

MELBOURNE  
BUSHWALKERS INC.

ABN 14 396 912 508



# THE NEWS

#866

May  
2023



Sunset over Mt Feathertop - R. Rossebo

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## WE ARE A MEMBER OF



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 5 June

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)

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## New Members

We welcome the following new members:

Pamela Williams  
Cindy Marcina  
Lian Crossley

Ronald Joseph  
April Porter  
Mark King

Georgina Strinavic  
Daniel Crivelli  
Babu Jayaraman

Ann Mackelvie  
Ingrid Klein  
Mirella Manfre



Wet walkers on Mt Howitt - G. Martin

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

Due date for contributions to June News: 21 May  
Email: [news@mbw.org.au](mailto:news@mbw.org.au)



## President's Column

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Your President is obsolete! Today I tasked the artificial intelligence (AI) large language model (LLM) ChatGPT 4.0 with writing my next President's Column: "Write me a 600 word President's column for a bushwalking club on the current and projected impacts of AI on multi-day bushwalking trips in Australia, including its impacts on trip planning, navigation, safety and equipment development. Mention examples of where AI is already being used with specific reference to the use of AI in finding suitable bushwalks based on preferences input by the user. Give examples of companies, organisations or apps that are leading future applications of AI for bushwalking."



Judge the answer for yourself. Instant awareness of current developments saved me hours of research. Well written and informative. The world is at a paradigm shift in technology and its impacts on what we do and how we live are likened to the impacts of the industrial revolution on farming communities. The pace of change in AI capabilities is staggering. The social and ethical implications of AI are testing the best minds across the world. We can be like the Ludites of a past era and resist the change or embrace the change and look for opportunities. The only thing we know for sure is that the Geni is out of the bottle and can't be put back in. One thing we cannot afford to do as individuals is ignore the changes and assume we won't be affected. Now read the ChatGPT column:

"As we head into a new era of technology, it's important to consider how it will impact our beloved pastime of bushwalking. One area that is already seeing significant changes is the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in trip planning, navigation, safety, and equipment development. In this column, I'll explore the current and projected impacts of AI on multi-day bushwalking trips in Australia, and highlight some examples of where it is already being used.

One of the most exciting applications of AI for bushwalking is in trip planning. There are now several companies and apps that use AI algorithms to help users find suitable bushwalks based on their preferences, such as location, difficulty level, scenery, and length. For example, WildEarth is an Australian company that offers an AI-powered platform for finding and booking outdoor adventures, including bushwalks. Another example is AllTrails, a popular app that uses AI to provide recommendations for hiking trails based on user ratings and reviews.

AI is also being used to improve navigation on bushwalking trips. One of the biggest challenges of bushwalking is staying on track and avoiding getting lost. However, with the help of AI-powered GPS devices and apps, bushwalkers can now navigate more easily and with greater precision. For example, the app Avenza Maps uses AI to provide detailed maps and GPS tracking for bushwalking trails, even in remote areas with no cell coverage.

AI is also playing an increasingly important role in safety on bushwalking trips. For example, some GPS devices and apps now feature SOS buttons that can alert emergency services in case of an accident or other emergency. Some apps, such as Cairn, even use AI to detect if a user is in distress based on their movement patterns and can automatically alert emergency services if necessary.

Finally, AI is also being used to improve the development of bushwalking equipment, such as hiking boots and backpacks. By using AI-powered simulations, designers can test different materials and designs more quickly and accurately, resulting in products that are more comfortable, durable, and functional.

While the use of AI in bushwalking is still in its early stages, it's clear that it has enormous potential to improve the safety, enjoyment, and accessibility of this great pastime. As a club, we should keep a close eye on these developments and consider how we can incorporate these technologies into our activities. For example, we could explore using AI-powered trip planning tools to help members find new and exciting bushwalks, or we could invest in AI-powered GPS devices to improve navigation and safety on club trips.

In conclusion, AI is set to revolutionize the way we plan, navigate, and enjoy bushwalking trips. While it may take some time for these technologies to mature, it's clear that they offer exciting opportunities for bushwalkers to

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# Noticeboard

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explore new and exciting trails and to do so safely and confidently. As a club, let's embrace these technologies and use them to enhance our bushwalking experiences."

Ian Mair

Footnote:

Since submitting this column I have formally notified the Committee at its Meeting on 1st May that I will be standing down as President, effective end-May. Thank you all for your contributions to the running of the club and its ongoing operations. The 100th Anniversary is just around the corner.

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## Vale Deb Bishop

Very sadly Deb passed away peacefully on Saturday 22 April with her friends by her side after a short battle with cancer.

Many of you will have known Deb. She joined MBW in 2010 and was active in the club on pack carry trips, base camps and day walks. She was secretary on the committee in 2016-17 and latterly was on the 'meet and greet' roster.

Deb was a dual American and Australian citizen. She was born in Salzburg, Austria, and had a fairly nomadic early life living in Europe and USA as her father was with the US military. Deb arrived in Australia in 2002 with her husband Brian and quickly adopted Melbourne as her home. When Brian died suddenly in Fiji in 2008 Deb returned to Melbourne and teaching in her specialist subject Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Deb became aware of her illness late December 2022 when in the US but chose to return to her home in Melbourne to have treatment. Her illness progressed very quickly and her family provided support from the US but sadly they were unable to get here in time.

