

MELBOURNE
BUSHWALKERS INC.

ABN 14 396 912 508



THE NEWS

#886

January
2025



Hiking through Summer Alpine flowers - J. Fritze

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 3 February

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:

Kevin Jackson
Daniel Stepanenko
Vida Demayana
Harriet Barrile
Benjamin Barsdell
Sheryl San Jose
Marco Podobnik
Michelle Huang
Karin Michell Wyatt



Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?

Due date for contributions to February News: 21 January
Email: news@mbw.org.au



The Christmas party held on 10 December was a great success, with 141 members catching up and a food spread like we've never seen before that included seafood and ice cream. This is the most members ever to attend a Christmas gathering in our history, and it is not surprising as we now have around 560 full members. A Christmas cake made by Susan Maughan was made for the committee and was delicious! Our thanks to Annemarie Mulder and Meredith Quick along with a great team of helpers.

There were two lucky draws for \$50 vouchers, one for five members who completed the members' survey and the second for three walk leaders who had an entry for each walk that they had led in the preceding twelve months. The winning walk leaders were John Terrell, Helen Dobbyn and Hiroko Nagano. Well done all! Our walk leaders are the most important people in the club and this is the only time that they may receive any reward. I enjoyed the evening and being able to catch up with so many of the members, some of whom I don't get to see very often.



With Christmas just a few days away as I write this I'm thinking of 2025 and what it may bring. It brings our AGM in March for one thing, an important meeting on our calendar. All committee positions are up for re-election and new blood is required! So something for you to ponder as you sit back after the Christmas cheer is a question for you to ask yourself - 'How about I join the committee?' There are eleven meetings a year and some of them are Zoom meetings. Don't be shy, if you think that you can contribute then have a word with me or any of the committee for any of the positions. Newcomers usually start off as a general committee member but not necessarily so.

March 2025 will see a step into history for The News - the March copy will be the last edition to be printed, only digital from then on. At the December committee meeting it was agreed that the physical copies held at the clubrooms would be dumped in the interests of space - all editions are now digitised. So maybe hang on to those copies that you have tucked away, they may become valuable one day! I have a copy of the first edition that we printed (May 1990) - before then The News was produced on a Gestetner machine, you may have to ask an oldie what this was!

We have some lovely walks on the program to start off the New Year including those favourites of mine, Mt Bogong and Mt Feathertop, so good walking and see you in 2025!



Wild flowers of the Alps - J. Fritze

January Safety and Risk Reminders



This month the main theme is “**being a friendly and welcoming club**” and the **members responsibilities** that underpin this aim. How we behave towards each other (and the Leader and Whip!) helps determine how good a time everyone has in all their club activities e.g. outdoor, social, volunteer roles etc. While many of us make great friends in the Club it is easy to forget that, maybe when we joined, it took more time than we hoped to be ‘included’!

The Code of Conduct: (MOD): As a legally Incorporated Organisation we have a number of obligations in how we operate our Club. One of these requirements is to have a **Code of Conduct** that makes it clear what behaviours are expected and what will not be tolerated on outdoor activities, social gatherings and meetings including Committee Meetings, etc. It applies to everyone as a member, leader or in any of the club’s numerous voluntary roles people are involved in.

Please read the following carefully and reflect on how well you and your friends adhere to these principles:

- Do you make new members feel welcome?
- Do you make an effort to include people who are on their own in your group’s conversations? Why not just approach them and say hello and invite them to join in?
- Encourage people who may be struggling?
- Do you provide support for new trainee leaders?
- Do you ‘call out’ inappropriate behaviour?
- Do you treat others with dignity, respect and listen to their concerns?
- Do you argue in public with the leader?
- Do you treat the leader as if they are a paid employee of a travel company?

Participants Responsibilities on Club Activities: Club activities require individual responsibility from all participants. The responsibilities listed in the document are intended to ensure a safe and enjoyable time for everyone. They cover a wide range of items including: checking the grading of the activity fits your capabilities, carrying all the relevant equipment you need including a personal first aid kit with your medications, and following all reasonable instructions from the Leader and Whip.

