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THE NEWS OF THE

Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.

EDITION 660 FEBRUARY 2006

Vale Denis Barson

24 June 1933 – 16 January 2006



Denis Barson. Taken on a trip in the Grampians in the Mt William – Major Mitchell Plateau area, May 1972. Helen Dent

Denis Barson, a long-time friend and life member of the Club, passed away last week while tending his garden in Mildura.

The Melbourne Bushwalkers contracted with Gronow's Furniture Removalists to provide vans to take us on Sunday walks and also weekend pack-carry walks. They put seats in the back for this purpose. In those days it was quite legal, and lots of groups – Church groups, Scouts, walking clubs, etc. used the converted furniture vans as cheap transport to picnics, walks and camps etc.

Denis's involvement with the Melbourne Bushwalkers started in 1952 when he commenced work with Gronow's after completing his national service. Jumping at the opportunity to earn overtime, Denis accepted the weekend van driving for the Club.

The Club stopped hiring a Gronow's van in February 1979. Then Denis drove a Quince's mini-bus before the Club decided to hire a van from Jack Baxter. In 1984 the Club purchased a van from Jack Baxter and continued to employ Denis to drive it. Regrettably illness forced Denis to stop driving for the Club in late 1989. His last trip was Sylvia Wilson's walk to Hughes Creek.

Denis got to know our ways and requirements as well as becoming a great friend of many Bushies. In later years he even sometimes participated in the walk if it was a round trip. He was a very good and safe driver, and leaders could rely on him to be at the end of the walk, even with sketchy instructions.

He was our van driver for a record 37 years, and was awarded life membership in 1976 to honour his services to the Club.

Denis had a couple of heart attacks, and underwent by-pass surgery, but kept driving for us until he retired. He moved to Wonthaggi where he enjoyed his gardening hobby. He later moved to Mildura.

He will be sadly missed by his many friends in the Club

Bob Steel (and Liz Telford, from The Melbourne Bushies – Fifty years along the track)

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

8 PM WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2006

TRADES HALL, CNR. OF LYGON AND VICTORIA STREETS, CARLTON

Come along and cast your vote (members). Non-members are also welcome to attend but may not vote.
All committee positions become vacant in February. A new committee to be installed.

A form for nomination of committee members is on the back page. Proxy forms are available from the clubrooms or can be downloaded from the Club's website.

**Members of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.
meet on Wednesday evenings
between 7.00 & 9.00 pm in the Clubrooms,
Victorian Horticultural Society Hall,
48 MacKenzie Street, Melbourne.
Visitors are always welcome.**



General correspondence should be directed to:

The Secretary,
Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.,
PO Box 1751,
Melbourne, Vic., 3001.

The News of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc. is the newsletter
of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc. and is published monthly.
Editor: Ron Hampton.

Walk previews & reviews, articles, poems, news items,
photographs of club events, reports of new gear, book reviews,
letters to the Editor, advertisements, etc. are always welcome.
The Editor reserves the right to edit contributions where space,
clarity or propriety dictate and to maintain editorial consistency.

Contributions to *The News* may be sent to the Editor by:

- Placing diskette or hand written material in the Editor's pigeon hole in the clubrooms
- Posting diskette or hand written material to either:
The Editor,
Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.,
PO Box 1751, Melbourne, Vic, 3001

Electronic mail is preferred.

Closing date for receipt of material for *The News* is the last
Wednesday of the month.

Advertisements in *The News*

Only advertisements directly relating to bushwalking will be
accepted (e.g. gear, maps, trips, tours, etc.).
Members' ads are free.

Advertising Rates (Artwork Ready)

in: printed edition only: as below, or printed & on-line editions:
as below + 25% or on-line edition only: as below + 25%.

Size:	1 Issue	3 Issues	12 Issues (1 Year)
1/4 Page	\$35	\$90	\$330
1/2 Page	\$55	\$150	\$550
Full Page	\$100	\$250	\$900

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

What's Happening with Club Members –

This month two members who met on of our walks were married. Congratulations go to Peter and Jacquie McGrath. We wish you the very best and great happiness for the future.

We have a group of four members – Carole Patterson, Jill Gregory, Dianna Gomas and Carolyn Braun, who are taking part in the 100 km Oxfam walk in April 2006. This walk commences at Jells Park at Wheelers Hill and ends at the top of Mt. Donna Buang. The team needs to raise a minimum of \$1000 for the event, so if you hear talk about fundraising or you wish to assist, contact one of the team.

Another group of Melbourne Bushies are walking the Kokoda Trail in Papua New Guinea in June this year. Wendy, Roz, Chris, and Elenora are walking in a country so rough that originally distance was measured in days not kilometres.

The two groups of New Zealand walkers came back from their trip full of great stories of the Heaphy Track which covered 82 km, mountain passes, sea kayaking and late night dancing. It sounds a great combination and I for one am looking forward to a terrific night of photos that Quentin is putting together.

The last outside activity that quite a few Melbourne Bushies are participating in, is the Western Australian Bike Ride that goes through the beautiful Southern Region of Western Australia. This is a 14 day cycle from Albany to Perth during March & April. There will be a list of those going on the notice board in the clubrooms, so that you will know which Bushies to look out for. Let me know by email if you are participating so that I can add you to the list.

Now for a request. The club enjoys having slide nights as you are aware – the sharing of photos and experiences of walks and adventures are very enjoyable. However with the advent of digital cameras, more and more of us need a laptop plus data projector to be able to continue these events. The club could really do with its own equipment. If there is anyone out there that has a data projector that could be donated or purchased for the club, please come and have a chat with me. At the same time, is there an old, but reasonably up-to-date laptop that no-one wants that we could keep in the club for this purpose?

OR . . . Has anyone access to either of these items that we could use on a regular basis? I would love to speak to you.

Safe Walking - Jan Palich

Wine & Cheese evening



**4th week
of every
month
in the
clubrooms,
7-9 pm**

Mt. Bogong Pack Carry

3-4 December, 2005

Melbourne sweltered in a temperature of 34 degrees on the Thursday before Rod's Bogong trip and we were prepared for hot weather among other options that the weather Gods might have in store for us. We were a group of eight. One of our number had never been to Bogong's summit before while another had first been there 40 years previously and on many occasions in the intervening years. Victoria's highest hill is like that – it demands its pound of flesh whichever approach is used but it offers rewards that encourage multiple visits. We used the well-used track up the Staircase Spur and the equally well-used track down the Eskdale Spur. We camped at the beautiful Cleve Cole Hut. This hut is a unique institution among the huts of the Victorian high country. It is a substantial structure built in 1937 from the local stone and is loaded with character. Cleve Cole died in an epic tragedy in the winter of 1936 after he and two others were trapped on the 'wrong side' of Bogong in a diabolical snowstorm that lasted about two weeks. The hut was built in his memory and has become an important refuge and focal point for walkers and cross-country skiers over nearly seventy years.

