

**MELBOURNE
BUSHWALKERS INC.**

ABN 14 396 912 508



THE NEWS

#896

November
2025



Admiring Spitters Falls, The Grampians - D. Shand

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 10 November

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

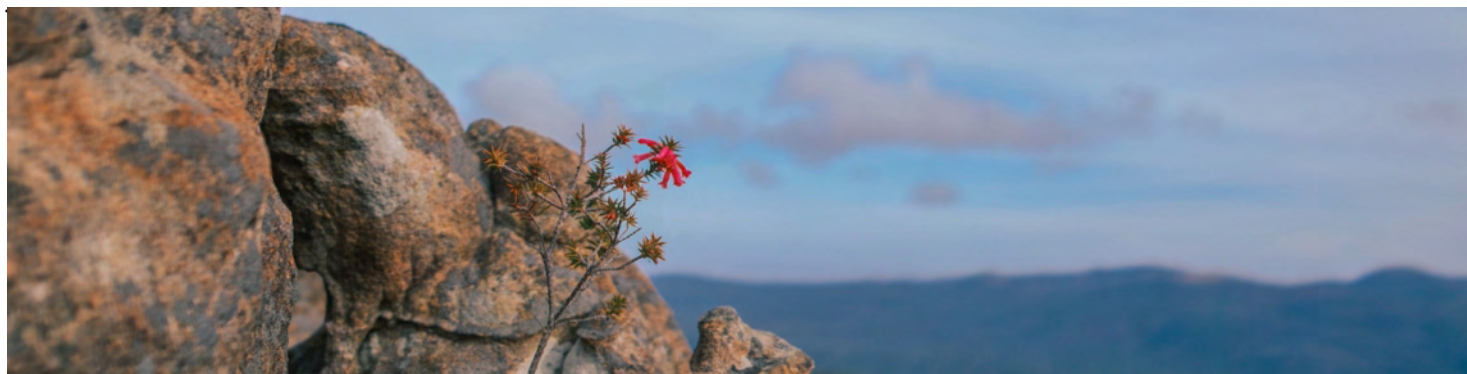
We welcome these new members to the club:

Fiona Margaret McDonald
Emma Chernyak
Miriam Gribble

Robert Gillespie
Isabelle Renaudin
Kate Noble

Lidia Martinelli
Karen Slattery

Saara Lusher
Janine Driden



Grampians vista - B. Dadvand

Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?

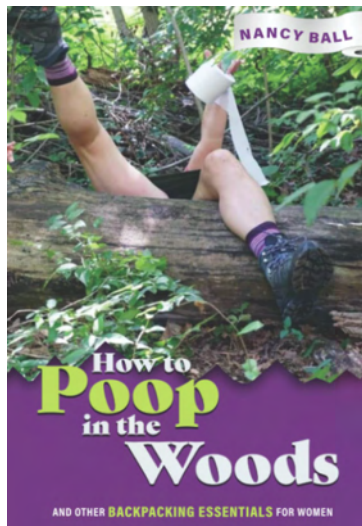
Due date for contributions to December News: 21 November

Email: news@mbw.org.au



With Christmas around the corner, I'd like to suggest a couple of books to add to your Santa list. All are very practical for Bushies!

First up, "HOW TO POOP IN THE WOODS: AND OTHER BACKPACKING ESSENTIALS FOR WOMEN" by Nancy Ball, and, on the same theme (!!), "HOW TO POOP IN THE WILD" by Alexander Andreasson. To quote the latter, it's "a handbook on the noble art of wild-pooping and leaving no trace". Beware, Santa's little helpers are everywhere. Also see the article later in this edition about "Going in the bush".



I'd like to extend a huge shout of congratulations to our Kiwi cousins at the Auckland Tramping Club who celebrated their centenary last month. Here at MBW we are fifteen years behind, so I am looking forward to catching up.

And remember to RSVP for our Christmas party on Tuesday 9 December!

Susan



CHRISTMAS PARTY

Melbourne Bushwalkers

Tuesday 9th December 6PM – 9PM

MBW Clubrooms

Come along for some fun and laughter
with old and new friends

Finger food provided and drinks
available at the bar

RSVP to Bernadette Prunty
social@mbw.org.au by the
15th November

Opportunity to join the Meet & Greet Team

Our Meet & Greet volunteers do a wonderful job every Wednesday evening, welcoming and educating visitors who are interested in joining the club. It is a crucial role because it is often the visitors' first contact with the club. We would like to grow the team. The commitment is approximately one Wednesday night per quarter. If you have been with the club for several years and would like to assist, please contact Bernd Neubauer at:

bernd@growthstrategies.com.au



100 Years Young – Auckland Tramping Club

The Auckland Tramping Club is not resting on its laurels as it celebrates its centenary year – the trips and events programme is as busy as ever – in fact, even more so.

