

**MELBOURNE
BUSHWALKERS INC.**

ABN 14 396 912 508



THE NEWS

#840

March
2021



Mt. Bogong ascent - R.I. Mair

WE ARE A MEMBER OF



Bushwalking Victoria

Members of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc meet on Wednesday evenings between 6.30-8.30 pm in the club rooms at:

**Mission to Seafarers Victoria
717 Flinders Street
Docklands**

Visitors are always welcome!

General correspondence should be directed to:

The Secretary
Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc
PO Box 1751
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

www.melbournebushwalkers.org.au

NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Jackie Lazzaro
Liz Brockley
Peter Stankovic
Jean Saxby
Caroline Thomas

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

Editor: Deb Shand

Calls for expressions of interest for club activities and extended trips, walk reviews, articles, poems, news items, photographs of Club events, reports of new gear, book/ movie reviews, letters to the editor, advertisements, et cetera are always welcome. However, the Editor reserves the right to edit contributions where space, clarity or propriety dictate, and to maintain editorial consistency.

Note: photographs should be sent as separate high resolution files which are capable of being edited.

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

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

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

Next committee meeting: Monday 12 April



SOCIAL SECRETARY SOUGHT

We all love our wine and cheese nights, slide shows and social events, hence we all love our Social Secretary! Alas, our current Social Secretary is stepping down after sterling service, so we urgently need a new person, or two people, to fill this important role within the club. Can you help us out?

For more details please contact the President at president@mbw.org.au

The Melbourne Bushwalkers Annual General Meeting will take place on March 24 at 7.30pm in the club rooms.

Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?

Due date for contributions to April News: 21 March
Email: news@mbw.org.au



President's Column

Dear members

Firstly, I would like to say a huge “thank-you” for being part of our great club and for your vital ongoing support, especially in these turbulent times.

In 2020 we have faced all kinds of challenges. Rewind to earlier last year, we all experienced smoke that engulfed Sydney and Melbourne as deadly bushfires burnt for months following years of drought. The devastating Black Summer bushfires destroyed over 12 million hectares of bushland and habitat. Nearly three billion native birds and animals – Australian icons and a huge drawcard for tourists and hikers– were killed or displaced.

Then COVID-19 struck and halted the world in its tracks leading to unprecedented lockdown and stay at home restrictions in Victoria. Many of us experienced anxiety and stress with limited contact with family, friends, and workmates, working reduced hours and losing work in some cases. For many of us it meant very little time spent in nature. Never have the benefits of being in nature – being in the wild – been so important to so many, but also the Black Summer bushfires created a new sense of urgency to protect the bushland for current and future generations.



The pandemic meant for our club that we had many months without any walks or gathering at our clubhouse at the Seafarers Mission. The committee worked hard to develop guidelines for our club to stay safe and to reinstate our walks program. As we could not meet in person for our social monthly club nights, we started to meet online and enjoyed a range of different presentations throughout the year. A thank you to our social secretary and speakers for making this virtual program happen. Our web master was busy putting the finishing touches on our website but still found time to re-open our club house virtually providing members with a chance to connect and to hear bushwalking news and updates. In November we finally restarted our walks program with the popular Sunday bus being back on the program in January. I want to thank our Sunday walk secretary and leaders for putting together our program, accommodating the changes in restrictions and rules and for stepping up to lead walks.

Despite the challenges brought about by COVID-19 we have achieved a lot. I thank all committee members and our volunteers for their support in the past year to ensure we kept members safe, met virtually, restarted our walks program and kept members informed. Special thanks goes to Brett Daniel, our Sunday walk secretary, and Jane McRae, our social secretary, who have both served on the committee for several years and who are stepping down at the end of this term. Thank you for your time, commitment, and energy.

Looking ahead, I am excited to welcome new members to our committee and to work with the committee to ensure we are providing our members with a diverse walking and social program, to support our leaders, provide training for future leaders, offer H&S training opportunities, focus on diversity, inclusion and reconciliation, and ensure we take care of the environment amongst some of the projects of the year.

I am looking forward to seeing some of you at the AGM, on future walks and hopefully many of you at our MBW 80th anniversary party, details to be published shortly. As you will recall, we were planning in May 2020 to get together to celebrate the club's 80th Anniversary. Due to the pandemic, we have had to postpone the date for our celebration. We will celebrate with a big bang once it is safe to meet again in a larger group.

