

**MELBOURNE  
BUSHWALKERS INC.**

ABN 14 396 912 508



# THE NEWS

#865

April  
2023



The Travers Saddle, Travers-Sabine circuit, NZ - 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](http://www.melbournebushwalkers.org.au)

Next committee meeting: Monday 3 April

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](mailto: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](mailto:news@mbw.org.au)

## New Members

We welcome the following new members:

Martina Seitz

Romana Trufas

Lorenza Leiva

Elaine Wilkinson



Sunset over Lake Rotorua, Travers-Sabine circuit, NZ - D. Shand

**Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?**

Due date for contributions to May News: 21 April

Email: [news@mbw.org.au](mailto:news@mbw.org.au)



The club's Annual General Meeting (AGM) happened as scheduled on Wednesday 22 March. As an Incorporated organisation it is part of our legal obligations to hold the meeting. But it is more than just a meeting to fulfil legal obligations and reporting requirements. It is also a "finger in the air" to get a feel for how the club is going, what in broader terms might be called the health of the club.



Organisations are like people. There are many vital statistics that can be recorded that give pointers about the state of health. Membership numbers and trends, activity statistics and financial viability, to name a few, are all very important. The written reports from key office holders published in the March newsletter and elsewhere in this edition highlight how the club is performing year-on-year against these and many other quantifiable measures. By nearly all accounts we are going very well. Yet, to my mind, these quantifiable measures only tell part of the story that is an outcome and not the reason for how well we are going. To get a fuller measure of the health of the club it is important to get a sense of the energy level that permeates our interactions, something that can be as fragile as it is intangible.

I am sure we have all had a similar experience. Walk into a room and feel a buzz in the air. Look around and see people chatting, mingling with each other, swapping stories or sharing a joke. You feel relaxed and welcome. So it was before our AGM, hardly the type of event that would rate high on your social calendar and yet it felt like one. The business of the evening was covered without controversy. A new Committee was elected and all circulated motions were passed. Time too to introduce a new award, the ABCD Award, which will become a feature of future AGM's to be given for a significant effort or contribution by a member that demonstrates a high standard of club values and expected behaviours. The close of the meeting did not signal a dash for the door. Those present made light work of returning the space we use to its pre-meeting arrangement before picking up prior conversations and taking the opportunity to catch up with fellow members. The bar at the Mission to Seafarers served its purpose.

The "finger in the air" received my vote of approval. A healthy club is more, much more, than simply being a mechanism for the running of bushwalking and related activities against a backdrop of convivial but superficial personal associations. It is a place where lasting friendships are formed, a place where bonds stretch beyond the confines of programmed activities, a place where even strangers dipping their toe into an unfamiliar environment are made to feel welcome. A healthy club is one where members feel rewarded simply by belonging and willingly step forward to give back to the club as much as they receive. Get it right and the quantifiable measures will look after themselves.

As noted in the Social Secretary's Report to the AGM, social activities have been an important aspect of the operations of the club in parallel with outdoor activities since its earliest days. The focus and frequency of events has varied widely over the years but the purpose remains the same - bring the members together in a relaxed setting to build a deeper sense of community. It is so fundamental to our way of thinking and operating that the promotion of social activities among the members is one of the four purposes of the club identified in our Rules of Association and the club's Social Secretary is an important ex-officio position on Committee. Many times each year I learn of friendships stretching back decades among former members who continue to meet together and hold dear their memories of the days when they were active club members.

A majority of the Committee are continuing their role from last year ensuring continuity in operations. Four new members join those previously serving: Roger Wyett (Sunday Walks Secretary), Meredith Quick (Social

*continued next page*

## Noticeboard

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Secretary) and Ruth Stewart and Leigh Wykes (General Committee Members), bringing the total Committee to 15 for the first time in many years. I am delighted to welcome them all with their breadth of experience, energy and complementary links with members across the club. Good health, whether of an organisation or personal, cannot ever be guaranteed and requires constant monitoring and attention. With a full year ahead I look forward to working with the new Committee for 2023-24.

Ian Mair

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## Melbourne Bushwalkers Committee 2023/24

President (president@mbw.org.au) – Ian MAIR

Vice Presidents - Kim COWIE, David STOCKLEY

Secretary (secretary@mbw.org.au) - Christopher COLLETT

Membership Secretary (membership@mbw.org.au) - Halina SARBINOWSKI

Treasurer (treasurer-mbw@mbw.org.au) - Marianne WELLER

General Walks Secretary (gws@mbw.org.au) - Stuart HANHAM

Sunday Walks Secretary (sunday@mbw.org.au) – Roger WYETT

Social Secretary (social@mbw.org.au) – Meredith QUICK

General Committee Members - John TERRELL, Poppy SICARI, Bettina BRILL, Leigh WYKES, Ruth STUART, Christopher LORD

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## Social Secretary Report to AGM 2023

Ian Mair

Social activities have been an important aspect of the operations of MBW since its earliest days. The focus and frequency of events has varied widely over the years but the purpose remains the same - bring the members together in a relaxed setting to build a deeper sense of community. As the club has grown with an increasingly diverse range of activities the opportunity to meet and share experiences with other members who may not otherwise participate in the same walking events takes on a greater significance. The Social Secretary is an important ex-officio position on Committee. On behalf of all members I would like to thank Theo Mertzandis who took on the role for 2022 until work commitments limited his availability. Theo has continued to assist.

