

MELBOURNE
BUSHWALKERS INC.

ABN 14 396 912 508



THE NEWS

#878

May
2024



Greeting a paraglider on Mt Feathertop - G. Hopkins

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

Next committee meeting: Monday 6 May

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

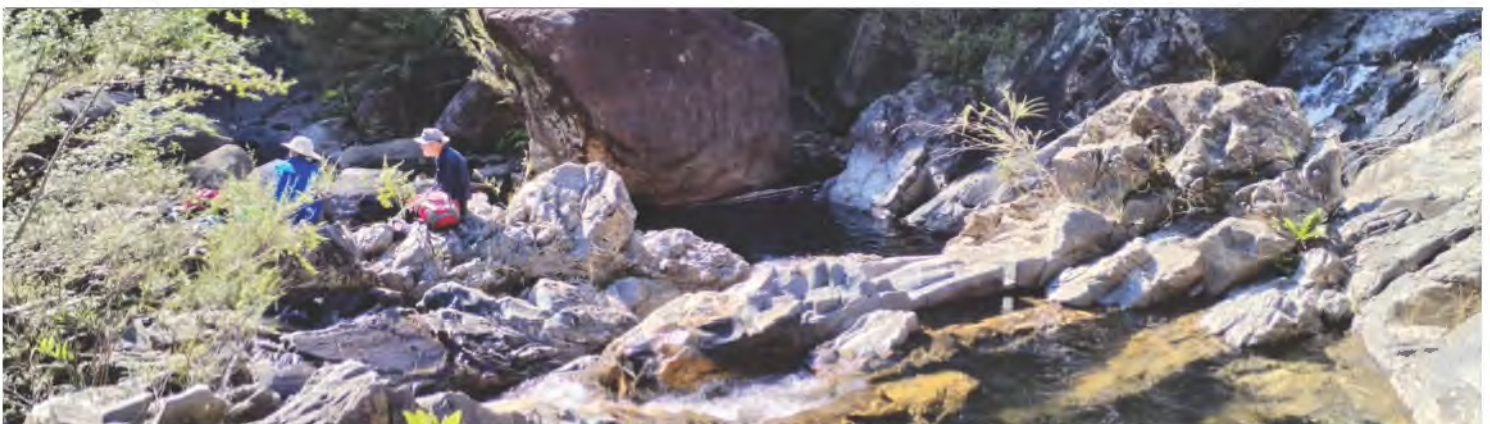
We welcome these new members to the club:

Mark Proctor
Frances Correa

Aaron Bembenek
Lisa Turnbull

Sandra Bucovaz

Angela Mezzatesta



Exploring Mt Buffalo gorges - J. Song

Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?

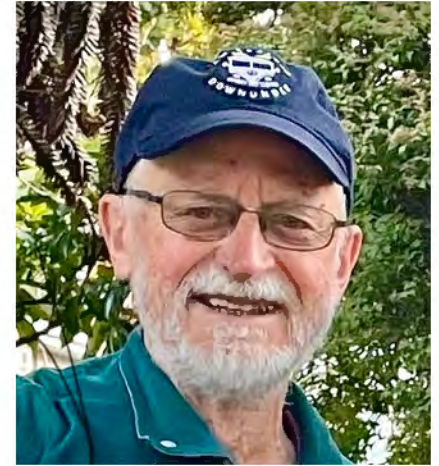
Due date for contributions to June News: 21 May

Email: news@mbw.org.au



President's column

Our Saturday Walks Coordinator, Maureen Hurley is stepping down after eighteen years. This is an extraordinary achievement and must surely be a Club record. Quite apart from that Maureen has led more than forty walks herself. Maureen deserves our thanks and congratulations on such a record. It warms my heart to be able to bring this to members' attention, it is a great example of our quiet achievers who just get on with the job and keep the Club going. We are now looking for her replacement so please consider whether you can put up your hand.