Best, Susanne
MBW President

we are turning



To commemorate Melbourne Bushwalkers 80th Anniversary the Club's committee has decided to plant 500 trees as a long-term legacy for the club. You can purchase one or more native trees by donating to our dedicated 80th Anniversary tree planting GoFundMe page <https://www.gofundme.com/f/melbourne-bushwalkers-80th-anniversary>

The link to this GoFundMe page is also available under the Membership tab: Notices for members on the club's homepage. The funds will be used for the 500 native trees and tree guards.

The club will organise and attend a tree-planting event (location to be confirmed) during winter 2021 and more details of how you can get involved will be posted closer to the date.

Fifteen Trees has been selected an independent, social enterprise company with established networks with Landcare, community groups and plant nurseries. Fifteen Trees has organised the planting of over 180,000 trees around Australia since its establishment in July 2009.

\$935 raised of \$2,500 goal



MBW 80th Anniversary Organising Committee - Call for volunteers

The Club's 80th Anniversary will be celebrated on **Sunday 20th June 2021**. A sub-committee will be formed to organise the event, so we are looking for volunteers to assist.

1. What will be required of you? Attend meetings (online) - anticipated 3-4 in total
2. What needs to be organised?
 - Preparation of Running Sheet / formalities / timings
 - History/photo board to be put together showing the Club's journey so far
 - Assisting the Walks Secretary if required, co-ordinating the walks being held on the day
 - Catering - liaising with the MTSv (Mission to Seafarers Victoria) and/or caterer for Afternoon Tea / Dinner / Drinks
3. Tasks that will be required on the day?
 - Meet and greet (toilets, emergency plan, brief rundown on MTSv)
 - Assisting with the clean up if required

If you have any questions or are interested please contact social@mbw.org.au by 15th March.

Melbourne Bushwalkers (Incorporated) Annual General Meeting 2021

**The Clubrooms, the Mission to Seafarers Victoria,
717 Flinders Street, Docklands**

Agenda

Time & Date: 7.30pm, Wednesday 24 March 2021
Chair: Susanne Etti

1. **Apologies**
2. **Confirmation of Minutes of the 2020 Annual General Meeting**
3. **President's Report**
4. **Treasurer's Report**
5. **Walks Secretaries' Reports**
6. **Membership Secretary's Report**
7. **Other Reports**
8. **Determination of Annual Subscriptions for 2021**
9. **Determination of the number of General Committee Members for 2021**
10. **Election of Office Bearers & General Committee Members for 2021**
11. **Appointment of Reviewers of Financial Statements**
12. **Conferral of Life Memberships**
13. **Conferral of Honorary Memberships**
14. **Award of Club Spoons**
15. **General Business**



Towards the Grey Hills - R.I. Mair

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

It is my pleasure to present this report and highlight the financial results of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Club for 2020. The year ended with a surplus in the Walks Accounts, partially offset by the deficit of the Administration Account. The Walk Account surplus stands at \$958 and the Administration Account stands at -\$1,494. This resulted in a total deficit of \$536.

The movement of the financial performance can be attributed to:

- Lower Sunday walks net surplus of \$958 (PY: \$5,283) mainly due to walks that were cancelled during the restriction period.
- Our membership fees were lower as compared to previous year by \$2,397.
- The above decrease has been partially offset by lower administration expenses such as Insurance charge from Bushwalking Victoria and rental fee.

The above-mentioned deficit reflects the impact Covid-19 has had on the Club's operations where Sunday walks were cancelled since the end of March 2020. The pandemic might affect the financial result for 2021 however the Club currently has reserves in the Administration Account. The Committee recommends that there be no increase in Membership fees for 2021-2022. The Committee has also determined that there will be no increase in Sunday bus fares this year.

In addition to Administration and Sunday Walks Accounts reserves, the Special and Wilkinson Lodge Accounts remain unchanged. It is prudent to maintain this level of reserves as a buffer against any future contingencies while retaining the ability to fund initiatives to improve facilities or services to members.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Club's Financial Reviewers, Richard Hanson and Raymond Spooner for their comprehensive review of the club's accounts. Richard has been the club's financial reviewer for the past 7 years and on behalf of all club members, I would like to thank him for his great contribution. I also would like to welcome Raymond as our new financial reviewer, Raymond is a CPA and was the club's treasurer for 3 years (from 2008 – 2011), Raymond also held a number of senior positions during his career. His expertise will be a great addition to the club.