Deb was a quiet achiever, very independent and self-sufficient. She was a great adventurer, always with a holiday planned, usually combining her love of hiking but otherwise she was back in US visiting her family. Deb was a wonderful friend and her quiet camaraderie will be very much missed.

There will be a light luncheon held on Wednesday 24 May in Carlton to honour Deb's life. Can you please RSVP to Jenny (0401001897) or Carol (0413542220)

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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.

Activity: Beginner's PC, 31 March - 2 April.

While leading a Beginners Pack Carry one of the participants experienced an injury that required hospitalisation in Wangaratta. After helping to provide first aid and ensuring the member was properly evacuated to hospital, Claire Luxford stayed overnight in Wangaratta for an extra night and drove the member home in his car. Thank you, Claire.



## NON-COMMITTEE ROLES, 2023-24

Each year the club has a large number of volunteers filling roles as activity leaders and in non-Committee functions. For 2022-23, in accordance with the By-Laws, the Committee approved the following non-Committee positions along with their incumbent members for the current year. The appreciation of all members for the many who contribute to helping make the club run smoothly is noted.

Environment Officer	John TERRELL
Risk Officer	Mick NOONAN
Training Officer	Mick NOONAN
Asst. Training Officers	Angela VETSICAS, Roger WYETT, Ian MAIR
Pack Carry Coordinator	Jopie BODEGRAVEN
Base Camp/Lodge Coordinator	Jill ALLEN
Wednesday Walks Coordinator	Ed NEFF
Saturday Walks Coordinator	Maureen HURLEY
Cycling Coordinator	-
Monday/Thursday Coordinators	Graham HODGSON, Janet HODGSON
Social Walks Coordinator	Jean GIESE
Asst. Sunday Walks Secretary	Theo MERTZANIDIS, Brett DANIEL
Asst. Social Secretaries	Susan MAUGHAN, Jenny ANDREWES
Equipment Officer	Brett DANIEL
Newsletter Editor	Deb SHAND
Webmaster	Ian MAIR
Assistant Webmaster	Mark A HEATH
Social Media Officers	Ian MAIR, Mark HEATH, Jill ALLEN
Mail Pick-up	Mark HEATH, Ian MAIR
Finance Reviewers	Richard HANSON, Ray SPOONER
Librarian	Cecily HUNTER
Archives Officer	Ken MACMAHON
Maps Officer	Mark HEATH
First Aid Kits Officer	Jenny ANDREWES
Clubroom Forms Officer	Poppy SICARI
Club Emergency Contacts	Jenny ANDREWES, Mick NOONAN, Jopie BODEGRAVEN, Stuart HANHAM, Derrick BROWN, Ian MAIR, Susan MCINNES, Margaret CURRY, Cecily HUNTER
BSAR Coordinator	Nigel HOLMES
BSAR Members	David LAING, Maciek DZIK, Nigel HOLMES, Stephen MURPHY, Kim COWIE, Claire LUXFORD, Rose PERICH (via Essendon BWC)
Meet and Greet Officer	Elizabeth GWYNN
Wednesday Duty Roster Helpers	Denise CHARMAN, Judy MACWILLIAMS , Babak DADVAND, Jenny ANDREWES, Jopie BODEGRAVEN, Silvia GRANDE, Fay DUNN, Bernadette HARRINGTON, Gillian WAINWRIGHT, Michael NOONAN, Margaret CURRY, Bernadette PRUNTY, Anitha DAMODHARASWAMY, Carmen DIENHOFF, Adriana FARI-PALCO, Helen DOBBYN, Neil O'REILLY, Rose PERICH, Therese RYAN, Hiroko NAKANO, Chris LORD, Elizabeth GWYNN, Susannah DAX

**Ian Mair**  
President

## May Safety and Risk Reminders

Mick Noonan, Risk Officer



This month we feature the **Leaders Emergency Checklist** (White Laminated Card), listing the **items Members are required to take on a walk**, and ask *“Do you remember what **DRSABCD** stands for?”*


**First Aid Safety - DRSABCD:** Yes, its **Dangers?**, **Responsive?**, **Send for Help**, **Check Airways**, **Normal Breathing?**, **Start CPR**, **Attach Defibrillator**. See the St Johns Ambulance description in this News.

### What Members are required to take on Activities (excluding camping gear) **NEW:**

- Adequate clothing for the activity including waterproof rain gear (not a plastic bag!),
- A wide brimmed hat is essential in summer: A pullover or fleece jacket, beanie and gloves in winter.
- Change of clothing, especially in winter. This can be left in the bus or car. A change of shoes is required on bus and car trips.
- A first aid kit appropriate for the activity and its duration. Even on Sunday Walks where the leaders carry a group first aid kit you should always carry basic first aid equipment. Don't rely on others to do this for you!
- Your personal medications eg. for pain relief, including things like an EpiPen and any Inhalers you may require. Make sure to tell the Leader of any conditions that may impact you during the walk so they can quickly respond if needed.
- You need to be fully self-sufficient so carry all your food, snacks, a minimum 2L of water and possibly emergency rations in case of delays.
- Matches in a waterproof container and a torch in case the group is late back, especially in winter.
- Whistle, pencil/pen and paper.
- Personal items, including, sunscreen, lip screen, toilet paper, identification, club Green Health Card preferably in the top of your pack, some money etc.
- The leader may recommend additional items for the activity eg. sticks, gaiters, etc.
- If in doubt check the **Introduction to Melbourne Bushwalkers** on the Website or ask the leader.