The weather was in transition mode during the drive up to Mountain Creek on Friday and we wondered what the next day would bring. Soon after we started up the Staircase Spur on Saturday morning our suspicions were

confirmed as the weather began to deteriorate in earnest. On reaching the tree-line we were in cloud, the wind hit us with full force and the rain approached us horizontally. We encountered a family group with some decidedly unhappy looking young children who were descending. Our leader persuaded most of the group to don over-trousers as well as jackets and parkas and the like. The remaining climb up to the top and the on-going traverse to Cleve Cole was 'character-building'. The wind was very strong, visibility was minimal and we were thankful for the well-defined track and snow-poles. We were more thankful to find on arrival at the hut that a fire was going. Three congenial souls were in residence and we were able to dry out and warm up. The rest of the afternoon and evening was spent enjoying the ambience and camaraderie of the hut and its occupants.

Sunday morning dawned fine but just as windy as the previous day, and these conditions continued during our return and descent down the Eskdale Spur. The absence of rain and the better visibility encouraged us to linger briefly on the summit. Then we carefully negotiated our way onto the top of the spur and continued downwards, having lunch at the new Michell Hut on the way. (Howard Michell was one of Cleve Cole's companions on his fatal trip).

Given the conditions, the trip was satisfying if not exactly enjoyable all the time. It reminded us of what the high country can be like in adverse weather and it was rewarding to find that our skill and equipment enabled us to handle the conditions with safety and not too much discomfort. Thankyou Rod. The group consisted of Rod Novak, Trish Elmore, Claire Luxford, Max Casley, Paul Beers, Bob Oxlade, Bill Donald, and

Jerry Grandage

Notable Nuptials

It is with pleasure that we announce the wedding of our Assistant Walk Secretary, Peter McGrath, to the exuberant, astute and charmingly persuasive Jaqui Verkade. Peter is a long-standing and deeply-valued member of Melbourne Bushies.



Peter and Jaqui exchanged their wedding vows on Saturday, 25th January, 2006 at Xavier College Chapel in Kew, followed by a beautiful reception in the Garden Restaurant at the National Gallery Victoria, midst family and close friends and a number of buddies from the Bushies. A wonderful time was had by all.

All of us at MBW wish to extend to the new Mr and Mrs McGrath our sincere wishes for a long and happy life together and may they enjoy all Life's richest blessings including good health, prosperity and the sharing of Life's many pleasures.

Lynda Larkin (Vice President)

Snowy Mountains

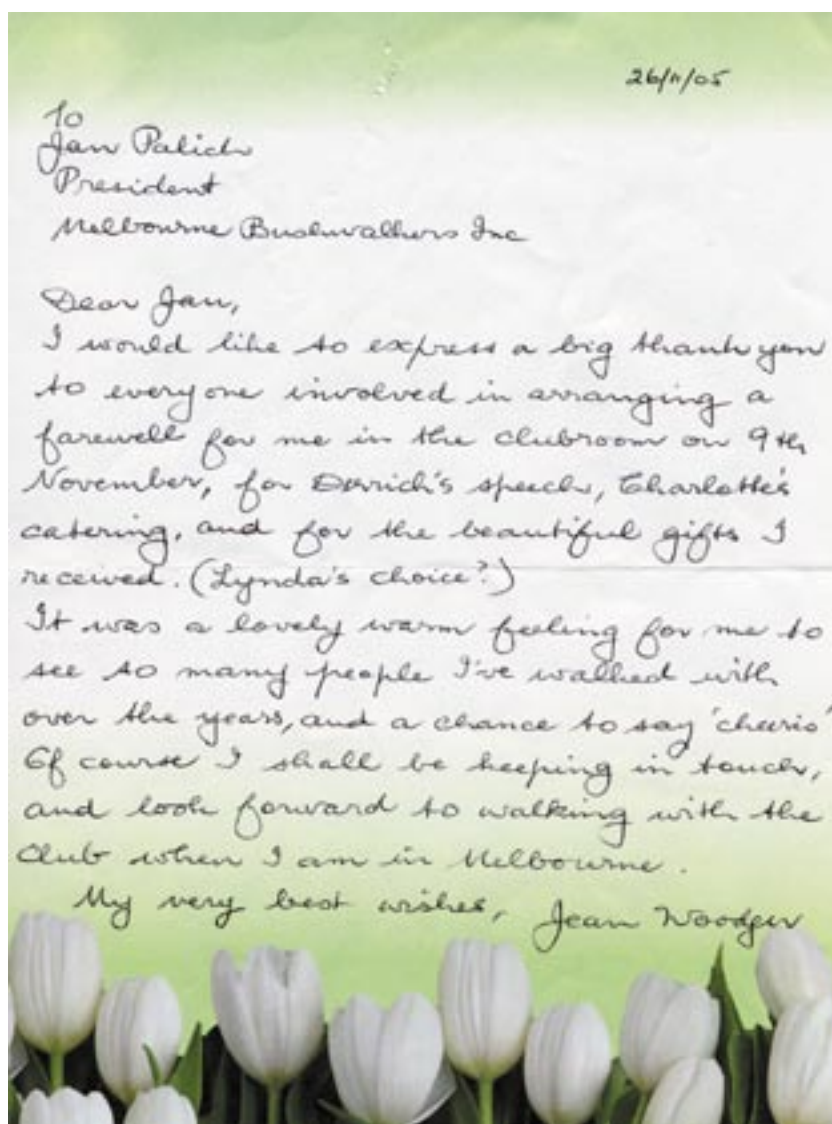
Pack Carry: 24 December – 1 January 2006

Most so-called Christmas trips on the Club program leave Melbourne on December 26 and I was pleased to find that Ralph's trip to the Snowy Mountains would involve spending Christmas Day on the track. Ralph had envisaged the walk as a nine-day pack-carry but had to modify the agenda as a result of part of the intended route being 'closed' due to its failure to recover (so far) from the January 2003 fire. So we did a four-day walk in the highest part of the Main Range and a five-day walk centred on the Gungartan-Jagungal area. Both involved a mixture of pack-carrying and side trips with day packs.

We were a select group of four and the morning of Christmas Eve saw us in the metropolis of Jindabyne in wet and windy weather which seemed likely to continue. Bakeries, Harry Potter films and procrastination were all

viable options that appeared more attractive than shouldering heavy packs and braving the elements. Early in the afternoon the rain eased and we ventured out even though the wind remained powerful. In fact wind or its absence was a feature of the whole trip and in one form or another it often figured in our conversation. Often there was too much of it but in calmer and hotter conditions we missed its cooling effect and suffered greatly from an over-abundance of the dreaded march flies which made life difficult much of the time.

Early on Christmas morning we were on the top of Kosciuszko and although the wind was unrelenting it was fine and clear and we had the place to ourselves. There followed two and a half days of delectable wandering on the 'roof of Australia', during which we experienced the joys that the best of the high country can offer – magnificent expansive landscapes, exquisite wildflowers in full bloom, beautiful glacial lakes, rock formations, even a waterfall, and a feeling of uniqueness by virtue of



the Main Range and its surrounds being Australia's only very extensive area above the treeline. Our campsite under Mt. Carruthers was blissful. Most of the area that we traversed was untouched by the 2003 fire, but we noticed that much of the slopes of Mts. Carruthers and Twynam was still in recovery mode following the phasing out of cattle grazing in the 1950s.

