

MELBOURNE  
BUSHWALKERS INC.

ABN 14 396 912 508



# THE NEWS

#875

February  
2024



Through the forest on the way to Woods Point - R. Jung

# 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 4 March

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](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:

Peter William Wells  
Jane O'Bryne

Sian Nisbet  
Kara Odum

Bernadette Young

Lucien Nahon



Flowers of the High Plains: Mountain Celery, Alpine Everlasting, Yellow Kunzea - G. Hopkins, J. Fritze (more next page)

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

Due date for contributions to March News: 21 February

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

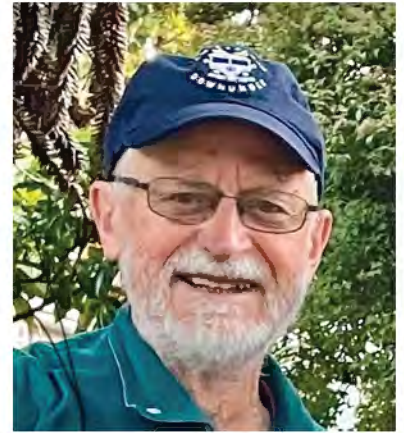


## President's column

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Happy New Year folks! We've already had a few wettish walks and now seem to be heading for some hot ones. Time to be careful about sunblock use, water intake, good hats and not overdoing the exertion quotient. Leaders may need to be especially vigilant for overheating and dehydration symptoms.

The club is heading towards the AGM, to be held on March 20 at the clubrooms. We have already received interest from members for committee positions but have several positions without nominations, so please consider whether you would like to step up and help out the club. To know more, have a word with myself or a committee member. Meetings are generally held monthly and may be at the club rooms or using the on-line format. One position to be filled is the president, as I am not nominating. I stood in to help ease our way through a particular issue, and I shall offer to continue in this role but not as president, as I think that the two roles should be separated. We shall report on this at the AGM. Please consider whether you might be a suitable candidate or whether you know someone who is. Previous experience on our committee or some other committee would be useful but not essential. We have had excellent presidents who have not had prior experience and we have some experienced committee members who will be willing to help ease a new candidate into the chair! If anyone has put their hand up for any position and has not heard from me recently then please let me or David Stockley know.



I hope to see you out on the track soon, taking advantage of the Summer and Autumn walks.

Derrick Brown

Flowers of the High Plains: Bogong Euphrasia, Carpet Heath, Veined Sun-Orchid - GH & JF



## ABCD Award Nominations due end February!!

The Annual Above and Beyond Call of Duty (ABCD) nominations close at the end of February each year. While many people can be nominated there is one annual award.

The Awards Panel will review all nominations and rank them prior to presenting their recommendation to the Committee for a presentation at the March Annual General Meeting. This annual award is for the best significant contribution to the Club by any member in the prior year. This could include:

- A member, walk leader or any other volunteer who has made exceptional contributions
- Committee members undertaking significant one-off tasks, etc.

So please put on your thinking caps and nominate a deserving recipient! Get your nominee to accept the nomination and complete the simple on-line form in the Members' area of the website.

Mick Noonan for the Awards Panel



## February Safety and Risk Reminders

This month the topic is the **Club's Emergency Mobile** and its role in our **Emergency Contact System**. It is effectively an insurance policy that we hope never to have to use.



**Club Emergency Mobile 0447 489 661:** The Club has an *Emergency Contact System* that includes a Club Emergency Mobile. The prime purposes of the mobile are to:

- **Provide members with information on any significant trip delays.** For all activities the leader will endeavour to advise our *Club Emergency Contacts* of any significant delay so a message can be put on the Emergency Mobile's voice message bank.
- **Advise Leaders, particularly for Pack Carry and remote/walk in Base Camps, who the current Club Emergency Contacts are.** There are 2-3 volunteer CECS on duty each month and their contact details are updated at least monthly by the General Walks Secretary on the mobile's message bank recording.

Before setting out, walkers should advise people who may become concerned if there is a significant delay of the location of the trip, method of travel, expected time of return and the Club Emergency Mobile Number.

While members should always carry a mobile, depending on your Service Provider the mobile may not work in non-urban areas, or there may be no coverage available at all. So tell anyone who might be worried about you being late home about the Club Emergency Mobile. A delay of 1-2 hours for Day Activity and 3-4 hours or even an extra day for multi-day Activities is not generally a cause for concern.

