

MELBOURNE  
BUSHWALKERS INC.

ABN 14 396 912 508



# THE NEWS

#891

June  
2025



Passing an ancient snow gum on the King Billys - C. Fong



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## 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](http://www.melbournebushwalkers.org.au)

Next committee meeting: Monday 2 June

The News of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc (The News) is published monthly, and is the official newsletter of Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc.

Editor: Deb Shand

Calls for expressions of interest for club activities and extended trips, walk reviews, articles, poems, news items, photographs of Club events, reports of new gear, book/ movie reviews, letters to the editor, advertisements, et cetera are always welcome (maximum 400 words recommended). However, the Editor reserves the right to edit contributions where space, clarity or propriety dictate, and to maintain editorial consistency.

Note: photographs should be sent as separate high resolution files which are capable of being edited.

**Please send your contributions as unformatted text files by email to [news@mbw.org.au](mailto:news@mbw.org.au)**

**Closing date for receipt of material for The News is the 21st of the month.**

Advertisements should relate to bushwalking (e.g. gear, maps, trips, tours, health and fitness etc.). These may be published subject to space availability and Editor's discretion. For current advertising rates contact the Editor at [news@mbw.org.au](mailto:news@mbw.org.au)

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## New Members

We welcome these new members to the club:

Katia D'Hulster  
Rosa Azulsky  
Louise Collins  
Yu Ren  
Dongqi Lin  
Vajira Wijesekara  
Janaka Hirimuthugoda



## Whoops!

Derrick Brown

My report of a walk based on Native Dog Flat in the May edition of this newsletter contained an error! An observant reader noted that I reported that the aircraft crash site at Cowombat Flat in NSW was that of the Southern Cloud, a passenger aircraft. This information was derived from my map which clearly and accurately marks the crash site - of another plane! The crashed aircraft at Cowombat Flat is in fact that of a military aircraft, a Douglas DC-3, that crashed on August 24, 1954 due to engine failure. One man died and there were three survivors.

The Southern Cloud (not to be confused with the Southern Cross, a famous aircraft that also crashed) was an Avro X passenger aircraft on a regular flight that crashed in 1931 but not found until 1958. All eight people on board died.

We have a number of crash sites in Victoria and NSW and our bush walks have taken me to a number of them, including one on Mt Torbreck only last October. Thanks to Geoff Mattingley for spotting the error.

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

Due date for contributions to July News: 21 June

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



Dear members,

I would like to draw your attention to our resources:

As we edge closer to winter, our walk program accommodates the shorter days and colder weather. There are walks closer to Melbourne, especially in The Dandenongs and Bayside, plus a few base camps and pack carrying trips for the hardier. These are led by experienced people, quite a few with impressive mileage in their CV.

In addition to the talented human resources, I would like to remind you of the many helpful links on our website. Logging into the "Members' Area" will lead you to dehydrating workshops, archival photos, walk reports galore, and a plethora of statistics that make very interesting reading. On the subject of reading, a reminder of a special resource located in the Mission to Seafarers, and that's our library. Now is the perfect time to thank our outgoing library officer, Cecily Hunter.

Other links include: the Wednesday night duty roster, a complete list of Club Officers should you need to contact anyone with a specific question or concern, the guidelines for submitting trip photos, and, of course, your membership renewal form!

Finally, I encourage you to look up the "external resources" in the Members Downloads, where you will find a map reading guide by Geoscience Australia, and Bushwalking Victoria's "Tread Softly Brochure" and "Walk Safe" booklet.

Susan Maughan  
President



## Call for volunteers to help setup a Bushwalking Victoria "Club Connections" Facebook group

Bushwalking Victoria is working to establish a Private 'Clubs Forum' Facebook Group to facilitate communication directly between Victorian walking clubs. This private forum will have a number of benefits for clubs to e.g.

- share any excess capacity clubs may have for lodge/base camp trips
- share experiences of third party accommodation/tour providers
- share first aid training in order to satisfy minimum numbers

Over the coming months, BWV will set up the Facebook Group as a trial, however we need 2-3 Facebook savvy volunteers from clubs to help with small amounts of administration. If you would be willing to help, please contact Richelle at BWV: [eo@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au](mailto:eo@bushwalkingvictoria.org.au).