On October 18th 1925 the club had its first trip, first committee meeting and first collection of subscriptions – all in the crater of the volcanic island of Rangitoto, a short boat trip from Auckland City. The roll of members quickly grew, with the weekly Sunday trip soon becoming multiple options to cater for demand.

Within 5 years, the club had purchased a property in the Waitakere Ranges forest, on Auckland's western coast, and constructed a hut there. This quickly became a well-loved very social base for club day and overnight tramps, come rain or shine. After many decades of extensions and maintenance, the hut is still going strong today, although principally for non-club groups, ever since the club trips were able to expand far and wide all over New Zealand.



Very quickly the club developed a love of “The Mountain” – in the Tongariro National Park there are multiple true alpine peaks of Ruapehu, Tongariro and Ngauruhoe, with plenty of scope for mountaineers, trampers, and skiers. Virtually every year since there have been club trips to The Mountain, and over a period of 68 years ATC built, extended and maintained a ski lodge there.

A few years ago, as plans for our centenary were starting to form, we commissioned the digitisation of all our club magazines and annual reports that had been diligently retained and preserved. These are now all accessible to everyone on our website and make for

fascinating reading. These then provided a valuable research base for our centenary book – 100 Years With Boots and Pack – a sample chapter is available [here](#) (also an order form).

Our first big centenary event this year was the Coast to Coast walk – hardy Aucklanders can trek between the east and west coasts of New Zealand in a comfortable 5 hours – or less - without leaving the bounds of Auckland City. One party started in the west, the other in the east, and they all met for a picnic in the middle. The target for the day of 100 participants was well exceeded.

A challenge to our club members is to walk 100 miles on club trips during the year, maximum 10 miles per trip. Many members have already achieved that, barely half way through the year.

For the mid-year Kings Birthday Weekend, a large group tackled a wide variety of day walks on The Mountain – despite the “variable” weather creating its challenges, showing us trampers yet again who is the boss. A mid-winter weekend based at our Waitakere hut (itself now 96 years young) was also well attended. Special tramping trips are continuing throughout the year, as well as our usual busy trips programme. In the planning stages we debated whether



Noticeboard

we could run 100 tramping and social events during the year – we need not have worried, as that number will be comfortably exceeded.

The big day of October 18th is rapidly approaching. That will feature an afternoon tea and dinner with displays of photos, memorabilia, old tramping gear and all that interests trampers. Registrations for that event have now topped 100 people, with some past members joining us from Australia, Canada, and all over New Zealand. The following day we have scheduled a “Rangitoto Revisited” trip to return to close to where we began – not to the bottom of the crater as that is off bounds and very overgrown now – but in true ATC fashion, with multiple walk options for the day to suit all comers.

So, what has changed in 100 years? Virtually everything – our book elaborates that in light hearted vein. A more appropriate question is what hasn’t changed ? The club has always provided the means by which people can together enjoy the forests, the mountains, the rivers, the weather, with experienced members encouraging all to learn and lead us into the future.

Tony Walton, ATC president 2013-2025

November Safety and Risk Reminders

This month the theme of “*being prepared*” continues. If you are well prepared then you and your fellow walkers will have more fun and reduce the impacts if something does go wrong.



Take Plenty of Water: The Club recommends a minimum of 2 litres of water for a day walk, so make sure you check the forecast and take enough for the situation e.g. length of walk and temperature. Your water should be easily accessible while you are walking!

Drink plenty of water before and during the walk. If not used to walking in hotter water consider taking more than 2 litres. Avoid the hottest parts of the day if you can and if it is going to be 38 degrees or more don’t walk. On the walk try putting a wet Chux around your neck!

Do you have appropriate Ambulance Cover?: This is essential to cover you when bushwalking in the outdoors. Make sure you have comprehensive cover or renew it if you have let it lapse. Ambulance Victoria’s Family or Singles cover will protect you across Australia from possibly a very expensive bill for an ambulance or helicopter ride. Many Private Hospital Insurance covers will only cover you from urban or rural street addresses not remote tracks or paths.