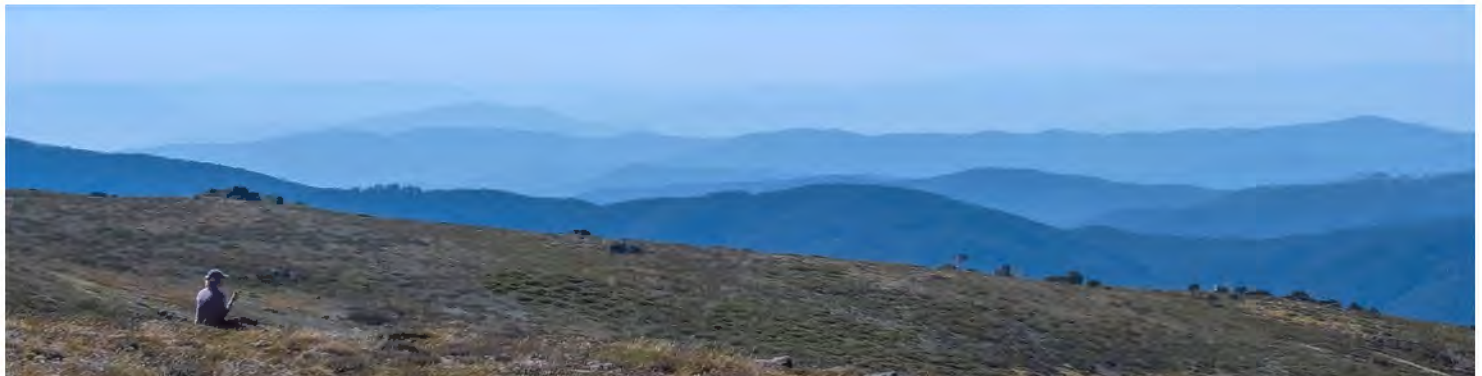
On a recent pack carry to Mt Feathertop we camped at a beautiful spot near the junction of the Peak Track and the Razorback. A memorial on this hill told us that a Mollie Hill had a skiing accident there in September 1932 and subsequently died. She was the first cross-country skier to die in a skiing accident in Victoria. She was a nurse and with a group from the Ski Club of Victoria had been stuck in the Feathertop Bungalow (now just a ruin) for six days due to bad weather. On 2 September the group set off to follow the Razorback to Hotham. Mollie fell, injured a wrist and continued with one arm in a sling. She then slipped on ice and slid 60 metres down a steep slope, hitting a tree. She was stretchered out to Harrietville (presumably down the Bungalow Spur) and taken to Bright hospital where she died that night from intracranial bleeding.

This story is significant to me as the same thing almost happened to me at a nearby spot. I was skiing along the same Razorback Spur with a Melbourne Bushie group and we were approaching the Big Dipper, a biggish hill at the Hotham end of the spur. The leaders of the group went directly up the hill but I made an on-the-spot decision to go around the hill to the left (east) side of the hill. Unknown to me this side of the hill, being rather exposed, was solid ice, and steep. Cutting the skis into the ice was difficult and proved to be my undoing. I slipped and with an overnight pack down I went. There was nothing to stop me from going all the way to the bottom ... and the trees. Fortunately I didn't have a damaged wrist and I happened to have read but never practised, an emergency arrest technique. I threw away one pole and used the other as a brake and it worked, otherwise I wouldn't be writing this today.

Now I'm telling you this because we've had one or two similar incidents in the last twelve months where a walker has made an independent decision to do something a little different - take an alternative route over/around an obstacle and caused a problem. When I reiterate the advice that walkers should follow the advice of the leader - and their route - it is said with the conviction of hard experience. We all make those quick on-the-spot decisions when walking but our radars should be switched on in awkward or difficult terrain.

Now, on the same subject of cross-country skiing I draw your attention to the information elsewhere in this newsletter regarding proposed ski trips, especially for beginners - but they won't be on the Razorback! If snow arrives in sufficient quantity then I hope that we can take advantage of it and introduce this wonderful activity to more members. If you like walking then I think that you'll love cross-country (x/c) skiing! I hope to see you out there.

Derrick



On the High Plains - B. Dadvand

May Safety and Risk Reminders



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

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

What Members are required to take on Activities (excluding camping gear): (MOD)

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

Leaders Emergency Checklist (White Laminated Card) NEW:

This card is designed to be taken on walks and lists the key steps in dealing with an Emergency including the Whistle Codes. You can collect a laminated card in the Clubrooms or print the version in this News, trim it up and put it in a Zip Bag.