Andreas Meister, Secretary



## Spotlight on ... Jean Giese, OAM, Life Member

*(This is the first of what is planned as a series of interviews with club members where Derrick Brown asks members about their experience with the Melbourne Bushwalkers. And who better to kick off the series than Jean Giese?)*

**Derrick Brown (DB):** Jean, you have been a bushwalker for many years. Tell me how you started.

**Jean Giese (JG):** It was 1974, my husband had just died three months earlier and I was in Box Hill hospital with a broken pelvis. A woman friend came to visit me and gave me a magazine to read. It was 'Walk', produced by the Melbourne Bushwalkers. I lay in bed and read about these exciting walks that they did and I thought "That's what I'll do when I'm better" as I was looking to reconstruct my life. I recall the first walk. Someone was minding the children, I got the train, met the group of walkers and got on a van. All I had to do was to take my lunch, I didn't have to do anything, I couldn't stop smiling.

**DB:** And you've never looked back! So that means that you've been a member for more than fifty years!

**JG:** Yes, I was 46 when I joined.

**DB:** Then at some point you got into pack-carrying walks?

**JG:** Yes, Sylvia Andrews was telling me how wonderful the weekend walks were and I thought, "OK, that sounds like me". Then I thought that perhaps I should know where I'm going first so I went on a Club navigation course and learned how to use a map and compass.

**DB:** How did you get on?

**JG:** I'd been brought up in WA to be afraid of the bush because people got lost easily, but it was great. I found out you could go out into the bush on your own and know where you were.

**DB:** So that gave you confidence?

**JG:** Absolutely! It was one of those moments. My first pack carry was led by Grahame Wills-Johnson, it was on the Murray. He would call out "five minutes" before we got moving and he left exactly at that time, so I learned about punctuality, you had to be ready on time.

**DB:** And later, you began to lead walks, didn't you?

**JG:** Yes, Art Terry came with me on my first preview, and many more later, and I learnt much from him.

**DB:** What walks really stand out for you?

**JG:** Tasmania is a stand-out. I did the Cradle Mountain walk early on, fabulous.

**DB:** You also tried skiing, didn't you?

**JG:** Yes, but coming from WA I hadn't any snow experience so maybe it was a bit late to start at age 60. I went on a beginners trip, then I went into Wilky (Wilkinson Lodge). It was icy, so I took my skis off as I couldn't

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## Noticeboard

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manage. Then I fell and injured my leg. I got to Wilky but had to sleep downstairs as I couldn't manage the ladder. I thought that I had a twisted ankle but I had broken the fibula. I lasted the week there but had to be taken out by skidoo. There were six skidoos, one out front, outriders and one behind. So embarrassing, they blew whistles to warn the downhill skiers as we approached Falls Creek. I covered my head so they would think that I was dead or something.

**DB:** So here you are, an experienced day walker, weekend and extended trips walker, skilled in navigation and leading, you had become a very confident person, Jean. And then you joined the committee?

**JG:** Yes, I became a general committee member before becoming vice-president. Then the president became ill so I took over, then I was elected president.

**DB:** And you were president from 1991 for four years until 1995 and you were only the third woman president. This was a new experience for you, wasn't it?

**JG:** Yes, I got hold of the Incorporations Act and read about chairing meetings. And I had to know this as we had a controversial time then with the van. Some wanted it sold and some didn't, it was an emotional issue and we had two Extraordinary General Meetings to resolve it. We had a falling out with one or two members.

**DB:** Yes, I remember that was a stressful time. But back to walking - you did some overseas travel didn't you?

**JG:** Yes, I set off on my own to Austria where I met up with a friend of a club member who took me walking in Austria and Switzerland. Then I went on my own to England, to the Lake District. I joined up with the Ramblers walking groups and went to Scotland as well.

**DB:** And I know that you've been to Nepal.

**JG:** Twice! Great adventures, and made easy because I belonged to the bushwalkers. The first time I went by myself for my 60th birthday. The second time was a club trip when I was 65. That included a river rafting trip when one person fell overboard and had to be rescued.

**DB:** Exciting stuff! Your contributions to society were formally recognised both by the club and by London some years ago. Can you tell me about that.

**JG:** The Club made me an Honorary Life Member in 1998 and then in 2022 I was awarded an OAM (Order of Australia Medal) for my work with the Hawthorn U3A (University of the Third Age) for my services to the community, which included the MBW.