Also, a special thanks to my fellow Committee members for their support and their friendship during my time as Treasurer. I joined the club as Treasurer in 2019 and it has been a pleasure being a part of the Committee and as such I have enjoyed meeting so many wonderful and inspiring people, I will not stand for Treasurer in 2021.

Finally, the club continues to maintain a strong balance sheet and is financially well positioned to meet its ongoing commitments in 2021. Based on the club's financial state I recommend the report be accepted.

Christine Thach

WEBMASTER'S REPORT 2020

Significant steps were taken in the past year to reposition and enhance the club's online presence and communications.

- a) A rebuild of the club's website to provide easier and friendlier access through mobile devices was launched in July 2020. The website is now the primary source for previews of club activities;
- b) The features available to Members through the Members' Area of the website were extended as part of an ongoing process of providing Members with more timely and comprehensive information on the operations of the club;
- c) Significant progress was made in adding to the digital archiving of club newsletters and other key documents;
- d) The communication of club activities through Social Media platforms was maintained as a parallel approach to informing members and non-Members. Specifically, the club maintains a presence on Facebook, Instagram and MeetUp, each of which recorded a growing following.

The adoption of Google Workspace (formerly G Suite), a Google product providing online document sharing and other capabilities, is being steadily integrated into our activities. Bulk email management is now handled through Google Workspace. Video club meetings were hosted through Google MeetUp when face-to-face meetings were restricted.

Ian Mair

GENERAL WALKS SECRETARY'S REPORT 2020

After a normal start to 2020, the Corona virus emerged and our activities were cancelled from 23 March until 31 May. Some events resumed in June and early July, but the program was again cancelled from 8 July until 31 October. Despite some earlier limits on the number of attendees, it was a great relief when our program started to get back to normal in November and December. No useful comparison can be made with the number of events or the attendance figures in 2019.

However, out of our scheduled day walks, 50% of **Wednesday** trips went ahead (10 in total), 30% of **MOFs'** walks (3), 36% of **TOFs'** walks (4), 13% of **Saturday** trips (1) and 36% of **Social walks** (4). For extended activities, 38% of **Pack Carries** proceeded (8 in total), and 31% of **Base Camps** (4). 40% of **Training** events occurred (2), but no Lodge, Cycling, Skiing, Track Maintenance or Conservation activities took place. The efforts of our leaders and coordinators, who planned the many activities that were later cancelled due to virus restrictions, should also be recognised.

Looking at the highest attendances (when Corona limits didn't apply), the **Wednesday** group had 23 people on the Mt. Morton, Belgrave Heights walk. This was where our first official Club walk was held, 80 years ago. The **MOFs** had 7 walkers at Alphington Parks, while 14 **TOFs** enjoyed Summer in the Dandenongs, 6 people went on the Middle Park to Sandringham, **Saturday** trip, and 11 **Social walkers** explored the Banksia Park area on the Yarra.

Further afield, the **Pack Carry** at the Cobberas had 15 hikers, and the Beginners' Pack Carry at Mt. Baw Baw saw 13. The first **Base Camp** at Snake Island attracted 14 people, while the second **BC** there, had 11. Susan Maughan must be congratulated for her persistent efforts in rescheduling the second camp and organising boat transportation, against a background of changing Corona restrictions. Her annual Christmas **BC** at Camp Eureka also attracted a total of 19 participants, over 4 days. In addition, Susan organised a **Canoeing** event in the city, which was attended by 22 paddlers. The **Leaders' Training** session had 12 "students".

Thanks to the determined work of our coordinators and leaders, the program returned strongly at the end of last year, with a wide variety of activities, including several rescheduled from earlier in the year. It is encouraging to see that this trend has continued into 2021.

Stuart Hanham

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT 2020

1 July is the period that members who have not renewed are deemed resigned. As at the 30 June 2020, the club's membership was just a few members under our 2019 numbers with 546 members, compared to 551 the previous year. The big difference between the two years has been the number of members who had decided not to renew at this time. There was a 58% increase in non-renewals at this point (from 113 to 179). With lock down in place, there was little that the club could offer to members or to visitors. At the same time the numbers of temporary members (active visitors over the last 13 months) plummeted from 217 to 118, a 45% drop in numbers.

