



The NEWS

of the

MELBOURNE WALKERS INC.

MARCH 1998

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

EDITION 565

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PRICE 60 cents

All Bushies Welcome

*Afternoon Tea & Pyjama Party
in Kalorama*



from 3pm onwards
Saturday 21st March

31 Jeeves Ave Kalorama

Stay on for BBQ tea but please note

This a completely empty house

So BYO everything - chair, esky's, meat for BBQ,
cutlery cups etc. Sleeping bag, pillow, sleeping mat
and PJ's

To help me celebrate my 1st mortgage.

RSVP - Fiona

Music and dancing supplied by George.

Prizes for the most imaginative pyjamas or nightie

Subs are now due

We are now in the Subscription Renewal period, now to the end of May, but please pay early. Use the slip at bottom of front page or pay the Membership Secretary who will be in the Club rooms every week. The reminder is the 'SubsDue' on your mailing label, which remains while you have not paid. Also check your address and 'phone numbers are correct in the membership list and update them if necessary.

Yarra River Lilo Trip

Saturday 21st March

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 Ken & Joan McMahon

BYO everything including chairs and lilos.

WILKIE WINTER BOOKINGS

for skiing groups are now open. If you are a competent cross-country skier, like the idea of going away for a week but have no idea how the system works ring me up and I'll fill you in. For the 13 weeks of winter we are very short of Melb Bushies to make use of an excellent facility. *Sylvia Ford*

Committee 1998

President	Derrick Brown
Vice Presidents	Peter Chakley Peter Gipps
Secretary	Bernice Webster
Treasurer	Anne Wilkins
Walks Secretary	Pearson Cresswell
Assistant Walks Secretary Sunday Walks	Jean Woodger
Membership Secretary	Peter Havlicek
Social Secretary	Marisa Rizzuto
Wilkinson Lodge Manager	Sylvia Ford
"News" Editor	Judy Gipps
Committee	Jan Palich Fiona Gallery Jenny Gregory Alan Miller Stuart Mann

Gwynnyth Taylor

It is with regret that the club accepts the resignation of Gwynnyth Taylor due to ill health.

Gwynnyth is an "old time" member having joined in 1955. Not only was Gwynnyth a member of MBW but she was also very active in conservation issues, she was President of VNPA in the sixties as well as being very involved in her local Montrose conservation group. Indeed she was wielding a mattock removing blackberries just before her 80th birthday.

MBW will always be grateful to Gwynnyth for alerting the club to the fact that Wilkinson Lodge was available for purchase from the Ski Club of Victoria. She was one of the keen members of MBW who bought and donated Wilky to the club. Without her instigation and enthusiasm back in 1957 we may not have our well loved lodge today.

Doug Pocock

Jenny Flood and Jopie Bodegraven

Jenny and Jopie were involved in a serious car accident when returning from a club weekend trip at the beginning of February in the Otway region.

We wish them both a speedy recovery.

Big Walk

On the 19th April the Rotary Club of Bright are organising a walk on Mt Buffalo via the Big Walk track. Details on the noticeboard in the clubrooms.

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,
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 **APRIL 98 News** is 26th March 98

Committee Reports

Treasurer:	Accounts for February 1998
Opening Balance	\$58,288.83
Receipts	\$2,769.60
Payments	\$2,788.15
Closing Balance	\$58,269.68

Walks Secretary:	Attendances for January 1998
	Trips Av 1997
Sunday Bus	4 35 40.5
Pack Carry	3 5 9.3
Base Camp & Lodge(Walhalla)	2 16 40
Wed, Hist, Dandenong	1 10 9
Canoe	1 24
Cancelled	1

Membership:

Life Members	11
Honorary Members	10
Single Memberships	377
Family Memberships (2x 45 =)	90
Total membership	488

Duty Roster

11 th March	Jenny & Stuart
18 th March	Alan & Peter C
25 th March	Sylvia & Marisa
1 st April	Jean & Fiona
8 th April	Peter G & Derrick
Next committee meeting 6 th April, 1998	

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 April Day Walks

Walk on Sunday 15th March

This walk is to Aireys Inlet and the leaders are Fay Pratt & Clare Lonergan.

Please note this walk will **leave at 8.30am** from Southbank Blvd not 9am as previously stated.

Saturday 28 March	Dandenong's Explorer Easy
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Leaders:	Michael Humphrey
Transport:	Private
Expected time of return:	Approx 4.00pm
Approximate length of walk:	12 kms

As you can see from the details or perhaps lack of details above I have not decided on the actual location of this walk as yet - so be sure to give me a call at home on _____ for further information.

See you there - where ever that might be !!!

Sunday 29th March	Moorabool Gorge Easy & Easy/Medium
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Leaders:	Marisa Rizzuto & David Laing
Transport:	Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Expected time of return:	7.00pm
Approximate length of walk:	14 & 18 km
Map Reference:	S Brooks Brisbane Ranges Nat Park

Both walks will descend a short steep untracked section to Spring Creek. Following the dry creek (at time of preview) for about 6 km. The easy walk will return along a combination of tracks and roads while the EM will cross over the main access road and follow tracks generally along ridges then a road back to the bus. The creek walking will involve some rock hopping but not difficult and quite pleasant.