**DB:** They were most well-deserved, Jean. The OAM was presented to you by the Governor-General at Government House, I believe?

**JG:** Yes, quite an occasion!

**DB:** As time went by you began slowing down and the pack carrying became more difficult so you started up mid-week walks.

**JG:** Yes, it began with 14km Wednesday walks, then later I added 10km walks on Monday and Thursday, and a social walk of 5km ending with a lunch together.

**DB:** And these all became quite popular and have been running each month ever since. And finally, Jean, what are your key memories of the club?

**JG:** I've just been delighted to think how well everything's gone and what a splendid organisation it is, and the

*continued next page*



opportunities that it gives people. If you learn how to walk and know where you're going, it opens the world to you, doesn't it? It's just fantastic. And I was so impressed with so many people who knew so much about places to go. It's a place where people can go where you don't have to have a partner, you don't have to have special skills. You can just join and follow along, or if you're already skilled up and adventurous, you can do adventurous things. But I think that a lot of people restart their lives somehow after they've been in some sort of trouble, divorce or death or something. I think that's a common thing, in my observation. Because that's what I was doing, trying to reconstruct my life after a major event. So it's been such an important part of my life.

**DB:** And you are such an important part of our history! All-in-all, an unmatched, tremendous contribution over a fifty-year period! Thank you, Jean, for your reflections.

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### Advanced Outdoor Leadership Skills Series

Over the next year or so there will be a series of articles on **advanced outdoor 'leadership skills'** in the News. They are intended for current club leaders who would like to improve their skills, new club leaders, members who walk with family/friends, and just about anyone who wants to grow their outdoor skills for walking, cycling, kayaking etc.

The content is based on a series of reprints/extracts from the **Victorian Bushwalking and Mountain Training Advisory Board Manual** which is now out of print. It was recognised as one of the best books on outdoor leadership. The articles also include one on **Why do groups sometimes make bad decisions?** - this was last printed in 2 parts in the August and September 2024 News.



Each month in the News there will be a link to a different topic. The skill areas to be covered are:

- **THIS MONTH'S LINK:** [Learning to be a leader](#) – skills, attributes etc
- Problem Solving
- Power and influence
- Dealing with conflict
- Understanding group needs
- Situational leadership: how the actions of the leader can relate to the competence of the group
- Delegation: builds on content of online manual, including delegation styles, and barriers to delegation
- Leadership ethics
- Building confidence of individuals and the group: may also be useful for experienced leaders acting as mentors for newer leaders
- Stages of group development (mainly relevant for leaders of multi-day walks)
- Review of leadership theories
- Styles of leadership (covered in detail on the Leaders Training Days)
- Another leadership theory: how the expectations of group members may influence the leader
- Why do groups sometimes make bad decisions?

All these documents have been loaded into the **Training Materials** part of the **Members Downloads** area of the Club Website. If you would like an article ahead of publication in the News, then check out the Club's Website. Later in the year we will run a video session(s) on **Advanced Leadership Skills**.

Feedback, suggestions, comments all welcome!

Mick Noonan, Training Officer. noonan1953@gmail.com

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June Safety & Risk Reminders

Winter is here, so if you're a winter walker check you have an **Emergency Blanket** in your First Aid Kit and learn to identify the signs of **Hypothermia**. We also feature **The Leaders Guide** (Blue Card).



**Carry an Emergency Blanket:** They are made of ultra-thin aluminium foil, only cost a few dollars, are available from a range of outlets including chemists, and weigh next to nothing (around 40gms). They could save your or someone else's life this winter. They can also be used as a heat reflector on the floor of your tent, or to attract searchers.

**Hypothermia:** The gradual onset of the effect of exposure to extreme cold may be overlooked in the early stages. When the body loses heat faster than it can create it and the core temperature is lowered, the condition is known as **hypothermia**. It is responsible for several deaths each year in Australia.

Carry an Emergency Blanket and wear suitable clothing (e.g. not cotton or denim) especially in Winter to ensure you always have adequate protection from the cold particularly when combined with wet and windy conditions. On overnight walks be self-sufficient and do not rely on reaching huts for shelter. Avoid physical exhaustion by walking within your group's capabilities.