As with all other aspects of the club's operations the impact of COVID has been notable where assembling in groups carried concerns for personal health. The core monthly "Wine and Cheese" (now "Wine and Chat") sessions have still attracted a good turnout for a range of talks on local and overseas walks and travel. 9 events averaged a turnout of 30 each. Members were treated to tantalising tastes of the French and Spanish Pyrenees, hiking across less familiar areas in Serbia and insights into endangered possum species in Victoria. A new initiative for 2022 was the selection of a topic and speaker to address an aspect of indigenous affairs during the same month as NAIDOC.

After a prolonged gestation, 2022 saw the club under the guidance of Susanne Etti undertake the planting of 500 trees as partial celebration of the club's 80th Anniversary. We also launched the inaugural club Market Night to replace the previously held Auction Nights. The new format proved popular and allowed for a more efficient recycling of pre-loved gear with lots of chatter and tense negotiation.

The Mission to Seafarers has continued to provide an excellent option for a range of social events, including the annual end-of-year party and other celebrations.

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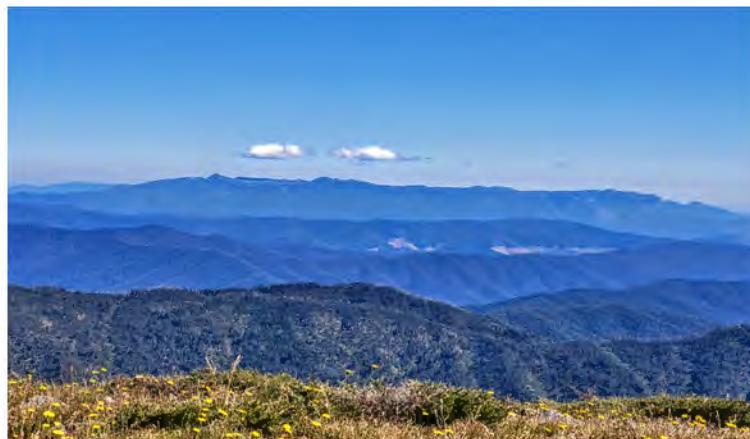


## Environment report 2022

John Terrell

The major MBW conservation activity in 2022 was the 80th Anniversary Tree Planting, held over from 2020. 27 members braved cold, grey and rainy conditions on 18 September on a property at Kinglake to plant 500 trees donated by MBW and its members as a legacy for the future. The trees planted were a mixture of Mountain Grey Gum, Messmate, Blackwood, Round-leaf Pomaderris,

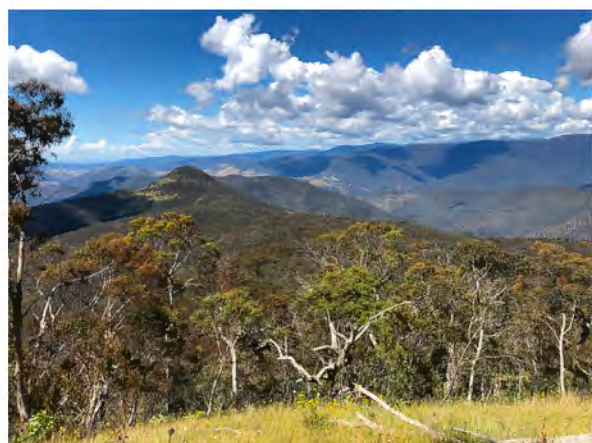
Silver Wattle, Silky Goodia, Musk Daisy Bush, Hairpin Banksia and Mountain Tea-tree. Thanks to Susanne Etti who initiated and drove this project over the two intervening years, in conjunction with Fifteen Trees and Upper Goulburn Landcare (UGLN). See <https://15trees.com.au/tree-plantings/melbourne-bushwalkers/> for photos and details.



September also saw another round of consultation on the expanded Falls to Hotham Alpine Crossing project. I wrote a submission on behalf of the Club, with particular focus on preserving bushwalkers' existing rights, especially at the proposed High Knob Overnight Node, as well as raising concerns about the route and increasing commercialisation of the Alpine National Park. A number of members also made private submissions.

