

MELBOURNE
BUSHWALKERS INC.

ABN 14 396 912 508



THE NEWS

#881

August
2024



Hiker dwarfed by the landscape on the way to Brinkley Bluff, Larapinta Trail, NT - J. Terrell

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

Next committee meeting: Monday 5 August

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 (maximum 400 words recommended). 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

New Members

We welcome these new members to the club:

Tony Payne
Emily Bajraszewski
Elsie Kidd

Sally Ho
Matthias Frey
Elaine McDuff

Helen Fitzgerald
Sivakumar Sadasivan

Rita Napoli
David Charlwood



Larapinta flowers - J. Terrell



Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?

Due date for contributions to September News: 12 August

Email: news@mbw.org.au

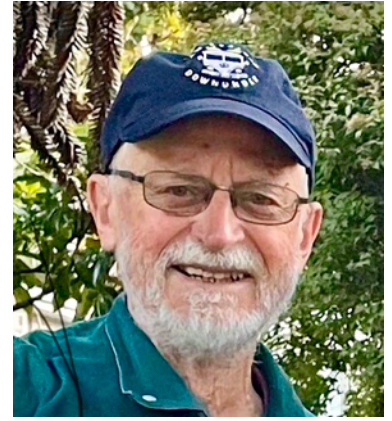


President's column

Keeping you posted on two issues:

1. The clubrooms issue - The initial report by our sub-committee covered the current situation, the government situation, the objectives for the locale and possible developments. It is early days and it is likely that nothing will happen until 2025. It is possible that there would still be space for tenants like ourselves in a revised situation, but nothing is guaranteed. We shall remain in contact with developments and I'll let you know as and when anything changes. Meantime the club continues with the use of the Mission to Seafarers building as before.

2. The outstanding legal invoice - We are still negotiating with the insurance broker and the insurer, with Bushwalking Victoria and Bushwalking Australia on the sidelines, keeping in touch with developments and helping where they can. As things stand we have a large invoice in our 'In tray'. It is rather complicated but I'm hopeful for a happy ending.



I'm pleased to announce that the Awards Panel is back to three with the addition of Susan Maughan. Susan joins Mick Noonan and Angelica Vetsicas and Susan will take the lead on the panel. Thank you for stepping up Susan, and welcome!

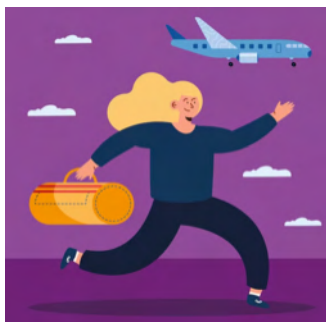
One aspect of the Club's activities that has changed over the years is the use of the 'great' walks here and overseas. Countries like NZ, France, the UK and many others have had these for a long time but Oz has been slow to develop them here. We now have a number around the country. Some are solely commercial trips using huts, others can be Club-led trips and may use huts and camping sites. There are pros and cons with these walks but they are proving to be quite popular with the walking community and play a part in extending that community. One aspect of using the prepared camping sites or sharing huts is that only a limited space is provided, in line with the numbers booked. Inevitably there is a certain amount of 'jostling' for bunks and tent sites as everyone tends to turn up at approximately the same time and tries to settle in, in their groups. In my experience there is always a good outcome as many exchanges are made in good humour and new friends are made. I'd like to think that Melbourne Bushies always do the right thing and ensure that they are conscious and solicitous of other people and their requirements. Misunderstandings can always arise, especially when there are different nationalities involved so we should be especially careful then. I shall shortly be in Italy on such a trip so I am reminded to keep this in mind!

Despite the cold weather we are still waiting for some skiable snow for some x/c ski fun. Let's hope! otherwise there's always some walking opportunities and I'm pleased that a beginner's pack carry is providing another opportunity for day walkers to try something new even if the weather is a little chilly. Now is the time for a campfire!

And finally, some advance news for Sunday bus users - that's a large proportion of our membership. The Committee will be considering a change in the cost of using the Sunday bus!

'till next time,

Derrick



IMPORTANT NOTE RE SUBMISSIONS FOR SEPTEMBER NEWS!

The News editor will be going on an overseas trip in mid-August, so **please can you send submissions for the September News to news@mbw.org.au by 12 August** so that this edition can be prepared before I go away.

Thanks so much!
Deb

August Safety and Risk Reminders

This month we look at **Bushcraft** and two great resources from Bushwalking Victoria: the on-line **Bushwalking Manual**, and the **Walksafe** booklet. These resources can be found on the Bushwalking Victoria website and in the Members Area of the Club Website under “external resources”.