The **Code of Conduct** and **Participants Responsibilities on Club Activities** documents are reprinted in this News – please read them!. They are part of the **Clubs By-Laws**, copies of which, along with our **Rules**, are always available on the Club Website.



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



CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Statement

Every person participating in the activities of Melbourne Bushwalkers should strive to ensure:

- The inclusion of every person regardless of their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture or religion
- There are opportunities for people with a range of abilities to participate
- They demonstrate respect towards each other, the organization and the broader community
- There is a safe and inclusive environment for all, free from violent or abusive behavior
- There is protection from sexual harassment or intimidation

2. Breaches of the Code

The following behaviors are considered to be breaches of the Code:

- Violent or abusive behavior or vilification of any kind towards another person or the organization
- Discrimination against another person based on their age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, religion or any other irrelevant personal characteristic
- Victimization of another person for exercising their rights through this Code of Conduct
- Failure to maintain a safe environment free from violence, abuse, discrimination and harassment

3. Responsibility of Individuals

It is the responsibility of individuals bound by this Code of Conduct to:

- Make themselves aware of the standards of behavior required
- Be accountable for their behavior
- Report breaches of this Code to a Committee Member or Leader

4. Responsibility of Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.

It is the responsibility of the Committee to adopt, implement and comply with this Code of Conduct and treat any breach or complaint made in an unbiased, sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner. Any breaches of this Code will be dealt with in accordance with the Club's By-Laws and Rules.

5. Policy Implementation

The Code of Conduct will be published on the Club's website, be printed in the Club's Newsletter and copies made available in the Club's meeting room

6. Related Policy Documents

- Melbourne Bushwalkers (Inc.) - By-Laws
- Melbourne Bushwalkers (Inc.) - Rules of Association
- Melbourne Bushwalkers (Inc.) - Participants' Responsibilities on Club Activities
- Bushwalking Victoria - Code of Conduct



PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSIBILITIES ON CLUB ACTIVITIES

Club activities require individual responsibility from all participants. The guidelines listed below are intended to ensure a safe and enjoyable time for everyone.

- Check the grading of the activity and read the grading definition in the Preview. If in doubt as to your ability to undertake the activity, check with the Leader before you commit to participate.
- Persons under 18 years are required to be accompanied by a parent or authorized guardian.
- Bring all the correct clothing, equipment, sun protection, food and water with you. (A minimum of 2 liters of water per day should be carried although this is dependent on terrain and weather conditions. If in doubt about what to bring ask the Leader at booking time or before departure.
- Participants on all Club lilo, rafting and canoe activities are required to use buoyancy vests and helmets.
- Arrive at the meeting place in time to depart at the time stated.
- Ensure your health and fitness is suitable for the activity. Advise the Leader if you feel unwell or suffer an injury during the activity.
- If you suffer a medical condition that may require assistance or medication, ensure you advise the leader, carry appropriate instructions and that the leader or a friend know where these are located.
- Ensure you carry the Club's green Personal Health Details card at all times when participating in a Club activity, preferably in the outside pocket of your pack.
- Ensure you have ambulance cover as evacuation from remote areas is expensive.
- Follow all reasonable instructions from the Leader and "Whip".
- Provide assistance and support to others on the activity.
- Be aware of and comply with the Club's Code of Conduct and demonstrate respect and consideration for other participants
- Stop at all track/road junctions, signs, or whenever there is doubt about the correct route and wait for instructions from the Leader.
- Carry a personal First Aid kit, whistle, torch, pen, paper, matches in waterproof container
- The code when using a whistle is (1 blast – acknowledge, 2 blasts – stop and regroup, 3 blasts – EMERGENCY).
- The Whip is there to assist slower members and to ensure that nobody is left behind. If you need to leave the track for a toilet stop, inform someone nearby and leave your pack on the track.
- Care for the environment – minimize plant damage, don't cut track corners, take your rubbish home, keep at least 100 meters away from watercourses for toilet stops and bury toilet waste at least 15cm below the surface.
- Clean shoes after walking in Phytophthora areas (70% methylated spirits/bleach to 30% water).
- When camping, fuel stoves are encouraged, fires should be kept to a minimum size, no rubbish burnt in fires, only dead wood used for firewood and fires to be completely extinguished before bedtime if conditions warrant and when leaving the campsite.
- Don't pollute streams with shampoo, soap, detergent or food waste. Ensure washing is done away from streams, lakes, etc.
- Ensure you leave details of the activity and names and telephone numbers of the Club Emergency Contacts (noted on the quarterly Activity Program) with your family or friends and make them aware of the emergency procedures.