We then drove to Guthega Power Station and walked in to Schlink Pass to start the second stage. Following a day of oppressive heat the next day brought very high wind and intermittent horizontal rain. We contoured round the side of Gungartan in preference to walking over the top, and we were glad to reach the (well-named) Tin Hut. Two days later we enjoyed a full day's side trip in perfect conditions to Jagungal, a fairly isolated peak that is set apart from the more frequently visited Main Range area. For me this was the high point of the trip – in a 40 year bushwalking career I had never been up Jagungal before although I had admired it from afar on several occasions. Our campsite for two nights was at Tarn Bluff on a small rocky hill just above a tarn. Our tents were under some grand old snow gums which were still covered with foliage, unlike the vast majority of snow gums in the area that were burnt in the 2003 fires and are now re-growing from the base.

The last two days of the trip were somewhat dominated by heat and march-flies. Huts offered a welcome escape from the flies and the pool under Valentine Falls was refreshing.

Ralph, Bill, Marilyn and I enjoyed a great trip – thank you, Ralph.

Jerry Grandage

Swindlers Creek Pack Carry

26 December – 1 January 2006. Swindlers Creek to Anglers Rest via Cobungra River

MONDAY. It was an early start on Boxing Day for the five of us to meet at Millawa for coffee etc. and then onto Dinner Plain for lunch. As our walk required a long car shuffle, our leader Paul Beers gave three of us detailed instructions for the 6km walk down Brandy Creek mine track to our 1st campsite at the junction of Swindlers Creek and the Cobungra River. Paul and Max then drove to Anglers Rest leaving Paul's vehicle and also meat in the freezer and other items at The Blue Duck Inn ready for our return on New Years Eve. They returned in Max's car

and did very well to join us at camp around 6.30 pm. It was a large flat grassy area and we all enjoyed a dip in a nice deep hole in the Cobungra.

TUESDAY. Our campsite was at the foot of Paling Spur and up a track which led to the Bogong High Plains. We did a day walk up it and along to Young's Hut for lunch, returning to camp about 4 pm. This had been about 12 km and as the afternoon was warm another swim was in order. We still had this beautiful campsite to ourselves.

WEDNESDAY. We had some great rolling thunder early this morning followed by rain. Our wise leader had suggested we depart at 10 am which was just as the rain eased off. It was about 7 km to our next camp at the river near Flourbag Creek. This involved a lovely walk, crossing the river about 12 times in less than knee deep water to the grassy flats on alternate sides. We had the option of walking further along, but as it was warming up again, and after all it was an Easy Medium walk, a unanimous decision saw us swimming and relaxing.

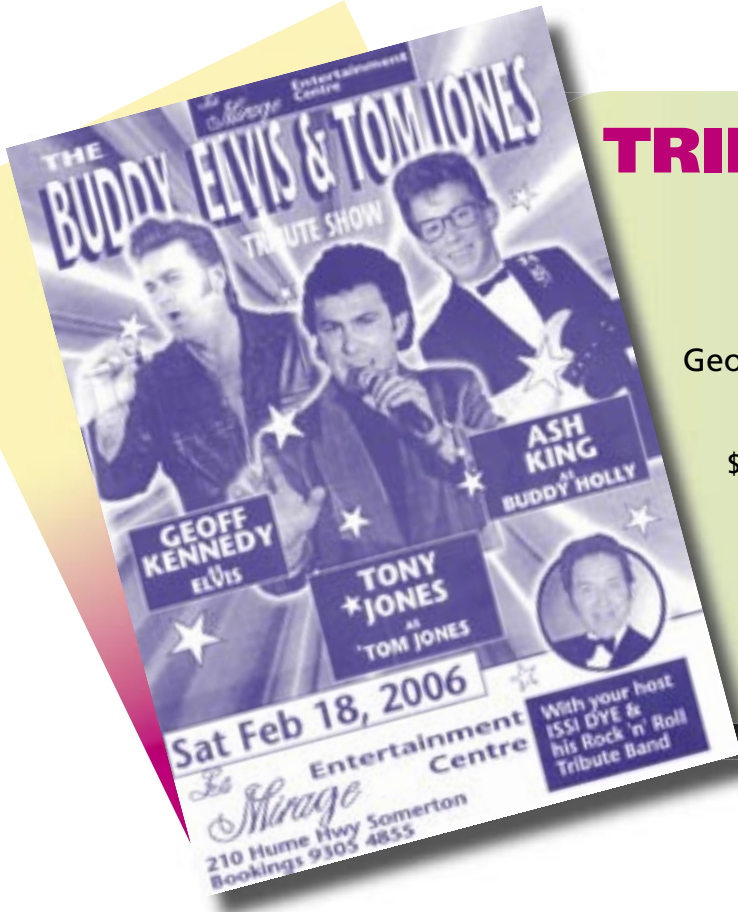
THURSDAY. We followed this beautiful river along until lunch time through fields of wildflowers and much birdlife, with the Blue Wrens very active. The river was now entering a steeper gorge section so we ascended about 200 metres as we moved along and just at the contour level where the slope lessened we followed a very old overgrown logging track for 3.5 km before descending to the river to camp. A family group camped there were the first people we had seen since we began on Boxing Day. They had gained access through a friend's private property and 4WD track. We saw some platypus in the river here and we crossed to confirm the position of a walking track that led to McNamara's Hut on the High Plains. I tried fishing unsuccessfully, but one of the family group caught a nice trout. A Barking Owl startled us while having dinner.

FRIDAY. As the river was entering another steep section we ascended again and occasionally followed an indistinct logging track which could have been 50 years old judging by the trees growing on it. After 7 to 8 km, during which time Susan was the only one to see the huge deer crashing away from us, we descended to the river and another nice campsite and swimming holes just opposite tomorrow's exit point. After yesterday's experience I almost landed a trout today. We disturbed some nice ducks here also.

SATURDAY morning we forded the river for the last time and a steep climb of 250 metres brought us to McCoy's track then to Callaghan Rd and along the Bundara River. Two anglers we walked by had just taken 3 trout from it. Gee Whiz, not much shade out here, but a swim at Anglers Rest and a BBQ at the historic Blue Duck Inn which fortunately survived the bush fires was a great place to cool down. We were indeed fortunate to have Paul show us his favourite place which, although not far from some roads was quite remote in most respects.

Thanks Paul for sharing it with us and to Susan, Ian and Max for their company on this great walk.