The last few years of bushfires, extreme weather and COVID lockdowns have made it very difficult for managers of public lands, such as Parks Vic and DELWP, and volunteer groups, such as BTAC, to organise conservation and track maintenance activities, whilst making the need for these activities even more pressing. 2022 started to see a return to normal operations, however it has taken some time for us to restart MBW participation in conservation and track activities. Several activities were included in the club program in 2022, but almost no expressions of interest received, and in the end even the Environment Officer was unable to attend them. However, some club members did attend several activities. The current Parks Victoria requirement for individual registration makes it more difficult to organise club participation and to know who is registered for, or has attended, an activity.

Claire Luxford has kindly offered to liaise with BTAC and to coordinate and promote MBW involvement in track maintenance activities for 2023 and this has already led to new participation. As bushwalkers we have a strong interest in both conserving and revitalising our natural environment, as well as maintaining the walking tracks that



we rely on. We encourage all members to consider joining in conservation and track maintenance activities, many of which are included on the MBW activities program.



### Annual Training Report 2022

Mick Noonan

2022 was my first year as Training Officer. The priorities were to improve our training for new leaders and to continue the regular training activities we conduct. Major activities were:

- Our annual New Leaders Training Day (10 attendees) in August, establishing an enhanced mentoring approach with Development Mentors (a pool of 15), Activity Mentors and an Assistant Leader role. We currently have 13 new leaders being mentored across day and extended activities.
- Running Critical Incident Management and Online Website Process Training for existing leaders
- Adding Smartphone Navigation (the same as run by Andrew Robinson for Bushwalking Victoria) to our existing Field Navigation Day (Roger Wyett, 2 conducted to meet demand) and GPS Navigation training (Ian Mair). All up 31 attended across the 3 types of activities.
- Continuing the annual subsidised First Aid Training (David Cash organised it again in 2022).
- Our monthly News Reminder System is now in its second year and is a critical aspect of our Safety and Risk Management Framework.
- Providing information on Bushcraft, new or changed Club Policies etc. to members via the News.

The News is an important channel for educating and reminding members and leaders on safety, risk management etc. It also provides advance notice of training activities run by us and BWV. So ***we really do need you to have a look each month*** for items relevant to you.

For 2023 we intend to embed the new mentoring approach, continue to support our new leaders, and provide a range of training/education opportunities for members. We will be looking at training for our Pack Carry and Base Camp leaders (working with Bushwalking Victoria), and how we assist new members who have been leaders before joining our Club so they can quickly commence leading with us.



### Amendment to MBW By Laws

Following a review of the applicable MBW policies and practices by the club's Risk Officer, Mick Noonan, and Vice-President, David Stockley, in conjunction with consultation with relevant MBW members and feedback on practices adopted by other clubs, it was recommended that a new By Law be adopted:

**"2.19 On all Pack Carries and Remote/Walk-in Base Camps the leader will ensure that the group has a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB)"**

The recommendation was discussed and adopted by Committee at its meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March. A copy of the updated By Laws is available for download from the club's website.



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2023-24

**Membership subscriptions are due 1st April 2023.** You are not required to sign an Acknowledgement of Risk form on renewal, however you are advised that payment of fees implies acceptance of the risks involved in any activity you may undertake as a member of MBW. Members are asked to read the following wording regarding insurance cover through Bushwalking Australia.

'In voluntarily participating in activities of Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc., which are described to me by the activity leaders, I am aware that my participation in the activities may expose me to hazards and risks that could lead to injury, illness or death or to loss of or damage to my property. I also acknowledge that I may encounter weather conditions that could lead to heat stroke, hypothermia or being in locations where evacuation for medical treatment may take hours or days. In particular when participating in abseiling or above the snowline activities I am aware that these activities could expose me to additional hazards and risks.

To minimize risks I will endeavour to ensure that:

- Each activity is within my capabilities;
- I will carry food, water and equipment appropriate for the activity;
- I will advise the activity leader if I am taking medication or have any physical or other limitation that might affect my participation in the activity;
- I will make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during the activity;
- I will advise the leader of any concerns I am having; and
- I will comply with all reasonable instructions of club officers and the activity leader'

**I have read and understood these requirements.** I will consider the risks before joining any activity of the Club. I acknowledge that I will take responsibility for my own actions, that the Club strongly recommends that all participants have comprehensive personal ambulance cover, and that **payment of my subscriptions will be deemed as full acceptance and understanding of the above conditions.**

### RENEWAL SLIP

If any of your personal details have changed, update your details through the Members' Area of the club's website, or complete the form below and send it by email to [membership@mbw.org.au](mailto:membership@mbw.org.au), or if paying by cheque forward it with your payment to the Membership Secretary.

**If paying by cheque or EFT please be sure to clearly identify who the payment is for** to assist the Treasurer and Membership Secretary to identify you and ensure your renewal is properly recorded.

Payment to the Membership Secretary, together with completed form (if required) by one of the following methods:

- Cash or cheque on club night (cheques payable to Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.)
- Cheque and Renewal Slip posted to Membership Secretary, Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc, P.O. Box 1751, Melbourne 3001
- **(Preferred)** EFT to the club account. **Please ensure your full name and 'SUBS' appear on the transfer.**  
(Account Name: Melbourne Bushwalkers, A/c No. 0058-46013, BSB: 013-006).

