. Gina and Derrick joined us when we were cooking our meal. They had started up the spur at 2 p.m. Gina, of course, arrived first. So much for the 'flu!

We started early on the morning of the 27th to climb onto the Crosscut Saw before it got too hot. Our 5-star camp that night was on a hill above MacAlister Springs with views over the Devil's Staircase. Some of us went straight to camp after a leisurely lunch, while others walked towards Mt. Magdala and some

actually got there. It was a hot day. At the Vallejo Gantner hut I found a Christmas message in the log book from Max, Bill and Stephen. (Bill later said he had left a message at our camp site on Stanley Name Spur, but we didn't find it.) By the way, the composting toilet at Mac Springs is warm, odour free, and has a picture window. A comfortable place to spend an afternoon.

28th December: Mac Springs to Mt. Speculation. A walk across the spectacular Crosscut Saw to Buggery for lunch. (Pardon my language, but look at the map.) My feet are recovering (not all that well) from an operation and I found the downhill parts of the Crosscut Saw painful. However, the track down from Buggery was soft and not too steep. Then the climb up Mt. Speculation. There is one rocky part which is a bit tricky. Stuart waited at the top to offer help to those who wanted it. Jean arrives. 'Pass up your pack, Jean'. Stuart puts his hand down and is handed Jean's gumleaf fly switch. Next comes the map. Then Jean's pack. Finally Jean climbs up and retrieves her gear. The camp site below the summit of Speculation was another excellent one – in fact they all were. Mountains and valleys all around us.

On 29th December some of us left camp early for a day walk out to the Razor, while others had a bludge day. It was quite cold and cloudy when we left and I only took 1 litre of water. But the clouds soon cleared and it got hot again. Peter turned back when the track became a bit airy. (On the return journey we found a better track which avoided that part). We continued till we came to an open, rocky hill which led on to the Razor proper. There Alan and Derrick stopped and said they'd wait for Gina and me back at a cave we had passed a while ago. So the two determined women went on. We found a cool rock overhang for our lunch. Then we tackled the last climb. We had got to the stage where if the next climb wasn't the summit, it would have to do, but it was the summit.

We retraced our steps, rejoined Alan and Derrick where they had been resting in the shade, and climbed back up Mt. Despair. Derrick by that stage was feeling the heat more than the rest of us. When we reached Catherine Saddle we walked down the road to find the water spot marked on the map, but we only found some wet rocks and a muddy pool. (Bill later told me that he had continued for another 10 minutes and found good water by the road.) Alan kindly shared his remaining few mouthfuls of water and a mandarin. We trudged in the heat up the road to the water spot and were very glad to reach it at last. There was even a pool where you could dip your body.

On the 30th we packed up and followed the ridge to Mt. Koonika and down to the Speculation Road. We

camped that afternoon on the slopes of Mt. Cobbler near a creek which fortunately had enough water for drinking, if not for swimming.

Next morning after a 7.30 a.m. start we climbed Mt. Cobbler. The views were fantastic and we stayed in the summit area for over an hour talking, photographing, watching birds and taking in the scenery. After lunch some of us went down to Lake Cobbler for the only swim of the trip and visited the falls, which had very little water. We had a most enjoyable New Year's Eve party around the campfire that night with balloons, sparklers, jokes, songs, stories, and some magic from Ces.

1st January 1998 was our last day. We left Mt Cobbler and the snowgums and descended towards King River. Ces sprained his ankle and some kind people gave him and some others of us a lift. I saw a 4-wheel-drive approaching and was muttering to myself about 4WD 'hoons' when I heard my name spoken by one of them. They turned out to be club members Craig and Amanda out in the bush for a few days by themselves to get away from us rowdy Bushies.

At last we were all back at the cars and another wonderful Christmas walk was over. Thank you Jean for a great trip. You're a terrific leader, cook, and tent partner.

Merilyn Whimpey

Wilkinson Lodge Winter Bookings

Now it is time to think about if you are wanting to go into Wilky next winter and who you want to go in with. Bookings will open on Wednesday March 4th and will follow the system used in previous years. Preference will be given to groups full of Club Members, be prepared to be flexible with your date option.