Sunday 5 April	Kinglake Easy/Medium & Medium
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Leaders:	John Kittson & Janet Norman
Transport:	Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Area:	Kinglake
Approximate distance from Melbourne:	65km
Expected time of return:	1830 approx
Approximate length of walk:	15km & 15km (climb)
Map Reference:	Kinglake Outdoor Liesure Map

Both walks will start/finish at the Steels Creek Picnic Ground. The E/M and Medium walks will be on tracks. The medium walk has a fairly steep climb just after the start. The wildlife is plentiful and lyrebirds can be heard in the fern gullies, so if the weather is fine it should be a great day. We will be using the Canterbury Road exit from Melbourne and The Melba

Highway via Lilydale to Yarra Glen, then turning off to Steels Creek and returning home the same way.

Don't forget the fresh water and the dry change of clothes, and a thermos left on the bus, just in case it rains.

Sunday 12 April	Taradale Easy & Medium
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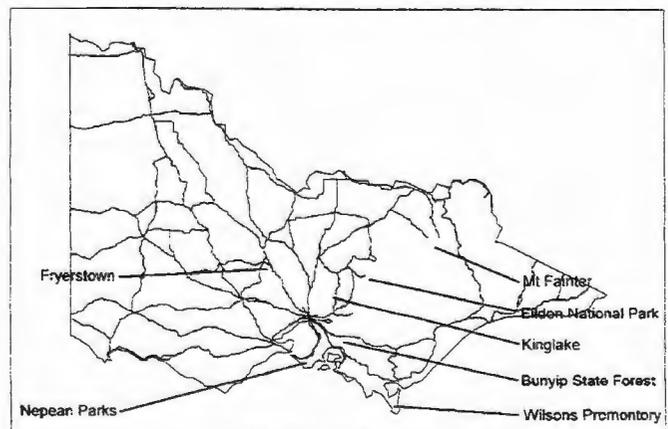
Leaders:	Alan Miller & Clare Lonergan
Transport:	Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Area:	South of Castlemaine
Expected time of return:	6.30pm
Approximate length of walk:	10 & 15km
Map Reference:	Drummond

The walks are through dry eucalypt forest with good views from the ridge line which we reach about lunch time. The easy walk is only about 10km and mainly on tracks. The medium walk is mainly off tracks. Both walks end at the old gold mining town of Fryerstown. Previous leaders have usually got lost in the vicinity of Nuggetty Creek. Several substantial nuggets of gold were found in the creek bed last century.

Monday 13 April	East Melbourne - Easy
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Leaders:	Athol Schafer
Transport:	Tram, Meet under Flinders St Station
	Clocks at 10am
Area:	
Expected time of return:	3.30pm
Approximate length of walk:	5km
Map Reference:	Melways map 2G

East Melbourne was a Government Reserve until 1852-53 when the first Crown Land sales were held in the area, coinciding with the great influx of wealth bought in by the gold rush. Blocks which had a reserve of £300 bought up to £2000 by the new rich. The walk takes in these residential areas; then lunch either at the kiosk or in outdoor picnic style, before exploring the leafy and sunny expanses of the gardens.



Wednesday 14 April Easy/Medium	Kinglake-St Andrews- Island Creek
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Leaders: Margaret Borden
Transport: Private
Area: Kinglake National Park
Expected time of return: 6 pm
Approximate length of walk: 15 km
Map Reference: Kinglake Outdoor Liesure

Meet at Island Creek Picnic Ground at 10am or ring me for other arrangements.

We will start from the Island Creek picnic ground and then along Stringbark Track with its variety of plant and bird life and then climb approx 300m up Andrew Hill with its views across the Toolong Forest and down to "The Gums". Hopefully we will be able to cross Island Creek and get across to the road under the transmission line (if not another 1.5 kms up the road for the same result). Then a climb of approx 130m in the open with good long views back to the various ranges and a steep scramble down again to Island Creek and back to the cars. Hopefully we will hear and see the yellow tailed black cockatoos who frequent this area, as well as other varieties of bird life and autumn fungi.

Saturday 18 April Easy	Navigation Day
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Leaders: Alan Clarke
Transport: Private
Area: To be advised
Expected time of return: Saturday evening
Approximate length of walk: 8-10km

This will be an excellent opportunity for those who wish to learn navigation, or just to practice your skills in a relaxed way. The emphasis will be on how easy navigation can be, and how it can lead to enjoying walking even more. The site will not be too far from Melbourne, and the course will be short so there will be plenty of time to practice. If the demand is there I will also conduct an evening introductory session prior to the day.