**Fees** (Please circle your membership category) \*

Single member: \$45 \*\*

Concession: \$34\* (Proof required \*\*\*)

Couple/Family: \$90 \*\*

Concession: \$68\* (Proof required \*\*\*)

**Notes:** \* Members who have nominated their Home Club as other than Melbourne Bushwalkers and paid the insurance cover to their Home Club should only pay 50% of the appropriate fee noted above.

**\*\* Members who currently receive their copies of 'NEWS' via postal mail should add \$30.00 to continue.**

No new hard copy subscriptions will be accepted.

**\*\*\*** Concession membership applies to those who hold an Australian Government concession card, not a Seniors Card only.

Name: ..... Year of Birth (optional).....

Name: ..... Year of Birth (optional).....

( Note: Year of Birth is used only for statistical purposes and not published in any lists. )

Fill in Address, Telephone number(s) and Email address only if changed since last renewal:

Street Address: .....

Suburb / Postcode .....

Tel: [H] ..... [W] ..... Mobile: .....

Email: ..... Home Club: .....

Emergency Contact ..... Tel:.....[H][M][W]

## April Safety and Risk Reminders

Mick Noonan, Risk Officer

This month we cover the leaders ***Duty of Care*** and managing a very ***large group of Visitors***.

**A Leader's Duty of Care (NEW):** We use the Bushwalking Victoria definition below:

***What a reasonably prudent leader would do to take reasonable care to avoid exposing fellow walkers (having regard to their age, experience, skill and other individual matters) to unreasonable risks of injury or loss.***

This complements the **Acknowledgement of Risks** that members and visitors make, as well as the **Code of Conduct** and **Participant Responsibilities** that apply to all participants. A leader needs to comply with the Club's Bylaws and Activity Policies and take the Activity Guidelines into consideration when conducting their activities. We try to make this easier for leaders to ensure they are taking "reasonable care" by these regular **Safety & Risk Reminders** that, over a 12-month period remind both members and leaders of the things they should be aware of or need to comply with.

**Choosing the Whip when there are lots of Visitors (MOD):** When the number of Visitors on a walk, primarily Sunday Bus Walks, is 15 or more then the leader needs to ensure that the Whip is also a leader. While this becomes a requirement at 15 the leader can try and have another leader as Whip whenever they believe it is necessary.

**Members and especially Leaders are encouraged to read the monthly Reminders to stay aware of their responsibilities as participants or as leaders on Club Activities: NEW = a new item; MOD= changed from last time; and the others are unchanged.**



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## Going the Extra Mile

Any MBWC member can nominate a fellow walker to be acknowledged for their assistance, via the web form on the Members page on our website.

On Day 3 of the club's Travers-Sabine Circuit (11 Feb – 2 Mar 23) walk in New Zealand one of the group slipped and broke her wrist. Search and Rescue were called and a helicopter dispatched to effect an evacuation back to Nelson Hospital. Halina Sarbinowski, volunteered to accompany the injured walker to provide personal and logistics support, thereby foregoing the remainder of the walk.

On the Diamantina Spur-Mt Fainter South PC, 10-15 March 2023, Ian Mair walked out an injured fellow walker (on Day 2 of a 5-day trip). Ian then waited another 2 days in the area, until the remainder of the group finished the walk. Thus, Ian missed out on the walk, however all appreciated his caring attitude and assistance provided, that enabled the remainder of the group to finish and enjoy the PC.

Kim Cowie continuously contributes by volunteering in multiple situations that arise during Club activities. Kim always puts her hand up to volunteer, and is always inclusive of everyone, enthusiastic and makes visitors feel welcome. She has been very kind and helpful on walks that require carpooling.

Thank you, Halina, Ian, and Kim.





## Volunteering Opportunity with BTAC (Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation)

Date: 21 - 25 April 2023

Area: **McMillans Walking Track** - From Ritchie Rd to Talbotville with main emphasis on the difficult to access 13km section from the southern end of White Timber Spur Track to Stonewall.

Scope: The volunteers will be working with Parks Victoria and DEECA to do track maintenance work. Maintenance work will involve brush cutting, hedge trimmer operation, chain-saw operation and the use of hand tools for vegetation trimming, clean up, track marking and track benching. Duties will also include camp warden and carrying in gear and supplies to satellite camping areas.

Sign-up, come along and give back to your bushwalking community!

The next event is planned for May 19-20 on the AAWT. To be able to participate you will need to register your interest on Park Connect and you will also need to obtain a volunteer working with children check (free).