I am happy to advise that between June 30 and December 31, 83 members renewed membership. Although our numbers are below the highs of 2018, we have a very robust membership of 450. Even though we do not have the temporary membership base that we had last year, 209 compared with 51 at the end of 2020, we hope, with the recommencement of our walking activities, that we will build these numbers up again.

The committee has been very conscious that with very few walking activities on offer during most of 2020 that our members have been very loyal to the club, and it has, therefore, recommended not to increase membership fees for the 2021/22 membership period and to offer a discount to members who renewed for the 2020/21 period. This discount will be \$10 for single memberships or \$15 for family memberships. There will also be a discount for members who have multiple memberships who decide that MBW is not their "home" club.

Halina Sarbinowski

SOCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT 2020

Only one in-person Presentation Night was held in 2020 (February) before the COVID-19 restrictions were put in place. Thanks to the tireless efforts and assistance of Ian Mair, from May we were able to provide an alternative, online program of presentations. The move to online enabled flexibility of dates and the opportunity to have intra and interstate speakers. This year's programme was as follows.

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| February - | Walking from Munich to Venice across the alps, Ian Mair |
| March - | AGM - Election of committee members |
| May - | Walk in the Dolomites, Susanne Etti |
| | The not-so-Great Walks of NZ, Wen Qi |
| June - | The Great South West Walk for everyone, Ian Mair |
| July - | Cape to Cape in WA, Angela Vetsicas |
| | South West Coast Path (UK), Ian Mair |
| August - | Fifteen Trees – Planting a Better Future, Colleen Filippa |
| September - | Walking Patagonia, Meredith Quick |
| October - | Wild Nature: Walking Australia's South East Forests |
| | Walking the Camino de Sydney, Brent & Giselle |
| November - | Walking New Zealand Saddles and Valleys, Ian Mair |

Social Nights are held on the fourth Wednesday of the month. The aim of the Presentation Nights is to have a diverse range of topics presented by members and external invitees that educate and inspire. In addition, providing members and visitors the opportunity to meet and catch up in a social setting (subject to COVID-19 restrictions).

The 2021 program is currently being put together. The Committee extends an invitation to all members – if you or anyone you know would like to share your/their walking (or related) experiences – no matter how low key or epic, domestic or international at one of the Presentation Nights - please contact social@mbw.org.au

Thank you to those who have assisted over the past year, in particular to Ian Mair for being the web host for the online events. I wish the incoming Social Secretary all the best, I hope they enjoy the experience.

Jane McRae

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST: LITCHFIELD NATIONAL PARK

Expressions of interest are sought for a 7-9 day pack carry trip in Litchfield National Park, NT with a commercial operator from June 6 2021. The proposed walk is off track and will be rated Hard. Please contact Meredith Quick if you are interested.



ADVANCE NOTICE: CROSS COUNTRY SKIING - ROVER CHALET - BOGONG HIGH PLAINS - 7-15 August 2021



Once again we have been offered the use of the Rover Chalet for a week's X-C skiing. The chalet is an 11 km ski in from Falls Creek so is well away from the crowds. The chalet is well fitted out with a commercial grade kitchen, mattresses for sleeping on in the loft, internal toilets and hot showers. There is a washing machine and a drying room. 240v power so you can charge your phones even if reception is restricted.

We run the week with a voluntary roster covering all the chores that need to be done, cooking, cleaning, wood chopping, bread baking etc. We try to organize full day trips every day taking lunch with us, usually at least two standards, an easier and a harder. If the weather is lousy we often play around on sheltered slopes near the chalet, perfecting (in my case trying) telemark turns.

The week includes Tawonga hall to sleep in on Friday night and a bus up and down to Falls Creek. To ski in we have to carry our fresh meat and vegetables, all the other food is stored in the large pantry in the chalet.

To go in you need to have had experience on skis and to be able to carry a pack. The pack can be kept fairly light as you don't need many clothes because you can wash and dry them up there.