Sunday 19 April Easy & Easy/Medium	Nepean Parks
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Leaders: Peter McGrath & William Cone
Transport: Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Area: Mornington Peninsula
Expected time of return: 7.00pm
Approximate length of walk: 14km & 19km
Map Reference: Discovering the Peninsula,
 3ed, Conservation Forests and Lands

This is a very pretty walk. It offers a little bit of everything - scenery, beach, pounding ocean, fresh air, favourite tourist spots, tea rooms and probably the best start and finish of any walk on the programme. To say

I am enthusiastic about the Point Nepean National Park is perhaps an understatement. I always find it an exciting place to be. So come on this walk. I am sure you will find this a very rewarding day out.

Although the distance for the Easy walk is a little shorter than the standard 15kms distance, and the Easy/Medium walk is a little over the standard 17km, the walks are entirely flat and can be supplemented with closer inspections of the beaches, Sorrento Tea Rooms or London Bridge.

One point to note is that because we will be walking in either sand, good tracks or some rock it is a day for runners not boots.

Some Tips for Nepal

Having enjoyed four fantastic weeks trekking in Nepal, I would like to offer some tips for potential commercial trekkers in 1998.

- Take your full-length thermarest (and thermarest pillow),
- Eucalyptus wool mix is great for handwashing socks, jocks and thermals,
- Take some nappy pins - to attach washing to your day pack for drying,
- Australian chocolate and nibbles tastes better than the local stuff. Have some in reserve to get you over those high mountain passes.
- Nepalese toilet paper is like sandpaper. Take several rolls of unbleached Aussie toilet paper,
- Vitamin C tablets kept the colds and flu away,
- Take some old (wearable) clothes to give to the Porters at the end of the trek.
- Take books, cards, games, walkperson and tapes for those long nights.

I had a great trek in December 97 - January 98, going up the Arun Valley to Namche Bazaar (the Sherpa capital), then upwards to the Gokyo Lakes and then climbing Gokyo-Ri (5483 metres). This is in the Everest region and these mountains are awesome.

Rod Novak

Previews for April Weekend & Pack-Carry Walks

3-5 April Lake Eildon Nat Park Easy

Leaders: Max Casley
Transport: Private
Area: Lake Eildon
Expected time of return: Sunday Evening 8pm
Approximate length of walk: 30km
Map Reference: Rocky Peak 1:25,000,
 Torbrech 1:25,000

The Lake Eildon National Park lies to the south end east of Lake Eildon and has tall forests of various types. The original plan for this walk was easy backpacking. However, my initial look at the area around Jerusalem Creek showed that it is generally steep. The walk I did was pleasant with views of Mt Torbrech, Lake Eildon and the Pinnacle but better done with just a day pack. Hence, this may be changed to a base camp. I will have details later. Another possibility is a backpack trip to Fraser State park (which is now part of Lake Eildon Park), camping at Mountaineer Inlet. Whatever happens we will have a good trip.

This area is about 2.5 hours drive from Melbourne, so driving there Saturday morning may suit some people.

10 - 13 April Kosciuszko National Park Medium Tin Mine

Leader: Gina Hopkins
Transport: Bus from Southbank Boulevard at 9.00 am
Area: Kosciuszko National Park
Approximate length of walk: 52 km
Map Reference: Thredbo 1:50,000

If past walk reports are anything to go by, this Club hasn't been to this area of Kosciuszko National Park since Christmas 1981. The walk will start from Dead Horse Gap on Friday morning - not too early as we will have had a long drive the night before. Instead of following the well-trodden 4WD trail, our route will take us up on to the crest of the Great Dividing Range and continue over Jerusalem and Purgatory Hills. There is no track here and it may be a little (or a lot) scrubby in places. From the top of the 'hills' (which are over 1800m high!) we should have fabulous views of the Ramsheads to the north and the Pilot and Cobberas to the south. Our first night is planned in the vicinity of Brodies Camp, a distance from the cars of about 12 km.

If the scrub hasn't been too bad we will follow the Charcoal Range south until we join the Tin Mine Fire Trail, where we turn westwards towards the Tin Mine Area. Saturday night's camp will be somewhere in this area. Then on Sunday we will visit the Tin Mine Falls,

apparently the highest in the park, and quite difficult to get to. We then start the return journey north along Cascade Trail, heading for Cascade Creek for Sunday night. After a brief look at The Cascades, a shortish walk and a steady climb will bring us back to the cars at Dead Horse Gap.

You will need to be an experienced weekend walker to come on this trip, and be prepared for any type of weather, including snow. Fuel stoves must be carried. I have also read recently that giardia is endemic in the local wildlife, so water sterilisation tablets are recommended.

10 - 13 April Kosciuszko National Park Medium Main Range

Leaders: Bill Metzenthien
Transport: Private
Approximate length of walk: 60-65 km
Map Reference: Natmap 1:100k:Kosciusko 8525
Limit: 12

The core of this trip will be a traverse of the Main Range from Schlink Pass to the Abbott Range and a descent of Hannells Spur to finish the walk. The initial part will take us around tracks over the Grey Mare and past Valentines Hut. I hope to start from the Geehi Reservoir but if the road is closed we will have to do the traverse of Robertsons Ridge which will make the first day a long one, bringing the grading up to medium/hard.