MELBOURNE BUSHWALKERS INC

PERSONAL HEALTH DETAILS CARD

Name:_____D.O.B____/____/____

Address:_____

Next of kin:_____

Relationship:_____Phone:_____

2nd contact:_____

Relationship:_____Phone:_____

My doctor:_____

Phone:_____

Current medical conditions/allergies:_____

Medications:_____

Ambulance cover: YES/NO

Private Health Insurance Fund name:_____

Carry your GREEN HEALTH CARD: Make sure you carry the Club Health Card in your pack. In case of an emergency we may have to provide your health information to get you the best medical treatment. You can print one off from this Newsletter and pop it in a small zip lock sandwich bag.

Health Advice to Leader: Before a walk quietly let the Leader and/or Whip know of any health or other issues you have they should be aware of that might impact you on the walk, e.g. where you keep your EpiPen.

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

See in the New Year at Hotham! 27 Dec 2025-1 Jan 2026

We will be staying in Asgaard lodge at Mt Hotham and sharing walks with the Catholic Walking Club of Victoria who are staying at Tanderra lodge. There will be several walks of different standards each day.

This will be the fourth year I have booked Asgaard over Christmas and the second for MBW however it is a peculiarity of their booking system that they allow the booking of a bed regardless of the room and there would be roughly 40 or so beds available. This means that say if 3 members of the same group had beds in the one room and a fourth was unoccupied bed then theoretically a stranger could book this bed. However, for the past 3 years no stranger has ever shared the lodge, let alone a room, with walkers who have booked. Also a consideration is that most walkers prefer bottom beds and some single rooms and as there will be just 10 – 11 rooms available to us I will be restricting numbers to accommodate each walker's wishes as best I can.

We also intend to have a tennis afternoon at Dinner Plain (there are 2 courts) – so bring your racquet! And a theatrical review night – and of course New Year's Eve may be on New Zealand time.

Cost: \$60 per person per night – if staying 5 nights \$300. You can stay as many nights as you wish and cost is pro rata. If interested contact me on gtibballs@bigpond.com I won't take payment yet until the numbers firm up and I'm more certain that we will more or less have the lodge exclusively to ourselves. Most of the attendees from last year have expressed interest in coming and they are on my list. I can't put a ceiling on numbers as sharing preferences and what days people will be there influence this but as a ball park figure it would be 16.

Asgaard facilities – basically everything is supplied except food. Linen, towels, doonas (sleeping bags not allowed), large kitchen with 2 ovens with gas cooktops, dishwasher, cutlery, dishes, storage space for food, fridges, freezer and wifi. Car parking is directly outside the lodge. For further info on Asgaard go to website <https://www.asgaard.com.au/>

You can ring me anytime for further details on 0408 144 265
Regards Quentin



Advanced Leadership Skills Series

For November we are looking at:

Understanding group needs

This covers: Individual needs; Task needs; Group needs; Balance of task and group need

Note: The complete set of articles is available on the Website





Camp Eureka Christmas 2025

Join us for the Club's 11th year at Camp Eureka. We have exclusive use of the Camp from the 23-28 December. You are welcome to come for a day walk, stay overnight or stay for the whole 5 nights.

Walks will be offered each day starting from the 24 December depending on the weather.

There will be further details about the Camp in the December activity program. Contact Janet Hodgson for further details or to make a booking.



Going in the bush and the problem of toilet paper!

Bushies on a recent trip were very disappointed to find that their chosen lunch spot was littered with little squares of whitish paper, indicating some type of previous toilet activity. You may have encountered the same thing yourself! Shock, horror, what to do? I know, we'll get the Environment officer to write an article for the News.

Exhaustive research revealed that there are many schools of thought on how to "go" in the bush but all focus on the need to maintain hygiene, protect the environment including water supplies and consider your fellow and future walkers. Some conclusions:

For #1: One simple solution if you need to wipe after you wee, is to carry a zip lock plastic bag so you can carry out your toilet paper. Always carry out wipes, tampons, and pads. Or use a panty liner much easier than using toilet paper for the drips

For #2: Choose a spot 100 m from a water course if possible. Dig a hole at least 20 cm deep (a plastic trowel is very useful here) and fill it in afterwards. It's probably safest to bury toilet paper with the waste rather than burn it due to danger of starting a bushfire. Carry a small tube of hand sanitiser for use afterwards and before eating. For further useful (and entertaining!) suggestions, have a look at Caro Ryan's blog: <https://lotsafreshair.com/poos-wees-and-other-mysteries/> and <https://lotsafreshair.com/what-the-heck-is-a-pee-rag/> Also <https://themountainjournal.com/2016/06/05/lets-talk-about-poo/>.