Summer Seasonal Fire Outlook

The Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Summer 2024 shows an increased risk of fire for large areas of Australia with this Summer’s Victorian fire outlook having more higher risk areas than normal. The full Australian Seasonal Fire Outlook can be found [here](#).

Below is the summary and detailed extract for Victoria:

Summary:

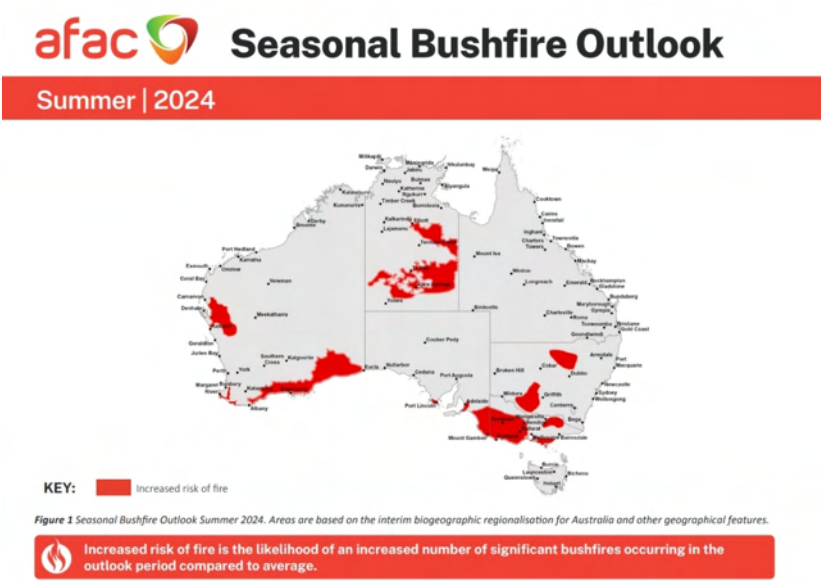
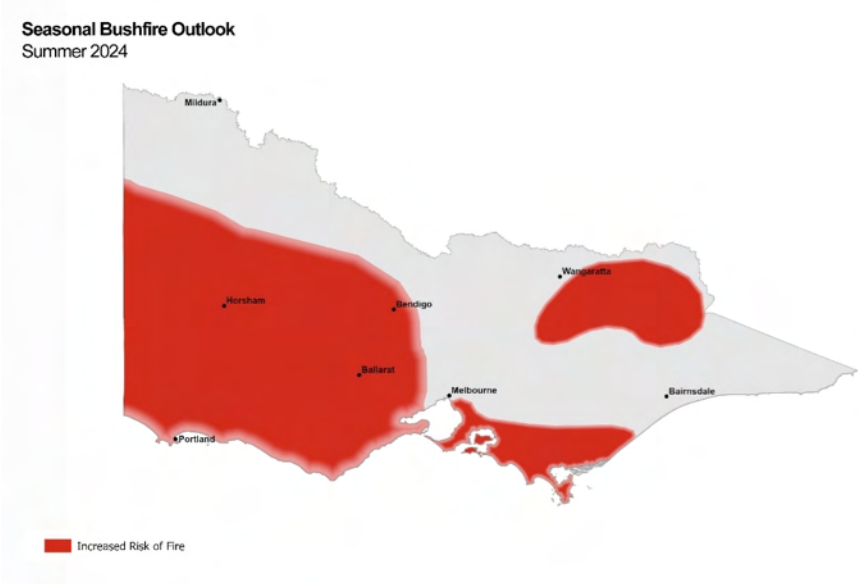
- Increased risk of fire is indicated for most of Victoria’s west, but also north-east Victoria, and south-west Gippsland, including Mornington Peninsula and greater Melbourne
- Fire authorities will continue to monitor conditions for any changes in fire risk

Severe longer term (18-month) rainfall deficiencies persist across southwest Victoria, resulting in a substantial amount of dead and dry plant material within forests which will make it easier for fires to start and spread.