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

<p>MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS Inc EMERGENCY CHECKLIST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't panic! DRSABCD • Is it safe for group to remain in location? Or return to the last known location as any search will start there. Keep warm, stay calm and seek shelter. • For Sunday bus, phone the driver • Medical emergencies: who has first aid skills? • Use the injured/ill persons green 'Personal Health Details' card only if patient is not coherent • Are they carrying medication? Access Health card details • Assess early exit options <p>CALL FOR ASSISTANCE "000" or "112" on mobile, state following</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location incl grid reference and directions • Your mobile number • Nature of emergency <p>Use a Personal Locator Beacon if necessary Make it easier to be located:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move above tree line • Move to clearing or track • Move to open section of a creek line 		<p>Make it easier to be located (cont):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lay a block of bright colour visible from the air • Smoking fire – if safe to do so • Direct person to listen for searchers <p>SEEKING ASSISTANCE Subject to nature of incident, group size & experience direct two personnel to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk to higher ground to make contact • Walk out to summon help • Guide searcher/rescue back in <p>Contact the following as necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Club Emergency Contact to put a message on the Club's Mobile 0447 489 661 • For serious injuries contact a Club Officer or CEC <p>DISTRESS CALLS 3 regularly spaced calls (whistle, shouts, banging on a billy, or torch flashes at night)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 blasts – emergency • 2 blasts – stop and regroup • 1 blast – acknowledge <p style="text-align: right;">02/2022</p> <p>Note: Available as a White Laminated Card in Clubrooms or Print and put in a Zip Bag</p>
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Annual Training Report 2023

2023 was my second year as Training Officer. The priorities continue to improve our training for new leaders and to continue the regular training activities we conduct for all members. Major activities were:

- Our annual New Leaders Training Day (a record 14 attendees) in August, 10 of them have now led one or more walks, 3 have led their first Pack Carry, and 1 more will first lead this Autumn.
- We embedded our new leader mentoring approach, currently we have a pool of 15 Development Mentors with Stuart Hanham and Richard Long joining the group. There are 15 new leaders currently being mentored across day and extended activities. Three are now considered graduates. Many current leaders have kindly acted as Activity Mentors for new leaders during the year.
- Smartphone Navigation (Andrew Robinson runs these courses for Bushwalking Victoria and also for us), Field Navigation Day (Roger Wyatt, 2 conducted to meet demand) and GPS Navigation training (Ian Mair) continued to be popular. All up 33 attended across the 3 types of activities.
- Continuing with our annual subsidised First Aid Training (organised by Ruth Stewart), 14 attendees.
- Our monthly News Reminder System is now in its third year and is a critical aspect of our Safety and Risk Management Framework.
- Providing information on Bushcraft, new or changed Club Policies etc. to members via the News. Also, a Video night on *Emergency Communications and Getting Assistance in the Bush*.
- Promoting and communicating the new PLB Policy to leaders and members.

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

In 2023 Bushwalking Victoria, aided by a State Government grant, and supported by a number of Clubs (including ours) created an online resource of new, and existing/updated material covering all aspects of leader training. In 2024 we will see how we can use this, particularly for training Pack Carry and Base Camp leaders and for Advanced Leadership Training.

For 2024 we intend to continue our mentoring approach and support our new leaders, provide a range of training/education opportunities including new ones using the BWV material, including the ever-popular topic of Navigation, for both members and leaders.

Mick Noonan, Training Officer

DRSABCD action plan

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



D

DANGER

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

R

RESPONSE

Check for response—ask name—squeeze shoulders

No response
• Send for help.

Response
• make comfortable
• check for injuries
• monitor response.



S

SEND for help

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

A

AIRWAY

Open mouth—if foreign material is present:

- place in the recovery position
- clear airway with fingers.

Open airway by tilting head with chin lift.



B

BREATHING

Check for breathing—look, listen and feel.

Not normal breathing
• Start CPR.

Normal breathing
• place in recovery position
• monitor breathing
• manage injuries
• treat for shock.



C

CPR

Start CPR—30 chest compressions : 2 breaths

Continue CPR until help arrives or patient recovers.



D

DEFIBRILLATION

Apply defibrillator if available and follow voice prompts.

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

Learn First Aid | 1300 360 455 | www.stjohn.org.au

Changing of the Saturday Guard

After 18 years of great service to the Club, Maureen Hurley, our Saturday Coordinator, is stepping down. As well as producing 3 Saturday walks programs per year, Maureen has led many walks herself.

Her Saturday group specialises in the Dandenong Ranges, but has covered the Macedon area, Kinglake, Warrandyte, Sugarloaf Reservoir, the Plenty River, Bayside and large outer suburban parklands.

We are now looking for a successor to Maureen, to prepare the Autumn, Winter and Spring programs each year, with the help of regular leaders and hopefully some new ones. The group doesn't walk during Summer.