In good weather this is a fabulous walk with lots of views of wonderful country. Survivors of my last Easter walk in this region can be assured that we won't be spending any days ascending a creek and there will be no scrub bashing (unless parts of the Hannells Spur track or the Robertsons Ridge road have become overgrown).

Kosciusko National Park can be wonderful at Easter, or it can be dreadful. If there are blizzard conditions or there is extensive snow on the Main Range then an alternative walk in the area may replace this one. Gear (clothing, tent, etc) suitable for extreme conditions must be carried on this walk.

If you want to come on this walk please let me know by 1st April. Park entry permits must be arranged.

PERSON WANTED TO SHARE HOUSE

Non-smoking female with cat requires person to share 3 bedroom clean and tidy house in Kilsyth. \$110 per week includes electricity, gas and water. Bond of \$200.

Contact Dominique on

10 - 13 April	Bryces Gorge Base Camp
Easy & Easy/Medium	

Leaders:	Anne Wilkins
Transport:	Private
Area:	Alpine National Park
Expected time of return:	Mon 13th Evening
Approximate length of walk:	Various
Map Reference:	Howitt Selwyn 8223 N & Tamboritha-Moroka 8223 S

This Easter base Camp takes us to the Alpine National Park, and although there has unfortunately been a fire in the park (with 200 head of cattle grazing fenced on a portion of Bryces Plain - see conservation forum in Feb News) there is still much great walking to be done in the area.

It will more than likely be a walk in base camp of 3km and from there we'll head off in a variety of day walks including Conglomerate Falls, Piemans Falls and other wonderful high points.

A great autumn long weekend in the beautiful Victorian High Country.

17 - 19 April	Wilsons Prom
Easy/Medium	Lighthouse

Leader:	Peter Gipps
Transport:	Private
Area:	Wilsons Prom
Expected time of return:	7 pm
Approximate length of walk:	36 km
Map Reference:	Outdoor Leisure Series - Wilsons Prom

The focus of the walk is a visit to the Lighthouse at the tip of the Prom. To avoid a straight (boring) out and back we will start the walk from the Mt Oberon carpark and finish at Tidal River. The walk from the Mt Oberon carpark takes us downhill along a vehicle track with attractive timber and ferns along both sides for the first few kilometres. As the track levels out the height of the trees decline until we reach the junctions of the

Altered Address/Phone of Members

tracks to Oberon Bay and Waterloo Bay. We then start a gradual climb, past Halfway Hut to Martins Hill, where we leave the vehicle track for the last few kilometres to Roaring Meg, where we will set up camp. Once established we will continue to the Lighthouse unburdened by our camping paraphernalia.

In the morning those of the more energetically inclined can make a quick excursion to South Point, the most southerly point on the mainland, before returning to camp. On the return trip we retrace our steps as far as the turn-off to Oberon Bay, where we take to foot tracks for the rest of our trip.

24 - 26 April	Niggerheads - Mt Fainter
Medium/Hard	

Leader:	Peter Day
Transport:	Private
Area:	Bogong Alpine Area
Approximate length of walk:	35 km
Map Reference:	Vic Map - Bogong Alpine Area

We will start from Bogong Village on Saturday morning, and will follow a track to Spring Saddle Hut, the along the Fainter Fire Track to Bald Hill, Bogong Jack Hut and Mt Fainter North. Saturday night we will camp near Little Plain.

On Sunday we will do a side trip along the Niggerheads before returning via Fainter South. From Fainter North I plan to follow the spur line heading towards Pretty Valley. This may be overgrown, but I plan to check it out prior to the day. Once down the spur there should be a track back towards Bogong Village.

This should be an interesting trip with plenty of time to explore the Niggerheads. The walk is rated Medium/Hard because of the off track route on the return.

Lost contact with:

Conservation Forum

Thanks to all the people who 'phoned or spoke to me about last month's Conservation Forum. It seems that others feel the same way.

Reduced to it's essentials my concern is that our National Parks don't have the degree of protection I'd assumed that they would have because they were declared as national parks. I understand that the purpose of national parks is to protect the "values" (landscape, flora, fauna, cultural etc) in the national parks - the reason that a national park would have been gazetted in the first place. Protection of values is the weak link. Values are open to interpretation by the government of the day. A government could decide that values are improved by building a multi-acre hotel and car park at The prom. Or that the values of the Alpine National Park are improved by excising 285 hectares from it and giving it to the Falls Ck resort for development into ski-tows, roads and cafes. I don't think so and many Melbourne Bushies don't.

What can we do? The VNPA strategy re Falls Ck is to ask the Minister for Planning to call for a full Environmental Effects Statement on the excised land. Development could only then go ahead subject to conditions imposed by the EES. A problem here is that the minister is Rob Maclellan, minister for Planning & Local Government, who's benchmark for urban values seems to be the "Good Design Guide". Not a good omen for aesthetic value judgements.