Bob Oxlade



TRIBUTE SHOW

Saturday 18th Feb

Ash King as **Buddy Holly**
 Tony Jones as **Tom Jones**
 Geoff Kennedy as **Elvis Presley**

Dance floor, Fully Licensed
 \$40 (group discount price) includes
 3-course meal and show

La Mirage,
210 Hume Highway, Somerton

Contact David Arnold or
 Charlotte Bradly
 asap to reserve your place

FORM OF APPOINTMENT OF PROXY

I _____
 of _____
 being a member of Melbourne Bushwalkers (Incorporated), hereby appoint

_____ being a member of Melbourne Bushwalkers (Incorporated), as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the
annual general meeting half-yearly general meeting extraordinary general meeting
(delete as appropriate)

to be held on the _____ day of _____ 2005 _____
 and at any adjournment of that meeting.

*My proxy is authorised to vote **in favour of against** the following resolution(s):
(delete as appropriate)

Signed _____ Date _____

*Delete if not applicable

TRACKS, HUTS AND CONSERVATION

Track Maintenance Report for 2005

The Club held two track maintenance weekends in 2005. In May, we helped Ranger Ross Grant at Mt Buffalo repair the walking track along the snow meadows of the Le Seouf plateau (opposite the Cathedral). This weekend involved laying permatread tiles, placing water drainage boles and building rock steps. In October, we assisted Ranger Lachie Davis and the Grampians Walking Tracks Support Group with track work on the Major Mitchell Plateau. We repaired the wooden planking near First Wannan Creek, placed rock cairns and pruned branches resulting in a much improved track. Thank you to the following club members who have participated in these very important activities: Diana Gomez, John Fritze, Max Casley, Iris Curran, Alan Clarke, Gina Hopkins, Bob Oxlade, Derrick Brown, Mark Heath, Ralph Blake, Jopie Bodegraven and Rod Novak. Also in 2005 the Federation has assisted Parks Victoria Rangers with the more remote walking track projects. This new group is called the VicWalk Track Group and have successfully completed walking track projects at Bunyip State Park, Alpine National Park (Tarli Karng & Snowy Plains), Cathedral Ranges, the Grampians and Mt Buffalo.

Rod Novak, club delegate, VicWalk Track Group

Equipment For Hire

You should never have to pass up the opportunity to go on that favourite base camp because you don't have a tent or some other piece of equipment. The Club has equipment for hire at a nominal rate.

As well as the usual tents, sleeping bags, packs and Trangias etc., the Club has also acquired some new equipment for hire.

The recent acquisitions include:

- a three man/woman tent for base camps
- a Thermarest mattress
- a Garmin eTrex GPS for use by leaders

For a full list of the equipment for hire, please see me in the clubrooms.

John Coe



Life Membership

It is proposed that Jean Woodger, Peter Havlicek and Alan Miller be considered for Life Membership at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting this month.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT 2006

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, both paper and electronic versions.

As at the beginning of February 2006, the membership of the Club was 489 (February 2005: 469) including 11 Life and 11 Honorary members.

The number of members increased by 20 during 2005 with 72 (2004:70) new members joining and 52 (2004:80) members relinquishing their membership.

Peter Havlicek, Membership Secretary

CONSERVATION REPORT FOR 2005

Mark Heath, Bill Metzthen, Derrick Brown and Rod Novak have represented the Melbourne Bushwalkers at the monthly VicWalk Conservation Committee meetings. A special THANK YOU is dedicated to all the club members who have written, telephoned and e-mailed their state MPs on the alpine cattle grazing issue. THE highlight for 2005 is the State Government decision to stop the alpine grazing. Also, in November the state government proclaimed the Otway Ranges National Park. Current issues include the VNPA's River Red Gum campaign for the Murray River and its tributaries and The Wilderness Society projects in Tasmania and south-west Victoria (Cobbobonee Forest). The Club has assisted in tree planting weekends especially with the Regent Honeyeater project in the Lurg Hills, near Benalla. The Committee has donated the interest earned from the investment account to the VNPA and The Wilderness Society.

*Rod Novak Club delegate,
VicWalk Conservation Committee*

Winter Sunday Walks Planning Meeting Change of Date

The date of the Winter Sunday Walks Planning Meeting has been changed from Feb 9th to Feb 16th. I have emailed the regular walks committee members about the change. Anyone else who is interested is welcome to attend but please ring me first in case of any further change of details

Jopie Bodegraven Walks Secretary ph94824691

WALK SECRETARY'S REPORT 2005

2005 has been another good year for the club with a varied activities programme and lots of participants. The total number of participants is up slightly and this is largely due to the increase in the number of Sunday Bus walkers. Average attendance on the bus has increased by 3 to nearly 39. Numbers on the TOFS and Dandenongs Explorer walks have declined slightly with 10 and 17 average attendance but the Wednesday walks have increased in popularity with 18 walking on average. The pack carries still have a solid core of devotees with an average of 8 walkers per trip, up one from 2004. The base camp average however has slipped down from 15 to 12. We had 3 Lodge trips, to Bendigo, Halls Gap and at Barjarg near Mansfield for skiing with an average of 13 people. We also had 2 well attended canoe trips and cycling has taken off in the club with an average of 18 on the 4 day cycle trips and 21 on the 2 weekend cycle basecamps. There were also 2 track maintenance weekends and a tree planting weekend.

The club website has been upgraded which helps to keep our flow of new members strong and a new and fairer reimbursement system for Sunday walk preview transport costs has been introduced.

The club insurance policy now again covers skiing which will give us the option to programme ski trips

Producing and running a walks programme takes a lot of work and I would like to thank all the team who have contributed so much. Firstly we have our co-ordinators. Peter McGrath rustles up leaders for the Sunday walks and fixes up any problems as they arise. Sandra Mutimer keeps the Wednesday walks humming along nicely. Warren Baker has been doing a wonderful job of organising the Dandenongs Explorer walks for many years and has now finely handed over those reins to Liz Telford and Maureen Hurley. Jean Giese makes sure that our not quite so physically strong members have no excuse for slacking by co-ordinating our monthly, easy TOFS walks. Ask Jean what that acronym really stands for. Then there is Rod Novak, our Conservation delegate who organises occasional track maintenance activities and Quentin Tibballs our training co-ordinator who endeavours to make sure we can all navigate.

Our leaders are crucial to the running of the club. In 2005 we had 81 of them, some leading up to 7 trips! Thank you to all of you. The club would disappear without your valuable work. I urge everyone to consider becoming a leader. You will find it very rewarding, a lot of fun and not as difficult as you might think. Speak to me or Peter or one of the other co-ordinators about it.

I am certainly enjoying being walks secretary. If someone else very much wants to take over I would happily stand aside but failing that I will happily continue on for a second 12 months. I will however be going

walking overseas in Britain, Spain & Switzerland for 3 months from mid June to mid September. I will attempt to do as much of the required planning and routine work as possible before I go, but I will need someone to stand in for me during this period. It could be a previous walks secretary or someone who would like a taste before taking over as walks secretary the following year.