If interested, please contact Maureen on 0490 881 255 for more details about what's involved in this role.

Stuart Hanham
(General Walks Secretary)



Call out to fellow travellers – Expressions of Interest sought

I'm very keen to do a particular hiking trip '**Deserts and canyons of the Southwest – USA**' run by reputable tour company, **World Expeditions**. They offer many tours but unfortunately many of them never run because they don't meet minimum departure numbers, so if perhaps if the USA is on your bucket list you might like to consider joining me on this tour. More details here:

<https://worldexpeditions.com/United-States/Trekking-Walking/Deserts-and-Canyons-of-the-Southwest>



It's a 14-day trip starting and ending in Las Vegas. It includes 9 day walks including Bryce Canyon, Grand Canyon, Zion National Park, Canyonlands & arches National Park, Capitol Reef, San Rafael Swell, Canyon de Chelly, Antelope Slot Canyon and Monument Valley.

I've done lots of research across a range of companies and this is by far the best itinerary for hiking and most reasonably priced at \$6240 AUS keeping in mind that the USA is an expensive destination. It includes breakfast and lunch on most days. It can be expensive flying into Las Vegas due to limited flight availability but it costs considerably less to fly to San Francisco and catch a bus from there, but you have to allow at least an extra day either side to do this.



The tour dates I wish to travel on are **22 September to 5 October 2024**. This is an idea time as it's after the peak season, with less crowds and being early fall the weather is a bit cooler and more suitable for hiking.

Please contact me if interested or you have any questions on jancolquhounoz@hotmail.com ph: 0410 212 140

Cross-country Skiing

Despite the Bureau of Meteorology forecasting a warmer-than-average winter we are going to be optimists and get ready for some cross-country skiing! We intend to have a “Last-minute call” for those interested when the white stuff arrives in the mountains. It is hoped that we can have a Beginners’ Day at Lake Mountain when beginners will get free instruction and individual mentoring from experienced skiers. We also hope to arrange a day or weekend for the more experienced skiers.



Beginners’ Day at Lake Mountain

This will be for absolute beginners or those with limited ability. Note this is cross-country skiing, *not* downhill or skating, and is for *full Club members* only. This may be either mid-week and/or on a weekend. Boots, skis and poles can be hired on the mountain, and this is the best place as once hired you can change any of the kit if it doesn’t suit and this is especially important for boots and bindings. We will use easy tracks or suitable off-track terrain. Informal tuition will be in small groups and one-to-one. Detailed clothing requirements and notes will be sent to listed beginner applicants.



Experienced skiers are required to support us here please!

If interested please **email** me saying whether you are:

1. a beginner or with limited experience or
2. willing to be a tutor
3. interested in midweek, weekend or both opportunities
4. a car driver or passenger.

Day or overnight stays for experienced skiers

If you are interested in a trip to Mt Stirling or St Gwinear, or elsewhere, please indicate this.

If/when we get some suitable snow we will phone/email the list, but it will be a short-notice call.

Regards (with fingers crossed),

Derrick Brown
derrick.e.brown41@gmail.com

KEEP THE NIGHT FREE: Movie Night Cinema Nova – The Way, My Way

Date: Monday Night 20 May (based on current information the film will be on general release on the Thursday prior)

Based on Bill Bennett’s book of the same name, *THE WAY, MY WAY* is the charming and captivating true story of an Australian man’s transformative experience walking the Camino de Santiago, and the people he meets along the way that changed his life forever.

For more information contact Meredith Quick, Social Secretary social@mbw.org.au



Federation Walks 2024 Update



Federation Walks, now 90 years old, started as the world-wide 'hiking boom' took off in the 1930s

From Australia's earliest days, men and women were drawn to the natural environment and walked the wild country and seaside, utilising trails and pathways established by First Nations people. As Australia developed, the tracks of miners, timber getters and cattlemen served the walkers well.

In the early 1930s Victorians joined the world-wide obsession with walking and clubs sprang up everywhere. The fad had hardly caught hold before it waned, but curiously, in 1934, as its popularity faded eight walking clubs in Melbourne founded a Federation of Victorian Walking Clubs, to promote the activity and to lobby for political recognition.

Federation Walks has been operating over the past 90 years with only a few exceptions, including the war years when walkers were called into the war effort.

