

**MELBOURNE
BUSHWALKERS INC.**

ABN 14 396 912 508



THE NEWS

#876

March
2024



Looking over Lake Eildon from Rocky Peak - B. Harrington

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 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

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

Alert! Cinnamon Fungus found near Castlemaine

The Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club advises the presence of Cinnamon Fungus, *Phytophthora cinnamoni*, has been confirmed in the Porcupine Ridge area of the Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park. Cinnamon fungus infects the plant roots and will kill infected plants. There is a wide range of native plants that are susceptible to the disease. **People, vehicles and animals all transport the spores and subsequent infection to other areas.** In late 2023 Parks Victoria closed the Loop Track to vehicles with locked gates at either end in an attempt to slow the spread of this pathogen. However, it is unlikely that Cinnamon Fungus is restricted to this area. It is almost certainly along adjacent Wewak Track and Porcupine Ridge Road. Fungal spores are spread in soil and by water.

What you can do:

- As far as possible **AVOID** walking or driving in areas that are affected.
- When in affected areas **KEEP TO TRACKS**
- Keep all your footwear and clothes and vehicle **CLEAN** so that you do not transfer the spores to other areas.
- Scrub your boots and spray with an agent that will kill the spores (PhytoClean, bleach 25%, methylated spirits 75-100%) **BEFORE** and **AFTER** your walk in the bush.



Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?

Due date for contributions to April News: 21 March

Email: news@mbw.org.au



We've probably all noted the signs of feral animals and their destructive habits in the high plains of Victoria and NSW and it was only after many years and much work that cattle were finally excluded from the Victorian High Country. The recovery signs are noticeable with wonderful wildflower growth and we can now walk and camp without watching out for cow dung! While Victoria had a policy of restricting feral horses NSW actually were promoting them as having heritage value! Fortunately they have at last changed their policy and have taken action. I show here an extract from 'Mountain Journal' of 1 February 2024:



The summer of 2023/2024 has been an eventful time in the campaign to remove feral horses from Kosciuszko National Park. Figures announced by the NSW government on 29th January show that 3,530 feral horses have been removed from Kosciuszko since the Plan's commencement – by re-homing, removal to knackery, aerial and ground shooting, and shooting in yards. The biggest contributor to the removal total was ground shooting (1,022 horses) followed by re-homing (866 horses) and aerial shooting (822). The proportion of aerial shooting is likely to increase in coming months; the method was not approved by the NSW government until October 2023, after a consultation process.

The NSW government also announced, in their 29th January statement, the areas of Kosciuszko National Park that will be closed for aerial shooting of feral animals – deer, pigs, and horses. The southern section will be closed for most of March, and the northern section from 4th April to 4th October. In both cases, parts of the Australian Alps Walking Track will be closed. Bushwalkers appear to be accepting these closures as inconvenient but necessary. The prospect of 2025 being the year in which walkers will have a better chance of finding a dung-free campsite, and can start to see recovery of the alpine meadows and bogs, is the light at the end of the tunnel.

Note the closures, unfortunate but essential to the plan. Also note the numbers of feral horses removed. The feral horse protection movement claimed that there were no more than three thousand there in total! In Victoria there remains much work to be done to remove horses, deer, and pigs. Dogs and cats also remain and can sometimes be seen. The Club has been a little quiet on this front for a time and I'd like to see more support going this way in 2024.

Another topic of interest to us is the state of our tracks. It's been a grand growing season of late and many tracks are severely affected by the rapid re-growth and fallen timber. Parks Victoria are not able to clear many tracks each year using contractors, so volunteers are of prime importance. Again a Club of our size should be capable of fielding regular strong reinforcements for the track clearing operations organised by Bushwalking Victoria. There are jobs going for everyone, so look out for the opportunities on the programme and perhaps consider a day or two on the track doing some satisfying work!

Don't forget the upcoming AGM, when we shall re-set for our next twelve months.

