

**MELBOURNE
BUSHWALKERS INC.**

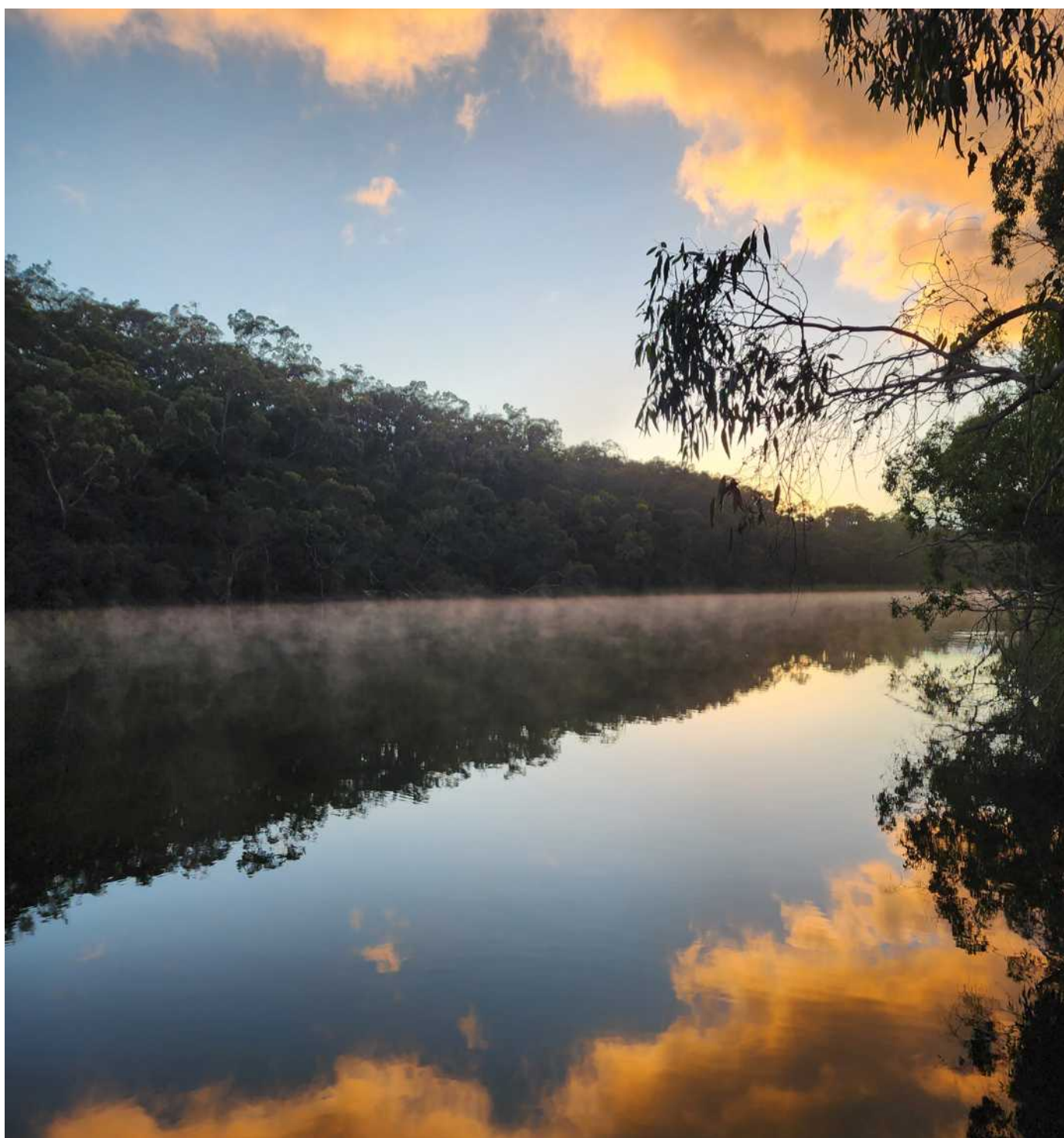
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THE NEWS

#900

March
2026



Reflections on the Glenelg River, Great South West Walk - R. Curwen-Walker

WE ARE A MEMBER OF



Members of the Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc meet on Wednesday evenings between 6.30-8.30 pm in the club rooms at:

**Mission to Seafarers Victoria
717 Flinders Street
Docklands**

Visitors are always welcome!

General correspondence should be directed to:

The Secretary
Melbourne Bushwalkers Inc
PO Box 1751
MELBOURNE VIC 3001

www.melbournebushwalkers.org.au

Next committee meeting: Monday 2 March

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

Editor: Deb Shand

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

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

Please send your contributions as unformatted text files by email to news@mbw.org.au

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

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

New Members

We welcome these new members to the club:

Bernadette Stephen
Ella Taylor
Grace Cho
Ruby Lu
Fionn Skiotis
Lisa Horler
Caroline Brown



Yellow Robin, Great South West Walk - R. I. Mair

Would you like your trip photos featured in the newsletter?

Due date for contributions to April News: 21 March

Email: news@mbw.org.au





Newcomers quickly discover that the social aspect of our Club is very important, and this definitely needs to be highlighted when we read so much about loneliness in modern society. Finally, it gladdens my heart to observe that we are the embodiment of a successful multicultural Melbourne.

Susan Maughan

March is "reporting month" as we head towards our Annual General Meeting. Please take time to review the various reports included in this edition of the News as you will have an opportunity to raise questions or make comments. The AGM will be held on Wednesday, 25th March at 7:30 pm.

Looking back on our previous twelve months of activities, it's hard not to observe that we are much more than a bushwalkers club. Not only we do offer an extensive choice of walks of various levels, but we have opportunities to join in cross country skiing, canoeing, kayaking, and social walks. I continue to marvel at the destinations, such as Tasmania, the Northern Territory, NSW, Western Australia, and New Zealand.



Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

As we say goodbye to the 2025 committee and welcome the new one, there is one constant presence who works away tirelessly and with diligence and a dash of creative flair. That, of course, is our popular Editor!



It would be amiss not to include Deb Shand in our round of appreciation and back slapping, and, needless to say, it gives me great pleasure to be the one to stand up and lead the applause. The presentation of The News is always to the highest standard, and I always look forward to it popping into my inbox. Deb's editing skills, attention to detail and many years of dedication is truly appreciated. Also, she shows unparalleled patience, if, for example, your President has to send a corrected article, often due to misplaced **comma's**.

THANK YOU, Deb, you are a star.

Susan Maughan



Annual General Meeting

**The Annual General Meeting of the Melbourne Bushwalkers (Incorporated)
will be held on Wednesday, 25 March 2026 at 7:30pm
at The Mission to Seafarers Victoria, 717 Flinders Street, Docklands**

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

Business:

**Apologies
Acknowledgement of Country
Confirmation of Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting
President's Report
Treasurer's Report
Walks Secretaries' Reports
Membership Secretary's Report
Other Reports
Determination of Annual Subscriptions for 2026-27
Determination of number of General Committee Members for 2026
Election of Office Bearers and General Committee Members for 2026
Appointment of Reviewers of Financial Statements
Conferral of Life Memberships
Conferral of Honorary Memberships
Presentation of ABCD Award
Award of Club Spoons
General Business**

***Any member unable to attend in person may appoint a proxy to be received by the
Secretary before or at the commencement of the meeting.
Proxy and Committee Nomination Forms are available in the clubrooms
or may be downloaded from the Club's website (https://mbw.org.au/MBW_docs.php)***



Navigation Training Day – Saturday 14 March

This training day will be conducted on the Victorian Rogaining Association's permanent course in the Chewton State Forest.

Rogaining is an excellent and exciting way to learn map and compass navigation and involves navigating from one permanent checkpoint to another and can fine tune reading of a topographical map. These checkpoints are placed, with a description of their locality, on the map and are generally a half to one and a half km's apart. We could expect to cover up to 10km for the day.



Prior to the day I will email you a 1:25,000 map which I will construct using our club's website facility. This map will include a park near where you live, so you can practise using a compass bearing to travel between 2 points. I will also email you links where you can access information on how to use your compass. Although I have some spare compasses, and can loan these to you, it would be best if you could acquire your own. I recommend a Silva Ranger compass or similar (available from Paddy Pallin/Bogong etc). If buying online you need to check if it is manufactured for the Southern hemisphere (otherwise the needle may not swing freely).

The plan is to have you familiar with using the compass prior to the day and then on site divide into small groups of 2 or 3 people, one of who will be familiar with map and compass navigation. Each small group will then locate several pre agreed checkpoints prior to a lunch break when we will debrief, and a further repeat of the process in the afternoon.

A map of the rogaining area will be supplied on the day or you could print one out from the Vic Rogaining Association's website. Please contact me for further details on geoq@bigpond.com

Also, as Chewton is a fair distance from Melbourne I will try as best as I can to arrange car sharing.

Quentin Tibballs

Call for Expression of Interest - NZ in March 2027

The walk: Routeburn and Greenstone-Caples tracks - 6 day-5 night walk of approx. 95km.

Dates: 9-20 March 2027

Group size: 8

You: a current member with multi-day (minimum 4 nights) pack carry experience and high level of physical fitness

If interested, please contact Wen at wenqi237@gmail.com by 22 March 2026 as DOC Great Walk hut booking is likely to open in early May for the 2026-27 season.





Spotlight on ... Halina Sarbinowski

Derrick Brown

DB: Halina, your background is quite unusual. Your parents met just after WWII ended, in Germany?

HS: Yes, at the end of WWII my parents were in Germany. They met and were married within six months of meeting. They were together for almost sixty years until my dad's passing. Dad had been in the Polish National Underground so he could not return to Poland which was under Soviet control. They were displaced persons. They didn't want to stay in Europe and as dad had been a member of the Polish division of the American army they applied to migrate to the US. As they were waiting, Arthur Calwell (Minister for Immigration) made impassioned speeches throughout Europe stating that Australia "needed you". So mum and dad also applied for Australia with the intent to migrate to the first of these two countries to accept them. Fortunately for me it was Australia. Mum and dad travelled by ship to Australia and did the usual stint in Bonegilla before settling in Brunswick. My sister was born the year they arrived, then after about four and half years, my brother, then just over a year later the baby of the family was born - me. Shortly after my birth my parents moved to Fawkner where a small community of Polish people had settled. We boarded with a family in the next street to where my father and his friends were building our house. This was a common practice during those early years.

DB: What are your best memories of your time there?

HS: I had a great childhood. My father was one of the first of his friends to buy a car. We would constantly be visiting friends in the country and while I was little we quite often had a couple of families bundled in the car as we explored. It was easy to sit on an adult's lap then - no seat belts! At Christmas from the time I was five, we spent time at the beach at Torquay. We always had the same camp site and became friends with other regulars. We were even child sat at times by the boys from Footscray who had a big army tent and were trying to stack empty beer bottles its entire length and height during their stay. At about twelve, alas, our Christmas venues changed to Tootgarook on the Mornington Peninsula where friends had a holiday house.

DB: What about your school years?