Alta Via 2 - A walk in the Italian Dolomites

Presentation by Derrick Brown - 26 November in the clubrooms

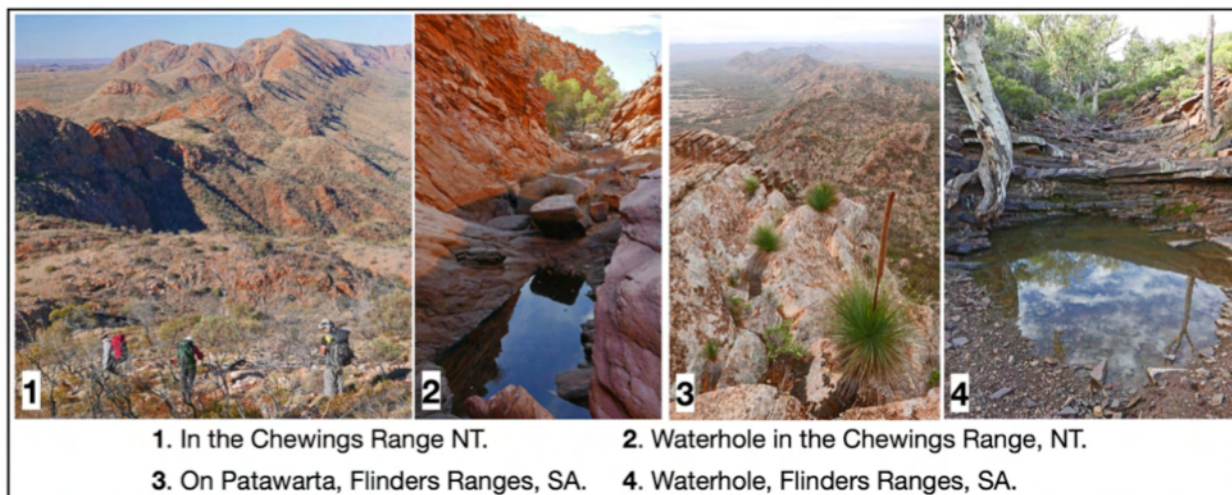
In September 2024, a small group of Melbourne Bushwalkers walked the Alta Via 2, a 174km walk in the beautiful Dolomite mountains of northern Italy. This challenging route is a north-south trek through jagged limestone peaks and sheer cliffs of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. I will share our experiences and photos of the walk that Gina and I describe as "Simply one of the best walks that we've done!"



Effective folding buckets for extended pack carrying trips. Rob Jung v4b 18-Oct-25

Why carry a bucket?

In my experience, sourcing water on extended pack carrying bushwalks can be difficult. This is especially the case in places such as in Central Australia (1) or the Flinders Ranges (3). Typically, the examples shown in 2 & 4, were the only water sources accessible to nearby campsites. They were limited and it was important not to contaminate them. Hence if we wanted to wash ethically, water needs to be collected in a container such as a bucket, then used and dispersed well away from the waterhole. The larger size of buckets makes them much better for this than billys.



Some other uses for buckets are shown in 7 & 8. They can provide a convenient transfer reservoir (7), as well as a vessel in which to treat water – in this case by using alum clarification (8). Again, a bucket is much better for these uses than is a billy.



Suitable buckets

In years past, many of us carried water buckets made by Paddy Pallin (5). They were mostly used to provide cooking water at camp. Today that purpose has been superseded by plastic bladders. Paddy's bucket might be still used for washing, however it is only semi-stable when used this way. In view of the alternatives, I could not recommend using one for this now.

I sought a better solution some years ago and began to make my own light weight collapsible buckets. They were stable, since I fitted them with three legs, attached via sleeves sewn to the sides. Proper stability required that the legs were equal to, or slightly longer than the height of the bucket. Having a solid rim assisted, but it was the legs which were the most important factor. The bucket shown in 7 and 8 was made of Dyneema Composite Fabric and the rim was of whipper-snipper cord.

continued next page

Later I considered commercially produced foldable buckets. It seemed the best of these was the Sea-to-Summit 10L bucket (9). It was heavier than mine but made of a tougher and more waterproof fabric. In the catalogue it looked impressive, but users' comments said otherwise. This REI user's comment was typical of many others:

"Falls over too easily ... It's light weight and foldable, but good luck keeping this thing standing upright. I dumped all the water out multiple times just because there was a slight slope or pebble underneath."

Such comments were accurate (10). However, there is at least one solution to the instability problem: stabilise this bucket in the manner I have for my homemade ones.



