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Quarterly Magazine  
Canberra Bushwalking  
Club



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Canberra Bushwalking Club Inc  
GPO Box 160, Canberra ACT 2601  
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View from Cobberas No 1 Trig to Middle Peak, Cleft Peak and The Pilot *Photo by Jan Gatenby*

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## Guidelines for Contributions

Members' contributions are welcomed – articles, poems, recipes, photos, artworks and other items related to bushwalking, conservation and allied activities. Articles may be up to approximately 2,500 words in length, although most will probably be considerably shorter. Those describing long trips, especially if they are exploratory or unusual in some way, may need to be longer in order to be useful to readers interested in the areas described.

Please send all contributions to:  
contributions@canberrabushwalkingclub.org

If you would like a short message to be published in the Monthly Update, please mark it as **URGENT**.

**Disclaimer:** Any opinions expressed by individual authors do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor, the Committee or members of CBC.

***Deadline for contributions to the next Quarterly Magazine will be 9 August 2023, though earlier would be appreciated.***

Please follow the **Detailed Guidelines** on page [3](#) when making a contribution.

**All members of the committee** can be contacted in one email to:  
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## Contribution Guidelines

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### **Please follow these Detailed Guidelines when making a contribution**

- The most acceptable text software is Word.
- Please do not embed images in your email text, but send them as attached files, preferably jpg, with captions and the photographer's name; If a photo is not yours, make sure you have permission to use it.
- Please ensure your articles have been thoroughly edited and spell-checked.
- Photos should be high resolution, though I would appreciate it if you could straighten seriously oblique horizons.
- If you are sending a link, please include the web address.
- Please specify the topic of your contribution in the Subject line of your email, and send only one article / contribution per email. (More than one photo can be sent in an email, depending on the file size.)
- The deadline for contributions to the next Quarterly Magazine will be 9 August 2023, though earlier would be appreciated.

Pat yourself on the back. You're special. That's right, special. Well according to my GP anyway. She believes that we bushwalkers are a 'special breed' – and she's downright envious. My poor GP can't wait for me to turn up in her office so she can ask me about my latest bushwalking adventures. Keen to do the Kungsleden – the King's Trail in Sweden, she's desk bound and surrounded each day by people with sniffly noses, aches and pains, and other mysterious ailments. Not me? When I go out and about walking, I'm surrounded by healthy, enthusiastic, cheerful and knowledgeable like-minded folk. I've found my tribe!

What is it that makes bushwalking special? What makes it so good for us? For this I consulted a doctor of another kind, Dr Google, who unearthed a myriad of facts. According to [ABC Science Reporter, Belinda Smith](#), reconnecting with nature rejuvenates us, calming our mind, lowering our risk of diabetes and heart disease. It improves our mental health and prolongs life and as far as I'm concerned, a long, healthy, happy life is right up there as a personal goal.

Key findings from the [Bush Walking State of Play Report](#) are particularly interesting. Did you know that the annual estimate is that 5.8% of the population aged 15+ go bushwalking with an almost equal gender split (49% male/51% female participation)? Unsurprisingly, bushwalking was found to be most popular in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) with 10.6% of us participating. Tassie wasn't far behind at 10.2%, and given the exceptional areas of bush and wilderness close to those of us fortunate enough to live here in the ACT or Tasmania that's not terribly surprising to me.

Here's where it gets interesting. It seems that only 11% of bush walking participation was organised. That would include informal social media groups, eg Meet-up, I imagine, and with one in five (18%) of participants being motivated to go out bushwalking for 'social reasons' this new form of 'hooking up' is increasingly popular.

Younger participants reported that their dominant motive was to be outdoors enjoying nature, while middle-age are donning their boots for fun and enjoyment. Older Bush Walkers (65+) are primarily motivated by physical health and fitness. Makes sense to me.

[Lisa Wood](#), a public health researcher at the University of Western Australia, believes that we all have an innate desire to connect with nature. She calls this 'biophilia'. "It reminds us

that we're part of a bigger planet", she says. I like that perspective.



So do the Japanese, it seems, with extensive research undertaken by Dr Qing Li, a clinician and researcher at the Nippon Medical School in Tokyo who is a firm believer in [‘forest bathing’](#). In forest bathing many Japanese run their fingers through the soil and breathe in, deeply filling their lungs with fresh air, all the while listening to the sounds of the forest. Studies show that stress hormones drop even after just a short walk among trees. Dr Li is at the forefront of work he calls “forest medicine” which argues that even a short walk in a forest provides greater health benefits than those arising from a stroll around a city. His research has found that after a walk in the forest our bodies have higher levels of the natural killer cells inside us which go around looking to repair our damaged cells. It is argued that forests contain phytoncides, volatile organic chemical compounds given off by the trees which contain natural antimicrobial and insecticidal qualities. These are designed to protect the tree from damage by bugs, bacteria and disease. It’s not just trees that contain [phytoncides](#) but other green plants including vegetables, and perhaps more importantly for us is that

they’ve been found in eucalypts, although the jury is still out as to whether they provide the same natural medicinal effect as that shown in pine trees.

So, there you have it. Whether you’re convinced by the research, hypotheses and arguments above or not there’s no doubting that regardless of our fitness levels hiking/walking is easily accessible and available to most of us. We don’t need fancy fitness gear. Seeing me in my dorky hat and shirt out on the trail, often covered in scratches or leaf litter after a relaxing encounter with some native Bursaria, attests to that. What’s more we don’t even have to travel far with the ACT being blessed by having over 90 parks including our beautiful and very special Namadgi National Park and Tidbinbilla Nature. No excuse, right? Phytoncides look out, here I come.

‘Till next time - happy and safe walking everyone.