A lack of autumn-winter-spring rainfall has also affected much of western and northeast Victoria as well as significant parts of greater Melbourne, Mornington Peninsula and southwest Gippsland, where fuel availability in forests and heathlands is higher than normal and fire occurrences are higher than average

While the outlook has higher chance of warmer maximum temperatures, rainfall may be variable, potentially ranging from above average to below average. If a wetter outlook eventuates, fire activity may be moderated in early summer, but a drier pattern may translate to continued increase in fuel availability across much of the State and potential for long-duration fire events over summer.

An increased risk of fire is indicated for most of western Victoria, as well as for southwest Gippsland, including Mornington Peninsula, greater Melbourne and north-east Victoria. The current level of landscape dryness in these areas is strong enough that without significant rainfall, the flammability of fuels in forests, woodlands and heathlands will remain high with elevated potential for fires to start and spread. Grasslands in these areas have superficial green-up, concealing underlying dryness (known as 'green drought'). Curing is likely to advance earlier than normal in these areas.



Elsewhere across the state, the fire risk potential is assessed to be normal, noting that, at any time, areas dominated by drier forests, woodlands and heathlands (inland and coastal) can produce super-fast running fires under the onset of hot, dry and windy conditions. Landscape conditions will be monitored to identify significant changes to fire risk.

Going the extra mile

Just over an hour into the last Sunday bus walk for 2024 the whip, Neil O'Reilly, blew his whistle twice wanting the group to allow for regrouping. He then rang me, the leader, and advised that one of the walkers was struggling with the heat and hills. As the route to where the bus was parked was mainly on the flat, it was decided that the walker would be walked out to the bus. Neil kindly agreed to escort her. The pair decided, rather than wait for three to four hours for the rest of the group to finish the walk, to make their way to the nearest station and home. Neil kept me up to date with their progress and their decision to return home.

Thank you Neil for going the extra mile.