9. As advertised, this near full Sea-to-Summit 10L bucket appears stable. This is deceptive & is not the case in reality. Unsupported it requires a very flat surface, *great* care in placing it on the ground & no wind.
10. In practice, this bucket can be supported by the handle above. In this windy location it **must be**, or all 7L contents would have been lost.
11. In most cases, conveniently placed branches are not available & a stabilised bucket is essential. At Kooyoora where the ground was not level & it was windy, water was securely retrieved into the bucket from this rockhole.
12. A closer view of my modified Sea-to-Summit bucket.

My stabilised bucket is shown in 11 and 12. I used fibre-glass poles from an old tent for the legs. These were firmly attached at the top of the bucket by threading the top of the poles through eyelets and clamping the poles above the eyelets with silicone tubing sleeves. The eyelets were held within webbing that was sewn to the top of the bucket. The lower part of the legs must be constrained vertically and this was done using a nylon skirt (blue in 12). The skirt was not sewn to the bucket – that would compromise its water proofing. Friction holds the skirt in place, especially when the bucket fills.

I used 1/4" OD polyethylene tubing to form a stiff but flexible rim. This tubing was connected to the bucket by sleeves also sewn to the bucket. The rim circle was completed with silicone tubing (12).

I now use this improved Sea-to-Summit water bucket in preference to my lighter, earlier designs. My reason for the switch, is the durability of its waterproofing compared to my earlier models. The table compares the weight of variations of this bucket (12), with an earlier bucket (7 & 8).

Bucket	Weight, g
Rob's 8L DCF bucket (7 & 8)	42
Sea-to-Summit 10L bucket, as purchased in carry bag (9)	98
Sea-to-Summit 10L bucket, this modification with PE tube rim in carry bags (11 & 12)	154

Readers may contact Rob Jung for more details. (robjung99@gmail.com)

Training activity: First Aid Course

Date: Saturday 29 November
Contact: Quentin Tibballs

Time: 9.30am-4.00pm

Venue: Rowville



The **registration cost is \$135** and is an all-day course in Rowville - however, attendees will get a \$40 reimbursement or, for Bush Search and Rescue volunteers, a \$50 reimbursement from Bushwalking Victoria. MBW leaders who have led 2 or more walks in the past 12 months will get a reimbursement of \$95 so there is no out of pocket cost to them.

Comprehensive pre-reading is required. Topics to be covered are: Cardiac arrest / managing an unconscious patient / defibrillation; Fractures; Sprains / strains; Snake bites; Head injury / spinal injury; Bleeding management; Asthma / anaphylaxis / Epipens; Burns. The certificates to be obtained are: **Provide First Aid (HLTAID011)** + Outback First Aid variation (commonly known as a Level 2 certificate); **Provide Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (HLTAID009)** (First 2.5 hours)

More details on website Activity Program. **Please email Quentin on geoq@bigpond.com if interested** and he will send you further details.

Fedwalks 2025 – The Grampians

Rob Jung

This year's Federations walks were in the Grampians and about thirty club members attended. It was a basecamp weekend and we were accommodated in Halls Gap. Jill's group thought themselves very lucky to be sharing a large house. Others like myself had to withstand the very windy weather camping in caravan parks. My weekend tent was up to the challenge, but that weather forced at least one member to return home early.

This year's walks were located in areas **not** affected by the three large fires which burnt out more than half the park: from Halls Gap and north and the very southern part of the Serra Range. The two walks I chose were in the southern part, north and south of Mt Abrupt. The Grampians holds one third of Victoria's flora and even though it has been dry in the past year, I wasn't disappointed at what I saw. Just some of the botanical stars on display are shown in my photo collage below.



Rob Jung Federation weekend 2025

Memorable Bushwalking Moments: Part 4 1998

East and West Cope Aqueducts/Alpine Walking Track - 5 days

Leader Jean Geise

Barbara Goldfinch

Arriving at Strawberry Saddle on the Bogong High Plains Road, it had begun raining, then hailing. We awoke the next morning to snow blowing horizontally across the clearing. Abysmal. There'd be no walking today.



Camping below Mt Cope

Next day dawned sunny. Spirits lifted. We had to do two days walking in one, possible due to a flexible schedule thanks to Jean's expert planning. She deserves much credit.

We had two medical emergencies. Sylvia with severe abdominal pain, which I treated successfully with acupressure. Sylvia later helped me to cover my badly sunburnt legs which resembled the 'stars and stripes', white where sun block had been applied, red where it had not. Mosquito bites, the stars. Squatting was painful, sleep only possible on my stomach.