1. An experienced member shall be leader with preferably at least one other experienced Wilky user as back up. It is the leaders duty to collect fees up front - NP PAYMENT, NO BOOKING. Leaders are also responsible for organising the food so should consider the food kitty at the same time. It is a great help to the treasurer if one cheque is used to pay for the whole group.
2. For two weeks (March 4th and 11th) only members may book bearing in mind that at least three weeks are put aside for outside groups. Much of the first night will be spent sorting out the leaders choice of week. If you want to book you must speak to the leader first. Leaders may refuse someone if they feel they are not competent or incompatible with the rest of the group.

3. After these two weeks then members families and friends can fill vacancies up to the full group of eight.
4. The weeks run from Saturday to Saturday and groups are expected to book for the entire week. If groups are not filled the Manager may offer places to other members or visitors.
5. Winter fees are \$35 for members and \$70 for visitors. Children under 18 take their parent's status, 16 and over are visitors unless they have membership. Refunds will only be for exceptional circumstances, apply to the Committee via Lodge Manager.
6. In the event of disputes the Manager will make a decision based on group members brownie points gained through work parties, committee positions, bribes, favours etc.

Doug Pockock

Wilky Manager (at time of writing)

REMEMBER - NO PAYMENT- NO BOOKING

Membership Secretary's Report 1997

The Membership Secretary's regular duties include:

- the maintenance of the register of members' particulars (address, 'phone, subscription status)
- the collection of subscriptions
- giving advice about membership to potential or new members
- assisting in the preparation of membership lists and in mailing the News

As at the beginning of February 1998, the membership of the Club was 488 (1997: 483) including 11 Life and 10 Honorary members.

The number of members increased during 1997 with 84 new members (1996: 87) joining and only 79 (1996: 73) members relinquishing their membership.

In parallel with the activity of Margaret Borden, who responds to enquires received on the Club's 'phone number, the Membership Secretary responded to postal enquires, some 20-30 over the year, by mailing walks programmes and other information about the Club.

Members would help very much if they could let the Secretary know as soon as practicable when their address, home or work 'phone have changed. It has happened that quite suddenly, the News have started returning with a "Not at this address" stamp. Also, prompt payment of 1998 subs within the subscription period (within 3 months after the AGM) would be greatly appreciated. To help as a reminder as necessary, the mailing label during these months will carry a discreet 'SubsDue' message which no longer appears once you have paid.

Peter Havlicek

Treasurer's Report 1997/98

The club has five principal activities each with its own ledger. These are:

- Club (production of "The News", social, equipment, affiliations and insurance).
- Wilky (management of the lodge).
- Walks (management of the walks programme).
- 50 Year Publication (production and sales of a booklet commemorating the club's 50th anniversary).
- Special Account (management of the interest from a special \$20,000 term deposit).

Overall, the club achieved a \$2,057 cash surplus, and a profit of \$1,431. The different activities contributed to this result as follows:

Club

The Club Account achieved a net cash loss of \$1,305 reflecting decreased interest income (-\$422), an increase of \$2 per member in the Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs affiliation fee (-\$1,000), the provision of first aid training (-\$650) and increased expenditure on the Christmas Party (-\$500). No major expenditure on equipment (sleeping bags, tents etc) took place this year. On the positive side, there was increased advertising revenue (+\$340).

Wilky

Wilky achieved a cash surplus of \$2,123. Although the fees were reduced this year, there was an increase in revenue. Expenses were slightly lower this year with no major capital investment.

50 Year Publication

The 50 Year Publication managed a cash surplus of \$110 this year. There was no major expenditure in this area this year. Although the price was reduced this year, only 22 copies were sold.

Walks

The Walks Account achieved a cash surplus of \$1,134. Over the last six months, there were very few walks that were not completely sold out, reflecting the growth in the membership and good weather. The break-even point remains 40 (including two leaders).

Special

The Special Account managed a cash deficit of \$5.06. The Term Deposit of \$20,000 which is invested at 9.25% should provide an annual return of \$1,850. For reasons unknown, the bank provided \$1,855.06 last year. This year, \$1,850, plus the extra \$5.06 from last year, was donated to the Victorian National Parks Association in accordance with the conservation purpose of this association.