My view is that we have to restrict the powers of the government. Substantially remove the value judgement on competing values from the government of the day once a national park has been declared. The values of the park who have to be defined and ranked in priority when the park was gazetted and the minister only to have limited, and defined, powers to judge values within areas of equal ranking.

There may be an opportunity about to present itself to influence the National Parks Act (NPA for short). Amanda Martin (VNPA director) told me that the government is planning on reviewing the NPA. The driver for this, as I understand it, is coming from the Office of Fair Trading! This is odd. Why? Are the government concerned that there might be cries of unfair trading that will interfere will plans to commercialise our national Parks? I don't trust them.

Over the next few months I hope we will be able to determine what the issues and difficulties are in influencing a new NPA - one with true protection. We need to establish:

- What the current NPA is and where its weaknesses are,
- How to lobby effectively for is change,

- What the new NPA should be to effective provide protection for ever beyond politics,
- and a hundred other things.

To do this will require skills of all kinds, from environmental awareness to the legalities of legislation. We will need to be able to call on a range of skills from people within and without the Melbourne Bushies. I hope all Bushies who can, will contribute.

To start the ball rolling and to give support to our committee the following resolution was passed at the AGM on Wed 25/2/98 (proposed by me, seconded Rod Mattingley, passed unanimously).

"That this meeting expresses its concern about the lack of protection of Victorian National Parks given by the National Parks Act and affirms its confidence in the committee to strive to have the act improved."

The motion is intentionally very broad in its scope so as to give the committee the freedom to decide on the best approaches and to coopt members to achieve this aim. I expect that we will work with other bushwalking groups, the Fed of Vic Walking Clubs and the VNPA - as a minimum.

Please support the committee in its endeavours.

Graeme Thornton

Letter to the editor

I am very concerned and outraged at the government's continued plundering of Victoria's national parks as reported in the Conservation Forum during the past few months. It seems as though OUR parks can be used for any kind of exploitation without our consultation so long as some individuals stand to benefit economically. This is totally unacceptable.

The Melbourne Bushwalkers must give its full and undiminished support to the Victorian National Parks Association. They are the best chance we've got of making our views heard and achieving the absolute preservation of our national parks for all time. Other national park users such as four wheel drivers, resort skiers, and cattle graziers have strong lobby groups and bushwalkers need one too. The more support the VNPA receives the greater their chances of success will be.

I also urge all of you to join the VNPA. How much do our priceless national parks mean to you? Surely much more than the cost of a VNPA membership.

The continuation of cattle grazing in the Alpine National Park is totally incompatible with its re-generation and preservation as a natural place. It is also deplorable that such a detrimental activity be subsidised by the government. To see the damage caused by cattle at the Bogong High Plains, and then to have the

Minister Tehan justify grazing at Bryce Plain with some rhetoric about fences and "rigorous inspection" is just heart breaking!

We need to ask ourselves why there is a need to graze cattle in sensitive alpine environments in the first place. It is because there is sufficient demand for products from the cattle by people like you and me. If the demand for these items decreases then it follows that there would be less, or perhaps no, requirement for cattle grazing in the high country. We all have the power right now to choose not to support the continuation of cattle grazing on our land. This is just one example of how the way we lead our lives directly impacts the natural environment.

As a group or individuals we must take action to help ensure there is a future for Victoria's national parks before it is too late. We all love our national parks. Try to imagine life without them - I don't think I could!

Ralph Blake

Regulatory Impact Statement Alpine Resorts (Management) Regulations 1998

A RIS for the ARC has been released, with comments being due by 20th March 1998.

The main item that concerns bushwalkers is the off-season entry fees for resorts. Thus, if you park at Diamantina Hut, Loch Car Park, Falls Creek (and it is now a big resort), Baw Baw Village, Lake Mountain or Mount Stirling, you could be paying a fee.

Cross country skiers are hit as well. A day pass could go to \$8.00 for 1988, and there will be no all resort passes. People who use the groomed tracks (often the only viable way to get out of a resort) as access to remoter regions will apply as well, and remote skiers coming back from a multi-day trip could be fined, as they have no current pass.

The RIS mentions stakeholder participation, the ARC using common sense to resolve problems, safety being paramount, and the costs of similar destinations. Without going into detail, much is incorrect rhetoric, but one example. A few years ago the ARC had an alternative route for cross country skiers at Falls Creek that cut the creek below the dam wall. The slope was generally un-used as it was too dangerous.

If you want to have a say, be quick. THE RIS is available free from the bookshop, Natural Resources and Environment, 8 Nicholson Street, East Melbourne, or from Grant Arnold, 9637 8580.

Stephen Lake

Lunch break at Mt Worth
Photo by Harry Dimech

Helicopter Spur - Howitt Spur **30 January - 1st February 1998**

Not having walked for about three weeks I looked forward to a pleasant weekend in the Victorian Alps amongst clean air and a starry sky.