The evolution of walking clubs and associated activities has further developed making the organisation now known today as Bushwalking Victoria a significant body in the areas of recreational walking and club development, conservation and track maintenance and search and rescue activities.

Comprising more than 60 established clubs, 12 associated organisations and about 200 individual members, Bushwalking Victoria represents over 6500 club members and an estimated 360,000 active recreational bushwalkers in the Victorian community.

So put the weekend of 11-13 October 2024 at Wilsons Promontory in your diaries and start the planning to attend this unique weekend experience. **Bookings open Monday 3 June 2024.**

More Information on the website: <https://fedwalks.org.au/>



References:

[The Scroggin Eaters: A History of Bushwalking in Victoria, to 1989 by Graeme Wheeler \(1991\)](#)

[The Ways of the Bushwalker: On foot in Australia by Melissa Harper \(2020\)](#)

www.bushwalkingvictoria.org.au

If You Go Out In The Woods Today...

Stuart Hanham

Recently, I went for an afternoon walk at Newport Lakes Park in Newport, one of my favourite suburban reserves. The Club has been to this oasis, too. It's a revegetated quarry with two large lakes, wetlands, rocky cliffs, bush, plenty of birdlife, several picnic spots and impressive viewpoints. While I was walking through a bushy area, I was surprised to see a large gathering of people off-track, in the middle of the bush. On closer inspection, they were dressed in black and facing a tall, thin character with a pointed hat and a long grey beard, who looked like a wizard.



My first thought was that they belonged to some sort of cult and then I saw a variety of equipment around them. Suddenly, a member of the group laid a long, thick hose through the bush near me and soon steam rose out of many holes, creating an eerie atmosphere. After I was spotted, another man, possibly a security guard, approached me. Luckily, he was friendly and when I asked him what was going on, he said that the ABC was filming a creepy children's TV show! It was certainly in a good setting.

I'd still recommend a walk around Newport Lakes and you might even see a sequel being filmed.

Australia's Biggest Bushwalk Challenge


In May 2024, walkers can take on the Australia's Biggest Bushwalk challenge and raise funds to help the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) bring our native animals back from the brink.

Over 80% of Australia's animals are found nowhere else other than in this country. Sadly, 619 of these Australian animals - like pink cockatoos and sea lions - are threatened species, losing their homes to habitat destruction and climate change every day.

You can sign up to join the challenge as an individual or team here:

<https://www.australiasbiggestbushwalk.org.au/>

Commit to how many kilometres you would like to cover over the month and ask friends, work colleagues and family to donate – every dollar counts. There's not much that's more important than protecting the natural environment where our native species live – after all, we live here too! Donations are tax deductible.



Be a Nature Hero for Australia's threatened animals

Join Australia's Biggest Bushwalk today!

Challenge yourself to walk, run or roll 43km, 77km or 124km this May and raise funds to bring our beloved animals back from the brink!

1 - 31 May

www.australiasbiggestbushwalk.org.au

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2024-25

Membership subscriptions are due 1st April 2024. You are not required to sign an Acknowledgement of Risk form on renewal, however you are advised that payment of fees implies acceptance of the risks involved in any activity you may undertake as a member of MBW. Members are asked to read the following wording regarding insurance cover through Bushwalking Australia.

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

To minimize risks I will endeavour to ensure that:

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

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

RENEWAL SLIP

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

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

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

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

Fees (Please circle your membership category) *

Single member: \$45 **	Concession: \$34* (Proof required ***)
Couple/Family: \$90 **	Concession: \$68* (Proof required ***)

- Notes:** * Members who have nominated their Home Club as other than Melbourne Bushwalkers and paid the insurance cover to their Home Club should only pay 50% of the appropriate fee noted above.
 ** **Members who currently receive their copies of 'NEWS' via postal mail should add \$40.00 to continue.** No new hard copy subscriptions will be accepted.
 *** Holders of a Seniors Card or Commonwealth Healthcare Card only are not eligible for a concession.

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

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

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

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

Street Address:

Suburb / Postcode

Tel: [H] [W] Mobile:

Email: Home Club:

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

Mt Buffalo: Exploration of two rugged gorges

- 23-24 March 2024

Francesca Coles,
(New member of VMTC)
Photos by Josh Song

Six of us gathered in Porepunkah on a balmy Friday evening for a weekend of walking below Mt Buffalo. Ray (the walk leader), Paul, Cameron and Francesca arrived in time for a satisfying meal at the Porepunkah Pub, while Joshua and Sandra joined us later at our shared basecamp at the Riverside Caravan Park.