Halina Sarbinowski

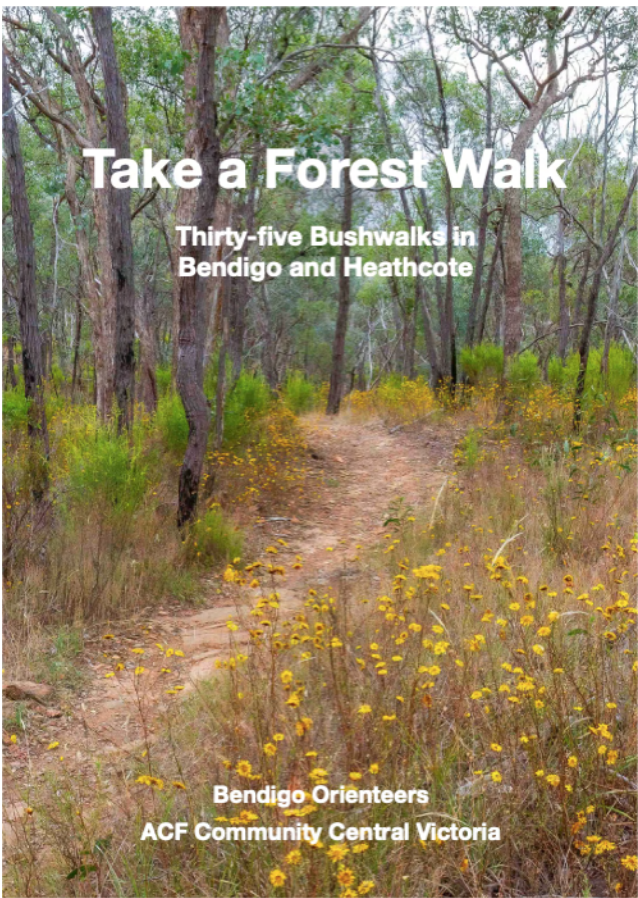


“Take a Forest Walk” - Bendigo bushwalking guide

Bendigo’s new bushwalking guidebook has just been reprinted after the initial print run sold out. "Take a Forest Walk" has been written to inspire you to get out and walk in the historic mining areas, forests and woodlands of Bendigo and Heathcote. There is so much to explore! This book is suitable for a wide range of people. The 35 graded walks range from 1.5-10km, and are designed to be completed in half a day or less. They could act as a starting point for longer walks or be combined if you are visiting the Bendigo or Heathcote areas.

This book was co-published by the Central Victoria ACF Community group and Bendigo Orienteers. The detailed maps and notes are very clear to follow and the book is illustrated throughout with photos of the local bushland.

Copies are available now at local Bendigo (Bookish) and Castlemaine (Stonemans) bookshops and visitor centres in Bendigo and Heathcote, or email centralvictoriaacf@gmail.com to pick up or post.



Wild flowers of the Blue Mountains - R. I Mair

Blue Mountains Base Camp – 16-24 November 2024

Jeanette Burnett

It is said that the Blue Mountains is like the Grampians on steroids. Yup. There were scenic lookouts and boardwalks and tourist attractions. Imposing cliffs, beautiful waterfalls and green forests. Difficult and challenging trails with steps up and steps down and not a whole lot in between. Great camaraderie in completing so much in not enough days.

Being so accessible from Sydney, there was a smorgasbord of tourist attractions as well as \$15 steak nights at the local pub. It was fantastic to see massive cliff faces and sheer drop waterfalls from the many well maintained and constructed vantage points on the cliff top trail. The cable cars took us down to the lush valley floor and back again. There was also the touristy experience of seeing large vinyl dinosaurs scattered along a National Park boardwalk. Their recorded sounds were similar to the moans of constipated aardvarks (serious).



We, however, soon ventured beyond these areas and tackled the many, many rock steps and bridges and steep ladders that John Chapman so obviously enjoys. It was a challenge and even the fittest calves were screaming at their owners by the end of the trip. There were track closures due to storms but Halina, with the help of John and Ian, managed to navigate the changes and the days were a great selection of interesting trails. Wentworth falls shrouded in an eerie mist was amazing.

Descending to a rainforest, we were surrounded by deafening cicadas, leeches and an amazing display from a flock of lyrebirds. This was a highlight as the birds just did their thing and sang their songs. It was so special. Fortunately, none of them have put aardvark moans on their playlist.

The trails were hard on the legs. The easiest were the “stride, stride, step, step, step” as you could get into a sort of rhythm. The hardest were 100’s of straight up and down rock or metal or pine pole steps. The Furber steps became our yardstick as to degree of difficulty. We climbed these at the end of a hard day in the humidity. The Devil’s Hole Walk was impressive. We took an hour to descend for 500m but the sheer beauty and adrenaline rush of being in such a narrow drop down the cliffs was worth it.

The transverse trails were often chiseled into the cliffs with massive rock overhangs just above your hat. Signs told walkers not to linger in some areas as rock falls can happen. Mmmm. The massive wind carved





encouragement and respect within the group as we climbed up and down those cliff faces via stairs or ladders or scrambling. The Katoomba YHA was comfortable and a good base to relax with a wine or two after a day on the trail. Its location provides great access to supplies, transport and trail heads.

Halina did an amazing job pulling this trip together and I thank her and the whole wonderful group of fellow hikers for sharing my first ever trip to the Blue Mountains.

cliffs at Govett's Leap were a highlight as were the Empress Falls entertaining us while we ate lunch.