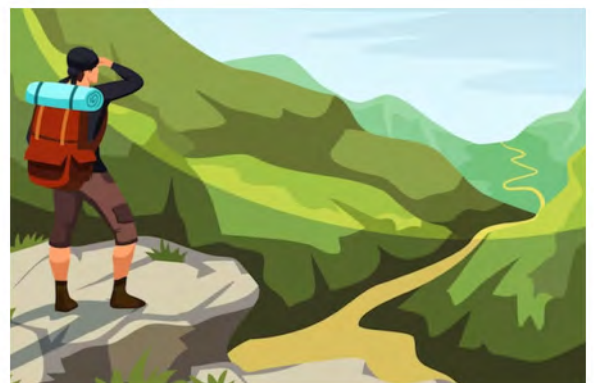
Have you put this number in your mobile contacts? You can always find it in the **FAQ Section** of the Club Website. Remember it **cannot** be used to contact the Club as we only use the message bank to provide information. There is no physical phone!

The Clubs **Emergency Contact System** and its **Club Emergency Contacts** also have a number of other specific uses particularly for Pack Carriers and Base Camps:

1. If a PLB is activated on a Club Activity the CEC/ECS provides information for responding Emergency Services.
2. Leaders can report urgent serious incidents via the CEC and potentially get assistance in managing the incident.
3. Leaders can also call the CEC if they don't have internet access and need urgent advice on incidents that may impact the group e.g. fire/ extreme weather/floods.

**Members and especially Leaders are encouraged to read these 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



## Batty's Hut: Who was Mr Batty?

Derrick Brown

Struggling down Batty's Spur recently I reflected on Mr Batty and his hut. Why did he build it here down this spur? Where was the path he had constructed? After all it was his hut that we were heading to on a wet-looking Sunday morning in January 2024. Our leader Gina, found the way down and we arrived at the hut, well there was the chimney and a pile of rubble and tin.

Some of us remembered the hut itself, yes it was still there some twenty or was it more, years ago? We had skied down at one time as well. Today though, it was a slow climb around, up, over, under and through the thick growth and fallen timber.



Painting by Keith Smith

William Batty came to Australia from Yorkshire in England, married and had three sons and four daughters. One son died in 1920 when the remaining two sons, Bill and Jack took over their father's cattle run on the High Plains. Jack had a farm at Glen Valley, then a busy gold mining area with a population of 2,000, two hotels, three schools and two racing clubs. Most of the population was said to be of the Batty family!

They would take their cattle up to the tops following the Big River, later the Mitta Mitta, into Wild Horse Creek and onto Batty's Spur, then called New Country Spur. They would take 500 to 600 head of cattle at a time. I can imagine that there was quite a path after 600 cattle had tramped past! At first they camped at Kelly's Hut then they built their own hut on the spur in the late 1930's. Built to accommodate just two, Jack Batty and Alf Bearse took up the sheet metal by packhorse. Jack made the door and took it up in pieces, cutting the required timber from the snow-gums around the site. They had great difficulty finding a straight piece for the ridgepole. Using an adze they squared off the ridgepole and door posts. The hut was quite small, only 4 by 2.8 metres, with a dirt floor and two snow-gum beds.

"It's an ideal spot" said Jack. "In the rough weather you could hear it roaring out on top and snowing or anything and it'd be quite calm where the hut is. We had yards and a paddock. I fenced it off myself with an axe and fallen timber. I was nine days up there on my own."

The two brothers, Bill and Jack went to the rescue of Cleve Cole, Mick Hull and Howard Michell in 1936 when the three cross-country skiers lost their way on Mt Bogong in a blizzard. Michell went for help and found Bill Batty at his hut. It was a further two days before the search party were able to find and retrieve the other two and Cleve Cole died soon after reaching the Glen Valley Bush nursing Centre. Next time you climb Mt Bogong look for the memorial on the Staircase Spur below the summit, and you'll probably camp at Cleve Cole Hut.



Derrick with others at Batty Hut site, January 2024

And if you are very keen and energetic you may find your way down to Bill and Jack Batty's hut! Bill died in 1964 aged sixty-one. When you reach the hut site pause for a moment and listen carefully - you might just hear an old bushman boiling his billy.