Friday Night was spent camping at Howqua Gap beside the hut in which Gina was sick in. However this did not slow her down walking up Helicopter Spur as the sun rose and the flies became more friendly. (I cursed myself for leaving my fly veil at home)

As the afternoon wore on the heat made walking tiring and lots of water was consumed by everyone. On top of Mt Magdala we had great 360 degree views including burnt bushland near Mt Reynard seen through Gina's binoculars.

Continuing on we came to our campsite in the saddle between Mt Madgdala and Big hill. It was such a warm evening that we didn't have a fire, but a guest instead.

We had met Andrew in the morning at Howqua Gap, he had left his car at the Bindara/Circuit Road Turnoff, walked up Stanley Name Spur over Mt Thorn to the Crosscut Saw, Mt Howitt to our campsite. A fair days walk in the heat. Next morning he left us to walk down Helicopter Spur while we walked up to Mt Howitt and took in the views for an hour.

With the sun beating down on us and skin turning red we retreated down Howitt Spur for lunch beside the Howqua River south branch rather than do a side trip along the Crosscut Saw.

Back at the cars we found Andrew wisely waiting for a lift up the Bindara Road to his car. Five kilometres later we stopped to have a look at the Bindara Falls which cascade over a large cool, dark overhang like a shower (well worth a visit)

Thank you Trish for leading a lovely summer walk. Party Trish (Leader), Jope, Jenny, Dianne, Gina and me, Cameron McMillan.



GETTING INTO KNOTS ON THE CENTRAL PLATEAU

Sixteen hours into a heavy battering, a loud twang confirmed what the storm the previous week had already told me: in spite of several years' good service, my system really wasn't up to it when it came to the crunch. There's no place quite like Tassie when it comes to showing up any weaknesses. To paraphrase the famous lexicographer, the threat of immediate tent demolition concentrates the mind wonderfully on the question of knots.

These days most bushwalkers use Prusik knots on their guy ropes as the easy way to tighten things to the optimum. The lazy (efficient!) ones have things set up so as to tighten the guy by pulling down from the tag loop at the top end, rather than up towards the tent from the bottom end. The bottom end is thus often a simple loop knot hooked over the tent peg. However, such a set-up needs to be re-tightened at frequent intervals during prolonged stormy weather. What is missing is some tensioning device, which is why car tents usually have metal springs or heavy duty rubber rings at the ends of their guy ropes.

The tension can be supplied using shock cord, which is readily available from hardware shops, or less satisfactorily (because the gauge is a bit too heavy) by cutting those dangerous hooks off the ends of an octopus strap. In an emergency such as I now faced, I quickly tied figure of eight loops in the peg ends of the three side guys I had anchored to a common peg, then passed the shock cord loop which had broken (I'll explain in what way in a moment) through these and re-made the loop by tying a water knot (tape knot) and pegged it back into place.

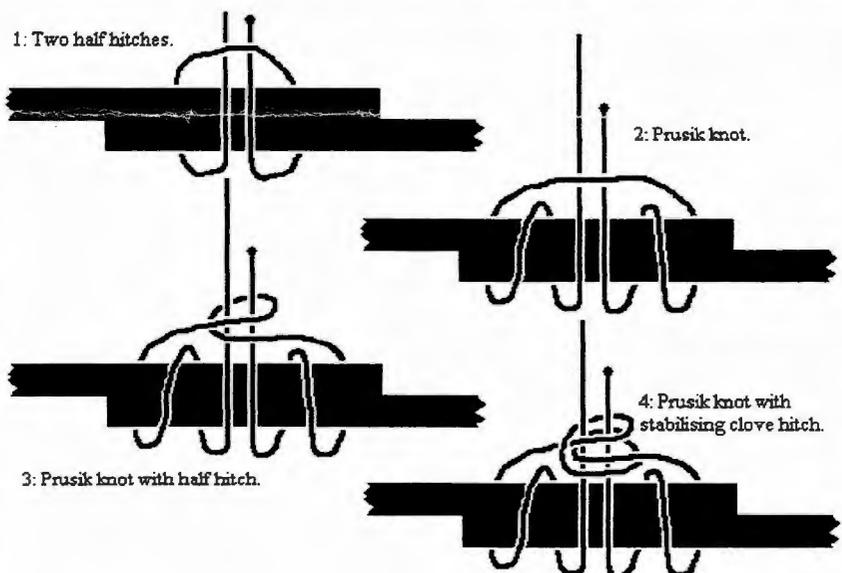
This setup will stand up to any storm - you will rip out the peg or snap the tent pole long before you break the shock cord loop. So why wasn't this what I had been using, so as to avoid any trouble, in the first place? Shock cording is desperate stuff to form into a free-standing loop. Very few knots in it fail to come undone, and it niggles that those very few which can be relied upon consume a great deal of length which is so much dead weight, not contributing to the tensioning function. I had therefore devised an ingenious scheme in which the shock cord loop was formed by pushing the ends into a 2 cm length of PVC tubing full of Araldite and letting everything set solid. Worked fine for several years. Failed just when I most needed it.