For the early warning, mild and severe signs and symptoms, and how to treat Hypothermia see the St Johns Ambulance **Hypothermia First Aid Sheet** in this News. For Bushwalkers additional warning signs can be lagging behind and stumbling. Also, difficulty unwrapping a sweet such as a barley sugar is a simple test for loss of usual co-ordination.

**Severe Hypothermia is a medical emergency** and requires urgent medical attention, Call 000 if possible or else summon Emergency Services as quickly as possible e.g. using a PLB.

**Leaders Guide (Blue Card):** This card is designed to be taken on walks and is a basic guide for all Leaders on what to do before and during a walk. It also has a handy Whips Guide. It complements the leaders Emergency Checklist in last month's News. You can collect one in the Clubrooms or print the version in this News, trim it up and put in a Zip Bag (last updated 2022).

*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


**Leader's Guide**

**BEFORE THE WALK -**

- Appoint a suitable Whip give them a map, and discuss route
- Form a circle, Acknowledgement of Country, Name off, welcome Visitors
- Number off, check total with any other leaders
- Ensure all have seen a Yellow Walker Card and have a Green Health Card
- Introduce Walk, tell people re:
  - No going ahead of leader
  - Stopping and waiting at intersections
  - Always keep the person behind in sight
  - If going for a loo stop leave pack on the track
  - To let Leader know if any problems
  - Care for the environment

**DURING THE WALK -**

- Keep eye on everything especially Visitors
- Stop at Junctions
- Regularly let people catch up
- Regularly check with whip, especially at stops
- Keep people informed of route
- Ensure sufficient breaks, e.g. Morning/afternoon tea, lunch



**IF AN INCIDENT OCCURS**

- Be sure of the problem – don't panic DRSABCD
- Get/keep people together
- Allocate tasks/take appropriate actions
- Seek assistance
- Be aware of leader's rights - you have ultimate authority
- Refer to Emergency Checklist

**Whip's Guide**

**DURING THE WALK**

- Always be in sight of the last person
- At catch-ups make yourself obvious to the leader
- Count at regular intervals, especially at stops, and look to advise leader
- Stop at any packs for the owner to return
- Follow the map
- Assist any stragglers
- Advise leader of any or potential problems e.g. whistle codes
  - 1 blast (acknowledge, 2 blasts (stop & regroup
  - 3 blasts (emergency)
- Generally make leader's job easier

04/2022

**Note:** This leaders Blue Card is available in the Clubroom or print this page and put in a Zip bag

# Workshop: Using your Smartphone for Navigation

Saturday September 13, 9am to 3pm at  
Outdoor Activity Hub Conference Room, Westerfolds Park, Fitzsimmons Lane, Templestowe

**Andrew Robinson**, who runs this very popular one-day Workshop for Bushwalking Victoria, is conducting it for Melbourne Bushwalkers. A number of members have already done this course with BWV and with us in 2022, 2023, and 2024. In this Workshop we will look at how GPS satellite navigation works – the theory, practicalities, advantages and limitations. We will discuss a variety of free smartphone mapping/navigation apps, including Avenza, Organic Maps, and Terra Map. An outdoor practical exercise will be included. Detailed notes, activity sheets and map will be supplied.


Registration for the Workshop opens at 9.00am on Saturday, August 9 and closes at 5.00pm on Saturday, August 30.

*To Register use the link on the Website Activities Program.*

You will need to provide your Name, Mobile Number and Make and Model of your Smartphone. Numbers are limited; this is popular so book early!


Enquiries: [bushnavigationandmaps@iinet.net.au](mailto:bushnavigationandmaps@iinet.net.au) or [noonan1953@gmail.com](mailto:noonan1953@gmail.com)

**IMPORTANT:** After registration, successful applicants will be provided with information on what to bring. They will also receive detailed instructions on phone setup. Preparation and pre-reading **MUST** be completed **BEFORE** the workshop. You must already be familiar with basic map/compass navigation and be conversant with your own smartphone e.g. be able to update software and install new apps.



### First aid fact sheet

## Hypothermia



- DO NOT rub affected areas.
- DO NOT use radiant heat such as fire or electric heaters.
- DO NOT give alcohol.