**Leaders Emergency Checklist (White Laminated Card) **NEW:**** This card is designed to be taken on walks and lists the key steps in dealing with an Emergency including the Whistle Codes. You can collect a laminated card in the Clubrooms or print the version in this News, trim it up and put it in Zip Bag (last updated 2022).

**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.**

<p><b>MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS Inc</b> <b>EMERGENCY CHECKLIST</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't panic! DRSABCD</li><li>• Is it safe for group to remain in location? Or return to the last known location as any search will start there. Keep warm, stay calm and seek shelter.</li><li>• For Sunday bus, phone the driver</li><li>• Medical emergencies: who has 1<sup>st</sup> aid skills?</li><li>• Use the injured/ill persons green 'Personal Health Details Card only if patient is not coherent</li><li>• Are they carrying medication? Access Health Card details</li><li>• Assess early exit options</li></ul> <p><b>CALL FOR ASSISTANCE</b> "000" or "112" on mobile, state following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Location incl grid reference and directions</li><li>• Your mobile number</li><li>• Nature of emergency</li></ul> <p>Use a Personal Locator Beacon if necessary Make it easier to be located:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Move above tree line</li><li>• Move to clearing or track</li><li>• Move to open section of a creek line</li></ul>	<p>Make it easier to be located (Cont):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lay a block of bright colour visible from the air</li><li>• Smoking fire – if safe to do so</li><li>• Direct person to listen for searchers</li></ul> <p><b>SEEKING ASSISTANCE</b> Subject to nature of incident, group size &amp; experience direct two personnel to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Walk to higher ground to make contact</li><li>• Walk out to summon help</li><li>• Guide searcher/rescue back in</li></ul> <p>Contact the following as necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A Club Emergency Contact to put a message on the Club's Mobile 0447 489 661</li><li>• For serious injuries contact a Club Officer or CEC</li></ul> <p><b>DISTRESS CALLS</b> 3 regularly spaced calls (whistle, shouts, banging on a billy, or torch flashes at night)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 blasts – emergency</li><li>• 2 blasts – stop and regroup</li><li>• 1 blast – acknowledge</li></ul> <p>..... 02/2022</p> <p>Note: Available as a White Laminated Card in Clubrooms or Print and put in a Zip Bag</p>
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## ALERT!!! You need your own comprehensive AMBULANCE COVER!!

Starting with the Meet and Greet when visitors come to the club, then in the Introduction to the Melbourne Bushwalkers Pamphlet we tell people that they **should have their own comprehensive ambulance cover**. This is also covered periodically in the monthly Reminders.

Yet it seems that some members think that the Club's Personal Accident Insurance (from Bushwalking Australia) or their Private Hospital Insurance will pay for any Ambulance or remote medical assistance costs they may incur. The Personal Insurance only covers limited non-Medicare costs and is capped at \$3000 - it will cover you till you are 95! But this could still leave you with an ambulance bill in the thousands of dollars.

So if you have not got Ambulance Victoria Cover (works for anywhere in Australia including for Air Ambulances), or confirmed any Hospital cover you have will cover you for remote areas including Air Ambulance, then please sort out your cover before your next walk!

Mick Noonan, Risk Officer

## DRSABCD action plan

In an emergency call triple zero (000) for an ambulance



**D DANGER**  
Ensure the area is safe for yourself, others and the patient.

**R RESPONSE**  
**Check for response**—ask name—squeeze shoulders  
**No response**  
• Send for help.  
**Response**  
• make comfortable  
• check for injuries  
• monitor response.



**S SEND for help**  
**Call Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance or ask another person to make the call.

**A AIRWAY**  
**Open mouth**—if foreign material is present:  
• place in the recovery position  
• clear airway with fingers.  
**Open airway** by tilting head with chin lift.



**B BREATHING**  
**Check for breathing**—look, listen and feel.  
**Not normal breathing**  
• Start CPR.  
**Normal breathing**  
• place in recovery position  
• monitor breathing  
• manage injuries  
• treat for shock.



**C CPR**  
**Start CPR**—30 chest compressions : 2 breaths  
Continue CPR until help arrives or patient recovers.



**D DEFIBRILLATION**  
**Apply defibrillator** if available and follow voice prompts.

© St John Ambulance Australia. St John encourages first aid training as this information is not a substitute for first aid training.

Learn First Aid | 1300 360 455 | [www.stjohn.org.au](http://www.stjohn.org.au)

## Mount Howitt / Toot-buck-nulluck

Elevation 1742m – rising high in the Victorian Alps - but where did the name originate?

Most bushies will know of Mt Howitt, but little of its namesake. The mountain takes its current name from the explorer and eminent Australian, Alfred William Howitt (1830-1908).

### Who you say!

Alfred Howitt was a great explorer, he was also an expert bushman, naturalist, geologist, botanist, government surveyor and an authority on Aboriginal culture and social organisation. He has left a major legacy of writings on many subjects, in particular his important work in recording of names, language, songs, message sticks, kinship, and social relations of Aboriginal groups across Gippsland – the Gunnai/Kurnai. Howitt also gave great service to the Victorian Government and Australia in many roles as a magistrate, land surveyor, and naturalist.