Araldite doesn't really bond to PVC, nor to the rubber strands in the shock cording core.

Back in the tent I watched the ceiling gyrate crazily for hours when suddenly, like a manhole cover, the penny dropped. There is no need whatever to try to form the shock cording into a free-standing loop, using knots or Araldite or anything else. It is the peg end of the guy rope which should be used to hold the ends of a straight piece of shock cording together to form the loop. What sort of knot? The good old Prusik once again works perfectly well, at least under tension. The ends of the shock cording will never slip through once it has been tightened.

However, every storm passes - and every camp is struck and the tent bundled up into the pack. The Prusik isn't quite up to this situation, when the tension is off. It tends then to loosen and come undone, with the result that at the next camp straight bits of shock cording will have wriggled their way free, just waiting to be flicked into the depths of the nearest scoparia thicket, never to be seen again. The diagrams below show two developments of the knot which retain both the gripping and sliding qualities of the Prusik, and which also hold together under zero tension. Knot 3 is completely adequate, but knot 4 is for people like myself, who insist that only outhouses constructed of brick will do.

The central part of each diagram represents the two ends of the shock cord length brought together. They could be replaced by a pencil if you wish to practise with a piece of string. The little blob indicates the free end of the guy rope. Thus in the first knot it is brought down in front of the pencil and wrapped around it in the left half of the knot. To form the right hand half of the knot, the free end is brought in front of the fixed



end of the guy rope before being wrapped around the pencil on the right in the opposite sense, with the free end then tucked through to emerge along the same pathway as the fixed end enters the knot.

The Prusik in figure 2 is a very easy extension of the knot in figure 1 - simply wrap the free end twice around the pencil before you cross over to do the right hand side of the knot, which should be completed to be symmetrical with the left hand half. Again, the free end goes out of the knot along the same path as the fixed end comes into it.

In knot 3 a loose half hitch is passed around the incoming fixed end when the left hand half of the knot is finished. The right hand half is then completed in the usual way, and as usual the free end follows the same path as the incoming end when leaving the knot - in other words it, too, must pass through the middle of the

half hitch, which has to be left loose enough to allow this to be done before everything is tightened up.

Before tackling the final refinement in figure 4, go back to figure 1. At the halfway mark the sense of rotation of the free end around the pencil was reversed. If the sense of rotation is not changed when the second half of the knot is formed, the free end will emerge from the second half hitch pointing down the page instead of back up the page. These two half hitches comprise a knot known as a clove hitch. In knot 4 the half hitch tied around the incoming end halfway through knot 3 is replaced by a clove hitch, which once again must be left loose enough for the free end to be able to follow the emergent pathway out through the middle of it before the knot is tightened up.

Graham Wills-Johnson

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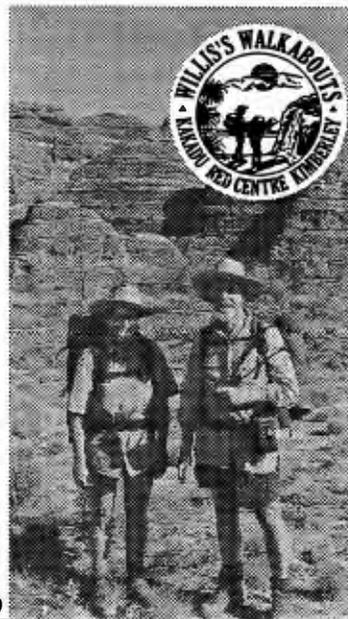


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Tisdall Torrents!

Australia Day Weekend 1998 Walhalla

DURR! DURR! DURR! THUD! THUD! THUD! THUD! Reveille and Brian was mimicking the call of the Walloping Wombats. Or was it the Klaxon Kangas? Even the Polluting Possums! Sunday 25th January 1988, 4AM and the visitors that Brian was mimicking had decided to have a corroboree on the roof of Stalag Tisdall. They chucked buckets at us. Some were full of water, bricks and whatever they could lay their hands/paws on. And now out b..... illustrious leader, Brain, was having a go. DURR! DURR! THUMP! THUMP! Marching up and down the verandah, huffing and puffing on the peace (?????) pipe. The Cottagers, up the hill, slept in peace. It was only 8am.

At least the rain had stopped and we were going to Mt St Gwinnear today. First the car shuffle and then the walk. We'd had a marvellous day of walking on Saturday. Left Stalag Tisdall, Walhalla, about 20 minutes late - waiting for SOMEONE who'd driven down from Melbourne. The excuse = It's a long way from the front door to my car! !!!! That's a new one.