HS: Like a good Catholic girl, I was sent to the local Catholic primary school, then the Catholic all girl secondary school. All the local Catholic secondary schools were bursting at the seams when a decision was made to build a senior Catholic co-educational college for years 11 and 12 only on the site of the old Broadmeadows Baby Home. As the new college was not completed, I attended my first term in Year 12 at another Catholic college from 3pm to 8pm, after the school's regular students left at 2:30pm. It was a great time. During the week I barely saw my parents at all. The school was very progressive with even a smokers' courtyard for the students! This was a year of good times so I was surprised that I passed sufficiently to earn a studentship to study as a primary teacher.

DB: So teaching was your first job?

HS: Yes, as a teacher I worked hard to ensure the best outcomes for my students, preparing lessons on weekends and correcting work during the week. In my ninth year of teaching I took my Long Service Leave to visit relatives in Poland and explore Europe. I soon realised that there was more to life and on my return to Australia and work I couldn't settle. I was encouraged by my partner to quit and to explore other options. I worked part-time and studied accounting full-time graduating in three years. As I was at least twelve years older than most of the students, I knew I had to stand out and so I studied hard. This was easy as I enjoyed it so much.



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DB: So you switched careers?

HS: Yes, on graduation I was offered a position with one of the top five accounting firms but felt that I would become a "workaholic" again and opted to seek employment in health. I wanted, rather than to chase profit, to try to get the best out of limited resources. I worked in health for over thirty years as firstly, a management accountant for about ten years, before taking on the role of practice manager for the Heart Centre, a private cardiology practice located at The Alfred. I loved this role. I loved the people I worked with and always admired their dedication to improving the health of their patients. I worked in this role until I retired at the end of January 2020 just before COVID hit.

DB: When did you take an interest in walking? Did your parents initiate this?

HS: Even though neither of my parents' home towns were anywhere near the beach, the beach was their favourite vacation destination. We never explored the bush. My parents were actually quite afraid of the bush, especially snakes. I don't know why but my brother, sister and myself all enjoy the bush. We all love exploring it, camping in the bush and enjoying the solitude.

What attracted me to bushwalking was the time when, in school year 10, a Canadian exchange teacher organised two bushwalking bus trips. One to Werribee Gorge and the other to the Lerderderg River. I just remember laughing so much as we slid down embankments to the river and up the other side, exploring trails ... getting right out of my comfort zone.

I had always been a walker. I had always walked over three kilometres to and from my secondary school. Unfortunately, the reason was not a healthy one. Each day, with four of my friends we walked and saved our bus money to buy a ten packet of cigarettes. Not a good reason but it instilled in me a passion for walking. I especially wanted to walk in the bush but neither of my partners shared this passion. So, in my 40s and single I was able to follow my passion. A girlfriend had been a member of Melbourne Bushwalkers and she recommended the club to me. I especially liked the idea of the bus. Twenty-six years ago I did my first walk with the club. I remember the walk clearly. I remember the leader who said the track was basically flat as we made our way from Sheoaks Picnic area to Blanket Leaf Car Park at the back of Lorne. It was uphill all the way! I eventually learned that leaders don't recall the hard bits. They enjoyed the walk ... so it was easy. Initially I thought that they were just liars!

I had only given up smoking for a short time after a twenty-five year habit. I used to think that I was going to die as I slowly made my way uphill with my heart beating so fast I thought it would burst, but the whip always waited and was always encouraging so I continued to walk with the club.

I did almost give up after a very difficult day when I had to abandon a walk (on the Cathedral Range) on a very hot day and returned to the bus within 30 minutes of the start of the walk. It scared me. However, after a few months I decided to try again, and I gave myself a target of one walk a month to keep myself motivated. Soon I was exceeding this target and enjoying walking again.

DB: At some point you joined the committee. How did this come about?

HS: After about two years, although not a fast walker (even still to this day) I decided to lead a walk on the Mornington Peninsula, an area I knew well. I loved the



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experience. Participants were grateful. I continue to lead and continue to enjoy the experience. I once decided that I would lead the most walks in the club for a particular year. Alas this put a target on my head...I was a potential Sunday Walks Secretary. I vowed never to go onto Committee but alas I had the experience and the knowledge so in 2007 I joined the MBW Committee as Sunday Walks Secretary. I was Sunday Walks Secretary until 2018, then I became Membership Secretary. A role that I still hold.

I have continued on Committee and leading because I am so grateful to the club. I credit the club from transforming me into a walker who would not participate on a walk with waterfall or mount in its name to walking in countries like New Zealand, Vietnam, England, Wales, Scotland, Iceland, Norway, Nepal and more. Some as club walks but others through friendships that I have developed in the club. It is easy to give back to an organisation that has given me so much.

DB: Terrific, thanks Halina, thanks so much for sharing all of this with us.

MBW Art and Craft Exhibition

On Saturday, 14 February, approximately 55 people including visitors and members, came to the clubrooms to explore their hidden artistic talents. 17 members exhibited a broad range of interesting art and craft items. These included paintings, photos, knitted

garments, embroidery, pottery, drawings, textile designs, handmade books, wooden creations, jewellery, polished stones, tapestry, cross stitch, cushions, a patchwork quilt and a selection of crafty bushwalking items.

Members took great delight in sharing details, stories and experiences of their art and craft work in a relaxed, fun and supportive environment. Liz Reece raised \$300 for charity from sales of her beautiful textile artwork. During the afternoon we were serenaded by a band playing music for a "Valentine's Day" event in the sunny courtyard beside us.



Many photos taken on the day illustrate this creative and joyful occasion and can be found on our website. And here's a comment from a happy attendee:

*Thank you for organising the Art and Craft event. It was good to hang out with all the talented artists Bushies.
Ta
Ken Macmahon*



The Tree

This beautiful tree, photographed by Joshua Song in Camperdown Botanic Gardens in August 2025, reminded him of the following poem by well-loved Chinese writer Echo Chan (1943-1991) and he has shared this with us. As nature lovers I'm sure we can all identify with it. More about the life of Echo Chan can be found here: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanmao_\(writer\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanmao_(writer))



If There Is an Afterlife

by Echo Chan also known as Sanmao

If there is an afterlife, I would like to be a tree —
standing into eternity, with no posture of sorrow or joy.