View from Mt Howitt towards Devils Staircase - State Library

He was intrusted to investigate the ill-fated Burke and Will's expedition, bringing their remains to rest in the

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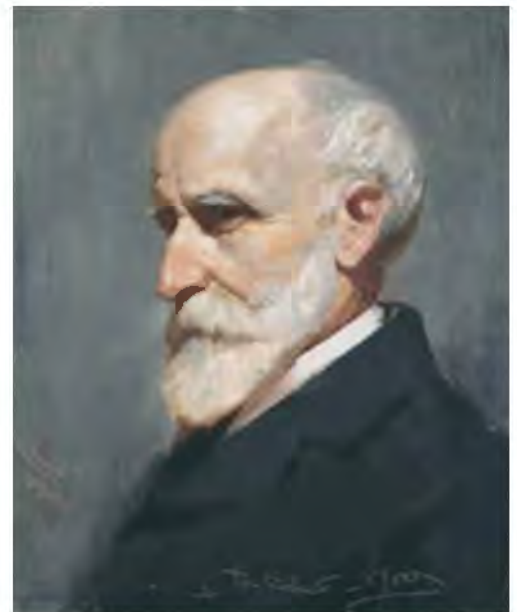
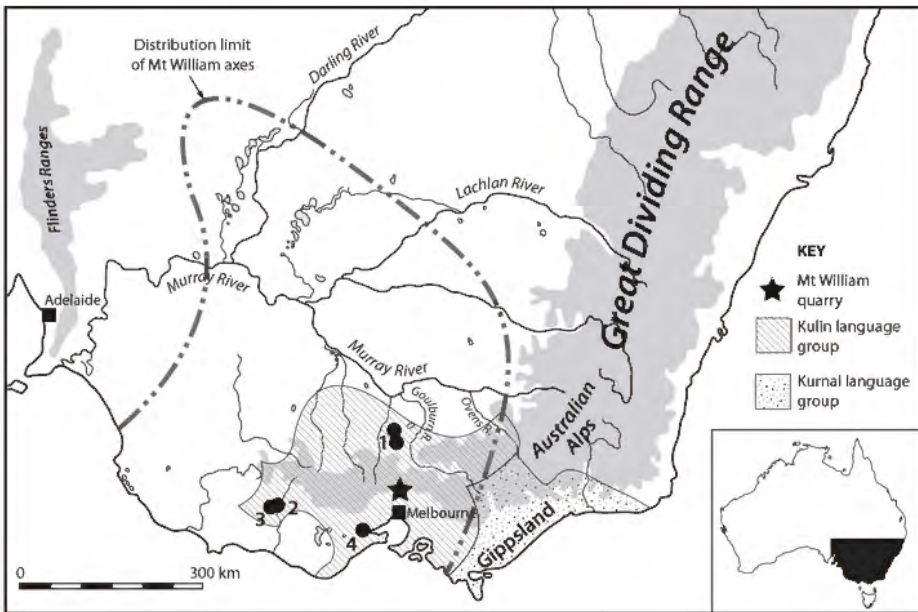
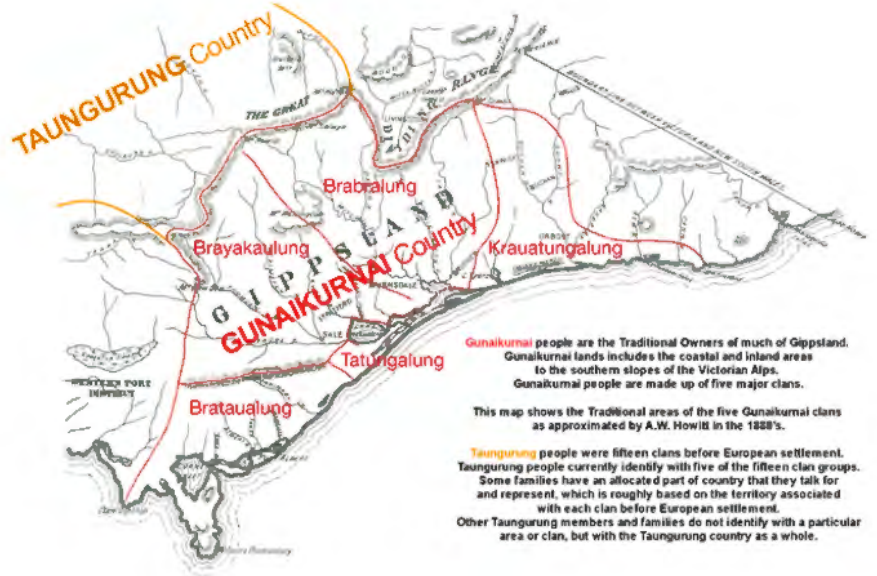
# Noticeboard

Melbourne General Cemetery, along with important documents, including the 'Wills' diaries. Upon Howitt's death it was reported at the time that 100,000 people lined the city streets of Melbourne to send him off.

(The map below was surveyed and drawn by Howitt).

This part of the Alpine National Park is known as the Wonangatta/Moroka area. It has a significant history before white occupation. Mount Howitt which straddles the Great Divide is also known as **Toot-buck-nulluck** by the south-eastern Gippsland clans of the Gunnai/Kurnai. Along with the Taungurung clans who occupy the north-eastern headwaters of the ranges, the area became an important meeting and trading route for the Kulin Nation and the Gunnai/Kurnai, in particular the valuable tool making 'greenstone'.