Happy walking, Derrick



Annual General Meeting

**The Annual General Meeting of the Melbourne Bushwalkers (Incorporated)
will be held on Wednesday, 20 March, 2024 at 7:30 pm
at The Mission to Seafarers Victoria, 717 Flinders Street, Docklands**

**Members are invited to attend.
Non-members are welcome but are not eligible to vote.**

Business:

Apologies
Confirmation of Minutes from the 2023 Annual General Meeting
President's Report
Treasurer's Report
Walks Secretaries' Reports
Membership Secretary's Report
Other Reports
Determination of the Annual Subscriptions for 2024
Determination of number of General Committee Members for 2024
Election of Office Bearers and General Committee Members for 2024
Appointment of Reviewers of Financial Statements
Conferral of Life Memberships
Conferral of Honorary Memberships
Award of Club Spoons
General Business

Any member unable to attend in person may appoint a proxy to be received by the Secretary before or at the commencement of the meeting.

*Proxy and Committee Nomination Forms are available in the Clubrooms
or may be download from the Club's website (https://mbw.org.au/MBW_docs.php).*

AGM 2024 – Membership Secretary report

The Melbourne Bushwalkers membership year commences from April 1 to March 31 of the following year. Taking this into account my report will be based on March numbers to give a true reflection of how the club is progressing.

The club has weathered the impact of COVID extremely well with numbers outstripping our pre-COVID memberships. The first impact of COVID on club activities was from the first lockdown commencing March 31, 2020. Many activities were cancelled due to the lockdowns that occurred over 2020 and 2021 with the last ending on Thursday October 21, 2021. When the club was able to the club offered a walking program and have been able to offer a full walking program since the end of the last lockdown.

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OUR MARCH MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS FROM MARCH 2020 to MARCH 2024 are:

2020 – 538

2021 – 477

2022 – 503

2023 – 561

2024 – 568 (February membership plus 5 applications to be submitted for approval in early March)

It is also important and pleasing to note that the club is still attracting younger new members.

As Membership Secretary I know that the reason that the club has been able to thrive is thanks to the volunteers who lead walks, who are on committee, who are activity co-ordinators, who do “meet and greet” or who help where they can. This is a volunteer organisation and I give thanks to all members who contribute to ensuring that the club continues to thrive.

Please note that the committee’s recommendations regarding membership fees and cost of printed newsletters will be advised prior to the AGM.

Halina Sarbinowski

Federation Walks Weekend at Wilsons Promontory, 11-13 October 2024

2024 marks the 90th Anniversary of Bushwalking Victoria. Dating as far back as 1935 Victoria's peak bushwalking body (formerly known as The Federation of Victorian Bushwalking Clubs) has organised an annual get-together of member clubs for a shared experience of walking and socialising. Known as Federation Walks this name and tradition continues today. Each year one or more clubs come together to organise the event. Melbourne Bushwalkers has been a regular host club or provided support to other host clubs.

The 2024 Federation Walks is being held at Wilsons Promontory hosted by Bayside Bushwalking Club with support from Melbourne Bushwalkers and several regional clubs. Planning and preparations for the event are well advanced with an exciting program of 20 walks to be offered on both Saturday and Sunday to suit all levels of fitness and interest. Coinciding with the 90th Anniversary of Bushwalking Victoria this year's event will be something special.

Accommodation options will include shared lodges, powered and unpowered camp sites at Tidal River. This picturesque spot offers a range of options to make the most of one of Victoria's favourite National Parks. Melbourne Bushwalkers has requested the Arthur Lucas 24 bunk lodge for those who prefer roofed accommodation which will be allocated to club members on a first-come basis for those staying for both Friday and Saturday nights.

The Federation Walks website (<https://fedwalks.org.au/>) will be regularly updated as details of the activities program and other functions are firmed up. Bookings for the event will commence on 3rd June through the website. Act now to note the date for bookings and mark 11-13 October in your schedule.

Contact Ian Mair for further information.



General Walks Secretary Report for 2023

After a post-Covid surge in attendances at our Club's general activities in 2022, the overall average number of attendees declined last year. However, a few activity groups showed similar results to 2022. **Highlights** of last year included Base Camps at Cape Paterson and Halls Gap, an Easter Lodge trip at Mt Hotham, a Pack Carry on the Overland Track in Tasmania, 2 PCs in New Zealand on the Tongariro and Travers-Sabine tracks, and a Beginners' PC at Cape Schanck. Canoeing made a comeback, including a paddle to Herring Island on the Yarra.