Ref: 'Gentlemen of the High Country' by Tor Holth with Jane Barnaby, Weldon Publishing, ISBN 0947116753

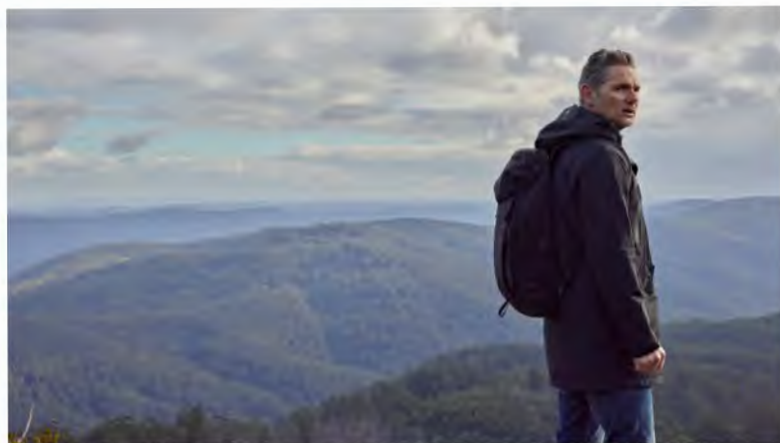
## Night at the cinema - The Dry 2: Force of Nature

This film is the follow up to *The Dry* (2020) and is the screen adaptation of Jane Harper's best-selling novel by the same name.

This Australian made mystery-thriller, filmed in both the Yarra Ranges and Otways in Victoria sees Eric Bana return as Aaron Falk, alongside an all-star cast. Given that the location and themes of the film are well aligned with exploring the great outdoors, it seems like a great opportunity for us to enjoy this film together.



The film will be released to the public on Thursday February 8th (no session times are available yet). I am planning for the club to make it to a screening at Nova Cinema on Thursday 15 February. The normal non-concession ticket price is \$23.80. If we get a group together, I will be able to negotiate a better price.



If you are interested, please contact me at [social@mbw.org.au](mailto:social@mbw.org.au) indicating the number of tickets you would like by February 7 so that I can communicate our needs with Nova.

Bring on the popcorn and the Choc Tops!

Meredith Quick  
Social Secretary

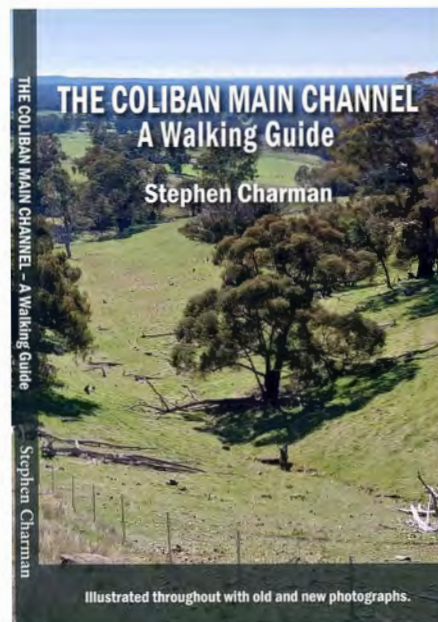
## Walking the Coliban Main Channel, Central Victoria

Steve Charman

Members might remember an article about my book 'Exploring the Coliban Main Channel' which appeared in the June 2023 issue of *The News* (#867).



The book collected historic photos and news articles about the Coliban Water Scheme, a massive 19th century infrastructure project, which brought water from the Great Dividing Range to the parched plains of Central Victoria, in particular, to Castlemaine and Bendigo. My hope was that the book might encourage walkers tackling various sections of the 70km long channel to more fully appreciate the historical artifacts strewn along their path.



Since then I've taken the opportunity to radically revamp the book. It now contains over 200 pages of walking notes, maps and a detailed description

*continued next page*

of the entire channel from Malmsbury Reservoir to Crusoe Reservoir, Kangaroo Flat. In addition to the original 19th century press reports there are more photos, both historic and contemporary. To reflect these changes the book has a new title, "**The Coliban Main Channel: A Walking Guide.**"

The book can be purchased at Stonemans Bookshop and the Castlemaine Visitor Information Centre, Mostyn Street, Castlemaine. However I'll do my best to make sure it's available at other bookshops throughout Central Victoria. The book will retail for \$25. **I hope to make it to a Wednesday meeting soon where the book will be available for purchase for the special members price of \$20.**

## Melbourne Bushwalkers Dehydrator Meals Recipe Booklet



The inaugural 'Melbourne Bushies Dehydrator Meals' booklet will be available to download from our website this month! You can find it in the Members Area under Downloads/Forms and Documents/General Guidelines.

Thanks to all the members who provided their delicious recipes. Happy dehydrating!