#### Signs and symptoms

##### Mild

- feeling cold
- shivering
- clumsiness and slurred speech
- apathy and irrational behaviour

##### Severe

- shivering ceases
- difficult to find pulse
- slow heart rate
- loss of consciousness

#### What to do

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 Move the patient to a warm, dry place.
- 3 Help the patient to lie down in a comfortable position. Handle the patient as gently as possible, avoiding excess activity and movement.
- 4 Remove any wet clothing from the patient.
- 5 Place the patient between blankets or in a sleeping bag, and wrap them in an emergency blanket.
- 6 Cover the patient's head to maintain body heat.
- 7 Give the patient warm drinks if they are conscious. Do not give alcohol.
- 8 Place hot water bottles, heat packs and other sources of external heat directly on the patient's neck, armpits and groin. Be careful to avoid burns. Body-to-body contact can be used if other means of rewarming are not available.
- 9 If hypothermia is severe, call **Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance.
- 10 Stay with the patient until medical aid arrives.

**In a medical emergency call Triple Zero (000)**

**DRSABCD** Danger ▶ Response ▶ Send for help ▶ Airway ▶ Breathing ▶ CPR ▶ Defibrillation

You could save a life with first aid training • [www.stjohn.org.au](http://www.stjohn.org.au) • 1300 360 455

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## Going the extra mile

Nominee: Halina Sarbinowski

When a fellow club member incurred a broken wrist in the middle of a club Base Camp, and was unable to drive, Halina cut her participation short and drove the member back to Melbourne, so that she could receive medical treatment. Thanks Halina!

Activity: Thornton Base Camp, 24-27 April (ANZAC weekend)

## Grampians NP Fire recovery

Information from Parks Victoria about recovery from the summer fires in Gariwerd (the Grampians) is available at [this link](#)

(Thanks to Rob Jung for this information)

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## Where have all the wombats gone?

Derrick Brown

Have you been wondering, of late, where all the wombats have gone? I have. Looking back at the many times I've driven up to the High Plains on a Friday evening I was always dismayed to see the dead wombats at the side of the road, being victims of road accidents. They were particularly abundant on the Bright - Tawonga Road that cuts through to Mt Beauty. These days there's none. In one sense that's good, no wombats being killed. Perhaps they have at last learned their kerb-drill? I doubt it, I believe the population has severely declined.

So it was much to my joy that on the recent Anzac weekend basecamp, based at Thornton, we came across evidence of a sizeable wombat population. This was at Devils River, Lake Eildon National Park, where we stopped for lunch. Alongside a large wombat hole was the biggest accumulation of wombat poo that I've ever seen. As wombats are known to be solitary animals this is extremely unusual. Maybe they had recently had an annual gathering? A special party before winter sets in? There were a number of burrows to be seen on our route, meaning that there were many others hidden away. There was one recently excavated in the (dry) riverbank, below the obvious waterline, perhaps dug by an inexperienced youngster.

I was prompted to establish the numbers of wombats in Victoria and I found an article on them (2020) that gave the estimated population as 433,000. They are unevenly distributed, there being hardly any in the western areas of the state. The populations have been disturbed by 2019/2020 bushfires as well as the usual culprits - climate change, urban growth leading to habitat loss, foxes and feral dogs, and disease. Being a rather loveable, uniquely Australian animal there are efforts being made to monitor and assist them and I include a note here in case you'd like to consider becoming involved.

And as a reference to their poo, which as we all know is a unique cuboid shape, I quote here a poem (source unknown) that I came across some years ago.

### The wombat

As you splash along the track,  
eyes alert, ears pinned back,  
You may have seen those queer square turds  
And thought, if not expressed in words,  
The stress of such a defecation  
baffles one's imagination.

But it's not done to entertain us -  
The wombat has an oblong anus.  
So, if your slumber is disturbed  
By cries and screams, don't be perturbed.  
Eyes closed, teeth clenched and racked with pain,  
A wombat's gone and crapped again.