In 2023, there were 2 more **Monday** group walks than previously, and attendance figures, were very similar. The most popular trip was Pantom Hills to St. Andrews, with 16 walkers. There was an extra **Thursday** group activity, while overall attendances declined slightly. The Olinda Forest walk had 17 participants. The **Saturday** group had 1 less activity, and attendances also fell slightly. Their Ferny Creek/Tremont hike attracted 19 people.

2023 saw 1 less **Wednesday** activity than in 2022, while average attendances declined by 5.4. Autumn in the Dandenongs was the most popular trip, with 14 hikers. Meanwhile, our **Social walkers** had 1 more activity than previously, and attendance results were similar. There were 15 people on the Studley and Yarra Bend Parks walk.

No **Conservation** attendance figures were received for 2023, as was the case in 2022. **Track Maintenance** saw an increase of 4 activities, with a Grampians event having 7 attendees. **General Training** activities also increased by 4, including sessions on Light Weight Equipment (19 attendees), Leaders' Training (15) and 6 new fitness events. However, average participant numbers declined by 10. There were 2 less **Navigation** activities, but attendances were very similar to 2022. A Map and Compass, and a GPS session both had 9 people. For **Skiing**, the Bogong High Plains tradition continued, with 1 event, but 2 less skiers than in the previous year.

Base Camp results were very similar to 2022, although there was 1 less Walk-in BC and the average number of WiB attendees decreased by 3. **Lodge** trips also fell by 1 and attendances declined slightly. The Otways BC had 30 hikers, while the Mt. Hotham Easter Lodge trip had 27. Camp Eureka was held again, over the Christmas period in 2023, and attracted 17 people. A Federation Weekend in the Trentham area was also attended by 17 of our members.

The number of **Pack Carries** soared in 2022 but fell by 10 last year. This was due to cancellations for low bookings and leaders being unavailable. However, average attendances were very similar. The Beginners' PC at Cape Schanck was the most popular, with 16 hikers, while the Mt. Howitt PC had 15. The Overland Track in Tasmania saw 12 people, while both New Zealand trips attracted 9.

After no **Canoeing** activities in 2022, 4 were held in 2023. This included 3 on the Goulburn River and 1 on the Yarra, with 8 paddlers.

In conclusion, our overall **non-Sunday program** last year, had only 1 less activity, but nearly 20 less average attendees (-14%) than in 2022. In fact, this attendees result has almost reverted to our 2019 pre-Covid one. Many thanks must go to our Coordinators and leaders for continuing to offer a wide range of activities in 2023, including the return of Canoeing. I'd also like to recognise the impressive work of our long-serving Wednesday Coordinator, Ed Neff, who stepped down last year, before passing the role to Fay Dunn. In 2024, I now look forward to an increase in our overall attendances.

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MBW Activity Statistics 2022 & 2023

	2022			2023		
	Trips	Average Nos	Average Visitors	Trips	Average Nos	Average Visitors
DAY WALKS						
Monday	9	8.5	1.3	11	8.6	0.6
Thursday	9	9.8	0.9	10	8.4	0.5
Saturday	8	16.6	3	7	14.9	1.3
Sunday Bus	25	41.7	12.1	24	48.5	10
Sunday Carpool	25	16.4	3.2	25	17.1	2.4
Wednesday	20	13.1	1.3	19	7.7	0.7
Social Walks	12	8.2	0.8	13	8.5	1.1
OTHER ACTIVITIES						
Conservation	1	-	-	-	-	-
Training	6	17.8	0.8	10	7.7	0.3
Navigation Training	4	9.2	-	2	9	1
Track Maintenance	1	-	-	5	0.2	-
Skiing	1	8	-	1	6	-
Base Camp	10	17	1.2	10	16.1	0.9
Walk-in Base Camp	2	8	-	1	5	2
Lodge	4	18.5	0.5	3	17	1
Pack Carry	42	8.5	0.5	32	8.3	0.4
Canoeing	0	-	-	4	6	0.8

- Trip numbers are based on total trips – January to December.
- Average attendance numbers based on information from leaders, but exclude trips where numbers have not been provided.
- Not included are 18 cancellations in 2022 (due to a variety of reasons) and 25 in 2023, as follows: **low numbers** – PC x 5, BC x 1, Canoe x 2, Train x 1; **fire risk** – Sat x 1; **bad weather** – Wed x 1, Track x 1; **leader unavailable** – Wed x 1, Thu x 2, PC x 6, Train x 2; & **unspecified** – Sun Bus x 1, BC x 1.