## Melbourne Bushies Dehydrator Meals

### Members' Favourite Recipes



**An experience  
you will never forget**

**Drysdale  
River  
Bushwalking**

 **NoTraces  
BushWalking  
Australia** 

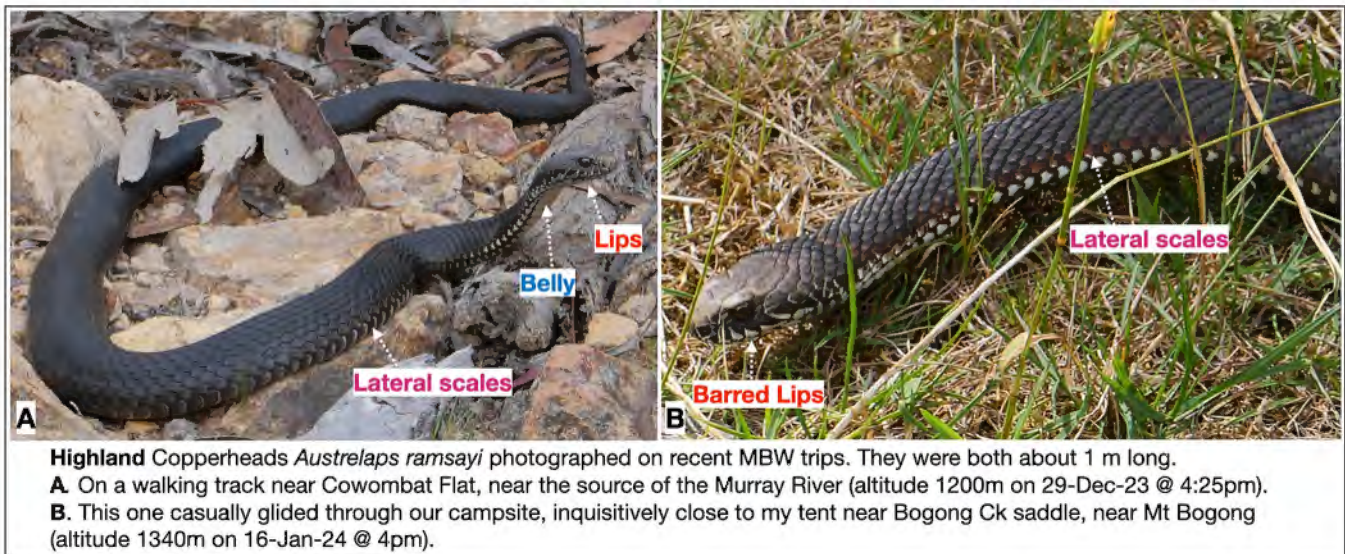
Expedition date  
**9 to 22 June 2024**  
[notraces-bushwalking-australia.com](http://notraces-bushwalking-australia.com)  
Ph: +61 457 726 525

## Highland copperhead snakes

Rob Jung

It is more usual than not that I see snakes on walking trips. I have never been bitten, or come close, nor have I seen anyone else bitten, although that does occur. However, I am watchful and careful. Some snake species are more aggressive than others and it is worth knowing what species it is we see.

In mainland *Alpine* areas, I think that the common snake I see is the Highland Copperhead. I am not a herpetologist, but from the descriptions, and their tolerance of low temperatures, they seem to be the most likely. On recent MBW trips some of these snakes have posed for clear photos. More frequently they are shy and rapidly move away when we approach. Two are shown in the figure.



Copperheads vary in colour similarly to Eastern brown snakes *Pseudonaja textilis*, however the latter are **not** described as having barred lips, large eyes and distinguishing lateral scale colour features (Cogger, p.675). These features are shown in the figure. Similarly, they eliminate other possibilities such as red bellied black (*Pseudechis porphyriacus*, p.666) and tiger snakes (*Notechis* species, p.660).

According to Cogger (*Reptiles & Amphibians of Australia*, 1992, pp635-6) there are three geographic forms of Copperhead snakes confined to Eastern Australia including Tasmania: a lowland version *Austrelaps superbus*, the highland version I have seen, *Austrelaps ramsayi* and another isolated to SA. Cogger's general description is for the lowland version, however online descriptions for *A. ramsayi* are similar (eg. <https://australian.museum/learn/animals/reptiles/copperhead/>).

His description is: "Very variable in colour ranging from light grey through reddish brown or chocolate brown to black above. The enlarged **lateral scales** may be cream yellow or red, while the **lips** are often strikingly barred. **Belly** is cream to leaden coloured. Eye large. Averages 1.3m long." Note the barred lips, the belly colour and the lateral scales in the figure. Most commonly I see black snakes with cream-yellow bellies in mainland alpine areas.