Having cleared the backlog of articles with the first two issues of our new Quarterly it Magazine, I was a bit apprehensive of filling the third, but I need not have worried. What strikes me is the enthusiasm generated by bushwalking, and the authors' keenness to share their experience with others, whether they be adventurous explorations of new areas, revisits to old haunts, which somewhat mysteriously may not be what memory envisaged, or the deep satisfaction of renewing their familiarity with places that have long held a centrality in their hearts. All this held together by a love of the bush and a delight in the company of their fellow walkers.

Laeli has leapt into print with her first article for *it*, an account of a trip led by Garry Boxsell to the Cobberas, an area seldom (if ever?) visited by our Club but very rewarding with its beautiful montane forests and craggy peaks, despite some horrendous scrub—and just over the border from The Pilot (though the access is much longer). Ian Turland takes us to the newly advertised McMillans Track, also in alpine Victoria, for the first time and then continues the account of David Brieese's Great South Coast Walk. Will they finish it in their next expedition to coastal NSW?

Cynthia has hit a more serious note with her Senate *Inquiry into the Impacts and Management of Feral Horses*, illustrated with Keith's graph, constructed from Club walks statistics. Without the efforts of conservationists, we wouldn't have National Parks and other wild areas to walk in, and on a more serious level, to keep the Earth liveable. And we also acknowledge our First Nations people who, over tens of thousands of years, worked out ways to preserve the environment on which we all ultimately depend.

Thanks to the photographers and artists too, who make the Magazine a delight to look at. I'm greatly enjoying working with all the talent we have in the Club.

Meg McKone, Editor



Backed by The Breadknife, Meg reaches the top of Balor Peak, an offshoot of the Grand High Tops Track in the Warrumbungles. *Photo by Terrylea Reynolds*

A submission was made to the Senate Inquiry into the Impacts and management of feral horses in the Australian Alps expressing our support for eliminating feral horses from Kosciuszko National Park.

Access to Currowan Falls\* in the Budawangs is one of nine places in that area where access tracks pass through private property. We are working on this.

A submission is being made to the Review of the Namadgi National Park Plan of Management, supporting aerial culling of feral animals, increasing resources for weed control and opposing inclusion of accommodation for walkers in the National Park.

*\*Currowan Creek is in Currowan State Forest between the Kings Highway and the Western Distributor, on the lands of the Yuin people.*



Currowan Falls

*Photo by David Poland*

## **Proposed Amendment to Club Constitution regarding Membership Requirements**

At the Club's general meeting on 17th May members had the opportunity to discuss and vote on the proposed amendment to the Club's Constitution, as outlined in the April monthly newsletter.

The motion to remove the requirement for prospective Club members to be nominated and seconded was defeated.

Accordingly, the membership requirements in relation to joining the Club as currently outlined in Section 3 of our Constitution, remain unchanged.

Terrylea Reynolds  
President

## **Currockbilly Logbook**

CBC member David Poland reports that the Currockbilly logbook for 1964 to 1970 is now stored in the National Library of Australia Manuscript collection at MS10711.

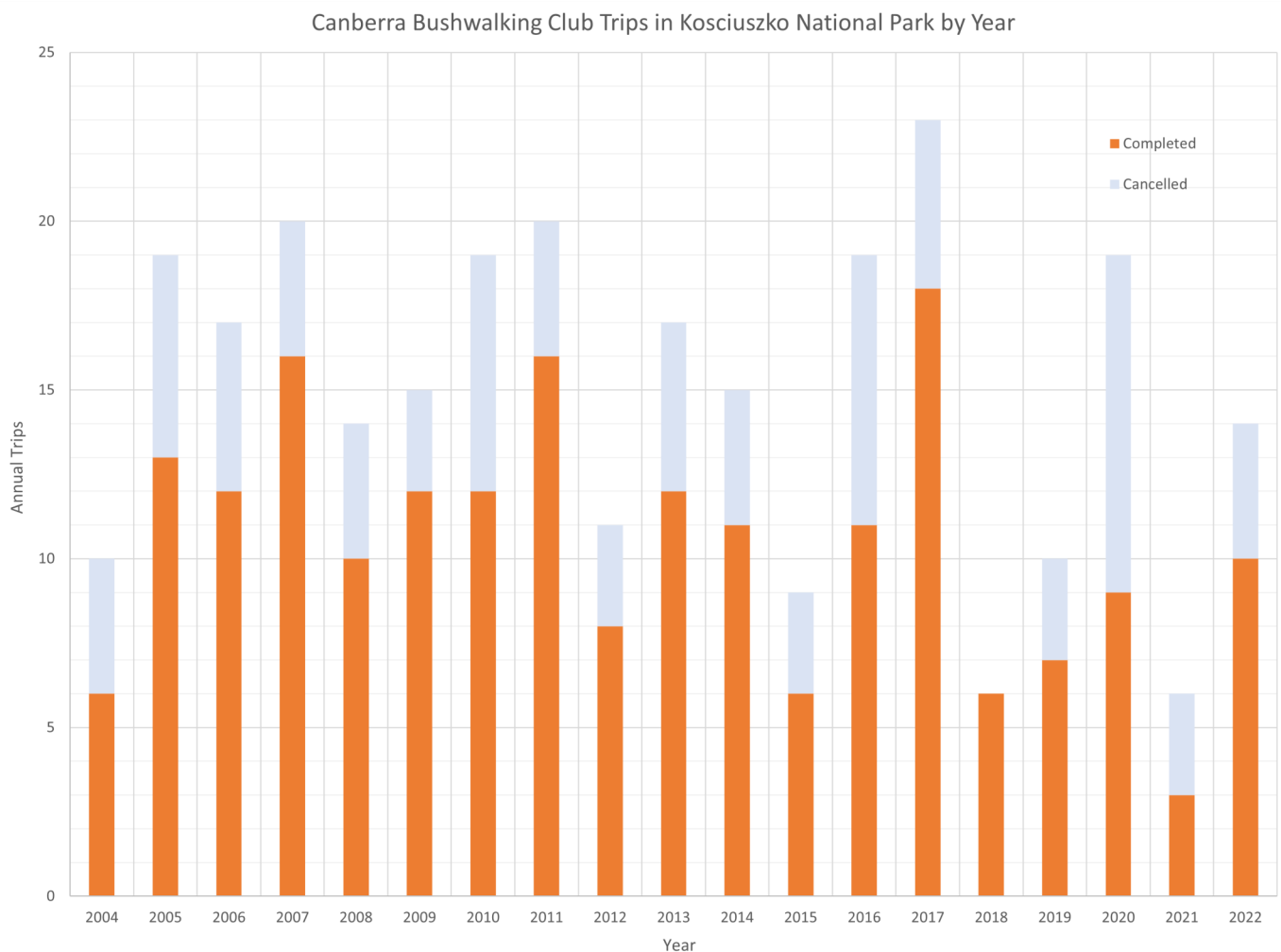
The 1970 log book is still in active service on the summit.