Half of me serene in the earth's soil,
Half flying freely in the wind;
Half casting cool shade,
Half bathing in warm sunlight.
Quiet beyond words, proud without arrogance,
Never depending, never seeking.

If there is an afterlife, I would like to become a
gust of wind —
so even a moment feels eternal.
With no sentimental feelings, no eyes tender with affection.
Half of me carefree in the rain,
Half traveling in the spring light;
When lonely, I would go far alone,
carrying all gentle longing away with me,
never to miss, never to love again.

If there is an afterlife, I would be a bird —
flying across eternity with no pains of being lost.
To the east lies a burning hope,
to the south a warm nest to rest;
To the west, the fading sunset to chase,
to the north, fragrant blossoms awakened.

If there is an afterlife,
I hope that every time we meet,
it would turn into eternity.

(translated by ChatGPT)



March Safety and Risk Reminders

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



Mission to Seafarers Clubrooms Safety: The rooms at the Mission to Seafarers have clear evacuation signs and use one combined alarm/evacuation signal. A recorded voice clearly says to Evacuate accompanied by a loud “whooping” sounding alarm. If an evacuation is needed, then the evacuation signal will be heard and the on-duty member of the Mission to Seafarers staff will direct everyone to the Assembly Area. It is located in the public open space near Seafarers Bridge over the Yarra and the adjacent Convenience Store.

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

Accessing Private Property: The leader is responsible for obtaining the landowners permission to cross private property before the walk. Gates must be left open/shut as they are found on all walks and particularly on private property, and livestock should not be disturbed. If the walk has been done before the trip report should provide the contact details for the landowner. Note that there is a risk that the landowner may withdraw permission if there is extreme weather of flooding, so it may be advisable to check in case of bad weather,

For major popular walks the permission to use private property has generally been pre-arranged by the organisation responsible for the walk e.g. the Heysen Trail in South Australia. Generally, access to private property is not allowed in the declared fire season. Our private property policies are covered in By- Law 2.7 and the Guideline for Leading a Day Walk.

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

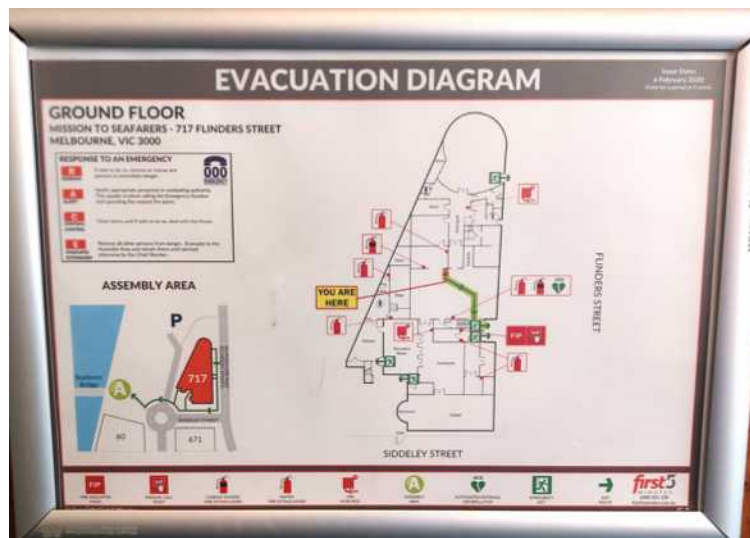
Camping Equipment for Members to borrow: The Club has an **increased** amount of camping equipment for members to try and use on Pack Carries and Base Camps. It's available from the Clubrooms on Wednesday nights and can be booked, ideal to see if you like overnight walking! Why not do your first Beginners Pack Carry this Autumn? Also, a GPS can be borrowed when not required by Leaders so you can practice your navigation skills.

Putting out Campfires: CFA advise is that you should **only put out campfires with water** as using soil may result in the fire restarting long after you have left.

Checking for Backburns: (NEW): After Summer and the fire season ‘slows down’ remember to check for controlled burns and back burning in the areas you will be walking in. See the link at the bottom of the Clubs Website homepage.

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



Holding onto your hat

Brian Steffensen

For a while now I have been experiencing the possibility of “sudden hat loss in high winds”.

A new product called an Akubra Chin Strap (from RM Williams) solves the problem. \$20 from City Hattery, under the Clocks, Flinders St Station, Basement. If the hat has a small textile rim (most do, including leather hats) this device is good; but a little difficult installing - easy with a tip from the shop.

Relax then when crossing bridges, edges, or near water ways.



Sunday Walks Secretary Annual Report 2025

Walkers	No	Total	Ave	Vis	Ave
Sunday Bus	25	1070	42.8	240	9.6
Sunday Car	24	395	16.46	57	2.38

One Sunday Bus was cancelled (low numbers and thunderstorms) and one Sunday Car (fire risk). These cancellations are consistent with previous years – there has never been cancellation of more than two Sunday walks since 2017.

Total Sunday Walks walkers by year

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Bus	1288	1214	1112	241	574	1043	1165	1132	1070
Car	391	353	359	249	336	409	429	394	395

- Lower bus numbers were noted towards the end of the year but appear to have picked up for January and February this year.
- There was excellent attendance at the Leader’s Training Day on 8 November and new leaders have begun to lead walks.
- Obtaining leaders is an ongoing issue, however all the leader positions were filled for both Sunday bus and car walks for 2025.