Cogger goes on to say that while dangerous, they are usually inoffensive with bites uncommon. However, their venom has a strong neurotoxic action and is also powerfully haemolytic and cytolytic.

Highland copperheads are found in alpine areas, including NSW southern highlands, in montane heath, woodland, sclerophyll forests, along water bodies, and in swampy areas with thick clumps of tussock grass. Important for living in alpine areas is that they are active both day and night even at low temperatures when no other reptiles are active. They mainly feed on insects, lizards and frogs.





## New Year's Day 2024

The Bushies BBQ was a raging success. Over forty trekked over to the Yarra in Kew. Plus, the weather was sublime. The wonderfully talented Annabelle took the photos.



## 'The 4 Peaks Challenge' - 2024

Think you can rise to the challenge of 'summitting' Mt Leura, Mt Sugarloaf, Mt Elephant and Mt Noorat on the same day?

Then this Friends of Mt Leura Inc. activity, in partnership with Mt Leura & Mt Sugarloaf Management Committee, is a must do for you and your family or friends.



MTs LEURA AND SUGARLOAF	MT ELEPHANT	MT NOORAT
Two of many scoria cones that nest inside an older maar volcano.	A perfect breached scoria cone that erupted some 180,000 years ago.	A circular crater that is the deepest scoria enclosed crater in Victoria.

**When:** Sunday April 21<sup>st</sup> 2024 ... for a full day of activity.

**Where:** Meet/start @ Volcanic Education Centre (Mt Leura Road, Camperdown) at base of Mt Leura at 9.30am. Coffee van onsite.

**BYO:** Morning tea, lunch, snacks and plenty to drink; sunscreen, day pack plus camera and/or binoculars for the terrific views.

**Wear:** Sturdy footwear and clothing suitable for the weather.

**Transport:** BYO vehicle.

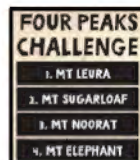
*All welcome, and bring the kids ... but please note that some steep and rough terrain will be encountered so a degree of physical fitness is required.*

*This is our 5<sup>th</sup> '4 Peaks Challenge' ..... Keep the tradition going!*

**For more information contact FoML:**

**John Fallon on 0487 341 337**

Supported by:



## The Wilderness Society Nature Walk Challenge 2024

If you love it, walk for it! [Join the Nature Walk Challenge 2024](#)

For the **month of March**, join thousands of Australians across the country, as they walk to protect Australian wildlife and the places they call home.

**Register for free and select your walking distance. Set your fundraising target and ask your friends, family and work colleagues to support you. With every step you'll be**

**helping protect endangered species and their homes, all while enjoying the benefits of getting active and spending time outdoors!**



The Nature Walk Challenge is designed with everyone in mind. Whether you're an advanced hiker or a leisurely stroller, you set the distance and the pace. You can choose from a 50km, 70km or 100km challenge. Or you can choose your own distance, whether that's 5km or 500! It's up to you. Whatever you decide, the most important goal is to get outside and enjoy reconnecting with nature.

**Australia is losing precious biodiversity at a staggering rate, with 563 animals currently threatened with extinction. We are also leading the world in mammal extinction, with a total of 39 species already lost. That's 5 more extinctions and 69 more threatened with it, in the last 12 months since Nature Walk Challenge 2023.**

Funds raised from the Nature Walk Challenge will support Wilderness Society's ongoing work to protect the habitats of endangered wildlife across Australia. We do so by:

- Advocating for new laws that support the life our lives depend on.
- Monitoring satellite imagery and recording suspicious land clearing via Watch On Nature.
- Funding well researched and credible reports to protect Australia's wildlife.
- Stopping risky proposals before they start.

The Nature Walk Challenge is sponsored by like-minded, environmentally friendly organisations including Patagonia and Zorali. They have provided **generous prizes to be won throughout the challenge, including vouchers and gift packs**. There are also rewards up for grabs, including limited edition Nature Walk Challenge t-shirts, bags, drink bottles and hoodies.

So grab your hiking boots, step up and step out, while protecting Australia's precious wildlife—now and for generations to come.

### **Fiddlers Green-Black River (twice)-Woods Point via the AAWT and MMT – 13-17 December, 2023**

John Terrell

When asked if he had ever walked McMillans Track, a well-known Bushie replied to me “No, and I never intend to. Horrible man, horrible track!”