If you haven't visited this part of the Victorian Alps, put it on your walks list, it's exhilarating.



Portrait of A.W. Howitt – (1900) Tom Roberts  
Monash University Collection

Good walking,  
Geof Martin





## 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 Susan McInnes.

### Turkish Bride soup

There's lots of stories behind this soup but I like the one that says it is made to sustain the bride on her wedding day. That makes it a great soup to sustain us walking. With some modifications you can easily make it vegetarian or vegan.

#### Ingredients:

2 tbs butter  
2 tbs vegetable oil  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
1 celery stalk, very finely chopped  
1 medium carrot, very finely chopped  
4 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
1 cup / 200g red lentils, rinsed  
1/3 cup/ 70g fine bulgur wheat, rinsed  
3 1/4 cup, 750 ml chicken or vegetable stock  
1.5 litres just boiled water  
1 teaspoon sweet paprika  
3 tablespoons tomato paste  
1/2 teaspoon Aleppo pepper or mild chilli flakes  
1 teaspoon dried oregano  
2 tablespoon dried mint  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
Serves 4

#### Instructions

Melt the butter with the vegetable oil in a large saucepan over a low heat. Add the onion and fry for 5 minutes, then add the celery and carrot and cook for another 10 minutes with the lid on, adding the garlic for the last minute or so. Tip in the lentils, bulgur wheat, stock and hot water, then cover and cook over a low heat for 15 minutes, stirring every so often so the soup doesn't catch. Lastly, add the lemon juice, dried mint and cook for a final 5 minutes taste and add salt if needed.

#### Notes

Dehydrate.  
Rehydrate and heat and serve with a drizzle of olive oil and Aleppo pepper to taste. Enjoy and be sustained.  
If you're making the soup expressly to dehydrate, reduce the boiled water quantity and keep a close eye on the liquid levels and stir often.  
I reduce the oil quantity to the bare minimum to make dehydrating quicker.

## Track Clearing Activity with BTAC

**AAWT: Omeo Highway to Gill Creek: 19-21 May 2023**

The May BTAC activity which involves working with Parks Victoria to clear overgrown areas of the Australian Alps Walking Track from the Omeo Highway to Gill Creek. You will be required to register with Parks Connect to participate (this involves obtaining a volunteer working with children check...which is free). The plan is to camp at the Big River Campground 44km north of Omeo approx 5 hours drive from Melbourne. The AAWT is 12km further north, we will travel by car to the track each morning and walk into the work site. For more details visit Park Connect website: <https://www.parkconnect.vic.gov.au/>





# WALKING THE HILLS OF SIKKIM & DARJEELING



Sikkim and the Darjeeling hills are lands of soaring Himalayan peaks and stunning views, quaint farming villages and lively market towns. Traditional lifestyles and livelihoods are widespread. Unusually for India, population density is low and protected forest coverage is high. This makes it something of an outlier in a country which is seeing rapid population growth and urban development.

Guided by North East India native Kabir Pradhan, we explore this unique region on foot, with day walks through a variety of landscapes including forests, pastoral land and farming hamlets. Each night we return to comfortable accommodation, ranging from heritage hotels to farmstays and tea planters' bungalows.

Along the way we learn about the numerous ethnic groups who call this region of India home, including Tibetans, Nepalis, Bengalis, Lepchas and Bhotias. With favourable conditions we are afforded regular views of the main Himalayan range, including of Khangchendzonga, the third highest mountain in the world (as pictured, seen from Darjeeling). As is always the case with our hosted tours, there is good food, unique accommodation and the company of like-minded travellers.

The tour runs for 14 days and is limited to 12 people. There are currently 3 rooms still available.

## WALKING THE HILLS OF SIKKIM & DARJEELING

**3 TO 16 OCTOBER 2023**

**Group tour with Kabir Pradhan  
organised by India Unbound**

For more information please contact  
Lincoln Harris at India Unbound

**0402 534 521** 

**[lincoln@indiaunbound.com.au](mailto:lincoln@indiaunbound.com.au)** 

 **INDIA  
UNBOUND**  
CUSTOM MADE JOURNEYS

*ASPIRING LEADERS, WE NEED YOU!*

## **LEADERS' TRAINING DAY**

**Sat 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2023, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm**

**Rivers Room at Clubrooms @ Mission to Seafarers Victoria**

*Why not attend this free training offered uniquely by our club to skill up members and build confidence to take on leading roles?*

*Suitable for new leaders, those thinking about leading, and previous leaders returning after a long break.*

*The trainers will be Angela Vetsicas, Ian Mair, and Mick Noonan. The day covers:*

### **Welcome and Introductions**

#### **So You Want to Become a Leader?**

- The concept of leadership.
- Different styles of leadership and Key Relationships.

#### **Walk Research, Planning & Previewing**

- Why, Who, Where, When and How to organise a walk.
- Conducting a preview, what to do before, during and after.
- Resources to access when selecting a walk, especially our extensive data base.

#### **Activity Processes, Documentation & Resources**

- Walk description and grading, walker registration.
- Map, GPS track and walk notes, transport plans, emergency details, incident reports.
  - Online Website and Paper Processes.

#### **Conducting the Walk**

- Tasks which need to be completed a week and a day prior to the walk.
- Tasks to perform after you arrive at the walk but before you start walking; appointing a Whip.
  - How to conduct your walk in a safe manner so that all participants enjoy the walk.