Now for those into figures here are the stats

YEARLY ATTENDANCE TOTALS FOR THE 5 YEARS 2001-2005

Year	Total	Day	W/E Total	Pack Carry	Members	Visitors	Trips
2001	2,613	2,011	602	208	1,999	614	137
2002	2,756	2,200	556	226	2,062	694	132
2003	2,621	2,089	532	137	2,142	479	128
2004	2,926	2,357	569	177	2,451	475	146
2005	3,025	2,482	543	185	2,535	490	139

WALK STATISTICS 2005 V 2004

Activity	No of trips		Average Attendance	
	2005	2004	2005	2004
Sunday Bus	50	51	38.6	35.5
Wednesday	12	12	17.7	15.7
Dand Expl	10	10	16.5	18.9
TOFS	10	11	9.6	10.9
Pack Carry	24	26	7.8	6.8
Base Camp	19	22	11.6	14.6
Lodge	3	1	12.7	19
Cycle W/end	2	2	21	7
Cycle Day	4	2	18	8
Canoeing	2	2	18.5	19
Tracks & Planting	3	2	9.7	8.5
Nav Training	1	1	7	8

Jopie Bodegraven, Walks Secretary

Want to become more involved in the Melbourne Bushwalkers? Want to learn what keeps it going and how you can contribute energy and ideas?

Then join the MBW Committee

All positions become vacant in February and we are looking for general committee members and people willing to take on specific roles. Interested? Then talk to Jan Palich or Fay Dunn or any committee member in the club rooms.

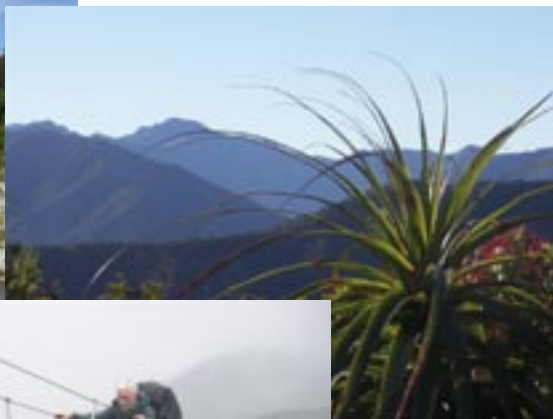
Newsletter editor required

Feeling creative and are familiar with word processing? Then talk to Ron Hampton about producing the newsletter. A new editor is required in 2006.

THE HEAPHY TRACK

South Island, New Zealand

January 2006



1846. We didn't have any near run-ins with seals as the N-S group did, but both groups were awed by the apparently sub-tropical vegetation and spectacular proximity of the mighty Tasman Sea.

Reaching Heaphy Hut from either direction was a highlight for everyone. On the incoming tide, the roaring sea pushes through a narrow inlet in the Heaphy River and cause waves to run for a hundred metres or more along the river. The waves hitting Heaphy Bluff are spectacular and sonorous and the huge driftwood (driftlogs is more accurate) along the beach pays homage to the power of the ocean and rivers here.

The S-N group had the advantage of beautiful weather early on, so we were swimming in the Heaphy River on night 1, and then walking along it on Day 2, in mottled sunlight. The second day involved more of a climb and was longer at 21.5 km. We encountered the first of many swing bridges just past the Heaphy Hut and when we arrived at James Mackay Hut, we not only had the beautiful vista of the Heaphy Bluff and Heaphy Hut in the distance, but also the happy smiling members of the N-S group...though Gerardine had a rather bruised and battered face as the result of a fall on Day 1. Like everyone else she extolled the teamwork on the track, and she almost seemed to have forgotten about the fall by the time we saw her.

Days 3 and 4 were a little wetter but that was to be expected as the DOC website told us that rainy days in January averaged 11. Our group was lucky as these were our shorter days of 14km and 13km respectively. These were days of walking across the Goulard Downs, through tussock country and creek beds and some patches of shrub and beech forest. Day 4 between Goulard Downs Hut and Perry Saddle Hut provided real enchantment for us, or as



Quentin, quintessential planner, had us all booking our huts for the Heaphy Track on July 1 last year, the opening day for bookings on the Department of Conservation website <www.doc.govt.nz>.

I diligently persisted with the website in the early hours, and as part of the South to North group (S-N group) eventually had my bookings made for Heaphy Hut, James Mackay Hut, Saxon Hut and Perry Saddle Hut, in that order. The North to South group (N-S group), led by Quentin, tramped¹ the trail and the huts in reverse order.

The Heaphy Track was the main feature of our two week trip to New Zealand from January 7 to 22, with 16 Melbourne Bushies and 2 visitors tramping the 82 kilometre trail over 5 days and 4 nights. For the S-N group led by Rod, the first day was a highlight as we set off from the backpacker quarters at The Last Resort along the 16.5 km coastal path forged by Charles Heaphy in



such comforts...but we felt great. Our driver Rory, however, assured us that we were very smelly.

This was only the beginning of our adventures as a number of us spent two days sea kayaking in the Abel Tasman National Park and another two days walking on Queen Charlotte Sound near Picton. Also unreported so far are our many chill-outs, wine touring, spotting of whales, seals and dolphins from our mini-bus along the East Coast...not to mention, summer pudding addictions, Kurdish dancing, rock n' roll and Quentin's efforts at perfecting the New Zealand acc'nt. Let the

Quentin, leading the North to South group, said: "It was Tolkien-like. You were waiting for the troll to appear." Ken also saw the fantasy world of Jonathon Swift in the area, a "new world. Strange lands". There were limestone caves aplenty and it was a delight.

On Day 5 we headed downwards on the final 17 km stretch through swirling mists towards Brown Hut, our destination. Unlike the North to South group who just had a 20 minute drive to the hot showers and real beds at The Last Resort, we had to travel a few hours to Nelson before

editor know if you would like to hear more in some exciting future instalments!

Everyone is totally agreed that not only was it a spectacular tramping opportunity, but more importantly, it was like being transported into a transient but highly functional family. Thanks to Quentin, Rod and the wonderful members of Quentin's Quintessential Qurew!

¹ New Zealand for "bushwalking".

Marjie Courtis

WILLIS'S WALKABOUTS

Dream reading

in our free newsletter



And it might save YOU some money.

We send out an email newsletter about six times a year. The last one brought us a nice, unsolicited testimonial from one of our clients, Diana Schraner. *"It is always a pleasure to receive your newsletters! They always make me think of the bush and Australia and all the walks I want to do with you in the future!"*

Every newsletter contains at least **one special offer** which is not available anywhere else.

www.bushwalkingholidays.com.au

Win a voucher for up to \$1000. Email for details.

And it's not just about trips. In the past year, it has included short stories about light-pack bushwalking, the first Top End Rogaining and Orienteering Carnival, Cydne Ingrid, new flights to Darwin and Kununurra, and changes to Kakadu National Park.

Why not see for yourself. Send us an email and ask to go onto our list. If you later decide you don't want it, send us another and your name will be removed.