Thank you

Quentin Tibballs (Sunday Walks Secretary)



General Walks Secretary Report 2025

In 2025, our average attendances increased for 8 non-Sunday activities, remained the same for 2, and decreased for 6, compared with 2024. **Highlights** of last year included another popular Base Camp on Maria Island, 2 in the Grampians (including 1 with FedWalks) and a big Easter Lodge trip at Falls Creek. Pack Carries ranged across Victoria, NSW, Tasmania and WA, and included King Spur and Mt. Jagungal.

MBW Activity Statistics 2024 & 2025

	2024			2025		
	Trips	Average Nos	Average Visitors	Trips	Average Nos	Average Visitors
DAY WALKS						
Monday	10	8.2	1.3	11	9.2	0.9
Thursday	11	7	0.3	10	9.2	0.6
Saturday	9	8.4	0.6	8	13.1	2.6
Sunday Bus	24	47.2	12	25	42.8	9.6
Sunday Carpool	25	15.8	3	24	16.5	2.4
Wednesday	16	11.1	1.1	17	10.6	0.9
Social Walks	10	8.3	0.7	13	6.4	0.8
Historical	1	20	5	0	-	-
OTHER ACTIVITIES						
Conservation	0	-	-	0	-	-
Training	4	10.3	0	3	19	2
Navigation Training	3	5.7	1	4	6	0.5
Track Maintenance	-	-	-	-	-	-
Skiing	1	3	0	-	-	-
Base Camp	13	14.3	0.6	14	16.4	0.4
Walk-in Base Camp	1	7	0	0	-	-
Lodge	2	23	1	2	20	0.5
Pack Carry	26	8.8	0.8	32	10.1	0.5
Canoeing	0	-	-	2	6.5	0.5



Last year, there was 1 more **Monday** group walk than previously, and average attendances increased by 1, although visitor numbers declined slightly. The most popular trip was along the Darebin Creek, with an impressive 20 walkers.

The **Thursday** group had 1 less activity in 2025 (but there were 2 cancellations), while average attendances rose by 2.2 and visitor numbers increased slightly. The Plenty Gorge walk had 19 participants.

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Our **Saturday** group also had 1 less activity than in 2024 (but 1 cancellation). However, average numbers increased by an encouraging 4.7 and visitor numbers rose by 2. The most popular hike was at Mt. Macedon/Hanging Rock, with a pleasing 20 hikers.

There was 1 extra **Wednesday** walk than previously (despite 2 cancellations), while average attendances and visitor numbers fell slightly. The Darebin Creek and Steele Creek hikes both attracted 17 people.

There were 3 more **Social Walks**, but numbers declined by 1.9, although the visitor average was up slightly. Another Royal Park walk had 14 participants. No **Historical** walks were held last year.

Also, no **Conservation** or **Track Maintenance** attendance results were recorded in 2025, as for 2024. **General Training** activities decreased by 1 (but there was 1 cancellation). However, average numbers rose by an impressive 8.7. First Aid training saw a total of 37 attendees at 2 sessions, while the Leaders' Training day had an encouraging 20. There was 1 extra **Navigation Training** session last year, and attendances were similar to 2024. The map and compass exercise attracted 11 people.

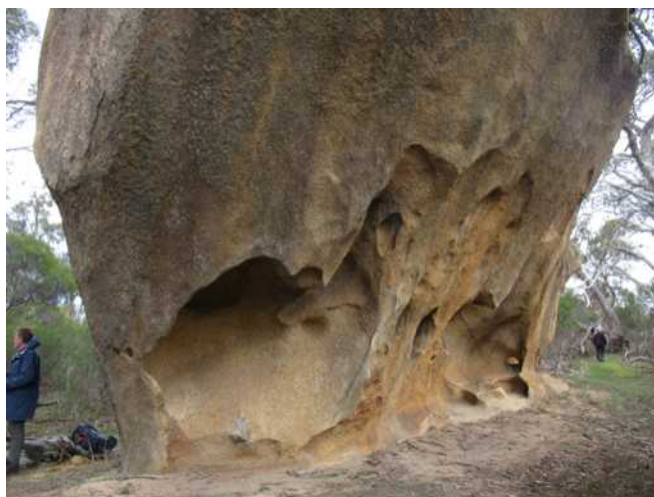
Base Camps showed an increase of 1 activity, and a rise of 2.1 in numbers, but with similar visitor figures. No **Walk-in BCs** were held in 2025. Grampians BCs were popular, with 26 hikers at the MBW trip and 31 at the Federation Weekend. Return trips to Maria Island and Great Barrier Island (NZ) were attended by 21 and 17 people, respectively. The same number of **Lodge** trips (2) occurred last year, but with 3 less attendees, on average, and a slight reduction in visitors. The Easter trip at Falls Creek, was again popular, with 30 hikers. No **Skiing** attendance results were recorded last year.

In 2025, **Pack Carries** showed an impressive increase of 6 (despite 4 cancellations), and attendances rose by an average of 1.3, while visitor numbers were down slightly. The Mt. Alexander, King Spur and Mt. Jagungal walks were the most popular, with 15 hikers each, while a new trip along the Sydney coast attracted 12 people. There were also 3 Beginners' PCs. After no events in 2024, **Canoeing** returned last year with 2 trips.

Overall, the number of activities increased or remained the same for 10 of our 16 groups, in 2025. This was especially the case for Pack Carries, which showed a pleasing increase, and also Social Walks. Once again, our Coordinators and leaders must be thanked for all of their efforts in providing an interesting and varied program. Many thanks must also go to our long serving Social Walks Coordinator, Jean Giese, who passed the role to Gill Wainwright, at the beginning of 2025. This year, I think our non-Sunday groups can expect further growth.