Visit the BTAC Website to view program and proposed events at: <https://bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/btac>

## WANTED: your favourite dehydrator meal recipe

Bettina Brill

Send in your recipe, if possible with photo of ingredients and/or the cook enjoying the result. Who knows, if we get enough recipes we can have our own Melbourne Bushies dehydrator cookbook. For more info and inspiration contact Bettina who is making this her little project.

This month we have a recipe from Meredith Quick.

### Bush Sushi

Ingredients:

1 cup dehydrated rice (should make 3 cups when rehydrated)

1 tin/packet fish of your choice

1 small packet pickled ginger

Wasabi powder (or paste)

1 carrot

1 small cucumber

Soy sauce (I use the fish they give you with takeaway)

Nori sheets (4 sheets)

Method:

At camp, rehydrate your rice

Finely slice your carrot and cucumber

Lay out your nori sheets, place rice on top, divide the

fish, carrot and cucumber between the nori sheets

Roll your nori sheets into a cone or more traditional sushi shape

Mix your wasabi with the soy sauce - ENJOY!

If you want to go lighter, I have also had success with dehydrating fish, just select fish in brine or spring-water and drain well before dehydrating.



### Correction to last month's risotto recipe:

This sentence should have read: Mix wine and stock, cook rice in 2 cups wine-stock mixture until absorbed, then keep adding another cup of mixture, waiting until absorbed, **repeating** until rice is cooked.

## Bright's famous trees in danger

Jan Palich

Did you know that developers wish to cut down Bright's iconic trees? This is really disturbing as they are beautiful and healthy. It would be such a shame to lose this asset to Bright.

If you would love these trees to remain, there is an opportunity for you to help at "change.org", by signing this petition to the Alpine Shire Council:

<https://chng.it/rVmNnD29JM>



## Manaslu and Annapurna circuit trek opportunity

A fantastic opportunity to combine two popular trekking destinations; the Manaslu and Annapurna Circuit treks, or you can just join the Manaslu Circuit. This is an amazing four-week experience that will take you across two high alpine passes - Larkya la Pass (5,160m) and Thorong La Pass (5,416m). Along the trail you will see more than thirty enormous mountains, including the 8th highest mountain in the world, Mt. Manaslu (8163m), and the 10th highest, Mt. Annapurna (8091m). An early morning rise before sunset will take you to Poon-Hill (3,210m), famous for its spectacular mountain views in the early

morning light. The Manaslu trek is frequently regarded as the trek for those who wish to see untouched natural beauty – and of course the iconic and majestic views of Mount Manaslu (The Spirit Mountain) Manaslu comes from the Sanskrit word manasa, meaning "intellect" or "soul". This trail has recently become as popular as the other well-known treks such as Everest, Annapurna & Langtang.

The Annapurna Circuit trek first opened to travellers in 1980 and today is considered one of the finest trekking destinations in the world, as it passes through rhododendron forests in the lower regions of the Annapurna and Dhaulagiri mountains. You will view several massive peaks, that include Annapurna I, II, III, IV, the Dhaulagiri (8167m), Machapuchare (Fish Tail), Annapurna South and Manaslu. The Annapurna Conservation Area is home to more than 100 species of orchids, rhododendron forests, sub-tropical marshes, valleys, bamboo and oak forests, alpine glades, and hundreds of wildlife species such as Marten, deer, the languor monkey, red panda and the elusive snow leopard. In addition to the diversity of flora and fauna, there is the remarkable hospitality of the people in small hamlets, villages, and towns along the trek.

The trip starts in Kathmandu on September 23, and concludes on October 22, 2023.

If you would like further details please contact Christine Ross (Maroondah Bushwalkers) [ross.christinej@gmail.com](mailto:ross.christinej@gmail.com) phone 0408055351.





### Canoe Trip: Eildon to Alexandra on the Goulburn River - 18 February 2023

Alan Lamb

TLDR: A brilliant day on the water with constantly changing beautiful scenery. Mostly peaceful and serene with occasional excitement.

The Details: On Friday I headed down to visit a cousin whose property has views of the lake. Seemed like a good plan to catch up and save a lengthy drive for the Saturday morning meetup. At the repeated insistence of my cousin, I checked my location, the intended meet up point and found I had a 1 hour 30 minute drive in the morning. OMG Eildon is BIG. I Googled it, Eildon is 6 times larger than Sydney Harbour.

Who knew? Anyways, next morning I lobbied up at the launching spot. I have no recollection of being near Eildon before and was taken away with the beauty of the area.



At 10 with precision, the six of us had identified each other and started collecting the watercraft by the launching spot. An eclectic collection of boats, from fast fiberglass kayaks clearly happy with a bit of white water fun, to sit on tops, open canoes, and my 3 piece modular kayak. Rachel helped us all quickly feel welcome. Seriously, if you have just about any paddle craft you would have enjoyed the day. After a bit of the classic car drop off relay, the day really commenced.