It was a team effort. It was not easy walking. Fortunately, the obsessed orchid hunters in the group provided some of us with many, many welcome photo stops. The stunning native flowers or a pair of red-tailed cockatoos were spotted and given time for admiration. There was a quiet



Rubicon Valley and Lake Eildon – 6-8

December 2024

Stephanie Nortier

Some of the crew left Melbourne early Friday and met up at the El Lago restaurant. Nestled right in front of the Eildon lake, we sat outside sipping our drinks to refresh ourselves due to hot weather and at the same time enjoying the view of the lake with the boats calmly floating while waiting for our lunch to be served.

Later in the afternoon we settled into our respective accommodation. The group caught up later in the



evening before dinner chatting away when suddenly the rain bucketed down with no warning, the cicadas went silent and it was the beginning of a long rainy night.

Saturday, we explored Rubicon Valley. It's a historic area for a hydroelectric power scheme. We followed the Rubicon Aqueduct Track and crossed multiple wooden bridges. Twenty minutes before finishing the walk we got caught in heavy rain but we kept smiling, the walk was about to be complete.





Sunday, we walked to north Lake Eildon. The sun was back, the colour of the water was beautiful to look at, photographers shot the picturesque blue water of the lake and its surroundings. We came across some wildlife, a shy echidna and wandering wombat, both tried to hide and look invisible. At the final stage of the walk, there was an endless steep hill to climb but it was worth the effort, a 360 degrees view waiting for us.

It was a memorable hike shared with a lovely group, leader and whip.

Square Head Jinny-Picture Point Spur -

December 13-15 2024

John Fritze and Carol Ward

This was billed as a challenging walk, and for some, the challenges began even before we started walking. First, our coffee boost from the Produce Store in Mansfield was unavailable, but, as luck would have it, we stumbled across a small café on the other side of the road that could provide the three-shot something-or-other needed to revive our devastated Trish.

Next, the seemingly endless drive on winding, unsealed forestry roads to reach our starting point at the Upper Howqua Camping Area highlighted another challenge of remote walking when one of our cars arrived with a flat tyre. Again, we were in luck, another Melbourne Bushies group was already at the site and quickly attended to our tyre.

Our first day's walk involved a 900-meter climb over Square Head Ginny to a campsite near Mt Lovick. Gina had considered doing this entirely off-track but, in the end, decided to do the first bit along the road. This was uneventful. Upon leaving the road we faced a steepish climb through light scrub to the first cliff line. Some of us found this tiring due to the hot, humid weather and our ever-increasing ages.



Negotiating the cliff lines was one of the highlights of the walk, and Gina was determined to make it as entertaining as possible. When we arrived, we attempted a challenging route straight up but had to give it a miss when we reached a point where all that stood between us and death was a clump of grass. We then skirted the cliff line to a point where some of us had climbed previously. It didn't offer as much clean rock scrambling as Gina would have liked, and we had to pull ourselves up through the occasional prickly bush, but it was nevertheless a rewarding climb.



Once on top, we found ourselves in a wonderful landscape of mature, unburnt snow gums growing over lush green grass interspersed with waves of golden pea and clumps of other wildflowers. Add to this perfect weather, great company, and 360-degree views over



unspoilt ranges, and you can get an idea of how we felt as we made our way along the ridges and spurs to our campsite at the base of Mt Lovick.

It was a beautiful campsite on a little grassy clearing among the snow gums. We thoroughly enjoyed our well-earned meals but went to bed early due to the lack of comfortable seating. In the morning, our tents were dry, and the sunlight streaming through the snow gums as we had breakfast was simply magical.

We headed off at 8:00 am., climbed over Mt Lovick, and followed Bluff Track to Lovick's Hut. This is a very horsified area, and we were reluctant to visit the hut but found it well-maintained and spotlessly clean, although

there was no escaping the smell of horse poo. From there we continued to Picture Point via the viewpoint at the top of Helicopter Spur. Those in the know could point out the names of mountains and walking routes in every direction.

From Picture Point, we took a little side trip to an ancient snow gum we had visited previously. It was a sad experience; our old friend was dying limb by limb.

The route back to our cars involved negotiating some cliff sections and tricky-to-navigate spurs. Gina took this as an opportunity to mentor Andreas on the finer points of navigation using only paper maps and plastic compasses. This is where John became unstuck. On finding a route through the first cliff line, he may have led Andreas astray. Fortunately, he still had some misdemeanour credits left over from a previous walk and didn't get Jacque into trouble again.