Stuart Hanham

(General Walks Secretary)



Social Secretary Report for AGM 2024

Meredith Quick

Committee Thank you dinner - Final Numbers - 29 accepted



Attendees Wednesday Club Events 2023-24

Month	Day	Topic	Presenter/organiser	Attendees
April	16	Cinema – The Giants	Jenny Andrewes	8
April	26	Hiking in Austria Solo	Agajan Akbari	40
May	24	The Coast and Hills of Wales	Ian Mair	60
June	28	Dolomites and Dumplings	Bettina Brill	40
July	26	Black & White History of Australia	Kim Cowie	21
August	23	Exploring Australia`s Unique & Challenging Terrain	John Fritze	65
September	27	Walking in Nepal	Deb Shand	65
October	25	Art show & Walking NZ Hump Ridge Track	Art show Brett Daniels	45
November	22	Night Market	Susan Maughan	30
December	12	Xmas Party	Xmas Party	100
January	1	NYD BBQ	Susan Maughan	50
January	31	Dehydrator meal workshop	Hiroko Nakano	45
February	15	Cinema – The Dry 2 – Force of Nature	Meredith	8
February	29	Walking in Tajikistan	Agajan Akbari	TBA
March	20	AGM	Committee	TBA
April	24	Walking in Iceland	Ian Mair	TBA
May	29	TBA		TBA
June	26	Walking the AAWT	Claire Luxford	TBA
July	31	TBA		TBA
August	28	TBA		TBA
September	25	TBA		TBA
October	30	Walking the Larapinta	Jill Allen	TBA

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Action Items

Room Dates to be confirmed with Seamans Mission	Meredith	TBA
Liaise with Seamans Mission re Art show	Meredith	TBA
Create checklists for Xmas party organisation	Meredith	TBA
Liaise with Club members for ideas for Wednesday night chats	Meredith	TBA
Liaise with Webmaster re report storage	Meredith	TBA

Upcoming Victorian Mountain Tramping Club 50km walk - 23rd March 2024

VMTC is running a 50 km walk on Saturday the 23rd of March. The walk will link up the Dandenong Ranges National Park and Lysterfield state park.

The walk is 51.5km long with 1800meters ascent. Do not underestimate the short but steep ups and downs in the Dandenongs.

There are plenty of toilet and water points along the way, these are included in our main stopping points, i.e. morning tea , lunch, and afternoon tea.

There are 4.5km of footpaths to link up the Dandenong Ranges National Park and Lysterfield state park but they are quite pleasant to walk. Otherwise, management tracks and walking tracks.

If you are interested please contact Mark Sorrell at marksorrell6@gmail.com



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Webmaster Report to AGM 2024

A questionable place to start an annual report is to look back at the previous one and see how well you delivered on the plans for the coming year. I tend to shun being self-critical so I have inflated my rating and awarded myself a D-. The good news is that I still have lots of scope to do better next year!

Notwithstanding, the past year has seen a number of significant developments for the future operation of the club's online activities.

(a) During August the club's website hosting company migrated our website to a different server with a newer and more secure operating system. Ongoing checks of system logs show a marked reduction in malicious attempts to disrupt our operations actually reaching our website.

(b) During November a group of 6 members met with the webmaster to form a development team for the future development of the website. The team agreed on a common set of programming tools and protocols to be adopted. Team members are currently familiarising themselves with the website structure from locally hosted copies of the website. Once the teams' familiarity is enhanced to a suitable level (and the webmaster gets moving!) individual IT team members will be allocated to further develop parts of the current infrastructure – mainly, applications.

(c) A first step in progressing (b) was the upgrading of the core website programming language to a more recent version. This was completed in late-December with consequential changes to the performance of the website resolved during January.

The past year has also seen a few extensions to the content available to members through the Members' Area. (a) A new downloads page has been added for content made available by presenters following Wednesday night Wine and Chat sessions.

(b) A new downloads page has been added for presentation material and other resources used during Leader Training sessions.

(c) Enhancements have been made to the maps download utility as a result of contributions made to the preparation of maps for the coming FedWalks 2024 event at Wilsons Promontory in October. The MBW website maps utility was used as the primary tool for the preparation of the maps to be added to the event booklet.