The Bushwalking Manual: *Bushcraft* is defined by Wikipedia as “*the use and practice of skills, thereby acquiring and developing knowledge and understanding, in order to survive and thrive in a natural environment*”.

Bushwalking Victoria have produced a manual on bushcraft for all Australian Bush Walking Clubs and it is a valuable resource both for people new to bushwalking and also for experienced walkers. See the article included in this News.

The **Walksafe booklet pdf**. This handy booklet is all about being equipped to enjoy bushwalking. It covers what Bushwalking Victoria consider are best practices for:

- Planning for water, food, clothing, equipment, the route and the group,
- Common sense bushcraft, camping and minor mishaps, and
- What to do in the unlikely event of becoming lost/separated, a major accident, extreme heat/cold, snake bite, fire, flood and electrical storms

Open this hyperlink to have a look: https://bushwalkingvictoria.org.au/files/walksafe_booklet.pdf You can easily download the booklet and put it near your **Emergency Plus Application** on one of your smartphone screens.

TIP for Leaders - Swapping mobile numbers with your Whip. For walks that have reasonable mobile reception consider swapping mobile numbers with your Whip. As well as regrouping frequently so you can check with your whip on any issues or using a whistle this gives both of you another option for communicating.

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.

Mick Noonan, Risk Officer

*** LEADERS TRAINING DAY ***

Saturday August 31st 10am to 6pm

At the Clubrooms (Mission to Seafarers)

Suitable for members interested in leading walks, new leaders and experienced leaders who want to update their skills.

If you are interested check out the **Activities Program** on the MBW website and contact Mick Noonan.





For safe and enjoyable bushwalking in Australia. Published by Bushwalking New

NEW BUSHWALKING MANUAL

Information and guidelines for safe and enjoyable bushwalking in Australia. Published by Bushwalking Victoria



Bushwalking Victoria has published an online updated [Bushwalking Manual](http://bushwalkingmanual.org.au) for use by all Australian bushwalking clubs at <http://bushwalkingmanual.org.au>

It provides guidelines and information for safe, enjoyable volunteer bushwalking in Australia. The manual includes contributions from many state and territory peak bushwalking organisations and emergency services. It is based on the *Bushwalking and Ski Touring Leadership Handbook* and has been updated to include recent changes to bushwalking practices and equipment. The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning provided funding for its development.

The Manual covers a wide range of topics including:

- Trip Planning
- The Trip
- Leadership
- Food and Water
- Equipment and Clothing
- Environment
- State specific Information
- Weather: Understanding Weather, Thunderstorms, Lightning
- Emergencies: Communications, If Lost, Shelters, **Bushfires**, First Aid, Body Core Temperature
- Related Activities: Rogaining, Ski Touring, Snow Shoeing

The manual is for anyone who is interested in learning more about bushwalking. So whether you're a walk leader, an experienced bushwalker, a member or a novice just starting bushwalking this annual is for you. It is well worth at least a browse!!

Our Club produces a number of guidelines on various aspects of outdoor activities and increasingly you will see us reference the new Bushwalking Manual.

Mick Noonan

ADVANCED LEADERSHIP TOPICS: Why do groups sometimes make bad decisions? (Part 1)

This is the first in a series of articles on **Advanced Leadership Topics** this will appear in the news over the next 12 months. This particular question came up at one of our Leaders Training nights a few years ago.

Outdoor Leaders and their groups normally make good decisions, but not always! Sometimes leadership decision making styles and group psychology can combine to result in poor or bad decisions. After trawling the literature, particularly focusing on outdoor leadership we have come up with this article to help answer the above question. We will be adding this material to the club's Leaders Training.



Not one of our Bushies leaders? Not planning on becoming one? This article is still important for you!

We all make decisions every day, independently or with others. You may 'lead' family outings or go outdoors with friends and make decisions without thinking of the 'style' you use or whether it's appropriate. So read on, hopefully you may learn something!

Part 1 below is about Outdoor Leaders Decision Styles. Part 2, in next month's News, will look at the Psychological and Social aspects of outdoor groups.

Decision making for Outdoor Leaders

One of a leader's key roles is to make decisions. Leaders make many decisions, often automatically as they go about planning and undertaking the groups' outdoor adventure. Other times they need to make considered decisions (solve problems) dependent on their experience and skills, sometimes with inputs from the group.