If you are interested talk to me (5964 4581) or Marilyn (9578 1062)

Doug Pocock

GHOST FORESTS OF THE HIGH COUNTRY

The future of our alpine forests:

Bushwalkers in Victoria's alpine areas are exhilarated by the sight and presence of magnificent forests of old snow gums and Alpine Ash. Sadly the future of these forests has been put under threat by frequency and severity of recent bushfires. A thoughtful article from Cam Walker, "Ghost Forests of the High Country" poses an important question on intervention to preserve the continued survival of these forests:

<https://themountainjournal.wordpress.com/2021/02/14/ghost-forests-of-the-high-country/>



THE BLUFF & HOWQUA RIVER CHALLENGE - 16-18 Jan 2021

Sharon Thomas

Climbing the Bluff with a full pack and descending again (alas) was not the living hell I imagined it may have been! Well why put myself through this when there are much easier, picturesque walks than this one?

The challenge of climbing this mountain was what set my little legs on fire! Admiring (amidst my huffs and puffs) the wildflowers along the way, those that weren't covered sparingly with snow, as we approached the ridge. Truth be known I didn't really stop to admire my environment but to catch my breath and stretch my quads by simply standing tall. But oh the views - until we hit cloud and disappointingly were prohibited from any views at all - thank goodness for the immense challenge of the climb, inch by inch. Once on the Bluff, it was freezing, my irrational mind turning straight away to frostbite! It was exhilarating, I felt elated! Conqueror!!



Not long after we drew our poles and commenced to tramp on across and downward toward our haven for the night - Bluff Hut. Visibility seemed to be about 15m give or take, so I had to keep a steady pace for fear of dropping back to the whip!

At Mt Eadley Stoney and across to Bluff Hut we witnessed the effects of last years' bushfires and mercifully the new growth reappearing. At Bluff Hut we warmed ourselves, socks and shoes by a raging hut-style fire. Sylvia thankful for Ian's superglue as one can't be too careful drying boots by an open fire! Naz debating whether to sleep outside in her tent or inside in her tent (!!!) or inside on the bench in the hut, to avoid drenching rain as she did the previous night at Sheeppyard Flat. This night at the Bluff Hut was cold but mercifully dry.

The next morning bright and early (aaagh)was the descent. Now when I hear 'descent' I think, "oh yes, going down, easy". Nope! Well the writer woke feeling nauseous and so on this note I decided to make the wise choice and "descend" with Eddie via the road. I was assured this was quicker. Yes, they were right it was quicker by about 5 hours. It took us about 2 hours but it was more uphill up and up with every windy turn!



We camped for the evening at 8 mile flat, enjoying a swim, feed of decent food and wine, and our camp chairs - thanks to John and Helen for the use of their storage van. Next morning, the 8 mile Spur climb was easy-peasy carrying our daypacks. The most difficult was determining from our new perspective where we climbed the Bluff. This took a while. Eventually we moved on and back to the cars for the return drive to our campsite and final pack up.

I learned a few things on this, my first full pack carry, such as:

- that the most rain actually falls in the mountains and to be aware of forecast rain which will potentially keep my butt dry;
- to purchase the best bedding gear I can afford with an



R value beyond my comfort zone. Nothing much worse than merely existing and wishing time away through a dastardly cold night;

- to entertain strangers with grateful respect whilst walking as I never know when I may need a hoist up the side of a mountain whilst labouring under a full pack;
- that even if I am disappointingly denied a view, a most difficult climb is indeed worth the effort.

Satisfaction is not so much found in the accomplishment but in the journey towards it. The end goal is the icing on top!;

- how to pee in a packet during the wee hours of the night, invaluable!;
- how to hit a strike with wine bottles beyond drinking their contents;

- that if I persist with alpine walking, I too will be a 'smarty pants' when it comes to knowledge of the district;
- that no matter how much I may fill my day pack, it is definitely not heavy! The 8 Mile Spur climb was easy-peasy!
- that the leaders and members of Melbourne Bushies display a real care and concern for all involved. Being apart of such a club can only reflect positively in my life. Thankyou for some great leadership shown this weekend and on my previous base camps and bus trips. I had a terrific weekend!