Conclusion

The shortfall in the Club Account was offset by the gains from Wilky and the Walks Account. It is considered that this position is satisfactory in the absence of any major expenditure required at Wilky. The Walks account rises and falls from time to time however it is considered that any shortfall that might arise will be offset by the more regular income received from Wilky.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the annual subscription remain unchanged.

Peter McGrath Treasurer 04/02/98

CASH FLOW

OVERALL		THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR
INCOME	Club	\$15,728	\$15,209
	Wilky	\$5,264	\$5,467
	Walks	\$26,260	\$30,761
	Publication	\$110	\$348
	Special	\$1,850	\$1,855
	TOTAL INCOME	\$49,212	\$53,640
OVERALL	Club	\$17,033	\$14,154
EXPENDITURE	Wilky	\$3,141	\$3,506
	Walks	\$25,126	\$30,654
	Publication	\$0	\$9
	Special	\$1,855	\$1,850
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	\$47,155	\$50,174
	CASH-SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$2,057	\$3,466

PROFIT & LOSS STATEMENT

	THIS YEAR	LAST YEAR
Income	\$49,212	\$53,640
Expenditure	\$47,155	\$50,174
Cash Surplus	\$2,057	\$3,466
Plus: Increase in Assets		
Wilky	\$423	\$452
Equipment		
Camping	\$0	\$771
Equipment		
Other	\$0	\$60
Equipment		
Maps	\$35	\$8
Books	\$20	\$20
	\$478	\$1,311
Less: Depreciation		
Camping	\$171	\$300
Equipment		
Other	\$119	\$153
Equipment		
Maps	\$113	\$141
Wilky	\$701	\$690
Equipment		
Operating Profit	\$1,431	\$3,493
Less: Abnormal Items		
Revaluation of 50 Year		\$3,611
Publication		
De-recognition of Wilky		\$1,000
Contents		\$4,611
Equipment Hire	\$1,431	\$ (1,118)

Melbourne Bushwalker's Inc

BALANCE SHEET YEAR ENDED 31/1/98

ASSETS	THIS YEAR	LASTYEAR
Bank	\$58,289	\$56,232
Postage Float	\$500	\$500
Camping Equipment	\$736	\$907
Other Equipment	\$331	\$459
Maps	\$297	\$375
Books	\$186	\$166
Wilkinson Lodge	\$4,351	\$4,618
Equipment		
50 Year Publication	\$1,085	\$1,195
TOTAL ASSETS	\$65,775	\$64,452
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$2,286	\$2,880
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$2,286	\$2,880
NET WORTH	\$63,489	\$61,572

Wilkinson Lodge Managers Report 1977

Use of the lodge was up on last year with 905 visitor nights (880 last Year). Non member use was 475 nights (359 last year). Winter use was popular with eleven weeks booked and most of them full. There were four winter weeks used by outside groups, VMTC, Melb Noric Ski Club and Maroondah (2 weeks)

There were no major maintenance carried out this year. The new toilet/shower light system installed by Bill Metzenthon has worked very well and is a great improvement. Once again Maroondah bushies carted, cut and stacked the firewood.

Some people are still causing interruptions to the smooth running of the Lodge, overfilling lamps, not turning on or off the water correctly, leaving windows open, burning and leaving tins in the kitchen stove, leaving rubbish behind, not returning keys promptly etc. The guide manual has been revised and reprinted. I urge all users too read it carefully.

Wilky is a great asset to the Club and I would like to see even more use especially over the summer as I don't think it looks good for passers-by to see it empty.

Doug Pocock

Equipment Officer's Report 1997

The following items were hired out during the year.

	No of Hirings
Tents	12
Sleeping Bags	9
Rucksacks	9
Day packs	3
Stoves	3
Foam mat	1

This figure is quite low, considering the number of camping trips on our programmes. We would like to remind people that the above items are almost always readily available for hire.

We now have an Ezidri Snackmaker food drier, to be hired out on a weekly basis (maximum of 2 weeks). This allows time to study video and recipe/instruction book, and organise containers. Drying times can be anything from 6hrs to 24hrs depending on product. Running costs approx. 3c to 4c per hour. The drier must be cleaned thoroughly before return. Hiring fee is \$10 per week, plus a refundable deposit of \$20. The deposit may be forfeited if it is not returned thoroughly cleaned.