## CBC trips in Kosciuszko NP 2004 to 2022

Club members who are concerned about the damage being caused to Kosciuszko NP by feral horses (and isn't that all of us?), may be interested in the graph below which shows the number of trips our Club has programmed in the Park for the past 18 years.

Keith Thomas created the graph from the Club's statistics, and Cynthia Breheny, our Conservation Officer, included it in the Club's submission to the Senate *Inquiry into the Impacts and Management of Feral Horses* in April. As Cynthia says, "One picture is worth a thousand words" and this one demonstrates our keen and ongoing interest in KNP.



A few notes from Keith:

Covid drastically reduced the number of our trips to the Snowies;

The low numbers in 2004 were probably due to the effects of the fires;

The numbers have dropped significantly as we've aged.

Dear Editor,

Below is a short extract from a trip report by 'Bush Explorers' of a trip into the Colo. Possibly a good lesson for many in CBC.

'Soon, the views disappeared completely, and this was not just due to the rain but mainly because we entered an area of thick scrub, which was also very wet on the occasion. Somewhere along this stretch, the navigation system of my waterproof? phone packed up, so for the rest of the trip, it was back to compass and map mostly, with an occasional Garmin GPS check. I have no problem whatsoever about using technology whilst bushwalking, but it is essential to also be able to find your way if it malfunctions.'

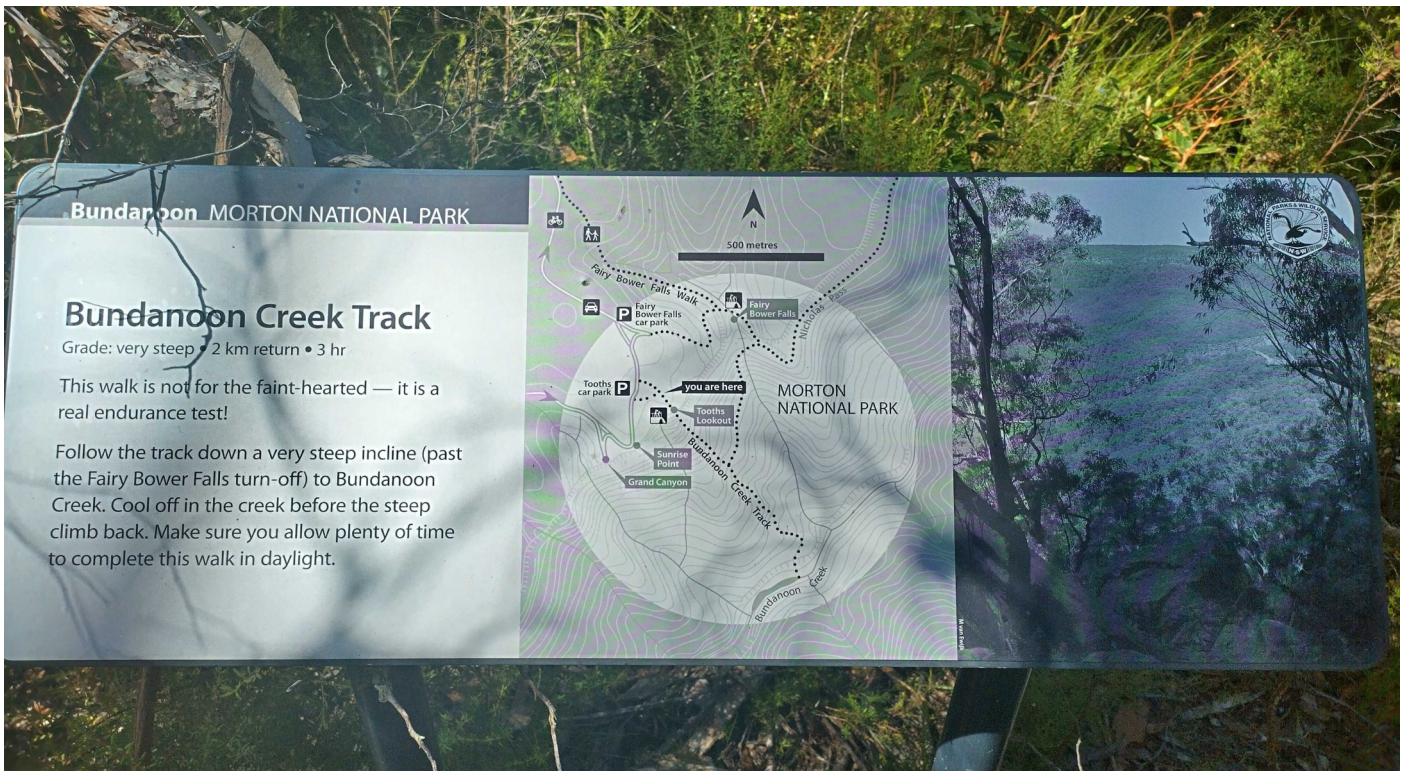


Explanatory note: Both quote and photo by Yuri Bolotin, part of Bush Explorers, which I think is a spinoff from The Bush Club. He publishes very detailed walks reports in the public domain which is where I got the info for my letter.