As with Leadership, there are a number of 'models' of decision making. Each style is a different method of weighting alternatives and examining solutions. For example, for outdoor leaders' suitable decision styles include:

- Behavioural – involves the group, tries to avoid conflict, persuasive, finds solutions acceptable to group
- Directive – autocratic, act quickly, telling, expects immediate action, no group involvement, can result in quick action but without all the facts
- Analytical – involves the group, can be slow and time consuming, analyse large amounts of information

Styles can be combined, you can 'learn' new styles, reduce weaknesses and increase your strengths. Outdoor Leaders decisions can generally be characterised as:

- Safety related e.g. responding to an emergency such as whether to cross a fast flowing creek, etc.
- Adventure/Trip related e.g. how to successfully complete the trip or when/how to enhance the experience
- Ethical e.g. actions that may damage a remote/protected environment, whether to light a fire, carry out other people's rubbish, etc.

Our focus is the decisions leaders and their groups may need to make during the activity. As leaders develop, their skills, knowledge and experience grows and their decision making becomes easier and more confident.

An Undulating Half Year

Compared to the first half of 2023, the number of activities offered by our various groups, during the same period this year, has been quite mixed. The Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Social Walks and Saturday results were very similar, however, there were 4 more Base Camps, 5 less Pack Carries (after a surge in 2023), 3 more Training events, but no Canoeing activities, and no Conservation attendances were recorded.

Highest Attendances

Monday: Feb. 19, **Sandringham - Elsternwick** – 11 (3 visitors)

Wednesday: Jan. 10, **Coburg and Edwardes Lakes** – 27 (5)

Thursday: Mar. 7, **Beggary – Everard Circuit** – 10

Social Walks: Feb. 24, **North Melbourne historic walk and dinner** – 15 (1)

Saturday: May 25, **Domino Trail, Trentham** – 11

Sunday Bus: May 5, **Gunnamatta – Cape Schanck** – 58 (13)

Sunday Car: Apr. 28, **Plenty Gorge** – 27 (6)

Base Camps: Mar. 8, **Mt. Buffalo, Lake Catani** – 19

Lodges: Mar. 28, **Easter at Falls Creek** - 24

Pack Carries: Mar. 15, **Mt. Baw Baw** – 15

Training: Feb. 10, **First Aid** – 14

Special Mentions

Interstate Pack Carries: Feb. 7, **South-West Cape Circuit, Tasmania** – 6 (1)

May 17, **Larapinta Trail (group 1), N.T.** – 8

Jun. 3, **Larapinta (group 2)** – 8

The average number of people attending our various groups, in the first half of 2024, compared to the same period last year, also showed mixed results, as follows:

Monday -2.2	Wednesday +4.2	Thursday -3	Social Walks +3.4
Saturday -9.3	Base Camps -10.4	Pack Carries + 0.4	Training -5.1

With Winter behind us and a Spring program offering plenty of variety, including 8 Pack Carries and the big FedWalks Base Camp at Wilsons Promontory, attendances should increase in the second half of this year.

Stuart Hanham

(General Walks Secretary)



Alpine huts and the story of Cleve Cole

Many of us have enjoyed visiting and camping around Cleve Cole hut and know that it was built as a memorial to a pioneer of the High Country, Cleve Cole. However, few of us know the details of his adventures and tragic demise.

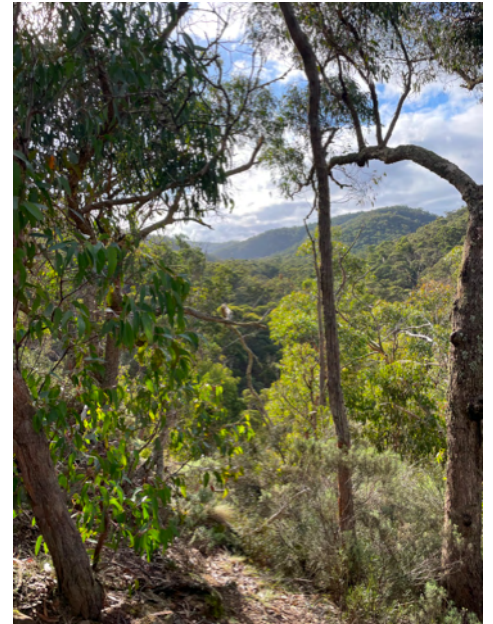
The article by Blair Gatehouse which can be accessed [here](#) tells the story and makes fascinating reading about early times in the mountains, illustrated by photos from that era.

(With thanks to Rosemary Cotter who found this article on the State Library of Victoria blog)

Lerderderg Gorge Walk - 22-23 June 2024

Enrica Cheung

A group of four of us met at the start of the walk, drinking hot tea and donning our beanies and gloves to prepare for this Winter pack carry. It wasn't too long before we were dropping layers as we encountered arduous steep uphill and downhill before levelling out more for the rest of the day. Fortunately for us, our one river crossing was a dry one and there was no need to enter the icy cold river water!