What can I say, the river is a little slice of paradise. The water was beautifully clear, and you could see the rocks beneath glide by as, hugely assisted by the current, we paddled downstream. We enjoyed wide open river with pastures sloping down to the sides and cows watching with mild interest as we floated past. Sometimes the river narrowed, and we were propelled rapidly past embankments with stately towering old redgums and wilder bush lands. There were fallen trees to dodge and times to just stop paddling and enjoy the serenity.

Lunch was soon a good idea and we stopped at a sharp bend that provide an ideal flat area with great views and a shady tree for some food and a companionable rest break. I topped up my sunscreen, smelt the unusual smell of minty freshness and realised I'd just smeared toothpaste over my nose. Lol.

About halfway along were the rapids. Life had, with much caution, organised the SES to be present with about 30 volunteers decked out in high viz gear and a helicopter or 2. Regrettably for this narrative, their services were not required. The confident of us braved the rapids without drama. Myself and others decided that 'portage' was the go. For non-kayakers, this translates to dragging your heavy kayak over the lesser rapids with the power of the water forcing the kayak forward while you negotiate your way over submerged and immensely slippery rocks. So, not really the easy option.

The last half was more of the same. Which is not a complaint. More winding river and smaller rapids. At one point I watched the experienced kayakers all head to the right of the river for the faster flow. I elected to go the clearly calmer water. I found a distinct lack of river and surplus of rocks and reminded myself that I was clearly a newbie as I felt each rock dragging under my kayak. Very soon, perhaps too soon, we had paddled 30 Km and reached our destination. The experienced paddlers suggested we had probably only done half the work or less – thank you current. Shout out to Rachel, thank you for being the organiser and thank-you for the obvious care you took of us.



### Travers-Sabine Circuit, NZ - 13-19 February 2023

Leader: Ian Mair

Participants: Halina, Bernadette, Jenny, Meredith, Anita, Richard, Deb, Ros

The Group decided in a very democratic manner that we would all write the Trip Report! However, there was disagreement as to how we would approach it. So our Walk Leader appointed me (Ros) as Collator and decreed the report structure. No one would go against our great Leader so we all complied!

#### **Ros: Anticipation before the walk – Preparations; Weather!**

The day before we flew, Meredith and Ian emailed to warn us all to be prepared for a bumpy ride into Auckland because “If this current (cyclone) modelling comes true, this will likely be the most serious storm to impact New Zealand this century, especially with Auckland being in the mix for a potential direct hit.” (The Guardian).

As I had spent the last 2 weeks crazily packing and cooking and rehydrating meals for our two-week walk, I just gritted my teeth and offered prayers to the heavens and tried to flow with the plan. It won't be the last time I will be offering prayers related to this trip, even for a non-religious person like me who only resorts to Catholic-bred practices in very dire circumstances. (It would happen again during the second walk in the North Island as we slid on our bums in torrential rain down the slippery side of a massive raging waterfall, where a slip would very likely mean a fall into the wild waters!)

#### **Richard: Big First Day**

None of us expected to be walking 27km on the first day! But things happen and you have to adjust. In this instance there was a cyclone called Gabrielle that could have caused us to be holed up in a hut for two nights. This would have meant our whole two-week program would be behind by a day. So Ian made the call that we combine the first two days walking from St Arnaud to John Tait Hut. We walked and walked next to Lake Rotoiti and the Travers River in beech forest.



#### **Halina: Second day**

Day two was supposed to be one of the easiest days with only 6.9kms over 3 hours, expecting to be at Upper Travers Hut for lunch. A slip, a fall, a broken wrist and a helicopter evacuation changed the dynamics of the day leaving seven to complete the hike.

There was some light rain and wind but otherwise the forecast wild weather didn't eventuate.

#### **Anita: Over the top to Sabine Hut**

On day 3, we left Upper Travers Hut for West Sabine Hut. We reached the saddle after a steep climb, where we were rewarded with a 360-degree breathtaking view of mountain ranges. Even though it was cold and drizzling, it didn't stop us going on a side trip to get a spectacular view of the valley and tarns. We began a steep descent





## Along the track

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from here. We walked cautiously because it was rocky and uneven. My legs were shaking from the 1,120-meter-long descent but as I looked back up the hill, I felt pleased and proud of myself.

The following day, we walked along the river and through lovely grassland. We then arrived at Sabine Hut, a beautiful lakeside hut where we stayed for 2 nights to get back on schedule. The sunset at the jetty was absolutely stunning.



### **Meredith: Angelus Hut and Out**

Leaving Sabine Hut, we arrived at Angelus Hut in good time despite the steep climb of 1400m and the challenging, rocky route along the ridge. The hut was fully booked so our opportunity to choose beds was limited. There were 3 distinct groups in the 28-bed hut. Us, the Wellington Tramping Club and girls weekend away. There was lots of cheer in the hut as the weather turned and the clouds descended. After a very competitive card game, Richard and I prevailed, we could not be superseded, and a draw was called. Victorious, we retired to bed basking in our temporary glory.