And yes, early Victorian explorer, pastoralist and parliamentarian Angus McMillan is now known to have led several massacres of the indigenous Gunai people in Gippsland. In 1864, he was contracted by the Victorian Government to build an 8-foot-wide track from Omeo to Woods Point connecting the many gold-mining communities in the Gippsland hill country. Over time, parts of this track became logging roads and 4WD tracks, while other sections were overgrown with blackberries and regrowth. So not very attractive sounding! However the Gippsland-based Ben Cruachan Bushwalking Club have put much effort in recent years into rediscovering and restoring the original route as a 220 km walk across the southern high country.



I wasn't planning to walk McMillans track (MMT), but I wanted to complete a section of the Australian Alps Walking Track (AAWT) crossing Black River, so, rather than do a short walk with a long car shuffle, I decided to explore a horse-shoe shaped longer walk with a shorter car shuffle incorporating 1½ days of AAWT and the final 2½ days of MMT.

I looked for reports from MBW trips in this area and, apart from the AAWT section, found ... nothing. *Guide to the Victorian Alps* (MUMC, 1970) mentions numerous walks in the Woods Point – Jordan River area and I thought there might still be something to discover, albeit less spectacular and popular than the Alpine NP. But too much logging and 4WD tracks?



It also looks like mid-December didn't suit too many other walkers. So it ended up with Rob, Alistair and me, on the long, rough drive to Woods Point and the 1 hour car shuffle.

And the walk? Some of the 4WD tracks were very enjoyable with lovely forest and glimpses of distant ranges through the trees. And some were horribly

steep and rocky. But much of the route lay along very pleasant foot tracks, some recently cleared. We passed numerous relics of the gold mining era, including dry stone walls, bits of machinery and blazed trees thought to be from the original 1864 track works.

## Along the track

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We camped near Black River and Stander Creek, both delightful, clear, flowing streams although the campsites were small and rough, sometimes requiring clearing of blackberries and bracken. There was constant birdsong, a couple of copperheads and a few leeches. Lots of wildflowers, magnificent forest, fern gullies and a giant (30cm) mushroom! Overall, I'm glad to have done this walk in an area that I think deserves to be more often visited. Thanks to Rob and Alistair for your company on this adventure!



## The Cobberas - 27 December-1 January 2023/4

Rachel Keen

The Cobberas trip was off to a wet start with rain pouring down as we headed to Native Dog Flat campsite and set up tents. We fell asleep to heavy rain and sodden ground. Our planned route the next day was adjusted so that we could walk the 4WD track rather than climbing up the mountains in the wet. We arrived at lunchtime to Cowombat Flat and some sunshine and a full Murray River. The campsite was peaceful and relaxing.

The next morning we were up early and arrived at the top of Cowombat Ridge to clearing mist and blue skies. We arrived at our main destination for the day - the Pilot - and climbed up through the steep bush to the summit. It looked like there were multiple routes we could have climbed as the bush was nice and open. At the top we had clear views in all directions and admired the scenery for some time. After descending back to Cowombat Trail we headed off to the point where we'd turn off to explore the source of the Murray. There were multiple horse (and human) tracks going through the bush that made it easy to move through and we found the source where we took a few photos.

A good trail led up to the Cairn on the NSW/VIC border, and whilst it took a bit of looking, we were pleased to find it (and directly on the GPS NSW/VIC border as hoped!). After a wander through the bush via the Murray we arrived back at camp.

The next day we climbed through the bush off track and reached Cobberas Number 2 and Moscow Peak, the clear weather greatly assisting navigation. The bush had some small sections of hard bush to push through but was overall easy enough to move through. Our campsite in the saddle of Moscow Peak/Middle Peak/Cleft Peak was a welcome sight and water was aplenty after recent rains. Given a knee problem in the group we left out the side-trip to Cobberas Number One until next time and descended down near Bulley Creek to the 4WD track again.

Thanks to a competent and strong group of walkers for making this an enjoyable trip.



### Walking in the Wilderness - 26 December, 2023-1 January, 2024

Halina Sarbinowski

Five participants set off in two cars late morning on Boxing Day for our first night camp at the Clover Flat Rest Area (booking required) in NSW. We were able to meet up for lunch in Euroa and again to restock at Corryong for our first night before our pack carry. At Clover Flat we quickly set up tents in a light drizzle which soon abated and we had an enjoyable night of nibbles and wine.



Next morning, we headed to Round Mountain Carpark to start our five-day pack carry in the Jagungal Wilderness Area (Kosciusko National Park). On leaving Clover Flat we commented on how perfect the weather was. However, this was not the case for the full day. Our 19km walk started uneventfully and we were prepared for the crossing of the Tumut River on our way to Mackay Hut, but the rain predicted hit us on our way. After two waves of hailstorms and intermittent heavy showers, we were saturated by the time we arrived at the hut. Our rain gear had failed us in the downpour. David's gear held up until crossing the last water crossing. Three of the group had opted to wade thigh high at this unexpected crossing but David and Di decided to cross at some stepping stones and David had a dunking during the crossing. Those rocks were slippery!