Ref:

- 1.G.W. Heard and D.S.L. Ramsey, Modelling the abundance of the Common Wombat across Victoria, Feb 2020, Arthur Rylah Institute
- 2.WomSAT.org.au



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2025-26

**Membership subscriptions are due 1st April 2025.** 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](mailto: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).
- Cheque and Renewal Slip posted to Membership Secretary, Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc, P.O. Box 1751, Melbourne 3001

**Fees** (Please circle your membership category) \*

<b>Single member:</b> \$45 *	<b>Concession:</b> \$34* (Proof required ** )
<b>Couple/Family:</b> \$90 *	<b>Concession:</b> \$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.  
\*\* Holders of a Seniors Card or Commonwealth Healthcare Card only are not eligible for a concession.  
\*\*\* **Copies of the club newsletter are only available as PDF files downloaded from the website. No hard copy subscriptions are available.**

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

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

( **Note:** Year of Birth is used for statistical purposes only 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]



### Canoeing on the Glenelg River with clouds - 17-21 April 2025

Adriana Fari-Palko

Every time I look up at the sky and see clouds, I remember Thich Nhat Hanh's story about a grain of rice. He reminds us that there's a cloud inside every grain because, without rain, there's no rice.

We didn't eat rice on our Easter canoe trip, but if you think about it, there's a cloud hidden in everything we ate. And *all kinds* of clouds joined us for our three-and-a-half-day adventure on the river.

#### Day 1: Good Friday - Simpsons Landing to Patterson's Canoe Camping Area

We started off under delicate, feathery cirrus clouds, the fancy see-through ones that looked like someone dragged a paintbrush through the sky. At the camp, we packed all our belongings into barrels (very glamorous!) and were dropped off at Simpsons Landing, minus one essential item: car keys, notorious for their forever dives into the Glenelg River!



With the sky above us and the water like a mirror below, we glided along peacefully until we reached Patterson's. We only shared the camp with the wildlife. One particularly enterprising possum managed to break into a tent and make off with a banana! Who knew possums love potassium, too?

#### Day 2: Saturday - Patterson's to George's Rest

The clouds picked up some speed on day 2. You know those puffy cauliflower-shaped clouds? They started popping up as we paddled a short distance to George's Rest.

The weather stayed dry long enough for a few of us to tackle a 12km walk. We thought we had the place to ourselves until sunset, when 13 young campers appeared out of nowhere, bringing plenty of energy and other weeds. Before the party could kick off properly, low, heavy clouds muscled in and opened the floodgates. Nothing quite like a bit of torrential rain to send everyone scurrying back to their tents!

#### Day 3: Sunday - George's Rest to Skipworth Springs

By Sunday, the clouds were racing each other across the sky, driven by strong winds. Our canoes wobbled and swung to the beat of the gusts, so we wisely kept the day's paddle short. By lunchtime, we had our tents up at Skipworth Springs and went for a 6km walk to fetch water from a neighbouring camp. The local stream turned out to be heavy on the 'earthy tones'.

#### Day 4: Monday - Skipworth Springs to the Finish Line

The final day greeted us with thick stratus clouds and





## Along the track

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another good drenching. Soggy but smiling, we made it to the endpoint, grateful for warm cars and dry clothes.

### Conclusion

Heavy rain feels just as wet on a canoe as it does on land, maybe even wetter. But if you ever feel grumpy about getting rained on, just remember there's a cloud hidden in every meal you eat, and an extra one in every sip you take.



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## Low Saddle - Mt McDonald - Mt Clear - The Bluff - Easter 18-21 April 2025

Celesta Fong

This was a joint walk between VMTC and MBW so there was much comingling amongst old friends and new. There were also two other parties on an overlapping trajectory throughout the weekend so there was ample opportunity to socialise, with even some swapping of party members between the groups.



After a quick car shuffle from Refrigerator Gap where we left a vehicle at the trail head to the Bluff walking track, we re-arranged ourselves into three 4-WDs for the 27 km journey to Low Saddle. The logistics for this walk was challenging with Gina putting a call out for 4WD-ers to enable a through walk across some of the most scenic country in the Victorian alps. The route took us along part of the AAWT from Low Saddle to the King Billys before diverging to finish at the Bluff on the last day.

Adding to the logistics was the perennial question of water. As back up, our Leader had organised a water drop of 2L p/person near our first night's camp below the Nobs. Notwithstanding three tireless volunteers walked an extra six kilometres (return) to collect additional resources, coming into camp at dark. In the meantime, others in the party facilitated the pack shuffle of our water collector's packs to camp. By which time we were all somewhat tired and grateful for our sleeping bags, despite the wonderful starry night.