Ian Hickson

I had advertised this trip as being rough, with a steep descent and a lengthy swim through very cold water. We would have to jump off a ledge, swim between cliffs then continue upstream, go under a waterfall and find ourselves in a cave with a huge boulder wedged at the top. However, it turned out quite differently.

Eight competent and enthusiastic walkers booked in — Garry B, Cameron, Deb M, Rose F,



Laeli H, Daniel P and Joe C, who offered to video this walk, and myself, the leader.

We parked near Teeths Lookout at Bundanoon Creek and carefully descended the sometimes very steep track. It was a mixture of slippery dirt track often covered with leaves or small pebbles which added to the slipperiness, rough high steps, and slides down some rocks which were too large to move. The descent took us about 40 minutes and we arrived at the Lake, which was so much larger than I had remembered. There was an abundance of vegetative growth everywhere. We enjoyed the morning tea break.

My memory of this walk, which I had done with Vance Brown as the leader about 15 years ago, was that we needed to cross to the other side of this lake walking either barefoot or in thongs. This time we needed to balance carefully and cross by stepping over large rocks, then with a helping hand slither onto the other side of the Lake. With all the growth evident on this side of the river we all kept our boots on. It was like a jungle to traverse, up over or under branches, up or through gaps in huge rocks where we had to haul ourselves either up or slither down to keep traversing to where I thought we should be able to clamber up a ledge of rock, and then enter very cold water in order to swim towards the water-



Joe at the trickling waterfall. *Photo by Gary Boxsell*

fall. At this stage we were walking quite high above the water which we could see about three to four metres below us. We continued along and spied a car tyre wedged between some tree branches about three metres higher than we were.

I decided to call a halt and explained to the group that the river had risen considerably (at least five metres) and therefore the cave would not be visible, but hidden under all this water. The group, ever enthusiastic to keep exploring, listened, then Joe along with Cameron and Daniel decided to push on to see whatever there was to see.

After a mere twenty minutes they returned with huge smiles and said they had found a lake so large and beautiful that I just had to see it. And so the party scrambled under and over more vegetation, up and over or through more huge rocks and eventually came to this quite beautiful lake about 200 metres in length and 40 metres wide with rocks at the end. After a short lunch break we entered the water and found it wasn't very cold after all. What a relief! Most of the group easily swam to the other end. Garry clambered over the rocks and could

see huge boulders under the water. Maybe my cave and the wedged boulder had dropped with all the storms of heavy rain and high surges of river water??

We then very languidly swam back looking at the tall cliffs on either side and the blue sky above. What more could you ask for? This group were enthusiastic and competent explorers.

After enjoying drinks and some more food we set off on our return, climbing out of the gorge and back to the Lookout. However the beauties of this river surprised us again by showing us another gem. On the way back we spied a beautiful small waterfall between all the rocks. I thought, well, if we couldn't swim under my waterfall this trickle of water sliding over rocks was a good second.

Thank you to all those who came expecting to swim under a waterfall and enter a cave. What we found was still very exciting and maybe a great summer walk swimming in the lake while the river is so high.

Just sometimes a walk has unexpected results!



Jeff Bennetts' comments may shed some light on the mystery:

Abnormally high water - the lake on Bundanoon Ck never used to be that wide. There were plenty of rocks out of the water allowing for a dry crossing and it was very easy to follow the opposite bank to the point opposite Fairy Bower Creek junction. Only from that point the going got rougher.

I have also headed downstream along Bundanoon Creek from the bottom of the Teeth Lookout Track. There was a large cave along here. You can turn up Coal Creek to the base of Coal Mine Falls where the tourist track comes in. (You'd need to check the park alerts, as the Coal Mine Falls track has been subject to landslips.)

Above: Our lunch spot before entering the second lake.  
*Photo by Gary Boxsell*

Left: Coal Mine Falls. *Photo by Jeff Bennetts*

*Walk participants: Ian Turland (leader), Geoff Barker, Peter Dodds, Gemma Dodds, Cynthia Burton, Felicity Chapman, Phil Turland, and John Simmons.*



Towards the Crinoline from Little Tamboritha *Photo by Ian Turland*

When browsing the internet in 2021, I was surprised to see a reference to a 220km walk in Victoria – my old home state – that I had never heard of. And it's been in existence since the late-1980s, which made it even more intriguing. It's the McMillans Walking Track (MMWT), which traverses the Victorian Alps from Cobungra on the Omeo-Mt Hotham Road to Woods Point, a hamlet tucked away in the bush on the upper Goulburn River.

The walk was developed by the Ben Cruachan Walking Club and follows, where possible, a track laid by Angus McMillan in 1864 to link a series of Gippsland goldfields. There are signs at points along the way of the goldmining era, including stonewalling, mine shafts and mining machinery.

Information-wise, I was in luck because a comprehensive and professional-standard guidebook to the walk had only recently been released by the Ben Cruachan Walking Club and well-known bushwalking guidebook writers John and Monica Chapman. I ordered a copy,

as well as hard-copy maps, and did a reconnaissance car trip to the area in late 2021, focusing on the start and end-points and possible locations for food-drops. The "track" (more later on that term) is intersected by several roads and these provide points at which food can be cached.

Logistics would be a key element in the success of the walk, requiring a very long car-shuffle as well as the placement of several food/water caches by a forward party. The food-drops meant we only needed to carry 2-3 days of food for any segment of the walk.