#### **Risk Management & Safety**

- Basics of Risk Management, and how it is involved in most decisions that we make.
  - Identify and Evaluate Risks.
  - Use strategies to manage risks, practical examples.
  - Legal responsibilities; Leader protections.

#### **Critical Incident Management**

- What are Critical Incidents, how to avoid them/reduce their impact.
- Dealing with the Critical Incident and with Emergency Services, Scenario Exercises.
  - Post Activity support for recovery and grieving.
- A Leader's view of the new Club Critical Incident Processes.



**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) \*

<b>Single member:</b> \$45 **	<b>Concession:</b> \$34* (Proof required ***)
<b>Couple/Family:</b> \$90 **	<b>Concession:</b> \$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]

## Razorback to Mt. Feathertop – 1-2 April 2023

John Gurskey

Walkers: Catherine, Roy, Angela, Bettina, Ken, John  
Leader: Claire Luxford

We started our walk at the trailhead at 9:15am on Saturday. We had all hoped for sunny weather however clouds, high winds and drizzle was forecast for the day. Sure enough, the predictions were spot on. We commenced the walk with clouds rolling across the trail pushed by high winds and accentuated with sideways drizzle. Thankfully, we all brought our rain gear and pack covers. We stopped for morning tea in a relatively sheltered area and chatted with intrepid day walkers heading up to Mt. Feathertop.



Having poles was essential this day as the rocks and descents were slippery from the constant rain. Although cloudy, windy and rainy it was still good to be on the trail! As we turned off the main trail at High Knob to our campsite at the head of the Diamantina Spur the clouds started to break, the wind died down and sun shone on a very wet mountainside. We set up our tents, dried wet gear from tree branches and settled in for a well-deserved lunch.

After lunch we grabbed our day packs, poles and snacks and headed up to Mt. Feathertop. The sun lifted our spirits as we started the ascent. It was a long slog up to the top, however well worth it. A highlight of the ascent was meeting a young father and his daughter who were staying at Federation Hut that night. It is so good to see young people enjoying the mountains and gaining an appreciation for the outdoors. We exchanged stories, took photos, and basked in the sun.

On the way down we detoured on the North West Spur Track to collect water from the spring about 500 meters from the main trail. Clear, cold water flowed into a small pool making it easy to refill our containers. We walked back in the evening sun enjoying the changing light and views of Mt. Feathertop in the setting sun.

We enjoyed a quiet dinner, getting to know one another better and swapping bushwalking tips and tricks. The night was cold however windless. Three cheers to the new pack carriers who endured a cold night with grit.

We headed back Sunday morning with the sun shining brightly and little wind. Some joked about going over the top of The Big Dipper or taking the lower easier path. We made it back to the cars tired but gratified that the walk ended with such beautiful weather.

Things we learned along the way were to make sure we all carry decent first aid kits, including snake bite elastic bandages, as several walkers reported seeing larger black snakes sunning themselves along the track.





### Pack Carry: Mt Howitt – (1742m) via the Howitt Spur and an Unnamed Spur -

Friday 14 April – Sunday 16 April, 2023

Ting Zheng and Geof Martin

*We wish to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Taungurung and Gunai/Kurnai lands for allowing us the opportunity to share this magnificent place.*

(The Taungurung and Gunai/Kurnai people's land adjoin in the Victorian Alps, along the Great Dividing Range from Mt Baw Baw to Mt Hotham.)

#### The walk that has everything! Read on!

Trip Leaders: Ian and Gina

#### Overview:

This was a double act walk - the objective, two groups would ascend to Mount Howitt (1742m) via two very different approaches from the Upper Howqua Camp. The so called 'easier' route was to take the Howitt Access Spur to Mt Howitt and onto Macalister Springs camp. The 'harder' route would traverse an unnamed and untracked spur up to Mt Magdala, join with the Australian Alps Walking Track, and finally make their way to Mt Howitt and Macalister Springs.

These overnight walks in the Mt Howitt area are set in the high Victorian Alps in the Wonnangatta/Moroka watershed. It is a rugged, spectacular, and quite exhilarating hiking experience on the main Divide, being east of Mt Buller and Mt Stirling. At just over 1700 metres elevation, Mt Howitt is not among the highest in Victoria, but its prominence makes it a great observational plateau to view the ranges in all directions – out past The Crosscut Saw and looking back to The Bluff. Mt Howitt takes its name from Alfred Howitt, a great explorer and eminent Australian – to read more about the mountain's namesake, see the accompanying article in this newsletter.

#### The Walk:

Leading up to this walk, Ian Mair made two things clear about this trip. Firstly, this is one of the classic walks in the Victorian Alps, the adjunct of two popular destinations, Mt Howitt, and The Crosscut Saw. The other, alpine weather could do anything, with shorter days, torrential rainfall, high winds, low clouds, zero visibility, and freezing wind chill.

This walk became so popular that the group was divided into two, following different but well-considered routes, being led by Ian and Gina respectively. There was a total of 15 keen members who arrived at the Upper Howqua Camp on Friday night, setting up a campfire and trying their best to recognise the others in the dark, with headlamps targeting unsuspecting fellow camper's eyes. After the last car arrived with leader Gina, we drank the last bit of the wine, and happily went to our tents or cars to settle for the night.