MT BOGONG-ROPERS HUT-GREY HILLS - 22-26 Jan 2021

Richard Hanson

The contrasts couldn't be greater - the first three days were too hot and the last day was spent in the pelting rain completely exposed on top of Mt Bogong. Each of our four days we started walking at 6.30am. The first three days to beat the heat of the day and the last to try to reduce our exposure to the rain. The first day was from Mountain Creek campground up the Staircase to Mt Bogong and then across to Cleve Cole Hut. We had the best 360-degree views. As if an ascent of 1400 m was not enough, we went for a day walk to Howman Falls and some had a swim. Camping was pleasant amongst the snow gums at Cleve Cole Hut.

Then it was down to Big River, where Ian spotted a huge snake, and up the other side to Ropers Hut. No day walks this day - we were all happy to rest but it did have another creek to bathe in.

The next day we walked up to Mt Nelse and enjoyed views of Falls Creek across toward Spion Kopje. We continued on the Grey Hills track, which had great views above the tree line, and over Mt Arthur and down to Little Bogong Saddle to camp. Some of us found this day just a bit too hot.

We had a change in the weather with some rain overnight but thankfully it was dry while we were packing up our tents. As soon as we got above the tree line it began to rain relentlessly. We all got drenched and it was no longer fun. But it was memorable!



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Along the track

Eventually we got halfway down Eskdale Spur to Michelle Hut where we were all relieved to change into drier clothes and have lunch. Then down the rest of the spur and along Mountain Creek. A 20 km day mostly in the rain.

All up we completed about 62kms, with 4490 m ascent and descent.

We enjoyed the flowers including billy buttons and golden everlasting daisies, the snow gums, the huts and the fabulous views we got above the tree line.

Thanks to Bettina, Angela, Ros, Eduardo and Ian for their company. And special thanks to Claire for leading us so well and knowing what to do when we had a cramp or an allergic reaction to jumping jacks.



TARILTA CREEK GORGE - 6-7 Feb 2021

Halina Sarbinowski

In 2000, when I first started walking with Melbourne Bushwalkers, a friend always encouraged me to go on the pack-carries or base camps stating that each time we got away for a weekend it was like a mini-holiday. Each time I head off on an extended walk her words come back to me and even now after many years of walking with the club I appreciate the sentiment.

On the first weekend of February, 10 Bushies and 2 visitors decided to have a mini-holiday and join the Easy pack carry offered by our leader, Ian. Being close to Melbourne we didn't have to have a Friday night camp and most drove up in the morning. Ian and I stayed in Daylesford on the Friday night as Ian wanted to check out the water situation and had an emergency back-up of 60 litres in the car. After recent heavy rain the creek was flowing beautifully and we were delighted that a water drop was not needed. Plus, Ian wanted to explore a little to reduce the walking close to farms so that we could enjoy the bush to the fullest.

After a hearty breakfast, Ian and I drove to the meeting point on Porcupine Ridge Road and waited for cars to arrive. A slight, but persistent rain fell. We were assured that this would pass and that the weekend weather would be perfect for the walk. This prediction proved to be so very true. There was a short delay to the start of the walk as one car had a bit of an issue, but with clearing skies we set off at 11:15am heading south-west along the Great Dividing Trail (GDT), took our previous day's explored, undulating route and were at Tarilta Creek for lunch.



We walked off track for the rest of the day, staying close to the creek, crossing it several times as required. However, dramas occurred. After a short break and a steep descent into the Gorge, one of the group realised that their phone was missing. Believing that it may have fallen from a pocket at the last break, Ian and Agajan dropped packs so that they could retrace steps to search for it. Ian appointed me as interim leader as he headed off.

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Along the track

Before the rest of the group moved off, the walker borrowed a phone to use “Find my phone” and discovered that the phone was on Porcupine Ridge Road, where we had left the cars. With relief, Ian was rung and he and Agajan regrouped with us not much further along the creek. The use of “Find my phone” impressed the group with many deciding to later explore its use.

At about 3:30pm we reached our camp site. It is a lovely site we had used before with a “camp kitchen” area that is sheltered with easy access to water and lots of places to sit. We set up our varied tents and decided to relax for the rest of the day. However, another little drama occurred. A member with an older stove, after flattening the grass, set up her stove which sat close to the ground. Some of the grass sprung up and started to burn. It was not much of an issue, however, in an attempt to stamp out the few blades that were alight the stove was knocked and it separated from the gas tube. It was surprising how quickly the grass caught fire. Quick responses turned the gas off and water doused the small fire. The shocked walker, picked some of their dinner from the ashes and relocated the stove to a flat rock to finish cooking the meal, resolving that the stove was destined for a well-earned retirement.