And so it was that a party of eight – six CBC members and two "guests" from Melbourne – commenced the walk on 10 February this year.



Looking towards Mt Hotham from the King Spur Track *Photo by Ian Turland*

The walk afforded a wide variety of landscapes and vegetation. At higher elevations, we walked among snow gums, with wildflowers decorating the alpine meadows in areas such as Mt Tamboritha and Mt Arbuckle. A mixture of vegetation characterized the lower elevations, including the impressively tall mountain ash. Beautiful ferny gullies were a feature of

the latter part of the walk. Sadly, blackberries and other weed species were also part of our walking experience. One highlight was walking along – and through – the Moroka River in the Mt Darling-Snowy Bluff Wilderness Zone.



Rockhopping along the Moroka River *Photo by Felicity Chapman*

The track is in many ways more a route, rather than a “track” per se – though I gather this is also the case with the better-known Australian Alps Walking Track. It includes fire-trails in varying states and, in fact, there are a few stretches where one walks on high-quality gravel roads. Parts of it are foot-trails or fainter footpads. And parts of it are through untracked wilderness areas.

The route was usually not difficult to follow but there were parts requiring navigation skills. And while our food-drops kept our loads lighter, there were some very steep and sustained ascents and descents. (This was the only time I have had cause to use my hands to help me get up a 4WD track!) My firm assessment is that this is a walk for those who have experience in multi-day walks and are capable of managing a range of terrains. It is not a walk for bushwalking novices.



Despite doing the walk in late summer, water availability was generally not an issue for us, though we did put water-drops into a couple of locations. The MMWT crosses ten rivers, seven of which needed to be forded – the Crooked River is forded 25 times in one day! About half our campsites were next to rivers/creeks that provided good bathing opportunities. River levels can be a danger after lots of rain and, with heavy La Niña rains in spring, this was a major reason for delaying the timing of our walk from November 2022, when it was originally scheduled.

With the publication of the guidebook and the increasing popularity of long, multi-day walks (“thru-hiking”, as it is called in the United States and increasingly in Australia), the MMWT might in time attract an increasing number of walkers. But there was no sign of that when we did the walk. Although we encountered other people at some points – mostly 4WDers – we didn’t meet anyone else on the trail doing the MMWT. This was just as well at some of the campsites. Sometimes we were at spacious sites catering to the broader public, such as at Mayfield Flats on the Dargo River, Eaglevale on the Wonnangatta



Fording the Dargo River *Photo by Ian Turland*

and Rumpffs Flat on Mount Skene Creek. At the other extreme was our final night at Stander Creek. We joked that the name of the creek came from the fact there was standing room only! There are several historical huts along the route but none that would be used for accommodation except in emergency circumstances.

We managed to have a few mishaps along the way. Felicity gave herself an impressive black eye when she took a fall early in the walk. And I executed an apparently spectacular cartwheeling tumble which the others, after sympathetically checking I was okay, expressed fervent wishes they had captured on video. Our most challenging health/safety issue was that three days into the walk, John came down with a bad case of gastro. We gave serious consideration as to whether he might have to be helicoptered out, given his weakened condition. But, in the end, we managed to get him to our planned campsite on the Wonnangatta River, where his wife was able to drive in and collect him. Given our February timing, we also had to manage the risk of heat stress on some of the warmer days.

We finished the walk, as planned, on 22 February, thirteen days after we started. The seven of us who finished agreed it was a very satisfying way to spend two weeks: great mountain vistas, beautiful forests and wildflowers, and some pleasant campsites. And, of course, the excellent company of our fellow walkers – thank you to my walking companions for helping to make it a great experience.

There will be a presentation on this walk at one of the Club's social meetings later this year or next year, providing a chance to learn more about it.





*Photos clockwise from main:*

Morning Cloud from Mt Tamboritha *Felicity Chapman*; 19th Century stone wall and mining equipment *Ian Turland*; The very steep Abbott Creek Track *Felicity Chapman*; A hot slog up Junction Track *Ian Turland*; Campsite on the Moroka River *Ian Turland*.

Eight intrepid CBC members (Leader: Garry Boxsell; Group members: Cynthia Burton, Greg Buckman, Daniel Parsons, Jan Gatenby, Philip Gatenby, David Poland and Laeli Hogan) recently visited the remote Cobberas Range in North East Victoria's Alpine National Park, and The Pilot in southern Kosciuszko National Park (KNP).

The first day entailed a long, bumpy drive down the Barry Way and along Limestone Road, then car camping at Native Dog Flat. Next day, after a short drive to the trail head, we walked a couple of kilometres along Cowombat Fire Trail, before leaving the trail to bush-bash our way up to Moscow Creek saddle. We set up camp in the saddle and had an early lunch, then continued with day packs to ascend Mount Cobberas No.1, Middle Peak and Cleft Peak, all requiring some degree of scrambling to reach the highest point. The terrain was challenging, but the mature, unburnt forest was a pleasure to traverse. We returned to our tents at Moscow Creek saddle, happily exhausted, ready for a lovely evening huddled around a small but very cosy camp fire.



Resting on the ascent to the Moscow Ck Saddle *Photo by Jan Gatenby*

On the third day we ascended Moscow Peak and Mount Cobberas No.2, then navigated our way down a NNE spur to Cowombat Flat. The ascent through unburnt, mature forest was once again a great pleasure. We had lunch on Mount Cobberas No.2, enjoying expansive views back to the peaks we had ascended the previous day.



Mountain Brushtail Possum *Photo by Philip Gatenby*

After lunch, our progress slowed to a snail's pace as we encountered thick post-fire regrowth over a rough boulder-strewn and challenging descent. We were soon sapped of strength as we gritted our teeth and pushed on through the heavy regrowth. The highlight on this difficult descent was the sighting of a Mountain Brushtail Possum. Philip took a wonderful photograph of this unusual marsupial, so difficult to get correct exposure against a bright sky that most of us did not attempt it.