The next morning teams of deer hunters (Parks Victoria contractors) with their accompanying Beagle dogs, arrived and broke the quiet of the morning. After sharing and confirming our destinations with each other, the hunters set off with the valley filled with a 'hound' chorus. Shortly after, Gina's H group (AKA "The Eager Eight") set off at 8am. Half an hour later, Ian's E group (AKA "The Savvy Seven") set off along the Howqua River and onto the Howitt Spur. Both groups shared the same 3kms along the Howqua River. Ian soon spotted the location where Gina's group had clambered off the track with a pile of mud and sliding foot prints, revealing the struggles against gravity on the steep and slippery slope.







The 'Savvy Seven' made a lunch stop about a kilometre below the Howitt West Peak, where fast-approaching low clouds were now closing in. We happily appreciated the changing views, from layers of mountain silhouettes into misty grey clouds and bringing with it a mono picturesque effect to the surroundings. The ridge walk heading towards Mt Howitt was exhilarating, a fun sensation of floating with and against the wind. We howled, yelled, and laughed at each other and embraced this amazing wilderness. Upon reaching the Howitt plateau a unique panorama begins, we are surrounded by cascading valleys in all directions dominated by the Mountain Gum, rising to majestic Snow Gums and finally above the tree line our eyes run along a set of rugged escarpments.

Passing the Howitt summit, we traversed an undulating track to the junction of The Crosscut Saw and then down to our camping site by Macalister Springs. This is what every camper could ever ask for - the well-equipped Vallejo Gantner Hut, a toilet with view, a spring, and an open level campsite. Also, a good 'Samaritan' had lit the fire in the hut - what else could we expect! The toilet even had toilet paper, and sufficient daylight through a large window so you could see what you are doing and of course that view!

While the tea was brewing, the weather turned sour and kept worsening as forecasted, Ian and the good Samaritan managed to chop more firewood preparing for the 'Eager Eight' to arrive. With expert knowledge and trust in the others to make the best decision, Ian quietly worked out that the Hard group might not make it to the camp, and this was later confirmed by text message from Gina.



Now rewind the day to Gina's 'Eager Eight' progress. After at least four hours of bush-bashing along a spur line leading up to Mt Magdala (1725m), they were confronted with an imposing escarpment. With some sound consideration the Hard group set their sight on the summit and shimmied up and around the face, finally making the summit of Magdala mid-afternoon. As the weather looked threatening and enthusiasm waned, a decision was made to make camp near the summit at Hellfire Creek. It has good level campsites and a water resource within 200m. The downside is that it may not be as flash and cosy as the 'Savvy Seven', but the upside is that they completely avoided being smoked out - the A frame hut had a blocked chimney turning it into a giant smoke house.

The following day the weather continued to be grey and very wet, our sensible leaders decided it was time to skip The Crosscut Saw this trip due to the persistent rain and low visibility. Following the adjusted plan, the two groups now aligned with each other on the Mt Howitt summit.



Although looking like drowned mice, everyone was in happy spirits to see each other - it had been a long night after all. Up on the Mt Howitt peak we still managed some inspiring vistas, some of the old hands in the group pointing out the surrounding landmarks with such horror movie names as Devils Staircase, Crosscut Saw, Hells Window, Mt Buggery, Terrible Hollow, Mt Despair and Horrible Gap. With Ian now adopting a few more walkers, 12 of us walked back down the Howitt Spur, while the adventurers Gina, Leigh and Prabu carried on down Stanley Name Spur through the overgrown and much obstructed track.

Our final regrouping was at a much more civilised café in

## Along the track

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Mansfield, with barista brewed coffee and cake in the belly, we finally jumped back into warm cars and travelled back to Melbourne. But the battle with the elements wasn't yet over - the blasted leeches, they tried to overpower us at every river crossing and now they wanted to bloody hitchhike back to Melbourne – and some succeeded.

Thank you to Ian and Gina for all their time and effort, their detailed planning and preparation made for a very well organised and exciting trip.

*According to the closest BOM weather station, 24-hour rainfall was 38.2mm, with the lowest apparent temp (feels like): -5.9, lowest air temp: 1.9. Saturday afternoon / overnight wind: 50-60kmh with gusts at 70-80kmh.*



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## McMillans Walking Track – A BTAC adventure! - 21-25 April 2023

Peter Heading

This was a Bushwalking Tracks and Conservation (BTAC) activity which involved working with the Department of Energy, Environment & Climate Action (DEECA) and Parks Victoria to do maintenance work on the Crooked River section of the McMillans Walking Track between Ritchie Rd and Talbotville.

### History of McMillans Track

In 1864, Angus McMillan, a seasoned explorer, was called out of semi-retirement by the Victorian Government to lead a track cutting expedition, linking the goldfields and towns of Omeo, Dargo, Crooked River, Harrietville, Woods Point and the Jordan. The full track stretches 220km from Omeo westward to Woods Point through the Gippsland high country. As the goldfields declined and roads replaced the need for a pack horse trail, the track fell into disrepair and vanished under the encroaching bush. The Ben Cruachan Walking Club (BCWC) are credited with rediscovering and restoring the track which was reopened in 1988.