Please see the Equipment Officer in the clubroom.

Jean Woodger

Murray River Canoeing

The starting point for the canoe trip was Morgan's Beach, A nice enough camping spot, but ruined in my memory by the totally selfish behaviour of a few campers determined to party on with ghetto blasters blaring into the early morning. Gerhard is to be commended for his civilised approach in trying to get them to quieten down; I favoured type slashing and caravan burning as I lay wide awake at 3am.

After a car shuffle, George in sombrero and cunningly designed pyjamas, that both concealed and revealed, striped in colours that echoed the warmth of his personality, assembled us on the beach for roll call and last minute safety instructions. Then it was into the canoes, some of which, laden with green plastic bags full of food and belongings, resembled barges that out out to sea to dump garbage.

Saturday proved to be a mixture of swimming off yellow, sandy beaches and being assaulted by the noise and waves created by power boats and water skiers. However, the beauty of the bush and the khaki-coloured river prevailed.

The camping spot for Saturday night was pleasant enough, and thankfully isolated and quiet in contrast to the previous night's. The following morning saw George adopt a new role as gym instructor, encouraging people to loosen up stiff muscles before the day's paddling. I suspect that George took more than a professional interest in some individuals' gyrations!

Few power boats were encountered on Sunday, but a sudden storm meant paddling in heavy rain for half an hour or so until we came across a rather idyllic camping spot. George and paddling partner took time out to instruct us in what not to do if you don't want to overturn a canoe; unfortunately, none of us were around to benefit from this demonstration.

Once the rain stopped and the camp fire was blazing, there was time for Republicans and lone anti Republican (someone the a strong Northamptonshire accent) to engage in a lively discussion, as well as much drying of rain-soaked belongings.

Monday morning was bright and breezy, and it was an easy 17kms (or so it seemed) to Barmah Lakes. Paddling around the lake area, swimming, lurching and just plain relaxing ensued. Gradually people departed, though some made time for a convivial drink at Barmah pub, before setting off to Melbourne.

There were a few notable sightings of wild life - apart from George and Doug that is - a red-bellied black snake taking a dip in the river, and a pair of turquoise kingfishers.

I think all canoeists would join me in thanking George for a well organised trip, that was punctuated with his good humour, sense of the absurd and his easy assumption of responsibility. Thanks go to Sean for being so willing to tie and untie canoes, to Charles who demonstrated the capacity of human beings to overcome all odds, to Peter for his philosophical discourses, to Fiona and Maureen H. For their aerobic

instruction, to Doug for shouldering the responsibility of ensuring that the campfire was cleaned up and well and truly extinguished, and to everyone else for their good company and unique contributions to the trip.

Maureen Peck

Walks Secretary's Report 1997/98

Yearly attendance totals for the 5 years 1993 - 1997							
Year	Total	Day	Weekend		Members	Visitors	No. trips
			total	pack carry			
1997	3,019	2,488	531	234	2,403	616	135
1996	2,937	2,443	594	335	2,337	600	148
1995	2,993	2,402	591	323	2,256	737	146
1994	2,719	2,189	530	304	2,058	661	139
1993	2,651	2,127	524	287	2,035	616	138

Jan-Dec 1997 Statistics (1996 in ())				
Walk type	No. trips		Avg. attendance	
Sunday bus	50	(51)	40.1	(37.9)
Pack carry	31	(40)	7.5	(8.4)
Base camp	14	(15)	13.4	(11.7)
Lodge	5	(5)	22	(16.8)
Wednesday	12	(12)	11.8	(10.1)
Dandenongs	10	(11)	14.8	(13.9)
Historical	5	(7)	17.6	(12.1)
Other	7	(7)	13.1	(7.4)
Cancelled	16	(7)		

Overall attendances increased slightly over 1996, mainly due to the strong demand on the Sunday bus trips. The total number of trips was the lowest since 1992 due to a high number of cancellations. Many of these were ski trips cancelled because of poor conditions, while others were weekend trips which failed to attract interest. This is reflected in the lower total attendance on Pack Carries, though average party size was similar to last year. Base Camps and Lodge weekends were very popular.