At the end of the day, we were treated to sharing of a fire at our campsite near the river. It was such a comfort on a chilly winter evening and meant we could happily stay outside chatting and then get into our sleeping bags toasty and warm.

The next day, Cliff Track was true to its name, providing for some adventurous walking and also some rock scabbling. We continued on until our lunch break after which we had a steady climb to the 4WD track back to the cars.

I had never thought of Lerderderg Gorge State Park as a place to go to for pack carries but now it's on my list as an accessible place, only one and a half hours drive from Melbourne, to go to over a weekend for a walk in the bush with some excellent gorge views. Thanks Claire for leading and organising the trip and to Bettina and Darren for their company.



Quartz Ridge - Mt Bogong - Spion Kopje – 28 March-1 April 2024

Angus Dudley

Leader: Gina Hopkins,

Attendees: Trish, Derrick, John, Carol, Andreas, Ian, Halina, Ting, Fang, Rosalind, Matt

Thursday night was spent 10km outside Mt Beauty in a nice little spot that was off the road. Friday 8AM briefing was cool and clear. For the first day we would split into two groups. First group will go along the easier route that meanders its way up to Bogong Creek Saddle for camp @1300m. This is a winding and slowly rising series of different tracks and was a great start to the walk with most walkers from the first group into camp by 4pm.

The second group were leaving from Bogong village and going up Black Possum Spur. This was a fire trail (and steep in places) for the first couple km and then we headed onto the signposted track and followed the spur up along a recently cut track to our eventual target Mt Arthur. We were lucky enough to see an owl on the way up. Lunch was in a sunny and grassy saddle just below Mt Arthur with views across to the Kiewa Valley. After sumitting with post lunch jelly legs, we traversed along the ridge until dropping into the saddle (or helipad) for camp. Water was 200m down the track at the start of tomorrow's walk. The site was full with some walkers arriving shortly before dark.



Saturday meant another 8AM start but with no wind overnight the tents were soggy and were packed up wet. We started up Quartz Ridge on the winding and steady climb until we cleared the treeline which revealed stunning views across both sides of the ridge.

Seven keen walkers headed for an off track traverse to West Peak while the others headed to lunch at the Bogong trig point. There was running water in the saddle up to West Peak only 200m from the top. The views were beautiful but with recent burns the air was a little hazy. Both groups enjoyed lunch at the peak, with day trippers and other walkers making it a busy mountain. The track was rocky for the last 6km easy meander to camp at Cleve Cole Hut campsite with the last walker arriving just after 3pm. Three keen walkers set off for Howmans Falls and returned refreshed and clean after 90 mins. Again, a busy campsite with around 50 campers enjoying Victoria's high country @1700m.



Sunday was a relatively late start @8:30 as we leisurely made our way through the valleys inspecting and documenting the local flora before dropping into some old forests on our way down to our Big River crossing. Lunch was at the bottom, before a quick splash through Big River with Duane Spur patiently waiting for us. All walkers were happy to reach Ropers Hut a couple of hours later and with a hot sun and plenty of afternoon left it was nap central. Water was 200m away at the local creek which offered some limited bathing facilities. Ropers Hut campsite was all Melbourne Bushies until a couple walked in an hour before dark. It was a colder night with some walkers wearing all clothes to stay warm @1700m.



Monday 8AM start and the weather was again perfect with clear skies and cool wind. Off track walking traversing the rolling hills to Spion Kopje for morning tea before following the spur down. Once we passed the Howmans Gap track we had a boulevard sized yack track all the way down, with the last river crossing 2km from the cars giving us a sting in the tail. We all had a coffee and snacks at a local Mt Beauty café before the 4:30 closing time.

A fantastic walk with beautiful high country scenery and forests.

Larapinta trail, Group 2 - 3-20 June 2024

John Terrell

In 1975, the first time I visited central Australia, we climbed from Ellery Big Hole up to the ridgeline of the West MacDonnell range where we looked east and westwards along the broken, rocky ridges covered with spinifex. "You could walk along there, but you'd be mad!" we thought. "Sort of like the Western Arthurs, but dry, pricklier and ten times the distance!"

Three years ago, escaping from Melbourne's lockdowns, we found ourselves again in Arrernte country, now known as Tjorita / West MacDonnells National Park. People of all ages were walking the Larapinta Trail, some as day walks, some with organised groups, others with vehicle support and some who were walking the whole thing. We did a few day



walks ourselves and wondered if we should have brought our packs and tent with us. But it still seemed horribly long, dry and rocky underfoot.