(d) The bookings management sheet available to leaders was enhanced to provide quick access to participant email addresses to facilitate communication.

(e) As part of an ongoing move to migrate the club's paper forms to online versions, a new page was added for leaders to facilitate the submission of Previews to be added to the website.

(f) A new section was added to the Award Nominations page to include the ABCD Award launched at the 2023 AGM.

(g) A new section was added to the website to support operations of the Committee.

The focus of the current website team is on the development and performance of the website infrastructure. A critical requirement for the delivery of good service to members is the timely addition of content of relevance. Additionally, the archival function of the website requires significant input to complete the uploading of existing record sets and the addition of new compilations. Seeking volunteer support for these initiatives will be a focus of the coming year.

I would like to close by thanking all members for their timely and helpful comments when issues are experienced with the website performance or ideas arise for improvements and additions.

Ian Mair



Recent MBW Website Developments

1. Website Mapping Utility enhanced

In recent months MBW has been working with Bayside Bushwalking Club to prepare the maps to be used by leaders for the 2024 Federation Walks program at Wilsons Promontory from 11-13 October, 2024. These maps will appear in the event booklet provided to all participants.

To develop the maps the MBW team enhanced the mapping feature on the MBW website. Improvements include: (a) the addition of a north pointer showing magnetic declination; (b) an improved scale bar; (c) route highlighting; (d) distance markers along the route; and (e) the option to remove map control icons to provide a less cluttered map presentation. These improvements have now been incorporated into the mapping utility available to all registered club members through the Members' Area of the website.

2. Online Preview Submission Form

Melbourne Bushwalkers activity leaders prepare the Preview description notes that appear on the website to assist members decide which activities they may wish to join. Microsoft Word templates are available, however, leaders can submit their notes in any suitable form. To facilitate the preparation by leaders a new website Preview Submission Form was added to the Leaders' Area of the website. After extended testing the new Form may now be used by leaders for any type of activity on the club's program with only the required information fields presented for completion.

3. Clubroom Presentation Night materials

The MBW monthly Wine and Chat nights on Wednesday evenings in the clubrooms are a popular event bringing members together for casual interaction and informative presentations. From time to time the presenters make available copies of the presentation material or additional content that may be of interest to members. A new section has been added to the Download links within the Members' Area of the website to share these materials. First to be added is information from "Dehydrating Meals: A 101 Guide to Long-lasting Nutritious and Delicious Food" presented at the end of January.

Ian Mair
Webmaster

March Safety and Risk Reminders

This month, given the focus on the AGM we will cover safety in the Clubrooms and have only **two short reminders for Leaders** and **one for Members**.

Mission to Seafarers Clubrooms Safety: The rooms at the Mission to Seafarers have clear evacuation signs and use one combined alarm/evacuation signal. A recorded voice clearly says to Evacuate accompanied by a loud "whooping" sounding alarm. If an

evacuation is needed then the evacuation signal will be heard and the on-duty member of the Mission to Seafarers staff will direct everyone to the Assembly Area. It is located in the public open space near Seafarers Bridge over the Yarra and the adjacent Convenience Store.

There is a **Defibrillator** in the Main Hall, a **Fire Blanket** in the kitchen beside the stove, and a number of **Fire Extinguishers** throughout the building e.g. in the Entrance Foyer.



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Accessing Private Property: The leader is responsible for obtaining the landowner's permission to cross private property before the walk. Gates must be left open/shut as they are found on all walks and particularly on private property, and livestock should not be disturbed. If the walk has been done before the trip report should provide the contact details for the landowner. Note that there is a risk that the landowner may withdraw permission if there is extreme weather or flooding, So it may be advisable to check in case of bad weather. For major popular walks the permission to use private property has generally been pre-arranged by the organisation responsible for the walk e.g. the Heysen Trail in South Australia. Generally, access to private property is not allowed in the declared fire season. Our private property policies are covered in By-Law 2.7 and the Guideline for Leading a Day Walk.

Safety Equipment Available to Borrow (MOD): The Club has **PLB** (Personal Locator Beacons), modern **GPS** (Global Positioning System) devices, and modern digitally tuneable radios available to borrow (free!) for using on upcoming activities or to become familiar with them.