Although firewood was collected, the balmy evening and concerns about bushfire combined to decide not to light a fire much to Ian L’s disappointment as he had carried some pork sausages and potatoes that he had hoped to roast over an open fire. By 8:30pm we had all retired to our tents for the night.

We set off at about 8:45am the next morning, explored the creek a little further before we started to head away from the creek, and followed some 4WD tracks until we reached the Lancaster Ruins. Looking at the footprint of the ruins it was difficult to imagine that this had once been a thriving hotel. From here we again went off-track until we reached the Moran Track which was followed until Porcupine Ridge Road was reached. Crossing the road, we had another section of off-track walking through denser vegetation, making sure that we kept the walker in front in sight. Ian, with his trusty GPS, soon had us on Sebastopol Creek Track which we followed until we met the GDT again. We had a brief morning tea here before we started to follow the GDT, however, after only about 150 meters along, Ian decided to explore off-track again, wanting to visit Mr Hunts Chimney.

A few of the group who were suffering from “COVID unfitness” decided to continue following the GDT as an easier alternative and met up with the group at lunch at another ruin along the GDT. The rest was an easy walk along the GDT till we reached the cars. You would think that we would have no more dramas, but another walker believed that she had left her stove at the morning tea point. While the others headed off to Glenlyon for a coffee, Ian and I drove the ‘bereft’ walker back to the morning tea point, but alas no stove found. I do hope that it is found lurking somewhere deep in the recesses of a pocket of her pack. Most the group met at Glenlyon General Store where we enjoyed either a coffee, or a cold drink, and for some a special indulgence.

I am sure that the group: Kim, Deb, Ian L, Agajan, Susan, Michelle, Bernd, Kerrie, Lynn, Judith, David and myself thank Ian for organising a wonderful walk that was definitely a mini-holiday. The benefits of an Easy walk to refresh forgotten skills was an added bonus!

A special note: Many were very impressed with Ian L’s home-made pack based on a pack that Ian had in the 60s, but made with current light-weight materials. You may be able to see the bright orange pack in some of the photos on the website. Well done, Ian!



Upcoming activities

March 2021

| | | | | |
|--------|---|-----|-------|---------------------------------|
| Mon 1 | MTG: Club Committee meeting | Pvt | | |
| Thu 4 | TOF: Mentone to Sandringham Beach | Pvt | E | Eileen Ayre |
| 5-8 | PC: Baw Baw Traverse - Mt Whitelaw-Walhalla | Pvt | M/H | John Widmer |
| Sun 7 | DAY: The Oaks-Inverloch | Bus | E&E/M | Brett Daniel & Annemarie Mulder |
| Wed 10 | DAY: One Tree Hill, Ferntree Gully | Pvt | E/M | Ed Neff |
| 12-15 | PC: Mt Cobbler, Cobbler Lake&Dandongadale Falls | Pvt | M | John Terrell |
| Sun 14 | DAY: Bears Head Range | Car | M/H | Ian Mair |
| Mon 15 | MOF: TBA | | | |
| 19-22 | PC: Mirimbah-Howqua R-Mt. Timbertop-Buller West Ridge cct | Pvt | M/H | Agajan Akbari |
| 19-21 | CON: Friends of Bogong work party | Pvt | E | Deb Shand |
| Sun 21 | DAY: Kinglake-Watson Creek | Bus | E/M&M | Brett Daniel & John Widmer |
| Wed 24 | MTG: Club Annual General Meeting | Pvt | | |
| Thu 25 | SOC: Jells Park | Pvt | E | Eleanor Weekes |
| Sat 27 | DAY: Brimbank Park | Pvt | E | Maureen Hurley |
| Sat 27 | CAN: Moonlight Kayak through City | Pvt | E/M | Susan Maughan |
| Sun 28 | DAY: Lysterfield Lake | Car | E/M | Susanne Etti |
| Wed 31 | DAY: Plenty Gorge Park | Pvt | E/M | Jerry Grandage |

For detailed preview notes and program updates, please refer to the activities program on our website:
https://mbw.org.au/mbw_activities/MBW_activities_program.php