Exhausted, we continued, clambering over and ducking under fallen trees, forcing a path through heavily interwoven scrub and carefully picking our way down the steep boulder-strewn descent. The first person to catch sight of the open field of Cowombat Flat let out a whoop of joy, alerting the slower members of the party to an imminent end to our scrub-induced trauma. Cowombat Flat was to be our home for the following two days, so with our leader's knowledge of a good campsite next to the Murray stream, we all selected our tent sites carefully. Only one member had to make an emergency relocation when it became apparent that the resident nest of bull ants objected to their new neighbour. Many hands helped with a quick relocation to a safer site.

On Day 4 we set off with day packs to ascend The Pilot in KNP. After the previous day's scrub-bashing, we eyed the fire affected southern spur of The Pilot with suspicion and opted for the less interesting route out and back along the Cowombat Flat Fire Trail. We were blessed with another gorgeous blue-sky day to summit The Pilot. The ascent to the summit was through mostly unburnt, mature snowgum forest and once again, it was a delight to be there. After lots of photos at the trig we descended a few metres down the leeward side to enjoy a warm sunny lunch, protected by the mountain from the slightly chilly breeze.

On our return walk to Cowombat Flat, we diverted off trail again to visit Indy Spring Pole (the source of the Murray River) and Black-Allan Cairn No.1. Both locations are well hidden and would be very difficult to find without accurate descriptions and GPX locations. Thanks to the wonderful navigation skills of our very capable leader, no-one was lost, and

we located all the features. On the final day, before departing Cowombat Flat, we paused to visit the remains of the wreckage of a crashed Air Force DC-3 (Aug 1954). The walk back to the trail head was a mundane trek along the Cowombat Flat Fire Trail, crossing multiple gullies and ridges.



The plane wreck

*Photo by Jan Gatenby*

The weather for the entire walk was perfect. Predicted rain did not eventuate, the days were sunny and pleasantly cool for walking, the wind was minimal, the evenings were cold enough to appreciate a good camp fire but not frosty, allowing for a comfortable night's sleep. All in all, a fantastic walk with a great bunch of members and a first-rate leader who took communication and group care to a new level. It is a stunningly beautiful area and a delight to experience some of the less visited areas of Victoria and NSW with this wonderful group of bushwalkers.

*More photos next page*



Photos clockwise from top left:

Climbing Cobberas No 1 Trig *Laeli Hogan*; Indy Spring Pole *Greg Buckman*;

Black Allen Cairn *Laeli Hogan*

You will all be pleased to know that Janet Duncan's week in Kosciuszko (Perisher Valley) was a great success! All told, about 21 people with a bit of to-ing and fro-ing enjoyed the luxury of the Canberra Alpine Club chalet. Pat and I were delighted to meet old walking friends including Ailsa and Ross, Pat Miethke, Lorraine T and Lucinda.



A gnarled old snow gum

*Photo by Eric Pickering*

There were tigers, sheep, cyclists, painters, poets and the odd Bilby (or were they long-eared rabbits?). Some climbed Kosci (not the Bilbys), some cycled there (well almost). There were trips to the Main Range, Twynam, Carruthers, Blue Lake, Stilwell, the new track – Charlottes to Guthega, Sawpit Creek, Thredbo River, Rainbow Lake, Porcupine Rocks, Little Porcupine and other places including cafes at Charlotte Pass and Guthega. Each day small groups scattered this way and that to do their preferred walk/activity of the day. We marvelled at the scenery and those special gnarled gums, which can assume interesting shapes and profiles. Here, there is a parent and child?

Pat and I were chuffed on the first evening, when to the strains of “Happy Birthday to You”, Janet produced a Pavlova with many lighted candles in celebration of our 90<sup>th</sup> birthdays. Then there was that wonderful, perfect rainbow in the golden evening light.

Thank you all for a wonderful week, in particular walk leaders, Andrew, Gary, Lucinda and others. Dagmar, were you the leader of the walkers we encountered at Little Porcupine?





No, we were not helicoptered in! Thank you Ailsa and Ross for sharing your art works with us. And Ross, your double rainbow picture is a classic! You know folks; over the rainbow is “where the dreams that you dare to dream, really do come true.”

The biggest thank-you is to Janet for all the hard work, planning, and making it all happen in such a delightful way. Thank you Janet! I am sure you agree with Hannibal Smith of the A-Team (circa. 1985) “I love it when a plan comes together”.



Photos: Top: Double rainbow from the Canberra Alpine Club balcony.

*Photo by Ross Andrews*

Bottom: Pat viewing the Main Range from an outcrop en route to Mt Stilwell *Photo by Eric Pickering*

Blue Lake \*

Breezes tremble the surface - deep as a secret  
this pool, sheltered by cliffs. After

the long walk up through alpine fields  
I sit and breathe a while. I share the sun

with a skink. Peaks edge the skyline  
and summer flecks the green foreground:

silver daisy, gentians, carpet heath, billy  
buttons. A cool wind carries raven

calls – *ark, ark* – and the grasses  
bow and shimmer before it.

I am a seasonal visitor here,  
like the bogong moth. Drawn year

after year to the silence of granite  
its story of ice and eroded time.

These mountains know deep history;  
my breathing self, a moment in it,

of no more note than the raven feather  
I see has come to rest among the grasses.

*\*Kosciuszko National Park*



Painting and photo of Blue Lake *by Ailsa Brown*



Tuross Lake, from its southern sandspit *Photo by David Briese*

### **The Odyssey ... or is that 'Ode to the Sea'? - Great South Coast Walk Stages 4 & 5**

The saga continues .... In the last newsletter, I reported on Stage 3 of the Great South Coast Walk, which followed Alan Laird's presentation on Stages 1 and 2 at CBC's October 2022 social meeting.