Camping Equipment for Members to borrow (NEW): The Club has a wide range of camping equipment for members to try and use on Pack Carries and Base Camps. Its available from the Clubrooms on Wednesday nights and can be booked, Ideal to see if you like overnight walking or take on a Beginners Pack Carry. Also, a GPS can be borrowed when not required by Leaders.

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

X-C Skiing – Bogong High Plains 2024

Bill Metzenthén

The weather may be warm but now is the time to think of the annual cross country skiing week at the Bogong Rover Chalet.

Many members of the club will be familiar with the annual ski trips we have been making to the Bogong Rover Chalet. Things have changed this year. We no longer have access to a week nominally assigned to the Melbourne Bushies and so most of the usual mob will now be seeking to go to the Chalet with another group on Week 8 (Aug 16th – Aug 24th). Unfortunately, by the time you read this bookings will already have been open for a couple of weeks and the Week is possibly already booked out.



We have been going up there for 18 years (since we lost Wilkinson Lodge) for a most enjoyable week's skiing. The Bogong Rover Chalet is a comfortable lodge some 11km ski from Falls Creek. Much of the non-perishable food is stored in the chalet before winter and we only have to carry in meat and vegetables (one or two kg per skier, so easily manageable). As there is a washing machine and the lodge is well heated, packs can be kept very light weight.

If you are an experienced weekend pack-carrier and are interested you can speak to me on 9578 1062 to discuss the week. Prior cross country skiing experience is preferred but not essential provided that you are willing get some experience before the week. On behalf of the skiing group, I'd like to thank Doug Pocock for organising this week in previous years. Doug has decided that it's now time to hang up his skis and he won't be joining us anymore.

2024 Training Update

Our Training Program is starting to take shape: So far, we have had First Aid Training on Feb 10 with 13 attending (organised by Ruth Stewart), and an informative session on Dehydrating Meals on 31 January (presented by Hiroko Nakano). Current plans are:

- *Beginners Pack Carries: These will continue in 2024, the summer one was last December, see the Website Program for details as they are planned.*

- For Navigation we have:

- **A Navigation Field Training Day** will be run by Quentin Tibbals on 20 April with a prior required theory session in the Clubrooms at 7pm on 11 April. I want to thank Roger Wyatt who has been running these courses for years now. These hands on sessions are very popular with limited numbers so book soon via training@mbw.org.au Information is on the Website Program.
- **GPS Navigation** is on May 4 with Ian Mair. See Information in the Website Program. Once again very popular so sign up now!
- **MBC Smartphone Navigation Workshop** is on 14 September, with registration from 10 to 31 August. This is also a very popular course run again for us by Andrew Robinson who runs these courses for Bushwalking Victoria.
- The next BWV run **Smartphone Navigation Workshop** date is 27 April with registration opening on 10 March.

- Light Weight Walking: (presented by John Fritze). Great for new walkers and those who want to reduce their pack weight. Dates tba in News and on Website Program.

- Our **New Leaders Training** Day is confirmed for 31 August. Also suitable for current leaders who want to update some of their skills. Some of the Units may also be run separately.

- A new **Activity Guide for leading Pack Carries and Base Camps** is being finalised, targeted for March. The next **First Aid Training** will be at the end of the year (December or February).

A major activity this year will be taking advantage of the new training material Bushwalking Victoria have been developing with input from Clubs including ours. This includes Extended Walks, Advanced Leadership and Navigation, Club and individual training resources etc. We intend to run our first Advanced leadership, Leading PCs and Leading BCs sessions on Zoom during the year. All items will be advertised in the News and are part of the Clubs Activities Program on our Website.



Mick Noonan, Training Officer
noonan1953@gmail.com

Lake Eildon-Rocky Peak – 19-21 January, 2024

Bernadette Harrington

Leader: Ian Mair

Most of the group camped on Friday night at one of the Jerusalem Creek campsites amongst tall trees adjacent to the water. The condition of the access road required care, there were a number of deep depressions, including one small “trench” that required intervention. Ian located a suitable log on the group’s return from dinner at a pub in Eildon. The log was transported to the site by being passed through the car’s backseat windows, jutting out either side, and then was wedged in place to facilitate crossing, particularly for the two wheel drive cars.