There were superb views over the Nobs, High Cone, Square Top and Mt Clear the following day. The bush telegraph assured us that water was available at Chester's yards, where we caught up with a second VMTC group, that evening. The next day we traversed the King Billys 1 and 2, encountering magnificent ancient snow gums before some of us opted for a detour to Mt Magdala for a somewhat grey panorama of the surrounding peaks. Much to our surprise water was in short supply at our camp below Mt Lovick, though by the time we arrived slightly damp the matter was in hand. Fortunately, the tank at Bluff hut a short distance away was full, so a delivery of this precious commodity arrived courtesy of Roger and his 4WD! Any thought of socialising one last time was put to bed by cool temperatures and rain.



## Along the track

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On our final day, our 4-WD-ers took the low route below Eadley Stoney to expedite the final car shuffle. Gina handed over the leadership baton to a very capable Bernadette who took the main party across the ridgeline and back to cars.

Thank you, Gina, for a tremendous walk and the enormous amount of planning that went into it. It was all very complicated but worked out smoothly, with a little help from everyone involved.



## Easter at Falls Creek - 17-21 April 2025

Glenn Swane

Spending the Easter long weekend in Falls Creek was a great way to enjoy the outdoors, with three days of walking in perfect autumn weather. Our base at Alpha Lodge provided a comfortable retreat, where we could unwind after each day on the trails. Cool mornings turned into warm, sunny afternoons, creating ideal conditions for hiking.



### Friday: Easing In

Friday began with clear skies and fresh mountain air. Once the car convoy was sorted, the group split into two walks—one covering 14km and the other 18km. The terrain was mostly flat, following Big River Track, Marin Track, and Fitzgerald Track.

A break at Fitzgerald Hut offered time to take in the contrast between the area's natural bushland and remnants of pastoral history. The dead Mountain Ash from past bushfires made

for an interesting landscape. Continuing along South East Viaduct Track, we stopped for lunch at a creek crossing. The water was fresh and clear, though too cold for swimming.

The shorter walk wrapped up at Langford Gap, while the longer group pushed on for another 4km, stopping at Wallace Hut before heading back to the lodge to relax in the evening.

### Saturday: Mount Nelse

Another sunny morning greeted us on Saturday as the harder walk headed for Mount Nelse via Heathy Spur Track and Big River Track. The crisp start soon faded as the sun warmed the landscape, and we moved through low bushland into heath terrain.







After a morning tea break, we climbed above the tree line, where the wind picked up and the temperature dropped. At the summit, we paused for lunch, taking in views stretching across the ranges into New South Wales, though haze obscured Mount Kosciuszko. After descending, a group went out for dinner to round off the day.

### **Sunday: A Strong Finish**

Sunday's challenge for the harder group was Mount Jaithmathang, with impressive views across to Mount Buller. The easier walk was actually longer today, winding through Pretty Valley with a stop at Mount Jim for a scenic outlook.

The harder walk followed Fainter Track, stopping for morning tea at Tawonga Huts before continuing through regenerating bushland to the summit. Lunch was tucked away in the rock crevices, providing some shelter from the wind.

Instead of retracing our steps along the road, we took an off-track route back to the lodge for a final evening together. As the sun set, the weather finally turned—rain marked the end of a great weekend.

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## **Thornton Base Camp - 24-27 April 2025**

Thornton is a small town situated in the floodplain of the Goulburn River near Lake Eildon. The central location provides ready access for day walking options in the nearby Eildon National Park, Rubicon Valley and Cathedral Range, without the need for a long and tiring drive each day. The hills are steep and the walks can be challenging. The ANZAC Day long weekend was blessed with fine weather and our band of 16 set out to make the most of the walking options from our comfortable accommodation in Thornton.



### **Day 1 – Jerusalem Creek (Lake Eildon) - The Pinnacle Circuit**

Ray Spooner

After an initial briefing by the leader, 14 “Bushies” headed towards our destination at The Pinnacle, a 925m peak in the Eildon National Park. The walk commenced along Jerusalem Creek Road to the Gap Track, which was



followed until reaching The Pinnacle Track. Up until now the uphill climb on the 4WD track was quite easy. On reaching the 6km mark walking became increasingly harder. At the 8km mark the track levelled out, however for the next 2km to the summit of The Pinnacle there was an ascent of around 300 metres. The condition of the track due to the 4WD vehicle usage combined with steepness made it difficult to find secure footage. Good views were afforded of Mt. Torbeck as we approached The Pinnacle. Lunch was on the summit.