- Trip numbers are based on total trips – January to December.
- Average attendance numbers based on information from leaders but exclude trips where numbers have not been provided.
- Not included are 17 cancellations in 2024 (due to a variety of reasons) and 15 in 2025, as follows: **low numbers** – Sun Bus x 1, Thu x 1, Sat x 1, PC x 4; **high temperature** – Wed x 2, Thu x 1, PC x 1; **fire risk** – Sun Car x 1; **bad weather** – PC x 1; **leader unavailable** – PC x 1, Train x 1.

Stuart Hanham
(General Walks Secretary)



MBW - Social Secretary Report - AGM 2026

Bernadette Prunty

Social Events 2025-26

Date	Topic	Presenter/organiser	Attendees
Wednesday, 30 April 2025	Walking in Norway and Iceland	Agajan Akbari	60
Monday, 19th May	Cinema Nova - Film - The Salt Path	Bernadette Prunty	45
Wednesday, 28th May	Walking the Portuguese De Santiago	Judy MacWilliams	40
Wednesday, 25th June	Walking Te Araroa	Bernadette Young	34
Wednesday, 9th July	Dehydrating Meals - A 101 guide to long lasting nutritious and delicious food	Hiroko Nakano	29
Wednesday, 30th July	Forests, health and hope - A conservation journey	Jo Hopkins and Alex Kline - The Wilderness Society	20
Sunday, 17th August	Comedy Show - "Eat, Pray, Walk"	Bernadette Prunty	20
Wednesday, 27th August	A Hidden Walking Gem in Italy - The Camino Materano	Mick Noonan	30
Wednesday, 24th September	Pre loved goods exchange night	Susan Maughan	50
Wednesday, 29th October	Scotland on Foot	Ian Mair	57
Wednesday, 26th November	Walking in the Dolomites	Derrick Brown	75
Tuesday, 9th December	Christmas Party	MBW Committee	150
Thursday, 1 January 2026	New Years Day Party	Bernadette Prunty	17
Wednesday, 28th January	Spirit of the Kerry Way Walking in Ireland	Majella Grainger	47
Saturday, 14th February	Art and craft exhibition - 17 exhibitors	Bernadette Prunty	75

Forthcoming Events

Wednesday, 25th February	From Ocean to Andes in Peru	Deb Shand and Meredith Quick	TBC
Tuesday, 10th March	Volunteers Thank You Dinner	MBW Committee	TBC
Wednesday, 25th March	AGM	MBW Committee	TBC
Wednesday, 29th April	Penny Fields	Tour of Mont Blanc	TBC
Wednesday, 27th May	Film screening and discussion - "Forest County" Protecting the Yarra Ranges from logging	Lewis Haskins	TBC
Wednesday, 24th June	The Kimberley Up Close	John Fritze	TBC
Wednesday, 29th July	Walking in Italy	Annemarie Moulder	TBC
Wednesday, 26th August	McMillan track - 210 kms - Gippsland	John Kellas	TBC
Wednesday, 30th Septmeber	Grande Randonnee Nord - Noumea	Susan Maughan	TBC
Wednesday, 28th October	The Isle of Skye - Scotland	Judith Shaw	TBC
Wednesday, 25th November	Walking in Austria	Agajan Akbari	TBC
TBC December	Christmas Party	MBW Committee	TBC



Annual Training Report 2025

Our priorities continue to be improving our training opportunities for leaders both new and current, and to provide regular training activities for all members. In 2025 our main activities were:

- The annual **Leaders Training Day** on November 8 led again by Ian Mair, Angela Vetsicas and myself.
 - A record 17 attendees, breaking the previous record of 12
 - In the last 5 Years 54 people have now attended.While we prefer new leaders to have undertaken the training before leading it's not a requirement as all new leaders get a **Development Mentor** assigned and an **Activity Mentor** for each of their early walks, they also get a package of key documents to become familiar with.
- Our **Leader Mentoring** currently has a pool of 15 Development Mentors, and a record 25 new leaders are being mentored covering day and extended activities with 9 leading Pack Carrys. Thanks go to the many current leaders who act as Activity Mentors for new leaders during the year.
- **Navigation Training** continued to be popular. Over 60 people attended a range of activities:
 - **Field Navigation Training** (field day and a theory session, 8 March), and as well as a **Map and Compass (Rogaining) Day** (October 25 with 11 attendees, led by Quentin Tibballs)
 - **GPS Navigation** (April 12, 6 attendees, led again by Ian Mair)
 - Sessions on **Topo Map Reading** and the Club's **Website Mapping and Navigation support tools** (led by Quentin Tibballs and Ian Mair, 37 attendees).
- Our annual subsidised **First Aid Training** was held twice (May 17 and Nov 29) thanks to Quentin Tibballs (35 attendees).
- We had 3 **Beginners Parry Carry** events with a range of beginners and more experienced walkers attending. Thanks to Di McKinlay and Susan Maughan.
- We also had a presentation on **Dehydrating Meals and Food Nutrition** (Hiroko Nakano, July 9)
- A major update to activity guideline for **Leading Day Walks** was completed in 2025 and has now been communicated. Thanks to Quentin for his major contribution.