We were visited at camp by a pair of beautiful King Parrots that came in close to check us out as we set up, and in the morning we woke to a cacophony of bird calls. After driving a short distance to the start of our walk, thirteen walkers headed out following Gap Track onto an overgrown track walking amongst towering eucalyptus, and one section following Gap Creek passed through an area of impressive tree ferns. Hyacinth Orchids were displaying at their best along the walk. Native raspberries were in fruit providing tasty grazing, but disappointingly blackberries, also tasty, were beginning to invade this area.



Early afternoon we set up at O’Tooles campsite near the fast-flowing creek. Unfortunately, the gloss was taken off the otherwise idyllic campsite by the swarming March flies, resulting in everyone escaping relatively early to their tents. The flies had gathered whenever we stopped for any time during the day but we would move on before too many cries of frustration were heard.

We awoke again to an early morning chorus of many different birds and another clear day. We set out with a steady climb up Taylors Creek Track, before leaving this to bush bash up through dense vegetation to Rocky Peak Point (994 mts) where we had impressive views

over the national park with various arms of Lake Eildon visible around mountainous ranges and peaks. We continued bush bashing, following the ridge line initially, weaving around granite boulders and heading towards The Pinnacle before dropping down to emerge onto Pinnacle track. This climbed steeply to the Pinnacle where we joined the Pinnacle walking track which in turn dropped steeply back down to a last undulating section to our cars.

This had been a more challenging day, covering 16 ½ km with steep ascents and descents, including over three hours of bush bashing. But with this we had passed through an interesting range of vegetation and achieved some great views.



Monday and Thursday walks - something for everyone

Sharon Carr

If you're not at work during the week, or have time off, why not consider a Monday or Thursday walk with MBW. Melbourne's constantly changing urban landscape has much to offer - beaches, rivers, views, wetlands and lovely fresh air. Trees, native plants and birdlife. On our way from Sandringham to Elsternwick on Monday 19 February, a few of us swore we spotted a penguin (he turned out to be a cormorant. Penguins rock but cormorants are pretty cool as well). We also came across some greater crested terns wearing their weird toupees, who visit Port Phillip Bay during the summer.



Monday and Thursday walks are relaxed and educational, there's always interesting conversation and often a nice cold drink at the end, while still packing a punch and adding a healthy number of steps to your daily count. Hope to see you on a Monday or Thursday walk soon.



Snake Island adventure – 3-5 February 2024

Kate Lawless

Our Snake Island adventure started at 7.30am as 7 walkers gathered at the Port Welshpool Jetty, juggling a fruit & vegetable tray that had been given to us by a group of men who won it in the pub the night before. As we boarded our boat, Wayne, our skipper, announced to our delight, that he could drop us off on the beach west of the cattlemen's huts site. This meant that we only had a 10 minute walk instead of the anticipated 6.7 km from the Snake Island Jetty. Unfortunately we had already given the fruit and vegetable tray to Wayne before he told us of the change of plan.



Our beach landing was accomplished smoothly and we disembarked only 10 meters from dry sand. We waved Wayne off, then commenced our climb up the steep sand dunes. Susan led us to the cattlemen's compound

Along the track

where we settled into our various accommodation. Four of us pitched tents and the others selected beds in the dorms. The huts site is surrounded by post and rail fences which the kangaroos ignore as they graze the grass inside the compound. While we were settling in, they were coming within a few meters of us without any fear.

After lunch we set off on our first walk. We crossed the cattle field in front of the huts, passed through a gate, then followed a track through low scrubby bushland and over low sand hills until we reached the Crossroads intersection. Here we turned west, reaching the coast for a long leisurely walk on the beach and a swim before returning to the huts.