Send your email to walkabout@ais.net.au



Willis's Walkabouts 12 Carrington St Millner NT 0810 Email: walkabout@ais.net.au

Phone 08 8985 2134 Fax 08 8985 2355

PREVIEWS OF DAY WALKS FEBRUARY – MARCH 2006

SUNDAY BUS: Marysville Lookouts and Waterfalls

DATE	Sunday 19 February 2006
STANDARD	Easy and Easy/Medium
DISTANCE	14 km and 17 km
LEADERS	Dion Marriott and David Elias
TRANSPORT	Bus – Southbank Blvd. at 9 am
RETURN TIME	7pm approx.
AREA	Marysville
MAP REFERENCE	Marysville – Lake Mountain 1:30,000 Outdoor Leisure Map

Pleasant walk through the forest around scenic Marysville, approximately 75 km NE of Melbourne, set in the Mystic Mountains that is part of the Great Dividing Range.

The walk starts and finishes in the township of Marysville and initially follows the Steavenson River on a well maintained track to the famous Steavenson Falls, one of the highest falls in Victoria. There is a short side trip to the top of the falls if you are feeling energetic. Then we climb the Keppel track up to De La Rue, Oxlee and Keppel lookouts for fabulous views of the town and its surrounds.

The medium walk includes an extra loop along the Trestle track to take in an interesting trestle bridge.

Remember to bring lunch and a hat and plenty of water if the day is hot and a raincoat and jumper in case of wet weather. Also bring a change of shoes to be left on the bus.

SUNDAY BUS: Lake Elizabeth (Otways)

DATE	Sunday 26 February 2006
STANDARD	Easy/Medium and Medium
DISTANCE	14 km and 16 km
LEADERS	Lynda Larkin and Doug Langton
TRANSPORT	Bus Southbank Blvd. at 8.30 am
RETURN TIME	Approx. 6.30 pm
AREA	Otways
MAP REFERENCE	The Otways and Shipwreck Coast, Walking The Otways. E12

This walk includes some fairly steep uphill and downhill sections in a remote area of the Otways west of Lorne, along tracks flanked by towering gums and banks of tree ferns. The highlight of the walk will be a circuit of Lake Elizabeth. We will linger at the lake to enjoy its eerie beauty and discover its origins, then follow the Barwon River East Branch downstream before concluding the walk with a road bash back to the bus.

When the walk was previewed the air was fragrant with native mint and eucalyptus, we saw quite a few birds including some yellow-breasted robins and several black wallabies were sighted and no snakes!

Please make sure you bring sufficient water, sunscreen, hats and change of shoes for the bus. Book early so as not to miss out.

TOFS: Dandenong Ranges – Nicholas gardens

DATE	Thursday 2 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy
DISTANCE	12 km
LEADER	Jean Giese
TRANSPORT	Private
RETURN TIME	2.30pm approx.
MAP REFERENCE	Melways 75 and 124

If March is as hot as January and February we'll be glad to be walking under the tall Mountain Ash trees for most of the time. This is a round trip commencing at the the eastern edge of Sherbrooke Forest, then along Sassafras Creek, through the Alfred Nicholas Memorial Gardens and back through the north-eastern part of Sherbrooke forest.

Meet at the small carpark on Grantulla Road near the commencement of Foden Track (Mel. 124 C6) to start walking at 10.15 am. Book with the leader.

NAVIGATION DAY / ROGAINING

DATE	Saturday 4 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy
DISTANCE	10 km
LEADER	Quentin Tibballs
TRANSPORT	Private
RETURN TIME	7.00 pm
AREA	Walhalla
MAP REFERENCE	1:20,000 colour premarked map supplied

This day's navigation training will consist of the club entering teams into a Vic Rogaining Association's event at Walhalla. The event will be suitable for both novice and more experienced walkers – we will simply allocate participants to suitable small groups. Rogaining is an exciting method for a beginner to learn navigation. For further details contact Quentin on 0408 144 265 or on email .

SUNDAY BUS: Starling Gap – Ada Tree

DATE	Sunday 5 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy and Easy/Medium
DISTANCE	12km and 15km
LEADERS	David Laing and Tracey Jamieson
TRANSPORT	Bus – Southbank Blvd at 9 am
RETURN TIME	Approx 7 pm
MAP REFERENCE	Ada River 1:25,000

Not yet previewed but we will try to avoid tracks already done in the area recently.

Possibly Ezards Mill site to Starling Gap to Ada Tree with an extra section before Ezards for the E/M group.

The area is very attractive mountain forest South-East of Warburton.

SUNDAY BUS: Arawata – Andersons Ridge

DATE	Sunday 12 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy and Easy/Medium
DISTANCE	12 km and 17 km
LEADERS	Ron Milthorpe and David Anderson
TRANSPORT	Bus – Southbank Blvd at 8.30 am

The longer walk will be about 17 km and will involve several reasonable climbs in the first 5 km. The longer walk will start at Korumburra, the first good climb will be Cooks Hill which is about 180 metres in just over 2 km, The top of Cooks Hill is at an altitude of about 350 metres above sea level with great panoramic views. From the top of Cooks Hill we head across the steep hills and valleys to Anderson Ridge where we pick up the path of the shorter walk. The shorter walk will be about 12 km, commencing at Arawata, the first 5 km will be relatively easy going along Anderson Ridge, and offers great views from the mountains to the north, to Bass Straight to the south. The last 7 km will go cross country through the hills and valleys to Kardella then finish at the Djinta Djinta Winery at Kardella South. www.djintadjintawinery.com.au <<http://www.djintadjintawinery.com.au>>

On the day of the walk the Djinta Djinta Winery is having a Jazz Day. All will be welcome to enjoy the music, sample a drop or two in the cellar, or coffee in the restaurant.

Both walks will offer spectacular views of the South Gippsland hills and depending on visibility, views to the mountains to the north and the coast from Westernport Bay to Wilsons Prom.

Please note, Ron Milthorpe's phone number has changed from what is shown on the walks program.

WEDNESDAY WALK: ADA Valley Tramline

DATE	Wednesday 15 March 2006
STANDARD	Medium
DISTANCE	13.5km
LEADER	Ian Mair
AREA	Warburton / Ada Valley
MAP REFERENCE	Vicmap, Ada River 1:25,000; Melways Map 512 T3

The Ada Valley is accessed by a number of walking tracks including the 'Walk Into History'. This 33 km, two-day walk passes through some well-preserved sections of the historic timber tramline, past old mills and other relics of the early timber industry. Our Wednesday Walk will traverse the 7.5 km section from Starling Gap through the Ada River Valley to an old tramway junction which presents three choices: (a) head north to the New Ada Mill (2.8 km return) (b) head east to the Federal Mill (4.3 km return) or (c) continue south along the Walk Into History to the Ada No.2 mill. After lunch we will take the northern path up past the New Ada Mill site, following logging roads to meet Big Creek Road which will lead us back to Starling Gap.