The News is an important channel for educating and reminding members and leaders on safety, risk management etc. It also provides advance notice of training activities run by us and BWV. So, ***we really do need all members to look each month at the Safety and Risk Reminders Article.***

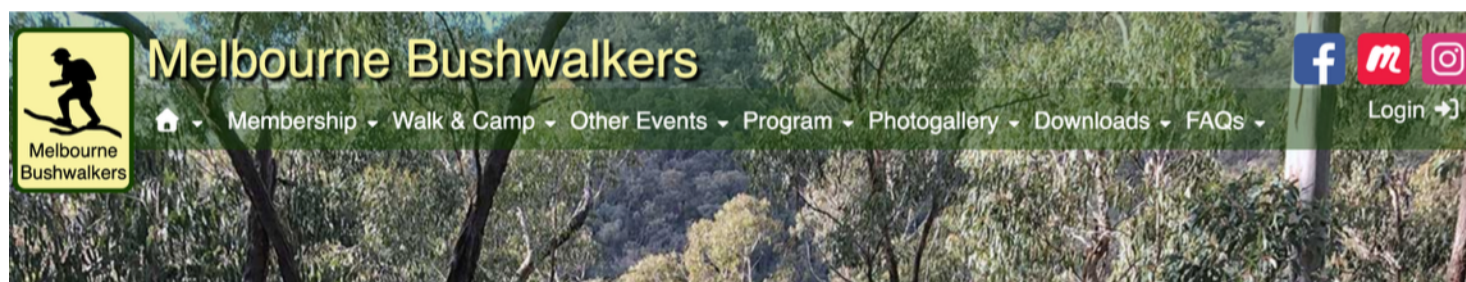
In June we started serialising the Bushwalking Victoria **Advanced Leadership Skills** in the News each month. It covers 14 specialist topics e.g. Delegation, and Problem Solving. All the topics are accessible to members on the Website.

Unfortunately, the **Smartphone Navigation Training** had to be cancelled as Andrew Robinson (who is not a member) decided to discontinue this course impacting Bushwalking Victoria, ours other Clubs. Thanks go to Andrew who has trained over 50 of our members over 3 years with many others doing his Bushwalking Victoria courses.

For 2026 we will continue our mentoring approach for leaders, provide a range of training/opportunities (particularly Navigation) and trial the new Bushwalking Victoria training for extended walks to encourage more people to lead them. We will also look at how to best provide Smartphone Navigation training.

Mick Noonan, Training Officer





Webmaster Report to AGM 2026

(a) During the year the core online facilities team has been expanded to include David Arnold on the website and Nina Izett for our social media presence. Both have wide experience in their respective areas and add a layer of security and continuity to this important dimension of service delivery to members. Their involvement adds to the ongoing contributions of Mark Heath who continues to provide backup and answer online enquiries during the webmaster's absence.

(b) Since joining the team as Co-Webmaster David has focussed on simplifying and documenting the current codebase and improving the functionality and user-friendliness of the club's email system. Nina is extending her role beyond running the club's MeetUp Group to work with other contributors to develop a comprehensive social media presence for the club, including our current Facebook and Instagram accounts. Jill Allen continues to provide an invaluable input to the Facebook presence.

(c) The online booking form introduced in July 2025 as an extension to the Preview description in the Members' Area, to facilitate member registration for activities, has been welcomed and widely adopted. All members are encouraged to use the facility to ease the workload on leaders by providing all the necessary details in a simple uniform format.

(d) A capability was introduced through the Membership Area of the website to extract trend data on the club membership, such as the average age of members over time, the average age of new members over time and the average age of resigned members over time. These additions are being implemented to assist in the Committee's planning activities and support the decision-making recommendations arising from the 2025 Member Survey.

(e) Further to developments reported last year, additional enhancements have been made to the website maps download tool to extend its utility as a planning tool for leaders. The enhancements have been followed up with video sessions to assist leaders' awareness of the capabilities of the tool. Additional sessions will be conducted in 2026.

(e) Trials have begun to test the ability of AI Large Language Models to assist the website team understand and manage the club's website coding and future extension. This rapidly advancing field utilising natural language as a complement to detailed coding language skills to maintain and extend the current website content has the potential to support the operations of the website team.

(f) The club's website has been registered on Keep Active, a directory service listing local fitness groups, social groups, organisers and trainers. This is a free listing. Since registration we have had several enquiries for more information on how to join Melbourne Bushwalkers.

I would like to close by thanking all members for their timely and helpful comments when issues are experienced with the website performance or ideas arise for improvements and additions. Enquiries from members who may like to contribute to the online facilities team are always welcome.

Ian Mair
Webmaster

Membership Secretary's Report – AGM 2026

The clubrooms at the start of 2026 have been abuzz with many visitors attending to join walks and hopefully they will eventually become Members. Our “Meet and Greet” volunteers have been very active providing an “Introduction to the club”. The interest in MBW has been reflected in the number of new members. Seventy-eight Temporary Members were approved and became Members in 2025.

Again, our membership numbers have exceeded past years. Our current membership as at February 2026 is 594. Unfortunately, our number of Temporary Members (on the list for less than 13 months) has dropped from 187 last year to 146. Although the number of Temporary Members is below last year our conversion rate of Temporary Members becoming Members has improved. It is always a pleasure receiving a membership application from an excited Temporary Member who has qualified to become a Member.

84% of club members have provided their year of birth. The information is only seen by the member. It is not available to other members. However, it provides the club with vital statistical information. If you have not noted your year of birth on your profile, please do. If you are unsure how to access your profile, please feel free to contact me at membership@mbw.org.au.

Again, I would like to reiterate that MBW's success as a club is due to its volunteers who contribute in so many ways. Your enthusiasm and dedication are highly appreciated. ***Please note that the committee's recommendation regarding membership fees will be advised prior to the AGM.***

Halina Sarbinowski – MBW Membership Secretary

Great South West Walk – 7-15 February 2026

Richard Hanson & Robin Curwen-Walker

Led by Ian Mair, eleven of us from newer to more seasoned members of thirty plus years, experienced a very enjoyable pack carry, walking seven days of the Great South West Walk from Portland to Nelson. The walk included four days in the bush and three next to the Glenelg River. It featured convenient walk in campsites with toilets, shelters and water, although at our first campsite, Cubby's, once all tucked up in our tents, a large branch broke off and fell from a nearby tree. It was an ear piercing crack and thud, and despite being away from our tents, gave us all cause for concern. It reminded us to “look up” before picking our next sites, although open space was difficult to find in the forested campsites.