We rose early on Saturday to begin the first of two separate days of gorge exploration, parking and beginning our walk to Twin Falls Gorge from about halfway up the mountain. We headed north along a well-graded forest road before diving down westward into the valley through open bushland. On the way, we came across a Parks Victoria fauna monitoring camera with lure, though there was no indication of which animal was under study.

We emerged onto Buffalo Creek just below Twin Falls then made our way upstream, criss-crossing the creek and boulder-hopping up to the falls themselves; a lovely spot to arrive at on a mellow autumn morning. Ray pointed out the special geology of our location: a contact zone between the granite and the adjoining sedimentary rock that had been metamorphosed by the heat of the molten granite. There were very clear lines between the 2 rock types, and excellent examples of Xenoliths - fragments of the sedimentary rock that had fallen into the molten granite, all of 200 million years ago!



We halted further up for lunch and a deliciously icy swim in one of many pools gouged out of the granite. Our return to the cars was via a carefully selected spur which led up to a ridge where we rejoined the road for an easy few kilometres to finish.

On Sunday, after a car shuffle to leave return transport at Mt Buffalo Chalet, our walk began from Eurobin Falls, much visited for its spectacular cascades. We left the track for wilder terrain along Crystal Brook. The going became rough as we pushed upwards through forest and scrub, scrambling over boulders and rock hopping beside the water. There were many lovely waterfalls, pools and ferny glades to draw us on. As we rose higher the massive walls of the gorge with their granite-tor ramparts loomed high above us. We climbed far enough for a superb view of Crystal Brook Falls, which plummet 200 metres down from the Gorge rim. With a dry start to the autumn, water levels were low, which helped with picking a navigable route through the upper gorge.

The walk had a spectacular finish via a steep route up the south side of the gorge, replete with ropes and recently installed ladder for scaling steep pitches. Some among us reminisced about rock-climbing exploits on the surrounding walls. On the way up, Ray introduced us to Buffalo Sallee, a species of small Eucalypt endemic to the Buffalo plateau.



We popped out at the Chalet carpark around 4:30pm, dispersing to Euroa and Melbourne after a wonderful and sociable weekend of walking in the unique environment of our beloved Mount Buffalo - in perfect autumn conditions. We all agreed that the walk postponement in October, due to heavy rains, had been a wise decision for these challenging off-track walks along rocky watercourses.

Easter at Falls Creek - 28 March-1 April 2024

Simon de Bruyn

There was a slight chill breeze as we started arriving at the cosy Alpha Lodge at Falls Creek on Thursday night. However, any sense that we'd get a cold reception from the alpine country was quickly dispelled on Friday morning, when the warm sun rose and we set out on our first walk of the weekend along the Big River Fire Trail off the Bogong High Plains Road.



The high country did its usual unpredictable thing and decided that a cloudless sky and a blazing sun would be the order of the day. My asthma flared up badly, especially due to some off-track we did that stirred up the pollen. But all in all, it was a fantastic hike along the Aqueduct Trail with one group finishing at Langford Gap carpark, while our group walked the full 19km or so on to Wallaces Hut, which proved to be a pastorally serene ending to the day.



I don't have much to tell from Saturday as the asthma induced on the previous day put me totally out of action. All I know is that the two groups walked the pole line to Tawonga Huts Campground, and one group tackled Mt Jaithmathang.

By Sunday morning I was much better and I chose the easy walk. We split from the more intrepid group at the Heathy Spur carpark just over the dam wall and meandered past Mt Nelse and down a gentle incline to encounter the wonderfully restored Johnston Hut.

This was a big surprise. We didn't turn up to an empty hut but to an active campsite -- and three generations of a family staying there; all using a comfy annexed area of the hut not usually available to regular visitors.

We were welcomed, served brewed tea and coffee, and invited to relax and use the comforts of the hammock swung between trees. We definitely did!

The trip back unfortunately was less enjoyable for some. Our new friend at the hut had recommended some off-track bush bashing to visit a waterfall. We set out in an exploratory mood but soon we were wondering who'd really been given the 'difficult' hike for that day, especially after we arrived back at the lodge more than an hour after the other group!!

Sunday night was a fantastic convivial time at the lodge. People shared food, fun and conversation. It was a great end to an amazing long weekend.