Our descent back to the cars was through the same delightful terrain we had experienced on top until we reached the tree line. Here we encountered tall forest with fairly dense undergrowth. Fortunately, we were able to follow animal tracks for most of the way and got back just in time for a quick dip in the freezing cold river. Then it was back to the Produce Store. We arrived 10 minutes before closing time, but thankfully, they were still happy to serve us.

From here, Carol and John made a beeline home while the others stopped for tea along the way. Our thanks go to Gina for creating another interesting walk and to Trish, Jacque, Andreas, Geoff and Celesta for making it so enjoyable.



Mt Howitt via Howitt and Stanley Name

Spurs - 13-15 December 2024

Matthias Frey

We started our walk with a stroll through beautiful rainforest along (and many times across) the Howqua River. Soon we left the river for a steep and at times challenging ascent up the mountain. After many hours of climbing, our efforts were rewarded with stunning 360 degree views of the Victorian Alps as we made it past the tree line and reached the West Peak of Mount Howitt.



We enjoyed the views during an extended and well-deserved lunch break before we set out to make our remaining way to camp. The walk across the main peak of Mount Howitt was leisurely compared to the morning climb and had a nice mixture of sweeping views, alpine flora and fauna, and even a little bit of forest.

To our surprise, the Macalister Springs campsite was empty as we reached it (and did not fill up too much until nightfall), so we had first pick of the best spots. The site

boasts an impressive hut for emergencies, a spring with fresh mountain water and a toilet which features (somewhat bizarrely) a panoramic window.



The second day was even more spectacular (and challenging) than the first. We started it off with a walk across the Crosscut Saw (almost) all the way to Mount Buggery with fantastic views of the surrounding mountains. After lunch, we began an arduous descent down into the valley, climbing rocks and logs and bashing through scrub. As the forest became denser, we eventually rejoined the trail along the Howqua River. We had to crisscross the river once again, but it did not take too long before we could behold the welcome sight of the last river crossing which marked the starting point of the walk.

The walkers in the group were Angus, Ros, Cameron, Wen and Matthias who were led by Hiroko and Mark. A big thank you is due to them for organising this amazing and challenging weekend for us!



Upcoming activities

January 2025

Wed 1	SOC: New Year's Day BBQ	Pvt	E	Susan Maughan
Thu 2	DAY: Yarra River-Flockhart Reserve-Dights Falls	Pvt	E	Jopie Bodegraven
Sun 5	DAY: Bostock Reservoir	Car	M	Quentin Tibballs
Wed 8	DAY: Macleod-Darebin Creek	Pvt	E/M	David Arnold
11-13	MNT: Mt Buffalo National Park	Pvt		Mike Grant (BTAC)
Sun 12	DAY: Point Nepean & London Bridge	Bus	E&E/M	Bernd Neubauer & Grant Roger
17-19	PC: Mt Alexander-Coliban Aqueduct	Pvt	E	Robert Ian Mair
Sun 19	DAY: Macedon Circuit Walk	Car	E/M	Babak Dadvand & Adriana Fari-palko
Mon 20	DAY: Maroondah Aqueduct Circuit	Pvt	E	Robert Ian Mair
Wed 22	DAY: Sorrento Back Beach, Mornington Peninsula	Pvt	E/M	Silvia Grande
Thu 23	SOC: Back Creek Res., Nettle & Glenburn Parks	Pvt	E	Merilyn Whimpey
24-27	PC: Mt Bogong via Quartz Ridge	Pvt	M/H	Hiroko Nakano
24-27	MNT: Track to Mt Howitt from Howitt carpark	Pvt		Joe Van Beek (BTAC)
Sun 26	DAY: You Yangs	Car	E	Quentin Tibballs
Wed 29	SOC: Alpe-Adria Trail-Glaciars to the Sea	Pvt		Robert Ian Mair
31-2	PC: Central Grampians Loop	Pvt	M	Robert Ian Mair

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