So it was with a degree of trepidation that I responded to Jill's news of a vacancy on her coming trip, that I might possibly be interested. In theory that is.

Having committed myself, there started an intense preparation period. What to take? Everyone said to keep it light. Jill sent me her packing list – 6.9kg base weight. No rain jacket or overpants, just a plastic poncho. Minimal clothing. Kmart tent but no tent pegs. I compromised, reassured that I could send back excess stuff with the early food drops.

Arriving at Alice Springs airport, I encountered group 1 (*News*, July) about to return to Melbourne. The first bit of advice was "Go at your own pace". Sounds good, I thought. I can do that.

The first few days walking from the centre of Alice Springs to Simpson Gap provided a fairly gentle introduction to what lay ahead. After



Along the track

recent rain there was plenty of water and wildflowers, but the invasive buffel grass was also everywhere.

The 26 km day 3 to Jay Creek made it clear that my natural place was near the back of the group, confirmed on day 4 on the spectacular, steep and rocky route into Standley Chasm where a café and our first food drop awaited us. Great to have new supplies, but now we had to carry them. Plus 5 litres of water. Up Brinkley Bluff where our group of 8 camped on the summit with 15 others and enjoyed the views, sunset and sunrise.

The next hard 20 km day saw us rock-hop and clamber through cycad-lined Spencer Gorge, traverse and descend the steep Razorback Ridge, arriving close to dark at our campsite in Hugh Gorge. Exploring the upper gorge next morning was followed by the much-anticipated swim, a brief but invigorating plunge to avoid a rocky barrier.



Succeeding days took us to Ellery Big Hole, Serpentine and Ormiston Gorges, the Finke River with the final pre-dawn climb of Rutjupma / Mt Sonder to watch the sun rise over our entire route.

It was a wonderful walk, one of the most spectacular and satisfying I have ever done. I am so glad to have accepted the challenge of walking 16 days across ancient plains, ridges, peaks, gorges, with dry and flowing rivers and waterholes. We saw and heard many birds - budgies, finches, birds of prey, honeyeaters and more – and a huge variety of flowering plants.

We camped along sandy creek beds, close (but not too close!) to ancient river red gums, on rocky ridges with stunning views and at well-equipped trailheads.

We saw many other walkers, some in groups or pairs but many solo, also some runners, and were frequently reminded of the seriousness of this undertaking. A solo walker had died in the week before our walk, we heard of people needing rescue after injuries or becoming lost, and we had our own evacuation drama. These reminded us of the need for thorough preparation, having a strong party which knew its abilities and the importance of carrying a PLB, or better still, a satellite communicator.

My thanks to Jill our leader, successfully completing her fifth Larapinta traverse, especially for encouraging me to “walk at my own pace”. And thanks to our companions - Geof, Bernadette, David, Angus, Ros, Deb and to Steve from Brisbane who became an honorary member of our group.



Upcoming activities

August 2024

Thu 1	TOF: Ferny Creek	Pvt	E	Elizabeth Gwynn
Sun 4	DAY: Barwon River & Buckley Falls, Geelong	Car	E/M	Stuart Hanham
Mon 5	MTG: Club Committee Meeting (video)	Pvt		Derrick Brown
Sun 11	DAY: Ventnor-Rhyll	Bus	E/M&M	Bernd Neubauer & Chris Lord
Wed 14	DAY: Mt Macedon Loop	Pvt	E/M	Mick Noonan
16-18	BC: Beechworth	Pvt	E/M	Jan Colquhoun
16-24	SKI: X-country skiing - Bogong High Plains	Pvt	Var	Bill Metzenthén (contact)
Sun 18	DAY: Garden of St Erth	Car	E/M	Geoffrey Martin
Mon 19	MOF: Sherbrooke Forest-Nicholas Gardens	Pvt	E	Jerry Grandage
Wed 21	SOC: Snow, Fire and Gold - The story of Bill Spargo and Evelyn Piper	Pvt		Stephen Whiteside
22-25	MNT: BTAC-Preparation for Fedwalks 2024	Pvt	Var	Meredith Quick
Thu 22	SOC: Merri Creek	Pvt	Easy	Bernadette O'Connell
23-27	PC: Little Desert National Park	Pvt	E/M	Claire Luxford
Sat 24	DAY: Lilydale Lake, Mt Evelyn	Pvt	E	Doug Pocock
Sun 25	DAY: Greens Bush-Cape Schanck	Bus	E/M&M	Brett Daniel & Chris Lord
Wed 28	SOC: Walking South West Tasmania	Pvt		Ian Langford
Sat 31	TRG: Leaders' Training Day	Pvt		Mick Noonan

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