Day 2 – Sunday – we had a long walk on the Gulf Track to the delightful Gulf Campsite. We passed through grassland, a variety of eucalyptus trees and high banksia in flower. At the camp site we rested while having lunch and watching black swans gliding by. On the return walk Rob and I went off track to see



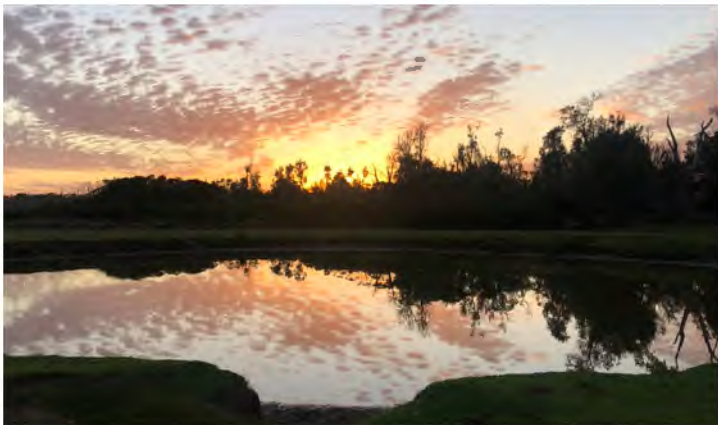
if we could locate a couple of other tracks that were showing on our maps. We bush bashed for about an hour not finding any sight of these long overgrown tracks. Later that afternoon a group of us took a short walk south of the huts to come out on the beach and loop back to the compound.

Our evening schedule was: sitting in the sand dunes watching the sun setting behind the northern tip of Wilson's Promontory, then sitting on the long veranda watching the ever-changing parade of kangaroos, deer, ibis, and ducks all arriving and departing according to their own evening schedules.

Day 3 – our departure day – was a flurry of packing, tidying, & cleaning to make sure that we left the huts in good order. Then we set off on the 6.7km walk to the Snake Island Jetty to meet Wayne for our return trip to Welshpool.

This is a delightful walk through ever changing vegetation. We crossed the Big Plain area, passing by the Big Plain Waterhole where we disturbed a number of animals who had probably come to drink, passed through a dark ferny forest and eventually emerged on the coast to gather on the jetty.

Walk participants: Susan, Robin, Kate, Tina, Kathleen, Sian, Rob



Upcoming activities

March 2024

1-3	PC: Mt Buller North Ridge	Pvt	M/H	Gina Hopkins
Sun 3	DAY: Whisky Creek circuit (Lerderderg SP)	Car	E/M	Quentin Tibballs
Mon 4	MTG: Club Committee Meeting	Pvt		Derrick Brown
Tue 5	MTG: Video session: 3 Capes Walk, Tasmania	Pvt		Robert Ian Mair
Thu 7	TOF: Beggary-Everard circuit	Pvt	E/M	Doug Pocock
8-18	BC: Great Barrier Island, NZ	Pvt	E/M	Susan Maughan
8-11	MNT: BTAC: AAWT - Johnnies Top	Pvt		Meredith Quick
8-11	BC: Mt Buffalo, Lake Catani	Pvt	E/M	Jan Colquhoun
8-11	PC: Mt Cobbler from the West	Pvt	M/H	Ray Thomas
8-12	PC: Razor-Viking circuit	Pvt	M/H	Claire Luxford
Sun 10	DAY: Arthurs Seat-Cape Schank	Bus	E/M&M	Brett Daniel & Robert Ian Mair
Wed 13	DAY: Birdland - in the footsteps of the Founders	Pvt	E/M	Doug Pocock
15-17	PC: Mt Baw Baw	Pvt	E	Robert Ian Mair
Fri 15	SOC: Movie: The Road to Patagonia	Pvt		Meredith Quick
Sun 17	DAY: Laverton-Williamstown (train based)	Car	E	Brett Daniel
Mon 18	MOF: Portarlinton by Ferry	Pvt	E	Halina Sarbinowski
Wed 20	MTG: Annual General Meeting	Pvt		Derrick Brown
22-24	BC: Kilcunda Base Camp	Pvt	E/M	Jill Allen
Sat 23	DAY: City Gardens (public or private transport)	Pvt	E	Maureen Hurley
Sun 24	DAY: Wirilda Track	Bus	E&E/M	Annemarie Mulder & Grant Roger
Wed 27	DAY: Burke's Lookout via Doongalla Homestead	Pvt	E/M	Chris Lord
28-1	BC: Easter at Falls Creek	Pvt	Var	Judith Shaw
28-1	PC: Quartz Ridge-Mt Bogong-Spion Kopje	Pvt	M	Gina Hopkins
29-31	MNT: BTAC: AAWT	Pvt		Meredith Quick
Sun 31	Red Hill South & Red Hill Estate Winery	Car	E/M	Jan Colquhoun

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