Although only 13.5 km long over relatively easy grades this interesting walk through history presents a number of challenges to justify its rating of Medium and takes around 5 hours. Recent track clearing activities have opened up the start and finish of the tramline section but much of it is overgrown and slow going with occasional fallen trees, log crossings and creek beds to negotiate. Overpants are advisable if there has been any recent rain. The leeches in this area are legendary and a ready supply of salt or

spray insect repellent is recommended to repel their amorous advances.

We will meet at Starling Gap at 10.30 am. Two hours should be allowed to get there. There are several options to reach Starling Gap, however, the better road is to follow the Warburton Highway to Yarra Junction and take a right turn along the Yarra Junction – Noojee Road (Route C425), following it for 23 km to a T-intersection with a sign '24 Ada Tree'. Follow this road north for 11–12 km to Starling Gap picnic area.

Call Ian Mair if you plan to come or if you have any questions.

SUNDAY BUS: Lake Mountain

DATE	Sunday 19 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy and Easy/Medium
DISTANCE	12 km and 15 km
LEADERS	Keith McKenry and Hans Edlinger
TRANSPORT	Bus 8.30 am start from Fairfield
AREA	Lake Mountain, 20 km west of Marysville
MAP REFERENCE	Vicmap: Marysville – Lake Mountain

Melbourne's closest alpine resort reaches 1530 m above sea and has views of the Acheron and Yarra valleys, the Victorian Alps and the city skyline.

These walks encompass sub alpine tracks and parts of the cross country ski trails which are available to walkers outside of the snow season. There are a number of lookout points along the way and expect to see stands of mottled grey Snow Gums, Alpine Heath, and alpine bogs which form the headwaters of the Taggerty river.

From November to March wildflowers bloom in a succession of colors and fill the air with fragrance.

Temperatures are on average 10°C cooler than Melbourne so be prepared. Alpine weather conditions are subject to rapid change so always carry waterproof and warm clothing.

Note: Because of the Commonwealth games, the bus will leave at 8.30 am from the MacKenzie Depot in Grange Road, Fairfield, just south of the railway line, east side. There is limited parking in the depot and more in Ravencourt Place, Hamilton Street and Grange Road. There will be pickups near Fairfield Station, in Station Street (east side, heading south) just south of the railway line, at Surrey Hills Station and along Canterbury Road.

DANDENONGS EXPLORER: Belgrave – Upper Ferntree Gully

DATE	Saturday 25 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy
DISTANCE	12 km
LEADER	Liz Telford
AREA	Belgrave, Kallista, Upper Ferntree Gully
MAP REFERENCE	Melways 75 and 74

The walk will commence at Belgrave Railway Station. We will walk somewhat up the Coles Ridge Track and cross over to the Hill Climb Track. After a bit of a climb we will stop at the Sherbrook



Falls, before continuing along Hacketts Track. Then we will walk a long One Tree Hill road before detouring down some quieter streets and walking on to One Tree Hill. We will walk down the Treefern track (steep) and finally on the Upper Ferntree Gully Railway Station, where we will catch the train back to Belgrave.

Please bring for enough money for the train fare back to Belgrave Railway Station.

There will be several steep hills to climb and steep declines, however, the walk will be at a relaxed pace. There are several nice pockets of rainforest with beautiful tree ferns to enjoy.

Please meet in the carpark of Belgrave Railway Station at 10:30 am (Map 75 in the Melways). To book, please call me between 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm during the week before the walk.



SUNDAY BUS: Cape Woolamai – San Remo

DATE	Sunday 26 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy and Easy/Medium
DISTANCE	15 km and 17 km
LEADER(S)	Liz Moore and Halina Sarbinowski
TRANSPORT	Bus – Fairfield at 8.30 am
RETURN TIME	7.00 pm
AREA	Phillip Island
MAP REFERENCE	Phillip Island Special 1:25,000

This area offers excellent beach walking along both surf and sheltered beaches.

Both walks will commence to the west of Forest Caves with the easy/medium group walking an extra 2 km before joining the same walk as the easy group.

The first part of each walk will be along surf beaches before ascending the cliff line to Woolamai Hill where mutton bird rookeries abound. This high point offers specular views including The Pinnacles. The last part of the walk will be along the sheltered beaches of Cleeland Bight, perfect for those who enjoy a dip (weather permitting). Finally we'll cross the bridge to San Remo and if time allows enjoy a latte before our return to Melbourne.

Please note 8.30 am start from Fairfield (due to Commonwealth Games).

WALKS SECRETARY REPORT

Trip figures for December 2005

	December 2005			December 2004	
	Trips	People	Average	Trips	Average
Sunday Bus	3	-	39	4	36
Other Day	2	-	11	2	14
Pack Carry	3	-	6	3	9
Base Camp	2	-	15	2	15
Canoeing	1	-	12	0	0
Cycle	1	-	21	0	0
TOTAL	12	-		11	

We only had 3 Sunday Bus trips due to Xmas but they were popular. The Xmas pack carries were poorly attended but Sylvia's Great Ocean Walk base camp and Lance's High Plains base camp had good numbers. Jan's Frankston cycle trip was great and Quentin had good numbers on his Upper Murray canoe trip

Jopie Bodegraven, Walks Secretary

PACK CARRY: King Spur – Queen Spur

DATE	10–12 February 2006
STANDARD	Medium/Hard
DISTANCE	20 km approx.
LEADER	Dion Marriott
TRANSPORT	Private
RETURN TIME	Sunday evening
AREA	Howitt near Buller
MAP REF	Howitt-Selwyn 1:50,000 Topo Map

A pleasant little circuit walk in the Alpine National Park in NE Victoria. The walk includes a traverse of the Cross Cut Saw, which is part of the famous Alps Walking Track, a 650 km track which joins Walhalla to Canberra.

We will drive up on Friday 10th and camp at some suitable spot near the start of the walk.

The walk begins on Saturday by ascending Kings Spur to Mount Koonica at 1594m, a climb of approximately 600m. We continue on to Mount Speculation at 1668m where there is a good campsite and water nearby in Camp Creek. Pitch tents, have dinner and watch the sunset from Speculation.

On Sunday we will traverse the Cross Cut Saw, a narrow ridge with many peaks and troughs and a precipitous drop on either side, so that it may seem to us that we are walking along the serrated edge of a saw blade.

There should be fabulous views of Mount Despair and the Vikings as well as Mount Howitt and the Devils Staircase down into the Wonnangatta valley.

The traverse includes the climb over the aptly named Mount Buggery, a steep and tiring 180 m climb out of Horrible Gap.

After this there may be time and sufficient enthusiasm to drop packs and take a short side trip to Mount Howitt before we descend Queens Spur and back to the cars. We will stop for afternoon tea or dinner on the way home.

The walk is graded medium hard as there are some steep climbs and small cliffs to negotiate. The walk is quite exposed and there is always chance of foul weather.

BASE CAMP: The Great Ocean Walk – Finale

This walk, originally scheduled for 24–26 February has been postponed due to unforeseen circumstances and will now take place on 7–9 April

PACK CARRY: Wilsons Prom Oberon Bay Circuit.