I have never experienced so much wildlife. Koalas jumping from trunk to trunk, growling in the night and my favourite - pooping on the tin roofed shelters that sounded like someone throwing stones on the roof. Tiger snakes, including one that completely blocked our path and had to be encouraged by Ian to move. An abundance of pretty blue wrens, yellow breasted robins and yellow tailed black cockatoos. Kangaroos stampeding through our campsite as we lay in our tents hoping they wouldn't crash into us. Echidnas, oblivious to our presence, busy making a mess of the trail and Fred fighting the possums who were trying to get into his pack in the shelter.

We enjoyed meeting a solo walker Tim who accompanied us till Moleside campsite on the Glenelg River where he had a kayak delivered. He was so fortunate to have Tony and Robin to mentor him with his kayak. It was a delightful campsite, and a charming spot from which Tim launched his craft.

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Ian even delayed our start that day so we could all support Tim and bid him farewell. We tried to check on Tim's welfare by asking passing paddlers if they had seen him. Alas it wasn't until three days later at the Nelson Pub where we caught up with his adventures and learnt all had gone well. There we farewelled Tim a final time for his walk into Portland.

There are more than 50 species of orchids found in the park and despite the season we saw many hyacinth orchids and a forest abundant with banksia, ferns and grass trees.

I want to close by acknowledging our leader Ian Mair. Ian is a great leader, well organised and thoughtful of his group. We were privileged to be on his walk. Thank you Ian.

Geelong Foreshore and Botanic Gardens -

16 February 2026

Cecily Hunter

What to do on a hot Monday in February? Fifteen club members and visitors chose to discover an interesting and weather accommodating answer to this question by following Ian on a walk along the shoreline of Corio Bay to the Botanic Gardens. The walk description proved accurate in every respect, an easy ten kilometres, mostly flat with a gentle rise towards the end. There was ample opportunity for loitering over taking photos, for refreshing coffee and ice-cream, and replenishing water supplies.



Most participants travelled by train from Southern Cross to the starting point at North Geelong station. From there, a short walk took us on to the pathway following the shoreline of Corio Bay from Rippleside Park to the Esplanade at Waterfront Geelong, and on to the Botanic Gardens. Along the way, we found hints of Geelong's history in signage and the hundred odd relics of the city's maritime days, shipping bollards painted to amuse and illustrate aspects of times long-gone. The broad path accommodated walkers and cyclists more or less comfortably, a sea breeze alleviated the rising temperature and the view out to sea gladdened the eye. Along the Esplanade overlooking Eastern Beach, green grass and rows of palm trees provided comfortable shade for a lunch stop. Seating was available for those who preferred it to lolling on the grass.

After lunch, we moved on, passing by Limeburners Point glimmering in full sunlight, to the shaded coolness of the Botanic Garden. My ignorance prevents any comment on the plants and trees on display, but they were beautifully lush and green (a stormwater harvest dam was nearby) and it was a delight to wander around. A café located in the fern glade tempted us to a long afternoon tea before heading off to walk back to Geelong station. Only one of the party decided to take the opportunity of swimming although the pool at Eastern Beach looked very inviting. The walk along Malop Street to the station was largely in the shade and we arrived in good time, as per program, to catch the train back to Melbourne at 2.45pm.



Upcoming activities

March 2026

Sun 1	DAY: Jan Juc to Anglesea	Bus	E&E/M	Chris Lord & Grant Roger
Mon 2	MTG: Club Committee Meeting	Pvt		Susan Maughan
Thu 5	DAY: Willsmere & Yarra Trails	Pvt	E	Jopie Bodegraven
6-9	PC: Lake Tali Karng & Wellington Plain	Pvt	M	Bernadette Young
6-9	PC: Great Ocean Walk: Marengo-Aire River	Pvt	E/M	Anne Wilkins
6-9	PC: Walking the High Silence: Pretty Valley-Wallaces & Ropers Huts-Falls Creek	Pvt	M	Petras Pedroarvy Surna
8-18	BC: Great Barrier Island (NZ)	Pvt	Var	Susan Maughan
Sun 8	DAY: Pixie Track, Dandenongs	Car	M	Babak Dadvand & Adriana Fari-palko
Wed 11	DAY: Taylors Creek: Watergardens-Keilor	Pvt	E	Mark A Heath
Sat 14	TRG: Navigation by Map and Compass	Pvt	E/M	Quentin Tibballs
Sun 15	DAY: Eastern View-Aireys inlet	Car	E/M	Annemarie Mulder
Mon 16	DAY: Cape Woolamai	Pvt	E	Halina Sarbinowski
20-22	PC: Heathy Spur-Ropers Hut	Pvt	E/M	Anne Wilkins
Sun 22	DAY: Mt Donna Buang-Cement Creek	Bus	E/M&M	Bernd Neubauer & Glenn Swane
Wed 25	MTG: Annual General Meeting	Pvt		Susan Maughan
Wed 25	DAY: Smiths Gully-One Tree Hill	Pvt	E/M	John Terrell
Thu 26	SOC: Braeside Park	Pvt	E	Gillian Wainwright
27-29	PC: Mt Typo-Lake William Hovell	Pvt	M/H	Ray Thomas
Sat 28	DAY: Lyrebird Walk-Grants Picnic Ground	Pvt	E/M	Carole Patterson
Sun 29	DAY: Garden of St Erth-Simmons Reef	Car	E/M	Therese Ryan & Stefan Bartl

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