Fortunately, at Mackay Hut we were the only occupants. We soon had a fire going (with the limited amount of wood that we could find) and our clothes were hung in every possible location. Decisions about where to source water were soon alleviated as the continued downpour supplied us with plenty of water for that night and the next day from the short guttering off the hut. Ros found her calling as the "water gatherer" as she collected this water in pots and transferred it to our various bladders, water containers and pots. As the rain continued, we decided not to erect tents but to sleep the night in the hut. Ground sheets down, we laid our mats down and settled in for the night. No rodents or spiders visited, and dry tents were appreciated.

Our second day of the pack carry was only about twelve kilometers. We retraced our steps from the hut to the AAWT (part of which we followed our first day) before deviating onto tracks in private land. These tracks led us to the Kosciusko Fire Trail and Cesjack's Hut. The weather had cleared, and we set up tents outside the hut. Water was easily sourced a short distance downhill from the hut. Two other walkers, who had walked extensively in the area, joined us, giving us tips on our next day's mainly off-track section to Valentine's Hut. They chose to camp away from the hut so again we had a hut to ourselves which we enjoyed while preparing dinner.



Our third day proved to be challenging. The trail from Cesjack's Hut was supposed to continue for several kilometers then we would be off-track. After about two kilometers, the trail no longer existed and we were guided by past GPS records. A day of 16km with at least fourteen off-track was challenging. Our leader, Ian, had hoped that it would be over open country. How wrong he was! We fought our way through thigh high bushes, tip-toed through swampy



landscapes avoiding water holes, over one saddle after another until we neared our third campsite. The open landscape was not often experienced and when it was, we were grateful for the easier walking. After Ian advised that there was only one kilometer to go, this became Ros's mantra. "One K to go...One K to go".

We had two river-crossings this day. On our first crossing, Ian's GPS record took us directly to stepping stones that led to an island in the middle of the river and then a hop, step and jump to the banks to continue our walk. David was able to find stepping

stones for the next crossing. With helping hands, we were able to cross both crossings without wet feet.

After the last river-crossing we had to scramble up to the AAWT to reach Valentine's Hut. Seeing another walker coming from the opposite direction, we scrambled for tent sites near the hut. Local knowledge became obvious as those coming from the opposite direction camped near the river which we would have to cross the next day. Our sites were not the best but being exhausted we slept soundly that night.

There was some miscalculation on day four. We anticipated between 8-12 kilometers prior to reaching the turn off to Mt Jagungal. Walking was easy on track, but we reached the turn-off after fifteen kilometers. With the exhaustion of the prior day's walk and the change to continue onto Derschko's Hut (as we had been advised our planned camp was infested with ants), only David had the energy to climb Mt Jagungal. Extensive water crossings were also required and after three creek-crossings where crocs were donned and feet dried before being clad with boots again, Ian, Ros and I decided that the easiest option was to walk through crossings. David and Di tried to locate stepping stones with "some" success.

On reaching the decision junction (side trip to Mt Jagungal) David was entrusted with the PLB, transferred necessities to a day pack, hid his overnight pack and parted ways with the rest of the group. The rest of us continued to Derschko's Hut. On arrival, we were directed up the hill from the hut to a beautiful, private camp site overlooking Mt Jagungal. It was a "perfect" site and one that I would be happy to return to in the future. We anticipated David's arrival in about 2 ¼ hours, but we had not factored in David's enjoyment at the summit. When rejoining us, he raved about the views. He would have liked to return the next day. However, we were tired. We were sated with the views we'd had and were happy to return to the cars to enjoy New Year Eve at Bradleys and Obriens Hut only a few kilometers from the Round Mountain Carpark.

This was a great walk, well thought out by Ian, our leader. Most of the group did not get to the top of Mt Jagungal on this walk, but it did not detract from the enjoyment. Those who had never been vowed that we would return, especially to again enjoy the campsite at Derschko's Hut. Summer is a perfect time to visit the Alpine area of NSW and this walk will always hold a fond memory for me and also for the enjoyment I had with my fellow walkers.