Bungalow Spur-Feathertop-Bon Accord Spur - 12-14 April 2024

David Cash

After the recent autumn break rains, this weekend promised to be fine with good walking temperatures. The walk kicked off at the Bungalow Spur trailhead on the outskirts of Harrietville with a group of 13 walkers. We had a moderately steep walk up through tall moist eucalypt forest thinning and drying as we reached our lunchtime goal of Federation Hut. Plenty of plant and bird spotting kept our minds off the exertions of the 1100 metre ascent. Having reached the saddle at Federation Hut a pleasant lunch was had with views onto the Razorback before the final ascent up Mt Feathertop.



Although a bit hazy for distant mountain spotting we couldn't have been luckier with our walk up Feathertop. We had the spectacle of a glider and paraglider soaring close to the summit and us. The drama of this had us all reaching for our cameras. The paraglider pilot looked comfortable although very focused on the job in the small capsule suspended from the glider. I was amazed to learn later he had flown up from Bright on thermals and was



about to land and camp with full camping gear on board. Despite the haze we could still see all the major peaks of the high plains including Mt Bogong. So exhilarating being on such an exposed, pointy summit with 360 degree views.

The plan was to collect water and then proceed on to the top of the Diamantina Spur for a quiet camp among the trees. On hearing that a large group had already setup there it was decided to camp on the rise just above the intersection of the Razorback and Mt Feathertop track. A great decision, the campsite offered

uninterrupted views of Mt Feathertop, the Bogong High Plains, the Buffalo Plateau, a beautiful sunset and night sky full of constellations. Despite the cold many of us stayed up star gazing. A small cairn on a rise above our camp was a memorial to Mollie Hill who died in a skiing accident in the early 1930's.

Sunday promised a scenic walk along the Razorback. We were not disappointed with stunning views and fine weather. Our first destination was the head of the Bon Accord Spur at 1761 metres. A sign at the top with a hand written inscription ominously pointed out the understated distance of the journey we were about to embark on – 9 km against the true 15km. Either way it was a challengingly steep descent. A pleasant lunch in shade at the old Bon Accord Hut site reminded us we were walking the original Mt Hotham route before there was a road. After a further afternoon descent we reached the Ovens River and Harrietville. The weekend was capped off with a lovely dinner at the Seven Creeks Hotel in Euroa. A great weekend walk in the company of Anita, Bettina, Brett, Cathy, Derrick, Fang, Kate, Marie, Matt, Peter, Ros, with many thanks to our leader Gina.



Upcoming activities

May 2024

Thu 2	TOF: Jumping Creek-Stanebrae	Pvt	E	Graham Hodgson
4-5	BTAC: Grampians Boroka Lookout Track	Pvt		Mark Heath
Sat 4	TRG: Navigation with a GPS	Pvt		Robert Ian Mair
Sun 5	DAY: Gunnamatta-Cape Schanck	Bus	E&E/M	Bettina Brill & Bernd Neubauer
Mon 6	MTG: Club Committee Meeting	Pvt		Derrick Brown
Wed 8	DAY: Daylesford: Two Lakes & Sailors Falls	Pvt	E/M	Deb Shand
Sun 12	DAY: Mountain circuit walk, Mt Dandenong	Car	M	Babak Dadvand & Adriana Fari-Palko
Wed 15	SOC: Walking in Africa	Pvt		Fang Fang & Sarah Keyt
17-2	PC: Larapinta Trail - Group 1	Pvt	Hard	Jill Allen
17-19	PC: Langi Ghiran	Pvt	M	Robert Ian Mair
Sun 19	DAY: Tallarook State Forest-Warragul Rocks	Bus	E/M&M	Bernd Neubauer & Helen Takano
Mon 20	MOF: Jells Park & Corhanwarrabul Wetlands	Pvt	E	Robert Ian Mair
Mon 20	SOC: Movie night - The Way, My Way	Pvt		Meredith Quick
Wed 22	DAY: Autumn in the Dandenongs	Pvt	E/M	Jerry Grandage
Thu 23	SOC: 100 Acres Reserve	Pvt	E	Gill Wainwright
24-26	BTAC: Howqua Area Tracks	Pvt		Meredith Quick
Sat 25	DAY: Domino Trail, Trentham	Pvt	E	Helen Graesser
Sun 26	DAY: Blackwood Area	Car	E/M	Judith Shaw
Wed 29	TRG: Lighter Pack Training - Theory 1	Pvt		Ian Langford

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