We'd headed out, it was unbelievably dry underfoot. We walked through strands of ferns, no leeches, no musty smell of decomposing leaves and the metter on the ground crunched. Some really wonderful scenery and before long we had reached Poverty Point. Some of the intrepid 'Bushies' clambered down under the bridge and onto the granite rocks at the edge of the Thomson River. The really intrepid shed apparel and into the water for a swim. We had lunch at Poverty Point and then headed out, back towards Walhalla. Onwards and upwards. Back to camp via the 'steam' train for 2.4 kms and another 3km walk along the road. Up to the Cottage for afternoon tea. Bikkies and coffee. *Very civilised*. We clambered down the hill and back to camp after eating all their bikkies.

To prepare tea.. Everyone had been requested to bring something for a communal meal. There was lasagne, three types of bolognaise sauce, garlic bread, dhal, pumpkin soup and lots of delicious offerings. Brian supplied the sweets, including ice cream. How did he keep it from melting? The camp fridges are rather antiquated.

Lights out was at 10.30 when Brain switched off the generator. We slept. And then the rains came. These had cleared for Brian's rendition on the didgeridoo and for our car shuffle up the mountain. Brian got a puncture going up the gravel roads, and shredded his tyre. A good start. Not. But we made it up the mountain to the start of the walk. It was misty/foggy when we set forth but we were full of enthusiasm and good cheer. The Bureau had forecast a good day and

the person upstairs wouldn't let it rain on a bunch of lively *Bushies*.

Much frivolity when we climbed Mt St Gwinnear and Brian proclaimed that was the worst/hardest hill on the walk. 'But will there be any undulations?' he was asked. 'Oh yes', he replied. 'But they're all downhill.' DOWNHILL UNDULATIONS? That's another new one.

It soon started to rain and by the time we had lunch, standing under a square of tarpaulin, supplied by Mary and John, it was becoming torrential. Brian made the decision here to continue on. He said it was a little further but the going was easier than returning. We trudged on, the rain got heavier and the air was noticeably colder. Nothing was immune. Large worms (15-20 cms long) were washed out of the ground and were struggling in the raging water. The paths were rivers, rain was pouring down the trunks of trees like waterfalls. The snow gums were very beautiful and very start. We could still appreciate their beauty.. We walked, plodded and helped each other. Watched for leeches. They appeared as soon as it started to rain. Talked about other walks, in the sun. About our meal in the Pub - does it have an open fire? And then there were the mushroom rocks. Huge granite boulders under which we could have sheltered. But we were too cold. We kept walking, to stop was impossible. At last the car park but had about 3kms to walk to reach the cars. Then when the drivers got the cars Janet had a flat. The car shuffle continued whilst Janet and Brian changed the wheel. Although the rain had abated it was bitterly cold and many of the group had to wait for the cars to return. We were all on the verge of hypothermia. It was not a comfortable walk. I'd really like to give you a list of places we didn't see, except that I've forgotten what they were. And when Brian guarantees that the weather will be fine and warm our group would like to return and enjoy the walk.

The meal at the pub was enjoyable that night: AFTER we had a very hot shower. It was still raining on Monday so the walk to the cricket ground was cancelled. We cleaned the Stalag and then headed for home. The group consisted of 21 members and friends of which 15 stayed at Tisdall and 6 were billeted at the cottage up the hill. Brian Crouch was the leader.

Did you know that Walhalla is the only town in Victoria that is not connected to electricity.

Margot McNamara



Walks in March/April 1998

	LOCATION			LEADER
1 Sun	FRASER NP (EILDON) (8.30 ST)	Bus	E/M & M	John Kittson & Janet Norman
6-9	MT COPE-YOUNGS HUT-	Private	E/M	Stan Macowiak
6-9	LITTLE RIVER GORGE WULGULMERANG)	Private	M/H	Stephen Rowlands
8 Sun	DOM DOM SADDLE	Bus	E/M & M	Sue Ralston & Peter Havlicek
9 Mon	HISTORICAL WALK: DENNIS -YARRA A	Public	Easy	Athol Schafer
13-15	CAPE LIPTRAP BASE CAMP	Private	E	Merilyn Whimpey
14 Sat	LITTLE RIVER GORGE	Private	M	Alan Ide
15 Sun	AIREYS INLET	Bus	E & M	Fay Pratt & Clare Lonergan
18 Wed	LERDERDERG GORGE	Private	E/M	Trevor Thomson
20-22	KING SPUR - QUEENS SPUR	Private	M	Ralph Blake
20-22	BOGONG NAT PARK WORK PARTY	Private	Easy	Doug Pocock
21 Sat	YARRA RIVER LILO TRIP	Private	E	Ken MacMahon
22 Sun	BELLBIRD CREEK (NOOJEE)	Bus	E/M & M	Lloyd Young & Fulvia Collavo
27-29	FEDERATION W/E BASE CAMP:	Private	Various	Sylvia Ford
28 Sat	DANDENONGS EXPLORER	Private	E	Michael Humphrey
29 Sun	MOORABOOL GORGE (WEST)	Bus	E & E/M	Marisa Rizzuto & David Laing
3-5	EILDON NP	Private	E	Max Casley
5 Sun	KINGLAKE (NORTH)	Bus	E/M & M	John Kittson & Janet Norman

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