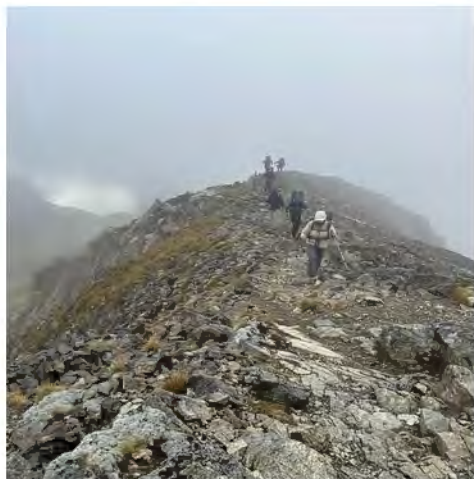
The following morning low cloud clung to the surrounding peaks as we prepared our packs for the last day of the hike. At the allotted time we bade farewell to the others and started

our climb to the first ridge. For the next 3 hours we rock scrambled over scree buffeted by the 30-50kmh winds. Occasionally sheltered by jagged rocks our ascent was slow and careful. The scree fell behind and we then had an easy path on loose gravel with a gentle ascent to Mt Robert. Making good time, we had a leisurely lunch with a view of the lake before commencing the final easy stroll down the well graded track to meet our transport. We had anticipated 6 hours walking but completed the day in 5 hours and had plenty of time to relax and look around prior to climbing aboard our transport back to Nelson.



### **Deb: Conclusion**

Thank you to Ian for leading us on this adventure with its elements of challenge, endurance, beauty, sadness, sweat, sand flies, awe, exhilaration and good humour. Thanks also to Halina for her support of all and for selflessly going the extra mile. Thanks to Jenny for her calm and proficient medical attention. And thanks to fellow walkers Bernadette, Ros, Anita, Meredith, and Richard for coming together with their unique qualities to make this such a memorable MBW trip.





### Tongariro and Round the Mountain – 23 February-1 March 2023

Jill Allen

The Round the Mountain hike is in the North Island of New Zealand. The walk starts along the first half of the Tongariro Crossing and continues for part of the Tongariro Northern Circuit, then continues on to circumnavigate the active volcano of Mt Ruapehu. To get to the start of the walk the group caught an early morning train from Wellington to a small town called National Park. The train trip was very enjoyable with large windows to enjoy the scenery.



After spending the night at a hostel in National Park, we woke to find the weather and forecast were terrible, but undaunted we started the walk regardless. It was overcast with low cloud and rain for the first three days; we were very lucky with a break in the weather on day one when the clouds cleared just long enough for us to see the Red Crater and the Emerald and Blue lakes from Tongariro.

It was day four before we even caught a glimpse of Mt Ruapehu when the clouds finally dissipated, and the sun shone. The terrain was mostly rocky with sparse volcanic ash plains, with the occasional section of beautiful rain

forest. We climbed up, over and down the many spurs of the mountain, crossing icy streams in the valleys. Sometimes there was a single lane suspension bridge over some of the deeper ravines.

There are two great things about hiking in New Zealand: one is no snakes, and the other is that each night you can stay in basic huts giving a cosy refuge for the night. This was especially good as we arrived soaking wet on a couple of occasions, and on these nights the huts soon resembled a Chinese laundry with clothes hanging off every vantage point over the fire.



Day five stood out as the most fun and interesting day of the walk as Ian, our leader, decided to go cross country instead of walking up a long and boring road. The group all enjoyed the challenge of finding our way across the tussock plains to eventually re-join the track some hours later. Once on the track again the rain started, lightly at first and then falling heavily just as Ian announced that we were about to do a 'horror section'. The route down wet, slippery rocks between raging waterfalls was terrifying for most of us if not exhilarating. I think Ian was very pleased when we were all finally down and standing safely on solid ground. We then had a short walk to the hut with one more river to wade through. We were all thoroughly wet by this stage.



The final day was a pleasant walk out through forest and a shuttle took us back to the hostel where we all enjoyed a hot shower before boarding the train to Auckland.

Thanks, Ian, for all the hard work in organizing this trip and leading us around the mountain.



### Diamantina Spur-Mt Fainter South - 10-15 March 2023

Barry Daly

We drove up to Smoko campground, near Harrietville, on Friday and camped the night. On Saturday morning we parked our cars at Hotham near the top of the mountain at Diamantina hut and began our walk along the Razorback. We then travelled via Diamantina spur, scrambling down very steeply. We arrived at Blair's hut in the afternoon. The camping ground was crowded, the weather was good, and we had walked 16km.

On Sunday we walked from Blair's hut up a steep climb to Westons hut. From there we walked to Tawonga huts and stopped for lunch. After lunch we continued on the walking track to camp at Mount Fainter South. Again we had walked 16km. While we were setting up our tents it started to hail then rained for 30 minutes. It was only us there which was nice compared to Blair's hut which had been very crowded.