The camp above Tawonga Huts was delightful. West of the camp was a spring and rivulet meandering downhill amongst the prickly leaved vegetation, sphagnum moss, native alpine mint and yellow bossiaea. Looking up the hill, shrubbery in the foreground, tents nestled amongst the snow gums on the ridge, lit by a vibrant setting sun. Most picturesque.

Enthusiastically, we were up early to complete the climb to Mt Fainter before the day became too hot. Mt Jaithmathang was a garden of boulders and alpine spring flowers. The views superb. We scrub bashed off the side of the mount and on to Little Plain. Fainter looming dauntingly above. The thought of climbing it was enough to make even the toughest heart feel faint, yet the summit cairn beckoned us onwards. Crossing some creeks, we dipped t-shirts in the water to become walking Coolgardie safes. Refreshing. Sadly, grazing cattle had trampled the creek banks leaving them barren and eroded, the water muddy, many meadow muffins and copious flies.

A welcome breeze met us at the summit where we were treated to stunning views. We 'dined' in an alpine rock garden on the top of the world. Lunch being a few biscuits, a spread, fruit and a chocolate bar washed down with a limited ration of water.



George and Judy on Mt Fainter

As dinner was being prepared that evening, snippets of songs, rehearsals for the New Year Concert, alternated with the Australian Ravens, an eerie, strangled wail. Or was that one of the concert performers? At "midnight" we stood around the fire with hands held and sang Auld Lang Syne, making up the bits we couldn't remember. It had been quite a day, full of variety and interest. Good walking and good company. The epitome of the whole week. Thank you all.

Whipstick-Kamarooka – 26-28 September 2025

Stephanie Nortier

The Whipstick and Kamarooka State Park is located about 2 hours away from Melbourne near Bendigo.

Upon arrival on Friday evening, we set camp at Campbell Road campsite before gathering at the Huntly Hotel for a social night over a meal and drink. Once we were all happy with our night out, we went back to the campsite and settled in for the night, falling asleep to the sound of frogs at a nearby dam croaking all night.



Saturday, we followed a trail that took us past old mine shafts, climbed over the Black Rock formation in the Whipstick, spotted birds, and a purple bed of orchids. Rob even spotted a yellow orchid. Gina brought her binoculars so the group could have a closer look at the different birds. We also spotted a beautiful white winged chough nest.

After 19 kms and tired legs, we arrived at our beautiful campsite. After settling in, we dug a pit fire, and all sat around to keep warm and relax. We had the pleasure to hear Derrick sing, he also encouraged us to sing along, what a fun night around the campfire.

Sunday, early morning wake-up call from various but beautiful bird songs. Our adventure continued

with some off track but flat terrain. We saw an old eucalyptus distillery, spotted a small but beautiful owl-nightjar bird with the help of the binoculars. Quick lunch break then back on the track where we continued to the end of the walk where the car shuffle transport was waiting.



Before going home, we stopped at Huntly bakery where we enjoyed delicious pies, cakes and coffee. Gina was a great leader making sure everybody was fine. Thank you to Brett for being the whip. Great trip away.

Trees tell tales: our Grampians base camp adventure – 25-28 September 2025

Adriana Fari-Palko



Have you read *The Hidden Life of Trees* by Peter Wohlleben? If you have, you'll know that trees communicate, support each other, and basically have more social drama than a reality TV show. Our recent three-day Grampians base camp proved his theories absolutely correct or at least, that's what I decided as I eavesdropped on the local flora.

Day 1: Mount Rosea via Burma Track (12km)

The trees on this circuit had clearly been through some terrible things. These
continued next page

Along the track

resilient survivors were definitely swapping war stories about bushfires. "I'll always remember December 2024" one gumtree seemed to whisper.

Day 2: Briggs Bluff via Gar Waterfalls (15 km)

I imagine the tree gossip here was exclusively about waterfalls. We had about five waterfalls on the track that day. "Did you see the flow this morning?" the trees must have whispered "Absolutely gushing, darling!" Every cascade had its own fan club of mesmerised vegetation. We were fans of all.



Day 3:

Boroka Lookout from Halls Gap (12km)

This track was steep enough to ignore all the trees on the way. These gravity-defying characters stood at impossible angles, basically doing permanent yoga poses. "Core strength," they seemed to boast, as we mere mortals puffed our way up. All the track survivors gathered for a photo.