### Bogong High Plains – 5-8 January 2024

Leila Nategh

On a Friday evening, our adventure to Mt Bogong began with dinner together at a cosy pub. Come Saturday morning, under Gina's guidance, we began our journey from Watchbed Creek. Passing through valleys and over hills, we were amazed by the beauty of nature around us. Along the way, we were welcomed by countless wildflowers, their vibrant colours adding splendour to our journey. Gina and Cath, with their keen eye for botanical wonders, identified various species, including delicate daisies that dotted the landscape and Kunzea, adding bursts of colour to our path.



Despite the forecast of rainy weather, Gina made adjustments to our plans, ensuring we still had an unforgettable experience. After setting up our tents and enjoying a satisfying lunch on Saturday afternoon, instead of reaching the summit, we eagerly set out to discover Whiterock Falls. The journey to the falls was a bit tricky, especially with the rainy weather making the terrain slippery and uneven. Upon reaching our destination, we were rewarded with a breathtaking sight. After admiring the magnificence of Whiterock Falls, we made our way back to Ropers Hut, where warmth and comfort awaited us.



On Sunday, we explored the ruins of Batty Hut. Along the way, we encountered numerous trees that had been affected by the devastating Eastern Victorian alpine bushfires of 2003. Much of the mountain, especially the northern side, bore the scars of that event. However, amidst the charred landscape, we witnessed a remarkable sight: many of the trees, though partially burned, were showing signs of resilience. Despite the damage, they were sprouting new leaves and stems, and some even had sprouts emerging from their bases. This resilience was truly inspiring, symbolizing the hope and the power of nature to recover and thrive even after facing adversity.

As evening fell, we sought refuge from the rain and wind in Ropers Hut. Inside, Geoff's cards provided entertainment as we huddled together, savoring warm cups of tea and the comforting sound of rain on the hut's roof. On Monday, as we made our way back, we were treated to a beautiful scene of rain and mist enveloping us like a farewell embrace.

Leader: Gina. Walkers: Carol, John, Derrick, Trish, Cath, Andreas, Marie, Marianne, Geoff, and Leila



## Upcoming activities

### February 2024

Thu 1	TOF: Mystery shady walk in Dandenongs	Pvt	E	Doug Pocock
3-5	BC: Snake Island, Corner Inlet, Victoria	Pvt	E/M	Robin Curwen-Walker & Susan Maughan
Sun 4	DAY: Coolart Wetlands-Flinders	Bus	E&E/M	Gregory Johnson & Prashant Mahajan
5-9	BC: FedWalks 2024: Scoping Week	Pvt	E&M/H	Bayside Bushwalking
7-17	PC: South-West Cape circuit (Tasmania)	Pvt	H	Ian Langford
Sat 10	TRG: First Aid Training	Pvt		Ruth Stewart
Sun 11	DAY: Birdsland Reserve	Car	E	Angela Vetsicas
13-16	BC: Aire River Area, Great Ocean Road	Pvt	Var	Susan Maughan
Wed 14	DAY: Olinda Upper Falls and Valley circuit	Pvt	E/M	Jenny Andrewes
Sun 18	DAY: Erskine Falls	Bus	E/M&M	Bettina Brill & Annemarie Mulder
Mon 19	MOF: Sandringham-Elsternwick (train based)	Pvt	E	Halina Sarbinowski
Wed 21	DAY: Plenty Gorge	Pvt	E/M	Fay Dunn
Thu 22	SOC: Hawthorn-Kew River walk (public trans.)	Pvt	E	Margaret Champion
23-25	BTAC: AAWT MacDonald Nth, High Cone-Square Top	Pvt		Meredith Quick
Sat 24	SOC: North Melbourne Historic Walk & Dinner	Pvt	Soc	Susan Maughan
Sun 25	DAY: Mt Macedon circuit	Car	E/M	Judith Shaw
27-29	BC: Midweek Murrindindi Scenic Reserve	Pvt	E&E	Halina Sarbinowski & Robert Ian Mair
Wed 28	SOC: Walking in Tajikistan & Silk Road Cultural	Pvt		Agajan M Akbari

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)

### (Another) Editor's note re length of articles for The News

Again, I would like to thank members for the interesting and inspiring contributions received for the News. I recently asked if contributors could keep their articles to about 400 words in length, and have likely caused some angst to people who were unaware of this word limit when writing their piece and were asked to shorten it. I do recognise that at times it is difficult to keep to that limit, for instance when farewelling a former member, or when recounting multi-day adventures. So now I have changed the wording about article length on P.2 of The News to read: "**maximum 400 words recommended**". Thanks and apologies to all those who have obligingly pruned their writing. I will continue to do my best to find space for all contributions received. *Deb Shand*