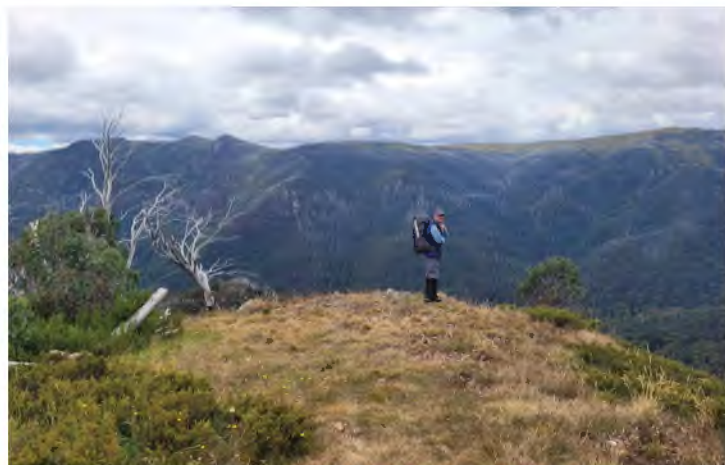


On Monday we did an extremely challenging but rewarding 9km walk with day packs down Fainter South West Ridge, climbing up steep rocks as high as 20 metres and bashing through thick scrub. We camped a second night at Fainter South camp site.

On Tuesday we walked back via Tawonga huts and then via the AAWT. We arrived at Dibbins hut and camped, having walked a total 15km. We had a refreshing wash in the Cobungra river.

On Wednesday it was a steep climb from Dibbins hut via Swindlers Spur for 1.5 hours (a good work out) to Derrick hut, Mount Loch car park area and back to the cars at Diamantina junction, 9km.

Overall a stimulating and challenging walk led and organized well by our leader Agajan. Many thanks to Agajan. Also thank you Ian for caring and walking out on day 2 with our injured walker, we all missed you a lot on the trail. Thanks also to Roy and Leigh for their good company.



## Upcoming activities

### April 2023

1-2	BC: Mount Samaria	Pvt	E/M	Roger Wyett
Sun 2	DAY: Wonthaggi Heathlands & Wetlands	Bus	E&E/M	Robert Ian Mair & Halina Sarbinowski
Mon 3	MTG: Club Committee Meeting	Pvt		Robert Ian Mair
Tue 4	MTG: Video session: Sunday bus then & now	Pvt		Robert Ian Mair
6-10	LOD: Mt Hotham Easter Lodge trip	Pvt	Var	Judith Shaw
Thu 6	TOF: Pigeonbank Trail-Bob's Wetland	Pvt	E	Jopie Bodegraven
6-11	PC: Mt Bogong-Mt Wills-Mt Nelse-Grey Hills	Pvt	H	Leigh Wykes
7-10	BC: Native Dog Flat	Pvt	Var	Ian Langford
Sun 9	DAY: O'Shannassy Aqueduct: Yuonga-Dee Rod	Car	E/M	Brett Daniel
Wed 12	DAY: Warburton River trails & Mt Little Joe loop	Pvt	E/M	Chris Lord
14-16	PC: Mt Howitt via Howitt & Stanley Name spurs	Pvt	M	Robert Ian Mair
Sat 15	TRG: Navigation with map and compass	Pvt	E	Roger Wyett
Sun 16	DAY: The Monk Walk: Castlemaine-Vaughan Sp.	Bus	E&E/M	Andrew Francis & Theo Mertzandis
Sun 16	SOC: Sunday Film afternoon: The Giants	Pvt	Soc	Jenny Andrewes
Mon 17	MOF: Ruffy Park Lake	Pvt	E	Michael Murray
Wed 19	DAY: Balcombe Creek & The Briars	Pvt	E/M	Richard Hanson
21-23	PC: Mt Bogong	Pvt	M/H	Ian Langford
21-25	PC: Fiddlers Green-Black River-Woods Point	Pvt	Exp	John Terrell
22-23	PC: Beginners: Cape Schanck-Greens Bush	Pvt	E	Gina Hopkins
Sun 23	DAY: Garden of St Erth-Simmons Reef	Car	E/M	Jenny Andrewes
Wed 26	SOC: Hiking in Austria solo	Pvt		Agajan M Akbari
Thu 27	SOC: Mullum Mullum Creek & Yarra River	Pvt	E	Gillian Wainwright
Sat 29	TRG: Navigation with a GPS	Pvt		Robert Ian Mair
Sat 29	DAY: Dandenong Ranges in Autumn	Pvt	E/M	Jerry Grandage
Sun 30	DAY: Ventnor-Rhyll (Phillip Island)	Bus	E&E/M	Bettina Brill & Brett Daniel

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](https://mbw.org.au/mbw_activities/MBW_activities_program.php)