For those who have missed the previous accounts, the Great South Coast Walk is a concept developed by David and Pennie Briese. It is based on a 650km walk they made in 2004 following the coast from Sydney (Bundeena, Royal National Park) to the Victorian border (Mallacoota). The route uses existing tracks and beaches, as well as traversing rock platforms, skirting around or over headlands and occasionally strolling along township streets – whatever works best.

Starting in February 2021, David has been leading a groups of CBC walkers doing the Great South Coast Walk in a series of stages. I have been fortunate enough to have done all of the stages so far. Other participants for stages 4 and 5 were: David Briese (leader), Pennie Briese, Philip Gatenby, Jan Gatenby, Lois Padgham, Bernard Morris, Alan Laird and Marg Sharp. I'm very willing to do multi-day walks carrying all my gear in a backpack, but I must admit it has been very pleasant having a support vehicle for all of the stages so far, so we've only had to carry daypacks. Pennie and Marg drove support vehicles for stage 4, while Marg provided the support for stage 5.

### **Stage 4, 110km: 6 walking days – 28 November to 3 October, 2022**

Stage 3 finished at Murramarang Resort at South Durras in Murramarang National Park, and so that is where our stage 4 started. We spent the first day walking to Long Beach on Batemans Bay. This is a very beautiful part of the coast, and is part of a new 34km, three-day Murramarang South Coast Walk running from Pretty Beach to Maloneys Beach. We had a comfortable house to stay in at Long Beach.

The second day involved a change in mode of locomotion. We were met near the house by Phil from Bay and Beyond and set off across the bay in kayaks. It was nice to be on the water. However, a strengthening wind made paddling increasingly challenging and, while we traversed the bay without any dramas, the conditions caused us to opt for the shelter of Observation Point rather than continuing on to Sunshine

Bay. We walked the final stretch to Pleasurelea Tourist Resort, where we pitched tents for the night.

The next day was a fairly lengthy (22km) walk to Barlings Beach. Given the spread of housing continuously along the coast down to Malua Bay, the first eight kilometres of our day's walk, it was somewhat surprising how little this impinged upon our *bushwalking* experience. There were only a couple of short sections on suburban streets, while in the main we were able to enjoy 'a rolling panorama of forested headlands, cliff-lines, rock platforms and sandy caves' (as David writes in his 'gang-gang' blog). Further south, we passed an impressive sea-cave before Rosedale Beach, and continued along more beaches and beautiful forest tracks to camp at Barlings Beach Holiday Park.



*All photos by David Briese unless otherwise stated*

Left: View from the North Rosedale sea cave;

Right: Walking through a spotted gum forest

Day 4 saw us walking to Moruya Heads. A swim early in our day's walk took us across the Tomaga River, emerging on the other side conveniently close to the riverside coffee van. We continued around Mossy Point and along Broulee Beach and on to Broulee Island, which we rounded along its rocky shore and rock platform to reach Bengello Beach. We were unable to secure a means of safely crossing the Moruya River, only 50m across, and so were driven the 12km around from the northern to the southern breakwater by our support vehicles. In the absence of physically crossing the waterway, we ritualistically dipped our toes into the water on the northern side and did the same on the southern side after we arrived there. Did this express a subconscious wish to have walked across the water?! Alas, our talents didn't extend that far. We continued to and over South Head, stopping to watch a couple of seals floating languorously below us, and on to Moruya Head campground.

The next day's walk took us through attractive forests and more beaches, and past several lakes and lagoons. We followed the Bingi Dreaming Track, which traces the ancient Song Lines of the Yuin Aboriginal People. We enjoyed some great views up and down the coast, including of distant Gulaga. There were a couple of waterways to wade on the way: a knee-high crossing at Congo Creek and a waist-high one at Lake Coila. We finished at Tuross Head where we relaxed over a drink at the Boatshed Café before the

support vehicles took us to Dalmeny, where we had the comfort of a beach house to stay in.

On the final day of Stage 4, our first order of business was to complete an ersatz crossing of Tuross Lake by dipping our toes in the water at the south side of the mouth – we had ‘toe-dipped’ in the northern side the previous afternoon – before resuming our walk southwards. Beyond Potato Point and Jemisons

Beach, we walked the 6½km of Brou Beach and waded the shallow entrance of Brou Lake, where, surprisingly, a couple of emus were to be seen. We arrived at the beach house at Dalmeny in time for a long lunch break.

We walked the remaining 8km to Narooma during the afternoon on a mix of paved bicycle/

Left: Paddling on Batemans Bay;

Right: Rock Ribs near Narooma.



pedestrian paths and beaches and rock platforms. Meanwhile, back at the beach house in Dalmeny, a drama unfolded. Alan, who had stayed at the house, phoned David to say the dishwasher had caught fire and smoke was billowing out. Alan gave us a running commentary as the fire brigade arrived, extinguished the fire and then let him and Marg collect our belongings. We arrived back to find our gear piled on the lawn next



to the charred remnants of the dishwasher. The house had come close to catching alight and the pungent smell of smoke permeated throughout. The real estate agent provided us with alternative (very pleasant) accommodation in nearby Kianga.

### **Stage 5, 85km: 5 walking days – 30 January to 3 February, 2023**

Our timing for stage 5 was determined in part by the need to cross some of the waterways at low tide. It was the same team, except that Pennie, whose knees had now recovered from surgery, joined us for all the walking, while Marg became our solo support driver.

We started walking – in the rain – where we had ended stage 4, in Narooma. Once out of the town area, there was some attractive coastline to follow, including Glasshouse Rocks, Bogola Headland, Fullers Beach and Corunna Point. The original intention was to camp at Mystery Bay but persistent rain during the day

and sodden campsites made that uninviting, and so we had Marg ferry us to Bermagui where we booked into cabins.