Peter Wohlleben would be proud or possibly very concerned about my imagination of tree conversations. Many thanks to all trees, but mostly to all humans for their beautiful company and to Babak and Deb for leading some stunning walks for us to enjoy!

And knees tell tales – more Grampians adventures

Deb Shand

What to do when you're going on a base camp with walks graded M/H but your knee is still recovering from an injury? Ask the leader if you can lead some E/M walks as an alternative, even if you're the only one going on those walks!

And so it was that I led some easier walks on Babak's trip thus providing an alternative program for attendees. Fortunately, I was familiar with some walks from previous trips to the area so was able to revisit those as well as finding some new locations. We climbed Boronia Peak, did a shorter version of Babak's Briggs Bluff walk, and explored Chatauqua Peak and Splitters Falls as the finale.

The YHA provided us with comfortable accommodation and room to socialise. We were blessed with perfect Grampians weather, Spring flowers, wide views, rocky scrambles and great company for the weekend. Thanks Babak and Adriana for your organisation and good humour and to all other participants for sharing the experience.



Western Strathbogie Ranges - 27-28 September 2025

Lynne Cornall

After a short drive in the cars, 5 hardy souls set off on our Strathbogie adventure. Our starting point was Gooram Falls, and from there we followed the Seven Creeks upstream to the plateau. There seemed an almost never-ending series of waterfalls, with a good amount of water cascading over them. As the day progressed, we encountered some tranquil pools, where two of our party had a refreshing dip (one by accident).



We continued on to Polly McQuinn Weir and then through some farmland to the base of Mt Wombat where we camped for the night under the gums. A koala entertained us with his extremely loud grunting, which luckily for us did not last too long. There was quite a lot of evidence of deer in this area, with many tracks through the bush. The population has exploded in the past decade, so that a previously reliable water point was no longer drinkable. Thank heavens for water filters and UV sterilisers...

Sunday morning saw us climbing Mt Wombat, which offered us spectacular 360 degree views around the Strathbogies and surrounding areas. We continued on to the Garden Range area which presented further wonderful views, and some delightful Tiger Orchids. Throughout our walk Ray shared some of his vast knowledge of the local flora and wildlife. He was quite excited to find evidence of Bandicoots in the area – the first time he's seen them on this side of the Plateau!

Towards the end of our walk, we had a look at some aboriginal rock paintings, that took a bit of searching to find. The small human figures in red ochre are out of the weather, under a large rock overhang, so are thankfully well-preserved.

Our walk concluded at G A Waterhouse reservoir where we had left a couple of cars previously. Thank you, Ray, Mai, Piotr and Bernadette for your company on this most enjoyable weekend.

And in a more poetic mode, here are some reflections from Mai about the trip: This walk took us through a variety of terrains, from climbing uphill through dense patches of bright yellow wattles, to hopping over rocky areas beside a burbling creek and fast flowing waterfalls... I enjoyed the sound of the crunch and rustle beneath our feet as we walked through the bush, and the challenge of steadying ourselves while descending steep hills - all of which I thoroughly enjoyed.



From Piotr: My best highlight was the nice bunch of people I had a pleasure to walk with. The walk was well-timed, with breaks, without a rush. I liked walking alongside these masses of water, such a rarity in the dry landscape in Australia.

And from Bernadette, a different perspective again: This walk felt more like a ramble through time, and an exploration of the landscape; it was more than 'just' a bush walk. We saw aboriginal rock paintings from

Along the track

ancient times and imagined tranquil creek-side camping spots from times gone past. From more recent history, I felt like our camp had the wild look of the bush in McCubbin's painting, *The Pioneer*. The modern human effects on the landscape, such as weeds, fences, and farmland, were such a contrast... From Ray's comments, our eyes were opened to the joys and details of tiny plants, signs of animals, and the geological history of the area. It was a great opportunity to explore things we would never have been exposed to without Ray's initiative for this walk.

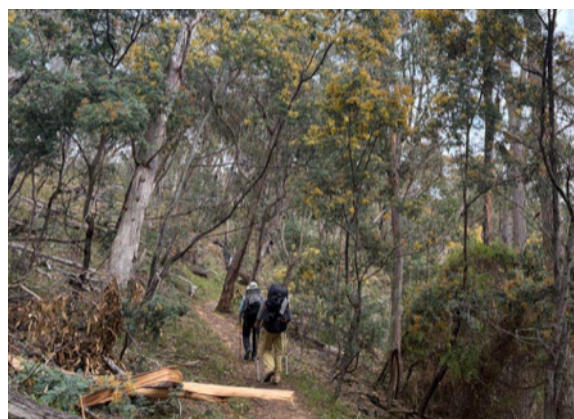


Vaughan Springs - Hepburn Springs - 11-12 October 2025

Tamsin Davidson

After a car shuffle, 11 of us, a mix of experienced walkers and newcomers, headed off from Vaughan Springs on Saturday, October 11th, to tackle a section of the Goldfields Track's Dry Diggings route. The mild weather over the weekend was perfect for walking. We immediately began passing old mine shafts, shallow diggings, and stone ruins, vivid reminders of the gold rush era. The terrain was rocky and undulating, winding through dry, eucalypt bushland.