We commenced our downhill walk on a track which was narrow, rocky and very steep in sections, placing



## Along the track

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strain on knees and quads. We were exhausted by the time we reached the creek! For the next 2km the creek was followed through a strand of small trees underplanted with ferns which had an enchanting effect compared with the dry messmate forest on the higher slopes. The track finally opened up through grasslands until we reached the cars.

### Day 2 – Lake Eildon Circuit

Babak Dadvand

On the second day of our legendary three-day bushwalk led by our fearless leader, Ian Mair, 16 Bushwalkers gathered at 8:30am, ready to take on the wild. Our journey started with an uphill climb that had us questioning our life choices, but we conquered it (eventually)!



Midway, one of our walkers took a surprise dive, giving new meaning to “falling for nature.” Thankfully, they were able to continue after receiving medical assistance to support the wrist. (Ed: X-ray examination on return to Melbourne indicated a fracture.) As we continued, we strolled along the edges of Lake Eildon, where the water levels were low, making it feel like we were on a lakeside promenade. It was picturesque, if you ignored the occasional mud puddle!



Towards the end, Ian decided to channel his inner speedster to ensure we reached a café before it closed. We practically sprinted (well, we tried) and arrived at 3:55pm, just in time to snag the last treats before they vanished into thin air. Sweet victory! It was a day of adventure, a few tumbles, and delicious treats, a perfect bushwalk adventure!

### Day 3 – Cathedral Range Ridge Track Circuit

Bernd Neuber

After two days of interesting and challenging walking a smaller group of 13 were ready to hit the lofty heights of the Cathedral Range. We undertook the northern loop starting at Cooks Mill camping area. The morning mist was solid as we begun and then before our eyes rays of sunshine pushed through and stayed with us for most of the walk. After

walking along the Little River Trail, we started our ascent towards Neds Saddle. The zig-zagging track made it relatively easy going. Lyrebirds could be heard and seen along the way.

We made it to Little Cathedral Peak for lunch. What a view! Little did some of the newbies know, the hardest stretch was ahead of us. It was mainly flat but involved significant rock hopping along the Ridge Track. The views were spectacular. Everyone took their time and were happy to see the track eventually head downhill.

A great Bushies group and the three days were fun, exhilarating and inspiring.





## Snake Island in images - 16-18 May 2025

Susan Maughan





## Upcoming activities

### June 2025

Sun 1	DAY: O'Shannessy Aqueduct (Waarburton)	Bus	E/M&M	Tanya Chambers & Keith Dudson
Mon 2	MTG: Club Committee Meeting	Pvt		Susan Maughan
Thu 5	DAY: Albert Park Lake-St Kilda Pier	Pvt	E	Halina Sarbinowski
6-9	BC: Hattah-Kulkyne NP	Pvt	E&E/M	Robert Ian Mair
Sun 8	DAY: Werribee Gorge	Car	E	Babak Dadvand & Adriana Fari-Palko
Wed 11	DAY: Domino Rail Trail	Pvt	E	Robert Ian Mair
13-15	PC: Wilson's Prom: Oberon Bay-South Point	Pvt	M	Rob Jung
Sat 14	DAY: Kinglake Mt Jerusalem circuit	Pvt	E/M	John Gurskey
Sun 15	DAY: Mornington to The Briars	Bus	E&E/M	Brett Daniel & Theo Mertzandis
Mon 16	DAY: Truganina Park/Sanctuary Lakes	Pvt	E	Bill Metzenthen
Sun 22	DAY: Daylesford Lake-Wombat Creek Dam	Bus	E/M	Stuart Hanham
Wed 25	SOC: Walking the Te Araroa Track	Pvt		Bernadette Young
Thu 26	SOC: Royal Park	Pvt	E	Sandra Mutimer
27-29	PC: Avon-Mt Hedrick Scenic Reserve	Pvt	E/M	Robert Ian Mair
Sat 28	DAY: Mt Towrong	Pvt	E/M	Carole Patterson
Sun 29	DAY: Mt Blackwood-Blackwood Ranges Track	Car	E/M&M	Andreas Meister & Keith Dudson

For detailed preview notes and program updates, please refer to the activities program on our website:  
[https://mbw.org.au/mbw\\_activities/MBW\\_activities\\_program.php](https://mbw.org.au/mbw_activities/MBW_activities_program.php)