DATE	3–5 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy
LEADER	Claire Luxford
DISTANCE	Approx. 26 km
TRANSPORT	Private
RETURN TIME	Sunday approx 6 pm
MAP	Wilsons Prom. National Park Outdoor Leisure Map

This walk is suitable for those wishing to try pack carry for the first time or those wanting to enjoy a leisurely weekend of walking and perhaps swimming. We will travel to the Prom on Friday night and camp at Tidal River. On Saturday morning we will explore Lilly Pilly nature walk and take in Mt Bishop, without packs. After lunch at Tidal River with our packs on, we will walk along the Oberon Bay Walking Track to Oberon Bay Camping ground. The walk will be leisurely, those wanting to swim should bring their togs. On the Sunday we will have time to swim and explore the area before completing the circuit via the Telegraph Track ending at Mt Oberon car park. **Limit of 8.**

BASE CAMP: Howqua River, via Sheeppark Flat

DATE	Friday 9 – Monday 13 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy/easy-medium
LEADERS	Paul Beers and Jan Colquhoun
TRANSPORT	Private
RETURN TIME	Monday late afternoon 13 March
AREA	Howqua River, via Sheeppark Flat
MAP REFERENCE	Buller South 8123-1-S, Bush maps Vic Howqua and Jamieson Rivers, Rooftops Mansfield-Mt Howitt Adventure Map

This base camp was a popular one last time in January 2004, and offers a variety of scenic walks and the riverside camp for swimming, etc. The 2006 walk preview had not been undertaken at the time of this going to press, so details will be posted on the noticeboard in the club in the next week or so. Given there were some difficulties with car access to the Eight Mile Creek campsite last time, we are waiting until after the preview to decide the actual campsite this year. Over the three days, at this point, we are intending to:

Friday: Meet for 7pm dinner at the (white) Mansfield pub and then travel in convoy. Those unable to do so can meet us at 9.30am on the Sat am.

Saturday: 10am: Drive to Refrigerator gao and walk to The Bluff to take in the views at the summit and do a circular walk via Bluff Hut.

Sunday: Walk up to Eagles Peaks from 8 Mile gap and return down to Jamieson River and car shuffle (last time we were there a wedge tailed eagle put on a flight show for us!).

Monday: Ritchies Hut – a short easy walk along the river and back across the other side with creek crossings.

Depending on numbers, we may also provide alternative walks on all three days to provide both easy and an easy/medium option.

See Paul and/or Jan in the clubrooms or look for the preview details on the notice board.

**PACK CARRY:****Spion Kopje – Ropers Hut – Bogong Creek Saddle**

DATE	10–13 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy/Medium
DISTANCE	Approx 45 km
LEADER	Bill Donald
TRANSPORT	Private
RETURN TIME	Early evening Monday 13 March
AREA	Alpine National Park Falls Creek Mt Beauty
MAP REF	Outdoor Leisure Bogong Alpine Area 1:50,000

Starting from Howmans Gap we drop down to and cross the Rocky Valley Creek and then have a steepish ascent (600 metres) to the plateau and on to our camp at Ropers Hut. Day two we are off to Bogong Creek Saddle via Timms Spur. In the afternoon we will be doing a side trip up the Quartz Ridge. Day three has us back to the cars at Clover Dam.

The area we are in is notorious for poor weather. Please come prepared for a wet and cold weekend.

**PACK CARRY: Feathertop & Fainter the hard way**

DATE	10–13 March 2006
STANDARD	Medium/Hard
DISTANCE	40 km
LEADER	Gina Hopkins
TRANSPORT	Private
RETURN TIME	Monday night
AREA	Bogong Alpine Area
MAP REF	Bogong Outdoor Leisure Map 1:50,000

When I was last on the Fainters I noticed this rocky spur heading west off the summit, plunging down steeply to the Kiewa River West Branch. That looks an interesting route to climb, I thought. On the other side of the valley I could see a long spur making its way up to the North Peak of Mt Feathertop. There are no tracks on these spurs, and I've no idea what the scrub will be like or how much rock scrambling is involved, but that's the route I want to try this weekend.

The walk will start from near Pyramid Hill, south of Mt Beauty, and approach Feathertop from the north along The Razorback. Then down to the Kiewa, up the other side to Fainter South, along to Fainter North and descend via Springs Saddle to West Link Road. A short car shuffle will be necessary. Campsites and side-trips will depend on the weather and the group, and the progress we make. There is a lovely campsite just near the summit of Fainter South, lovely in good weather that is.

If you're interested in this trip, please contact me before 24 February. After that date, please contact Jopie or see him in the Clubrooms.

BASE CAMP: Prom in a Day Circuit

DATE	17–19 March 2006
STANDARD	Hard
DISTANCE	45 km – on Saturday
LEADER	Derrick Brown
TRANSPORT	Private
RETURN TIME	Sunday late afternoon
AREA	Wilson's Prom

This has become a club classic walk, but is only for those who think that they can do 45 km in one day. We camp at Tidal River on Friday night and have an early start on Saturday. We do a clockwise circuit – Mt. Oberon, Sealers Cove, Refuge Cove, Kersop Peak, Waterloo Bay, Oberon Bay, Little Oberon Bay, Tidal River. Most of us swim at each beach (usually without bathers – there's hardly anyone around), entirely optional of course. I find the swims very refreshing. Sunday is a rest day – we may visit Picnic Bay or Tongue Point or even something more active before taking a gentle drive home via a coffee shop or two. Note that this year will be a bit different as we'll be seeing the Prom recovering from the bush fires of April 2005 when 13% of the Prom was destroyed, including much of the area we'll be covering. The recovery is going well apparently. Shade will be in short supply, so hats and sunblock are mandatory. All the tracks are open, with new boardwalks replacing the ones lost. It'll be a good weekend.

CYCLING BASE CAMP: Camperdown Area

DATE	24–26 March 2006
STANDARD	Easy/Medium
DISTANCE	About 100 km over 2 days
LEADER	Ken MacMahon
TRANSPORT	Private
RETURN TIME	7 pm
AREA	Western District
MAP REF	Vicroads Map Book or other road maps will do

The main focus of this trip will be the fantastic volcanic features that abound in the Camperdown district. On Saturday we will follow a circular route along sealed back roads visiting Glenormiston, Mt Noorat, Noorat village, Lake Keilembete, Terang and Lake Bullen Merri, a distance of around 55 km.

On Sunday I intend to cycle around Camperdown taking in the delightful streetscapes as well as nearby Mt Leura. Then we will cycle the rail trail from Cobden to Timboon, a distance of 34 km through farmland, forest, gullies and over some trestle bridges. This trail is gravel so it won't be suitable for racy road bikes.

We will be staying in a very picturesque and well appointed camping ground located high on a hill overlooking the district. There is an excellent pub in town with comfy chairs and good meals on Saturday evenings and just the thing for weary cyclists.