Resuming our walk at Mystery Bay the following day, we made our way to the unfortunately named 1080 Beach. I wondered whether we were to be heading for a series of beaches with toxic names – Strychnine Beach, Cyanide Beach, etc.? – but not so. Instead, we continued past the entrance to Tilba Tilba Lake, blocked by a sandbar, over the grassy tops of Tilba Head and along a long stretch of golden-sanded beach,



eventually reaching the mouth of Wallaga Lake, which necessitated a further wade. There were some great rock features along the shore in the area of Murunna Point. We entered Bermagui through reed-covered wetlands on a raised walk-way.

The next day was a long, 24km walk to Aragunnu. Our route included attractive forest tracks south of Bermagui. After crossing Armands Beach, a designated nudist beach, in our 'over-dressed' state, we negotiated a long and rugged rock shelf below the low coastal cliffs. As

Above: Campsite at Aragunnu; Below: Crossing Murrah Inlet

*Both photos by J&P Gatenby*

the land above was privately-owned, this was the only way to go. It was an impressive section but needed to be done at low tide. This took us to Murrah Lake, which involved a waist-deep wade. We walked on to the Hidden Valley campsite. Whereas once this would have been a possible campsite, it is now part of Mimosa Rocks National Park and camping is no longer permitted and we continued to a quiet and attractive campsite at Aragunnu Beach.

The next day's walk was shorter, with a later start, allowing us to wander around Mimosa Rocks, near the campsite. A small but active blowhole was part of this enjoyable exploration. The walk south from Aragunnu to Picnic Point was made much easier by following a route set recently by a bushwalker using the alias of Leonardo de Terminus. David had the route on his GPS and it was also marked with ribbons. This was much easier than hugging the coast. We had timed our crossing of Bithry Inlet for low tide, which worked well, and then continued to Middle Beach, our campsite for the night.

The next day – our final day for this stage – was also a later start, given tidal timing considerations. We skirted the edge of Middle Lagoon to the sandbar across its entrance. Waves breaking against the low headland cliffs to the south meant we had to make





our own track across to Gillards Beach. Further along, we faced a similar obstacle, necessitating a clamber up a cliff, helped by a rope that Jan fortuitously spotted. We reached Nelson Lagoon at mid-tide, with the water still moving swiftly. We assessed the best route across, picking a point where we could swim across with the current carrying us back down to reach the sandy spit between the lagoon and the sea. Pleasant walking took us to

the shore of Mogareeka Inlet, which we crossed on the road bridge. A walk along a cycleway and Tathra Beach took us to the Tathra Pub and a welcome celebratory beer to mark the end of Stage 5.



Above: On Ginns Lookout above Picnic Beach.....*Photo by J&P Gatenby;*

Below: The end in sight—heading towards Tathra Point

**Stages 4 and 5**, like the earlier parts of the Great South Coast Walk, were highly enjoyable, and I hope to do the remainder of the walk, down to Mallacoota. I hope too that others in the Club will also have the chance to experience this walk in the future – it's a great experience to be had in our own part of the world.

For more detailed accounts of Stages 4 and 5, as well as the other stages walked so far, see David's gang-gang website: <http://www.gang-gang.net/nomad/southcoastrevisited/index.htm>. This is an excellent resource for anyone considering doing this walk. I would certainly recommend the walk, either as a 'thru-hike' or, as we are doing it, by stages over a more extended time.





With the personal challenge drawing to a close, have you been inspired to climb a few mountain tops?



Our President, Terrylea Reynolds, at Wambelong Trig 1206 m on Mount Exmouth, the highest peak in the Warrumbungles

At the date of writing, 170 of us have. Sadly, letters H, I, V and Z have escaped unsummitted. But we have achieved the enormous total of 780 walker-hills – that’s those 170 walkers climbing to the top of 780 hills.

Check out your personal results on the CBC website [here](#).

We hope you’ve had fun and continue to enjoy your walking.

Your RU↑4it event coordinator  
John Evans

## Equipment Exchange, Sale and Hire

### ***Club's Excess Gear for Sale (cheap):***

Past members have generously donated gear to the Club, usually with the hope that it will continue in good service. Periodically we need to shed a surplus.

Items available are: Large packs \$20; small packs \$20; day packs \$5; 3-season sleeping bags \$10; inner sheets \$2; 2-man tents \$20; stoves (Whisperlite) \$20; cooking gear, water bottles, containers and stuff bags; 1: 25 000 maps AGD 84, GDA 94; mats, lilos, boots, miscellaneous.

### ***Gear Broker:***

Rob is able to facilitate gear sales and purchases among Club members with a degree of security.

Sales: Date, name, phone number, item for sale, asking price.

Purchases: Date, name, phone number, item sought.

Rob would contact potential sellers/purchasers, supplying the necessary details, after which the parties make their own arrangements.

### ***Equipment Hire:***

Please note that **\$20 deposit** is required for all items.

**Tents:** \$15 per weekend, \$40 per week: 2 person Olympus tent, 2-person Macpac tent,

1-person Microlite tent , 2-person snow tent

**Sleeping bags:** \$10 per weekend, \$25 per week

**Liner and mat :** nil cost

**Metho stove and fuel bottle:** \$5 per weekend, \$15 per week

**Snow shoes:** \$10 per day, \$25 per week; **Climbing gear:** \$10 per day or weekend per person

**Pack:** \$5 per weekend, \$15 per week

**PLB, GPS :** nil cost

Please note first overnight loan of gear gets a free loan.

Borrowers are requested to look after the gear and return it promptly.

Contact Rob on 6231 4535 or [robhorsfield@bigpond.com](mailto:robhorsfield@bigpond.com)