Mid-afternoon, we diverted off the track and descended down a steep gully to the (dry) Tarilta Falls where there was a large, flat, secluded and grassy area adjacent to the (dry) creek bed. Plenty of room for us all to set up our tents and there was a lone pool nearby for us to collect water. Dinner and chat around the campfire passed the evening away until drops of rain had some of us flee to our tents.



On Sunday morning we were awakened by the cheerful laughter of kookaburras. We set off, climbing a different gully to join the main track. Today's walking was a mix of bush tracks and well-maintained dirt roads. The wattle was in full bloom, creating a beautiful yellow contrast against the grey-green bush. As we walked, anticipation grew for our inevitable stop at the Chocolate Mill (the track runs right by it!). We paused there for an early lunch and indulged in hot chocolates and other treats.



A brief stop to climb the tower at Jackson's Lookout, although the views were largely impeded by the surrounding trees. From there, we soon arrived back at our waiting cars in Hepburn Springs to return to our normal lives. We hadn't seen anyone else walking the whole two days, so it was peaceful to have had the bush, the gullies, the tracks, the campsite and the goldfields ruins all to ourselves.

Grateful thanks to Bernadette for planning the walk and for so capably organising and leading us - her first time leading a walk with the club, but may there be many more.

Upcoming activities

November 2025

1-4	PC: Mt Bogong & the High Plains Chronicles	Pvt	M/H	Petras Pedroarvy Surna
1-4	PC: Mt Buller via West Ridge	Pvt	M/H	Robert Ian Mair
Sun 2	DAY: Burchell Track South	Car	E/M	Judith Shaw
Tue 4	SOC: Menzies Creek, Cup Day Social Walk	Pvt	E/M	Susan Maughan
Thu 6	DAY: Brimbank Park & Horseshoe Bend	Pvt	E	Jopie Bodegraven
7-9	PC: Mt Typo to Lake William Hovell	Pvt	M/H	Ray Thomas
Sat 8	TRG: Leaders Training Day	Pvt		Mick Noonan
Sat 8	CAN: Sunset Kayak & supper	Pvt	E	Susan Maughan
Sun 9	DAY: NEW: Dandenongs Circuit Walk	Car	E/M	Richard Hanson
Mon 10	MTG: Club Committee Meeting	Pvt		Susan Maughan
12-16	BC: Maria Island	Pvt	M&M	Jill Allen
Wed 12	DAY: Greens Bush	Pvt	E/M	Kerry Press & Ralph Blake
15-16	PC: Easy Mt Baw Baw weekend	Pvt	E	John Gurskey
Sun 16	DAY: Cape Schanck to Baldry's Crossing	Bus	E&E/M	Bettina Brill & Sharon Carr
Mon 17	DAY: Truganina Park/Sanctuary Lakes	Pvt	E	Bill Metzenthien
21-23	PC: Mt Feathertop via NW Spur	Pvt	M/H	Claire Luxford
21-30	PC: Bibbulmun Track: Walpole to Denmark	Pvt	M/H	Robert Ian Mair
Sat 22	DAY: Mt Macedon/Hanging Rock	Pvt	E/M	Helen Graesser
Sun 23	DAY: Long Forest Reserve	Car	E/M	Quentin Tibballs
Wed 26	SOC: Alta Via 2-A walk in the Italian Dolomites	Pvt		Derrick Brown
Wed 26	DAY: Maribyrnong River nature & history trails	Pvt	E	Stuart Hanham
Thu 27	SOC: Elsternwick Park & Wetlands	Pvt	E	Bill Metzenthien
28-30	PC: High Plains Huts & Hills	Pvt	E/M	Dianne Mckinley
Sat 29	TRG: First Aid Course	Pvt		Quentin Tibballs
Sun 30	DAY: Erskine Falls	Bus	E/M&M	David Gilbert & Peter Swiatkiwsky

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