The Sunday Bus trips continue to be the mainstay of the club's programme. Attendances in 1997 were consistently high with the bus frequently being full. The Committee has been concerned about this, though a survey of members views indicated that most were prepared to tolerate missing out now and then. To broaden the range of walk options we will be offering more Saturday trips in 1998.

We will also be establishing some better procedures for leader training. The initial response to these has been very positive.

Thanks to all those who attended meetings of the walks sub-committee, which is responsible for drawing up the programme. Special thanks to Lloyd Young (Assistant Walks Secretary, responsible for Sunday walks), Margaret Borden (Wednesday walks), Michael Humphrey (Dandenongs Explorers) and Athol Schafer (Historicals).

Pearson Cresswell
Walks Secretary 1997

New members

ARNOLD LA
KAREN MOORE

Altered Address/Phone

ALISON BLAKER

SUSAN CASTLE

DEBORAH HENRY

MICHAEL PIROTTA

Committee Reports

Treasurer: Accounts for January 1998

Opening Balance	\$59,673.20
Receipts	\$3,659.23
Payments	\$5,043.60
Closing Balance	\$58,283.83

Walks Secretary:
Attendances for November 1997

	Trips	Av	1996
Sunday Bus	4	40.8	43
Pack Carry	4	7.5	8
Base Camp	3	8.7	14
Wed, Hist, Dandenong	3	14	10
Other	1	21	4

Attendances for December 1997

	Trips	Av	1996
Sunday Bus	3	35.7	39
Pack Carry	3	8.3	9.8
Base Camp	1	9	7
Wed, Hist, Dandenong	1	10	9
Other	1	6	10

Membership:

Life Members	11
Honorary Members	10
Single Memberships	379
Family Memberships (2x 44 =)	88
Total membership	488

Duty Roster

11 th Feb	Stephen & Bill
18 th Feb	Marisa & Judy
25 th Feb (AGM)	Anne & Ralph
4 th March	Jean & Bernie
Next committee meeting 2 nd March 1998	

FOR SALE

**BRAND NEW Women's
Bushwalking Shoes**

- Made in Italy
- Approximately Size 8.5-9
- Cost is \$100.00 -HALF PRICE!!!
- Phone Marion

NEW PLANT SALE

March 6th - 9th
10 am - 4 pm each day

55 Railway Pde
Wandin North

14 cm pots \$1.00 - \$2.50

Special Offer!!!

Present this Ad and get a 10% surcharge

Walks in February/March 1998

Date	Location			Leader
6-8	AIRE RIVER (OTWAYS)	Private	E/M	Sylvia Ford
8 Sun	ANGAHOOK	Bus	E/M & M	David Laing & Deborah Henry
13-15	MITCHELL RIVER LILO TRIP	Private	Easy	Lloyd Young
15 Sun	UPPER LODDEN RIVER - BULLARTO RESERVOIR	Bus	E & E/M	Trevor Thomson & Max Casley
18 Wed	MURRINDINDI - WILHELMINA FALLS	Private	E/M	Max Casley
20-22	GRAMPIANS BASE CAMP (BUANDIK)	Private	Various	Carol Tidey
22 Sun	LAKE MOUNTAIN (8.30 AM)	Bus	E/M & M	John Kittson & Stuart Mann
27-1 Mar	WILSONS PROM	Private	Easy	Chin Tek
27-1 Mar	WILSONS PROM IN A DAY	Private	Hard	Pearson Cresswell
27-1 Mar	GOULBOURN RIVER CANOE TRIP	Private	Easy	George Zamora
28 Sat	DANDENONGS EXPLORER	Private	Easy	Michael Humphrey
1 Sun	FRASER NP (EILDON) (8.30 START)	Bus	E/M & M	John Kittson & Rod Novak

The NEWS of the Melbourne Bushwalkers

Print Post Approved. PP No 338888/00016
 If Undelivered, please return to:
MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS INC.
 GPO BOX 1751Q, MELBOURNE, 3001

**SURFACE
MAIL**

**POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA**



Change of Address and/or Phone Numbers

NAME

OLD ADDRESS

NEW ADDRESS

OLD PHONE (h).....(w).....

NEW PHONE (h).....(w).....

Make cheques or money order payable to "Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc" and post to
 Membership Secretary, GPO Box 1751Q, MELBOURNE, 3001