### The Trip

The weather gods were extremely kind to us for the entire 5 days as adverse weather would have made the track very slippery and dangerous. It was anticipated that this would be a challenging weekend of track clearing because of its remoteness, difficult access and unknown condition; and so it proved to be. Participants were Joe van Beek (BTAC Convenor), Peter M, Peter W, Peter H, Allan, Ros, Meredith, Chris and Sue. (Melbourne Bushwalkers were represented by Peter H and Meredith). Apart from me, all the rest of the crew had done track maintenance before.

Friday was spent travelling to Dargo where we all met at the Dargo DEECA Depot, for a welcome and briefing in preparation for our work on the McMillans Walking Track. We then proceeded on to make base camp for the night at Bulltown on the Crooked River. Some 4-wheel driving on steep tracks and a river crossing was required to get to this point. The Bulltown camp on a bend of the Crooked River is a reasonably spacious campground. A BBQ meal was provided on Friday evening c/- DEECA.





# Along the track

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## Saturday

On Saturday, a chainsaw team of three was transported via 4WD to the northern end to White Timber Spur Track South. They commenced clearing logs and bigger vegetation, working south. The remainder of the party commenced to pack carry all camping gear, supplies and track clearing equipment north to a make-shift camp, about 4.5 km along the track. We enjoyed being on this historically significant track constructed by the early gold miners through the stunning scenic steep-sided Crooked River valley. The benched track was constructed, at places high above the river, to a high standard with dry stone walling still in good condition in some sections.

Access to a suitable camping site was a bit of a challenge. There are no recognised camping sites along this section of the track, so it took some effort and ingenuity to find and make a camp site not too far from water, with tents strung out along the track. It was not possible to carry all of the gear in one go, so we had to make a return trip, then turn around and head back to the make-shift camp. There had been some thought the group heading north would make a start on the track clearing on the Saturday however we had expended most of our energy as human mules by this stage.

The plan had been that the two groups would meet at the make-shift camp by 5 pm. However, the rough terrain meant that this was not possible within this timeframe for the group heading south. With daylight failing, two members of our party headed north with extra torches to meet the group coming south. Fortunately, the two groups were in regular trunk radio contact with each other. Eventually they all made it back safely to the make-shift camp after 7.30 pm, so it was a pretty tiring adventure at this point.



## Sunday & Monday

Using a mix of chainsaws, brush cutters, hedge trimmers, mattock, spade and bare hands, we worked our way northwards from the bush camp. Over the course of a few days, the team chain sawed the logs off a 13 km section of McMillans Walking Track from the southern end of White Timber Spur Track South to Stonewall leaving some easy-step-over ones. A bit over 3km was thoroughly cleared including some dense patches of blackberry. Some step cutting and track benching was also undertaken to make walking easier. A couple of the team returned some gear back to the vehicles on the Monday, to lighten the load required for transportation on Tuesday.

## Tuesday

The morning was spent carrying our full packs, day packs and the remainder of the equipment back to the vehicles. We were determined to do this in one operation, to avoid multiple trips. The 4WD's then transported us back to civilisation. We also stopped to look at the historic Grant township on the way back to Dargo. From memory, 3000 people used to live at Grant in its goldfield heyday. Farewells were had back at Dargo before we headed home.

It was only towards the end of the trip that I was told by the rest of the crew that this had been the hardest trip they had undertaken, so I certainly picked it for my debut track work! It was hard going but very satisfying to help keep the tracks open for all of us to enjoy. In conclusion, I would like to throw it out there to all members of the club, but particularly those who either participate in pack carrying or base camp/walking, that you should aim to undertake track clearing duties, say at least once per year. It was calculated that the group of nine volunteers contributed a total of 336 hours to this activity.



## Upcoming activities

### May 2023

Mon 1	MTG: Club Committee Meeting	Pvt		Robert Ian Mair
Tue 2	MTG: Video session - History of the Coliban Aqueduct	Pvt		Stephen Charman
Thu 4	TOF: Berwick Parklands	Pvt	E	Rosemary Cotter
Sun 7	DAY: Macedon Ranges	Bus	E&E/M	Christopher Collett & Prabhu Delli
Wed 10	DAY: Autumn in the Dandenongs	Pvt	E/M	Jerry Grandage
12-14	PC: Marengo (Apollo Bay) to Cape Otway Lighthouse	Pvt	M	Rachel Keen
13-22	PC: Bibbulmun Track: Walpole to Denmark	Pvt	M	Robert Ian Mair
Sun 14	DAY: Silver Creek & the Cascades, Hazeldene	Car	M	Stuart Hanham
Mon 15	MOF: Olinda Creek-Mt Evelyn Aqueduct	Pvt	E	Graham Hodgson
Sun 21	DAY: Coliban Aqueduct & Fryers Ridge	Bus	Exp/E/M	Rose Perich & Kim Cowie
Wed 24	SOC: The Coast and Hills of Wales	Pvt		Robert Ian Mair
Thu 25	SOC: Toorak to Hawthorn (train/car)	Pvt	E	Margaret Champion
26-28	BC: Base Camp/Cabin weekend-Cape Paterson	Pvt	E/M	Margaret Curry
Sat 27	DAY: Domino Trail, Trentham	Pvt	E/M	Helen Graesser
Sun 28	DAY: Mt Jerusalem/Mt Everard circuit, Kinglake	Car	M	Leigh Wykes & tba
Wed 31	DAY: Quarry Hills	Pvt	E/M	Jopie Bodegraven

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)

